



Secretariat of the Pacific Community

**REPORT OF THE FORTIETH MEETING OF
THE COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**

Noumea, New Caledonia
25–29 October 2010

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**FORTIETH MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**

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AGENDA

1. Opening
2. Director-General's reports
 - 2.1. Overview Report
 - 2.2. Update on implementation of RIF
 - 2.3. Update on implementation of two-phase reform of SPC's organisational structure
3. Regional frameworks and strategies
 - 3.1. Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific
 - 3.2. Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific
 - 3.3. Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific
 - 3.4. Future of Pacific fisheries
 - 3.5. Mainstreaming the Paris Declaration, Accra Accord and Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles
 - 3.6. Towards a regional human rights commission
 - 3.7. Tracking development progress in PICTs
4. Divisional reports
 - 4.1. Economic Development Division
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Signing ceremony – POETCom New Caledonia organic certification system
 - 4.5. Land Resources Division
Launch of PRISM website
 - 4.6. South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA)
 - 4.7. Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)
5. Presentations from members on impact of SPC programmes at national level
6. Statements from observers

7. Long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC's core business
 - 7.1. Report of the CRGA Subcommittee on a Long-Term Sustainable Financing Strategy for SPC
8. Governance issues
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9. Initiatives / items proposed by members
 - 9.1. Micronesian Village project
10. Administrative and staffing issues
 - 10.1. Implementation of the 2009 triennial remuneration review
 - 10.2. 2010 market data review for positions advertised internationally
 - 10.3. 2010 market data review for positions advertised locally
11. Financial matters
 - 11.1. Status of members' assessed contributions
 - 11.2. 2009 financial report and auditor's management letter
 - 11.3. 2010 revised budget
 - 11.4. Members' assessed contributions
 - 11.5. 2011 budget and work programme
 - 11.6. Proposed format and structure of SPC's budget and work programme from 2012 on
12. Recruitment of new Director-General
13. CRGA 41 in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands
14. Other business
15. Adoption of CRGA outcomes and decisions

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

**FORTIETH MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**

(Noumea, New Caledonia, 25–29 October 2010)

REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS

AGENDA ITEM 1 – OPENING

1. The Chairperson declared the 40th meeting of CRGA open. The representative of Tonga said the opening prayer.
2. The SPC Director-General, Dr Jimmie Rodgers, formally welcomed delegates to the 40th CRGA, to New Caledonia and to the meeting house of the Pacific. He noted that this year the meeting was divided into two parts: the first two days were dedicated to a technical and scientific agenda, and the last two days to policy and governance issues. He also welcomed representatives of agencies making up the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) and development partners.
3. The draft agenda was adopted.
4. Representatives of USA, French Polynesia, Tonga, Fiji Islands, and American Samoa volunteered to join the drafting committee.
5. The proposed hours of work were accepted.

AGENDA ITEM 2 – DIRECTOR-GENERAL'S REPORTS

AGENDA ITEM 2.1 – OVERVIEW REPORT

6. The Director-General highlighted the key activities, initiatives and policy reforms of 2010, and discussed milestones for the organisation in the coming two years. He said the year to date had included continued implementation of divisional projects at country level in addition to carrying out the major decisions of the 6th Conference of the Pacific Community in Tonga.

Strategic direction for SPC

Together with SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) and SPBEA (South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment), progress had been made on the Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) agenda, with work on integration all but completed. The Director-General paid tribute to the SOPAC Council, SPBEA Board and SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme) for their support and commitment to achieving the vision of the Pacific Islands Forum leaders. He said that decisions were easy to make but implementation was difficult, and teams from these three agencies had worked tirelessly to translate decisions into reality. A host-country agreement had been signed with Vanuatu, and SPC was about to conclude consultations with Fiji Islands on a new host agreement. Consultation with Papua New Guinea (PNG) had begun on a planned country office. As a result of this progress, decentralisation would be a key focus of the subcommittee on a long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC. Key leadership and management challenges addressed in 2010 related to managing the implementation of the RIF reform process, ensuring that services to members were not diminished, and continuing to position the organisation strategically for the future. Reviewing and refining the strategic direction of the organisation had required major effort. While the direction of SPC programmes remained clear, contextualising the role of the organisation was more difficult. The Director-General highlighted SPC's three key result areas:

sustainable human and social development, sustainable natural resource management and development, and sustainable economic development. A fourth result area related to the internal positioning of the organisation to support the achievement of development outcomes.

Policy reforms

With respect to reforms in the policy agenda, the Director-General noted that many of the meeting papers outlined these reforms in detail. However, one initiative worthy of particular note was the continuing joint country strategy (JCS) process. CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) CEOs had agreed to develop a programme of CROP-wide JCS missions, ensuring joint programming and planning in countries. The Director-General noted that maintaining a wider policy agenda was one of his key functions. Key strategic policy initiatives undertaken this year would impact on the ways that SPC operates. He highlighted a number of proposed reforms, including: a change to CRGA meeting arrangements to ensure the dual roles of SPC – technical programme delivery, and policy and governance – are accomplished effectively; the rotation of the Conference of the Pacific Community between SPC's two major offices, Noumea and Suva, while allowing countries to host meetings; and facilitating cross-cutting decision-making by convening joint cross-sectoral technical meetings. Operational policies had been developed in 2010, including risk management, anti-fraud, and procurement and supply policies. Organisational engagement policies had been developed in the three key areas of climate change, gender issues and food security. These frameworks for engagement facilitated mainstreaming and allowed programmes to link with external regional and international frameworks.

Strategic engagement

The Director-General mentioned a number of strategic publications produced this year, notably a second edition of *SPC and the Pacific Plan*. Discussing implementation of the first pillar of the Corporate Plan, he highlighted the continuing focus on members' priorities within programmes. Implementation of the second pillar, 'Strategic engagement at international, regional and national levels', had progressed, most notably with the European Union (EU) and the Global Fund. However, the Director-General highlighted the difficulty posed by the high proportion of project funding, as opposed to programme funding, provided by these donors, an issue pertinent to discussions on the long-term sustainable financing strategy. Speaking of the regional level, the Director-General expressed sincere appreciation to all CROP agencies for their leadership on cross-cutting priorities. The continued support of SPC's founding members was noted. Confidence in SPC as a key regional partner, expressed by the US, French, Australian and New Zealand governments, had been reinforced by recent mentions in US policy statements and visits by the Australian Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Affairs and the New Zealand Minister of Foreign Affairs.

Corporate highlights

A highlight of 2010 was the establishment of the new Economic Development Division (EDD) as a response to the broader reform agenda. This division pulled together energy, communication, transport and infrastructure as the four drivers of economic growth. The Director-General noted that this 40th CRGA would be the last one for the current Social Resources Division, which would soon become the Education, Training and Human Development Division. In mentioning the significant activities of SPC's two regional offices, he emphasised that the North Pacific Office in Pohnpei was a geographical office staffed with a team representing a mix of SPC's divisional expertise. Achievements included support for the ongoing development of the Micronesian Village project in Federated States of Micronesia (FSM); the signing of agreements for the North Pacific Renewable Energy Project between EU and SPC in FSM, Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Palau; SPC representation at the Micronesian Chief Executives Summit and Presidents Summit; and initiation of negotiations on host agreements with Palau and RMI. The north Pacific, however, posed challenges in terms of members' assessed contributions. The Director-General noted that the Solomon Islands Country Office this year achieved the successful completion of a gender-based violence project with excellent outcomes in terms of policy-making and an official support unit in the country. The office provided support to the Solomon Islands census and the ongoing implementation of Pacific Rural Internet Connectivity System (PacRICS) systems for the Ministry of Health. In discussing corporate highlights of 2010, the Director-General noted that most SPC executive contracts would end in the next 18 months. This was opportune for the reform process, and the executive was committed to the best way forward for the organisation. Managing a decentralised and growing organisation had presented challenges, especially in terms of communication and harmonising remuneration across CROP agencies. Development of technological and cost sharing solutions and a review of standard terms and conditions and the salary structure had been undertaken during the year. In relation to the 2010 and 2011 budgets, the Director-

General noted that the recovery of the Australian and New Zealand dollars had enabled SPC to reinstate previously suspended services and remuneration increases. The budget format had been adjusted to reflect the RIF integration and reforms. He made special reference to the comparison table of sources of funds for the past two years. This reflected the changes in the funding proportions from members. The integration of SOPAC and SPBEA changed the mix of funding, and EU was considering some programme and direct budget support to complement project funding. Arrears in members' assessed contributions were noted, as was the clear audit report for SPC for 2009. Looking ahead, the Director-General emphasised how crucial 2011 and 2012 would be for SPC as the organisation moved past the RIF reforms. In order to realise the benefits of the RIF process in 2012, CRGA needed to address key challenges in 2011. Institutional strengthening milestones for 2011 included the completion of the first phase of RIF (the transfer of functional responsibilities to SPC), an analysis of corporate services for inclusion in the sustainable financing strategy, and revision of legal documents to reflect the RIF reforms. Acknowledging and thanking the governing councils once again, he noted that while there had been great challenges and limitations, huge achievements had been made towards the RIF reform. The Director-General concluded by saying that SPC would continue to be managed in accordance with the theme of 'many locations, one organisation, one system'.

7. The representative of Samoa thanked the outgoing Chairperson and congratulated the new Chairperson on his appointment. She further commended the SPC Director-General and SPC on the accomplishments made despite the challenges in the RIF process. She said that the Samoa JCS had been completed, and gave credit to the SPC Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility for its support in the process. She noted the key policy reforms undertaken by SPC in 2010, with special reference to the decentralisation policy.

8. The representative of Kiribati congratulated the representative of Cook Islands on his assumption of the Chair. She commended the Director-General on his concise snapshot of the 2010 report, the achievements made in the implementation of the Tonga Conference decisions, and progress made on implementing the RIF reform. Reiterating the importance of the rationale behind the RIF process, the representative noted the expanded role and scope of SPC, and members' trust that the reform process would not compromise the core services provided by the agencies. She said that JCSs provided a very important framework for strategic engagement as they were based on national priorities and the related expertise of SPC. She noted with gratitude the achievements of the small island states feeder shipping service, allowing countries with differing economic development levels to pool resources. She said that Kiribati looked forward to further work on the establishment of the Central Pacific Shipping Commission, which would address small island state priorities. She closed by acknowledging the support of donor partners in assisting the work of SPC now and in the future.

9. The representative of Fiji Islands congratulated the Chairperson and the Vice-Chairperson on their appointment. He commended the Director-General for his report and the tremendous amount of work undertaken towards establishing a vision of the way forward for the Pacific. He said Fiji was confident that the host agreement would be signed next year and progress towards the Pacific Village would continue, with the recent identification of land for the purpose.

10. The representative of PNG commended the representative of Cook Islands on assuming the Chair. He noted the excellent work of the Director-General in his stewardship of SPC during the RIF reform, and emphasised the critical importance of adequate resources to implement long-term reforms. He further commended SPC, the work of its divisions and programmes, and its support to the Pacific in dealing with competing priorities and cross-cutting issues. In relation to the proposed host country agreement between SPC and PNG, he reported that there was an article of the agreement that required further clarification.

11. The representative of FSM congratulated the representative of Cook Islands on assuming the Chair, thanked the Director-General for his comprehensive report on the services of SPC to members, and expressed appreciation to SPC for bringing its services closer to the northern Pacific members. He thanked the staff of the northern Pacific office for their work and donor partners for their support to SPC.

12. The Director-General acknowledged the feedback from members with appreciation. He noted that SPC's success is the Pacific's success.

Decisions

13. CRGA:

- i. noted that SPC's future direction will be guided by the following four key result areas:
 - a) Sustainable human and social development;
 - b) Sustainable natural resources management and development;
 - c) Sustainable economic development;
 - d) 'An efficient and effective organisation with the capability and partnerships required to provide optimum services to members';
- ii. With respect to the joint country strategies (JCS):
 - a) noted that heads of CROP agencies have agreed to join SPC in developing CROP-wide JCS with members, with all participating agencies being included in the same document;
 - b) noted that the Secretariat had prepared JCS updates or reports for each of its 22 island members;
- iii. With respect to decentralisation:
 - a) acknowledged the signing of a host country agreement by the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu and SPC in October 2010 formally establishing an SPC country office in Port Vila, Vanuatu;
 - b) noted that the Secretariat expected to conclude consultations on the new host agreement with Fiji for signing before the end of 2010;
 - c) acknowledged the update from Papua New Guinea (PNG) on the status of the host country agreement with PNG;
 - d) noted that the formal request made by the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga at the 6th Conference for SPC to consider locating a division in Tonga will be evaluated as part of the development of the long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC;
 - e) agreed that consultations with members wishing to host country offices will be informed by the outcome of the work on the long-term sustainable financing strategy;
- iv. With respect to specific policy initiatives:
 - a) noted the Secretariat's plans to develop specific policy parameters to guide further decentralisation and programme location;
 - b) noted the Secretariat's intention to develop SPC engagement strategies for cross-cutting priorities such as climate change, food security, poverty alleviation and gender issues;
 - c) endorsed the Secretariat's intention to work with the World Health Organization and Pacific Community members to develop the region's position paper on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) to be presented at the upcoming United Nations General Assembly Special Session on NCDs in September 2011;
 - d) endorsed SPC's provision of the secretariat for POETCom (Pacific Organic and Ethical Community) and its role in custodianship of the 'Pacifica Organic Seal';
- v. With respect to new partnerships:
 - a) noted with appreciation the support that will be provided to SPC's leadership and management through its partnership with the Pacific Leadership Programme;
- vi. With respect to SPC's publications:
 - a) accepted Parts I and II of SPC's 2009 Annual Report;
 - b) acknowledged the publication of *SPC and the Pacific Plan, July 2009 – June 2010 (Volume 2)*, and noted that production of this informative and popular publication will continue;
 - c) noted the Secretariat's intention to produce similar publications in several cross-cutting areas as resources permit, including *SPC and Climate Change*, *SPC and Food Security*, *SPC and the Millennium Development Goals*, *SPC and Poverty Alleviation* and *SPC and Gender Issues*;
- vii. With respect to the Pacific Plan:
 - a) noted that at the 41st Forum meeting in 2010, leaders highlighted the following issues which, while covered by existing Pacific Plan priorities, will require extra effort to achieve results: finalise the delineation of permanent maritime boundaries; sustainably increase coverage of safe

drinking water and sanitation services; focus education efforts on increasing literacy and numeracy rates; expand the definition of disaster risk management beyond climate change to be 'people focused', covering responses to health disasters and population growth and movement; and address the lack of technical and managerial capacity in the power utilities.

AGENDA ITEM 2.2 – UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF RIF

14. The Director-General described the substantial progress made towards the implementation of the RIF reform. The merger with SPBEA had been concluded, and all necessary agreements had been made to transfer SOPAC services to SPC and SPREP, with full implementation of the core work programme commencing in January 2011. He stressed that in 2011 the foundation would be set to realise the long-term goals of the RIF reform.

15. The SOPAC Director noted that the RIF reform process had provided opportunities which the organisation needed to grasp to ensure they did not become risks. He said that much hinged on results in 2011 and beyond to fulfil the expectations of the Forum leaders. The process of implementing the next steps was crucial to the stability of the reform, e.g. the payroll transfer in January. He emphasised the importance of the sustainable financing strategy in securing the SOPAC work programme in its new home in SPC and providing enhanced services to members. A decision by the SOPAC Council had been made on the legal status of SOPAC, which would see the suspension of commission activities and the transfer of contractual arrangements to SPC from the middle of next year.

16. The SPC Deputy Director, Corporate Services and the System Developer/Analyst provided an update on the transition and integration of corporate services, human resources and administration, finance, and ICT functions under RIF being done by the 'domino team', which consisted of SOPAC and SPC staff. They emphasised that best practice models had been identified and combined into the business practices of the integrated organisation. Detailed reviews of some services and functions would be undertaken along with training and induction of staff, to assure an optimum operating environment.

17. The representative of USA congratulated the staff of SOPAC and SPC on the work undertaken thus far.

18. The Director-General commended the extensive, complex work done behind the scenes by teams from SPC and SOPAC to implement decisions.

Decisions

19. CRGA:

- i. noted the full implementation of the decisions relating to the merger between SPBEA (South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment) and SPC;
- ii. noted the full implementation of the decisions relating to the transfer of SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) services to SPC and SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme);
- iii. noted in relation to legal aspects of the status of SOPAC and SPBEA:
 - a) that at its meeting in October 2010, the SOPAC Council agreed on the suspension of the Commission; and
 - b) that at the subsequent meeting (November 2010) of the SPBEA Board, members of the Board would hand letters to the Secretariat constituting the individual decisions of their respective governments to withdraw from the SPBEA Board, in accordance with the provisions of Article 11 of the SPBEA constitution, with the letters to be given to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Fiji, which is the depository of the agreement, thereby effectively suspending the SPBEA constitution.

- iv. noted that an update will be provided to members on progress in fully implementing the transfer of agreed functions (energy, ICT, infrastructure and transport) from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) to SPC;
- v. acknowledged that SPC is committed to meeting the objective of the reform of the Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) to achieve greater effectiveness and efficiency in delivering services to members, while meeting the condition that there should be ‘no diminution of services’ to members;
- vi. noted the additional resources needed by SPC, particularly in 2011, to ensure it has the corporate systems and services required to sustain an expanded and decentralised organisation; and
- vii. commended the CEOs of the organisations involved in the RIF process (PIFS, SPBEA, SPC, SOPAC and SPREP) and their staff for the tremendous work they have done over the past four years to achieve the full implementation of the reforms.

AGENDA ITEM 2.3 – UPDATE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF TWO-PHASE REFORM OF SPC’S ORGANISATIONAL STRUCTURE

20. In presenting an update on of the two-phase reform of SPC’s organisational structure, the Director-General said SPC’s recent growth was the outcome of the RIF reform and the associated decisions of the respective governing councils on the transfer of SOPAC programmes to SPC and the merger of SPBEA with SPC, which were endorsed by the 6th Conference in 2009. The expansion of SPC raised a major question on the best structure to take SPC into the future. He said the two-phase reform of SPC’s organisational structure that was presented to and endorsed by the 6th Conference was a response to this question. Phase 1 of the reform of SPC’s organisational structural was fully implemented in January 2010 with the establishment of the two new divisions of Economic Development and Applied Geoscience and Technology, and of SPBEA as a stand-alone programme under the jurisdiction of the Deputy Director-General (Suva). He noted that in Phase 2, which was to be implemented in 2011, SPC’s technical divisions would be reorganised into thematic areas linked to SPC’s three key result areas (KRAs): (1) sustainable human and social development; (2) sustainable natural resources management and development; and (3) sustainable economic development. In addition, a fourth KRA focused on organisational governance and management – ‘An efficient and effective organisation with the capability and partnerships required to provide optimum services to members’. The Director-General said that the new executive structure would be largely cost neutral for SPC due to re-designation of existing positions.

21. The representative of Fiji Islands commented on the place of SPBEA in the hierarchy shown in the proposed SPC organisation chart for 2011 (Annex 2 of paper 2.3). He said SPBEA had been an independent organisation with regional responsibilities but on the chart was shown under ‘several layers of bureaucracy’. He noted the Chairperson of the SPBEA Board had raised this issue at the Suva meeting of the CRGA subcommittee, which suggested concern about how SPBEA would deliver its services to members. He requested that this concern be reflected in the recommendations and asked if the existing status of SPBEA in SPC could be retained so it could continue to deliver services as at present.

22. In response, the Director-General stressed that the organisation chart shown in Annex 2 was necessarily compressed. He noted that SPBEA would sit within a separate pillar of the new Education, Training and Human Development Division. He said that for the proposed structure to work, a considerable amount of delegation was necessary and SPBEA would certainly have the authority to make decisions. As for all divisions and programmes, delegation of authority was also associated with accountability and monitoring requirements.

23. The representative of New Caledonia thanked the Secretariat for the excellent paper and said the question was – ‘Should SPC be restructured now?’ The answer was of course ‘Yes’ because the scope of the RIF reforms made restructuring necessary. In looking at the hierarchy shown in the proposed organisation chart and its relationship to the KRAs, he said it was understood that the integration of SOPAC and SPC work would happen gradually. However, it was necessary for SPC’s organisational structure to provide

bridges between SOPAC's work in natural resource areas such as water management and seabed issues and SPC's work in relation to KRA 2 – Sustainable management of natural resources.

24. The Director-General agreed with this observation, noting that in fact SOPAC's work related to all SPC programmes though the organisation chart did not show horizontal links between programmes. He said the structure was a dynamic one that would be refined. Work programmes would demonstrate linkages that could not be shown on the chart without including numerous arrows.

25. In response to the Chairperson's request for clarification on the place of SPBEA in the SPC organisational structure, the Director-General said an expanded chart would be provided to the meeting the next day, clearly showing SPBEA's place in the new Education, Training and Human Development Division.

Decisions

26. CRGA:

- i. noted the progressive implementation of Phase 2 of the organisational restructure of SPC, as endorsed by the 6th Conference of the Pacific Community in 2009;
- ii. noted that the proposed time frame for full implementation of Phase 2 over a two-year time frame (2011–2012) is aimed at maintaining cost neutrality in terms of remuneration;
- iii. further noted that the new organisational structure is directly linked to SPC's four key result areas.

AGENDA ITEM 3 – REGIONAL FRAMEWORKS AND STRATEGIES

AGENDA ITEM 3.1 – FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON FOOD SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

27. The SPC Director-General noted as background to the paper that the *Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific* was developed in response to the call for action by Forum leaders at the 2008 Pacific Islands Forum in Niue and the 2008 CRGA 38 resolution on food security. The World Health Organization (WHO) led the working group, comprising partner organisations, in developing the framework, which had been presented and endorsed at a number of regional fora. Of the framework's seven themes, the Director-General highlighted leadership and multi-sectoral coordination as key, and noted that without them the benefits of the other themes may not be realised. He said that regulatory frameworks and standardisation were similarly crucial. The framework also emphasised marketing and trade, health impacts, communication and electronic information based on evidence, to better enable decision-making. In conclusion, the Director-General emphasised that extensive consultation with countries had fed into the framework.

28. The representative of Palau requested clarification on how SPC would coordinate with partners, such as the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), which are already undertaking projects on food security for sustainable livelihoods.

29. The Director-General responded that FAO was part of the coordination steering group, while SPC's role was to coordinate information on the activities of the sector, and report the overall picture to countries. To this end, he noted that SPC had developed a reporting matrix that captured the activities of each agency and provided a holistic picture of outputs under the pillars of the matrix.

30. The representative of FSM thanked SPC for the efforts to help meet food security challenges in FSM. He said the ongoing technical assistance provided by SPC during the food summit and towards the development of the national food security plan was greatly appreciated. FSM was currently working with partners to implement the plan and an adaptation strategy project. The JCS process had assisted many activities directly linked to enhancing food security.

31. The representative of PNG congratulated SPC on its continued excellent work in the area of food security. Notable to the PNG delegation was the importance given to traditional means of conservation, which will complement activities implemented in PNG. He emphasised that while the framework was regionally coordinated, governments needed to act locally to encourage the promotion of traditional methods. The representative further suggested that collaboration with SPC would require needs assessments and gap analysis to assist countries to best support national practices. Effective land use concepts should also be encouraged. In conclusion he supported the plan to recruit a senior adviser in food security.
32. The representative of American Samoa congratulated the Chairperson, and thanked the outgoing Chairperson. He extended his appreciation to SPC for assistance in developing a plan for food security. He noted that food security was of special significance in American Samoa, as had been highlighted by the WHO STEPS survey showing the trend away from native food sources.
33. The representative of New Caledonia thanked SPC for the excellent paper. He said that food security had become a challenge in the Pacific. He suggested that CRGA ensure that the recommendations addressed the creation of a senior adviser position to undertake the coordination role. He asked if this position was already budgeted.
34. The Director-General responded that the position had been included in budgeting contingent on the proposal to CRGA to increase member assessed contributions, and that therefore it would be funded if this proposal was approved.
35. The representative of Kiribati endorsed the framework and thanked SPC for its work on food security. She acknowledged the significance of the small island state feeder shipping service which has assisted countries to ensure more regular and affordable supply of food items. Reduced transport rates resulting from the shipping initiative had filtered down to people in the form of lower costs for food items. She further commended the Land Resources Division for its work to mitigate food production challenges experienced in the northern atoll islands. The recent fuel crisis posed a serious challenge to the importation of food; therefore Kiribati appreciated the work of SPC in boosting local production of crops and fish and diversifying production systems to respond to climate change.
36. The representative of Niue congratulated the Chairperson and thanked the host country. He commended SPC on the excellence of the technical assistance provided to Niue. He said that the FAO food security pilot project was underway in Niue, and Niue looked forward to opportunities to increase food production in an effort to lessen dependence on imported food. He noted the importance of programmes that protect food from pests and promote health. Niue endorsed the food security recommendations.
37. The representative of Vanuatu extended his gratitude to the host country and thanked the outgoing Chairperson, the SPC Director-General and SPC staff. He said that all governments have national programmes for food security, and he asked for clarification on how SPC would work closely with other partners in the sector.
38. The Director-General responded that national level plans, which identify established partnerships, actors and activities, would be complemented by the regional plan. For countries without a national plan, the framework would provide a guide to assist with developing strategies.
39. The representative of New Zealand thanked New Caledonia for hosting the meeting. He said that New Zealand broadly supported the recommendations, as food security was an extremely important issue in the Pacific. He requested clarification on SPC's role and approach to coordinating the strategy. While acknowledging regional trends, he said that the many local specificities relating to food security, for example those raised by delegates in the discussion, needed to be captured and addressed appropriately. New Zealand therefore stressed consultation at country level and the need to clearly define SPC's role under the framework.
40. The representative of USA commented that food security was an issue fundamental of importance in the Pacific even before the challenges of climate change emerged. He said USA supported the recommendations in this report; however, he noted that the report said that SPC had been 'tasked' with taking these actions, but it did not state who had assigned this task. As CRGA and Conference were the only

bodies empowered to direct SPC, he suggested the language be changed to show that SPC had been 'requested' to take action on the issue.

41. The representative of France said that France endorsed the paper and recommendations, but that it supported comments made by USA, saying that it was up to CRGA to direct SPC to take action.

42. The Director-General clarified that SPC has been requested to act and that the use of the word 'task' was an oversight. He noted that food security was central to SPC's work in any case, and that it was logical for SPC to take a lead role as it worked in so many sectors. In response to the question from Vanuatu, he explained that the framework's matrix would record actors, activities and outputs under the pillars of the framework. SPC would coordinate information flow and resource articulation. The role of the senior adviser would be to coordinate an internal engagement strategy within the organisation focusing specifically on mainstreaming food security issues into programmes. SPC would not coordinate the activities of other agencies, but would manage information and provide a collated single progress report on regional implementation. He reiterated that the focus of the framework was regional interventions to supplement national plans.

43. The representative of Cook Islands offered endorsement of the framework and SPC's role as lead coordinating agency.

Decisions

44. CRGA:

- i. noted the efforts being made to improve long-term food security in the region;
- ii. acknowledged the importance of adopting a whole-of-sector approach to addressing the food security challenges facing the region on the basis of 'many partners, one team';
- iii. noted that the *Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific*, developed in response to the call for action by Forum leaders (2008) and the resolution of CRGA 38 (2008), was endorsed by the Pacific Food Summit and by Forum leaders at the 41st Forum meeting in Vanuatu (August 2010); and
- iv. endorsed the *Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific*, and SPC's role in coordinating its implementation.

AGENDA ITEM 3.2 – FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON ENERGY SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

45. The Director-General noted that the framework for action on energy security had been on the Forum leaders agenda for six years, though there had not been a dedicated comprehensive approach. Pacific Island energy ministers, at their meeting in April 2009 (PEMM 2009), expressed their preference that the region's energy sector be managed at the regional level by one agency. Their decision resulted in SPC assuming the role of lead coordinating agency for the regional energy sector, as an integral part of the broader reform of the regional institutional framework (RIF). The recent economic crisis had brought energy security into prominence, highlighting the Pacific's heavy reliance on petroleum fuels. Since assuming the lead role for the regional energy programme, SPC had reviewed the 2004 energy policy and developed a draft framework, which had been endorsed by PEMM and the Forum leaders. The Director-General highlighted a move in the framework away from specific energy issues to a more commodity-based approach. The framework articulated the regional approach, SPC's lead coordinating responsibility, and national roles. Extensive consultation and ownership had been achieved in the development of the framework and it was significant that this included private sector energy producers. A key element to note was that in this sector, the Forum leaders' call for improvements and efficiently would certainly require additional resources. The leaders' vision could not be achieved without new investment in the sector. In conclusion, the Director-General noted that energy security is essential, cuts-across many sectors and is a key driver for economic development. He said that SPC was currently developing an implementation plan with a view to presenting it at the 2011 PEMM.

46. The representative of Tonga noted that development in the region depended on energy being affordable. As a committee member for the Tonga Energy Roadmap, he thanked SPC for taking the role of lead agency at the regional level. He said Tonga supported the framework and its definitions of roles at regional and national levels.
47. The representative of Australia thanked the host country, and congratulated Cook Islands on assuming the Chair. She said that Australia supported the framework and welcomed the focus on regional interventions. She suggested that the implementation plan be costed in terms of regional intervention.
48. The Director-General responded that SPC planned to cost the energy security implementation plan, which would further link to and add value to national policies.
49. The representative of Samoa commented that the value of a framework came from in the buy-in it generated from countries and how well it related to national contexts. She asked how countries would access regional support, and called for a clear reflection of the critical link between regional frameworks and policies at the national level. She said the implementation plan should spell out how countries would utilise regional assistance and translate it into real action on the ground.
50. The Director-General responded that the framework would be linked to regional inputs of the JCS process. He noted that there were three best practice models for energy efficiency to date: the Tonga Roadmap, the FSM model, and the Samoa model, and that SPC could pull the experiences and best practice methods of these models together to share with other PICTs.
51. The representative of French Polynesia acknowledged energy security as a critical issue for the region and said French Polynesia fully endorsed the framework. He requested clarification on the methodology used to develop the framework, as it seemed that SPC's role was not as prominent as it should have been.
52. The Director-General responded that SPC had been confirmed as the lead coordinating agency and would take the lead secretariat role in all future meetings on energy security.
53. The representative of RMI said that RMI supported the work on the energy security framework as it was crucial to exploring renewable sources of energy. He suggested SPC work closely with other actors, for example the Micronesian Chief Executives, who were looking into these initiatives.
54. The representative of New Zealand stated his country's support of programmes that lessen dependence of PICTs on fossil fuel by helping them move to clean, renewable, indigenous energy resources. The New Zealand Aid Programme focused on national and bilateral level interventions, so he made specific note of comments in the framework relating to national vs. regional level activities. He said that New Zealand supported the recommendations in the report.
55. The Director-General responded that as energy efficiency was a key objective, SPC would collate and provide international research, information and assessments to quickly assist countries in making policy decisions.
56. The representative of New Caledonia thanked SPC for organising the innovative and consultative energy meeting in May 2010. A project was launched in May 2010 gathering partners from various stakeholders to encourage the establishment of projects defining the main measures taken for economic and infrastructure development. He said New Caledonia was working closely with the other French territories to adopt renewable energy in the Pacific, and that New Caledonia endorsed the framework.
57. The representative of Niue stated his delegation's support for and endorsement of the energy security programme. He said Niue was also working to adopt renewable energy sources in order to lessen dependence on imported fuel. He thanked SPC for its work as lead agency.
58. The Director-General noted that the Forum currently coordinated and led bulk procurement, with SPC support.

59. The representative of FSM expressed appreciation for SPC's ongoing work in the sector. He said FSM supported recommendations under this agenda item. He commended SPC for the technical assistance provided to FSM, which complemented projects underway in the four states and had realised some very positive benefits, for example bulk fuel purchasing. He also commended the new energy project getting underway in the north Pacific.

60. The representative of Nauru noted with appreciation SPC's commitment to drive the platform of energy security and commended the wide approach. He thanked Australia for its support for the development of the framework. He said that Nauru supported the framework and recommendations, and encouraged SPC to coordinate the prioritising of interventions to best benefit vulnerable economies. Key areas of action include energy efficiency, development of renewable energy sources and capacity development. Nauru had set a target of 50 per cent renewable energy use by 2015.

61. The representative of Solomon Islands stated his country's support of the recommendations and endorsed SPC's lead regional agency role, which would complement national activities in Solomon Islands.

62. The representative of French Polynesia requested that SPC become more visible as lead coordinating agency in the future.

63. The representative of New Caledonia asked for clarification on CRGA's endorsement of the framework, asking what CRGA's role was given that the framework had already been adopted by the Forum.

64. The Director-General responded that the Forum could only endorse it on behalf of its 16 members, not the other SPC members who were not Forum members. He explained that CRGA had a broader membership, so its endorsement covered all PICTs.

Decisions

65. CRGA:

- i. noted the recent developments that have taken place in the region's energy sector;
- ii. acknowledged the importance of adopting a 'whole of sector approach' to addressing the energy challenges facing the region on the basis of 'many partners, one team';
- iii. noted that the *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific*, developed in response to the call by leaders to step up efforts in financing clean and affordable energy, was endorsed by the special meeting of Forum energy ministers (June 2010) and the 41st Forum meeting (August 2010), and further noted it will be tabled at a full meeting of Pacific energy ministers in early 2011;
- iv. endorsed the *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific* and SPC's role in coordinating its implementation, including the development of a fully costed implementation plan that will be presented to the 2011 energy ministers' meeting, and to CRGA 41 and the 7th Conference of the Pacific Community in late 2011.

AGENDA ITEM 3.3 – FRAMEWORK FOR ACTION ON ICT FOR DEVELOPMENT IN THE PACIFIC

66. The Director-General spoke about the *Framework for action on ICT for development in the Pacific*. He explained that in their 2009 communiqué, Forum leaders called for a review of the Pacific Plan digital strategy and the development of a new ICT framework for the region. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) in collaboration with SOPAC and SPC commissioned the review at the end of 2009. As a result of the RIF reform, SPC assumed the role of lead coordination agency for ICT development in the region from January 2010 by incorporating the Pacific ICT Outreach (PICTO) programme in its new EDD. The results of the review of the digital strategy provided the basis for the development of the new *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific*. The primary aims for the framework were to help guide future action,

inform policy direction, enhance funding decisions and support the implementation of national policies and plans to achieve the longer-term aspiration of *affordable ICT for all Pacific Islanders*. He explained that teledensity (the number of landlines per 100 inhabitants) rates in the region were about 10 per cent, with lower rates in rural and isolated areas. Mobile telephony had increased rapidly, particularly in countries where the sector has been liberalised. Few countries had national ICT policies and legislation, and Internet access was expensive in much of the region. He said that capacity building in this sector was critical for many PICTs. The framework was fine-tuned through consultations with countries and was then endorsed by ICT ministers. A costed implementation plan was being developed to best enable regional organisations to support national activities. Like the framework for energy security, the achievement of the milestones within a seven-month time frame demonstrated the importance accorded to taking long-term sustainable approaches to improving ICT access in the region.

67. The representative of Palau thanked SPC for the report. He said Palau was requesting help with developing a national ICT framework, as it would be hosting the Micronesian Chief Executives Summit this year it was in need of assistance to prepare.

68. The representative of France noted that the French Pacific territories were independent in terms of telecommunications, and that France was very interested in developing telecommunications in the region. He explained that France provided assistance to its Pacific territories to improve access to telecommunications, including by providing tax relief to encourage investment in this area and by supporting undersea cable projects to link them with the rest of the world. He emphasised that depending on the final routing chosen, these cable projects could provide opportunities for other PICTs to join and bring them considerable benefits.

69. The representative of Cook Islands acknowledged the work that had gone into developing the framework, and the 'many partners, one team' approach. She noted the high level commitment to development of ICT that was evident from the references made to it in the outcomes and communiqués of several meetings. She acknowledged SPC's role in collaborating with other agencies. Given that the framework was already endorsed at the highest level it was now important to make sure it was integrated at the national level.

70. The representative of Niue acknowledged SPC's work in ICT through the Pacific One Laptop Per Child (OLPC) project and the South Pacific Information Network (SPIN) undersea cable project, noting that Niue had signed on to join the SPIN cable and was awaiting discussions. He also acknowledged the programme to upgrade Niue's telephone system that was being carried out by SPC and funded by the New Zealand Aid Programme.

71. The representative of Solomon Islands acknowledged SPC's work in developing the framework and the review of the Pacific Plan Digital Strategy. She said that like other PICTs, Solomon Islands faced challenges stemming from its geographical situation and that these made it difficult to provide affordable access to telecommunications services. She noted that Solomon Islands had recently deregulated its telecommunications sector, which had resulted in new competition and reductions in the cost of telecommunications services. She said the PacRICS project was making a big difference, with sites being established in rural health clinics as well as police stations and schools. In closing, she said that Solomon Islands was in the process of developing a national ICT policy, and that it supported the framework.

72. The representative of New Zealand acknowledged the work of SPC in progressing the framework, noting that SPC had been given a clear regional mandate to coordinate this work and had a valuable role to play. He said it was important to ensure that in doing so SPC focused its attention where it could add value in regional services rather than on areas in which services were best delivered nationally. He said that New Zealand supported the recommendations.

73. The representative of French Polynesia joined previous speakers in thanking SPC for the work of EDD. He noted that an undersea cable linking Tahiti to Hawaii had entered service during 2010, and that a new regulatory framework had been created in French Polynesia to liberalise the mobile telephony and Internet access markets. He said that French Polynesia supported the framework.

74. The representative of FSM thanked the Director-General and said that FSM fully supported the recommendations. He thanked SPC for the services delivered since it took on the coordinating role in the

sector. He noted that FSM faced challenges similar to those faced by other PICTs due to its island geography, and said that PacRICS had been of great benefit to FSM. Twelve systems had been purchased by the FSM government and EU and had been installed with assistance from SPC. He thanked Australia for its assistance in funding the PacRICS bandwidth. He said FSM hoped SPC would continue related training.

75. The representative of Kiribati acknowledged the work of SPC in ICT. She said that Kiribati faced challenges similar to those alluded to by others relating to its geographical situation. Providing sustainable and affordable ICT services was a priority of the Kiribati government. PacRICS and other projects in the ICT sector had been very helpful in Kiribati, particularly in the area of health, and the benefits were being seen in rural communities. She thanked Australia and the other donors. She explained that Kiribati was encouraging expressions of interest from service providers who could work with the government to provide ICT capacity, particularly connecting rural schools and health clinics, and said Kiribati would welcome technical assistance from SPC to guide it in working with service providers.

76. The representative of RMI acknowledged the work of SPC in this area. He noted that RMI also faced challenges related to the fact that it was a country made up of scattered islands, and that ICT connectivity was very important, particularly for development in the areas of education and health. He asked for clarification regarding how SPC proposed to support ICT development throughout the region, given the widely differing levels of development in ICT among members.

77. The Director-General explained that PacRICS was a broadband satellite system that was relatively inexpensive and could be deployed in isolated areas. The satellite connection was initially funded through a grant from Australia. He said the project's emphasis was more on livelihoods than on communication. Kiribati was the first country to change its regulatory environment, deregulating Internet service provision. He noted that SPC's role was to bring private sector providers together with governments, and that SPC was not a service provider. The PacRICS service, for example, was contracted out to an Australian company. The system had over 200 sites, including 40 public good sites – mostly in schools – where bandwidth was subsidised through the end of the year, with the idea that countries would take over afterwards. In response to the questions from Palau and RMI he said that SPC was assisting countries that wanted to review policies or link up with service providers, but that the funding came from the countries.

78. The Acting Pacific ICT Outreach Manager said that it was important to recognise the different levels of ICT development in the region and to localise SPC's intervention, including capacity building, recognising that some countries have more capacity than others. The outcomes of the recent ICT ministerial meeting in Tonga stressed coordinated approaches to ICT policy. He noted that although the Pacific Plan emphasised the need for ICT policies, only 30 per cent of countries had them. He further noted that only a few countries had legislation criminalising the misuse of ICT, leaving most countries without tools to deal with it.

Decisions

79. CRGA:

- i. noted the rapid progress made in responding to the request from Forum leaders in 2009 to review the Pacific Plan digital strategy and produce a new regional framework for ICT;
- ii. noted that the resulting *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific* adopts the 'many partners, one team' approach and will be supported by a fully costed three-year implementation plan based on the same approach;
- iii. noted that Pacific ICT ministers endorsed the framework in the Tonga Declaration at their meeting in June 2010;
- iv. further noted that Forum leaders also endorsed the framework at their 41st meeting in Vanuatu in August 2010; and
- v. endorsed the *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific*, noting SPC's role in coordinating its development and subsequent implementation.

AGENDA ITEM 3.4 – FUTURE OF PACIFIC FISHERIES

80. The Director of the Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division spoke about the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)/SPC Study on the Future of Pacific Fisheries, which was completed during 2010. He said that the study considered the future of fisheries over a 25-year time frame, and provided the basis for long-term strategic approaches to developing and managing fisheries at national and regional levels. The study was undertaken by a team of consultants who travelled to several PICTs, a panel of international experts provided input, and the first draft was reviewed by a steering committee made up of representatives from SPC, FFA, SPREP, PIFS, the University of the South Pacific (USP) and WorldFish. The summary report, including the seven objectives and 15 priority strategic actions, had been endorsed by SPC Heads of Fisheries, Forum Fisheries Committee Ministers, and Pacific Islands Forum leaders. The study identified threats and opportunities, developed scenarios for the future, and recommended seven key objectives, with a number of strategic actions that would lead to their achievement. He summarised the conclusion of the report as saying 'we must try harder', and noted that many of the recommended actions required commitment by PICTs.

81. The meeting was shown a film outlining the challenges faced by the region in sustainably managing its fisheries resources to benefit its communities and feed its growing population. Among the recommendations were emphasising tourism and other non-extractive uses of coastal fisheries; further strengthening management systems, including traditional forms of management; and strengthening surveillance and enforcement.

82. The representative of Solomon Islands acknowledged the work that went into the study, noting that it captured common issues for countries and steps to be taken by SPC. He acknowledged the support provided by SPC to Solomon Islands in fisheries. He emphasised the need to look at gender issues in fisheries, small-scale fisheries, and ensuring that SPC's work complements that done by other organisations.

83. The representative of New Zealand said that New Zealand was pleased with the report, and noted the need to be conscious of the fact that sustainable and cooperative management was necessary to avoid the collapse of the region's fisheries. He said New Zealand endorsed the report, and he echoed the statement of the FAME Director that the region had to try harder.

84. The FAME Director said that one copy of the DVD was available for each delegation. In response to the comments from Solomon Islands he said that SPC was interested in looking at the issues raised regarding assistance to Solomon Islands and that it recognised the importance of the work done by other agencies in the country.

85. The representative of RMI thanked the Chairperson and thanked SPC for the presentation. He noted that in the video the FFA Director-General said that thanks to conservation measures we still had fish in the region, but that he understood that in fact stocks of yellowfin and bigeye may be diminishing due to overfishing.

86. The FAME Director said that the FFA Director-General had commented on the use of management to correct problems, but that indeed, evidence showed that overfishing was occurring on bigeye and yellowfin and that those species were at risk if overfishing continued. He noted that there was more cause for optimism regarding skipjack and albacore.

87. The representative of Niue stated his confidence that SPC and other bodies would help the region find ways to address the challenge it faced in ensuring the resource was sustainably managed, noting that all inhabitants of the region depended on this resource.

88. The representative of Kiribati thanked SPC and FFA for the study. She acknowledged the importance of fisheries, saying that all PICTs had a long-term interest in maintaining them for the future of their populations, and acknowledged the great work being done in fisheries regionally and at the national level. She noted that many members face challenges related to providing surveillance, and that the observer programme was very helpful in addressing that challenge. She emphasised the importance of adding value in

fisheries as a means to encourage economic development, and said that Kiribati would welcome assistance from SPC in this area.

89. The FAME Director confirmed that the observer programme was being expanded and that SPC was working on assisting members with value adding. He closed by thanking the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) for funding the study.

Decisions

90. CRGA:

- i. endorsed the 'Future of Pacific Fisheries' summary report as an important strategic policy document for the region, noting the high-level support already expressed by Forum member countries;
- ii. approved the wide distribution of the study outputs (consultants' report, summary report and video) to Pacific Island countries and territories to raise public awareness of fisheries issues and the steps needed to secure a better future for the sector.

AGENDA ITEM 3.5 – MAINSTREAMING THE PARIS DECLARATION, ACCRA ACCORD AND PACIFIC AID EFFECTIVENESS PRINCIPLES

91. The Director of the Social Resources Division summarised the paper, noting that it was the culmination of ongoing discussions within the SPC Executive. A new policy would be developed to mainstream principles of aid effectiveness and formalise the SPC corporate position, which had not existed to date. Commencing with the Paris Declaration, which was endorsed in March 2005, there had been a number of international agreements that committed development partners and countries to the principles of harmonisation, alignment and managing aid for results. He explained that these agreements impacted how regional organisations delivered aid and development outcomes. A recent internal review showed that SPC was conscious of aid effectiveness and had implemented activities that embodied those principles, for example the JCS and decentralisation initiatives. However, many were implemented on an ad-hoc basis and needed to be institutionalised. Challenges included weak country systems, and varied donor requirements; a programme of institutional strengthening was being implemented to mitigate these. He noted that many policy actions would be instituted as part of mainstreaming.

92. The representative of Australia emphasised that aid effectiveness and harmonisation were key to improving outcomes in countries. She requested that Recommendation iii be amended to request SPC to develop an appropriate set of indicators to monitor progress, and that this be tabled at CRGA 41 for endorsement.

93. The Director-General welcomed this suggestion.

94. The representative of PNG endorsed Australia's suggested amendment. He noted with pleasure that SPC had factored aid effectiveness principles into policies to achieve full implementation of the MDGs by 2015. He asked for clarification on the collaboration with PIFS on this issue to ensure there was no overlap or duplication of activities. The representative called for countries to adopt aid effectiveness principles as national responsibilities when implementing outreach to communities.

95. The representative of Fiji Islands noted that Fiji associated itself with the Paris Declaration; however, it was not a part of, or bound by, the Cairns compact. Fiji would need to fully assess the new policy to identify possible impacts of the policy within SPC. Fiji could therefore not endorse the recommendation as written.

96. The Director-General noted Fiji's position on the Cairns Compact and the wish to view the full policy. He reiterated that mainstreaming aid effectiveness principles would improve SPC's technical programmes' work with countries and solidify collaboration to achieve common outputs.

97. The representative of Cook Islands said that Cook Islands supported Recommendations i and ii. Regarding Recommendation ii, she noted the importance of the commitment to provide predictable aid, and said that Cook Islands would like to see financial information from SPC well in advance and would welcome a broader mention of the Accra Agenda for Action in the strategy.

98. The representative of PNG suggested that Recommendation iii be extended to reflect collaboration with PIFS on aid effectiveness.

99. The Director of the Social Resources Division noted the call for more practical examples of aid effectiveness activities, mentioning that there were many examples included in two other background papers on the item which could be provided to delegates.

Decisions

100. CRGA:

- i. noted SPC's contribution to aid effectiveness and harmonisation;
- ii. noted SPC's intention to develop a new policy and plan to mainstream aid effectiveness and harmonisation principles for tabling at CRGA 41;
- iii. requested the Secretariat to develop appropriate indicators, for presentation to CRGA 41, to annually monitor progress in implementing these principles, and in regard to the latter, to collaborate with other regional organisations, including the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

AGENDA ITEM 3.6 – TOWARDS A REGIONAL HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION

101. The Manager of the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) spoke about the proposal to establish a regional human rights mechanism. She explained that PIFS and SPC had a formal agreement on RRRT's role in developing a regional human rights mechanism and that there was a need for sustainable work and support in the area of human rights area in the region. The timeline for development of the mechanism would be determined by the region itself. Functions of RRRT would overlap with those of the proposed mechanism, so clarity would be required. She explained that there was great diversity among human rights mechanisms around the world in the ways in which they were bound, varying from legally binding conventions to agreed terms of reference. Most began as commissions, and there was often a gap of many years before a court or other body was created. Several reviews called for the establishment of such a mechanism. Reasons for establishing a human rights mechanism include the advantage of pooling resources, the fact that countries continued to request assistance in the area, and the possibility of enabling a more sustainable approach to providing services. The proposed mechanism would be an independent body but would have to be attached to an intergovernmental body. As the region was often lumped together with Asia, the proposal would provide an opportunity for the Pacific to 'own' human rights through a mechanism reflecting Pacific values and owned, staffed, and driven by PICTs. The proposal was to start with a simple model, focusing on raising awareness regarding human rights compliance and reporting – activities that RRRT already undertakes. It would be necessary to review whether RRRT should be phased out, to ensure there was not duplication of activities. Whether or not states have to accede sovereignty would depend on the model chosen; some models, such as that of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), do not require members to accede sovereignty. This depended on the functions assigned to the mechanism, which could evolve over time. The cost would depend on the model selected. The model proposed would establish one or two commissioners. Funding would be needed for the commissioners and for a secretariat. It would be possible to start with one commissioner, with a second commissioner to be added to work on conventions that members have already signed, such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC). The proposal was for the mechanism to be financed by members. While there had been suggestions that donor funding should be sought, the RRRT Manager noted that it is also important to have member ownership. SPC had a formal partnership with PIFS to progress the development of a human rights mechanism. The model would need to be realistic and take into account the unique nature and cultures of the Pacific.

102. The representative of PNG thanked the Chairperson and the RRRT Manager, and commended the great work of RRRT in training lawyers, civil rights workers, and others. He said he doubted that the time frame was sufficient, and that it was important to have a full appreciation of the difficulties faced by countries, the conventions they had acceded to and why they had not acceded to others. He noted that there had been statements by various stakeholders on how good it would be to establish such a mechanism, but that in talking to individual countries there seemed to be much less motivation at present. He said that given the present context it was necessary to take into account the long-term sustainable financing strategy and the resourcing of such a mechanism. He asked if consideration was being given to establishing a human right mechanism in the Pacific because it was one of only two regions without one, and wondered if other regions had seen tangible benefits from them. He said that PNG endorsed a precautionary approach.

103. The representative of Niue thanked RRRT for the paper. He pointed out that Niue's situation at the national level was different from that of many other member countries and that its approach for recognising some conventions may not be the same as that of others. Niue had recognised three international conventions through New Zealand and still had some others to ratify, but he noted that it was important to be sure that when a new convention was ratified it was properly applied at the national level. The necessary monitoring and reporting could require significant resources. He said that like PNG, Niue endorsed a precautionary approach.

104. The representative of Samoa said that Samoa faced difficulties due to limited resources and capacity, and that this had caused difficulties in meeting the reporting obligations and financial requirements of conventions it had signed. Another difficulty was in aligning national legislation. Samoa was presently preparing for its Universal Periodic Review (UPR) and would be appearing before the UN Human Rights Council in May. She said that subject of a regional human rights commission had been raised in a UPR workshop in Samoa but had not been well received. It was felt that establishing a national human rights commission should be the first priority. Samoa was developing a national strategic plan. Altogether, Samoa believed that the timing was not right, given the amount of work SPC had to consolidate the changes resulting from the RIF process. It was also concerned about funding. Samoa felt that the proposal should be explored further.

105. The representative of Tonga said Tonga shared the concerns that had been expressed. Given the activities at the regional level – the RIF process, the long-term sustainable financing strategy and prioritisation of services, Tonga suggested deferring the proposal.

106. The representative of Fiji Islands thanked the Chairperson and RRRT for its work. He said that Fiji agreed with the views expressed. Although it was a good concept, the timing was not yet right. Fiji had recently completed the UPR and had its own human rights mechanism. It had taken a great deal of work to complete the review process. He said Fiji agreed with others that it would be better to look at the initiative later and to first concentrate on building capacity at the national level.

107. The Director-General thanked the Chairperson and delegates. He said there was a clear message from members regarding the timing of the proposal. There was no disagreement on whether it was a good idea or not, but members thought it was important to focus on the national level first. In response to the comment from PNG on whether the proposal was being made just so that the Pacific would not be one of the last two regions without a human rights mechanism, he said he did not think so. It would be an opportunity for countries that could not have their own human rights mechanism, as not all countries would be able to establish their own, and it was more urgent for those countries. He said SPC would explore the process further and bring it back to CRGA for consideration in the future.

108. The representative of PNG clarified his earlier comments by saying that it was important to ask such questions to guide discussions on how to approach the issue. He noted that RRRT did have important roles to play, including the role of 'midwife'.

109. The RRRT Manager thanked delegates for their feedback and noted that there was no disagreement. Such an initiative had to be Pacific led and driven, and timing was critical. She agreed with the comments by PNG on doing more work at the national level through consultation to further explore needs. In summary she said the message from members was that it was a good initiative but it needed further exploration and scoping and needed to be deferred until the time was right for the region.

Decisions

110. CRGA:

- i. endorsed the Secretariat's efforts to continue to assist members in their consideration of ratification of international human rights treaties and conventions and associated reporting obligations;
- ii. noted the Secretariat's intention to continue to explore the potential benefits of a regional human rights mechanism for the Pacific that could assist members in meeting their human rights obligations, with progress to be reported to a future meeting of CRGA.

AGENDA ITEM 3.7 – TRACKING DEVELOPMENT PROGRESS IN PICTS

111. The Director-General introduced the work of the SPC Statistics and Demography Programme (SDP) towards compiling a set of development indicators to monitor progress.

112. The SDP Manager began by referencing CRGA 39 endorsement of the development of a Pacific regional statistics strategy and action plan as well as the strategic objectives of the Pacific Plan relating to it. Significant progress had been made in compiling the first draft of a minimum core set of development indicators that would feed into a regional database to assist PICTs in regular monitoring and reporting of development progress. The core set of indicators included nine thematic areas encompassing all SPC programme activities. Two additional themes – climate change and food security – had since been recommended and were under consideration. A key driver of the programme was the policy mandate from Pacific leaders for a harmonised approach to statistical tools, allowing cross-country comparisons of the same statistics indicators. The leaders requested a common core set of indicators across most countries, which would address the regional tracking and monitoring of development performance and progress. Consultation with member countries, and in parallel with financial and technical partners, was underway to ensure the minimum core set met national monitoring requirements. Final completion of the core set would be coordinated by SPC and would be used to populate the national minimum development indicator database in collaboration with all member country statistics offices. SPC would also ensure that PIFS had up-to-date information to populate the annual tracking report produced for the Forum. The activity also served as a first stocktake of actual data gaps, and provided benchmarks and baselines to commence future work. Upgrading key administrative databases was considered the only way to improve information on social and economic conditions, which even the best censuses and household surveys could not provide. Acknowledging this challenge, SPC recognised that the development or strengthening of national administrative databases in key sectors (e.g. education, health, natural resources, civil registration, migration) was the only way to ensure viable and sustainable systems for regular data collection, particularly when compared to expensive ad hoc surveys. Given the time needed to develop and maintain functional administrative databases, SDP would also continue with its development of a pilot multiple development indicator survey. This survey would enable PICTs to capture all population-based development indicators, such as the targets for MDGs 1–6, on a more regular basis compared to the current programme of 5-yearly and very costly demographic and health surveys (DHS) and household income and expenditure surveys (HIES).

113. The representative of PNG welcomed assistance to members on the core set of indicators, the use of a harmonised approach, and the redevelopment of existing databases. He commended SPC on progress linked to the Pacific Plan, and interventions at the national level. PNG endorsed the recommendations of the report.

114. The representative of New Zealand commended this important piece of work to measure development progress and track regional progress. She said that it provided an excellent example of regional collaboration, and she noted with pleasure the development of macro-economic indicators and the disaggregation of data by sex.

115. The representative of Tonga endorsed the recommendations of the report, emphasising the importance of statistics and data gathering activities.

116. The representative of Niue expressed thanks to SDP, acknowledging training provided to the small Niue office, which had been greatly assisted by the better provision of statistics to government decision-makers.

117. The representative of Solomon Islands noted with appreciation the support of SPC in the area of statistics, and specifically support to Solomon Islands' census activities. She noted that population was an important dimension and thanked SPC for support to the national population policy. She said Solomon Islands would seek continued support to finalise the policy.

118. The representative of Kiribati joined other delegations acknowledging the efforts of SDP to support evidence-based decision-making. She further acknowledged the support of Australia.

119. The representative of French Polynesia noted with appreciation that a call at CRGA 39 to include French territories in comparison studies in the region had been achieved. French Polynesia supported the recommendations of the report.

120. The representative of Nauru thanked SPC for its ongoing technical assistance, training and capacity building in the small Nauru statistics office, which had greatly benefited from training.

121. The Director-General noted that the journey to get to a tangible outcome on a core data set had been a long one due to political sensitivities. The work began within SPC, and the outcomes would be continuously improved upon. Progress was strategically timed to fulfil the need to track progress on MDGs.

122. The SDP Manger thanked delegates for the positive feedback. He offered special thanks to the governments of Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and French Polynesia for making key staff available for work placements. This highlighted the need for a facility to address the challenges faced by small island states, and the benefits of utilising national capacity at the regional level.

Decisions

123. CRGA:

- i. noted the recent progress made on developing a core set of National Minimum Development Indicators in response to Pacific leaders' request for a harmonised approach to upgrading and extending country and regional statistical information systems and databases across all sectors;
- ii. agreed to provide SPC with consolidated feedback from their respective national/territorial statistics providers and major users of official statistics on the suitability and completeness of this core set for tracking development progress;
- iii. agreed to provide SPC with an assessment of the capacity of national/territorial statistical agencies to coordinate regular updates of this regional priority indicator list, and to identify challenges likely to be faced by national statistics offices in undertaking this task.

AGENDA ITEM 4 – DIVISIONAL REPORTS

AGENDA ITEM 4.1 – ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT DIVISION

124. The Director-General introduced the report on the Economic Development Division, requesting that while they listen to the divisional reports delegates reflect on how to identify which SPC services are most essential with respect to the long-term sustainable funding strategy.

125. The EDD Director presented an overview of EDD's work during 2010, its first year in existence. He explained that the division consisted of three programmes: the energy programme, with seven Suva staff members who transferred from SOPAC; PICTO, with two Suva staff members who transferred from SOPAC

and one staff member currently in Noumea; and the transport programme, made up of the former Regional Maritime Programme and some work in aviation that was just starting. The infrastructure programme was not yet operational, and there was also a directors' office. The EDD budget for 2011 was 7.2 million CFP units, with funding for energy and transport from EU and funding for PICTO from China. The director's office concentrated on administration and logistics, information and communication, and data gathering and analysis for the PICTO, energy and transport programmes, leading to staff efficiencies. Highlights of the energy programme during the year included the development of the regional framework, progress made on bulk fuel purchasing through the Pacific Petroleum Project, and a new newsletter. PICTO highlights included the development of a regional framework, further development of the PacRICS project, which now has 130 sites; further development of OLPC, with projects in seven countries and two trial projects; and a new newsletter and online portal. Highlights in the transport programme included the implementation of the Central Pacific Shipping Commission in Tuvalu, Kiribati, Nauru and RMI, resulting in freight rates to Nauru dropping by 30 per cent in the last 18 months; implementation of domestic ship safety programmes in Kiribati and Tonga auditing domestic ferries; the continuation of the maritime audit regime; the first meeting of regional directors of aviation in six years; and the implementation of data collection from airports. The work plan for 2011 included the first triennial joint ministerial meeting for energy, transport and ICT. The EDD Director noted that there were many cross-cutting issues for ministers in these sectors to address. Investment in human capital, including in-house capacity and national capacity, was one area on which the division would focus in 2011. Another area was planning, policy and regulatory frameworks, including national energy and ICT policies and implementation plans and a regional transport framework. Other areas in the work plan were international, rural and remote access; information and knowledge sharing, including a new ICT Internet portal; and financing, sustainability and monitoring and evaluation. In the area of transport, safety, security and environment was an area of emphasis, with a safe ship management pilot project going forward in Kiribati and Tonga and new International Maritime Organization (IMO) crew training standards. Key constraints faced by the division were uncertainty of funding, lack of recognition and utilisation of existing capacity, lack of technical and managerial capacity, data gaps resulting from a lack of emphasis on data collection and analysis, commercial and political pressures in transportation and communication, and lack of recognition in some countries of the importance of the three sectors for economic development. He noted that there would be further analysis through the regional frameworks of which services were best addressed at the national level and which at the regional level, as some members were relying too heavily on SPC in areas that should be national responsibilities.

126. The representative of Samoa thanked the Chairperson and the EDD Director, congratulating the division on its achievements. She asked when the division expected to develop its strategic plan. She noted that Samoa's port authority had requested clarification regarding seaport standards and marine pollution and asked about the status of that request. She asked about aviation standards regarding accident investigation, dangerous goods, and environment, noise pollution and greenhouse gases.

127. The EDD Director said that the division hoped to present its strategic plan at the joint ministerial meeting in April to give it time to complete the regional transport framework and have it feed into the plan. Regarding seaport standards, he said the standards came from the ISO 28000 standards for security. He said the division had provided training for some ports and that he would ensure that Samoa was included in the next round of training. He said the division did not address pollution directly but that it worked with SPREP in that area. He explained that aviation standards were the area of the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), which would be involved in developing the transport framework. SPC saw the work of EDD as supporting PASO and the Association of South Pacific Airlines. He noted that SPC had held a course in accident investigation, and that there would be another IMO-funded course in 2011. SPC was also working with IMO on addressing issues relating to dangerous goods. There was a lot of work from IMO in the area of the environment and greenhouse gases, and with the new Climate Change Advisor SPC would be starting to coordinate work in that area.

128. The representative of New Zealand congratulated EDD on the specific deliverables outlined for 2011, indicating helpful targets. She said New Zealand would like to see a full output plan for next year included in the report, and that it would be important to report against detailed outputs. She commended SPC's approach in the area of transport and supported further looking at what is best done regionally and nationally through the long-term sustainable financing strategy. She expressed some concern that the work plan did not always reflect those principles, noting that SPC activities should be limited to those best delivered regionally but that

the work plan had included a reference to electrification for 100 additional households – a function that one would expect to be implemented nationally.

129. The representative of RMI noted that EDD's work in energy and transport were very important to RMI's development and thanked SPC for including information about the funding available for next year. He asked if the amount of funding was sufficient to carry out the work and if it was sustainable for the future.

130. The EDD Director explained that the plan included a matrix with approximate costs, including staff costs, and activities pulled from the division's databases. Some activities did not have costs by them. This was a first cut and still needed some work. There was a need to strengthen impacts at the national level.

131. The EDD Deputy Director (Energy) said that the development of an implementation plan for the framework would involve a stocktake of the work of CROP agencies and other agencies in the energy sector in countries, and that this would help determine SPC's activities in 2011. This would help identify gaps and areas where there should be closer cooperation or emphasis. Certain activities would definitely go ahead, such as the North REP project. This was where the goal of electrifying 100 household came from. The action plan would reflect priorities and major outcomes from the framework as well as the work of other agencies.

132. The EDD Director responded to the question from RMI on the sufficiency and sustainability of funding, saying he thought it might not be sufficient, particularly as the tendency was for members to request further services. In the area of accident investigation, he said that some work could be done on a regional level, but it would be necessary to determine whether activities should be done on a regional or national level.

133. The representative of French Polynesia commended the EDD Director and team for the paper. He said that French Polynesia had not been able this year to fully participate in the ICT workshops, but that it had been actively involved in the activities of the transport and aviation programmes. He said French Polynesia was looking forward to strengthening its partnerships with SPC in transport and aviation. He thanked EDD for the quality of the annexes, particularly Annex 3, which clearly described all activities conducted in PICTs.

134. The Director-General responded to comments from Samoa on SPC's role in transport, explaining that SPC had a memorandum of understanding with PASO delineating responsibilities and cooperation. He noted that PASO had a specific mandate and limited staffing, and that much of SPC's work contributed to PASO's work. He thanked New Zealand for its comments, saying that SPC was slowly moving toward including outputs in work plans for EDD and other divisions. In response to the question from RMI on funding, he said that much of the division's funding was for the North REP project. This project was the source of the targets for rural lighting and SPC was the implementing party. He said that joint meetings were key, noting that if three or four cabinet ministers from a country attended a meeting and looked at cross-cutting issues there would be a better chance for progress to be made at the national level as governments would be in a better position to take positions on issues.

135. The Acting PICTO Manager presented the new ICT portal. He explained that the site was initially aimed at Pacific members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP), though SPC was looking at expanding it to include all members. He demonstrated that the site reflected the framework themes, and it was possible to submit documents and tag them based on the sector. The site could be searched by sector and it included a listing of upcoming relevant events as well as an ICT profile for each country, a register of ICT professionals in the region and many other features.

Decisions

136. CRGA:

- i. noted the work and achievements of EDD programmes to date, in particular their work in developing the *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific* and the *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific*, which were endorsed by CRGA under agenda items 3.2 and 3.3 respectively; and
- ii. endorsed the EDD's proposed work programme for 2011.

AGENDA ITEM 4.2 – SOCIAL RESOURCES DIVISION

137. The Director of the Social Resources Division (SRD) provided an overview of work in 2010 by the four programmes that make up the division – Human Development Programme (HDP); Statistics and Demography Programme; Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT); and Regional Media Centre (RMC). In August 2010, the division had a total of 56 staff; 64 per cent of SRD staff are female and over 70 per cent are Pacific Islanders. In 2010, SRD had a revised budget of 7.0 million CFP units, made up of 1.29 million CFP units (18 per cent) in core funding, 1.76 million (25 per cent) in programme funding, and 3.96 million (57 per cent) in project funding. The director presented summaries of each programme's work to date in 2010:

- Initiatives of HDP in 2010 included cultural mapping to develop an inventory of cultural resources and assets; support for Solomon Islands' preparations for the 2012 Festival of Pacific Arts; support for finalising national youth policies in several PICTs; assistance in developing national action plans to tackle violence against women in Kiribati and Solomon Islands; the Pacific Culture and Education Strategy 2010–2015 was finalised and later endorsed by the Council of Pacific Arts; and SPC convened a successful 11th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, which endorsed a range of strategies to accelerate gender equality commitments. A study conducted by the Community Education Training Centre (CETC) showed a strong contribution by graduates to entrepreneurial development and community empowerment.
- SDP's strategic plan has been extended by one year because development of the new plan has had to be deferred until after the consultations on the Regional Statistical Benchmarking Study and its implementation plan are completed. Capacity transfer and skills development have been integrated into all aspects of SDP's work, e.g. technical assistance (totalling 138 person-weeks) for national statistical systems has been provided to 15 PICTs this year to date. Support was provided for census rounds in FSM and Kiribati and household income and expenditure surveys and demographic and health surveys were conducted for several PICTs. An annual update of the Pacific region's MDG indicators was produced. The report feeds into the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Pacific Centre regional MDG database and the PIFS initiative on annual monitoring and tracking of development progress.
- The year was a challenging one for RRRT because of funding uncertainty (New Zealand is phasing out its support) and ongoing discussions about the most appropriate location of the team. Despite these difficulties, RRRT assisted 10 PICTs in submitting their first reports to the UN Human Rights Council under the Universal Periodic Review process. Support was provided for ratification of CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women) and related reporting. Legislative reviews were undertaken in four PICTs, to ensure compliance of HIV legislation with human rights. Capacity to improve legislation addressing violence against women was strengthened through providing training to lawyers and non-legal government and civil society staff from 11 PICTs, with funding provided by the UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women.
- In 2010, RMC has undertaken several joint programming initiatives in collaboration with LRD, FAME, the Public Health Division's HIV Section and HDP. It also supported the work of other CROP agencies including SOPAC and PIFS as well as that of the Fiji Audiovisual Commission.

The work of RMC contributes indirectly to the achievement of the MDGs by highlighting development issues, ranging from non-communicable diseases to fisheries and transportation, through its outreach programmes such as the Pacific Way television and radio programmes.

The Director concluded by noting that SRD in its current form will disappear at the beginning of 2011, with three of the four programmes becoming part of the new Education, Training and Human Development Division as part of Phase 2 of the reform of SPC's organisational structure. The Statistics and Demography Programme will become the Statistics for Development Programme (SDP) and will report directly to the Director-General.

138. The Chairperson thanked the SRD Director for his presentation and invited comments.

139. The representative of FSM said he had the pleasure of attending CETC's 2010 graduation ceremony and looked forward to FSM sending more of its citizens to CETC. He also commended RMC's work in producing the Pacific Way programme, saying it provided an excellent review of regional issues, including environmental concerns.

140. The representative of Kiribati thanked SRD for its contribution to Kiribati's efforts to achieve the MDGs. She said Kiribati had benefitted from RRRT's capacity building in relation to legislation on violence against women and its assistance for reporting under CEDAW and the Universal Periodic Review. CETC provided valuable leadership training for women, especially in developing community livelihoods. She also noted plans to mainstream gender throughout SPC programmes.

141. The representative of Palau said the Ministry of Culture and Community Affairs was especially appreciative of HDP's work in the areas of youth and gender, and that of CETC in community development. He noted the collaboration between PIFS and SPC in presenting an informative workshop on human rights in Palau.

142. The representative of RMI thanked SRD for its valuable work in the region. He recalled that at previous CRGA meetings, RMI had asked SPC to consider establishing a branch of CETC in the North Pacific and repeated the request, noting the expense for northern members of travel to Fiji.

143. The representative of Samoa noted the positive impacts of CETC's work for women at the grassroots, saying that exposure to entrepreneurial skills gave them the ability to improve the quality of life of their families and community. She noted SDP's contribution to monitoring progress on the MDGs and its capacity building work, asking if this could be extended to Samoa's Economic and Planning Office in addition to the Statistics Bureau.

144. The representative of Niue acknowledged SRD's assistance to Niue and noted the need to support women in business after they graduated from CETC. In relation to the 11th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, he recognised the need to support women's rights but asked 'What about men – are men so fortunate that there is no need to worry about their rights?' He also praised the Pacific Way programme, saying it was a source of information on regional issues.

145. The representative of Nauru thanked SRD for the assistance provided by SDP and CETC and also RRRT in relation to the Universal Periodic Review. He recalled that at CRGA 39, Nauru had requested assistance for a national consultation on CEDAW and was grateful that this had been provided.

146. The representative of French Polynesia noted that the meeting was asked to endorse the Pacific Culture and Education Strategy 2010–2015. However, only a summary of the strategy was provided in an annex to the SRD paper and the full document had not been tabled so members were not able to study its full implications.

147. The representative of PNG agreed with the views of French Polynesia and suggested the meeting defer endorsement of the strategy.

148. The representative of Australia concurred with the reservations expressed by the two previous speakers and also said that to be consistent, a costed plan for implementing the strategy should also be presented.

149. The Director-General said the Secretariat valued the comments of representatives on the impact of SRD programmes. He apologised for the fact that the Secretariat had not followed its usual protocol in tabling the full Pacific Culture and Education Strategy for endorsement, rather than just a summary. He noted that the strategy had been endorsed by Forum education ministers and suggested that with the meeting's agreement, the document would be circulated to members and a request for endorsement would be made out of session after they had time to consider it. He said SPC would further consider RMI's request to locate a branch of CETC in the north. Costs were a stumbling block but there was potential for a partnership with the College of Micronesia. In relation to Niue's question on support for men's rights, he agreed that this would be a useful issue for the next triennial women's meeting to consider, saying that there was a need for 'partnership, not war' between men and women. He also reminded representatives of SDP's plea for national feedback on the proposed set of development indicators.

150. The SRD Director said he was pleased that programme services were meeting members' needs. He noted that Cook Islands had offered to host the 12th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women. Adding to the Director-General's comments on a northern branch of CETC, he said that CETC has been modularising its courses so they can be delivered in-country on an extension basis. He noted that follow up of CETC graduates showed they frequently took up leadership positions (study results are available online).

Decisions

151. CRGA:

- i. noted the work and achievements of SRD during 2010;
- ii. noted the draft recommendations and outcomes of the 11th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women and the Secretariat's intention to prepare a fully costed implementation plan in response;
- iii. noted the progress made with respect to gender mainstreaming in SPC, in particular the establishment of a Gender Commitments Planning and Monitoring Mechanism;
- iv. noted the progress made with the development of a new strategic plan for the Statistics for Development Programme;
- v. noted that the Pacific Culture and Education Strategy 2010–2015 was endorsed by the Forum Ministers of Education meeting and that it will be circulated to SPC members shortly for out of session comment and approval, and further noted that the Secretariat will begin developing a costed implementation plan for the strategy in consultation with CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) agencies and partners in 2011; and
- vi. endorsed the proposed 2011 work plans for the programmes of the Social Resources Division.

AGENDA ITEM 4.3 – PUBLIC HEALTH DIVISION

152. The Director-General introduced the Public Health Division report.

153. The Director of the Public Health Division (PHD) presented an overview of the division's work in 2010. PHD was engaged in a reform process, continuing through 2010 and planned for completion by early 2011. He described the new structure, which facilitates a whole-of-health approach. PHD staff were currently based in five locations, with 78 per cent of positions project-funded and 94 per cent of the budget sourced from grants-based project funds. The reliance on project funding created a vulnerability for the division, as many 'mission-critical' positions did not have continuity of funding. The 2011 budget demonstrated the significance of SPC's health financing activity in the Pacific. The PHD Director noted key priority health

concerns in the region, including: significant variability in life expectancy, which in some countries was declining or plateauing; changing morbidity and mortality patterns; a continuing NCD burden, causing premature death in the Pacific; rising rates of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) evidenced from screening programmes (though HIV prevalence rates continue to be low, except in PNG); and an increase in tuberculosis (TB) and multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) rates in the Micronesian subregion, despite the decrease in TB rates in the region overall, which poses a threat to TB control in the region. Results achieved by PHD during 2010 to date were in line with the 2010–2014 PHD strategic plan. The PHD Director noted that these tangible results contributed directly to the Forum leaders' 'healthy islands' vision, a number of the MDGs, and objectives of the Pacific Plan. PHD services were clearly aligned to regional and national policies with sustained impacts and outcomes in a number of areas, including: a decrease in the incidence of malaria in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu; NCD plans being developed and adopted in place in 14 PICTs; and scaling up of HIV and STI awareness, counselling and testing services. PHD contributed significantly to health system strengthening in the Pacific by providing training, technical assistance, lab assessments, support to development plans, treatment monitoring, and health financing, specifically via the Global Fund and NCD 2-1-22 grants. The PHD Director noted expected future directions and challenges relating to PHD. SPC was well positioned, due to its multi-sectoral approach at the regional and national levels, to support the move to a whole-of-health approach, with a focus on strengthening primary health care services. Simplifying and harmonising grants management processes and standard reporting tools had improved SPC's involvement in a multi-agency, regional approach to health. The proposed work plan and budget for 2011, the largest public health budget ever presented to CRGA, reflected growth in funding compared to 2010, largely from project funding. Highlighting the current ratio of funding sources, the PHD Director noted that 95 per cent was project funding, of which 84 per cent was derived from two donors – the Global Fund and Australia. All project funding was disease focused; consequently the first of the four strategic plan objectives ('to combat and reduce the overall impact and burden of diseases') was well funded, while the remaining three were under-funded. The challenge of this imbalance was that flexibility, responsiveness, and maintenance of core funding had become issues of concern. As 63 per cent of the budget represented grants disbursed to countries, the grants management unit had become a critical component of the business plan. He noted that it was expected that this would diminish over time as more grants were channelled bilaterally, allowing PHD to re-focus on technical support for implementation. The PHD Director noted that some assumptions were built into proposed work plan results, including the continued availability of budgeted funds, the absence of significant public health incidents, retention of a required number of staff, timely receipt of project funding, and other partner agencies fulfilling their obligations. The proposed results for 2011 were presented. In conclusion, the PHD Director reiterated that the division was continually making progress towards improving the health of people in the Pacific.

154. The representative of FSM thanked SPC for its support, especially in the area of NCD reduction and increasing the capacity of the Guam public health laboratory. He said that a healthy society translates into economic growth and social well-being. FSM noted with concern PHD's potential loss of capacity, which could have a significant impact on the Pacific's ability to respond to priority health concerns.

155. The representative of Kiribati acknowledged the work of PHD in delivering critical services aligned to national health priorities. She noted positive impacts for Kiribati relating to strengthening of local capacity to respond to TB – a significant issue in Kiribati, support to develop the preparedness plan for influenza, and support to NCD public awareness programmes. She said Kiribati supported the whole-of-health and cross-sectoral approaches PHD had developed to health issues; however, she noted with concern that PHD could lose capacity to respond to the region's needs. She called for ongoing support from development partners.

156. The representative of Fiji Islands echoed these views. He said the PHD programme was critical to all communities of the Pacific, and he thanked SPC and development partners for their assistance. He expressed concern that funding for core support could be lost. To reduce the risk of loss of funding and delivery of services to the Pacific, Fiji suggested that CRGA encourage the Secretariat to seek alternative funding by approaching non-traditional donors – for example the United Arab Emirates and China. This was a key objective of the sustainable financing strategy, and would lighten the load of traditional donors.

157. The representative of Samoa said that the presentation reflected the bleak situation for health in the Pacific, particularly in terms of NCDs and life expectancy. However, the work of PHD and its positive impacts and contribution to the healthy islands vision help paint a brighter picture. She commended the PHD team for its efforts to align its work to national health priorities, and encouraged strengthening the

partnership with WHO. She echoed Fiji's point that sustainable funding is critical, and that SPC should seek funding from alternative sources.

158. The representative of French Polynesia expressed concern regarding the continuity of services for the Pacific, particularly relating to NCDs and pandemic preparedness. He asked if funding was stopping because projects were completed and their objectives had been achieved. He asked PHD to provide more detail about why the funding had stopped. He took the opportunity to inform CRGA of the new regional hospital in Tahiti which was inaugurated in August 2010. This hospital would offer cancer treatment and reduce the number of overseas evacuations.

159. The representative of Niue commended PHD on its success in implementing the strategic plan and helping achieve the MDGs. He said that Niue recognised NCDs as a critical component of health planning. He noted that significant issues, such as the importation of low quality meats, development of exercise and awareness raising programmes for promoting healthy lifestyles and consumption of healthy foods, should be addressed at the national level.

160. The representative of New Zealand congratulated PHD and member countries on the results achieved during 2010. She said that 2010 had been a difficult year for PHD staff and she offered particular thanks for their efforts. She said that New Zealand noted members' concern that PHD may lose capacity, and agreed that the issue was important; however, New Zealand's view was that as projects conclude it is important to reflect on SPC's role in supporting countries; this issue related to sustainable financing. She said projects were designed to boost development and capacity in countries, so after the conclusion of a project SPC needed to assess if country priorities had changed. The key issue, she said, was how projects transitioned to new priorities and funding modalities. There was a need for clarity on what resources needed to be secured for the long term and what were core functions. She congratulated PHD on the increase in quality and performance monitoring as part of its new structure, and proposed that this function be carried out for SPC as a whole instead of being duplicated at divisional level. New Zealand encouraged PHD to produce a work plan that reflected activities, indicators and outputs, allowing CRGA to assess progress and value for money over time.

161. The representative of American Samoa thanked SPC for its assistance, particularly for training and supporting regional seminars. He expressed concern over the sustainability of funding. He requested more clarity on the nature of the shortcomings experienced by PHD. He said that members needed to make their own path in addressing important issues like pandemic preparedness, with support from SPC.

162. The representative of Solomon Islands expressed his appreciation for SPC's work. Malaria rates were declining, and he noted PHD's role as the principal recipient of funds for the malaria and TB Global Fund projects on behalf of Solomon Islands. Similarly, the sector-wide approach (SWAp) programme, NCD plans, pandemic responsiveness, and gender-based violence policies had progressed thanks to PHD support. He noted SPC's focus on utilising existing government systems, aligning with country priorities and employing aid effectiveness principles. SPC supplemented a lack of capacity on the ground, so as institutional strengthening progressed, roles could change. He noted that SPC's Solomon Islands office was small compared to size of grants to the country, and proposed an increase in office personnel with finance, public health and grants management experience to oversee this significant expenditure.

163. The Director-General thanked delegates for their vote of confidence. In response to comments from the floor, he agreed that it was important to define regional versus national responsibilities, particularly in the health sector, as bilateral funding was often supported with regional assistance. He said that SPC's role was to support governments in building healthy communities. Many countries did not have the technical capacity to undertake their national responsibilities without support, so in these terms, SPC may seem to delve into national issues. He highlighted the importance of countries inviting established institutions like SPC to assist in a coordinated effort before hiring consultants directly. He said that fund management was currently centralised, as responding to the complicated requirements of international donors required significant capacity. Many countries were developing SWAps, leading them to eventually take up grants management and allowing SPC to move back into technical support. He noted that SPC's strategy was to withdraw from grants management over time, while still responding to country needs. He explained that SPC recognised the time-bound nature of the project model and acknowledged the need to present justification for project continuation. SPC's objective was to build capacity in countries, and given the mobility of the health sector

labour force, it was important for members to understand that this role was ongoing. The PHD work plan would be self-explanatory and would provide clear outcomes in 2011. On the issue of seeking funds from non-traditional donors, he said that while SPC was currently seeking new funding sources, it was cognisant of the importance of continuing relationships with current partners of ensuring that new sources contribute to the long-term sustainable development of Pacific countries. He suggested that CRGA 40 consider requesting SPC to be vigilant in looking to extend current project funding while seeking new funding sources.

164. The PHD Director responded to the comments by New Zealand by pointing out that rather than boosting activities, the NCD project had actually started the work on communicable diseases in most countries. Many countries had only recently completed NCD action plans, and were looking for funding to implement activities. Countries' varying stages of development dictated the amount and modality of assistance required. In response to the comment by Niue, he noted that the food security framework would build in actions to respond to imports of low quality meat.

165. The representative of New Caledonia congratulated PHD for co-organising a workshop on public health in the French territories.

Decisions

166. CRGA:

- i. noted the work and achievements of the Public Health Division (PHD) during 2010;
- ii. noted with concern that project funding addressing high-priority health concerns relating to non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and pandemic preparedness will come to an end in 2011, and further noted the Secretariat's efforts to explore continuation of aspects of the funding;
- iii. requested that the Secretariat, cognisant of the ongoing initiative to develop a long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC, further define the funding required to sustain its important work in addressing the health priorities of members;
- iv. requested that the Secretariat continue to pursue consultations on future financing from non-traditional donors;
- v. endorsed PHD's proposed work plan for 2011.

AGENDA ITEM 4.4 – FISHERIES, AQUACULTURE AND MARINE ECOSYSTEMS DIVISION (FAME)

167. The Director of the Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division introduced the presentation of the work of the division in 2010. FAME consists of two programmes, Oceanic Fisheries (OFP) and Coastal Fisheries (CFP), and the CRISP (Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific) Project Coordination Unit. FAME began implementing a new four-year strategic plan in 2010. The goal as stated in the strategic plan is sustainable management of the marine resources of the Pacific Islands region for economic growth, food security and environmental conservation. The revised budget for the division for 2010 was 10.8 million CFP units. Highlights for the year for CFP included good progress in resource mobilisation, with the start of the SciCOFish project (10.4 million CFP units over four years). The main output of the SciCOFish project coastal component would be simple monitoring programmes, databases, and effective management measures for key inshore fisheries, with an emphasis on building national capacity in these areas. In the field of aquaculture, three PICTs would have new development plans by the end of the year, to guide the development of this growth industry. The introduction of new species and varieties of tilapia for aquaculture was an emerging issue. SPC had never promoted species introductions, and concerns had also been raised by SPREP on the plans of some PICTs to introduce improved strains of Nile tilapia. Major achievements for OFP in 2010 included the completion of new region-wide stock assessments for skipjack and bigeye tuna, with the skipjack assessment making use of information from the tagging programme. The results suggested less scope to increase catches than previously thought and had attracted

considerable interest. The bigeye assessment showed that overfishing was continuing to occur. While the major tagging efforts of the Pacific Tuna Tagging Programme were completed in 2009, two cruises targeting bigeye tuna in the central Pacific using hand-line fishing were being conducted in 2010. Meanwhile, 15 per cent of tags had been returned, from as far away as Thailand and Ecuador. More countries were able to manage their own data efficiently using the latest version of the Tuna Fisheries Data Management System (TUFMAN) programme, which had been rolled out in seven countries during the year. A three-year research plan had been developed for key oceanic shark species, and funding for its implementation was being sought from the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). The region's observer programmes continued to meet the objective of 100 per cent observer coverage on purse-seine vessels during 2010, with support from SPC and FFA. By the end of the year, 150 observers would be trained. In relation to CRISP, 2010 was the last full year for the project and the emphasis had been on publishing and disseminating results. Field activities included trials of post-larval capture and culture in Kiritimati Island, Kiribati; further work on shark tagging; and a marine resource and biodiversity survey of the Chesterfield Islands of New Caledonia carried out with SPREP. FAME's 2011 work programme would be developed in detail in the first weeks of 2011 for discussion by Heads of Fisheries at their meeting in March. Several projects had been approved subject to final documentation, including a proposal to the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) to build on the work of CRISP; anticipated implementation of the Fisheries for Food Security project; participation in the GTZ climate change adaptation project; and a further phase of the Oceanic Fisheries Management Project funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

168. The representative of New Caledonia congratulated FAME for the impressive work accomplished, noting that it was of direct interest to New Caledonia and that the territory had been working directly with the division. New Caledonia had a particular interest in OFP activities and had great collaboration with the programme. Other areas that were important to New Caledonia included tuna fisheries data management, hook trials to reduce bycatch of turtles and the research in the Chesterfield Islands. The future of fisheries report was of great interest, and it was important to have data to sustainably manage existing fish stocks.

169. The representative of Cook Islands thanked the division for the presentations and congratulated FAME staff on the success of their work, noting that the division had been successful in steering through the global economic crisis. She said Cook Islands was looking forward to the projects on food security and SciCOFish.

170. The representative of French Polynesia expressed appreciation for the work of the division, and in particular expressed gratitude for its assistance in organising the Tahiti Aquaculture Symposium in Papeete in 2010 with financial assistance from France. He said that French Polynesia was happy that there was strong collaboration between SPC and WCPFC.

171. The representative of Solomon Islands thanked the division for the presentations and congratulated it for its work. He asked why coastal and nearshore fisheries were treated separately when they appeared to be overlapping areas. He noted that Solomon Islands supported the move of the Freshwater Aquaculture Officer to Fiji and the recruitment of a new Observer Coordination Officer based in Pohnpei. He asked about funding for the ecosystem approach to fisheries management.

172. The representative of Kiribati acknowledged the division's work with gratitude, particularly the ongoing support for strengthening the region's capacity toward sustainable management of resources. She acknowledged the support of donor partners and noted that it was hoped that this support would continue.

173. The representative of Vanuatu expressed appreciation for the work of the division. He noted that Vanuatu was a major beneficiary of SPC services and acknowledged SPC's ongoing assistance in the development of the country's national observer programme and in biological sampling. He said that Vanuatu looked forward to ongoing support in tuna data management. Deep bottom snapper was one main resource for small-scale fisheries, but there was a need to review stock status and the maximum sustainable catch. He said Vanuatu looked forward to more support in this area. Freshwater aquaculture offered much promise, and he suggested that SPC develop proposals to meet key challenges for aquaculture such as supplying freshwater prawns to farmers and assisting with biosecurity in this area.

174. The representative of Samoa thanked the division for its accomplishments to date and said that Samoa saw value in the work. The evidence on the depletion of tuna stocks was worrying given the region's

dependence on it. She asked if it was possible to charge WCPFC more for the services SPC was performing, given the need for SPC to increase the level of its long-term sustainable financing.

175. The representative of France complimented FAME for its work and noted that fisheries were of great interest to France. France provided financial support through FFEM (Fonds Français pour l'Environnement Mondial), and this support was expected to continue. France had also signed conventions and sent technical delegations to conferences in the region. The work of various French scientific institutions such as IFREMER (French Research Institute for Exploitation of the Sea) was helping increase understanding of the Pacific. He said that France would continue to support research and to work in close collaboration with FAME.

176. The representative of FSM thanked the presenters, and noted that FSM occupied one of biggest areas in the Pacific. Fisheries were the main source of economic opportunity and food security. He thanked SPC for its work in fisheries and thanked donor partners for their assistance through SPC and other agencies. He also thanked USA for its help with fisheries through the Coast Guard and Australia for its assistance through the Pacific Patrol Boat Programme.

177. The representative of Niue thanked SPC for the work of FAME. He said that the future of fisheries was critical for food security. He said it was critical to raise awareness on the issues relating to fisheries.

178. The FAME Director thanked delegates for their feedback. In response to the question from Solomon Islands he explained that there was a fine distinction between coastal and nearshore fisheries: nearshore fisheries included small-scale tuna fisheries. He said he hoped the GTZ project would build on the work to advance the ecosystem approach to fisheries management. In response to the question from Vanuatu, he said that deepwater snapper was in the division's work programme under the SciCOFish project. FAME was also working with a Tonga research student in the meantime on analysing Tonga's stock status, with the hope of extending the work to other countries where possible. Aquaculture and biosecurity were also in the work programme. In response to the question from Samoa he said that the WCPFC work was covered under an agreement and that WCPFC paid well for the services. He described the arrangement as a good value for both organisations. He noted that FFA was in same situation as SPC in terms of being dependent on donor and member funding; therefore, collaboration with FFA usually took the form of a joint approach with support from a funding agency.

Decisions

179. CRGA:

- i. noted the results delivered and the achievements of the division during 2010;
- ii. endorsed the outline of the 2011 work programme and endorsed in principle the new initiatives proposed, notably:
 - a second phase of the Global Environment Facility project to provide scientific support for oceanic fisheries management;
 - the strong fisheries component of the German Technical Cooperation (GTZ) programme to assist coastal communities to adapt to climate change; and
 - project support from the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) to build on the achievements of the Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP) project.

SIGNING CEREMONY – POETCOM NEW CALEDONIA ORGANIC CERTIFICATION SYSTEM

180. The Director-General announced that an agreement was to be signed to establish a participant guarantee system in New Caledonia under the Pacific Organic Standard developed by POETCom with assistance from SPC. Under the agreement, the association Bio Caledonia would undertake to certify products for the New Caledonia domestic market.

181. The Coordinator, LRD Information, Communication and Extension Services explained that the agreement allowed the use of the Organic Pasifika seal, and that New Caledonia was the first country in which this was being done. He said that POETCom was an example of successful regional collaboration.

182. The Director-General said that New Caledonia was leading the way in organic certification, and noted that food produced in traditional ways was considered organic. He explained that the Pacific Organic Standard was equivalent in quality to the European standard, so countries could access the EU market. He said that CRGA had approved SPC's provision of the secretariat for the standard and its role as custodian of the seal.

183. The Member of the New Caledonia Government Responsible for Ecology, Sustainable Development, Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries said that the agreement was the result of a Pacific initiative that was successful despite the fact that PICTs had varying regulations. He noted that in addition to the benefits stemming from regulations on pesticide use and environmental impact, organic fruits and vegetables were often better tasting than their non-organic counterparts. In closing, he said that this was an historic moment and thanked all who had contributed, including the Ambassador of France.

184. The President of Bio Caledonia said that the signing of the document was a big step for organic farming in the Pacific, and a step toward realising the common goal of Pacific populations – sustainable development on a local and regional basis. He thanked SPC and the Director-General, and New Caledonia growers for their contribution.

AGENDA ITEM 4.5 – LAND RESOURCES DIVISION

185. The Director-General introduced the Land Resources Division presentation.

186. The Acting Director of the Land Resources Division (LRD) presented an overview of the structure of LRD and the goals and objectives of the division's Strategic Plan 2009–2012. He explained that services were delivered under seven thematic areas, with three teams totalling 88 staff. He said that LRD delivered services with an integrated approach. He presented detailed achievements under the 2010 work plan. The division continued its facilitation role in the development of policy and legislation, along with technical and financial assistance, research and analysis, training, outreach and information services. LRD country activities totalled more than 280 activities carried out in all member countries. LRD ensured that the voice of the Pacific Islands was heard beyond the region by actively engaging at important international fora. The Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT) played an important role in climate change adaptation efforts, improving food security and increasing domestic and export trade in agriculture and forestry products. Substantial assistance had been provided to PICTs in the areas of plant health and biosecurity and trade facilitation. Ongoing initiatives under the 2011 work plan were presented, including a cost breakdown by output. New initiatives beginning in 2011 included four new projects in collaboration with EU, FAO and AusAID and the development of a multilateral environment agreement.

187. The Director-General of the Agriculture Research Institute of New Caledonia presented a review of the outcomes of the last meeting of Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) held in September 2010. The meeting focused on agro-biodiversity, addressing issues of food security, managing climate change, and trade opportunities. He highlighted HOAFS resolutions relating to better use of domestic markets and increased research to gain better understanding of the region's unique and diverse agriculture systems. He noted that PNG would host the next meeting in 2012.

188. The representative of PNG expressed appreciation for technical assistance and training provided by PHD, FAME and LRD. SPC activities that had been of particular benefit to PNG included the development of a biosecurity information facility in a number of specific technical areas, the pandemic preparedness project's assistance to PNG's animal health laboratory, the pilot project on facilitating agricultural commodity trade, and public health surveillance support during the PNG cholera outbreak. PNG shared other delegates' concerns regarding funding for PHD, while agreeing with French Polynesia's observation on the natural termination of projects when objectives have been achieved. PNG supported food security and public health initiatives regarding low quality meat imports.

189. The representative of Kiribati expressed thanks to LRD. Kiribati noted LRD activities that had contributed to national efforts relating to food and nutritional security, particularly promoting the value of traditional practices and food sources. She requested further clarification regarding progress under the pandanus project, the Pacific Agribusiness Research for Development Initiative (PARDI) – specifically how Kiribati would benefit from the initiative in terms of market access and trade perspectives, and how the Centre of Excellence for Atoll Agriculture Research and Development based in Kiribati would assist other countries.

190. The representative of France stressed the value of the Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade project and the Agriculture and Rural Development project, which are both EU funded and therefore supported by France. These projects would strengthen agricultural production, trade and rural development, thus contributing to economic growth in the Pacific.

191. The representative of New Caledonia, referring to the Pacific Organic Standard and the signing ceremony for the new certification system in New Caledonia, thanked the SPC Director-General for noting the pioneering work of New Caledonia on agricultural fair trade standards. In relation to forestry, the third France Oceania Summit held in 2009 highlighted the key role of forests. New Caledonia collaborated with New Zealand on an initiative relating to capacity of forests to store carbon dioxide, and hoped to secure funding in 2011 for a project on biosecurity on the same basis. He expressed New Caledonia's appreciation to SPC, SPREP and Landcare Research New Zealand for conducting a regional workshop, which was the first of its kind.

192. The representative of Nauru thanked LRD for the report. He said that Nauru wished to confirm requests for assistance in geographic information system (GIS) training, reforestation and land use planning, to be considered in the next JCS review.

193. The representative of French Polynesia commended LRD for the quality of the presentation. French Polynesia had adopted a draft country law in the area of Pacific organic agriculture standards. He said that the legislative process was underway and he thanked SPC for its leadership role.

194. The representative of Solomon Islands congratulated the presenters for the comprehensive report. He asked SPC if it had any provision to support countries with land ownership issues, and access to land for development purposes, for example large commercial developments. He suggested that a centre of excellence for organic forestry and agriculture be developed, potentially under the SPC-Solomon Islands JCS. He suggested that SPC representatives in countries should have a greater consultative input to line ministers in terms of policy development.

195. The representative of Niue thanked LRD for its efforts. He said that agriculture remained the backbone of the country, so LRD activities were vital. He noted the difficulty Niue faced in engaging in export trade. In terms of climate change and natural disasters, he encouraged LRD to work with Niue on identifying food crops that would recover quickly. Further support was requested regarding a black fungus that has targeted crops. He concluded by saying that food security and sustainable food supply were vital areas of work for LRD.

196. The Director-General, in response to the intervention from Solomon Islands, said that SPC could assist countries to unlock the economic potential of land while dealing with customary traditions by assisting with land use policies. SPC based technical support in some line ministries and at the implementation level in order to respond to areas of specific need to complement or fill capacity gaps. Referring to the question from Kiribati, the Director-General noted that the Centre of Excellence for Atoll Agriculture Research and Development played a regional role. He congratulated French Polynesia on its draft legislation.

197. The Acting LRD Director further responded to the intervention by Kiribati, clarifying that USA would fund a second centre for atoll agriculture in Marshall Islands, and that there was an opportunity for Kiribati to share experiences. The coconut oil and pandanus project had a trade focus. Responding to the query from New Caledonia, he commented that LRD would work with New Caledonia on potential future support to forestry as part of the JCS process. He confirmed that the request from Nauru was being addressed and that training would possibly occur in early 2011. Referring to the question from the representative of Solomon Islands, he said that the planned land use project proposal required review, and that it would be finalised for

presentation to AusAID by early 2011. However, bilateral assistance may be available to address these issues. LRD would assess the types of information countries required and move forward from there. He noted that there was a great deal of land use information held by forestry teams working on logging activities as they had already established ownership boundaries. Similarly, land use planning activities could be supported by the reassessment of palm oil plantations. Responding to Niue, he noted that plant health advisers would be sent to assess the black fungus issue.

198. The Chairperson asked if all PICTs could benefit from the two new EDF 10 projects.

199. In response, the Director-General noted that the PICTs that come under EDF – the ACP countries – would benefit. However, this did not include the northern territories. SPC could source parallel funding from other sources to cover those countries.

200. The representative of USA expressed concern at endorsing a recommendation relating to the HOAFS meeting, as some members did not attend and were not properly informed. He asked for clarity on HOAFS constituents and CRGA's role endorsing HOAFS outcomes.

201. The Director-General clarified the structure and constituents of the HOAFS meeting. He suggested that CRGA 40 note the decisions made at the technical level and instruct SPC to consider which resolutions should be built into the LRD work programme.

202. The representative of USA said he appreciated the clarifications, but noted that he had not received the circular.

203. The Director-General responded that the circular should have been distributed through the normal posting channels and apologised that it was not received by the delegate.

Decisions

204. CRGA:

- i. noted the progress made by the Land Resources Division (LRD) toward achieving the objectives of its strategic plan for 2009–2012;
- ii. noted the ongoing initiatives that began in early and mid-2010, which will help bridge some of the funding gaps for LRD programmes;
- iii. endorsed in principle SPC's participation in the new initiatives that have been proposed, notably:
 - Pacific Regional Land Project (AusAID)
 - Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods in the Pacific (FAO)
 - Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (EDF 10)
 - Agriculture and Rural Development (EDF 10)
- iv. further noted that the Secretariat will seek parallel funding to enable SPC members that are not beneficiaries of EDF to participate in the above initiatives as relevant;
- v. noted the outcome of the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) meeting, which was held in Nadi, Fiji, September 2010;
- vi. noted that LRD will need to mobilise additional resources to fully deliver the services envisaged in its strategic plan; and
- vii. endorsed LRD's 2011 work programme.

LAUNCH OF PRISM WEBSITE

205. The Manager of SPC's Statistics for Development Programme and the web developer provided a

presentation on the Pacific Regional Information System (PRISM). Recent development on the system has been driven by requests by users and requirements at the regional level. The key point was a greater emphasis on regional tables and comparative information, so rather than being a doorway to national statistics websites, PRISM allowed users to extract and customise data in a user friendly way, with built in quality assurance. A demonstration of the system was presented for the information of delegates.

206. The representative of PNG thanked SPC for responding to the request and providing the excellent snapshot presentation.

AGENDA ITEM 4.6 – SOUTH PACIFIC BOARD FOR EDUCATIONAL ASSESSMENT (SPBEA)

207. The SPBEA Director presented an overview of SPBEA's work. She explained that SPBEA had six sections:

- the Assessment, Curriculum and Standards (ACS) section, which supported member countries in aligning their assessment frameworks to their national curriculum frameworks and worked to improve standards in terms of literacy and numeracy in primary schools, as well as in teaching competencies;
- the Senior Secondary School Qualification (SSSQ) section, responsible for two regional qualifications and coordinating and monitoring their implementation;
- the Pacific Qualifications Register (PQR), which had been an AusAID project for five years, facilitated the portability of qualifications and hence the mobility of Pacific workers;
- the Research, Monitoring and Evaluation (RME) section, which conducted assessment research on the assessment data gathered so that student achievement could be monitored and evaluated;
- Corporate Services, which administered support systems; and
- the Scholarship Unit, which provided technical assistance for the processing of scholarships.

208. SPBEA finances consisted of core income (18%), income from programmes (6%) and projects (36%), and self-generating income (40%). In 2008, there were 16 staff; there were 22 in 2009, and in October 2010 there were 25. The increase was due to a new AusAID project. Some of the outcomes of ACS in 2010 were capacity building and training for the paradigm shift from assessment of learning to assessment for and as learning. Responding to an area of concern, life skills assessment instruments had been developed and implemented in two countries. SPBEA had also provided technical assistance for countries wishing to develop national assessment policy frameworks. The RME section had developed software to record, analyse and report on assessment data. In 2010, 111 secondary schools offered Form 6 qualifications and seven offered Form 7 qualifications. Nationalisation of the Form 6 qualification was ongoing. The PQR draft template was complete and country consultations had been conducted; the focus was now on accredited qualifications. New initiatives included improving the assessment of literacy and numeracy. In connection with this, a Pacific Language and Literacy Conference was planned for May 2011 and a regional workshop for teachers was also planned for 2011. She explained that it was expected that countries would have increased capacity to carry out their own assessment and also collect, analyse, interpret and report on the resulting data. More countries would adopt regional teaching standards and use regional benchmarks for the literacy, numeracy and life skills work. She said that SPBEA also planned more involvement with teacher training institutions and curriculum development officers, particularly in the development of intervention strategies and tools that target areas of underachievement.

209. The representative of Fiji Islands thanked the SPBEA Director for her presentation, which was very informative. As he understood it, the Board still existed and would exist until 11 November, so he asked for clarification regarding the SPBEA accounts.

210. The representative of French Polynesia thanked the SPBEA Director. While French Polynesia was not a member of the Board, he welcomed it to SPC, especially since the Board had been born in Tahiti, following a decision of the 1979 South Pacific Conference in Papeete. He asked for clarification regarding possible duplication of work and responsibilities in the areas of culture and education, noting that the RIF reform was meant to streamline the roles and functions of each body, so that they worked in synergy and did not overlap.

211. The representative of Kiribati thanked the SPBEA Director for her comprehensive and detailed presentation and acknowledged with thanks the valuable work that SPBEA had done in Kiribati in assessment and improving the quality of education. She said she hoped that the roles and functions of the Board would not be diminished but would be further enhanced.

212. The representative of Palau commended the SPBEA Director on her informative presentation and applauded the Board on its services. Palau's particular interest was in labour mobility for workers wanting to work in the South Pacific.

213. The representative of Niue thanked the SPBEA Director for the work the Board did in the region. He commented that countries shape their future form in their high schools, and thanked SPC for its work on the merger of SPC and SPBEA, adding that his country endorsed the work that had been done and wanted to move it forward.

214. The representative of RMI thanked the SPBEA Director for her presentation. He said he assumed that when SPBEA joined SPC its scope would extend to all SPC countries, but noted that the Director had referred to member countries and non-member countries. He sought clarification.

215. The Director-General clarified the legal status of SPBEA. Upon legal advice, the Board had sent letters to all SPBEA member countries asking each one to withdraw from membership. When all had done so, the Board would cease to exist. He also explained that SPC, SOPAC and SPBEA contributions would not be combined until 2012. In the meantime, each would continue to be payable in full. Regarding membership, both SPBEA and SOPAC would continue to provide services to their members. Expansion of membership could not take place immediately as it was not covered in the budgets (except where user pays) but it would be discussed next year. He requested that CRGA be supportive regarding the merger with SOPAC and SPBEA as it would be difficult to make progress without this support.

216. The SPBEA Director spoke about the disestablishment of the Board. To date, two countries had withdrawn their membership. She thanked the representative from French Polynesia for the welcome and, in response to his comment, said that the culture and education strategy had been endorsed at the education ministers meeting. She commented that it was impossible to separate education from other areas, e.g. education overlapped with climate change, sustainable development and culture.

217. Responding further to Fiji's question regarding accounts, the Director-General said that once SOPAC and SPBEA joined SPC, the name on the accounts would change but the accounts would remain separate.

Decisions

218. CRGA:

- i. noted the work and achievements of the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) in 2010;
- ii. endorsed its 2011 work programme including the planned initiatives;
- iii. supported the planned collaboration between SPBEA and development partners to improve the quality of education in the Pacific, as approved through the Forum Education Ministers Meeting, including benchmarking of the quality of education in the Pacific;
- iv. noted that professional autonomy will be maintained in SPBEA's decision-making processes regarding strategies to improve educational quality in the Pacific, further noting that the use of such autonomy will always be guided by the agreements underlying the merger with SPC; and
- v. further noted that members' assessed contributions for SPBEA will continue to be invoiced separately from those of SPC in 2011 and will be quarantined for the SPBEA programme.

219. The Director-General introduced the report on SOPAC's work, noting that although it would be joining SPC officially in January 2011, he felt that it was important for CRGA to get an idea of what SOPAC was all about.

220. The SOPAC Director said that SOPAC and SPC were in uncharted waters, with SOPAC the commission crossing the bridge to become SOPAC the SPC division. He noted that this week another step had been taken, with CRGA addressing its responsibilities in this area. He said he would talk about the sequence of events, particularly for the benefit of the SPC members that were not SOPAC members. The SOPAC Council had already approved the budget and work plan, with the assumption that they were passing them to CRGA to consider and endorse at this meeting. The budget was about FJD 20 million, and there were also EU B and C projects specific to countries totalling about FJD 14 million. He said that most members of the Council were present. Wallis and Futuna and Pitcairn were not members of the Council but were important members in a way because they were beneficiaries of B and C projects, and their desires were taken into account by the Council. He explained that France and USA were the only two countries that were not SOPAC members, and that an important goal of the presentation was to inform them of SOPAC's work and seek their understanding and endorsement. Corporate Services would come under review in 2011, and this would include a look at the skills mix in Suva. The Oceans and Islands programme provided services that were very important to countries and could not be provided nationally. He said that, rather than each country owning the complex and expensive equipment and developing the capacity to use it, countries needed access to the data produced by the equipment, which was owned by the region through SOPAC, and national capacity to use the data it produced. He shared examples of maps produced by SOPAC that integrate data and show information such as areas not mined, results of drilling samples, bathymetry, volcanic areas, submerged reefs, etc. Some of the maps showed the underwater terrain in great detail. One application of the mapping was in maritime boundaries, where countries were collecting baseline data for submission to the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) for determination of rights over seabed minerals. SOPAC was assisting with this complex and expensive process. The Water and Sanitation Programme was helping members extend access to safe drinking water, as well as groundwater assessment, flood forecasting, etc. Much of this work depended on data gathering, and there was a need for capacity in countries to collect data in areas such as rainfall. The HYCOS (Pacific Hydrological Cycle Observing System) programme was ending in 2010, and without long-term commitment the initiative was unlikely to benefit the work to adapt to climate change. In the area of adaptation and disaster risk management, the Disaster Reduction programme (with a staff of about 20) provided technical and policy advice for disaster risk policy. He explained that there was a regional framework as well as a global framework (the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005–2015). Tonga was the first country in the region to develop a joint plan for climate change adaptation and disaster risk management. Other countries were following. SOPAC's strategic plan had been endorsed at the recent Council meeting. Three areas were being emphasised: finalising the permanent delineation of maritime boundaries, an area in which SOPAC can help but which is national sovereign responsibility; achieving the MDG relating to access to safe drinking water; and disaster risk management and climate change. He noted that there was unequivocal support for SOPAC's integration with SPC among the scientists around the world who make up the Science, Technology and Resources Network (STAR). He said that although the recommendation for CRGA to endorse the SOPAC strategic plan, 2011 work plan and budget as endorsed by the SOPAC Council the previous week could be seen as presumptive, it was an important step in moving the integration forward.

221. The Director-General explained that the SOPAC draft strategic plan had not been circulated to members but that SPC had participated in its development and that it followed SPC's format. He said that the Council had endorsed it pending some amendments. Although some SPC members had not seen the plan, most had. SPC was seeking CRGA's indulgence, noting the plan's approval by the SOPAC Council. He said he hoped that CRGA members would endorse the plan as this would offer a way forward. SPC would circulate it as soon as possible.

222. The representative of New Caledonia welcomed SOPAC and its Director. He noted that New Caledonia had become the first associate member of SOPAC following an initiative of Jacques Iékawé and he asked what the status of American Samoa, French Polynesia, New Caledonia and Tokelau would be after integration. He said the response may encourage New Caledonia to increase its contribution, which until the present had been on a voluntary basis.

223. The representative of France thanked the SOPAC Director for the comprehensive presentation. She said that France was pleased about the merger because of the level of expertise of SOPAC. The organisation worked in very complex areas and SOPAC's expertise could be helpful to SPC. She said that areas such as maritime boundaries and disaster risk reduction and recovery were very important for Pacific communities, and noted that France intervened through bilateral agreements in disaster risk reduction and recovery work and also contributed to the SOPAC budget through EU. She said she had noted with great interest the comments of the Director-General on the fact that the budget document and strategic plan were not available, and although France was slightly uneasy about adopting them without reviewing them first, France was nevertheless in favour of adopting the recommendations. France did want to see the documents as soon as they were available.

224. The representative of Cook Islands said that Cook Islands placed great value on the assistance offered to it by SOPAC. Referring to predictions that Cook Islands might experience a particularly heavy cyclone season in coming months, she said that Cook Islands requested assistance in putting together a disaster management policy.

225. The representative of French Polynesia said that French Polynesia had attended the 39th meeting of the SOPAC Council the previous week and that it concurred with the comments of New Caledonia.

226. The representative of Niue thanked SOPAC for its services to Niue, and commended the SOPAC and SPC teams for their work. He said that Niue endorsed the Director-General's views on the way forward. As a recipient of SOPAC's services, he said Niue was happy to help however possible to work things out so that the other members could endorse the documents.

227. The representative of Kiribati thanked the SOPAC Director for the presentation and for SOPAC's work. She noted the specialist technical expertise that SOPAC provided to countries, including seabed mining, and said that Kiribati was interested in exploiting whatever resources it had but that it needed help to make informed decisions. First it was necessary to have proper delimitation of maritime boundaries. She said Kiribati was also working on aggregate mining, and thanked SOPAC for its support in this area. She said Kiribati hoped that with the merger it would continue to get this support.

228. The representative of Vanuatu joined his colleagues in thanking the SOPAC Director and welcoming SOPAC to SPC. He said that Vanuatu had benefited from SOPAC programmes and that it would continue to benefit from them as it was understood that the merger would not negatively affect SOPAC services.

229. The representative of RMI thanked the SOPAC Director for the clear presentation. He said that the expertise SOPAC was bringing to SPC would continue to benefit member countries, and RMI joined Vanuatu in requesting that the work continue without reduction. RMI encouraged other members to endorse the documents so SOPAC could continue to provide assistance.

230. The representative of PNG thanked the SOPAC Director and said that PNG was grateful for SOPAC's assistance with bathymetry and collecting data for its presentation to UNCLOS on the possible extension of its continental shelf. The expertise SOPAC brought was critical, and PNG shared the general view expressed regarding the importance of SOPAC continuing to provide services.

231. The representative of Fiji Islands noted that following the decision by the SOPAC governing council the previous week approving the strategic plan, the understanding among members was that there was a guarantee that services would not be affected, and this guarantee gave members the assurance to continue with their membership contributions for the coming year. Therefore, he said, Fiji endorsed the recommendations.

232. The representative of USA noted the positive comments from his colleagues. He said that although USA was not a member of SOPAC, it supported the recommendations. He said that SOPAC had an excellent reputation, including among US university scientists involved in STAR. He noted that US technical agencies like the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) worked with SOPAC on projects, and that SOPAC provided great value for the region and for USA. He said USA was happy to hear the opening remarks from the Director-General and the presentation from the SOPAC Director, and was glad that the

strategic plan had involved SPC input and that budgets would be kept separate in 2011 and brought together in 2012. He said that the way forward outlined by the Director-General regarding membership contributions appeared to be a good approach. For all of these reasons, he said, USA supported the recommendations.

233. The representative of Samoa said that Samoa wished to associate itself with the comments of others on the value of SOPAC's work and to commend SOPAC on maintaining the quality of its services despite the challenges of the RIF transition. She said Samoa was glad to see the positive comments from USA and France. Samoa had participated in the Council meeting that had endorsed the work plan, the strategic plan and the budget, and therefore Samoa endorsed the recommendations.

234. The Director-General said that copies of the strategic plan would be printed (though the translated version was not yet available) if members wanted to see it, noting that slight changes were being made. He said that the budget for SOPAC was included, as was the detailed work plan. In response to the question from New Caledonia regarding the status of SOPAC's associate members, he said the arrangement would be similar to that for SPBEA. This would be a subject of next year's discussions with members aiming to standardise the membership of all three organisations and present recommendations to CRGA.

235. The SOPAC Director thanked the delegates for their supportive comments.

Decisions

236. CRGA:

- i. endorsed the 2011–2015 strategic plan for the SOPAC work programme, including its provisions for the support and continuation of the SOPAC/STAR Network, noting that the SOPAC Council has approved the plan for the SOPAC work programme subject to some minor changes;
- ii. endorsed the SOPAC Council-approved 2011 work plan and budget for the SOPAC work programme to accompany the strategic plan, noting it has already been incorporated in the SPC budget.

AGENDA ITEM 5 – PRESENTATIONS FROM MEMBERS ON IMPACT OF SPC PROGRAMMES AT NATIONAL LEVEL

237. The Director-General introduced this agenda item, which has become a regular feature of CRGA as directed by the 6th Conference in 2009.

238. The representative of Solomon Islands gave a presentation outlining positive impacts of SPC Statistics and Demography Programme activities on the Solomon Island National Statistics Office (SINISO). SPC had provided technical assessment and recommendations, training and monitoring and continuous assessment of training. Of significant value in SPC's approach to capacity building was the personal touch that national officers felt during and after training. A significant impact had resulted from the ability of SPC-trained officers to train additional staff on new technology and processes. SPC-supported training placements in other countries were of benefit to SINISO; they had led to gradual and ongoing improvement of technical capacity and of the statistical system. These activities were building staff confidence, developing public trust in the statistics products, and creating national self-reliance.

239. The representative of PNG thanked the representative of Solomon Islands for his personal testimony. Upgrading skills allowed knowledge exchange with regional counterparts and was of particular benefit to the whole Pacific.

240. The Chairperson thanked the representative for his presentation, particularly as it highlighted how SPC could only realise achievements with the commitment of people in member countries.

Decisions

241. CRGA:

- i. noted that presentations by members have been made a regular feature of its agenda; and
- ii. expressed appreciation for the information presented by the Census Commissioner of Solomon Islands on the benefits of SPC's services in building national statistical capacity.

AGENDA ITEM 6 – STATEMENTS FROM OBSERVERS

242. CRGA heard statements from the United Nations Children's Fund, PIFS, SPREP, WCPFC, EU, Pacific Games Council and United Nations Development Fund for Women. The statements are appended to this report.

Decision

243. CRGA noted the statements by the following observers (in order of presentation) on the nature and benefits of their partnership with SPC: United Nations Children’s Fund, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, European Union, Pacific Games Council and United Nations Development Fund for Women.

AGENDA ITEM 7 – LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE FINANCING STRATEGY FOR SPC’S CORE BUSINESS

AGENDA ITEM 7.1 – REPORT OF THE CRGA SUBCOMMITTEE ON A LONG-TERM SUSTAINABLE FINANCING STRATEGY FOR SPC

244. The Director-General introduced the discussion of the progress toward developing a long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC. He explained that the subcommittee had met just prior to the beginning of the CRGA meeting, and that it had been presented a categorisation of the services provided by LRD by their level of importance and the cost of providing them. At this session, the FAME Director would share the results of a similar analysis for FAME services. He said that Paper 7.1a was the focus of the session, as Paper 7.1 had been looked at by the subcommittee. Paper 7.1a contained the instructions resulting from the subcommittee’s second meeting. The analysis of LRD presented a figure reflecting the gap between the total funds required to provide the services deemed ‘most essential’ and the amount of recurrent funding available, noting that nearly all of this gap was at present being filled by project funding. The goal had been to highlight this gap to focus on how to move that funding from project funding to recurrent funding. However, it was decided that a better approach would be to look at how much of the ‘most essential’ services should be funded by member contributions and programme funding (recurrent funding) and how much through project funds. He noted that LRD covered three sectors and that therefore the total amount required to provide the ‘most essential’ LRD services had come out higher than would be the case for the other divisions. Based on the discussions from the pre-CRGA meeting, SPC would perform further analysis to see if services needed to be funded annually (meetings, for example). The pre-CRGA meeting also discussed milestones and areas that still needed to be completed. One of these was the in-depth analysis of all areas in SPC. It was proposed that this be led by divisional directors. Another remaining task was an in-depth analysis of SPC’s decentralisation. There would also be further analysis of other areas, such as responsibilities of hosts and other members, and ways of increasing income and reducing expenditure. There would also be review of corporate and programme support. The assessment would include how SPC manages meetings and the JCS process. Analysis would include the implications of decisions of governing bodies, the RIF reform and the Pacific Plan. He explained that attendees at the pre-CRGA meeting had expressed concerns about the tight timeline that had been proposed to link into the 2012 budget, but he said that it was more important to have good quality work than to meet a particular timeline. Validation would be undertaken both with other partners and with members. There had been a suggestion from Cook Islands to add a column to allow members to provide feedback. He said that most members were happy for SPC to undertake the in-depth analysis on its other divisions, but that SPC needed to know exactly what the analysis would consist of, and it was looking to CRGA to provide guidance. However, he noted that the work had been started in the divisions.

245. The FAME Director presented an analysis that he noted was a draft, based on estimates for the next five years. The analysis included the objectives and results from the division’s approved strategic plan, who on the team was responsible for the work, the staffing requirements of the work, whether it was ongoing or of a limited duration (a key question), and the current funding type (programme, project etc.). The shaded areas indicated gaps or areas funded from project funding that SPC felt would be better funded from recurrent funding. He noted that the overall funding situation was not bad; for the first three years funding was expected to be close to the estimated needs. He emphasised that there was nothing wrong with project funding, but that the question was if the division had the right mix of funding types. The summary at the bottom of the table showed shortfalls in some specific areas. He said that it was not unusual to have gaps because projects ended but the needs they were filling continued to exist. Overall, there was a shortfall of

about 700,000 units. Funding needs were not static; they rose each year by about 5 per cent but recurrent funding did not rise at the same rate. In 2012–2013 several projects were coming to an end and there would be a need to seek other projects or recurrent funding.

246. The Director-General thanked the FAME Director for his presentation and noted that the same analysis had been done on LRD and FAME, but that the results for FAME had been presented more clearly. He asked members if this was the type of analysis they wanted to see from the divisions. SPC was proposing to undertake similar in-depth analysis of the work programmes of the other divisions, followed by an analysis of corporate services, decentralisation, etc. and finally the cost analysis. It was hoped that CRGA would provide guidance on the way forward.

247. The representative of USA said that he found it to be a very nice and useful document that systematically laid out key information, though it was understood that some aspects were preliminary. He asked some specific questions regarding the FAME analysis.

248. The FAME Director responded to the questions from USA, noting that some areas highlighted as gaps were presently funded by project funding but SPC felt that they should be funded by recurrent funding.

249. The representative of New Caledonia thanked the FAME Director for the detailed and very clear analysis that had been prepared so quickly. He said that in Paper 7.1a it was hard to see what had been done already by the consultant and what were the remaining tasks that SPC proposed to assign to the new consultant(s).

250. The Director-General explained that SPC was just looking for agreement to do the consultancy, and that SPC could work the details out later. He said that the consultant's report for Part 1 of the work outlined what had been accomplished so far and that SPC was looking for general feedback from members on what were the most important sectors. He noted that countries had said that a lot more analysis was required regarding the details. Some information had already been collected for Part 2 of the work. The remaining steps as proposed were to complete the in-depth assessment of all divisions based on the FAME analysis that had been presented, to look at administration and corporate services from SPC's perspective in terms of what SPC sees as required to support programme delivery, then to have that information checked by the consultant.

251. The representative of USA asked if the term sustainable funding included core funding plus programme funding.

252. The FAME Director confirmed that it included core and programme funding, as well as funding from WCPFC, which is expected to be sustained for as long as SPC provides services for WCPFC.

253. The representative of Niue thanked the Secretariat for its hard work in producing the matrix, which, he noted, was similar to work done by the government in Niue. He asked for information regarding the proposed timeline and remaining work for the consultancy and wondered if there was a need for a second consultant given the amount of work remaining.

254. The representative of Fiji Islands thanked FAME for the analysis, which he said would help members' understanding of the issues. He said that Fiji would be happy for it to be done for all divisions. Given the gaps that had been highlighted, particularly in 2014–2015, he said that it may be a good time to direct the subcommittee to also look at alternative donors to lighten the load for current donors.

255. The representative of Australia noted that when the study was first envisaged in 2009 there was a clear statement that alternative funding sources should be explored, but that it had not been mentioned. She said that it was a huge exercise and it was necessary to get it done right. There had been information gathering but not analysis, and there was still confusion regarding the methodology. She said it was important to be clear on what was expected and who was appropriately skilled to undertake the work, and noted that she disagreed with the Director-General's statement that it should be left to SPC to determine the details and skills, as very specialised skills were required.

256. The representative of New Zealand thanked the FAME Director and said that it was a complex area

and it was important to get it right. It was necessary to have a clear methodology. He said that the work done so far was useful but that it was clear that there was a need for more work on clarifying the methodology before going forward, and that it would be useful to further categorise the types of services SPC delivers. It would help members to categorise them as long-term or time-bound, rather than programme- or project-funded. He said that good work had been done, but it was not quite right yet. New Zealand supported analysis of decentralisation and would like it to be broader and incorporate aid effectiveness principles. In addition to looking at offices, the analysis should consider if SPC could embed staff. It was important to look at SPC's business model and apply a value for money test. All of these aspects needed to be included in the terms of reference. New Zealand also supported the analysis of SPC's corporate services. Echoing Australia's statement, he said it was important for CRGA to have a role in developing the terms of reference and in exercising oversight.

257. The representative of PNG said that a path forward seemed to be taking shape. This would include a subcommittee meeting following CRGA wherein SPC would provide a document addressing the comments and including further refinement of the terms of reference for one or more additional consultants. SPC would provide a beginning, but the subcommittee needed to have a meeting to discuss it. He noted that this was new territory and agreed with New Zealand that aid effectiveness principles needed to be incorporated.

258. The Chairperson asked members to clarify if the subcommittee meeting should take place before the close of the CRGA meeting or at a later time such as in January.

259. The representative of PNG said that it would be best not to hold the meeting immediately, as the text needed to be circulated and there had to be time for discussion.

260. The representative of France congratulated SPC for the documents presented. He said they were very understandable and that the analysis deserved to be extended so delegates could see things clearly and report to their governments. He noted that there was no deficit but there was a need for more sustainable funding in certain areas. He said that France had a close interest in SPC's decentralisation and the consultancy, and that countries needed to be informed of progress and define what they expect. It was important to think about the costs of establishing new offices. He said France was not opposed to decentralisation, but it had reservations. He said France would study the consultants' reports carefully. He noted that Paper 7.1a referred to analysing the implications of decisions by SPC's governing body and the Forum leaders, and said that France had concerns about that language as it was the role of Conference and CRGA to give instructions to SPC, not the role of the Forum.

261. The representative of New Caledonia requested that a document be circulated explaining the role of the Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility so that CRGA members could have a better understanding of the structure and work of the unit.

262. The Director-General responded that a paper outlining the specific roles of the facility would be provided. He thanked delegates for their positive comments. In response to PNG's proposal, he said that based on the outcomes of the present session, SPC would pull together a summary of decision points and circulate it to delegates before the end of CRGA, so that there was a firm basis to move forward. The first step proposed would be to roll out the analysis to other divisions using the template FAME had used. SPC would add a column with justification for each service (i.e. why the service should continue to be provided by SPC). Then would come an analysis of corporate services. The analysis would take into account the comments from New Zealand, picking up areas better suited to project or programme funding and long-term versus shorter-term provision. SPC would do a 'first cut' and validate it with members, preparing an updated version for the next subcommittee meeting. He said that SPC had noted delegates' concerns and explained that although it was clear that it was a big undertaking, the Secretariat may have underestimated the size of work in the beginning. It was too much for one person, but rather than engaging one other consultant, SPC would pursue Australia's suggestion to look at the mix of skills required, perhaps engaging a team with a good mix to work in parallel and more quickly. In that case, the decentralisation consultant could be part of the team. It was important to look at the skills required. He said that if members agreed, SPC would put together brief notes on the terms of reference and skills mix, the milestones for the consultant(s) for circulation and discussion before the end of CRGA. He noted that SPREP was also doing its own cost-effectiveness study on decentralisation which included looking at some of the options that New Zealand had suggested (i.e. embedding).

263. The representative of PNG said that as most of the members of CRGA were also Forum members, the Forum leaders also gave direction to CRGA, and he hoped that there was no animosity being expressed toward the Forum members.

264. The representative of France explained that France had an excellent relationship with the Forum and provided funding through it, his comments had simply related to the importance of being clear that the Pacific Community had its own rules and governing body.

265. The representative of Fiji Islands noted that it was important to keep in mind that SPC was an independent organisation.

266. The representative of USA explained that USA had sent a very large delegation to the Pacific Islands Forum in Vanuatu, and that USA appreciated PIFS and recognised its significance for the region. He said SPC should seek guidance from many places on decisions, but that fundamentally the decisions CRGA and Conference take were their own. Different delegations had different relationships with other organisations, which was good.

267. The Chairperson said that SPC had suggested a way forward and had taken onboard the suggestions. The Secretariat would assemble a document overnight and present it for discussion in the morning. At that time CRGA could look at whether the timeline was appropriate.

(The meeting adjourned for the day and the discussion continued the following morning.)

268. The Director-General noted that a new document had been put before delegates. It was a supplement to paper 7.1a and provided CRGA with the main points and consensus relating to agenda item 7.1. The proposed way forward was to complete an in-depth analysis of all divisions using the format applied by FAME, complete the validation process with countries and concurrently contract a consultancy team with a mix of skills to assess options and the costs and benefits of decentralisation. The terms of reference would be sent to members for review and all documentation would be presented at the next subcommittee meeting in late May/early June 2011. Other regional service providers would be included in the validation process.

269. The Chairperson noted the importance of the initiative and the need to ensure it was done right and in a timely way.

270. The representative of New Zealand noted that while the supplement to Paper 7.1a was generally a move in the right direction, the cost benefit analysis and value for money assessment of the decentralisation strategy needed to be included. More work was required on the long-term sustainable financing strategy study methodology and the classification of services. He noted that May 2011 may be too late to hold the next subcommittee meeting.

271. The representative of French Polynesia agreed that the supplement to Paper 7.1a provided a good guide; however, he requested that a cost analysis of the benefits deriving from the RIF process be included. He asked if the membership of the subcommittee would change.

272. The Chairperson requested that flexibility be built in to better enable CRGA to review the process.

273. The Director-General agreed that these suggestions could be captured in the supplement paper. He noted that the paper represented a summary of the way forward, and detailed terms of reference would be developed and circulated to members for comment. He proposed that subcommittee membership be open with the understanding that new members may need to fund their own attendance at meetings. In response to the comments from New Zealand he noted that the subcommittee meeting should be held as early as possible but no later than the end of May. SOPAC and SPBEA focal points needed to be advised on progress.

274. The representative of Australia asked that the recommendations reflect that the draft terms of reference would be provided to members for feedback.

Decisions

275. CRGA:

- i. noted the work undertaken to date by the subcommittee and the Secretariat to develop a long-term sustainable financing strategy;
- ii. endorsed the completion of the in-depth analyses of all SPC technical divisions, corporate services, programme support services, and the strategic engagement, policy and planning facility by the Secretariat using the methodology applied by the FAME Division taking into account suggestions and modifications proposed by CRGA;
- iii. noted that the results of this work will be sent to members for validation, and noted further that in some cases members of the executive and the strategic engagement, policy and planning facility may travel to some member PICTs as resources permit to support this validation process;
- iv. agreed that draft terms of reference (TOR) for the consultancy team that include the following components will be developed by the Secretariat and circulated to members for comment:
 - a) expertise in organisational structures, policy, human resources, monitoring and evaluation, impact assessment, financial economics and programme planning/delivery, with tasks to include development of financing options, analysis of the costs and benefits of decentralisation, and development of the draft long-term sustainable financing strategy;
 - b) financing options involving analysis of the role of PICT members (Pacific Island countries and territories) in relation to their ownership and support of the organisation; the impacts of decisions taken by the governing body and other prioritisation processes that result in SPC taking on the delivery of critical regional services; ways of increasing income and managing expenditure; and financial forecasting and risk management;
 - c) An analysis of all aspects of decentralisation including establishment of offices; embedding SPC staff in PICT sector ministries/departments; costs related to decentralisation; value for money; systems required to support decentralisation; the responsibilities of host countries vis-à-vis those of the Secretariat; analysis of benefits to and costs of hosting SPC offices for the members concerned; and review of the host country grants contributed by host countries;
- v. noted the intention to convene the next meeting of the subcommittee as early as possible in 2011 but no later than the end of May 2011;
- vi. agreed that the membership of the subcommittee is open to other members of CRGA; and
- vii. noted that the reports of the analysis and the draft long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC will be circulated to members of the subcommittee prior to the next meeting.

AGENDA ITEM 8 – GOVERNANCE ISSUES

AGENDA ITEM 8.1 – CRGA AND RELATED TECHNICAL MEETINGS

276. The Director-General presented an overview of the proposed changes to the organisation of CRGA and related technical meetings. He said that some changes had already been put in place, noting that for many members SPC was financing only half the cost of attendance at this meeting, and that founding members were funding their own attendance. He explained that until 1998 there had been two meetings – one focusing on technical work and one focusing on oversight. The agenda for this year's CRGA had been restructured, and he noted that it seemed to have worked well so far. He said that under the proposed arrangements, cost sharing would be retained for one CRGA delegate, and members could expand their delegations for the technical meeting if they chose to. The next Conference would take place in 2011 in RMI, and SPC was proposing that starting with the following Conference in 2013, the location be rotated between Noumea and Fiji. Other members could host Conference if they wanted, but would have to meet the extra cost (beyond the cost of holding the Conference in Fiji). The reasons for the proposed changes include

reducing expenses and adopting best practices from other regional organisations. Budgeting would be facilitated. He explained that some sectoral meetings were held by SPC alone and some were held in cooperation with other bodies (for example the health ministers' meeting was held in cooperation with WHO, and SPC was discussing with FAO the possibility of jointly convening a meeting of ministers of agriculture and forestry). The proposal was to hold joint ministerial meetings based on SPC's key result areas (sustainable economic development, sustainable natural resource management and development, and sustainable human and social development). An initial trial of this arrangement was planned for EDD in Noumea during first week of April, when ministers of transport, ICT and energy would meet. With this arrangement there would be one major meeting every year, on a three-year rotation. The next meeting would combine fisheries, agriculture and forestry, followed by a meeting of ministers of health, education, culture and youth. Planning was a cross-cutting area, and governments could choose whether to send someone from their ministry of planning. The proposal was for SPC to share costs for one delegate per sector under the same arrangement as for CRGA, i.e. SPC would pay either the per diem or the airfare.

277. The representative of Fiji Islands thanked the Director-General for the presentation. He said that Fiji had no problems with the recommendations. He noted that it was the members that would make the final decision on representation at meetings.

278. The representative of French Polynesia thanked the Director-General for the interesting document. He said French Polynesia had no objections to dividing the agenda. The minimum attendance of two delegates would not be a problem. He asked if the technical part of the agenda would be dedicated to a specific domain so that members could select delegates appropriately. He said that the proposed changes to the technical meetings might pose challenges. There would be practical questions regarding how members design their delegations. Theoretically there would be four ministers in the delegation for a meeting looking at four sectors. But members would find it difficult to decide who should be the head of the delegation. He said it was an interesting idea but that looking at the details it could be hard to implement, and that the practical implications may be different between different governments, with the possibility that domestic political issues could affect attendance. He asked for more information on how SPC envisioned the changes. He said that French Polynesia had no objections to rotating meetings between Noumea and Fiji, but that it would like to hear more about the costs to be supported by countries wishing to host the Conference.

279. The representative of PNG thanked the Director-General and said that PNG fully endorsed the proposal to hold technical meetings arranged under the key result areas. He noted that it was important to have the involvement of national planning ministers to ensure the messages from meetings were acted on by government, particularly in regard to budgeting.

280. The representative of FSM thanked the Director-General and said that FSM supported the recommendations. But he noted that FSM had some concerns regarding cost sharing. He said SPC's efforts to reduce cost were understandable. However, for technical meetings – which were important for implementing CRGA decisions – FSM may not be able to send the right technical people given the reality of its budget constraints.

281. The representative of Tonga said that Tonga supported the recommendations. He pointed out that it would be good to think through the implications, as some organisations ended up with two meetings running back to back.

282. The Chairperson said he assumed that countries could still choose to send only one person and that he assumed that the changes would apply to meetings not yet scheduled, not for those already scheduled.

283. The Director-General explained that, given the increase in the scope and coverage of SPC's work, it would be ideal to have at least two attendees: an SPC focal point and someone from a cross-cutting ministry such as planning. He said that each sector meeting would cover that sector's programmes and that there would continue to be some specialised meetings within each sector. As to how to choose who makes up the delegations and who leads them, the choice was up to the members. The size of delegations would have to be based on affordability. He said that the proposed reform had value to SPC and to countries. In response to the comments from FSM he said that SPC understood the issue, and that solutions could be sought in the context of the development of the long-term sustainable financing strategy. SPC would continue its commitment to support a minimum number of technical people. In response to the questions from the Chairperson, he said

that indeed, the changes would not apply to meetings that were already scheduled.

Decisions

284. CRGA endorsed the following arrangements for its future meetings:

- i. the division of the CRGA agenda into a technical and scientific agenda and policy, budget, administrative and governance agenda;
- ii. an increase in the number of official delegates to CRGA meetings to a minimum of two per member where possible, with one to come from a technical or planning ministry and the other being the SPC focal point, noting that final decision on delegation make-up and numbers is the responsibility of the member;
- iii. a cost-sharing arrangement for the attendance of two delegates from each island member at CRGA meetings, with SPC providing either return economy airfares **or** per diems for two delegates, and members meeting other costs;
- iv. the inclusion of further representatives of technical ministries in members' delegations to CRGA on a self-financing basis to ensure optimal oversight and direction of SPC's technical programmes;
- v. future meetings of the SPC Conference and associated pre-Conference meetings of CRGA will be convened in New Caledonia and Fiji on a rotating basis, with CRGA meetings in between Conference years continuing to be held at Noumea headquarters; and
- vi. further, any member of SPC may offer to host the Conference and the associated meeting of CRGA that year, on the understanding that the host will bear the additional cost to the Secretariat beyond what it would cost to host the meeting in Fiji.

285. CRGA endorsed the following arrangements for major regional technical meetings:

- i. major regional technical meetings will be held in New Caledonia or Fiji depending on logistical and cost considerations;
- ii. the Secretariat will share costs (either return air fares **or** per diems) for one member representative per sector to attend the relevant joint meeting, with members meeting their portion of these costs as well as the total costs for additional members of their delegation;
- iii. members may offer to host a major regional technical meeting on the understanding that they will meet the additional cost of hosting the meeting over and above what it would cost the Secretariat to hold the meeting in Fiji;

AGENDA ITEM 9 – INITIATIVES / ITEMS PROPOSED BY MEMBERS

AGENDA ITEM 9.1 – MICRONESIAN VILLAGE PROJECT

286. The Director-General introduced an update on the Micronesian Village project in Pohnpei.

287. The representative of FSM informed the meeting about the Micronesian Village project and ongoing efforts to establish a larger permanent site for SPC's North Pacific regional office. Those involved in the project had been working on moving it to the conceptual design stage. He expressed appreciation to member colleagues for their support and said that FSM looked forward to their continued support and guidance. FSM wished to reaffirm its strong commitment to hosting SPC and realised it had a responsibility to make sure SPC had suitable office accommodation so it could effectively deliver services. He said that the Micronesian Village was an ambitious project, not just for FSM and the northern members, but for the entire membership. All members were stakeholders because the project would house the region's organisation. The project would also have an impact on the geopolitical situation in the region. Therefore, FSM wished to seek the

help and guidance of metropolitan members and development partners. He noted that members' collective involvement in the project was critical and that it would represent regional integration and solidarity.

288. A representative of Conway Architects presented an overview of the project. He explained that the design philosophy incorporated aspects of Micronesian cultures. The complex would include a conference centre and modular units with offices for programme staff. There were some existing buildings on site, including a Japanese watchtower from World War II which would be incorporated into the design, and an existing pool and tennis courts. He said that about two-thirds of the site would be used. The design of the conference centre was inspired by the Nan Madol site.

289. The representative of FSM said that he hoped that attendees had enjoyed the presentation, and noted that the ownership aspect was important. He suggested some changes in the recommendations regarding the role of SPC and keeping members informed regarding the project. He thanked the Manager of the North Pacific Regional Office and the architect.

290. The Director-General noted that SPC was comfortable continuing to provide support to the working group. He also pointed out that the cost of USD 15 million was an estimation of the total cost, and that as the buildings were modular the scope and budget of the project could be reduced if necessary.

291. The architect confirmed that the total was an indicative budget based on the project's planned scale but that it could be refined.

292. The representative of RMI thanked the government of FSM and Pohnpei State for their willingness to provide the land, which he said was crucial. He pointed out that it was a long walk between the conference centre and the offices, and asked if any provision had been made to keep people sheltered from the rain when they were making this walk.

293. The representative of Kiribati thanked the FSM government, the architect and all involved. She said that the development that was taking shape demonstrated the commitment of FSM on behalf of Micronesia to support the delivery of services in Micronesia. She said that Kiribati hoped that as part of Micronesia, it would also benefit.

294. The representative of Palau said that Palau supported FSM's efforts and the concept of the Micronesian Village, as well as the proposed recommendations with amendments. Given the high total cost of the project, he recommended that it be divided into phases, starting with the highest priority buildings, in case there was difficulty in obtaining the full amount. He said that Palau supported the project and would assist however it could.

295. The representative of Nauru said that Nauru supported the Micronesian Village project and looked forward to working with FSM on it as needed.

296. The Chairperson noted that there was support for the proposal and the amended recommendations, saying that delegates supported FSM and looked forward to attending a meeting in the new conference centre.

Decisions

297. CRGA:

- i. noted with appreciation the progress made in implementing the Micronesian Village project by the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Pohnpei State and commended their commitment to providing long-term office accommodation for SPC and other organisations that might wish to establish offices in the North Pacific;
- ii. noted that the Micronesian Village project supports SPC's policy of decentralisation, which was directed by the 4th Conference of the Pacific Community in Palau (2005);
- iii. expressed support for FSM's efforts to secure funding for construction of the Micronesian Village and encouraged the Secretariat to continue its advisory support for the project; and

- iv. acknowledged FSM's request for SPC's continued involvement in the Micronesian Village Steering Committee.

AGENDA ITEM 10 – ADMINISTRATIVE AND STAFFING ISSUES

AGENDA ITEM 10.1 – IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2009 TRIENNIAL REMUNERATION REVIEW

298. The Director-General introduced the presentation, noting that it summarised recommendations requiring the attention of CRGA 40, particularly regarding implementation of the CROP and CEO job banding model.

299. The Director of Corporate Services presented the paper, noting that the triennial review of the remuneration terms and conditions of participating members of CROP was conducted in 2009. The review recommended SPC replace the current Mercer Egan Dell banding model with a new SP (Strategic Pay) 10 banding model for CROP remuneration, and introduce a new performance management system across all CROP agencies. He said that the new SP 10 banding model had already been endorsed in principle by CRGA 39. While accepting the new banding model as an improvement on the current situation, the Secretariat would seek further consideration to increase the number of bands equivalent to grade J in the current model by one, and also to increase the number of technical / scientific specialist bands by one. SPC would have a total of over 600 staff members in 2011, and these adjustments were therefore essential. He explained that the bands were defined by a range of job points, with the midpoint of the band representing the job performance expected at that level. Each band had a range of +/-20 per cent; thus, the full range for each band went from 80 per cent to 120 per cent of the midpoint. Most staff currently working at SPC would be expected to be between 95 per cent and 105 per cent based on performance, and none should be below 90 per cent. New appointees should normally begin in the lower half of the range – usually below 90 per cent on the first appointment. Only 11 per cent of SPC staff had salaries below 90 per cent of the midpoint for their new band when their positions were transferred into the new bands. In order to avoid having newly appointed staff at higher salaries than current staff with proven performance in equivalent positions, the salaries of these staff members were increased to 90 per cent of the midpoints of their respective bands. The total additional cost for this adjustment was 181,000 CFP units, which had been built into the 2011 budget. With respect to the CEO banding model, the consultants recommended that the CEOs of SPC and PIFS be placed in band 18 and the CEOs of FFA, SOPAC and SPREP be placed in band 17. In relation to performance management for CEOs, it was proposed that this be conducted by a special CRGA Standing Committee comprising the previous, current and future chairs of CRGA.

300. The representative of USA requested a currency conversion on the difference in the total budget required by the change of banding models, and suggested that the acronym FOC (Forum Officials Committee) be spelt out in the recommendation.

301. The representative of Samoa noted that while there would be financial implications, provision had been made in the budget. Samoa supports the recommendations.

302. The representative of French Polynesia highlighted that while CRGA was asked to consider a sustainable financing strategy, there was now a seemingly contradictory request to increase staff remuneration. To better understand the increase in budget, he requested data on the proportion of the increase compared to the total SPC payroll and the proportion of staff who would gain a salary increase. Regarding the Director-General's role, he questioned how realistic it was to have a committee assess the Director-General's performance. Were CRGA chairpersons best qualified to assess the performance of the Director-General?

303. The representative of Fiji Islands asked if this change in the remuneration model would affect members' assessed contributions.

304. The Director-General answered the question from Fiji by saying that there would be no impact on members' assessed contributions. In response to French Polynesia, he noted that the current system for assessing the Director-General's performance was a self-appraisal conducted every two years and reported to CRGA in a closed session. There were deficiencies in the system. FFA employed a formal and best practice model consisting of an interview following the presentation of a report of achievements against objectives. The difference from the current system was that it would now be synchronised with the system used by the rest of the organisation – an assessment undertaken annually with performance management acknowledged. The change would be cost neutral if the assessment was tied to CRGA meetings. Responding to the query from New Caledonia, he noted that increases would apply to only 11 per cent of staff who currently fall below the 90% level within their band.

305. The Director of Corporate Service noted that the SP10 methodology ensured a validation process, and promised a more appropriate and accurate assessment of job worth. He said that 45 staff out of a total of 540 would receive an increase.

306. The SPC Deputy Director-General (Noumea) provided data as requested by French Polynesia: the total budget was 90 million CFP units and total salary costs were 35.5 million CFP units (40% of total budget), so the change accounted for 0.5 per cent of total salary costs.

307. The Director-General said that the Secretariat was conscious of the point French Polynesia raised regarding the apparent disconnect between increasing salaries and the sustainable financing strategy. SPC faced a challenge in attracting and retaining experts who were expected to 'hit the ground running'. Once the remuneration system was corrected, discipline and responsibility regarding salary increases was incumbent on regional organisations.

308. The representative of French Polynesia thanked SPC for the clarification. He said that French Polynesia endorsed the recommendations.

309. The representative of Tonga suggested a slight change to one of the recommendations.

Decisions

310. With regard to the new job banding model, CRGA:

- i. approved the proposed new CROP harmonised banding model (presented in Table 2 of the paper) as endorsed by the participating CROP executives for presentation to and consideration by their respective governing bodies;
- ii. noted that the new banding model has been considered and approved by the Forum Officials Committee, the SPREP Council and the SOPAC Council for implementation in their respective organisations from January 2011;
- iii. noted that the cost of implementation of this new banding model is approximately 181,000 CFP units, for which provision has been made in the 2011 budget;
- iv. approved implementation of the new banding model from January 2011.

311. With regard to the remuneration arrangements for the Director-General, CRGA:

- i. accepted the 'Report on the Banding of CEO Roles' prepared by Strategic Pay and endorsed by CROP Heads;
- ii. approved the implementation of the new CEO band for SPC from January 2011;
- iii. agreed to the establishment of a CRGA Standing Committee comprising the previous, current and future chairpersons of CRGA to undertake the assessment of the Director-General's performance

annually and report to CRGA including recommendations on the Director-General's remuneration and performance-based rewards.

**AGENDA ITEM 10.2 – 2010 MARKET DATA REVIEW FOR POSITIONS
ADVERTISED INTERNATIONALLY**

312. The Director of Corporate Services presented an overview of the 2010 market data from the three reference markets – Australia and New Zealand (public service sectors), and Fiji Islands (all organisations sector) – for positions advertised internationally. He explained that a CROP working group reviewed the data yearly and if an increase was recommended it was first presented to FOC. He said that this first review provided benchmark data for the use of new banding model. The average for each band except Band 1 sat above the Fiji market and below the Australia market. Bands 1–5 closely matched the New Zealand market. The shapes of the three curves were similar, with a moderate slope for Bands 1–10 and a much steeper slope for higher bands. There had been strengthening of the Australian currency and weakening of the New Zealand and Fiji currencies compared to the SDR (Special Drawing Right). The opposite movements of the Australian and New Zealand currencies roughly cancelled each other out, showing that use of the SDR provides smoothing, as intended. CROP agencies, and SPC in particular, have had difficulties in recruiting and retaining staff. In earlier years CROP agencies had difficulties meeting salary increases called for by reviews. After the 2010 increase was implemented SPC reached parity with the 2008 market data. The recommendation is that parity be maintained for 2011, increase of 2.4 to 7 per cent, to allow SPC to continue to be able to recruit staff. He noted that the Forum Officials Committee had approved the new salary scales.

313. The representative of Australia requested information on the process of determining remuneration for staff recruited to different locations.

314. The Director of Corporate Services explained that once the 'job value' had been established, the base salary was determined, using Suva as a base, and a cost of living adjustment was added for staff based in other locations.

315. The representative of French Polynesia said it seemed that CRGA was asked to accept substantial increases in salaries every year, and that members were told that it would not affect the budget, but this year they were also being asked to raise assessed contributions. He noted that he had been representing French Polynesia at CRGA for 6 years and had seen frequent increases, but there had also been efforts, such as the decision to delay implementing the 2008 CRGA-approved increase because of outside events. He asked for information on the impact of these increases on employees' pay.

316. The Director-General explained that because of different locations in which SPC operates, increases were cancelled out by different movements in currency. He said that the total impact of the increase across SPC was negligible because of that.

317. The Deputy Director of Corporate Services said that the impact of the salary increase would vary depending on location. In Fiji, there would be an increase of 135,000 CFP units, because of both the percentage increase and strengthening of SDR to FJD exchange rate. In Noumea, the net cost was near zero because the increase was countered by a decrease in the cost of living adjustment of 13 per cent. In FSM there would be a small increase of 20,000 CFP units, and in Solomon Islands there would be an increase of 16,000 CFP units.

318. The representative of French Polynesia said that he with the additional information provided by the Secretariat he understood that the total cost would be approximately 170,000 CFP units. He noted that this increase in cost did not appear in the documents and that it was kind of information that it would be useful to have. He said that in the future when CRGA was asked to make decision it would be good to have that level of detail.

319. The representative of USA asked if the 181,000 CFP units mentioned in a previous paper referred to the same amount. If there would not be any impact in 2011, he asked, what about 2012?

320. The Director-General explained that these were two separate figures that happened to be close in

amount. He said that, barring unforeseen events, SPC expected things to remain similar in 2012.

321. The Deputy Director of Corporate Services noted that currency movements could impact the situation, for example if the SDR strengthened against the CFP. He said that the budget paper was an attempt to address that issue through reserves.

322. The representative of New Zealand echoed the comments from French Polynesia and Australia, and suggested that SPC think about adding a distinct section on financial implications in all the papers in the different sectors.

323. The Director-General explained that normally SPC tries to include financial implications. However, this year the budget had come in last because of the need to combine SOPAC, SPBEA and SPC budgets.

324. The representative of Australia requested that a recommendation be added regarding including financial detail in future reports.

Decisions

325. CRGA:

- i. noted that the respective meetings of the Forum Officials Committee, the SPREP Council and the SOPAC Council approved the new CROP salary scale, based on 2010 data from the three reference markets, for internationally recruited staff;
- ii. approved the implementation of the new CROP salary scale for SPC staff recruited internationally, effective from 1 January 2011; and
- iii. requested that in future the Secretariat include details of any financial implications of decisions in all papers presented.

AGENDA ITEM 10.3 – 2010 MARKET DATA REVIEW FOR POSITIONS ADVERTISED LOCALLY

326. The Director of Corporate Services presented an overview of the 2010 market data for positions advertised locally. He explained that SPC was continuing its decentralisation initiative and had offices in four countries. This was focusing attention on variations in terms and conditions between the offices, and the impacts of these variations on corporate information services. He said that in 2011 a CROP harmonisation working group would undertake a review. In the meantime, it was necessary to review salaries in the different locations.

327. The representative of USA noted that salaries for Honiara-based positions were pegged to those of FFA, and wondered how FFA calculates its salaries. He also asked if there were tax exemptions for employees in other countries, and if so if they were secure.

328. The Director-General explained that FFA pegged its salaries to Solomon Islands public service and private sector (all organisations). He said that there was an understanding between CROP agencies to collaborate in this area. He said that the issue of taxation was more of a question for international staff; nationals working in their own country were usually taxed. SPC was still in consultation with Fiji on this issue.

329. The representative of French Polynesia asked for figures translating the amount relating to the percentage increase in Fiji. He noted that SPC staff in Fiji were paid above the market rate, though he said it was understandable that when the reference market decreased SPC staff salaries were not adjusted downwards. He asked for confirmation that the issue of changes in SDR exchange rates did not apply and that therefore there was no need to compensate for such changes.

330. The Deputy Director of Corporate Services confirmed that salaries of staff recruited locally were not linked to the SDR, as they were paid in local currency. He said that in Fiji, salaries paid to local staff were well above the benchmark rate. He said that it was expected that the local market would increase in the future, and that as it did, it would catch up with the SPC salary scale. The situation was different for a small number of SPBEA staff, and there would be some salary adjustments for them, as they were not paid at the same level as SPC staff. The total increase for SPBEA staff would be no more than 5000 CFP units. For other Fiji staff there would be no increase. For Noumea-based positions, a .8 per cent increase had been paid in 2010 and there was no expectation of a large increase in the future.

331. The Director of Corporate Services said that for Noumea-based staff, SPC expected any increases to be of the same magnitude as recent ones.

332. The representative of French Polynesia thanked SPC for answering his questions. He summed up, saying that CRGA was being invited to decide on policies that would result in increased salary costs of 5000 CFP units, plus 170,000 CFP units for internationally recruited positions, plus 180,000 CFP units resulting from the job sizing and re-banding initiative.

333. The representative of USA asked if there would be an impact on the 2011 budget, and if so, if it would affect assessed contributions.

334. The Chairperson followed up on the question and asked about 2012.

335. The Director-General explained that there would be no impact on members' assessed contributions as the cost was covered in the 2011 budget. He confirmed that French Polynesia's estimate of the total cost CRGA was being asked to approve was about right, and that it was all provided for in the 2011 budget. He thanked members for their feedback and said that it was useful for SPC to know what information to include in the future.

336. The representative of New Zealand noted that according to the paper there would be a full review of terms and conditions of salary scales under CROP auspices. He asked for information about the scope of that review, adding it might be helpful to include more analysis on human resources profiles, such as years of service and where staff are on the scale.

337. The Director of Corporate Services said that the output of the CROP working group on terms and conditions was a major item for SPC. He said that the current model (aligning to local conditions) was increasingly difficult. He encouraged members to provide feedback on looking at other aspects of human resource management. The timetable for the review called for establishing terms of reference by the end of the year and carrying out the review in the early part of 2011.

Decisions

338. CRGA:

- i. approved the new salary scale for all Suva-based positions advertised locally, effective from 1 January 2011;
- ii. noted that for SPC Noumea-based positions advertised locally, a 0.8 per cent salary increase was paid effective from 1 January 2010;
- iii. noted that for Pohnpei-based positions advertised locally, no change is proposed to current salary scales; and
- iv. noted that for Honiara-based positions advertised locally, movements are linked to the Forum Fisheries Agency salary structure.

AGENDA ITEM 11 – FINANCIAL MATTERS

AGENDA ITEM 11.1 – STATUS OF MEMBERS' ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS

339. The Deputy Director of Corporate Services informed the meeting of the current status of members' assessed contributions. SPC regulations require the Secretariat to present this information to CRGA and to state what has been done to recover any arrears. The Deputy Director noted that three members were in credit – Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tonga. As of 26 October 2010, arrears were over 2.1 million CFP units. For some members, arrears cover several years, but in some cases arrangements have been made with the Secretariat to make regular part payments. He said the analysis of SPC's services that was carried out as part of the development of the long-term sustainable financing strategy showed a high level of benefits to PICTs in relation to their contributions.

340. The representative of the US said that the US paid membership contributions on a fixed schedule based on the government fiscal year, which ended 30 September. This accounted for the US being a few months out of step in paying its assessed contribution to SPC, though the payment was always made.

341. The representative of Kiribati expressed regret for Kiribati's arrears. She said there was provision for the assessed contribution under the Dept. of Foreign Affairs. The payment was being processed but would not cover the full amount of arrears.

342. The representative of Nauru noted that most of Nauru's arrears were for the period before 2006. In 2004, Nauru had requested assistance from PIFS, which was provided through Pacific Regional Assistance to Nauru. Thanks to development partners, Nauru was now out of the crisis stage but still had to rebuild its fragile economy. He stressed that SPC was an important partner for Nauru, which appreciated the contribution SPC made to the well-being of grassroots people. He asked whether the arrears from 1996 to 2007 could be written off, with a commitment made to paying off the remaining arrears.

343. The representative of American Samoa said its arrears were not an expression of dissatisfaction with SPC, noting that a part payment had just been made, and that the government was committed to settling them in full.

344. The representative of PNG said he had just made inquiries with Treasury, which paid membership contributions, and had been assured that the payments would be made.

345. The representative of Fiji noted how long some arrears had been outstanding. He said some members had much stronger economies than others and therefore different abilities to pay debts. In this regard, Fiji had no objection to consideration of Nauru's request.

346. The representative of Niue said his government had a budget deficit but would endeavour to pay its 2010 contribution. He said Niue appreciated SPC's services.

347. The representative of Tonga said the discussion so far had focused on debts and asked hopefully if there was a bonus for members like Tonga that had paid in advance.

348. The Director-General said that since he took up the position, the level of arrears had improved. He thanked members for their expressions of support and for their efforts to make regular payments despite financial challenges. He especially thanked Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tonga for paying in advance. He said the Secretariat understood the difficulties of some members, particularly Nauru and CNMI, but emphasised that arrears in assessed contributions are regarded as sovereign debt and are not written off, although no interest is imposed nor is there a question of curtailing services to the members involved. In addition writing off the debt had implications for members that were fulfilling arrangements to make payments. He noted Nauru's commitment to paying its current contribution. CNMI was also in a difficult financial situation but had made a commitment to work on a payment schedule. He reiterated that the Secretariat was always willing to work with members on practical arrangements for payment.

Decisions

349. CRGA:

- i. noted the status of members' assessed contributions;
- ii. further noted the efforts by the Secretariat to encourage members with arrears to settle their outstanding contributions;
- iii. encouraged members with arrears and current outstanding balances for 2010 to settle their outstanding contributions as soon as possible and / or agree a payment schedule with the Secretariat to settle their arrears over a number of years; and
- iv. expressed appreciation to all members that have paid their assessed contributions in a timely manner.

AGENDA ITEM 11.2 – 2009 FINANCIAL REPORT AND AUDITOR'S MANAGEMENT LETTER

350. The Director-General introduced the presentation of the 2009 financial report and auditor's management letter, noting that SPC had received a clean audit for 2009.

351. The Deputy Director of Corporate Services explained that SPC was required by its financial regulations to present its audit report and management letter. The audit report and financial statements were published in part 2 of SPC's annual report. The audit was conducted in accordance with international standards on auditing and SPC financial regulations, and SPC received a clean audit report for the 14th straight year. The balance sheet was very steady. In income and expenditure, there was a surplus of 841,000 CFP units, mainly from exchange gains, and interest income was lower than budgeted. The management letter, which points out areas where internal controls could be strengthened, made fewer recommendations than in 2008.

352. The representative of USA expressed USA's gratification that SPC had received a clean audit report, saying that USA appreciated the organisation's excellent financial management.

353. The representative of New Zealand said that News Zealand also congratulated SPC for its unqualified audit, and said that it demonstrates the robustness of the organisation. He said also acknowledged SPC for the level of transparency it provided by sharing the audit report and management letter and managements' responses. Given size of the organisation and the scale and diversity of its work, he asked if SPC had considered looking at establishing an internal audit function.

354. The representative of French Polynesia joined USA and New Zealand in congratulating the Director-General for SPC's clean audit. He requested further information on SPC's response of to security weakness in internal controls.

355. The Director-General said that the credit should go to the staff, and that they would be glad to hear the positive feedback. In response to the comments from New Zealand he said that SPC was planning to establish an internal audit function in 2011, and that this would be further discussed under agenda item 11.4. In response to the question from French Polynesia, he said that a substantial number of points raised in the management letter related to systems and provisions now being addressed thanks to the opportunity provided by the RIF integration process, so some would 'fade away' in 2011.

356. The Deputy Director of Corporate Services explained that many of the points made in previous management letters, particularly those relating to ICT controls, had been resolved.

Decisions

357. CRGA:

- i. accepted the 2009 audited financial statements as presenting a true and fair view of the financial position and financial performance of the Secretariat and of its Staff Provident Fund;
- ii. noted with satisfaction that proper accounting records have been kept and unqualified audit reports were received by SPC for the 14th consecutive year;
- iii. welcomed the inclusion in the financial report of the comments made by the auditors in the management letter and the Secretariat's responses, and commended the high level of transparency shown.

AGENDA ITEM 11.3 – 2010 REVISED BUDGET

358. The Deputy Director-General (Noumea) presented the 2010 revised budget. It was a balanced budget, and the revisions included increases in both income and expenditure. He explained that programme funding was provided by Australia, New Zealand and France as annual block grants, which provide some flexibility. A new term was being used this year: recurrent funding, which referred to core funding and programme funding. Cost increases resulted from exchange rate volatility and inescapable costs. Higher core income came from project management fees, miscellaneous income, bank interest and reductions in some special funds. Increases in programme funding were the result of additional programmes and strengthening of the Australian and New Zealand dollars. Increases in project funding were the result of efforts to mobilise resources, as well as the fact that when the Secretariat prepares the budget it takes a conservative approach, only including projects that have been officially approved. Therefore, when the budget is revised, projects that have been approved in the time since the budget was prepared get added.

359. The representative of Australia asked if the revised budget document reflected all of the changes during the year. She noted that Australia had approved a 1.8 million project during the year, and it did not appear to be reflected in the document.

360. The Deputy Director-General (Noumea) said that it included all projects that were approved at the time it was prepared.

361. The representative of RMI asked if the updated figures were also reflected in the division reporting.

362. The Deputy Director-General (Noumea) confirmed that they were.

363. The representative of French Polynesia noted that the total revised budget was about 72 million CFP units, including SPC and SPBEA, but that last year CRGA had adopted a budget of 68 million CFP units, including SPC, SPBEA and SOPAC. He asked if the budget had increase significantly, noting that the SOPAC budget was about 15 million, but that the merger did not occur. He asked if there was additional income for specific projects.

364. The Deputy Director-General (Noumea) confirmed that there had been significant additional funding received for projects, totalling about 15 million CFP units. There had also been other more modest increases in core and programme funds.

Decision

365. CRGA noted the revised budget (core and programme funding) for FY 2010.

AGENDA ITEM 11.4 – MEMBERS’ ASSESSED CONTRIBUTIONS

366. (The Chairperson noted that he had received a second communication regarding Agenda item 12, and that it would be circulated to delegates for further discussion under that agenda item.)

367. The Director-General presented a proposal to CRGA 40 to increase assessed contributions by 25 per cent beginning from January 2011. Conscious of economic pressures currently faced by member countries, he asked representatives to consider the movement of members’ assessed contributions since 1999 and the quality of services that SPC provides. An increase would strengthen the resilience of the organisation, particularly in essential, recurrent service areas. Since 1999, members’ assessed contributions had increased by only 8 per cent. However, the ‘weighted average regional inflation’ for the period up to 2009 was estimated to be approximately 45 per cent, and was projected to reach approximately 50 per cent by 2011. This translated to a 42 per cent reduction in SPC’s purchasing power in relation to its core resources, as measured against its 1999 capacity. CRGA 40 was further asked to consider re-introducing the linking of members’ assessed contributions to movements in ‘weighted average regional annual inflation’ to ensure maintenance of the organisation’s financial base relative to inflation. The business case for an increase in contributions was underscored by a dramatic increase in demand for essential services by members that did not have capacity to provide these functions themselves. The issue was the subject of the long-term sustainable financing strategy. The proposed increase would narrow the gap between SPC core budget and inflation movement, provide resources to manage the larger scope of programme delivery, support consolidation of the RIF reforms, and support the implementation of the Pacific Plan. New funds would create opportunities to build institutional capacity for the growing organisation, particularly in terms of administration, finance, programme support, policy and planning. Many of these services were currently resourced with project funds, or were un-funded, and the Director-General suggested that members’ assessed contributions were the best source of financing. Specifically, the increase would allow the establishment of 17 new positions, fund two major activities, and provide direct support to division directors, allowing flexibility to support reforms. The Secretariat also proposed an increase in the level of its reserves, to provide for emergency responses. Finally, the Secretariat proposed that the formula for members’ assessed contributions be reviewed as part of the current work on developing a long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC. This review could validate the existing formula or it could indicate that it should be replaced with one that would give members more flexibility in relation to the contributions they make.

368. The representative of Fiji Islands requested clarification on how the ‘total financial benefits to members’ figures were calculated, and what was meant by host grants.

369. The Director-General explained that ‘total financial benefits to members’ were derived from the JCS reports, specifically the estimate of services delivered. It was included to allow comparison of the cost/benefit analysis to the rates of assessed contribution. Currently, host-country grants were included in the member assessed contributions. Fiji and New Caledonia shared 1 per cent of the total contribution, with the breakdown calculated based on the number of staff per location.

370. The representative of France noted that France could not accept a 25 per cent increase to members’ assessed contributions. France was pleased to be the second largest contributor; however, the contribution should remain at the current level and not be increased. He noted that France was not a member of SPBEA, SOPAC or PIFS so it could not support an increase to France’s contribution based on the RIF reform. All countries were undergoing cutbacks as a result of the economic crisis, so an increase of 17 new posts was not justifiable at present. However, he said he was pleased to announce that France could maintain its assessed contribution and voluntary contribution at the current level. With regard to indexation, France could not accept the proposal as this was not the practice of France’s administration or other international bodies. France supported the proposal to review the system for assessing member contributions and suggested that a study be carried out in the medium term.

371. The representative of USA stated that USA could not support linking the members’ assessed contribution to a weighted average of regional inflation, as no other regional organisation used this model and it would have implications that went beyond contributions to SPC. USA supported a review of the formula for assessing member contributions. While conscious of SPC’s budgetary issues, USA could not support the proposed 25 per cent increase until the long-term sustainable financing strategy was completed,

as it was premature to build in an increase based on a work in progress.

372. The representative of Samoa stated Samoa's preference to reserve consideration on an increase to members' assessed contributions until after the long-term sustainable financing strategy was completed. The strategy would allow countries to make a better informed decision on the use and benefits of an increase to contributions. She noted concern that until the analysis of core services was completed, an increase of 17 new staff could create a duplication of roles and functions within SPC. Once key services and therefore posts were identified, SPC could streamline support staff and review the mix of skills required to operate the agency under the new structure. She requested a clarification on the emergency response fund.

373. The representative of Tonga asked if there was an intention to ask governments to maintain separate contributions to SOPAC and SPBEA, or if they would combined into a single contribution to SPC. The long-term sustainable financing strategy needed to be completed before considering an increase to contributions. Tonga supported reviewing the formula used to calculate member assessed contributions.

374. The representative of Solomon Islands, while recognising the rationale for the proposed increases, reminded CRGA that countries had varying abilities to pay at the current rate. He said that Solomon Islands had taken note of the rationale, but could not make financial commitments to regional agencies until the new government had completed the 2011 budget. He asked if an increase in 2011 would be followed by a further increase from 2012 onwards, and if the contributions for SOPAC and SPBEA would affect SPC future increases.

375. The representative of French Polynesia suggested that the proposal to increase members' assessed contributions was premature. French Polynesia preferred to wait for the outcomes of the long-term sustainable financing strategy review and the assessment of the RIF reform process. Therefore, French Polynesia could not approve the recommendations to increase member assessed contributions and to link the contributions to inflation. However, French Polynesia did support the proposal to review calculation of contributions. He was pleased to announce that French Polynesia, from 2011 could align its voluntary contribution to SOPAC (as an associate member) to those of other SOPAC member countries, which would be an increase.

376. The representative of Vanuatu noted his understanding that contributions to SOPAC and SPBEA would be maintained at current levels. Vanuatu could only support the recommendation to review the formula for calculation of members' assessed contributions.

377. The Director-General noted his appreciation for and understanding of the sentiments expressed by delegates. He reiterated that the justification for an increase to contributions was primarily to address critical bottlenecks to implementation of the RIF reform, which CRGA still expected SPC to undertake. In response to the question from Samoa, he explained that the current reserve fund was allocated for SPC to manage internal adversities. The proposed response fund would be available to programmes to fund services to members, and under the financial regulations, the current reserve fund could not be used for that purpose. In response to the advice from CRGA 40, the Director-General suggested that discussion of an increase to members' assessed contributions be deferred until the completion of the long-term sustainable financing strategy, meaning there would be no increase to core funding for 2011 and 2012. The recommendation regarding the linking of contributions to the movement in weighted average regional annual inflation would be deleted, and the recommendation regarding the review of the formula for assessing members' contributions would be included in the analysis for the development of the long-term sustainable financing strategy.

Decisions

378. CRGA:

- i. endorsed the Secretariat's suggestion that the formula for members' assessed contributions be examined as part of the current work on developing a long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC; and
- ii. deferred consideration of the increase in assessed contributions pending an examination of financial

options by the subcommittee on the long-term sustainable financing strategy;

- iii. decided against linking members' assessed contributions to annual inflation movements.

AGENDA ITEM 11.5 – 2011 BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAMME

379. The Director-General introduced the presentation of the 2011 budget, noting that CRGA 40 had already approved the divisional budgets as part of the division presentations.

380. The Deputy Director-General (Noumea) outlined some of the changes and the key features of the new budget format: the new organisational structure including SOPAC and SPBEA; changes to the representation of income and expenditure and key results to be achieved by categorising funding by recurrent or project; greater emphasis on key results with categorisation by recurrent and project funding; an direct correlation to divisional budgets and expected results; providing the ability to track SOPAC and SPBEA income and expenditure; inclusion of comparative budgets and expanded annexes such as assessed contributions, income by source and expenditure by division and type; and inclusion of personnel lists. The Secretariat proposed a balanced budget of 90,155,300 CFP units, comprising a recurrent budget of 28,635,900 CFP units (core funding of 15,132,200 CFP units and programme funding of 13,503,700 CFP units), and project funding of 61,519,400 CFP units. The recurrent budget made up 32 per cent of the budget, with projects accounting for the remaining 68 per cent. The total budget was divided as follows: SPC 70,188,800 CFP units (77.8%), SOPAC 16,992,500 CFP units (18.8%) and SPBEA 2,974,000 (3.4%). The SPC income included the track 1 energy and ICT functions transferred from SOPAC. It was SPC practice to apply conservative policies, for example, forecasting estimated exchange rates. Proposed remuneration increases were fully budgeted, and all projects and assessed contributions were based on signed agreements. The budget would not be impacted by the expected change to Fiji's income tax policy. The budget supported the view that the reserves needed to be increased to absorb future shocks and variability in income and expenditure. The issue would be included in the long-term sustainable financing strategy study. SPC had strong financial risk management systems.

381. The representative of RMI congratulated SPC on the clear and innovative format of the new budget.

382. The representative of New Zealand congratulated SPC for the ongoing improvement of the budget papers. New Zealand noted that 68 per cent of the budget came from project funding, which was a large increase. New Zealand was pleased to note the tone of consolidation, and stability given the recent RIF reforms. He applauded the division of expenditure into recurrent and project sources and noted the increase in available programme funding due to current exchange rates. He said that project management fees were a vital component of the stability of the organisation, and noted the necessity for ongoing transparency regarding this income. It was important to reflect new financial commitments and results in the budget. New Zealand confirmed that it could keep its member contribution at the current level, but could not yet confirm project funding for 2011.

383. The Director-General noted that project management fees were a very important source of revenue. The current CRGA-endorsed policy called for a 5 per cent fee for members and a 15 per cent fee for non-members. However, the policy overlooked the fact that donors had their own policies, so the application of fees was on a sliding scale based on individual development partner limits. The policy relating to member and non-member project fees needed to be addressed as part of the long-term sustainable financing strategy.

384. The Deputy Director-General commented that project management fees were now reflected as a separate income category. Increases in 2011 for these fees were small as SPC was entering a consolidation phase. He thanked CRGA for its suggestions to improve the format of the budget.

385. The representative of French Polynesia noted with pleasure efforts of continuous improvement in the budget format. Regarding national offices, he noted that there was no budget forecast for the new Vanuatu office in the 2011 budget.

386. The Director-General responded that once arrangements to establish the office under the host country agreement had been finalised, the impact would be included in the revised budget.

387. The representative of Vanuatu confirmed the status of the host country agreement.

Decisions

388. CRGA:

- i. noted the inclusion of the SPBEA and SOPAC budgets in SPC's 2011 budget as presented, and further noted that these budgets will be quarantined for SPBEA and SOPAC services in 2011;
- ii. approved the proposed budget for financial year 2011;
- iii. endorsed the Secretariat's view that the target level of the General Reserve should be increased from 600,000 CFP units to 3,000,000 CFP units (3.3% of total income) and that target levels of the Specific Funds need to be increased as well, with the new levels to be achieved by end of year 2015 and further agreed that these proposals should be presented in the context of the long-term sustainable funding strategy for SPC.

AGENDA ITEM 11.6 – PROPOSED FORMAT AND STRUCTURE OF SPC'S BUDGET AND WORK PROGRAMME FROM 2012 ON

389. The Director-General presented the proposed format and structure of SPC's budget and work programme from 2012. The Secretariat planned to embark on developing a new structure for its work programme and budget for the 2012 financial year onwards. This action was in response to requests from some members for SPC to develop a more comprehensive budget document. The RIF reform process had provided an opportunity to undertake this work in 2011. Principles underpinning the new budget structure were linked to key result areas, the JCS process and country development priorities. The 2012 budget would include a regional component and a format that tracks expenditure and implementation in each PICT. He explained that the new format would include a multi-year budget with a five-year forecast as an annex. Presentation of the new budget structure would align with the long-term sustainable financing strategy and would integrate the SPC, SOPAC, and SPBA budgets into one document. The 2012 budget would be more comprehensive, targeting decision-makers by tracking impacts at country level. The Director-General noted that given CRGA's rejection of the increase to member assessed contributions and linking contributions to inflation, SPC would look at new funding sources to complete the essential tasks required.

390. The representative of New Zealand commented that, as each CRGA member had a budget process and budgeting experts, SPC was invited to approach countries informally to request in-kind assistance for the preparation of the budget.

Decisions

391. CRGA:

- i. noted the Secretariat's intention to develop and present a new budget structure for the consideration of CRGA 41 and the 7th Conference of the Pacific Community in October 2011;
- ii. noted that the Secretariat will endeavour to accomplish this aim through other funding sources;
- iii. further noted with appreciation the willingness expressed by some members to provide in-kind support to the Secretariat to achieve this task.

AGENDA ITEM 12 – RECRUITMENT OF NEW DIRECTOR-GENERAL

392. This agenda item was discussed *in camera*.

393. CRGA:

- i. Noting:
 - a. provision 25 of the Tahiti Nui Declaration regarding the term of office of the Director-General,
 - b. that the Declaration does not address extraordinary circumstances in which SPC may find itself,
 - c. that the unprecedented transition period with regard to the expansion resulting from the full implementation of the revised regional institutional framework and the development of the long-term sustainable financing strategy constitutes extraordinary circumstances, and
 - d. the request by some members for an extraordinary extension of the term of the incumbent Director-General,

agreed to recommend to the 7th Conference of the Pacific Community that the incumbent Director-General of SPC be offered an exceptional further and final two-year term;
- ii. directed the Secretariat to prepare a consolidated document entitled Rules of Procedure for the Appointment of the SPC Director-General to be presented for the consideration and approval of CRGA 41; and
- iii. agreed to recommend to the 7th Conference that it approve the following criteria[†] for the selection of the Director-General of SPC, further noting that a practical knowledge of both of SPC's working languages (English and French) is an advantage:

The candidate

- a. has an appreciation of the key technical and regional issues;
- b. is sensitive to the needs of the organisation and of the region;
- c. has technical experience in areas relating to the purpose of the organisation;
- d. understands the geopolitical aspects of the region;
- e. is a good manager of research, technical and administrative staff;
- f. has excellent leadership qualities;
- g. is a good communicator both within and outside of the organisation;
- h. can work well with donors;
- i. can formulate and articulate a vision for the organisation;
- j. is conversant with the changes currently occurring in the region that impact on the nature and role of SPC and the services it delivers to members;
- k. is conversant with the new architecture for regional institutions and able to lead SPC, while also consolidating its expanded role, purpose and modality of service delivery to members;
- l. is of good character, standing and integrity, and able to command the respect of members and partners;
- m. is able to demonstrate dedicated effort and commitment to the development of Pacific Island countries and territories;
- n. is conversant with the principles of organisational change, organisational restructuring and change management.

[†]Note: Criteria (a–i.) were approved by the 36th South Pacific Conference in Saipan in 1996. Additional criteria (j–n.) for the position are proposed given changes in both the region and SPC since 1996.

AGENDA ITEM 13 – CRGA 41 IN MAJURO, REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

394. The Director-General explained that the CRGA Rules of Procedure stated that CRGA was to meet once a year at SPC headquarters in Noumea, except during the years when the Conference was convened when CRGA was to meet immediately before the Conference at a venue chosen by members of the

Conference. In accordance with the CRGA rules, the venue for CRGA 41 would be Majuro, RMI. Meetings of CRGA were generally held in either October or November and members would be advised of the exact meeting dates in due time through normal SPC communication channels. The CRGA Rules of Procedure stated that representatives of governments and administrations should provide a Chairperson and a Vice-Chairperson for each meeting, to be chosen in alphabetical order of CRGA member countries. Following this long-standing procedure, the Chairperson for the 41st Meeting of CRGA would be provided by FSM, and the Vice-Chairperson by Fiji Islands. CRGA 41 meeting dates would be discussed with the host before members were notified. The South Pacific Games in August, the Rugby World Cup in September and the delayed PIFS meeting would need to be taken into consideration, so members should expect the CRGA meeting and Conference to take place in early November.

Decisions

395. CRGA:

- i. noted that the venue for the year 2011 meeting of CRGA 41 will be Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, and that members will be advised in due time of the meeting dates;
- ii. noted that the Chairperson for CRGA 41 will be provided by the Federated States of Micronesia and the Vice-Chairperson by Fiji Islands.

AGENDA ITEM 14 – OTHER BUSINESS

396. The representative of New Caledonia, in relation to Agenda Item 8.1, expressed the pleasure of the New Caledonia government of hosting SPC headquarters. He said that New Caledonia would like to strengthen its collaboration with CRGA. In relation to member contributions, New Caledonia was not against the principle of an increase, but shared the consensus of CRGA 40. However, the government of New Caledonia was seriously considering increasing its voluntary contribution in line with its policy of regional integration.

397. The Chairperson noted CRGA's appreciation for New Caledonia's comments, saying that the intention to increase participation in SPC was valued and that CRGA looked forward to strengthening relationships with New Caledonia.

398. The representative of RMI expressed recognition of the valued contribution of Ms Elizabeth Grémont, delegate from New Caledonia, as this was her last CRGA. He also expressed his appreciation to the governments of New Caledonia and France for facilitating visa arrangements, allowing delegations to obtain visas on arrival.

399. The Chairperson further thanked Ms Grémont for her service to CRGA.

Decisions

400. CRGA

- i. acknowledged with appreciation the proposal by New Caledonia to increase its voluntary contribution to SPC;
- ii. recognised with appreciation the long and distinguished service of Mme Elizabeth Grémont, retiring delegate of New Caledonia;
- iii. expressed appreciation for the decision of the Government of France to issue visas for entry to New Caledonia upon arrival for delegates attending regional meetings, noting that this does not currently apply to Tonga and to countries that have an in-country French embassy (Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu).

AGENDA ITEM 15 – ADOPTION OF CRGA OUTCOMES AND DECISIONS

Decision

401. CRGA adopted its decisions.

ANNEX 1: OBSERVER STATEMENTS

UNICEF PACIFIC

Tim Sutton,
UNICEF Deputy Representative to the Pacific

Let me begin by thanking the Director General for inviting UNICEF to observe the 40th meeting of the CRGA, and also let me present greetings to the meeting from the UNICEF Regional Director, Ms Anupama Rao Singh and the UNICEF Representative to the Pacific, Dr Isiye Ndombi.

UNICEF places a very high value on our partnership with SPC. Having worked together successfully for a number of years, SPC and UNICEF agreed, in 2008, to bring our collaboration to a new level. We signed a Memorandum of Understanding which established a more formal collaborative mechanism to maximize the combined impact of the work of SPC and UNICEF for children, women and young people in the Pacific.

The MOU's purpose is simple – it is to ensure that the benefits and outcomes of the assistance provided by our two organizations -working in synergy -are greater than those possible by working alone.

Together, we have identified eight programme themes through which we are pursuing cooperation together with our national partners, for the benefit of children and women across the Pacific. These eight themes are (1) data management; (2) communication for behaviour and social change; (3) education; (4) emergency preparedness; (5) HIV/AIDS awareness and prevention; (6) health and sanitation; (7) child protection; and (8) youth.

Over the last couple of days the results of our collaboration under this MOU have been well reflected in a number of the presentations made to this meeting.

We look forward to reviewing together our 2010 collaboration later this year. We are also looking forward to planning our collaboration for 2011 and “stepping up” our partnership so that we can better support the development plans of our national partners for the benefit of children, women and young people.

We are also excited by the possibility of co-locating our offices in several Pacific Island Countries in 2011. If we can make this happen it has the potential to further enhance our programme partnership at country level and help us deliver support to our partners more efficiently and effectively.

As I noted at the beginning of this short statement, UNICEF places a very high value on our partnership with SPC, both in the Pacific and within the wider Asia Pacific region. The invitation from UNICEF and the Government of China to your Director General to participate in and co facilitate a high level meeting on South -South Co-operation in Beijing next week, alongside other leading regional organizations such as ASEAN and ADB, is a sure sign of the respect and esteem with which we at UNICEF hold SPC as a partner.

Thank you once again for inviting UNICEF to participate in the 40th CRGA. We at UNICEF look forward to, and remain committed to, furthering our partnership with SPC for the benefit of the children, women and young people of the Pacific.

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

Feleti P Teo,

Deputy Secretary General, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Thanks for the opportunity to address the CRGA meeting. The Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat is grateful for the invitation and the opportunity to observe at this meeting.

SPC, of course, is a major and long term partner of the Forum Secretariat in our common pursuit to support our membership, in advancing their development aspirations.

The occasion of the CRGA meeting this week carries some historical significance in the life of SPC as a regional organization. The organizational reforms that you have already considered arising directly from the RIF reforms will no doubt transform significantly SPC as a regional organization.

As we meet here this week, the Forum Economic Ministers are also meeting in Niue. My Secretary-General; Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade is in attendance at that meeting but he asked me to convey to you all his best wishes for a successful and productive meeting.

In the time allotted, I will make only four general points.

Firstly, you have already received the update on the RIF. I wish, on behalf of our Secretary General, to reiterate the sentiments and words of appreciation and congratulations expressed earlier in the week, to all those involved in executing the RIF reforms mandated by the Forum Leaders and the CRGA. Not only to Jimmie and his colleagues CEO of the other CROP agencies involved (SO PAC, SPREP and SPBEA) and their staffs but also to the CRGA and the other governing councils for their perseverance, dedication and commitment to seeing through the RIF reforms.

PIFS subscribes to and supports the observation by the Director General made earlier in the week that the RIF exercise was a long drawn out process, at time highly sensitive and emotive. But with the reforms now instituted and about to be rolled out, the greater challenge lies ahead and that is to ensure the sustainability of the standard of services delivered formally by other organizations and programmes which are now merged into SPC. The challenge set out by the Leaders for such merger, at the minimum, is that there should be no diminution of services. That will be the benchmark that will gauge the success or otherwise of the RIF reforms.

PIFS wishes SPC well and stand ready to support SPC in that pursuit.

The Second point, still RIF related, is the transfer of technical functions from the PIFS to SPC. The DG Jimmie Rodgers in providing the update on the RIF mentioned this aspect of the RIF. I will like to reconfirm what was said by Jimmie and further confirm the commitment by PIFS to transfer the technical functions still vested in the PIFS in the areas of energy, ICT, transport and infrastructure. As we meet this week, I can assure the meeting that none of those technical functions are currently undertaken by the PIFS. But we are hoping to formalize the transfer in the immediate future through a Letter of Agreement. The only remaining point of discussion is to come to a common understanding and clarity as to what residual role the PIFS will retain in policy development in these areas which are important drivers for economic growth.

We are also hoping that the regular high level consultations between SPC and PIFS will continue and remain in the future to be a key feature of our relationship.

The Third point is to acknowledge and commend SPC for the significant contribution it makes towards the implementation of the Pacific Plan.

It is evident from this week's meeting that SPC take the lead on a range of critical regional policy initiatives identified by Leaders' in 2009 as priorities for implementation under the auspices of the Pacific Plan. These priorities include food security, energy security, ICT, fisheries and climate change to name a few. The

challenge, of course, over the next few years will be to ensure that these regional policies are fully implemented and they are able to demonstrate that they are making real impacts on development outcomes at the national level.

The extent of SPC's contribution to the implementation of the Pacific Plan is documented in the publication released earlier this year, volume 2 of *SPC and the Pacific Plan: July 2009 to June 2010*. The substance of this publication contributes significantly to the Annual Progress Report for 2010 on the implementation of the Pacific Plan which was presented to Forum Leaders at their meeting in August this year. The finalized Annual Progress Report for 2010 will be published early next month, and for the first time it will also be published in the French language.

The Fourth and final point is to acknowledge and convey my Secretary General's appreciation to DG Jimmie Rodgers for his personal contribution and participation at the work of the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP). SPC as the preeminent technical regional organization with a broad range of technical programmes is a major partner of the CROP mechanism. A mechanism that has progressed from strength to strength and a key partnership for the implementation of the Pacific Plan, and provides coordination of regional development efforts to support people of the Pacific region achieving their development aspirations and to lead free and worthwhile lives.

I wish the CRGA well for the remaining days of your meeting.

SPREP STATEMENT

Kosi Latu,
Deputy Director

May I firstly take this opportunity to thank CRGA – and the Director General of SPC for inviting SPREP to make a statement to CRGA 40. I also convey greetings from the SPREP Director – Mr David Sheppard who is presently in Nagoya Japan for the Conference of the Parties on Biodiversity.

I wish to would like to briefly highlight some key and recent developments in the work of SPREP which hopefully will be of interest to CRGA.

Last month in Madang, the SPREP Meeting adopted SPREP's new Strategic Plan for 2011-2015.

It was by far the largest consultation ever undertaken by SPREP in the development of a Strategic Plan. It replaced and combined the previous SPREP Action Plan and its related Strategic Programmes – thereby refining and simplifying its planning process. A Business Plan will be developed within the next few months to operationalise this new Strategic Plan.

SPREP's new strategic Plan reflects not only the views of its constituency but also the inputs of all relevant stakeholders, collaborating agencies, NGOs and development partners. We are grateful to SPC for its inputs into this process.

In essence SPREP's new strategic Plan identifies 4 key priority areas:

- Climate change
- Waste management and pollution
- Governance and environmental monitoring
- Biodiversity Conservation

I am also pleased to report to the CRGA that SPREP has been an active participant in the SPC JCS missions. Last year – SPREP joined SPC in its JCS missions to Tonga, Palau and Samoa. This year we participated in the JCS mission in Fiji.

This collaboration is reflective of the need for CROP agencies to coordinate their work more in the delivery

of services to Countries in the region.

At the CROP Heads meeting in June 2010, the Director General informed the CROP Heads that a CROP Wide JCS mission would be held for RMI, and extended an invitation to all CROP agencies to participate. This type of exercise is not only welcomed but it demonstrates more and more the need for joint planning between the CROP agencies in their work.

SPREP is committed to this process and we look forward to the extension of this work in 2011.

At the SPREP meeting last month Members also discussed the possibility of a sub-regional presence to enable SPREP to be more effective in its work. Members agreed to undertake a cost/benefit analysis to enable Members to make a decision at the next SPREP meeting in 2011.

The idea of a sub-regional presence – is a broad concept and does not necessarily mean the establishment of a separate sub-regional office for SPREP. It does mean looking at the best cost effective option including co-location with other CROP agencies such as SPC.

The multi-agency approach that I referred earlier is further evidenced in the establishment of the CROP Heads committee on Climate Change. Whilst SPREP is the lead agency on Climate Change it recognizes the sector approach adaptation work by SPC, and the political guidance given by PIFs.

This committee met for the first time in Nadi a few weeks ago, and is co-chaired by PIFS and SPREP CEOs.

We are pleased to hear that SPC recently appointed a Climate Change Adviser, and I have heard this week, the support work that CC will provide to the different Divisions of SPC. I think that this support work is important and we would forward to working together with the SPC Climate Change Adviser on CC issues.

Some of you will recall last year the Climate Change Conference that was held at Copenhagen – which was a disappointment for the region. SPREP was pleased to have SPREP join its team during that conference. At Copenhagen financial commitments of about \$30 billion dollars were made by developed countries. A fast track for releasing these funds was also agreed on.

In anticipation of these large funds, the Pacific Climate Change Round-table agreed last year in RMI that a study on options for establishing a climate change fund for the Pacific should be undertaken. A draft of this study was completed last week, and has been submitted for consideration by the Forum Finance and Economic Ministers who are currently meeting in Niue this week.

This year at Cancun, we look forward to having a representative from SPC join the SPREP team.

SPC is a key partner for SPREP, and I would like to mention only a few areas where SPREP has and is currently collaborating with SPC:

- CRISP
- Marine species work – Action Plans for sharks, whales, turtles etc
- Invasive species
- Energy

More recently SPREP and SPC together with other partners have been collaborating on the development of the:

- The Ocean-scape proposal; and
- Development of indicators on the Environment for tracking development progress

Much has been said about RIF this week. For SPREP – RIF is now a matter of implementation. In April of this year, a LOA was signed between SOPAC and SPREP as part of Track 1 for the transfer of the CC related functions of SOPAC to SPREP.

Like SPC – SPREP has been going through a period of change. In the past 12 -18 months SPREP has been

refining and streamlining its internal processes and systems. This transition will continue for SPREP in 2011 as it moves into implementing its new strategic plan.

Once again we grateful to the CRGA for this opportunity, and would acknowledge the Director General – Dr Jimmy Rogers and his staff for their hard work.

WESTERN AND CENTRAL PACIFIC FISHERIES COMMISSION

Professor Glenn Hurry

Executive Director

Thank you for the invitation to attend and observe this important meeting of the SPC. The WCPFC is a reasonably new organization in terms of world tuna management, coming into being in 2003. Since that time and during the previous two years of the Preparatory Conference process the SPCOFP has been our science provider. This relationship has developed over the years as the non Pacific Island members of the Commission who were unaware of the SPC-OFP capabilities in this area have come to appreciate the professionalism and quality of their work. The Commission in a recent review of its scientific structure elected to continue its long term relationship with the SPC-OFP as its science provider.

The WCPFC members have always understood that the SPC-OFP role is primarily to support the Pacific Island Countries and territories in the management of their tuna stocks and all of these PICTs are members of our Commission. Despite this primary role the WCPFC believes that the SPC-OFP has been able to provide completely objective scientific advice for fisheries management to the WCPFC. One of the real strengths of the SPC-OFP is in their ability to present science to non technical heads of delegations in a way that it is readily understood. This coupled with their preparedness to listen and try to understand countries views has gone a long way to their acceptance by member countries of the WCPFC. This engagement with the WCPFC and access to additional data sources no doubt has the effect of allowing the SPC-OFP to have a better understanding of the tuna fisheries of the Pacific, to be better able to undertake stock assessments and provide an enhanced service to their primary constituency, the Pacific Island members of SPC.

As we move forward into the future SPC-OFP and the WCPFC will no doubt expand the relationship into other related areas of work and some of the recent work on by-catch, monitoring the use of FADs, and the work on establishing a research and assessment program for the shark stocks of importance in the WCPFC region are good examples of how our relationship will continue to develop and grow.

In summary the arrangements that the WCPFC has with the SPC-OFP are of great value and benefit to our members and it is a relationship that we hope continues to grow well into the future. Thank you again for the invitation to attend and observe your meeting.

EUROPEAN UNION (EU)

I would first like to thank SPC for the very comprehensive and informative reports presented this week. It certainly allows for a better understanding of the global context EU funded projects are part of and helps put them in perspective. It is of course more than a challenge to digest such an amount of information in one week but these documents and in particular the frameworks for action are definitely of great interest to us and will be of even greater interest next year when we will start reviewing the 10th European Development Fund strategy for the Pacific.

Secondly I would like to express EU satisfaction at the completion of the reform of the institutional framework and inform you that the necessary technical riders to EU projects implemented by SOPAC are currently being processed. We can reasonably expect this process to be completed by the end of the year, beginning of next year at the latest.

It is to be noted that three of the main projects to be transferred to SPC are in the field of Disaster Risk Reduction and are funded by national envelopes benefiting 9 PACP countries and the 4 OCTs. Most of the other projects implemented by SOPAC under the 9th European Development Fund are coming to an end either this year or next year.

Under the 10th EDF regional envelope all projects signed so far have been signed with SPC, including the Deep Sea Minerals project that will be implemented by the new geoscience and technology division staff.

Other projects to be signed in the months to come include the extension of the FACT project under the land resource management division and the extension of DEVFISH under the Fisheries division.

Still under discussion is a proposal for a regional energy project and a project in the sector of technical and vocational training.

Finally, SPC gracefully accepted to implement an 11.4 million EURO project addressing adaptation needs in SIS (Small Islands States) financed under the Global Climate Change Alliance. SPC also responded positively to the request by three northern ACP countries to implement their 10th EDF national envelope on renewable energy. We are very confident that this is an efficient way of implementing national projects that will be of benefit to all 3 countries.

The EU notes with interest the fact that it will become the second largest contributor to SPC budget. This is certainly due to the significant increase in the 10th EDF resources allocated to the Region at both national and regional level but also thanks to EU funds secured by SPC and SOPAC through a competitive process giving access to extra funding under what we call the Intra-ACP Facilities.

The EU heard the concerns expressed by the organisation on sustainability of funding. I have personally followed with interest the debate around inner-core versus outer-core priorities that took place on Monday in the context of the sub-committee on long-term sustainable financing strategy.

Here I would like to clarify some basic facts about European External Aid Programming in order to avoid raising unrealistic expectation and at the same time offering some food for thought.

As agreed in the Cotonou Agreement which sets the regulatory framework for EU-ACP countries relations, programming of external cooperation is done every five years. The first step of the programming process sees the EU 27 Member States decide the overall aid envelope they will make available to ACP countries over the next five years to be managed by the European Commission. In this regard, it is worth mentioning that France is one of the major contributors. Also important to mention is the fact that EU Member States have their own bilateral cooperation agenda and envelopes that are additional to the funds allocated through the Commission.

Once the contribution to the new programming cycle has been determined, cooperation strategies are jointly defined at regional and national levels. Cooperation sectors and aid modalities are decided jointly with the governments of the Pacific island countries and regional partners. This means that EDF funds will never be “recurrent” as they are only secured for a period of five years at a time. This being said, five years is quite a long term programming period that should assist any organisation to plan in a sustainable way and to foresee whenever necessary an appropriate exit strategy.

We understand that from a management point of view it is important to secure an amount of funds that provide for sufficient flexibility and fungibility to address gaps that might appear at times in one or another programme. We understand that Australia and New Zealand channel some of their aid package in this manner. We would therefore suggest that the EU sits together with these two partners in order to analyse possible similar programming approach in the future as well as any innovative ways that would allow for better partners cooperation and alignment in the Region in the spirit of aid effectiveness.

The negotiation on a potential 11th EDF regional programme will start around 2012. It will be important for the Pacific ACP countries to reflect on the way regional programming has taken place in the past and to

suggest new approaches for better and more effective aid delivery. But before such a reflexion can take place, the work undertaken by SPC with the help of KVA on sustainable funding will need to be completed and will need to address the very relevant and legitimate questions raised by some of the members on Monday. In particular an analysis of what would be the minimum corporate service costs and infrastructure costs necessary for an organisation such as SPC to provide the type of services currently available to the Pacific island countries.

Je concluerai en français en remerciant la CPS et en particulier son Directeur général d'avoir invité l'Union européenne à participer en tant qu'observateur à cette très importante réunion. C'est toujours un plaisir de constater qu'une organisation de l'ampleur de la CPS réunit en son sein l'ensemble du monde océanien permettant ainsi un réel échange de vues et d'expériences ainsi que d'intéressantes synergies entre les PTOM et les pays anglophones de la région. Une raison de plus pour l'Union européenne de confirmer son soutien à la CPS et de réitérer son appréciation de l'excellent travail fourni.

PACIFIC GAMES COUNCIL (PGC)

Andrew Minogue

Executive Director

The Pacific Games Council is delighted to present this Observer Statement to the 40th meeting of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations.

The Pacific Games Council was established in 1961 under the auspices of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and so it completes the circle very nicely that on the eve of the Pacific Games Council's 50th anniversary, it has recently opened its first ever Secretariat in Noumea and is today attending its first ever Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations as an Observer organisation.

After the first ever South Pacific Games were hosted by Fiji in 1963, New Caledonia is set to host the 14th edition of the Pacific Games next August and September. Bringing together over 3,500 athletes and team officials from 22 Pacific Island countries and territories, it is often claimed that the Pacific Games represents the biggest manifestation of the "Pacific in Action".

In any event, the Pacific Games, and the Pacific Mini Games held every two years in between the main Games, represent a major platform for the youth of the Pacific to demonstrate the best qualities of a healthy lifestyle, hard work, teamwork and a determination to succeed. These are all valuable skills to building better individual lives and stronger communities across the Pacific.

The Pacific Games Council and our 22 member Pacific Games Associations now stand ready to assist the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in its important work throughout the Pacific Islands region.

Our 22 Pacific Games Associations, also known as National Olympic Committees, are themselves made up of many different affiliated sporting organisations from Archery to Outrigger Va'a, from Athletics to Weightlifting, from Boxing to Wrestling; literally dozens of affiliated sporting organisations which reach right into the heart of daily community life in the Pacific with a focus on youth.

Over the next twelve months leading into the 14th Pacific Games in New Caledonia, the Pacific Games Council would like to explore ways that it could assist the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in its many important objectives by using Sport as a vehicle for social change.

From promoting public health and healthy lifestyles to the fight against obesity, crime and other social disorders, our 22 Pacific Games Associations are ready to work as delivery agents for programs designed to achieve better outcomes for communities in the Pacific islands.

The Pacific Games Council values its partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and looks

forward to developing even stronger bonds of cooperation as the Pacific Games sporting movement enters its second 50 years of life.

UNIFEM PACIFIC SUB REGIONAL OFFICE

Mr Chairperson, Director-General, CRGA Delegates, Donor and Development partners, ladies and gentlemen.

Greetings from UNIFEM Pacific Sub regional office and in particular, the Regional Programme Director, Ms Elizabeth Cox.

First of all, thank you SPC for the invitation to attend CRGA 40 and also for this opportunity to briefly share with members some of the key developments and progress of women's issues in the Pacific in particular our collaboration with SPC's Human Development section. Before I go into details, at this stage it would be appropriate to share with you the new UN Entity for Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women – UN Women.

UN Women now has an Under Secretary General, Ms Michelle Bachelet and the UN Women Board (40 members) is expected to be appointed in November this year. Like the Social Resources Division of SPC, UNIFEM is also going through a transition and come January 2011 UNIFEM Will be no more. However, we will continue to work under the new entity which is envisaged 'to accelerate progress in meeting the needs of women and girls worldwide.'

Programmes

UNIFEM is the women's fund at the United Nations, dedicated to advancing women's rights and achieving gender equality. It provides financial and technical assistance to innovative programmes and strategies that foster women's empowerment. UNIFEM works on the premise that it is the fundamental right of every woman to live a life free from discrimination and violence, and that gender equality is essential to achieving development and to building just societies.

UNIFEM Pacific has the following thematic areas namely:

- enhancing women's economic security and rights,
- ending violence against women and reducing the prevalence of HIV and AIDS among women and girls, and
- advancing gender justice in democratic governance in stable and fragile states.

UNIFEM Global Trust Funds

PNG, RRRT/SPC and WUTMi of RMI (Initiative for a Better Response to Address VAW –iBRAVE) have benefitted from this fund and this year PIFS was also able to secure funding assistance from the UN Gender Equality catalytic fund for Small Island States (Decision making and Economic empowerment).

Pacific Facility Fund on EVAW

The Pacific EVAW Fund is currently fully operating in Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea, and Nauru. In the coming years, the programme will expand to the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The Pacific EVAW Fund offers support through two main components:

- a) **Small Grants Scheme:** Grants are awarded (US\$3,000-\$25,000) for the implementation of effective projects and actions to address the multiple forms of violence against women.
- b) **Capacity Building Programme**
Technical support
Scholarships are offered for the following opportunities.

- Participation in formal training in women's human rights, crisis centre management and advocacy, lobbying and law reform, conducted by regional key agencies, such as the SPC/RRRT and the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC).
- Participation in South-South Exchange attachments Attendance at key gender meetings, conferences or conventions.

Partnership with SPC

Although we will be operating under a new name in 2011 we value and will continue to work closely with SPC on women and gender issues in Pacific Island Countries. In 2008 SPC and UNIFEM collaborated the Stocktake of NWMs in 6 PICTS in 2009; the findings of this report was tabled during the 11th Triennial meeting which was held in Noumea in August this year. UNIFEM was also invited to be part of that meeting where we were able to share information on UN Women and the UN Secretary General's UNITE campaign to Eliminate Violence Against Women. In addition, UNIFEM has been working closely with SPC/RRRT on Human Rights and assisting PICs (which have ratified CEDAW) through awareness programmes, legislative review, training, reporting and implementation of CEDAW. UNIFEM looks forward to continued collaboration with SPC in these areas. In addition we acknowledge that statistics is vital for developing and articulating gender responsive policies and gender inclusive legislation and would like to acknowledge the work being done by SPC's Human Development Programme and the UN, i.e. UNESCAP and UNFPA in this area. UNIFEM supports this effort to accelerate the development of the regional gender statistics framework and would like to emphasis the importance of gender statistics being an integral component of SPC and other development partner initiatives to improve overall statistical capability and services in the region.

Way forward

Donor harmonization and aid effectiveness is the way forward. UNIFEM acknowledges the statement by the Director General on the 1st day of the meeting that CROP agencies (as a collective) are moving towards having Joint Country Strategy. As you are aware the UN has Joint Programming in some PI countries and UN Delivering as One is being piloted in PNG. Premised on this approach, discussions with donor and development partners namely ADB, World Bank and AusAID is underway where Country Gender Assessment is considered to be the way forward in addressing women/gender and development issues.

What is the purpose and goal of a CGA?

- The purpose of a Country Gender Assessment is to develop a shared platform of understanding through which the key stakeholders diagnose the gender-related barriers to poverty reduction and sustainable and inclusive economic growth.
- The goal is a jointly-created evidence-based document that covers the critical gender issues of concern, in a way that helps the nodal ministry for gender and women (in PNG, the Department of Community Development) convincingly advocate for greater attention by core economic agencies and large line ministries to gender barriers.

Each CGA is specially developed for the specific country, and should be flexibly adapted to the local realities and to the constraints that may exist in terms of data and information. This Programme is currently being piloted in PNG. Results from this assessment should provide the basis for informed policy and legislative changes with ultimate benefits and improved livelihoods for women, men and children.

Let me conclude by saying that I am encouraged by the discussions in this meeting where SPC is committed to ensuring that gender is mainstreamed through its various programmes and projects. Whilst this is being done at regional level, UNIFEM is willing to support PICTS facilitate the mainstreaming of gender equality and the empowerment of women in National Development Strategies and Plans.

As we heard from SPBEA yesterday, education is about people; gender equality is also about people and cuts across every sector of development. Therefore all of the programmes and services that have been discussed this week must be implemented in way that equally benefits and empowers men, women, boys and girls.

In conclusion, I would like to reiterate UNIFEM commitment to working with SPC and other development partners to improve the lives of our people in the Pacific.

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