

BRIEF

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

Launched at Asia Pacific Commission on Agricultural Statistics (APCAS)

Nadi 19-23 March 2018

APCAS (23rd Session) was held for the first time in the Pacific region (Nadi, Fiji) on 19-23 March 2018. A feature of the week was the launch of the *Pacific Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries Statistics* (“P-SPAFS”). P-SPAFS was developed jointly by SPC-LRD (PAPP, SDD) and FAO – as well as *Pacific countries* through a Technical Working Group (TWG). This Note provides a brief background to P-SPAFS.

2. What is P-SPAFS

P-SPAFS is a ten-year strategic plan for the development of sustainable agricultural¹ statistical systems in the Pacific region. The region recognises that systematic production and use of agricultural statistics is important to inform policy, produce evidence and report against regional indicator frameworks, including the SDGs.

P-SPAFS is a mechanism and a governing and coordination framework that establishes a common vision for the development of sustainable agricultural statistical systems. It is a 10-year plan including a preparatory phase (2017) and three phases each being three-years long (2018 to 2026).

3. How was it Developed?

UN’s *Global Agricultural Statistics Plan* developed pre-2016 (by FAO) informs the P-SPAFS piece. A baseline study of *National Agriculture Plans/Strategies of 15 Pacific states* (2014) (by LRD-PAPP) revealed that agricultural statistics was a **documented priority** across the region. In 2015, a regional meeting of more than 50 agricultural statisticians and planners from 14 Pacific islands agreed to develop a regional plan and roadmap. A Technical Working Group (TWG) was formed to take this work forward. Membership of the TWG included:

- Cook Islands (Chair, Patrick Arioka, Director Planning, CI Ministry of Agriculture)
- Kiribati
- Vanuatu
- Tonga
- Samoa
- Federated States of Micronesia
- United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO-SAP and FAO-RAP)
- SPC (SDD) LRD (EU-PAPP)

The TWG convened face-to-face meetings at least 3 times between 2015 and 2017 to review/discuss drafts of the P-SPAFS. The document was prepared by David Marshall, an External TA appointed through a competitive process. Funding for all TWG meetings and external TA was met by LRD EU-PAPP funds.

4. Is there funding for P-SPAFS?

Up to now, funding by SPC was directed at the development of the framework, capacity building, support of the TWG and external TA. FAO’s technical support throughout the process has been critical. Launching the document at the bigger Asia Pacific forum like APCAS is a big “win” for this piece and the Pacific. It is hoped that this provides a platform for further development and donor support.

5. What are the next steps for P-SPAFS?

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

There are 4 key result areas for P-SPAFS (see below). One of the key steps that Pacific member states need to address early in the piece is a set of core indicators for agriculture. Funding is of course important.

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LRD/PAPP

More Information about P-SPAFS

Rationale

Three quarters of the Pacific population live in rural areas and largely rely on agriculture for their sustenance and livelihood. These populations are vulnerable to the long term impact of climate change and frequent natural disasters. Long term declines in agricultural productivity are undermining the sustainability of livelihoods and food security and have contributed to a rise in diet related non-communicable diseases (NCDs), which are responsible for three quarters of deaths in the Pacific (World Bank, 2014). Investing in sustainable agricultural development will help tackle two of the greatest challenges facing the region: climate change and NCDs.

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 existing and potential partners to give support and resources to help achieve that vision.

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 regionally comparable statistics made available for evidenced-based policy making, and development and compilation of a minimum 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, agricultural statistical plans developed and agriculture further integrated into national statistical collections.
- iii. Data published and disseminated, and awareness and accessibility raised for use by key stakeholders for policy making and monitoring.
- 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 goals², strategic objectives³ and regional policy frameworks⁴. 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 programs⁵ and with partner organisations⁶.

P-SPAFS development was supported by the GS and is effectively a SPARS, which were developed bilaterally between the GS and FAO member countries, however P-SPAFS is a regional, as opposed to country specific, SPARS. P-SPAFS is designed to continue after the GS concludes in 2018.

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.

² Sustainable economic development; empowered and resilient communities; and health and education.

³ 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.

⁴ Pacific Framework for Regionalism, the S.A.M.O.A Pathway, the New Song for Coastal Fisheries and agricultural strategies.

⁵ Climate Change and Sustainability; Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME); Land Resources (LR); Public Health; Social Development; and Statistics for Development (SDD).

⁶ CROP agencies, development partners and UN agencies.