

A regional commitment supporting communities in sustaining coastal fisheries in the Pacific

Watisoni Lalavanua¹ and Andrew Smith²

Background

Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) have agreed to scale up community-based fisheries management (CBFM) in the region. This commitment was established by fisheries ministers at the July 2021 Second Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting (RFMM2) through the endorsement of the “Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management: 2021–2025” (Framework for Action). This is the first regional policy to focus on CBFM in the region’s coastal areas. The Framework for Action was also approved by the 13th SPC Heads of Fisheries (HoF13) meeting that was held virtually in June 2021.

Framework for Action: 2021–2025

The vision of the Framework for Action stems from the vision of “A New Song for Coastal Fisheries – pathways to change: The Noumea strategy”,³ and follows the lead of the “Future of Fisheries: A Regional Roadmap for sustainable Pacific fisheries”.⁴

Coastal fisheries management, including CBFM, is a national responsibility. In acknowledging the sovereignty of PICTs over their coastal resources and the need for a strategic approach to support all coastal communities, the purpose of the Framework for Action is to provide guidance to PICTs in scaling up CBFM that supports local communities and achieves national and regional coastal fisheries management goals. The Framework for Action is available online in both English⁵ and French.⁶



Figure 1. Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling up Community-based Fisheries Management: 2021–2025.

¹ Community-based Fisheries Officer, SPC. Email: WatisoniL@spc.int

² Deputy Director Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (Coastal Fisheries), SPC. Email: AndrewS@spc.int

³ <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/b8hvs>

⁴ <https://fame1.spc.int/fr/publications/roadmap-a-report-cards>

⁵ <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/yr5yv>

⁶ <https://purl.org/spc/digilib/doc/5fgmk>

Implementation

The Pacific Community (SPC) is pleased to present the Framework for Action to its members and partners, and to help enable the effective support and empowerment of coastal communities to scale up CBFM. SPC will work with government agencies and staff, CBFM practitioners, other regional agencies, non-governmental organisations and civil society organisations, donors and other development partners to support its implementation through effective coordination and fruitful collaboration for the benefit of our local communities.

High-level political engagement

Two key challenges for scaling up were identified during regional consultations: 1) inadequate budget and staffing of fisheries agencies for coastal fisheries management, especially for CBFM; and 2) poorly supported subnational approaches to CBFM.

These two key challenges cannot be addressed by local communities but are important aspects that require high-level political support and engagement. The Framework for Action recognises these current constraints by providing regionally appropriate priority actions that could be selected

by PICTs to assist in producing nationally relevant strategic approaches for scaling up CBFM.

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Community management planning workshop in North Tarawa, Kiribati. Image: © Watisoni Lalavanua

