

Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet)



Strategic Plan 2010–2012



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Introduction

Effective policies rely on good information. Agriculture and forestry policy makers from the region identified weak communication, poor engagement of stakeholders, and lack of timely information as constraints to the development of effective agriculture and forestry policies and the enforcement and implementation of existing ones. A robust regional information exchange was identified as a valuable tool to strengthen communication in agriculture and forestry policy issues.

The Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) was established in 2006 with the aim of facilitating communication, information dissemination and capacity building, and enhancing awareness on issues related to agriculture and forestry policy. These efforts are intended to contribute to the development and implementation of sound policies, plans and decisions in the countries and the region. These aims are in line with the principles underpinning the Pacific Plan, in particular:

- to strengthen regional cooperation and integration in areas where the region could gain the most, through sharing resources of governance, alignment of policies, and delivering practical benefits;
- to build strong partnerships between member countries, Pacific territories, regional and international organisations and non-state organisations.

The network comprises policy officials and representatives from regional and international organisations, non-governmental organisations, the private sector, civil society and local community groups. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community/Land Resources Division (SPC/LRD) acts as the secretariat supported by a Core Group of members. The Core Group members are: SPC/LRD, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), Foundation of the People of the South Pacific International (FSPI), PNG National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI), Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), University of the South Pacific (USP) and the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO).

To support the network in future, and to ensure PAFPNet is focussed on issues of strategic importance to its members, this Strategic Plan was developed at its second stakeholder meeting in December 2009. Members of the network present re-examined the network's original goals and objectives to ensure they remained valid, and identified key objectives and outputs for the network over the next three years (2010 to 2012).

Challenges for policy development in the Pacific

Despite making significant contributions to employment, incomes and livelihoods in the Pacific, agriculture and forestry departments in the region remain under-resourced. In deciding how to allocate limited funding, priority is often not given to the policy and planning units of departments. Yet in the absence of strong policy and planning and effective prioritisation of activities the ability of the department to deliver services effectively and efficiently is severely constrained.

The absence of strong coherent policies has a direct influence on the effectiveness of government support to the sector. The policy development process provides an opportunity for all interested stakeholders to have their views heard, so that governments can make informed decisions on budget allocations. Resulting policy documents and implementation plans provide a reference point for all external agencies to ensure that their activities are aligned with government priorities. Common problems arising from the absence of strong policies include a lack of clear policy direction for research and extension, leading to potentially conflicting priorities, donor driven projects not aligned with government priorities, ad-hoc implementation of activities, and lack of monitoring and evaluation of activities to assess what is functioning well and what could be improved.

PAFPNet aims to support the policy development processes of governments in the region by providing a forum for policy debate, technical advice, training, and sharing lessons learnt and success stories.

¹ PAFPNet Stakeholder Workshop Report 2006

² Pacific Plan http://www.forumsec.org/resources/uploads/attachments/documents/Pacific_Plan_Nov_2007_version.pdf

Goal and objectives

PAFPNet goal

To facilitate communication, information dissemination, capacity building and awareness, to support the identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of agricultural and forestry policies.

6.2 Performance indicators

The performance indicators for the goal are:

Performance indicators	Objectively verifiable indicators
PAFPNet members receive timely information and training to support policy development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation	Positive feedback from members via annual member survey

Objectives and outputs

PAFPNet will focus on three key objectives for 2010 to 2012:

- Objective 1: Access to policy-related information improved.
- Objective 2: Dialogue among actors and stakeholders on sustainable agriculture, forestry and land issues advocated and encouraged.
- Objective 3: Capacity building and information needs identified and addressed.

OBJECTIVE 1 – ACCESS TO POLICY-RELATED INFORMATION IMPROVED

A fundamental purpose of the network is to improve the access of policy makers to relevant information necessary for informed policy development, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. This access includes sharing experiences within the region to ensure that lessons are learnt from previous interventions, successes built upon and repetition of mistakes avoided.

PAFPNet contains a number of mechanisms through which access to information is enhanced. An email distribution list allows any PAFPNet member to circulate relevant information to other members. The website is regularly updated to upload any documents of interest to members and an email circulated to inform them of new uploads. Annual meetings provide a further opportunity for national focal points, and for key members to exchange ideas and information.

Output 1.1 – PAFPNet website enhanced and regularly updated

The website is one of the main ways of disseminating information and publications. Members will be informed about regular updates. Attention will also be given to making the website more interactive by using Web 2.0 tools. A planned PAFPNet Wiki will be developed to make existing information more accessible to members and interested stakeholders including researchers and students. The website will provide members with dedicated country pages, which they can edit as they see fit, for an overview of the agriculture and forestry sector in their country or territory and links to further information. Links to social networking sites (such as Facebook) will be explored as a specific way of enhancing the participation of young people in the network.

Output 1.2 – Existing policies and plans documented

PAFPNet will provide a repository for all existing agriculture, forestry and land use policies and plans where available. Efforts will be made to encourage members to publish existing policies and plans.

Output 1.3 – Members contribute information to the network regularly

The effectiveness of the network depends on members using it to circulate relevant documents, information and experiences. The PAFPNet Secretariat will encourage a greater number of people to post to the network and share relevant information.

Output 1.4 – Policy-related evidence base strengthened

A wide range of data already exists that could help to strengthen the evidence base for policy making. Some is contained in agricultural censuses, forest inventories, household income and expenditure surveys, etc. The PAFPNet Secretariat will support members in developing a database of useful statistics from these sources.

Output 1.5 – Awareness materials produced

All forms of media will be used to disseminate relevant information to members, including news articles, policy briefs, and radio and television shows.

OBJECTIVE 2 - DIALOGUE AMONG ACTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY POLICY ADVOCATED AND ENCOURAGED

Output 2.1 – PAFPNet membership strengthened

New members will be encouraged to join the network. The PAFPNet Secretariat will use every opportunity (meetings, workshops, membership drives) to showcase the network and encourage new members to join. National focal points will be encouraged, to establish national policy networks and encourage their contacts and stakeholders to join the regional network. The membership list will be updated weekly. Other initiatives to strengthen membership will be considered including rotating moderation of discussion forums.

Output 2.2 – Key issues on agriculture and forestry policy debated

Discussion forums will be used to generate dialogue on key policy issues, and PAFPNet members will be invited to moderate on key topics. PAFPNet members will be encouraged to share experiences from the multitude of regional events that touch on these topics (for example from national and regional food summits, national policy consultation processes etc).

Output 2.3 – Links to other networks and databases established

The PAFPNet Secretariat will work with national focal points to identify other regional and international networks and databases that are interested in partnering with the network. Sharing information between networks will provide greater access to policy research and resources, technical information and expertise and provide an important avenue for learning from experiences from around the world.

OBJECTIVE 3 – CAPACITY NEEDS IDENTIFIED AND ADDRESSED

Output 3.1 – Members training and research needs supported

PAFPNet will support training and research needs where appropriate and practical, ensuring that these are delivered in partnership with others. The PAFPNet Secretariat will approach a number of research organisations in the region to formalise partnerships with them and encourage sharing of research results and joint research projects.

A researcher will be appointed and will work with PAFPNet members to identify areas of regional importance for research activities.

Stakeholders have identified the documentation of success stories and case studies that can be used for advocacy purposes and as benchmarks of examples of sound policy development, implementation and monitoring and evaluation as a key priority. PAFPNet will work with its members to organise specific activities to develop these case studies.

Output 3.2 – Facilitate partnerships between agencies delivering capacity development

PAFPNet will seek to ensure that agencies involved in capacity building initiatives relating to agriculture and forestry policy development coordinate their activities to maximise their effectiveness and avoid duplication. A strong network to enable development partners involved in these areas to communicate regularly, is an important tool in building the relationships and trust that can facilitate this process.

Output 3.3 – Database of experts strengthened

A database of experts will be reviewed and expanded to provide PAFPNet members with an up to date and accurate list of technical experts in the agriculture and forestry sector. The use of technical experts that lack Pacific experience is a constant challenge for policy makers in the region. The database will assist countries to identify experts with relevant expertise who understand the region's challenges, and will provide information about those with specific technical expertise, which might be difficult to source within the region.

Output 3.4 – Sharing policy related expertise

A weakness of relying on external technical assistance for policy development is the potential for external experts to have limited knowledge of the region, its specific circumstances and capacity constraints. The stakeholder workshop identified increased use of South-South cooperation between PICTs as a possible solution. For example policy experts from one country could assist countries through attachment programmes for specific policy development activities. The PAFPNet Secretariat will explore with partners the potential of establishing such a mechanism.

Guiding principles

The network operates according to a number of guiding principles developed at its establishment in 2006. These principles were discussed and validated at the stakeholder workshop in December 2009:

- empower communities including women and youth to participate fully in the agriculture and forestry sectors, and thus increase their income-generating capacity;
- facilitate national policy processes rather than getting directly involved in them;
- maintain consistency with principles of sustainable development and good governance;
- respond to requests in a timely manner;
- encourage cooperation, partnership, participation and consensus building;
- be people focussed and outcome-oriented;
- remain relevant to the needs and aspirations of Pacific communities;
- be open and flexible and remain focussed.

Institutional arrangements

PAFPNet is managed by a core group of agencies (SPC, FAO, SPREP, SOPAC, FSPI, NARI, and CTA) and a national focal point in each country provides the main contact point for the PAFPNet Secretariat (see Annex 2). The Secretariat of the Pacific Community's Land Resources Division (SPC-LRD) currently hosts the network and its Agriculture and Forestry Policy Adviser acts as the network administrator. The PAFPNet website is also hosted by the SPC website www.spc.int/PAFPNet.

National focal points are responsible for updating their national country pages, sharing relevant policy-related information, posting to the network as appropriate and encouraging stakeholders at the national level to join the regional network.

Where there is a demand, country focal points are also responsible for establishing national networks to complement the regions and ensuring that a forum exists for policy debate on nationally-specific issues.

Any individual with a strong commitment to agriculture and forestry development in the Pacific can join and post to the network.

Partnerships and resources

PAFPNet provides a way of strengthening partnerships and collaborating on activities to ensure that limited resources are used most effectively and lessons learnt from experiences in different countries.

CTA provided funding to establish the network and has continued to support it with specific activities.

Resource mobilisation strategy

To ensure the longer-term sustainability of the network, PAFPNet must establish and enhance partnerships with researchers, private sector organisations and businesses, non-governmental organisations and donors. PAFPNet members have commented that the true value of the network will be realised only through joint activities, research and publications.

Key outputs of the strategy are listed below.

Output 1 - Partnerships with research institutes, private sector bodies, non-governmental organisations and development partners formalised

The PAFPNet Secretariat will identify and formalise partnerships with key stakeholders to progress collaborative initiatives. These initiatives may take the form of joint research projects, case study compilation, funding for specific PAFPNet activities, providing resource personnel and technical assistance for PAFPNet activities.

Output 2 – Resources secured for specific, well-defined PAFPNet activities

Where specific PAFPNet activities have been identified (for example, the implementation of work relating to the Youth in Agriculture Strategy) the PAFPNet Secretariat will approach development partners and other key stakeholders to attract funding to support the implementation of concrete activities, in particular those at the national level.

Output 3 – Student and recent graduates attached to PAFPNet

The PAFPNet Secretariat will provide opportunities for students and recent graduates to expand their knowledge of policy-related issues by providing for short term attachments with the PAFPNet Secretariat. Joint supervision of specific student assignments will be explored with educational institutions.

Certain organisations have been identified as those to approach with a view to establishing formal relationships, and exploring how PAFPNet can support their activities and vice versa. This list is not exhaustive, and other organisations may be identified later. Existing PAFPNet members are not listed below but resource mobilisation efforts will also focus on expanding collaborative initiatives with existing members.

Regional body	Research/Educational Institution	Non-governmental organisations	Development partners
Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO)	National Research Institute (PNG)	Ecumenical Centre for Research, Education and Advocacy (ECEA)	International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD)
Pacific Institute of Public Policy	National Universities (e.g. Fiji National University)	FemLink Pacific	Australian Department of Primary Industries
Pacific Leadership Programme	Crawford School of Economics and Government (Australian National University)	Pacific Youth Council	New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry
			United States Department of Agriculture

The PAFPNet Secretariat will identify opportunities to apply for funding for specific activities and will also ensure that any such opportunities are circulated to members. PAFPNet will encourage Core Group members to include funds for information dissemination relating to policy within all project proposals. The PAFPNet Secretariat can provide technical assistance for these activities.

Reporting, monitoring and evaluation

Annual reporting to members and monitoring of the log-frame associated with this strategic plan and resource mobilisation strategy (see Annex 1 and 2) will occur. As the general aim of the network is to strengthen agriculture, forestry and land use policies in the region the ultimate measure of success will be the development and implementation of effective policies in these areas and the performance of these sectors. Many other activities contribute to this broad goal, however, and the monitoring and evaluation of PAFPNet activities is therefore focussed on output level indicators with the implicit assumption that, increased membership numbers, increased provision of information, increased download of PAFPNet materials and positive feedback from members are sufficient indicators of the usefulness and performance of the network as a component in policy development.

Annual reports and work plans will be developed by the PAFPNet Secretariat and circulated to members for their comments and inputs. An annual survey will be sent to members, to gain their feedback on the activities and seek suggestions for improvements.

Objective 1:

ACCESS TO POLICY RELATIONS INFORMATION IMPROVED

Narrative	Indicators	Means of verification
Output 1.1		
PAFPNet website enhanced and regularly updated	<p>PAFPNet website upgraded by September 2010</p> <p>PAFPNet members rate website as useful and user-friendly</p> <p>At least one new upload (policy briefs, newsletter, news articles, policy documents) each month</p>	<p>PAFPNet website records (hits, uploads, downloads, etc)</p> <p>PAFPNet member survey</p>
Output 1.2		
Existing policies and plans documented	<p>PAFPNet Wiki developed by December 2010</p> <p>5 new policy documents/plans uploaded to website annually and accessed by users</p>	<p>PAFPNet Wiki</p> <p>PAFPNet website records (downloads, uploads)</p>
Output 1.3		
Members contribute information to the network regularly	<p>20% increase in the volume of emails / material shared via the network annually</p> <p>20% increase in the number of stakeholders contributing material annually</p>	<p>PAFPNet message records</p>
Output 1.4		
Policy-related evidence base strengthened	<p>Agriculture and forestry statistics database developed by December 2011</p>	<p>PAFPNet website</p>
Output 1.5		
Awareness and resource materials produced	<p>At least one policy brief produced and distributed per quarter</p> <p>At least one policy-related news article uploaded per quarter</p> <p>At least one newsletter produced and distributed every six months</p> <p>At least one TV programme produced and shown on Pacific Way per annum</p> <p>Agriculture and forestry policy guidance manual produced by December 2011</p>	<p>PAFPNet website uploads</p> <p>PAFPNet distribution records</p> <p>Pacific Way schedules</p>

Objective 2: DIALOGUE AMONG ACTORS AND STAKEHOLDERS ON SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY POLICY ADVOCATED AND ENCOURAGED

Narrative	Indicators	Means of verification
Output 2.1		
PAFPNet membership strengthened	Establish national focal points in all PICTs by June 2010 50% increase in number of PAFPNet members per annum	PAFPNet focal point listing PAFPNet membership records
Output 2.2		
Key topics on agriculture and forestry policy debated	At least one discussion forum, consultation or policy dialogue seminars conducted per annum on a topical policy issues	Discussion forum records Seminar reports
Output 2.3		
Links to other networks and databases established	Formal links established with at least 5 other networks and databases by December 2012	Partnership agreements/memorandum of understanding

Objective 3: CAPACITY NEEDS IDENTIFIED AND ADDRESSED

Narrative	Indicators	Means of Verification
Output 3.1		
Members training and research needs supported	At least one collaborative research activity conducted per annum	Research papers and reports
Output 3.2		
Facilitate partnerships between agencies delivering capacity development	At least one joint capacity building activity conducted per annum with PAFPNet involvement	Activity reports
Output 3.3		
Database of experts strengthened	Database of experts reviewed and re-launched by December 2010 20% increase per annum in number of experts PAFPNet members access database to identify experts	Expert database on PAFPNet website Expert database records PAFPNet member survey
Output 3.4		
Sharing policy related expertise	At least one trial of policy expert exchange between PICTs conducted and evaluated by December 2012.	Attachment reports

Narrative	Indicators	Means of verification
Output 1		
Partnerships with research institutes, private sector bodies, NGOs and development partners formalised	At least one collaborative initiative conducted per annum with PAFPNet partners	PAFPNet activity reports
Output 2		
Resources secured for specific, well-defined PAFPNet activities	At least two successful funding agreements (non-CTA) secured for PAFPNet-related activities by December 2012	PAFPNet funding agreements
Output 3		
Student and recent graduates attached to PAFPNet	At least one student and/or recent graduate attached to PAFPNet per annum	PAFPNet activity reports



partageons les connaissances au profit des communautés rurales
sharing knowledge, improving rural livelihoods



SPC Land Resources Division



NARI



SPREP

SOPAC