

Pacific – Strategic Plan for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics (P-SPAFS)

Introduction and background

P-SPAFS is a ten-year strategic plan for the development of sustainable agricultural¹ statistical systems in the Pacific region. It was developed in recognition of the need² for a comprehensive plan to drive improvement and development of agricultural statistics to provide evidence base for decision making and policy formation, and to report against regional indicator frameworks, including the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

P-SPAFS provides a mechanism, and a governing and coordination framework, to establish a common vision for the development of sustainable agricultural statistical systems. It is a ten year plan including a preparatory phase (2017) and three subsequent phases (2018 to 2026).

The Strategic Plan was initiated in 2015 through a regional meeting and it has since been developed under the guidance of a Technical Working Group. The work has been supported by a partnership between the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics in Asia Pacific (GS), the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and SPC, both through its Statistics for Development Division (SDD) and the European Union (EU) supported Intra ACP Pacific Agricultural Policy Project (PAPP) implemented through its Land Resources Division (LRD).

Rationale

Three quarters of the Pacific population live in rural areas and largely rely on agriculture for their sustenance and livelihood. While the agriculture sector is a priority for development, the delivery of effective governance is hampered by insufficiently accessible and reliable data. Evidence-based policy requires timely, relevant and reliable statistics for use by policy makers.

P-SPAFS provides a mechanism through which Pacific users and producers of agricultural statistics can define their priorities and establish a common vision for the development of sustainable agricultural statistics systems. Furthermore, it provides a structure for bringing together partners to give support and resources to help achieve that vision.

Beneficiaries

P-SPAFS includes statistics in the agriculture sector, including: crops, livestock, forestry, aquaculture and fisheries. Statistics from these sectors will be used to understand issues relating to thematic areas of food security, disaster risk management, sustainable natural resource management and economic development.

All Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) under the mandate of SPC are included though not all countries will participate in all activities. The focus of the strategy is on addressing issues common to the region and therefore establishing regional level initiatives which will have application to many PICTs. PICTs participation in activities within P-SPAFS will be determined by their national needs, interests and priorities.

Objectives

The vision of P-SPAFS is for a region where decisions relating to food security and sustainable agricultural development are based on evidence from high quality, timely and relevant statistics. This will be achieved through strengthening the collection, dissemination and use of statistics relating to food security, agriculture, fisheries and natural resources. The Strategic Plan has four main objectives:

- i. High-quality and comparable statistics are made available for evidenced-based policy making, and development and reporting against a set of core indicators (including SDGs) to guide statistical collections.
- ii. Agricultural statistics integrated into statistical systems (e.g., National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) and the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy (TYPSS)) with robust coordinating mechanisms and agricultural statistical plans developed.
- iii. Data published and disseminated, and awareness and accessibility raised for use by key stakeholders for policy making and monitoring.

¹ Agricultural, in its most broad context, is inclusive of: aquaculture, crops, fisheries, forestry and livestock

² A Pacific Community (SPC) Comparative Study (2015-16) of National Agriculture Sector Plans of 15 Pacific countries showed a common regional need for greater focus on agricultural statistics.

- iv. Increased capacity of the Pacific region to sustainably collect, compile, analyse, interpret and disseminate agricultural statistics for evidence based policy and decision making.

Outputs

Numerous outputs will result through P-SPAFS. Based on the objectives, it is envisaged that the following outputs will result from Phase 1 (2018 to 2020):

Objective 1:

- Core set of regionally comparable agricultural statistical indicators, including relevant SDGs, agreed, reported against and disseminated.
- New and existing data collection mechanisms standardised and methodologies developed and implemented.

Objective 2:

- P-SPAFS integrated into the TYPSS work plan.
- Agriculture adequately integrated in new and revised NSDS'.
- Strategic plans for agricultural and rural statistics (SPARS) prepared for countries that are part of the GS.
- Support integration of agricultural statistics into existing national censuses and surveys.

Objective 3:

- Public awareness and P-SPAFS advocacy promoting the importance of agricultural statistics.
- Publications to highlight trends in agriculture, forestry and fisheries, and household food and nutrition.
- Research tools and outputs for the region generated and promoted.
- Data dissemination strengthened and improved access to agricultural statistics.

Objective 4:

- Capacity built in the collection, compilation and analysis of agricultural statistics for policy making.
- Strengthened institutional capacity to provide training on agricultural statistics.
- Data providers informed on the purpose and specific data requirements of agricultural censuses and surveys.

Linkages to SPC's core work and regional strategies

P-SPAFS is highly relevant to SPC's development goals³, strategic objectives⁴ and regional policy frameworks⁵. It is a cross-cutting strategic plan that will provide a framework for prioritisation, governance and collaboration with SPC's members, among SPC's technical divisions and programs⁶ and with partner organisations⁷, particularly FAO.

FAME and LR are respectfully responsible for sustainable fisheries and agricultural development and management, while SDD is responsible for regional statistical development, which is guided by TYPSS. Among other programs, projects and partnerships, P-SPAFS provides a framework for development of agricultural statistics to provide an evidence base for policy development to secure food and livelihoods, to combat NCDs, to adapt to climate change and to report against SDGs.

³ Sustainable economic development; empowered and resilient communities; and health and education.

⁴ Engagement and collaboration with members and partners; strengthened technical and scientific knowledge and expertise; addressing development priorities through multi-disciplinary approaches; improved planning, prioritisation, evaluation, learning and innovation; and enhance capabilities, systems and processes.

⁵ Pacific Framework for Regionalism, the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, the New Song for Coastal Fisheries and agricultural strategies.

⁶ Climate Change and Sustainability; Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME); Land Resources (LR); Public Health; Social Development; and Statistics for Development (SDD).

⁷ CROP agencies, development partners and UN agencies.