

## Positive impacts observed from the Effective Coastal Fisheries Management project in the Pacific

*After three years of implementation, the Effective Coastal Fisheries Management (ECFM) project, which has been implemented in 17 Pacific Island countries and territories, an independent assessment of the project shows positive results for national capacity in the areas of legislation, policy, and monitoring, control, surveillance and enforcement.*

The ECFM project has invested heavily in developing government capacity to address the increasing concern over the use and sustainability of coastal fisheries resources across the Pacific Islands region. The project started in June 2016 and is scheduled to continue through to June 2021, thanks to funding from the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. The Pacific Community's Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (SPC/FAME) Division has employed three full-time specialist staff as well as four Pacific Island Fisheries Professionals to implement this project. The project contributes to strengthening governance structures and processes, specifically legislation, policy and MCS and enforcement, with the ultimate goal of bringing about enhanced food security and sustainable livelihoods in Pacific Island countries.

SPC/FAME commissioned a review to assess the relevance, impact and sustainability of the regional ECFM project among its member countries. An evaluation was conducted to identify the key results as well as some lessons learned, and to provide key recommendations that will help to make important improvements in this project.

The review, carried out between November 2019 and February 2020, entailed consultations with SPC staff, stakeholder interviews in the margins of the third Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries, and country visits to Fiji, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The assessment highlighted the following findings:

- The ECFM project has been strongly relevant to regional and SPC priorities.
- SPC has been able, through the project, to provide a high level of service, such as increased capacity in core project areas (e.g. legislation, policies, plans).
- Project activities have been responsive to gender, social inclusion and environmental issues.

Based on its effective delivery to date, the independent review supported the continuation of the ECFM project and made some recommendations to optimise the project's impact and sustainability for the remaining two years, including:

- ensure arrangements and funding are in place for the certificate programme;
- further develop learning exchanges and cooperation between countries;
- reinforce monitoring and evaluation processes; and
- review the coastal fisheries content in the "New Song for Coastal Fisheries" and "Regional Roadmap", to ensure that these remain current in light of shifting priorities at the regional level.



### For more information:

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Verifying fish sizes at a Fiji market, was part of MCS and enforcement training sessions organised during the ECFM project. (image: Steve Dunlop)