

Consolidated Responses for the PAFPNet Discussion for the month of July 2015

Date: 13/07/2015 – 24/07/2015

"Addressing Biosecurity in the Pacific Island countries and Territories"

The PAFPNet topic for the month of July, **"Addressing Biosecurity in the Pacific Island countries and Territories (PICTs)"** highlighted questions that would help bring to light problematic areas being faced in this industry. The five (5) questions that were presented during the discussion were posed also with the intention of determining the needs for improvement to be better able to shape possible solutions.

Contributors to the discussion had formulated various definitions of the two terms "Biosecurity" and "Quarantine" and were asked to expound on what the terms signified. The forum produced relatively similar classifications of the both terms. Biosecurity was simply depicted as the protection against plant and animal pests and weeds into a new environment. It includes the measures taken to stop the spread or introduction of harmful organisms to human, animal and plant life. Quarantine was outlined as the confinement or strict isolation of specimen(s) (usually exotic) posing either a direct or an indirect threat or risk to existing life forms (native species) in a natural setting. The condition of quarantine confinement is reliant on the notion of whether ships, persons, animals or plants are carrying any sort of infectious or contagious diseases.

The effective and efficient monitoring of border protection against the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in PICTs is impossible to maintain. Discussions had raised key pointers for the inclusion of new pests and diseases with a country's border. According to members, the increase in international trade and travel (movement of people) is one of the many channels to the high rise entry of various pests and diseases. These channels are considered as a non-deliberate means of border exposure. Moreover, legal importation of goods, animals and plants can be accompanied by pests that may go undetected, sometimes as a result of inadequate checks.

Additionally, illegal importation such as smuggling of prohibited goods was also highlighted as one of the major reasons for border intrusion of diseases. However, various means of exposure were emphasized, including introduction by natural means, a condition deemed uncontrollable. For instance, the wind, ocean and even migratory animals become vessels for transferring various pests and diseases. In the case for migratory animals, this is most commonly found in wild birds that may carry with them the bird flu virus.

Considering the issues posed during the engagement, associates suggested for adequate human and financial resources to be made more available to improve border security. Furthermore, training of staff and quarantine officers on a full range of skills and capabilities related to the safekeeping of our borders was mentioned key to addressing the issue of the lack of staff knowledge and ineffective security implementation. To add on, forming closer partnerships among government, private enterprises, educational and research institutes, as well as the community was deliberated as an

effective enforcement element to increase border defence and protection against various pests and diseases.

Lastly, providing the network with the Pest List Database (PLD), most of the members were not aware of its existence. However, many had made mention of its usefulness. According to a comment made on the forum, although the PLD is made available to its users there is still a need for improvement. This database must be constantly updated to help formulate an effective and efficient implementation strategy that will help tackle the border control issue.

The assessments of the consolidated responses were gauged from the questions below:

- 1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.**

What do these two terms really mean?

- 2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.**

- a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?**

- b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?**

- 3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.**

- 4. Are you aware that there is a country Pest List Database for each PICTs? (Yes or No)**

Here is link to the Pacific Islands Pest List Database housed under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC): <http://www.spc.int/pld/>

- 5. Was this link informative and helpful? Why?**

Please visit the following link PAFPNET discussion:

<http://www.spc.int/pafpnet/pafpnet/discussion-summaries>

Responses from:

- [1. Mr. Russel Campbell, Biosecurity Division, Guam Department of Agriculture – Guam](#)
- [2. Mr. Josua Wainiqolo, Biosecurity and Trade, Secretariat of the Pacific Community \(SPC\) – Fiji](#)
- [3. Mr. Ngatoko Ta Ngatoko, Biosecurity Service, Ministry of Agriculture Cook Islands – Cook Islands](#)
- [4. Mr. Tony Gunua, Plant Health, Secretariat of the Pacific Community \(SPC\) – Fiji](#)
- [5. Mr. Sam Panapa, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Department of Agriculture – Tonga](#)
- [6. Mr. Lesio Saurara, Biosecurity and Trade, Secretariat of the Pacific Community \(SPC\) – Fiji](#)
- [7. Mr. Fereti Atumuravi, Plant Health, Secretariat of the Pacific Community \(SPC\) – Fiji](#)
- [8. Mr. Ilagi Puana, Animal Health Production, Secretariat of the Pacific Community \(SPC\) – Fiji](#)
- [9. Ms. Ana Tunabuna-Buli, Biosecurity and Trade, Secretariat of the Pacific Community \(SPC\) – Fiji](#)
- [10. Dr. Bukola Babatunde – Fiji](#)
- [11. Mr. Bob Macfarlane, Biosecurity Solomon Islands – Solomon Islands](#)
- [12. Mr Nilson Prasad – Fiji](#)
- [13. Grahame Jackson – Australia](#)

1. Mr. Russel Campbell, Biosecurity Division, Guam Department of Agriculture – Guam

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.

What do these two terms really mean?

Traditionally, and from my perspective as an agricultural scientist, the word "quarantine" has included activities to protect agricultural or forestry plants or agricultural livestock from the threats of imported pests and diseases; it also included activities to exclude weeds from a jurisdiction. It could also often be used to include protection for companion animals such as dogs and cats, etc. The term "biosecurity", in my mind, is a more recent usage which also includes quarantine activities to protect the environment, humans or anything of importance to humans from the destructive influences of invasive destructive organisms in the broader sense.

2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

- a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

Smuggling, humans putting their own interests ahead of that of the community in general; lack of resources to enforce and inspect sufficiently.

- c. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

Increase funding, personnel resources, inter-agency cooperation and the education of the public.

3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

Demand that sufficient resources are available to inspect, enforce and educate. Also require all government agencies involved to be highly cooperative with each other to maintain the highest efficiencies possible.

2. Mr. Josua Wainiqolo, Biosecurity and Trade, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.

What do these two terms really mean?

Quarantine is a term that is narrow in its context. It is the protection of plant and animal pests and weeds from getting into a new environment. Maybe an island state or an area within the SIDS.

Biosecurity is a term that has been used recently in a much broader context. It's the protection of the environment from pests and diseases (plant and animal) and also takes into account protection of human health (example from deadly mosquitoes that carry malaria)

2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

- a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

Smuggling of prohibited goods across the border. Insufficient resources (human as well as sophisticated equipments) to detect smuggled goods. Those who smuggle goods are too clever to

hide prohibited goods that at times our x-ray machine and human error tend to fail to pick this up and confiscate.

b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

We need to work in a collaborative way with other agencies and our local community. There needs to be resourcing available in terms of human and financial resources to carry out biosecurity activities at the border effectively. Its when we don't have the resources that we tend to cut corners and biosecurity work is not given the priority that it needs.

3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

Biosecurity is everyone responsibility. We need to educate our community by talking to them and also producing awareness materials that will assist in maintaining a strong border control in our SIDs. Also we need to engage with all the stakeholders and community.

4. Are you aware that there is a country Pest List Database for each PICs? (Yes or No) Yes

Here is link to the Pacific Islands Pest List Database housed under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC): <http://www.spc.int/pld/>

5. Was this link informative and helpful? Why?

Yes, Can access the database from the link.

Please let me know if you have any queries regarding the questions.

We look forward to learning from the experiences faced in your countries concerning the topic of addressing Biosecurity in PICTs.

3. Mr. Ngatoko Ta Ngatoko, Biosecurity Service, Ministry of Agriculture Cook Islands – Cook Islands

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are "Biosecurity" and "Quarantine".

What really this two term mean The two term really means the same but I will try and see what Quarantine is in terms of general protection at the border as some NPPOs still use or

maintain the title as their statutory name for their service. As for the Cook Islands since the inauguration of the new legislation as we have now established our office the 'Cook Islands Biosecurity Service' as formerly known Quarantine Service.

Biosecurity.....

Biosecurity concerns the prevention, management and control of animal and plant pests and diseases, generally known as animal and plant quarantine. It enables countries to protect themselves from incursions of pests and diseases, thereby safeguarding food production and improving the environment and the prospects for trade in agricultural products.

Biosecurity is of growing interest as a result of globalization of the world economy, the rapid increase in communications, transport and trade, technological progress, and increased awareness of biological diversity and environmental issues. Countries require legal instruments and supporting mechanisms that respond to domestic requirements and are consistent with the international policy and regulatory framework.

Quarantine.....

Prevention or isolation to prevent the spread of pests and diseases.

2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

3. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

Lack of raising awareness within the Community or the General Public and there are probably number of reasons on this issue and this could be the availability of the information, the resources available is limited to remote areas in the country and as well reaching the target audience and at times considered expensive exercise especially if government priority is focus in other areas of interest such as the development of schools, etc.

4. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

Strengthening NPPOs capabilities in terms of training, up skilling staff on modern biosecurity law enforcement technology and methods of service delivery, diagnostics systems, enhance database capabilities, etc.

5. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

It is important NPPOs is to work closely with Farmers, Importers, Exporters, Non Government Organizations, Community leaders, School, Border Control agencies, etc. Collaboration with stakeholders is essential to achieve biosecurity obligations at borders and once people understand the importance and responsibilities of safe guarding flora and fauna of the country from exotic pests and diseases.

Additionally, for the Cook Islands and this may not work in other country because of their government policies or priorities. We will be introducing the basis of a user pays system. That is, those people bringing in the risk contribute to the cost of running a service which works to protect the Cook Islands from the risks associated with the imported cargo or visiting vessel. Fundamentally this should not be a significant burden to the taxpayer and Government but rather to those who profit from the business of importing. Gearing costs in this way often leads to the supply chain beginning to manage risks to avoid cost/time at the Port of discharge which means for Biosecurity the risk is reduced or kept offshore completely.

4. Mr. Tony Gunua, Plant Health, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.

What do this two term really mean?. Quarantine literally means exclusion/prevention from happening or getting established. It has been used as the border to prevent exotic pests and diseases of plants and animals and weeds from entering a territory/country. It was restrictive to pests of importance from entering a country. The international definition of Quarantine as defined by IPPC in ISPM N0.5, “Glossary and definitions” Official confinement of regulated articles for observation and research or for further inspection, testing and/or treatment [FAO, 1990; revised FAO, 1995; CEP, 1999]. Biosecurity also embraces quarantine but includes other harmful exotic biological agents that could affect a country once introduced.. Biosecurity has been used recently so is not found in the ISPM No 5 .

2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

- a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

Entry could be intentional, smuggling of prohibited substances or unintentional as hitch hikers on import commodities/articles. Therefore, when importing substances from other countries, the biosecurity organization should be thorough in the Pest Risk Assessment (PRA), making sure that threats of the exporting countries are minimized, export cargo are properly inspected and certified before shipment. And imports at the port of entry should be inspected properly before release to importers. In some instances, endemic pests that were not aggressive previously could become serious during this global climate warming/change. For example ; Cocoa Pod borer in PNG (PNG entomologists can confirm).

- b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

It does involve so many factors. Some of it includes, adequate funding, well informed staff and sizeable workforce, up to date surveillance and inspection systems (x-rays, trappings), up to date treatment and Post Entry Quarantine facilities and diagnostic tools and facilities.

3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories. The way to go is through awareness using, television, radio, brochures/flyers, billboards, short videos, letting everyone know of the consequences of introductions of exotic pests in PICTs. Directing them to understand that “ biosecurity/Quarantine issues of a nation is everyone’s business” and not only the organisation entrusted.

4. Are you aware that there is a country Pest List Database for each PICs? (Yes or No) : Yes

Here is link to the Pacific Islands Pest List Database housed under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC): <http://www.spc.int/pld/>

5. Was this link informative and helpful? Why? It helps as it tells each PICTs members the records of pests that were officially recorded. These records are used to negotiate trade (imports and exports).

Tony

5. Mr. Sam Panapa, Plant Protection and Quarantine, Department of Agriculture – Tonga

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.

Biosecurity refers to measures that are taken to stop the spread or introduction of harmful organisms to human, animal and plant life.

Quarantine is the confinement of regulated articles for observation and research for further inspection, testing and treatment

What do these two terms really mean?

Biosecurity refers to measures that to be used to stop the spreading or introduction....., while Quarantine is to prevent the spreading, both terms similarity.

Quarantine is a narrower concept than biosecurity.

2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

- Expansion of international travel and trade
- Lack of resources
- Smuggling
- Bird migration
- Biosecurity Officers does not do their job -

b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

- continue to develop measures to prevent the incursion of new pests, diseases and weeds
- develop and implement innovative and effective biosecurity systems
- capacity building

3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

- create a clearer understanding in the community of the value of biosecurity and how it can be maintained
- train and develop people so that we have the full range of skills and capabilities we need
- form closer partnerships among government, industry, educational and research institutes and the community
- develop and implement a contemporary and responsive legislative and regulatory framework

6. Mr. Lesio Saurara, Biosecurity and Trade, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji

Thanks Grahame,

You are one of many that have identified similar abnormalities with the database and so has our colleague handling it.

It is some what like the CABI database itself and of course have its own challenges however country members may first require to prioritise exactly what their NPPO want to action with available required resources and unless this is done those likely errors and mistakes in national databases won't be anticipated.

Another approach to having this ratified at national level is capacity building and mentoring, another big challenge for NPPO is consistency in maintaining these database in its operational level and staff turn over, where there are no succession plans for another to take over and theres a gap for a period of time!

It is a good idea and worth using where most of the data have been collected and of course funding is always the biggest challenge for such activity.

I believe NPPOs can upgrade their capacity and resources for such key activities in not only maintaining its pest list database but also verifying the list of pests by its very own scientists if any and or with help from experts outside their organisations.

It is one of the many responsibility of NPPO to conduct survey and surveillance with of course assistance from other organisations if need be whether it's interception or incursion or when country members rely on imports and or exports the need to regularly update it's pest list.

Its benefits entail notification obligations on pests of economic importance, development of emergency response plans, regulatory measures, pest free areas and of course information exchange with trading partners.

A major contribution to this database apart from its initial setup and capacity building is the intervention from the plant health experts in their respective fields of entomology, pathology and

nematodes to travel as far isolated and remote places to obtain specimen and build capacity for NPPO and I may say that this is done annually for PICTs where again funding is always a challenge given the vast number of Pacific Island countries.

PPPO is a good forum and so is country intervention, but I'd still use the Pest List Database for pest comparative analysis as it is user friendly thanks to its inventors and of course other databases available online and or journals to cooking up a pest list. This. List can always be verified per commodity for a country through negotiation rounds between trading partners and of course with another survey but we need to start from somewhere and that is the pest list database.

Vinaka.

Lesio.

Sent from my ALCATEL ONE TOUCH POP C1

7. Mr. Fereti Atumuriravi, Plant Health, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.

What do these two terms really mean?.

- Biosecurity – generally refers to any life form(s) that could pose to be a threat to an ecosystem or from an ecosystem or under threat or at risk of being affected thus, requires provision of certain measures to ensure no adversities happens as a result.
 - Quarantine – generally refers to confinement of specimen(s) (usually exotic) posing either a direct or an indirect threat or risk to existing life forms (native species) in a natural setting.
2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

- Introduction by natural means or hitch hike (wind, ocean current through drift debris, ocean vessels, aero planes,
- Introduction deliberately undetected by travelling public
- Introduction by accident - official means but insufficient risk analysis carried out prior approval of certain life forms.

b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

- Provide appropriate awareness to the following;- travelling public, would be suppliers of these materials, school curriculum/tertiary institutions
- Compulsory search for all returning agriculture staff, research scientist, commercial farmers, agri-exporters, agri-importers, agri-agent retailers and wholesalers, NGO staff associated with agriculture etc...
- Conduct spot checks to all commercial farms and conduct an audit of all crop varieties planted in the farm and trace back to the supplier to verify the validity of the information
- Strong adherence to the phytosanitary measures

3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

- Education and awareness is one of the most influential means to empower stakeholders to understand the real essence of the slogan “protection is better than cure”. Awareness using real Pacific examples such as Taro Leaf Blight (TLB) in Samoa, Taro Beetle (TB) in Fiji to name a few would provide vivid understanding of the potential catastrophe such mishaps could bring about.

4. Are you aware that there is a country Pest List Database for each PICs? (Yes or No)

Here is link to the Pacific Islands Pest List Database housed under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC): <http://www.spc.int/pld/>

5. Was this link informative and helpful? Why?

Fereti Atumuriravi

8. Mr. Ilagi Puana, Animal Health Production, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.

What do this two term really mean?.

Biosecurity is generally means measures that are taken to stop the spread or introduction of harmful organisms to human, animal and plant life. The measures can be a combination of processes and

systems that have been put in place. Generally a CONCEPT whereas Quarantine generally refers to the period of time during which a person or an animal or a plant material that is suspected of having a disease is kept away from others to prevent the disease from spreading. Generally an ACTION.

2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

Most commonly through:

1. Legal importation through permitted imports of animal and plant materials from countries that are known to have the disease or pest that have not been adequately checked from countries of export.
2. Illegal importation such as smuggling of infected materials (animal or plant materials), foreign fishing vessels or logging ships carrying untreated food stuff for crews that may be exchanged for fresh produce from locals
3. Migratory animals such as migratory wild birds – common way for spread of bird flu
4. Contaminated footwear or clothing from tourists, returning local travelers who had visited farms overseas and have not cleaned them prior to coming home.
5. Wind as a result of strong winds and weather from harsh environment conditions of natural disasters and climate change
6. Emerging pests and diseases is a new trend where local pests and disease agents that were not infective in the past have become infective and causing diseases as a result of conducive environment caused by climate change in Islands.

b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

- Updated and practical Biosecurity Laws and Regulations
- Updated Import conditions that are based on import or pest risk analysis and are sound and justified to facilitate trade at minimal risk of introduction of exotic pest and diseases through importation
- Strict Biosecurity Law enforcement by all those involved in the border control such as Biosecurity authorities, Customs, Coastal Fisheries and Police working together (Biosecurity should be promoted and encouraged as everyone's business).
- Trained and qualified Biosecurity inspectors and managers who can have confidence in making decisions on the spot.
- Adequate national budget for Biosecurity programme in PICTs

- Active collaboration between PICTs and regional organization who have the expertise.
3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories
- Awareness to promote the negative side of Biosecurity risks to public and stakeholders at large as well as positive side of maintaining effective biosecurity protection. .
 - Public and stakeholders to be actively involved in Biosecurity programmes in PICTs
 - Public and stakeholders to report unusual pest and disease sightings or incidences to the Biosecurity authorities or border control agencies
 - Pest and disease emergency response plans to involve public and stakeholders participation and training.
 - Voluntary quarantine support schemes from the public and stakeholders at large.

Ilagi Puana

9. Ms. Ana Tunabuna-Buli, Biosecurity and Trade, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – Fiji

My contribution to this forum is directed towards questions 4 and 5 alone.

The records existing in the PLD are the result of many surveys and publications from both recent and past years. While it has its cons of some missing pest occurrences on crops and lacks other customized tasks that a user would prefer, it still retains most crop pest information for the Pacific and is therefore still a helpful and informative tool to refer to. Apart from published literatures, the PLD also contains data that are being contributed by the countries themselves, so I have always considered it a valuable tool, as who better, to provide country data than those who witness these occurrences every day. This also creates awareness for the countries and their own pest status.

The consistency of publishing up-to-date records on the website is an ongoing collaboration between SPC and the countries and is something we are continually working on. However, the standalone copies available for each country are accessible and allow countries to keep a record of all pest occurrences, whether authenticated or not.

On another note, while there are some pest occurrences that are general knowledge to most of us, we've often overlooked the fact that getting the information published is just as important, when it comes to stating an official occurrence. Despite all the work and surveys being done in the Pacific, there is a lot of information that still needs to be documented and published. These provide good literature sources for the database.

No doubt the PLD can still be improved to provide more accurate pest lists and better functionalities; this is something that we are aware of and hope to improve through closer collaboration with the countries.

Vinaka

Ana

10. Dr. Bukola Babatunde – Fiji

Below information are my views to the discussion on biosecurity issues:

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”.

What do this two term really mean?.

- Biosecurity is a set of protocols or precautions used to minimize the risk of introducing an infectious disease into plant and animal populations, and to prevent the spread of disease within that population. The protocols and precautions include proper cleaning, disinfection and precautionary methods of ensuring that diseases are not carried from one premise to another
 - While quarantine is a strict isolation imposed to prevent or contain the spread of something considered dangerous, often but not always disease. Quarantine period is between 7 and 30 days of detention or isolation imposed upon ships, persons, animals or plants on arrival at a port or border, when suspected of carrying some infectious or contagious disease. Quarantine can be applied to humans, but also to animals of various kind.
2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

- a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?

Migratory bird movement

Illegal smuggling of new crops into the country

- b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?

- Strict Biosecurity Laws and Regulations. Heavy penalties (Long jail terms and expensive fines) for people who fail to observe these Fiji's Quarantine Laws.
 - Conduct Import Risk Analyses (IRAs), which are structured, science-based, approach to developing and reviewing quarantine policies.
3. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.
- Let Biosecurity agency develop strict biosecurity and hygiene standard and requirements for crop and animal farm operations
 - Let each farm develop their biosecurity plan in line with the requirement standard
 - Let there be compliance section ensuring that this is done
 - Compliance Program's core function is to work with Biosecurity program managers, members of the public and other law enforcement agencies to carry out investigations where suspected breaches of our legislation appear to have occurred.
 - Compliance issues warnings to those individuals and entities that may inadvertently create risks situations
 - Launch quarantine awareness campaign program and educate the general public to report quarantine any unusual pests and diseases, or sickness in animals and plants
 - Introduce quarantine into school curriculum having links to a number of different learning areas, including science and the environment
 - Let Quarantine and Inspection Service recognises and rewards individuals and organisations who have made an outstanding contribution to maintaining Fiji's quarantine integrity.
4. Are you aware that there is a country Pest List Database for each PICs? (Yes or No)

NO

Thanks,

Dr Bukola Babatunde

11. Mr. Bob Macfarlane, Biosecurity Solomon Islands – Solomon Islands

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are "Biosecurity" and "Quarantine". What do this two term really mean?.

Both are about limiting the movement of exotic pests into a country to protect agriculture, forestry, environment and biodiversity. In SI we refer to Quarantine as being all about activities at the border, i.e. operational inspections etc. whereas Biosecurity refers to a continuum of activities from pre-border, through border to post-border. E.g. Pre-border is knowledge about pests in trading partners and other countries to enable Import Risk Analysis, border activities are the same as the old quarantine activities and post-border is all about control of pests in-country including surveillance and emergency response activities.

2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.
 - a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?
 - Increased trade,
 - Increased movement of people
 - Reducing standards of law enforcement
 - Reducing standards in educational attainment of new agriculture graduates
 - Loss of corporate knowledge as older more experienced staff retire.
 - Change in agricultural practices
 - Climate change
 - b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?
 - Increased publicity with stakeholders e.g. importers, exporters, public, politicians
 - Regular refresher training for biosecurity staff
 - Regular verification of the standards of work done by biosecurity staff
 - Better national budgets for biosecurity services
 - A higher status for biosecurity nationally, e.g. customs get all the money because they make money for government, biosecurity is unrecognized for the work it does in protecting investments.
 - Some new serious pest outbreaks (taro leaf blight in Samoa was a huge shock to the system)

2. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.
 - Ensuring the politicians understand the importance of biosecurity to national agriculture and forestry investments, and the environment and biodiversity so they vote for better budgets.
 - Education of the general and travelling public will reduce the number of illegal importations as people understand the serious consequences of unsafe imports.
 - Education of importers and exporters to ensure they fully implement biosecurity requirements
 - A review of Import Specifications to ensure they are all technically justified and not a mechanism for reducing imports or raising government revenue.

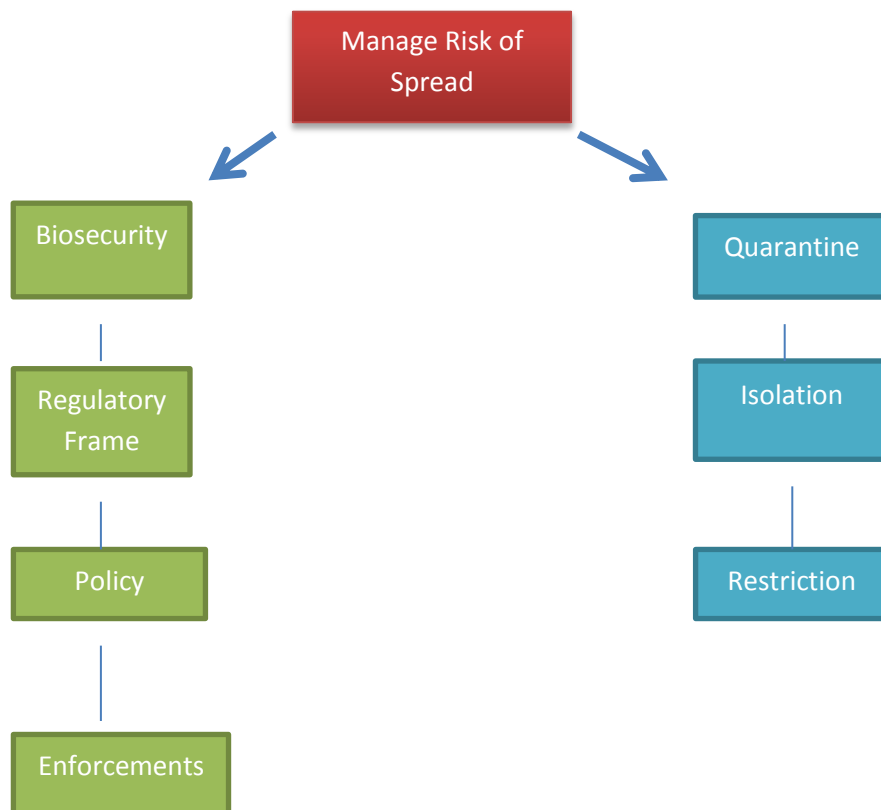
4. Are you aware that there is a country Pest List Database for each PICs? (Yes or No) Here is link to the Pacific Islands Pest List Database housed under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC): <http://www.spc.int/pld/>
 - Yes.

5. Was this link informative and helpful? Why?
 - The data is out of date and when using the country stand-alone version I have found it to be crippled by artificially imposed constraints, E.g. arbitrary limitations on which references are valid and which are ignored (e.g. over 25 years old). We are restricted to the format of reports designed by the programmers, I want to be able to design my own report outputs. Countries need access to all the information about their country, none should be restricted, if they are negotiating with another country who has searched the internet for pests of the crop the Pacific exporting country that relies on PLD will be at a disadvantage as the importing country will know more about their pests than they do.
 - Also we need to change the old insular mind set of wanting to control “bad” information coming from our countries. PICTs must embrace transparency if they really wish to be able to negotiate genuine market access arrangements. Importing countries must be able to trust that exporting countries are telling the whole truth. If there is no trust then market access negotiations will always be difficult. The PLD is a good place to start.

- Once countries are willing to genuinely share information (as required by IPPC and WTO SPS) then the PLD might become useful if it has fulltime staff inputting data to keep it up to date. As it is it is a waste on money.
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12. Mr Nilson Prasad – Fiji

1. Two terms that are commonly used at the border are “Biosecurity” and “Quarantine”. What do this two term really mean?



2. Biosecurity is the first line of defense in trying to keep exotic plant pest and animal diseases gaining entry into our Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). But we often read or hear about the introduction of exotic pests and diseases in our PICTs.

- a. What could be some of the reasons new pests and diseases gain entry into our PICTs environment?
 - Poor enforcement
 - Lack of knowledge of pest and diseases
 - Using other ports of entry e.g. Yachts
 - Corruption
 - Poor awareness

 - b. How can we improve PICTs biosecurity at the borders?
 - Educate and train enforcement officers
 - Transparency in the Biosecurity Sector
 - Strict regulatory policies
 - Having Awareness Programmes
2. How can stakeholders / general public assist and contribute positively towards ensuring Biosecurity is intact within the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.
- Good transparency
 - Follow regulatory policies
 - Understand what Biosecurity does and the impact to the nation

4. Are you aware that there is a country Pest List Database for each PICs? (Yes or No) Here is link to the Pacific Islands Pest List Database housed under the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC): <http://www.spc.int/pld/>

No

13. Grahame Jackson – Australia

I will just address points 4 and 5:

I am very aware of the Pest List Database and I have always thought it was an excellent initiative. To have a compilation of pest records of each Pacific island country in one place is very convenient. In a later phase of the project, when the heads of agriculture agreed to allow everyone to see the records of any country, the database become even more useful and valuable.

However, two things were assumed (i) countries would send new records to SPC without delay in keeping with their international obligations, and (ii) SPC would ensure that PLD records were accurate and up to date.

Unless these two things occur, the PLD has limited usefulness.

I use it a lot as I write pest fact sheets, but for many pests the records are not accurate, or the pest is missing from some countries where it is known to be present. I have stopped using it as a reference for pest distribution, and have stopped pointing out the mistakes to SPC as there are too many.

The solution is put the problem to the PPPO and HOAFS and seek a mandate to repair the problems. I hope that can happen. A lot of effort and money has been put into the Database and, as I say, it's a great idea and potentially very, very useful.

Grahame