

Information paper 2

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## The Pacific Community Centre for Ocean Science (PCCOS)

*SPC Secretariat*



Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique

11<sup>th</sup> SPC Heads of fisheries Meeting, 11–15 March 2019, Noumea, New Caledonia

11<sup>e</sup> Conférence des Directeurs des pêches de la CPS, 11–15 mars 2019, Nouméa, Nouvelle-Calédonie



## Purpose

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide information on the status of the Pacific Community Centre for Ocean Science established with the Pacific Community (SPC).

## Background

2. Improvements to management of ocean resources and marine ecosystems require significant collaborative commitment of shared resources and support at the regional level to enable science-based sustainable utilisation, management and governance for Pacific Islands Countries and Territories (PICTs) to accrue benefits from new opportunities such as sustainable fisheries and aquaculture, deep sea mining, marine renewable energy, sustainable sea transportation, sustainable tourism, blue carbon, marine genetic resources, and assimilation of solid waste. Ocean science knowledge is paramount.
3. In commemorating the SPC's 70th anniversary, the 10<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Pacific Community in 2017 agreed to task SPC to establish a Pacific Community Centre for Ocean Science (PCCOS) to be hosted at SPC in order to first set up a virtual Centre that brings together all of SPC's internal scientific and technical expertise around ocean science. The second phase will pursue the objective of becoming a true flag ship for scientific excellence and a dedicated regional science information and knowledge hub that brings together expertise in ocean and fisheries science through partnerships with other national and international scientific bodies.

## Context

4. SPC, through PCCOS, is required to engage in increasingly complex and demanding regional and international processes supporting its members' efforts to secure sustainable development in a rapidly evolving governance and policy environment.
5. The outcome document entitled "The future we want" from the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, Rio+20 recognises that the conservation and sustainable use of the oceans and of their resources contribute to sustainable development including through poverty eradication, food security and creation of sustainable livelihoods and decent work, while at the same time protecting biodiversity and the marine environment and addressing the impacts of climate change.
6. This is enshrined in the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, and particularly Goal 14 conserve and sustainably use of the oceans, seas and marine resources. To support the implementation of SDG 14, the Conference affirmed a strong commitment to conserve and sustainably use our oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development, the need for an integrated, interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral approach and the integration of Goal 14 targets into national development plans and strategies that include gender equality and the crucial role of women and youth. The understanding of ocean health and the role placed on science and traditional knowledge systems is noted as being of paramount importance, as is the contribution of marine scientific research, to underpin and support decision-making. It also reaffirms the need to implement international law as reflected in the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).

7. Regional leaders, at the national level and through regional CROP agencies, have continued to promote sustainable development for the Pacific region through numerous initiatives<sup>1</sup> that seek to secure the conservation and sustainable use of the ocean and its resources. Following on from the Blue Pacific concept endorsed by Pacific Island Leaders in 2017, the 49th Pacific Islands Forum on Nauru in 2018 again highlighted oceans, climate change and disaster resilience and fisheries among the priority issues confronting the region.

## Positioning PCCOS

8. SPC's divisions and programmes actively contributes to strategic partnerships in ocean science with a large number of institutions and initiatives at the national level, regionally (particularly with other CROP agencies) and internationally. It supports the existing ocean science-related activities across the Pacific islands region that are largely structured around themes with efforts to promote a coordinated multi-sectoral approach, including in relation to climate change.
9. In this context, the SPC's approach of establishing PCCOS and delivering integrated and cross-sectoral ocean scientific and technical services requires multipartner collaboration and coordination with international and regional organisations such as: the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner (OPOC) established at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS); the University of the South Pacific (USP); the Secretariat of the Pacific Environment Programme (SPREP); the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); and various other international and regional partners.
10. PCCOS has potential to facilitate and promote cross-sectoral engagement and cooperation internally at SPC for a better-integrated service to its members. In doing so, it will promote institutional efficiency and add value to existing SPC ocean science services. Externally, PCCOS is the platform to coordinate and integrate ocean science activities carried out by SPC with the work of its international and regional partners.

## PCCOS Services

11. The PCCOS initiative is a multi-disciplinary multi-sectoral integrated programming approach of SPC to assist its members in achieving the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 14 and contributing to other SDGs under the concept of Blue Pacific. The overall goal is to provide world class ocean science, knowledge and innovation supporting conservation and sustainable use of the Pacific Ocean, seas and marine resources pursuing the following objectives.

### *PCCOS as the platform for coordination and integration of ocean science at SPC*

12. The objective is to strengthen and enhance cooperation, collaboration, and integration of ocean science programme activities carried out by SPC's technical divisions and programmes<sup>2</sup> in relation to ocean governance and management and to support the implementation of regional framework and international instruments.

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<sup>1</sup> A non-exhaustive list of regional initiatives includes the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, the Small Island Developing States Accelerated Modalities of Action (S.A.M.O.A Pathway), the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape (FPO), the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP), the Pacific Islands Meteorological Strategy (PIMS) and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Convention.

<sup>2</sup> The Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) division, the Geoscience, Energy and Maritime (GEM) division and the Climate Change and Environmental Sustainability (CCES) programme

13. This requires to coordinate and ensure adequate and relevant ocean science information is readily available and easily accessible to SPC members and relevant stakeholders through database, portals and web presence.

*PCCOS delivers integrated ocean science and services to SPC members*

14. Providing integrated ocean services is provided by SPC through its programmes and projects that focus on developing innovative solutions to prevent and mitigate detrimental impacts to marine environments and build, sustain, and drive blue economies in Pacific Island countries and territories.
15. Integrated services include under current SPC's programmes:
  - a. Advise on and assist with the development of coastal, ocean and maritime policy, legal and institutional frameworks across sectors such as marine energy, fisheries, marine tourism, deep sea mining, culture, marine environment, maritime transport and marine infrastructure;
  - b. Support women empowerment and youth participation in ocean science and sectors above;
  - c. Facilitate marine spatial planning and Integrated Coastal Zone Management including marine resources and ecosystems and development activities;
  - d. Conduct science-based hazard and risk assessment and develop marine and ocean forecasting systems to support early warning systems;
  - e. Support the sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture and assist the development of safe and green shipping and ports, and safe seas;
  - f. Develop ocean literacy and maritime and fisheries capacity;
  - g. Enhance data collection and provide data management services for fisheries & marine ecosystems, ocean observation and predictions.

*PCCOS partnerships with international and regional partners in ocean science*

16. SPC implements several partnerships with international and regional partners to make available the best ocean science and deliver its programmes and projects in PICTs. SPC's scientific and technical services align and link to all relevant national, sub-regional, regional, and international ocean related frameworks, bringing together expertise in topics related to marine science, fisheries, governance, maritime transport, climate change and risk and disaster preparedness.
17. A PCCOS governance framework has been established to ensure decision-making and provision of services are aligned to PCCOS objectives. A Coordinator<sup>3</sup> plays the interface role internally and externally for any question related to PCCOS.

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<sup>3</sup> The current PCCOS Coordinator is Thierry Nervale, Deputy Director, Oceans and Maritime [thierryn@spc.int](mailto:thierryn@spc.int)