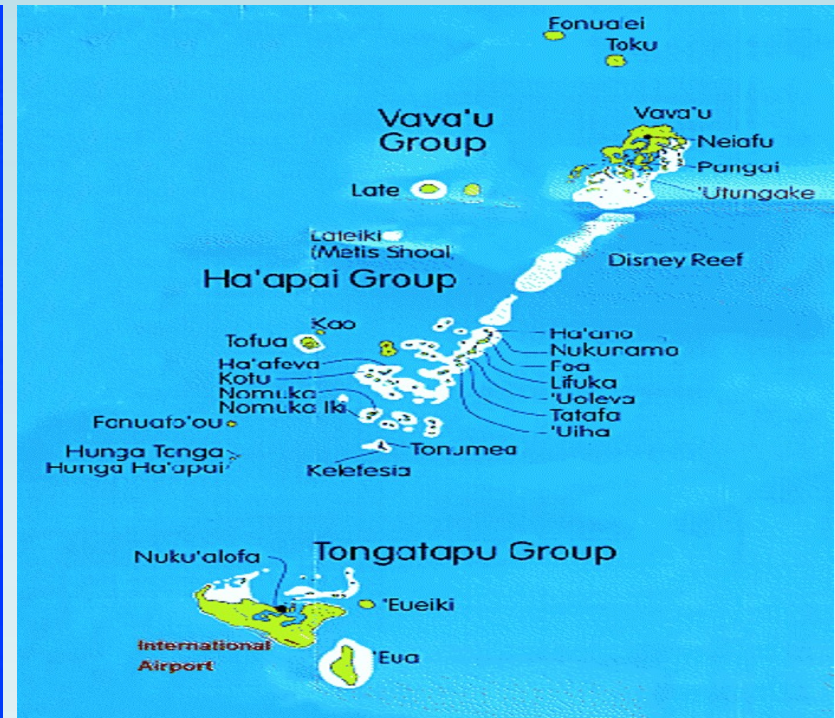


# WHALE WATCHING IN TONGA





## OUTLINE OF THE PRESENTATION

1. Introduction
2. Background
3. Development of the Whale Watching Industry
4. National & Regional Conservation Efforts



## Background

- Pre 1978 Whaling
- 1978 Royal Decree to prohibit whaling
- Fisheries Conservation & Management Act 1993



## Development of the Whale Watching Industry

- Started in late 1980's
- Whale Watching & Whale Swimming Act 2008
- Whale watching & Swimming Regulations 2013
- Growing rapidly and reflected in the growth in the number of operators to 36: 36 in Vava'u, 6 in Tongatapu, 8 Ha'apai and 2 Eua islands
- 67% operators are foreign owned; 22% are locally owned; and 11% joint foreign/Tongan partnerships





## National & Regional Conservation Efforts

- Continuous Work on (i) studying whales since 1993 under the project South Pacific Humpback Whales Project since 1993; (ii) reviewing of policy & legislation/regulations; (iii) awareness programmes
- At regional level Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme has led a 2 year campaign to protect Whales
- April 2017 International Meeting “Whales in a Changing Ocean” & follow-up

# MALO 'AUPITO

