



SPC
Secretariat
of the Pacific
Community

**The 5th Regional Meeting of Heads of
Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS)
24th - 27th September 2012 Nadi, Fiji**

and

**Third Regional Conference of
Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (MOAF)
28th September 2012 Nadi, Fiji**

Meeting Outcomes and Resolutions

October 2012

**Land Resources Division
Secretariat of the Pacific Community**



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Secretariat of the Pacific Community**



Australian Government
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NEW ZEALAND
MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE
Aid Programme



Australian Government
Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research

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SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

FIFTH REGIONAL MEETING OF HEADS OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SERVICES (HOAFS) (24th - 27th September 2012, Nadi, Fiji)

5th HOAFS MEETING OUTCOMES

1. The Fifth Regional Meeting of Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) was held in Nadi, Fiji Islands 24-27 September 2012 on the theme of 'Managing Strategic Risks to Agriculture and Forestry in the Pacific'.
2. Participants attended from the member countries and territories of the Pacific Community, development partners, regional and international organisations and public and private sector bodies. The meeting was chaired by Mr Kanawi Pouru from Papua New Guinea. International and public sector and regional media attended the meeting.
3. The meeting was opened by Fiji's Minister of Local Government, Urban Development, Housing and Environment and also Acting Minister for Primary Industries, the Honourable Col Samuela Saumataua. He said the agriculture and forestry sectors faced a number of strategic threats from food insecurity, climate change, urbanization and the health of Pacific people. The Pacific island region's population is expected to reach 15 million by 2035 and, to meet the demand for food without significant price rises, food production needs to increase by over 50%.
4. One challenge is how to feed new, urban populations in the face of land degradation, deforestation and pollution of scarce water resources. The Minister said regional co-operation and support is critical to help face the challenges. SPC should continue to be at the forefront of advanced research into agriculture and forestry issues in the Pacific. The Chair then thanked the Minister for his opening remarks and setting the scene for the meeting.
5. The keynote address was delivered by the Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Dr Jimmie Rodgers highlighted the need to enhance food and nutritional security, promote economic development, and sustain good management and development of land, water, agriculture and forestry resources. The rising incidence of Non-Communicable Diseases is a serious threat and adding to the pressures facing the region.
6. The 3 sub-regions of Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia have distinct challenges in land resources and EEZ and there is not one solution to common problems *and develop policies adaptable to specific region*.
7. Given the scale of the problems faced, and the limited resources available, there is a need to set priorities for the work. The delivery of services must be based upon the best science and evidence available. The collective experience and expertise of the HOAFS meeting is an important opportunity to guide the work of SPC for its members.



Participants of the 5th Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) Meeting

8. The LRD 2011 report was presented by acting director Mr Inoke Ratukalou highlighting achievements against the LRD current strategic plan. The meeting welcomed the update of activities in the Director's Report for the SPC's Land Resources Division as well as the LRD Strategic Framework, 2013-2016. The meeting recognizes the growing opportunities for the sharing of resources among SPC members, as a means of addressing limited human and technical capacity.
9. The Secretariat presented on the challenges faced and opportunities identified to be able to enhance the implementation of its strategic plan.
10. Country reports were presented by member delegations highlighting achievements since last HOAFS, challenges faced by members, national priorities in the next 5 years, and assistance from SPC in achieving those objectives. The reports highlighted a range of cross-cutting and thematic issues, challenges and opportunities, including:
 - a. The need to make food security and healthy food choices remain as key issues and priorities for the region, given population trends and changes in lifestyle among Pacific island people.
 - b. The need to recognise traditional knowledge of agricultural practices in addressing food security especially in postharvest processing and developing value-added products.
 - c. The importance of youth and women in agriculture and forestry in developing Pacific island social and economic activity that promotes, respects and preserves Pacific identity, environment, culture and way of life.
 - d. The increasing negative impacts of climate change on vulnerable Pacific communities and requests SPC to continue collaborating with partners to assist its members to assess climate change risks and implement adaptation and mitigation strategies to build resilience.
 - e. Organic food production as beneficial to human health and the environment as well as providing livelihood opportunities and encourages members to develop national policies to promote organic production and processing of food and other crops.
 - f. The need for enhanced biosecurity to protect national borders from the introduction and spread of pests and diseases in favour of agro-biodiversity.
 - g. The importance of addressing zoonotic diseases that accounts for the majority of epidemics affecting people through increased veterinarian services.
 - h. The significance of strengthening national and regional research capacity and taking into consideration the specific needs of members.
 - i. The significant contribution of forests and trees and agroforestry systems for sustainable natural resource management and sustaining Pacific cultures, economies and livelihoods.
 - j. The challenges in land mobilisation and access to support sustainable agriculture and forestry development and request the Secretariat for technical assistance to help members address these challenges.
11. The meeting welcomed the Statements from development partners and note with appreciation the support provided to members.

Resolutions

12. The HOAFS adopted the Resolutions of their meeting.

Next Meeting

13. The meeting agreed that future HOAFS meetings will be held in either Fiji or New Caledonia as agreed to by CRGA 41. The meeting also agreed to continue to rotate the Chair by alphabetical order among the Pacific Community members, with the Chair of the next HOAFS to be Solomon Islands.

Acknowledgements

14. The HOAFS meeting expressed their gratitude to the Government of Fiji and the SPC Secretariat for their hospitality and excellent meeting arrangements. The meeting acknowledge with deep gratitude the continuing support from donor partners. The Government of Fiji thanked the delegations for their valuable contributions to a successful meeting.

RESOLUTIONS OF THE 5th HOAFS MEETING

The Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (MOAF) are requested to endorse the following resolutions from the 5th Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) meeting:

1. Director's Report

In the Integrated Strategic Plan (2009- 2012), LRD continues to align its activities to the recommendations by the 2008 Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (MOAF) meeting; the 2010 Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services meeting, and to the national priorities in the Joint Country Strategies. The goal is to assist the Pacific Community to improve food, nutritional and income security and to manage agricultural and forest resources in a sustainable way. The three objectives are (i) Improved food and nutritional security; (ii) Integrated and sustainable agricultural and forestry resources management and development, and (iii) Improved biosecurity and increased trade in agriculture and forestry products.

- i. note with appreciation and commendation the progress made by LRD towards achieving its strategic objectives;
- ii. note the ongoing initiatives from 2010, 2011 and 2012 have helped bridge some of the funding gaps for LRD programs;
- iii. support the development of a Long Term Sustainable Financing Strategy;
- iv. approve the outline of the 2013 work program.
- v. endorse in principle and thank IFAD for the new initiatives that have been proposed notably;
 - IFAD funded Organic Agriculture Project.
 - IFAD funded establishment of the Centre for Excellence for Atoll Agriculture for the Republic of Marshall Islands and continuation of the Centre of Excellence for Atoll Agriculture for Kiribati
 - IFAD funded development of soil schools in PICTs.
- vi. endorse in principle LRD Strategic Framework 2013-2016 Outline
- vii. note in order for LRD to fully deliver service envisaged in its new strategic plan it will require greater resources in order to maintain/strengthen its professional and technical capacity.

2. Pacific Agricultural Policy Programme

The Pacific Agricultural Policy Programme (PAPP) is a new project funded by the European Development Fund for the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. PAPP runs from July 2012 - July 2016 and will be implemented by SPC. The EUR8.6m project covers the 14 Pacific members of the ACP group. The aim is to enhance the regional capabilities of the Pacific's agricultural sector in eradicating poverty. PAPP's three main results will be (i) Strengthening regional agricultural development strategy, (ii) Improve the dissemination and adoption of applied agricultural production research technologies, and (iii) Contribute to agricultural enterprise development through improved market linkages.

- i. note and support the implementation of this important project.

3. Regional policy framework on REDD+ in the Pacific

With almost 18% of global GHG emissions attributed to the forestry sector, international climate change policy is working towards a framework termed REDD+: Reducing Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation PLUS conservation of forest carbon stocks, sustainable management of forest, and the enhancement of forest carbon stocks. REDD+ enables countries to create and sell carbon assets as well as timber. The Pacific Islands Heads of Forestry Meeting (September 2009 in Nadi, Fiji) mandated SPC to develop a Regional Policy Framework for REDD+. A final draft of the Framework is hereby presented for endorsement.

- i. endorse the Pacific Islands Regional Policy Framework for REDD+
- ii. support and assist Pacific Island countries to participate in international forest carbon financing regimes such as REDD+

4. Improvement of Key Services to Agriculture

The Improvement of Key Services to Agriculture (IKSA) is a new project funded out of the sugar sector adjustment funds provided to Fiji by the European Union. IKSA runs from June 2012 to the end of 2015. SPC LRD will implement the EUR3.7m project. The aim is to help cushion the economic and social impact of the sugar sector restructuring by supporting a diversified market-driven agriculture sector. The two main results are (i) Horticulture/food crop value chains are supported and supply capacities are enhanced, and (ii) Fair trade associations are replicated and operations strengthened.

- i. note and support the implementation of this important project.

5. Enhancing resilience of Pacific islands agriculture to climate change

Land provides for livelihoods and helps to define social and cultural identities. The management and proper use of the land is wanting. If current trends continue, there will be more than twice as many people living in the Pacific islands region in 2050 to 2100. There will be increasing pressure to produce food to feed growing populations. This means intensifying agriculture in the face of increasing soil degradation, incidences of pests and diseases, water availability problems and the predicted impacts of climate change. Adaptation strategies are now a matter of urgency.

- i. take note of the progress made in the establishment of the Pacific Island Tree Seed Centre and to endorse support for its operation, including the need for PICTs to sign the Material Transfer Agreement (MTA) with SPC, to facilitate the safe and efficient exchange of tree germplasm in the region.
- ii. endorse and welcome the support for regional and global activities that are implemented through the AusAID International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative Phase 2 and EU Adapting clonally propagated crops to climatic and commercial changes, to build resilience of Pacific agriculture and addressing knowledge gaps to climate change;
- iii. endorse and support the need for PICTs that have not yet ratified the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture to do so and enable the Pacific to access more diverse climate resilient germplasm available within the Treaty's Multilateral System.

6. Informing Evidence-Based Policy in the Agriculture and Forestry sector

Agriculture and forestry are the major source of livelihoods for Pacific island households. The two sectors are the main source of employment and household income, and contribute substantially to GDP and exports. Increased agricultural productivity and consumption of local foods is the key to reducing food insecurity. Effective land and forestry management is also vital to coping with the threat of climate change. It is essential that accurate agricultural and forestry statistics are collected regularly to enable policy makers to develop and monitor the impact of evidence-based policy and project implementation.

- i. work in partnership with SPC's Land Resources Division and the Statistics for Development Division to improve national and regional systems for the collection and analysis of agriculture and forestry data;
- ii. ensure Agriculture and Forestry NMDIs are integrated into census and survey questions; for smaller PICSD, integrate Population Census and Agriculture Census as discussed and recommended at the SPC-FAO workshop in June 2012;
- iii. advance the evidence-based policy approach and the increased use of key indicators to design and track progress of evidence-based national agricultural policy, with the support of SPC Pacific Agriculture Policy Programme.

7. Pacific Organics and Ethical Trade

The Pacific Organic Standard (POS) was endorsed by the HOAFS in 2008 and launched at the MOAF. There is now a regional network known as the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom). The POETCom Secretariat is now housed within SPC and is funded through the EU - Increasing Agricultural Commodities Trade (IACT) project. The Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) funded the development of a governance structure for POETCom to ensure transparency and accountability in the implementation and management of the POS.

- i. delegate to the POETCom Advisory Board the management and implementation of the POS and POGS;
- ii. promote and mainstream organic agriculture into SPC and national agriculture strategies in recognition of its role in food and nutritional security, climate change adaptation and mitigation, enhancement of biodiversity and the livelihood opportunities it can provide.

8. Reference Manual for utilising and managing the soil resources of the Republic of Fiji

Soil resources information is important for sustainable agriculture and forestry management and development. The Reference Manual is a guide to the field identification of soils, soil attributes, soil fertility, and the suitability of the soils for various crops. The Manual will be of value to stakeholders in planning future land development assistance and formulating rural sector and land use policies.

- i note the new publication: Reference Manual for Utilizing and Managing the Soil resources of the Republic of Fiji.
- ii request SPC to replicate this work in other PICTs and urge donors to assist.

9. Pacific Plant Protection Organisation (PPPO) Strategic framework and workplan, 2012-2018 / Membership towards CABI

The Pacific Plant Protection Organisation (PPPO) members face increasing challenges to protect their plant resources. The establishment of sustainable mechanisms to preserve food security and biodiversity must be a regional responsibility. This Strategic Framework provides the vision and objectives for this work.

- i endorse the PPPO Strategic Framework for 2012-2018;
- ii endorse the PPPO work plan and budget for 2012-2018 (US\$1.7m);
- iii endorse reallocation of CABI membership fees to PPPO.

10. Secretariat of the Rotterdam Convention (FAO)

The Rotterdam Convention offers a range of benefits for members including value as a tool for pesticide and chemical management. Activities linked to the convention include training, national standards for export/import controls, facilitating dialogue between countries, monitoring severely hazardous pesticides, finding alternatives to chemicals, and national action plans. The 149 Parties to the Convention include four in the Pacific islands - Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Samoa and Tonga.

- i members who have not signed up to consider the ratification and implementation of the Rotterdam Convention.

11. International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) Strategic Plan

IFAD is formulating a new Pacific strategy in agriculture and rural development that includes livestock, fisheries, forestry and all parts of the value chain. Nine Pacific island members are members of IFAD. The approach is for direct engagement with communities as the best entry point for improving livelihoods. This will target isolated and disadvantaged areas and includes a special focus on youth and women in rural areas.

- i note the proposal for a new IFAD Strategic Plan for the Pacific.

12. International Society for Tropical Root Crops (ISTRC)

The ISTRC supports activities to improve tropical root crop production, support capacity building and networking. The research and gene bank practices could add considerable value to the regional Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePACT). SPC will be seeking to join the Society. As a 'sustaining member', SPC members will derive benefits that can be assessed over the three-year period associated with sustaining membership.

- iv endorse in principle for SPC to become a sustaining member of the International Society for Tropical Root Crops.

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

THIRD REGIONAL CONFERENCE OF MINISTERS OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY (MOAF)

(28 September 2012, Nadi, Fiji)

COMMUNIQUE

1. The Third Regional Conference of Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry was held in Nadi, Fiji on 28 September 2012 on the theme of 'Managing strategic risks of Agriculture and Forestry in the Pacific Region'.
2. Participants attended from the member countries and territories of the Pacific Community, development partners, regional and international organisations, and public and private sector bodies. The meeting was chaired by Papua New Guinea.
3. The outgoing Chair, the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries for Samoa, Hon. Le Mamea Ropati, said close collaboration was needed to help meet the challenges facing the region. The incoming Chair, the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock for Papua New Guinea, Hon. Tommy Tomscoll, said Pacific farmers and foresters must be smart, innovative and progressive if their industries are to remain productive and economically viable in fast changing times.
4. The Director-General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Dr Jimmie Rodgers, said the Pacific islands region seeks the best outcome within its limited resources. He outlined the work of SPC in the key areas of food and nutrition security, resources management, and biosecurity. SPC sees itself as an extension of national services and works closely with members and development partners to achieve national development goals.
5. The Chair highlighted the need to tailor the technical support from SPC and development partners, due to the diversity within the region. Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICT) are well placed to align the work by SPC and development partners with their national priorities.
6. Securing access to land for agriculture and forestry remains a priority for members, given the nature of land tenure systems in the region. This is becoming more urgent due to population trends and land degradation. Ministers emphasized the importance of national land use policies and plans in addressing land utilization, development and environmental protection.
7. The Ministers welcomed updates on successful farming ventures including the promotion of organic food production, processing, value added products and networking.
8. Robust research and analysis is needed to support good policy options for agriculture and forestry. There is also a need to utilise traditional knowledge as well as new technology to promote social and economic development and help to achieve self-sufficiency. The meeting stressed the importance of passing this knowledge on to future generations.
9. Ministers acknowledged the gravity of the non-communicable diseases (NCD) crisis in the Pacific and urged the Secretariat, PICTs and development partners to undertake more research, and increase awareness and education on food safety and food quality. Ministers emphasized the importance of making healthier food choices and consuming food with high nutritional value. Ministers further stressed the need to enhance local food production and consumption.



3rd Conference of the Pacific Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry.

10. The meeting urged the Secretariat and development partners to continue to align their support to implement national priorities through capacity building, supplementation or substitution; grants and technical assistance.
11. The meeting welcomed the statements by Ministers and heads of delegation and the presentations by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community.
12. The Secretariat noted the requests for technical support in the following specific areas. The Secretariat shall consider these in its work plans contingent on the availability of resources:
 - a) The need to make food security and healthy food choices remain as key issues and priorities for the region, given population trends and changes in lifestyle among Pacific island people.
 - b) The need to recognise traditional knowledge of agricultural practices in addressing food security especially in postharvest processing and developing value-added products.
 - c) The importance of youth and women in agriculture and forestry in developing Pacific island social and economic activity that promotes, respects and preserves Pacific identity, environment, culture and way of life.
 - d) The increasing negative impacts of climate change on vulnerable Pacific communities and requests SPC to continue collaborating with partners to assist its members to assess climate change risks and implement adaptation and mitigation strategies to build resilience.
 - e) The Organic food production as beneficial to human health and the environment as well as providing livelihood opportunities and encourages members to develop national policies to promote organic production and processing of food and other crops.
 - f) The need for enhanced biosecurity to protect national borders from the introduction and spread of pests and diseases in favour of agro-biodiversity.
 - g) The importance of addressing zoonotic diseases that accounts for the majority of epidemics affecting people through increased veterinarian services.
 - h) The significance of strengthening national and regional research capacity and taking into consideration the specific needs of members.
 - i) The significant contribution of forests and trees and agroforestry systems for sustainable natural resource management and sustaining Pacific cultures, economies and livelihoods.
 - j) The challenges in land mobilisation and access to support sustainable agriculture and forestry development and request the Secretariat for technical assistance to help members address these challenges.
 - k) Enhanced coordination and partnerships linking agriculture with renewable energy initiatives focusing on rural and remote populations.
13. The Ministers urged continuing support to the Secretariat in assisting PICTs with market access and market penetration through trade diversification activities. They further suggested that trade become integral to achieving key development outcomes.

RESOLUTIONS

14. The Ministers adopted the Recommendations of their meeting, as well as those proposed by the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) meeting.

NEXT MEETING

15. The Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) had earlier decided to hold future HOAFS and MOAF meetings in Fiji or New Caledonia, for cost reasons. The Ministers noted that opportunities remained open for other members to also host the meetings, provided adequate financial resources are made available. French Polynesia indicated a desire to host a future meeting of the HOAFS and the MOAF.
16. The meeting welcomed the Solomon Islands offer to host the next HOAFS and MOAF meetings and acknowledged the willingness of Solomon Islands to meet additional costs.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

17. The Ministers expressed their gratitude to the government of Fiji for their generous hospitality and for agreeing to host the meeting. The Ministers also thanked the Secretariat for the excellent meeting arrangements.
18. The Ministers acknowledged with sincere gratitude support provided by development partners including European Union, GIZ, Australia, ACIAR, IFAD, UN agencies (including FAO), JICA, New Zealand, France, CTA, Global Crop Diversity Trust, and United States of America.
19. The Government of Fiji thanked the Ministers and participants for the successful outcome of the meeting.