

Memorandum of Understanding between FFA and SPC

2nd Revision 2005¹

Memorandum of Understanding between the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community concerning Collaboration in the Development, Conservation and Management of the Tuna and related Resources of the Western and Central Pacific.

The South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (hereinafter referred to as “FFA”) and the **Secretariat of the Pacific Community** (hereinafter referred to as “SPC”);

Noting that they are required by their member governments to address objectives promoting the development, conservation and management of the tuna resources of the western and central Pacific as follows:

- The FFA mission defined by its Strategic Plan 2005-2020 is “to support and enable our members to achieve sustainable fisheries and the highest levels of social and economic benefits in harmony with the broader environment”;
- The Goals of the SPC Fisheries Programmes, defined by the Strategic Divisional Plans 2006-9 are that “fisheries exploiting the region’s resources of tuna, billfish and related species are managed for economic and ecological sustainability using the best available scientific information”, and “SPC members are significantly assisted in their commitment to apply the Ecosystem Approach to coastal fisheries and aquaculture by 2010”;
- Both organisations work towards the shared Vision of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy of "A healthy ocean that sustains the livelihoods and aspirations of Pacific Island communities" and the Goal of the Pacific Plan, to “Enhance and stimulate economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security for Pacific countries through regionalism”.

Recognising the complementary relationship between their responsibilities and activities supporting the development and management of highly migratory fish stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean,

Aware of the necessity for cooperation in supporting the growth of Pacific Island's capacity to develop, assess, and manage their tuna fisheries and ecosystems;

Strongly Desiring to maintain their mutual understanding and facilitate the attainment of their common objectives in this field through the maximum possible co-ordination of their efforts;

Acknowledging the establishment of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) and the need to support the interests of FFA and SPC member countries and territories within the commission in the sound management of oceanic pelagic fisheries,

¹ This is a revision of the initial MOU between SPC and FFA signed in 1997

Have agreed as follows:

1. Maintenance of Co-operation

FFA and SPC agree to establish and maintain co-operation in respect of matters of common interest to the two organisations.

2. Definition of Current Work-areas

FFA and SPC hereby agree on the following working definition of their respective regional competencies, for the purpose of addressing any potential overlap in the implementation of their historical founding agreements, for the purpose of avoiding confusion by observers unfamiliar with the region, and for the facilitation of CROP² processes. This working definition should not be construed as officially limiting the potential scope of work of either agency within the mandate areas agreed by members according to their respective founding Agreements, and may be amended by mutual agreement as required:-

- FFA is the regional Lead Agency with responsibility for advising its members on the management of regional stocks of highly migratory species, including policy coordination, legislative harmonisation, economics, marketing, and fisheries MCS³;
- SPC is the regional Lead Agency for fishery and fishery ecosystem assessment and science, and any issues relating to coastal and reef fisheries;
- Both organisations cooperate in regional aspects of Pacific Islands domestic tuna and oceanic fisheries development, according to specific agreement under Section 6 (iii) below;

3. Exchange of Information and Documentation

FFA and SPC hereby agree to freely exchange information and documentation on, and to keep each other fully informed of, their activities and programmes of work on oceanic resources, subject always to such arrangements as may be necessary for safeguarding information of a sensitive or confidential nature as agreed by the owners of that information, including the member countries and territories of both organisations. Protocols on the exchange of data are attached as Annex A.

4. Consultation on Matters of Common Interest

SPC and FFA agree to consult with each other concerning programmes or activities in which either may have a substantial mutual interest. In furtherance of this, each agency shall keep the other apprised in timely fashion of national or member requests for assistance, and staff travel plans, as they relate to areas of common interest.

5. Colloquium

SPC and FFA agree to continue to meet as secretariats at least once every two years for the purpose of discussing and reviewing activities of mutual interest and support, provided that this meeting will be alternately convened by each secretariat and that each secretariat will endeavour to minimise the cost of participation, particularly the organisation of such colloquia in conjunction with other meetings within their respective work programmes.

² Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific

³ Monitoring, Control and Surveillance

6. Specific Activities

(i) Specific activities relating to highly migratory species research

The Oceanic Fisheries Programme of the SPC Marine Resources Division will provide services as follows in support of regional processes administered by FFA:

- a) the monitoring of fisheries by the collection, processing and compilation of fisheries statistics (particularly catch, effort and size composition) for target and non-target species in the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of SPC member countries who are also member countries of FFA;
- b) the conduct of regular stock assessments of target and non-target species, as appropriate, in particular the estimation of current status of the stocks/fisheries in relation to biological reference points;
- c) assistance in the development of management plans, including recommendation of appropriate precautionary reference points to be applied to the in-zone management area;
- d) the provision of advice concerning the status of target and non-target species, as appropriate, across their range;
- e) the conduct of biological or other research projects in support of stock assessment; and
- f) the reporting of the results of these activities to such bodies as may be stipulated.

The activities detailed above will not adversely affect the services provided to FFA and SPC member countries and territories.

(ii) Specific activities relating to national tuna fisheries management & development planning

The SPC Marine Resources Division will assist with FFA initiatives towards the formulation and revision of national and territorial tuna fishery management and development plans, as work programme resources and schedules permit. SPC cooperation in national tuna fishery management planning may include:

- a) participation in joint in-country projects to develop tuna fishery management and development plans;
- b) provision of scientific advice on the status and capacity of tuna stocks, and related species;
- c) provision of scientific advice in assisting member countries and territories to apply an ecosystem approach to the management of oceanic fisheries;
- d) provision of small to medium-scale tuna fisheries development advice;
- e) provision of gender or social impact advice.

(iii) Specific activities relating to tuna fisheries development

The Fisheries Development Section of the SPC Coastal Fisheries Programme and FFA will cooperate generally in support of the major task of development of domestic tuna fishing capacity in SPC/FFA member Exclusive Economic Zones, drawing upon the established strengths of each agency. For the purpose of avoiding any appearance of duplication, the complementary roles of the two agencies in this field are defined as follows:

- SPC will continue to focus its efforts on practical experience-development in small to medium-scale Pacific Island tuna fishing enterprises through the placement of masterfishermen, the production of practical handbooks to promote cost-effective and environmentally-sound fishing, the testing of appropriate new fishing methods and gear developments, and advice to government and fishing associations on development options and the implementation of strategic development plans;
- FFA will continue to focus on assisting member governments to provide an appropriate fishery management and policy enabling environment for domestic tuna fisheries at all scales, and the production of strategic tuna fishery development plans at the national level.

- Each agency will advise and assist the other as appropriate, particularly the provision of SPC input to national fishery development planning, and the provision of FFA input to practical enterprise development.

(iv) Specific activities relating to tuna fisheries monitoring

FFA and the SPC Oceanic Fisheries Programme Statistics and Monitoring Section will cooperate in developing regional standards and providing technical support to Members, including:

- a) The design of standard formats for observer, port-sampling and fishing information;
- b) The development and provision of training for observers and port-samplers;
- c) The joint biennial convention of the Tuna Fisheries Data Collection Committee

(v) Specific activities relating to the implementation of the Convention On The Conservation

And Management Of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks In The Western And Central Pacific

FFA and SPC, subject to the consent of the Forum Fisheries Committee and SPC Heads of Fisheries respectively, and to the availability of adequate funding that would avoid any deleterious impact on existing SPC/FFA regional programmes of fisheries work in support of member countries and territories, will cooperate in providing any services necessary for the implementation of the Convention, according to their respective competencies and specialisations. As well as collaborating directly with the Commission, as appropriate for the maintenance of highly migratory fish stocks for the general benefit of the region, SPC and FFA will collaborate in assisting and advising their member countries and territories in the fulfilment of their commitments as members of the Commission.

Revision

The review of this Agreement shall be a standing item on the agenda of any FFA/SPC Colloquium held under the provisions of Paragraph 5 of this Agreement.

(signed) Lourdes Pangelinan
Director General,
Secretariat of the Pacific Community

(signed) Feleti Teo
Director General
Forum Fisheries Agency

16th November 2005