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## **Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development (C-SPOD) Program**

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## **Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development (C-SPOD) Program**

C-SPOD is Canada's major regional commitment to the Pacific Islands, worth more than \$28-million Cdn spread out over 14 years in two phases. It reflects the Canadian and Pacific belief that ocean development is a key priority.

The program is funded by the Canadian Government through the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and is coordinated by the Fiji-based Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and LGL Limited, environmental research associates, Canada.

The second phase of the C-SPOD Program, which started in 1997, focuses on the sustainable development of the Pacific region's living marine resources and promotes regional partnership, ownership, and accountability for the program's results. The second phase of C-SPOD will end in 2004.

C-SPOD projects are developed and implemented by the program's four participating Pacific regional partner organizations -- the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Solomon Islands; the South Pacific Forum Secretariat (ForSec), Fiji; the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Samoa; and The University of the South Pacific (USP), Fiji. The projects are approved and managed by a committee of the regional organizations and CIDA.

All projects funded through C-SPOD ensure equity and balanced benefits for all Pacific Islanders, including children, women, and men. They also are concerned with environmental sustainability and encouraging the involvement of the private sector.

## **Projects**

C-SPOD projects continue to be successfully implemented by the regional partner organizations with considerable results and benefits to the region.

C-SPOD projects with **FFA** are concentrating on the sustainable management of the region's large migratory tuna resource and assisting countries in obtaining a larger share of this resource. Examples of project result are:

- Comprehensive tuna management and development plans have been developed in Fiji, Kiribati, Palau, and Solomon Islands, and work is presently underway in Marshall Islands. These plans have had a major impact on in-zone tuna management and have resulted in a substantial increase in revenues to countries. SPC has been heavily involved in the development of these Tuna Management Plans. SPC staff have assisted with the in-country stock assessments, future development issues, training and capacity building, and gender analysis.
- Fisheries Management Officers from FFA member countries are more able to provide advice to decision-makers, particularly in developing country positions on management matters. This has been an extremely useful tool during the MHLC Process and subsequent discussions on the new tuna commission.
- Fisheries Management Officers have become more effective in the apprehension and preparation of fisheries prosecution cases. This has often resulted in swift out-of-court settlements bringing financial benefit to the country concerned and a lifting of morale among the officers.
- A number of countries have been assisted to redraft their fisheries laws and regulations.
- Gender issues related to the tuna fisheries have been identified and are being addressed.

The **Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat** has concentrated on the trade of food fish and certification of aquarium products. Results to date have provided member countries and regional companies with:

- The development of a certification program in Fiji, the Cook Islands, Vanuatu and Solomon Islands to certify the quality and sustainable harvest of marine ornamental species. Forum Secretariat has partnered with the Hawaii-based Marine Aquarium Council (MAC), to develop this market lead certification and labelling system.
- A report that identifies opportunities and barriers for food fish exports from the region into Canada.
- Grants to fisheries companies to increase their exports to the North American market.

The projects at **SPREP** have concentrated on increasing the regional capacity in Coastal Zone Management particularly coral reef and marine turtle conservation, and developing a regional program to prevent marine pollution. Country and regional benefits from the project include:

- The reactivation of the marine turtle conservation program in Pacific Island countries. Including the development of a strategy for future conservation efforts.
- A number of people trained in coral reef monitoring methods and backup support to the regional coral reef monitoring initiatives.
- Increased visibility of coastal problems and means of addressing those problems using a taskforce approach.
- Increased confidence of government officers, private sector, and communities with an interest in coastal issues including greater awareness and training in CITES issues.
- A strategy and workplan for the Protection of the Marine Environment in the South Pacific Region (PACPOL), which is being implemented with C-SPOD funding.
- A marine pollution risk assessment of the region on an individual country and port basis to identify high-risk areas contained in a soon-to-be-completed regional database. The database is enabling countries to develop focused actions to address marine pollution problems.

At **USP**, C-SPOD is assisting the Marine Studies Programme in becoming a world-class centre for marine studies and developing a pool of trained marine scientists from the Pacific.

- C-SPOD funding enabled MSP to offer the only scholarship program in the region, which allows students to do post-graduate studies on regionally relevant problems. More than 30 Pacific Islanders have either graduated or completing their studies in various aspects of marine science and marine affairs. Students have come from Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Many of the graduates are now working through out the region for governments, Regional Agencies and NGOs.
- A number of people have been trained as part of MSP's post-harvest fisheries training project aimed at improving the quality of fisheries in domestic markets, improving food security, and the standard of living for small-scale fishers.
- A large number of primary and secondary school readers have also been developed for the MSP Post-Harvest Fisheries Development project in close collaboration with SPC. These readers are now being used in classrooms through out the Pacific.
- USP has developed an active research and training program in aquaculture that is now collaborating closely with SPC and ICLARM.(see information paper 19 for further information)
- MSP is coordinating a very active coral reef monitoring network in seven countries.
- Recent training and on going mentoring to develop 16 case studies of gender issues related to subsistence fisheries in eight countries.

There have also been a number of unanticipated benefits from the second phase of the **C-SPOD** program, including:

- Increased cooperation between regional organizations in implementing ocean and marine projects.
- A commitment by USP to involve non-USP member countries, Federated States of Micronesia and Palau, in C-SPOD projects.
- Increased media coverage and visibility of Canadian support to Pacific marine sector.
- Increased incorporation of results-based management and concerns for gender and private sector issues in the broad program of the regional partner organizations.

### **Future**

The C-SPOD project will be completed in 16 months. The priority during this time is to document lessons learned. Particular focus will be put on the success and constraints of the various tuna management plans. Additional studies will include

- *Case studies to document how involvement of private sector in management planning has assisted in government in developing policy*
- *Documentation of the success of turtle conservation in Vanuatu*
- *Measurement of impact of the Post-Harvest Training material.*
- *Documentation of the involvement of SPC and SOPAC in C-SPOD II projects.*

### **Future Canadian support ????**

Currently CIDA is preparing a strategy for possible Canadian assistance to the Pacific. If that strategy is approved then CIDA will follow up with the region to determine the type and scope of future Canadian Aid.