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Mr Gavin Wall, FAO sub regional coordinator,  
Mr Patrick Arioka, Chair of the Pacific Agricultural Policy Programme steering committee

2- Speaking Points

Hon. Minister <sup>Vina</sup> Seruiratu, development partners, colleagues from across the Pacific...

It is a great pleasure to participate, ~~together with our colleagues from SPC and FAO~~, in the opening of this workshop on "Strategic Planning for Agricultural and Fisheries Statistics".

Agriculture and fisheries are crucial sources of economic growth in the Pacific. Agriculture is furthermore an essential sector in the fight against poverty, given the large proportion of households in many countries **relying on subsistence farming.**

Over many years, the <sup>European Union</sup> EU has supported Pacific Island countries in developing ~~these key sectors~~ <sup>agriculture + fisheries</sup> through our bilateral and regional programmes.

The **Pacific Agriculture Policy Programme (or PAPP Programme)**, a co-organiser of today's workshop, is an excellent example of a successful regional programme in the agriculture sector. The programme is <sup>FINANCED</sup> funded by the <sup>European Union</sup> EU and implemented by the <sup>Pacific Community and has</sup> SPC, with an overall budget of 8.6 MEUR. It provides assistance from the **macro level**, i.e. policy making and strategic thinking, **to the micro level**, with support directed to smallholder farmers. <sup>Excellent</sup>

<sup>coverage</sup> PAPP The project seeks to **improve food security for Pacific smallholder communities** by addressing three policy areas:

- <sup>It aims to</sup>
1. Strengthening regional agricultural development strategy;
  2. Improve the dissemination and adoption of applied agricultural production research technologies;

and to

3. Contribute to agricultural enterprise development through improved market linkages;

Together with our Pacific partners we are currently preparing our future cooperation programmes for the period up to 2020. These programmes will be funded via national and regional envelopes of the new 11<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund. In the Pacific, **agriculture and fisheries will remain key EU intervention areas.** sectors for European Union support

In 2016 we will launch new rural development and agriculture programmes in **Vanuatu (€25M)**, in **Solomon Islands (€10M)** and in **Fiji (€20M)**. In **addition**, our 11<sup>th</sup> EDF Pacific regional programme foresees a total of **€35M** for supporting the **sustainable management of oceanic and coastal natural resources**. The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) has been tasked to lead the discussions for the development of this future project, which will start next year.

Recognizing the importance of sound public financial management and reliable statistics for the implementation of any development project, the 11<sup>th</sup> RIP foresees a total of 6 MEUR for public financial management reform, including statistics support.

Today, statistics play a fundamental role in development. In two weeks, on October 20<sup>th</sup>, it will be ~~the~~ **International Statistics Day**. <sup>CELEBRATE</sup> And two weeks ago, on September 25<sup>th</sup>, the UN General Assembly approved the **2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**, comprising of 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) and 169 associated targets. Reliable and timely statistics will be essential to manage and monitor the achievement of the new SDGs. A ✓

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However, despite the increased focus on statistics in development, funding for strengthening statistical systems and capacities remains very limited.

Statistics on statistics

As this workshop is all about statistics, I'll happily oblige and provide you with some figures. According to the 2015 annual report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century (PARIS21), only approximately 0.24% of Official Development Assistance in 2013 was allocated to supporting statistics. This support was largely provided by a small number of providers. The European Commission (and in particular its statistics service EUROSTAT) is the world's top development ~~cooperation donor~~ <sup>partner</sup> in the field of statistics, followed by the World Bank, the UNFPA and FAO. <sup>European Union</sup> ~~The EU alone~~ provides roughly a quarter of the global funding for statistics development.

COLLABORATION

works closely with

WIC, FAO,

the Pacific

Strengthening agriculture statistics in ~~this region~~ is challenging, given the limited resources and the informal nature of agriculture. However, I believe this workshop has the potential to make a difference by bringing together representatives from both agriculture ministries and statistics offices, which often work in isolation. Strengthening cooperation between both will be a key to the development of sustainable statistics and development in the region.

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The regional dimension is another important advantage of this workshop. Statistics become more meaningful when they can be compared across countries and in regular time intervals. Monitoring the sustainable management of fisheries or the effects of climate change and food security, necessitates regionally and even globally harmonized statistic systems.

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Make people more aware.

The European Union has declared 2015 the European Year for Development. This month's theme is "Food Security". I believe the PAPP programme, which focuses on improving food security for Pacific smallholder communities, and this workshop, which targets agriculture and fisheries statistics, are excellent examples for our joint work in this field.

As the exchange of knowledge and best practices between partner countries is at the centre of our PAPP programme, I look forward to the workshop's discussions, the good work done by our colleagues from SPC and FAO as well as the contributions of many of you coming from neighbouring islands.

The Pacific region and its agricultural sectors are very well represented today and this is a recipe for an excellent workshop to take place over the next 3 days.

I wish you all a fruitful discussions and exchanges.

#### Attachments:

- workshop agenda;
- concept note;
- invitation

climate change

RESILIENCE

WST ANABILIY  
PROFITABILITY