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Title:	Reports from the Sixth Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture and from the Third Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue
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Summary/short description/key points:

The **Sixth Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture (RTMCFA6)**, including the **Third Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue (CBFD3)**, was held from 13-17 November 2023. The RTMCFA6 and Cbfd3 were in-person meetings, with plenary sessions streamed online.

The purpose of the RTMCFA6 was to bring together coastal fisheries and aquaculture scientists and technical experts in the Pacific to discuss important technical and scientific gaps, needs, challenges and opportunities.

The purpose of the Cbfd3 was to give community fisher representatives, civil society organisations (CSOs) and other non-state actors (NSAs) an opportunity to share experiences and lessons-learned on community-based fisheries initiatives, and to provide information and advice on key needs and issues associated with the sustainable use of coastal fisheries resources.

The reports of the RTMCFA6 and Cbfd3 are provided in Background papers BP1a and BP1b, respectively. The participants of both meetings were asked to identify, discuss and agree on clear priority issues to be transmitted to the HOF16 for consideration. This working paper presents those key recommendations from the RTMCFA6 and the Cbfd3.

Recommendations:

Members are invited to:

1. Note the RTMCFA6 Outcomes and Actions Report (provided as Background paper 2a).
2. Consider and make determinations on the specific recommendations from the RTMCFA6 to HOF16.

3. Note the Cbfd3 Outcomes and Actions Report (provided as Background paper 2b).
4. Consider and make determinations on the specific recommendations from the Cbfd3 to HOF16.

Reports from the Sixth Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture (RTMCFA6) and from the Third Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue (CBFD3)

Introduction

5. The **Sixth Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture (RTMCFA6)** was held from 13 to 17 November 2023, and was chaired by Mr. Manuel Ducrocq, Head of the Fisheries Department, Government of New Caledonia.
6. The RTMCFA6 was an in-person meeting and brought together coastal fisheries officers, scientists, technical experts and partners in the Pacific to share experiences and to discuss priority coastal fisheries and aquaculture technical needs, challenges and opportunities. 23 SPC member countries and territories participated, with over 96 participants (60 male, 36 female) from members, observers, civil society organisations (CSOs), non-government organisations (NGOs) and other non-state actors (NSAs). The meeting was also streamed online with more than 35 registered listeners.
7. RTMCFA6 included the **Third Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue (CBFD3)**, run over two days, 14-15 November 2023, where representatives from fishing communities, CSOs and other NSAs provided input and shared their experiences on key issues and challenges, offering solutions on inclusivity, communication, and collaboration in community-driven coastal fisheries management. Mr. Eugene Joseph from the Pohnpei Conservation Society, Federated States of Micronesia, served as Convenor, supported by the Vice Convenors, Ms Delvene Boso and Ms Aydah Akao from the Solomon Islands.
8. The CBFD provides an opportunity to share experiences and lessons from community-based initiatives to strengthen efforts to maintain productive and healthy ecosystems and their associated fisheries resources that are critical to the wellbeing of coastal communities. The CBFD helps provide information and advice on key community-based fisheries needs, through the RTMCFA, to the Heads of Fisheries and the Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting, to assist with informing Pacific Leaders on priority issues associated with the sustainable use of coastal fisheries resources. It is also an opportunity to foster dialogue between fisheries agencies and the CSOs and NSAs on the sustainable management of coastal fisheries resources in the Pacific.

Report to HOF16 on the Outcomes and Actions from the RTMCFA6

9. The overarching theme of RTMCFA6 was to discuss and address some of the main technical issues affecting coastal fisheries and aquaculture in support of better evidence-based resource management, equitable access to resources and sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture and nearshore livelihoods.
10. The meeting included plenary and breakout group sessions on:

- a. SPC member Pacific Island country and territory presentations on their respective national priority technical needs, issues and challenges in coastal fisheries and aquaculture, and any actions taken since the previous RTMCFA.
 - b. Introduction to accessing information and knowledge products on the new SPC FAME website.
 - c. Assessing aquaculture feasibility: technical, economic and social factors.
 - d. Update on progress of the Pacific regional aquaculture strategy.
 - e. Review of aquaculture and biosecurity legislation: findings and recommendations.
 - f. Increased effectiveness of mariculture hatchery systems.
 - g. Addressing challenges to aquaculture development.
 - h. How technology is supporting the delivery of better data for informed management of coastal fisheries.
 - i. Coastal fisheries management – Reviewing and updating legislation and policy.
 - j. Coastal fisheries livelihoods – diversification and food security.
 - k. Coastal fisheries livelihoods – Anchored FADs and nearshore small-scale fisheries.
 - l. Coastal fisheries and aquaculture climate change vulnerability.
 - m. Value of understanding economics and socioeconomics in coastal fisheries and aquaculture.
11. The **RTMCFA6 Outcomes and Actions Report** (see Background paper 2a), along with all the working and information papers and the presentations, are available on the SPC FAME RTMCFA6 website (<https://fame.spc.int/events/RTMCFA6>).
 12. The **RTMCFA6 Outcomes and Actions Report** includes the agreed priority issues and needs to be actioned by SPC members, provides guidance to SPC FAME's Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Programme (CFAP), and identifies the key recommendations to be taken to the 16th Heads of Fisheries (HOF16) meeting in April 2024.

Summary of the RTMCFA6 key recommendations for the 16th SPC Heads of Fisheries

13. The RTMCFA6 meeting agreed the following recommendations should be transmitted to the 16th Heads of Fisheries for SPC members to consider and action:

RTMCF A6 Recommendations to HOF16	Suggested HOF16 Actions
<i>Aquaculture: “Review of aquaculture and biosecurity legislation: findings and recommendations”</i>	
<p>Recommendation 22 (a). The meeting requests HOF16 to encourage member PICTs to clarify roles and responsibilities of competent authorities and government services and to improve decision-making processes, including through memoranda of understanding and delegation of authority, based on actual institutional capacity for management and surveillance of aquatic species.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i></p> <p><i>To encourage PICTs to action, where relevant.</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 22 (b). The meeting requests HOF16 to discuss and action the development of a legal study on ballast waters and biofouling to prevent and mitigate negative impacts on marine ecosystems and aquaculture, involving collaboration between SPC FAME and the Geoscience, Energy and Maritime Divisions and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i></p> <p><i>Direct SPC FAME to discuss and action with SPC GEM and SPREP</i></p>
<i>Aquaculture: “Addressing challenges to aquaculture development”</i>	
<p>Recommendation 27 (a). The meeting requests HOF16 to discuss and endorse the development of a preliminary feasibility study to design and develop a budget for a regional mariculture hatchery, principally to provide training for their managers and technicians to support the development of mariculture production in their own facilities.</p>	<p><i>To consider, endorse and support.</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 27 (b). The meeting requests HOF16 to consider undertaking a study for the development of model small-scale hatcheries adapted to the context of PICTs.</p>	<p><i>To consider and endorse.</i></p> <p><i>Direct SPC FAME to action.</i></p>

RTMCF A6 Recommendations to HOF16	Suggested HOF16 Actions
<p><i>Coastal Fisheries: “How technology is supporting the delivery of better data for informed management of coastal fisheries”</i></p>	
<p>Recommendation 30 (a). The meeting requests HOF16 to task SPC FAME to develop and implement annual Coastal Fisheries Stock Assessment Workshops (CSAW) and Coastal Fisheries Data Workshops (CFDW) to address capacity and capability gaps in data collection, analysis, utilisation and reporting in the region.</p>	<p><i>To consider and endorse.</i> <i>Direct SPC FAME to action.</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 30 (b). The meeting requests HOF16 to task SPC FAME to convene a peer-to-peer exchange that aims to facilitate knowledge sharing, share experiences and lessons among PICTs in data collection, analysis, and utilisation.</p>	<p><i>To consider and endorse.</i> <i>Direct SPC FAME to action.</i></p>
<p><i>Coastal Fisheries: “Coastal fisheries management – Reviewing and updating legislation and policy”</i></p>	
<p>Recommendation 33 (a). The meeting requests HOF16 to encourage members to identify dedicated staff within their fisheries agencies to manage each formal request for SPC FAME assistance on coastal fisheries policy or legislation. These appointed representatives will serve as the primary focal point of contact with SPC FAME on coastal fisheries policy or legislation and will benefit from tailored training and mentorship opportunities, including short-term attachment for hands-on experience.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i> <i>To encourage PICTs to action.</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 33 (b). The meeting requests HOF16 to encourage members to recruit an in-house lawyer for each PICT fisheries agency who would work jointly with technical staff to promote the timely development and adoption of policy and legislation for coastal fisheries and aquaculture management.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i> <i>To encourage PICTs to action, where appropriate.</i></p>

RTMCFA6 Recommendations to HOF16	Suggested HOF16 Actions
<p>Recommendation 33 (c). The meeting requests HOF16 to promote the inclusion of law and policy modules in fisheries management courses and programmes offered by universities and training centres in the region.</p>	<p><i>To consider and endorse.</i></p>
<p><i>Coastal Fisheries: “Coastal fisheries livelihoods – diversification and food security”</i></p>	
<p>Recommendation 37 (a). The meeting requests HOF16 to encourage SPC FAME to explore funding opportunities to support capacity enhancement in nearshore fisheries development and livelihoods diversification, especially for post-harvest and value-adding support.</p>	<p><i>To consider and endorse.</i> <i>Direct SPC FAME to action with donor agencies.</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 37 (b). The meeting requests HOF16 to prioritise the collection of essential data to facilitate comprehensive feasibility and cost-benefit analysis (CBA) for livelihood diversification initiatives.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i> <i>To encourage PICTs to action.</i></p>
<p><i>Coastal Fisheries: “Coastal fisheries livelihoods – Anchored FADs and nearshore small-scale fisheries”</i></p>	
<p>Recommendation 40 (a). The meeting requests HOF16 to consider establishing and securing consistent national funding sources to complement external support to ensure the long-term sustainability of national FAD programmes and their benefits to fishers and coastal communities.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i> <i>To encourage PICTs to action, where appropriate.</i></p>
<p><i>Cross-cutting: “Value of understanding economics and socioeconomics in coastal fisheries and aquaculture”</i></p>	
<p>Recommendation 45 (a). The meeting requests HOF16 to encourage members to institutionalise socioeconomics in national fisheries and aquaculture plans and strategies and to include fisheries-related</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i> <i>To encourage PICTs to action.</i></p>

RTMCFA6 Recommendations to HOF16	Suggested HOF16 Actions
socio-economic data in their national census and household income and expenditure surveys.	

Report to HOF16 on the Outcomes and Actions from the Cbfd3

14. The Cbfd3 focused on hearing the voices of the CSOs and other NSAs, defining and adopting the selection criteria for Cbfd participants, identifying national focal points and process, establishing the selection process for the Convenor and Vice-Convenor. The session was delivered in the broader context of scaling-up community-based fisheries management (CBFM) guided by the Pacific Framework for Action on Scaling-up CBFM, through discussions on strategic information, awareness and communication, and gender and social inclusion. The final session was on gathering Pacific voices to inform the planning and shaping of the Global Small-Scale Fisheries Summit 2024.
15. The **Cbfd3 Outcomes and Actions Report** (see Background Paper 2b), along with all the Working and Background papers, and the presentations, are available on the SPC RTMCFA6 website (<https://fame.spc.int/events/RTMCFA6>).
16. The **Cbfd3 Outcomes and Actions Report** outlines the outcomes and action points of consensus among Cbfd3 participants highlighting priority issues and needs to be actioned by CSOs and other NSAs, SPC members, provides guidance to SPC’s Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Programme, and identifies key recommendations to be taken to the 16th Heads of Fisheries Meeting in April 2024.

Summary of the Cbfd3 key recommendations for the 16th SPC Heads of Fisheries

1. The Cbfd3 reported into the RTMCFA6 meeting and agreed that the following recommendations should be transmitted to the 16th Heads of Fisheries for consideration, and for CSO/NSAs, members and SPC to act on:

Cbfd3 Recommendations to HOF16	Suggested HOF16 Actions
Community-based Fisheries Dialogue	
<p>Recommendation 49 (a). The Cbfd3 acknowledges the efforts by national fisheries agencies to increase support and resourcing to community-based fisheries and requests HOF16 to provide an update on progress since this request was endorsed at HoF15 and RFMM4 and on plans for sustained support.</p>	<p><i>To consider, support and action.</i></p> <p><i>Request SPC FAME to track and include in meeting reports to Cbfd and HoF</i></p>

CBFD3 Recommendations to HOF16	Suggested HOF16 Actions
<p>Recommendation 49 (b). The CBFD3 requests HOF16 to enable and implement meaningful participation of fishers in developing and reviewing national regulations and rules. This should take into consideration the fishers’ need to fish for income and food.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i></p> <p><i>To encourage PICTs to action.</i></p> <p><i>Request SPC FAME to track and include in meeting reports to CBFD and HoF</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 49 (c). The CBFD3 requests HOF16 to enable recognition of community level governance systems in national legal frameworks where appropriate.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i></p> <p><i>To encourage PICTs to action, where appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>Request SPC FAME to track and include in meeting reports to CBFD and HoF</i></p>
<p>Recommendation 49 (d). The CBFD3 acknowledges progress by member country governments on establishing dialogue with CSO and NSA groups. CBFD3 requests HOF16 to encourage national agencies to develop and/or foster strong, mutually beneficial partnerships with civil society groups and networks, towards strengthening CBFM nationally.</p>	<p><i>To consider and support.</i></p> <p><i>To encourage PICTs to action, where appropriate.</i></p> <p><i>Request SPC FAME to track and include in meeting reports to CBFD and HoF</i></p>