

SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY**THIRTY-SECOND MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS**
(Nouméa, New Caledonia, 4 - 7 November 2002)**SPC REGIONAL SECTORAL MEETINGS**

(Paper presented by the Secretariat)

INTRODUCTION

1. The purpose of this paper is:
 - (a) to propose a basic format for SPC regional sectoral meetings, and a formal mechanism by which these meetings can provide consensus advice on specialist sectoral issues and *intra*-sectoral priorities to CRGA, without overburdening CRGA with detail or attempting to influence or duplicate CRGA's *inter*-sectoral priority-setting role; and
 - (b) to update CRGA on the Secretariat's plans for rationalising core funding support to these meetings.
2. Arising from the 2001 review of the SPC (sponsored by AusAID), CRGA31 agreed on the need to clarify those aspects of SPC governance mechanisms by which regional sectoral policy is linked to SPC organisational and inter-sectoral policy-making at the CRGA level.

BACKGROUND

3. Compared to many other CROP agencies, which cover a restricted number of sectors, the SPC work-programme is relatively diverse, and requires member country guidance in a number of specialist areas (see Annex 1).
4. Meetings of member country and territory representatives to regionally consider specific sectoral issues like Fisheries, Agriculture and Health etc., complement the work of SPC Governing Council. CRGA guides the inter-sectoral aspects of the organisation as a whole – particularly the core budget and institutional policy framework in which the work-programmes are embedded and balanced. However, SPC's work covers a number of individual sectors relating to specific ministries or departments at the national and territorial level, where specialist input from these ministries and departments is necessary to keep SPC work-programmes relevant to the regional needs of member countries and territories in these specialised areas.

5. As well as regular member-representative sectoral meetings convened for the guidance of programmes, there are also other types of sectoral meeting convened for other purposes, including training courses to familiarise sectoral specialists with new issues or techniques, ad-hoc workshops for the purpose of developing a specific regional strategy, or specialist working groups to provide Pacific Community member input into a shared sub-sectoral problem. This paper is purely concerned with the regional sectoral meetings that provide senior-level guidance to SPC work programmes and which may contribute to SPC's overall governance mechanism (although these meetings often also have additional purposes or outputs).

ISSUES IDENTIFIED

Role of Sectoral Meetings in the governance of SPC's work-programme

6. Whilst the role of these meetings in providing intra-sectoral guidance to individual programmes is clear, there is no formal mechanism by which CRGA can access the consensus views of their national and territorial colleagues, except where an SPC regional sectoral meeting directs a Division to include these issues in its report to CRGA, or where a national or territorial representative to these meetings provides a specific briefing to their CRGA representative. Without formalising this relationship there is the danger of CRGA either receiving too little, or too much, information.
7. The Secretariat recommends that the Chair of an SPC regional sectoral meeting be tasked with providing a report to CRGA summarising key issues arising, according to certain guidelines.

The issues to be brought to CRGA's attention should:

- be of potential cross-sectoral relevance or issues arising outside the mandate area of the sector, particularly issues of regional Foreign Affairs relevance; or
 - draw the attention of SPC Governing Councils to important new sectoral developments, or
 - draw the attention of CRGA to a significant rearrangement of regional priorities *within* the sector, or a gap or other perceived sector-specific flaw in a strategic programme plan; or
 - be of assistance in defining the relationship between SPC's sectoral work programme and other agencies working in the same sector; or
 - respond to a specific question asked by CRGA relating to the sectoral meeting's area of expertise.
8. It is recommended that these reports be conveyed to CRGA in writing and included in the appropriate Divisional presentation, but alternative approaches could be for the CRGA representative from the sectoral meeting Chair's country or territory to present the report, or, where funding support is available, for the sectoral Chair to present the report themselves and thus be available for clarification.

Sectoral Meeting Definition and Terms of Reference

9. There is no formal shared definition of the role of these meetings in providing member country and territory within-sector guidance to SPC's work programmes. The Secretariat proposes that the following (in no particular order of priority) form the basis of the terms of reference for all defined SPC regional sectoral Meetings:

- (a) to provide individual and collective member country and territory advice to SPC work programme staff, on issues within the meeting's area of sectoral competency;
 - (b) to provide consensus prioritisation, from time to time, of regional issues within the meeting's area of sectoral competency;
 - (c) to provide a forum for the raising of, and the free exchange of views between members on, shared sectoral issues;
 - (d) to provide a forum for engagement between member country sectoral specialists, non-governmental sectoral agencies, and research or development agencies, and thus provide a means whereby the work-programmes of these other agencies can take guidance from the consensus regional sectoral priorities and needs expressed by members;
 - (e) to examine, from the point of view of sectoral appropriateness, relevant SPC triennial programme strategic plans and SPC annual programme work-plans, as opportunity arises, and provide advice to CRGA as appropriate;
 - (f) to participate in independent reviews of SPC sectoral programme performance, as opportunity arises;
 - (g) for each Pacific Community member sectoral representative to provide written or verbal updates on the current status of the sector and its priorities within their country or territory;
 - (h) to provide a brief report to CRGA according to approved guidelines (providing the recommendation in paragraph 7. is approved).
10. Each meeting would be tasked with defining its own detailed terms of reference, appropriate to its own sector, and incorporating these principles. Meetings that are shared with other agencies might, however, need to consider only a subset of these terms of reference, or convene as an SPC-specific special session.

Sectoral Meeting Funding

11. SPC's organisational policy on the core-financing of regional sectoral meetings has been relatively flexible in the past. There is a general understanding that core funding will only be available for meetings on a three-yearly cycle. Where external funding is available, SPC programmes are able to also convene regional sectoral meetings in between years. Some of the particularly larger SPC programmes have convened regional sectoral meetings without any core funding support at all.
12. The frequency of SPC regional sectoral meetings, normally held every three years, has been raised as a concern particularly by the PICT participants to meetings that deal with natural resource management, including fisheries, agriculture and forestry. They recommend these meetings be convened every two years so that important new sectoral developments, or emerging regional priorities within the sector, are addressed on a more timely basis.
13. The Secretariat agrees that while some SPC programmes can maintain a three-yearly meeting schedule, others should be convened on a two-yearly cycle to ensure that the SPC work-programmes remain relevant to the regional needs in certain specialised areas.
14. Accordingly, a schedule of regional sectoral meetings for the years 2002-2006 has been prepared by the Secretariat and is attached as Annex I to this paper.

15. In determining the allocation of core funding support to these meetings, the Secretariat is guided by the principle of assuring inter-programme equity and budgetary predictability among SPC programmes while taking into consideration some differences in their requirements, such as meetings. After some consideration, the Secretariat has decided to provide a minimum of 50 percent of the estimated standard cost for the approved SPC regional sectoral meetings from the core budget.
16. Any more frequent meetings, and all programmed subsectoral and subregional meetings and workshops, would continue to be funded from other programme sources, or convened on a voluntary basis with participants covering their own costs.
17. This allocation mechanism will assure a minimum of core funds to all approved SPC regional sectoral meetings, while at the same time, encouraging all programmes to seek co-funding from external sources.

CONCLUSION

18. The secretariat is not proposing to impose an identical format on all sectoral meetings – each has a different set of issues and has evolved in directions that appropriately addresses the needs and wishes of its member country sectoral representatives, and each has a different balance of national and regional concerns – but to define a common understanding about the issues that are common to all of these meetings, particularly a common set of principles to underpin their Terms of Reference, a formal mechanism of linkage with the SPC Governing Council and the allocation of core funding.
19. CRGA is invited to consider and endorse:
 - a) the Secretariat's schedule of SPC regional sectoral meetings as identified in Annex I;
 - b) the basic Terms of Reference for the meetings as defined in paragraph 9;
 - c) the requirement for a report to be provided from the Chair of each SPC regional sectoral meeting according to the criteria in paragraph 7; and
 - d) the steps taken by Secretariat to rationalise core-funding support to the meetings.

SPC'S REGIONAL SECTORAL MEETING SCHEDULE

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Land Resources							
Agriculture		X			X		X
Forestry	X			X		X	
Marine Resources							
Oceanic and Coastal Fisheries	X			X		X	
Maritime	X	X	X	X		X	
Social Resources							
Women		X			X		
Culture			X		X		X
Statistics and Demography	X			X			X
Energy		X	X				
Youth			X			X	
Health		X		X		X	
Support							
Information Technology		X					

Regional sectoral meetings organised by SPC Programmes

2000

Heads of Forestry – Forest & Trees programme and the GTZ project
 2nd Heads of Fisheries – Coastal and Oceanic Fisheries Programmes
 Heads of National Statistics Offices – Statistics and Demography programmes
 5th Meeting of APIMTIMA (Maritime administrators & Heads of Maritime Schools) – Maritime.

2001

Permanent Heads of Agriculture and Livestock – Agriculture programme
 6th Meeting of APIMTIMA – Maritime programme
 Conference of Pacific Women – Pacific Women's Bureau
 Regional Energy Meeting (co-sponsored with PIF/SOPAC) – Renewable Energy Programme
 Ministers and Directors of Health (co-sponsored with WHO) – Public Health Programme
 1st Pacific Information & Communication Technology regional planning meeting – IT.

2002

Ministers of Culture & Council of Pacific Arts meeting – Cultural Affairs programme
 Regional Energy Meeting (co-sponsored with PIF/SOPAC) – Renewable Energy Programme
 Heads of Youth – Pacific Youth Bureau
 7th Meeting of APIMTIMA – Maritime.

2003

Heads of Forestry – Forest & Trees programme and the GTZ project
 3rd Heads of Fisheries – Fisheries programme
 Ministers and Directors of health (co-sponsored with WHO) – Health programme
 Heads of National Statistics Offices – Statistics and Demography programmes.

2004

Heads of Agriculture – Agriculture programme

Conference of Pacific Women – Pacific Women’s Bureau

Council of Pacific Arts meeting – Cultural Affairs Programme.

2005

Ministers of Youth – Pacific Youth Bureau

Ministers and Directors of Health – Public Health programme.

2006

Heads of Agriculture – Agriculture programme

Council of Pacific Arts meeting – Cultural Affairs programme

Heads of National Statistics Offices – Statistics and Demography programmes.

