

10th SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting

Noumea, New Caledonia, 14–17 March 2017

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Outcomes from the ninth Heads of Fisheries meeting with progress against each outcome

FAME Secretariat

The ninth Heads of Fisheries (HoF) Meeting took place at SPC Headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, from 9–11 March 2015. An additional half day focusing on the results of the Future of Coastal Fisheries Workshop (3–5 March 2015, Noumea) was held on 6 March prior to the official opening of HoF 9.

HoF is a regional meeting of the heads of SPC member country and territory fisheries agencies, or their appointed deputies, covering the entire range of interests for which they have responsibility and on which the SPC Division of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) provides advice and assistance. As such, the HoF meeting plays a unique role in providing strategic guidance to the Director's Office, the Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) and the Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) of FAME.

The meeting was chaired by Joyce Ah-Leong, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Fisheries Division, Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, Samoa. The meeting was officially opened by Dr. Colin Tukuitonga, Director General, SPC. The agenda of the 9th HoF was adopted with no additional provisions.

The following outcomes constitute the main points of consensus agreement among delegates that the meeting felt necessary to document, either to guide the management of the FAME work programme, to draw to the attention of other regional agencies and development partners, or to signal agreement on issues that require attention by members themselves, and to inform the Forum Fisheries Committee and SPC CRGA.

Outcome from HoF9	Progress against outcome over last 2 years
Coastal fisheries	
<p>1. Recognised and encouraged SPC CFP's effort in establishing standardised data collection programs and willingness and appropriateness of SPC to act as a repository for storing collected data.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation</p>
<p>2. Recognised and encouraged SPC CFP's ongoing efforts in bringing in-country coastal fisheries and aquaculture legislation up to the level of oceanic legislation. Reaffirmed the importance of Monitoring, Control and Surveillance (MCS) and called for greater assistance with coastal MCS from SPC.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: a new project has commenced, funded by New Zealand, covering coastal fisheries and aquaculture legislation (national and subnational) and coastal fisheries and aquaculture MCS&E, again, national and subnational.</p>
<p>3. Noted new core funding from the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) to support four new positions within the CFP (two to be based in the Coastal Fisheries Science and Management section and two in Aquaculture). Supported SPC CFP's efforts in maintaining the Pacific Island Young Professional Program under DFAT funding.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation</p>
<p>4. Expressed concern over the growing number of ciguatera cases and called for greater assistance from SPC with harmful algal blooms and their impacts on fisheries and food security in the region. Suggested that some CFP activities could be conducted in greater collaboration among bi-lateral and regional partners (e.g. ciguatera monitoring and identification of harmful algal bloom species with USP or laboratories in Samoa).</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: CFP has very limited resources in the area of ciguatera assessment, and are happy to partner with other researchers where appropriate. However CFP participated in a ciguatera monitoring skills workshop: CFP participated in the brainstorming workshop at IRD in July 2016 with Institute Louis Malardé and participants from Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, RMI, Tonga and Wallis and Futuna, with the objective of determining key issues, identifying potential funding bodies, and developing funding proposals.</p>
<p>5. Noted advances made on creel and market surveys and biological sampling and expressed interest in furthering these activities. Suggested that SPC CFP surveys could target gaps in global data repositories (e.g. size at maturity information on FishBase).</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Some work in selected countries on size at maturity for a selection of species completed, while ongoing in other countries. Also some genetic work on selected coastal finfish species to assess connectivity is ongoing.</p>

<p>6. Supported SPC CFP's efforts and assistance with training in standardised data collection, analysis and reporting. Indicated a need for greater training in these activities within the French Territories. Noted that SciCOFish project was focused on P-ACP countries, and supported the idea for French speaking territories to develop a coordinated funding proposal for training through their EDF 11 funding proposal for Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs).</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: No training in standardise data collection and analysis in French territories: except recently in Wallis and Futuna (sea cucumber and trochus in water assessment). Proposal for EDF 11 OCTs is still being developed, so some training may be incorporated into this.</p>
<p>7. Supported SPC CFP's work on climate change monitoring at the five baseline sites and expressed interest in expanding this to other countries.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>8. Expressed support for SPC CFP's work in improving economies of scale of small-scale aquaculture farmers. Commended the proposal by CFP to review the impact of their aquaculture training.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: impacts of aquaculture training are being assessed based on the type of training that is being delivered. In 2016 impact of gender training is being assessed for Fiji based on follow-up surveys 6 months post training.</p>
<p>9. Acknowledged the assistance provided by the SPC CFP in the areas of aquaculture, aquatic biosecurity, risk assessment protocols and aquatic animal health, particularly given the role of aquaculture in maintaining food security, reducing fishing pressure on reef environments and replenishing wild fisheries. Requested training on biosecurity issues. Expressed support for the new mariculture and biosecurity position.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: aquatic biosecurity has now been strengthened following an appointment of an Aquatic Biosecurity Specialist under new MFAT Aquaculture Project in January 2017. Official request for technical assistance in this area are currently being received by SPC. Key areas will include assisting countries to update national status on OIE reporting, developing national aquatic biosecurity plans, technical assistance with import risk assessment protocols and improving husbandry practices for aquatic animal health status.</p>
<p>10. Recognised the importance of involving the private sector and communities in aquaculture, and encouraged that aquaculture be placed on a more business-like footing. Particularly encouraged the involvement of the private sector in development of hatchery operations and other aquaculture services, and recognised the continued role of SPC CFP with assistance in improving aquaculture hatchery facilities.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: this activity will now roll out in 2017 under the new MFAT funded Sustainable Pacific Aquaculture Development project. Two new officers, Aquaculture Officer and Aquaculture Technician, have been recruited since November 2016 to provide assistance in this area.</p>
<p>11. Suggested a Code of Practice for aquaculture be adopted regionally. Suggested SPC CFP could play a lead role in assisting PICTs to adopt a harmonised Code of Practice.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: assistance with national specific codes of practices based on the varying nature of aquaculture developments in the member countries will now commence. This will then form the basis for a harmonised regional code of practice to be developed. Technical assistance to develop a national code of practice will be undertaken for one member country in 2017.</p>

<p>12. Recognised the effort of SPC CFP in sports fishing development for tourism and training in safe vessel operations, fish handling and financial management, and called for greater training in these activities.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Training in these areas is ongoing with financial support from New Zealand under the Pacific Fisheries Training Programme (PFTP) which ends in 2018. Vanuatu made a request for the training of local sport fishing guides and this may be planned for 2017.</p>
<p>13. Called for further economic analysis of coastal fisheries, particularly, but not limited to, analysis of tourism-related fisheries activities especially the costs and value of sports fishing operations.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Economic analyses are conducted by our Fisheries Economist and are a core element of CFP's work. The economic valuation of sport fishing tourism in New Caledonia was done in 2016 and results presented in the <i>SPC Fisheries Newsletter</i> (http://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/InfoBull/FishNews/150/FishNews150_14_James.pdf)</p>
<p>14. Reaffirmed SPC CFP's crucial involvement in FAD deployment and maintenance, including capacity building programs, and supported the planned workshop with WorldFish in June 2016 and related likely outputs such as a manual of new inshore FAD models. Called for simpler, more cost-effective designs for community-based FADs.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Expert Consultation on FADs was held in June 2016 and outcomes presented in the <i>SPC Fisheries Newsletter</i> (http://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/InfoBull/FishNews/150/FishNews150_37_Albert.pdf). FAD manual with latest designs and technology will be published in 2017.</p>
<p>15. Supported SPC CFP's work in fisheries diversification projects (including those for small pelagics, diamond-back squid and flying fish) and encouraged further SPC assistance with these projects. Suggested a review into the profitability of bagan fishing platforms.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Squids fishing trials conducted in French Polynesia in June 2015 using a small boat and thus down-scaling the fishing operation to make it more suitable to small-scale fishers. Fishing trials for small pelagics using light attraction will be conducted in Fiji in June 2017 in collaboration with FAO. Bagan fishing trials in Kiribati have been stopped following technical problems but will resume in Tonga as part of a New Zealand funded project with NIWA.</p>
<p>16. Called for greater prioritisation by the SPC CFP of coastal fisheries activities in member countries based on available resources and capacity, particularly given reductions in staff and operating funds forecast for 2015–2016. Noted that this would also need to be balanced against donor interests and objectives.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation. Prioritisation undertaken in areas with limited resources and this will be an ongoing process in some work areas of the CFP.</p>

Oceanic Fisheries	
<p>17. Reaffirmed strong support for pelagic species stock assessment work and SPC OFP's role at regional, sub-regional and national levels. Reaffirmed SPC OFP's role as premier scientific advisory body for oceanic fisheries in the region.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>18. Noted and appreciated results of recent stock assessment work on four key target species, and acknowledged suggestions by SPC OFP that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a. there is no room for expansion of skipjack or yellowfin catches; b. catches of bigeye should be reduced to rebuild the stock and; c. catches of albacore be set at a level that allows profitable domestic longline fisheries. 	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC OFP undertook and presented stock assessments for albacore in 2015 and skipjack and blue shark in 2016. This work programme has formed the basis of OFP advice to members and to WCPFC over the past 2 years.</p>
<p>19. Suggested stock assessment reports could include list of management options targeted towards higher-level decision-makers.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: OFP continues to provide the scientific support to underpin management options developed nationally and through FFA/PNA/WCPFC. The annual Tuna Fisheries Assessment Report (TFAR) contains the management advice agreed by the WCPFC Scientific Committee, while advice on future stock status based upon 'status quo' conditions are provided in WCPFC SC working papers, and enhanced advice on candidate management options provided nationally, sub-regionally and regionally to the relevant fora.</p>
<p>20. Noted results of recent risk assessment and stock assessment of silky and oceanic whitetip sharks and the rapid imposition of bans on the retention of these species and the use of shark lines on longline gear by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC).</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: further work on the potential effectiveness of WCPFC Conservation and Management Measures for these stocks has been produced and presented to WCPFC Scientific Committee. SPC is currently collaborating with the WCPFC ABNJ project to study the post release mortality of silky sharks to support future science and management advice on this species.</p>
<p>21. Noted and supported upcoming OFP work on range contraction of target species due to increasing catches in tropical areas and the potential effects on catches within Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs) of higher latitude PICTs.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: a comprehensive analysis of skipjack data to examine whether range contraction might be occurring was presented to WCPFC SC11 (SA-WP-05). The information available provided no evidence of range contraction in this stock.</p>
<p>22. Supported OFP's proposed plan for short- and long-term attachments and data analysis training workshops within OFP's stock assessment, data management and ecosystem monitoring sections.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: The annual stock assessment training workshop has continued to increase member scientist's understanding of the outputs from the OFP stock assessments, and increase member engagement at WCPFC Scientific Committee. Further, in 2016 the course was again expanded to a second week, during which more advanced concepts were covered. A further improved course is planned in 2017. Plans to recruit a 'Junior Professional' position within the OFP in 2016 were delayed due to SPC core funding reductions to FAME and the implementation of the SPC cost recovery policy on programme and project funding. However, the first 'Junior Professional' position is currently under recruitment and another is planned for 2018.</p>

<p>23. Commended SPC OFP's effort in bioeconomic modelling of Pacific tuna fisheries, with encouragement for more economic indicators. Suggested that in addition to the tuna species, the economic value of principal bycatch (e.g. wahoo, mahimahi) and associated billfish should be quantified.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: In close collaboration with FFA, work on the bio-economics of the southern (albacore-focussed) longline fishery has identified candidate target reference point stock levels that should return the fishery to profitability. These imply reductions in fishing effort, and work has begun in identifying the economic consequences of different ways of achieving the target level. At the national level, individual bio-economic models have been developed, again in collaboration with FFA and financially supported by the Environmental Defence Fund. All these studies have included the potential revenue from key bycatch species.</p>
<p>24. Noted SPC OFP's efforts in artisanal tuna data collection in some PICTs, and potential for continued assistance from SPC OFP in expanding this to other countries and territories with in-country assistance.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: New artisanal tuna data monitoring programmes have been implemented in Niue, Tokelau and expanded to five outer islands in Kiribati. The programme is now active in seven counties, with elements of the programme applied under FAD monitoring programmes. As it expands the ADMP continues to explore and discuss the overlap with other areas of data collection – vessel registration, vessel safety, FAD monitoring and creel surveys. A tablet based application to record the artisanal tuna data has also been developed (TAILs).</p>
<p>25. Commended SPC OFP's efforts in oceanic fisheries data management. Noted that many PICTs are now starting to analyse their own data and encouraged SPC to maintain capacity to intervene and to advise PICTs on data quality where required.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC continued to support the improvement in the capacity for member countries to analyse their own data through a number of areas, including, the annual Tuna Data Workshops, the new TUFMAN 2 database system, the establishment of the new web-based DORADO reporting system (with over 100 reports available). SPC has also enhanced their ability to respond/advise on data quality issues raised by member countries through the establishment of a new OFP DATA HELPDESK using the proprietary software, SLACK.</p>
<p>26. Supported the development of the tuna tissue bank and the potential for collected material to inform stock assessments and fisheries management, and for the potential of collected material to be used in student and capacity building projects.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC OFP has further developed the tuna tissue bank, the capacity for storage and the range of specimens able to be stored. In 2015 WCPFC confirmed funding to operate the tissue bank in 2016-17. This covers tuna and related fish biological samples and support for their collection by observers. SPC would like to significantly expand the tissue bank to cover marine biological specimens more broadly, and to significantly enhance the use of the bank in the training of students and regional capacity development.</p>
<p>27. Noted the suggestion by SPC OFP to transition from grab sampling to spill sampling on purse seine vessels and called for SPC OFP to push issue at national, regional and international fora.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC OFP has conducted additional analyses on better approaches for estimating total purse seine removals by species and reported on these to SC11 and SC12. SPC-OFP is currently in the process of evaluating methods of estimating purse seine species composition data as part of Project 60 (see WCPFC SC 12 ST-WP-02). This work will address the question of whether spill sampling is the method of choice for observer-based catch sampling, based in part on evaluation of the benefits of spill sampling compared to grab sampling based estimates. Project 60 will also identify medium-term approaches to monitoring catch compositions. As such, SPC-OFP is working towards identification of sampling approaches that deliver least-biased estimates of catch composition, including but not limited to spill sampling. The results of Project 60 will be presented to WCPFC's SC and Commission as appropriate.</p>

Director's Office and Information Unit

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| <p>28. Noted and supported the ongoing work of the Director's Office and Information Unit into disseminating information to member countries to make informed management decisions, including the production of teacher information kits for the Cook Islands, the translation of information kits on Fisheries for Communities into Fijian, and the development of educational videos such as the newly produced 'Pacific Black Gold'.</p> | <p>Noted with appreciation.</p> |
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FAME Strategic Plan

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| <p>29. Noted the changes to the FAME Strategic Plan concerning key result areas and called for the continuation of scientific data collection within the CFP's key result areas and inclusion of disaster risk management in general within the Strategic Plan, Suggested the planned independent review be coordinated in manner compatible with the SPC Corporate Plan review.</p> | <p>Action since HoF9: Changes in the SPC corporate approach now has the Divisions with Business Plans and not Strategic Plans. Independent review underway for the FAME Division.</p> |
| <p>30. Suggested that current strategic plan run its course and FAME use this time to develop the new business plan aligned to the new SPC Corporate Plan in the interim.</p> | <p>Action since HoF9: FAME has a draft Business Plan and this will be presented at HoF10 for discussion and finalisation.</p> |

Apia Policy and The New Song for Coastal Fisheries: Pathway to Change

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| <p>31. Endorsed the new guiding document for coastal fisheries management ('The New Song for Coastal Fisheries: Pathways to Change') to succeed the 2008 Apia Policy. Recommended the outcomes document from the Future of Coastal Fisheries workshop be presented to the FFC Official meeting as an endorsed document by HoF and encouraged SPC to seek higher level support for the outcomes document from regional meetings, including the FFC Ministerial meeting and the SPC CRGA. Suggested that the outcomes document be presented to sub-regional groups (e.g. MSG, Te Vaka Moana) to assist with the holistic approach to implementation.</p> | <p>Action since HoF9: The New Song has been endorsed by both the FFC Officials meeting in May 2015 and the FFC Ministerial in July 2015. The New Song is also promoted at high levels and is linked to the Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries. Taking the New Song forward, especially the community-based ecosystems approach for fisheries management (CEAFM) will also be discussed further at HoF10.</p> |
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<p>32. Noted increases in future fish requirements due to increasing human population within the region and supported call for greater collaboration among stakeholders at regional, national and sub-national levels to address future food security and livelihood needs.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>33. HOF agreed that The New Song be called the Noumea Coastal Fisheries Strategy: Pathways to Change.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>34. Suggested to cross-check the Apia Policy and transfer outstanding elements into the new FAME business plan.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: A cross-check was undertaken and the new FAME business Plan takes account of the main elements in the Apia policy.</p>
<p>35. Suggested the outcomes document be used to develop elements of the FAME business plan.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Activity completed and the new Business Plan will be discussed and finalised at HoF10.</p>

Deepwater snapper: towards improved stock assessments and management

<p>36. Supported the work conducted under OFP's deep-water snapper project, in particular its capacity building aspects, and encouraged further support from the OFP in capacity building initiatives.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation. Action since HoF9: no funding has been identified at this stage for capacity building in deep-water snapper fisheries, however other capacity building initiatives are being considered.</p>
<p>37. Called for investigation of applicability of using age-based indicators in other fisheries, particularly for coastal species</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC-OFP, in collaboration with the Tonga Fisheries Division, have prepared a factsheet outlining stock assessment techniques applicable to deep-water snapper fisheries in the Pacific and examples of their incorporation in to harvest strategies. This work has been used to inform management of Tonga's deep water snapper fishery. In addition, tested readability of otoliths, developed biological parameters and completed preliminary aged based status assessment for key indicator coastal species in at least 9 PICTs (Cooks, FSM, Kiribati, NC, Palau, PNG, Tonga, Tuvalu, RMI).</p>
<p>38. Noted that the deepwater snapper project will finish at the end of 2015 and called for SPC to continue deepwater snapper project and support to member countries and territories with deepwater snapper activities noting that this will require sourcing additional funds.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC and NIWA are partnering in Tonga for a deep-water line fishery project funded by New Zealand with SPC having provided economic inputs to the project including an economic analysis of the current deep-water snapper management plan.</p>
<p>39. Called for ongoing assistance from SPC with the finalisation of country and territory deep-water snapper management plans underpinned by latest scientific findings.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: deep-water snapper management plan completed for Vanuatu, while Kiribati and Tonga plans are still in draft awaiting country input.</p>

Standardising data collection and management for Pacific Island coastal fisheries and aquaculture

<p>40. Noted and encouraged database development projects planned for 2015–2016, including a database for aquaculture, database for FAD-related data, trials of mobile applications and a database for domestic shipments and exports of coastal resources to facilitate traceability of product.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Some expansion of databases with an export database now available and the use of the new TAILS app for FAD data collection, and this is discussed more under Working Paper 3 at HoF10.</p>
<p>41. Reaffirmed the importance of standardised data collection and called for a review of databases currently in place within PICT fisheries departments and other regional organisations.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC have convened a number of workshops under the umbrella of Tuna Data Fishery Data Collection Meeting (DCC) on standardising tuna fishery data collection. The DCC Strategy meeting looked at how to continue to maintain data standards with EM and ER devices, monitoring specific reviews were carried out for observer and artisanal data and subsequently integrated into the main DCC work. This is a process that could be further explored for achieving standardisation in coastal fisheries data. For coastal fisheries this issue will be discussed under Working Paper 3, the harmonisation of small-scale domestic fisheries data at HoF10.</p>

Towards a data sharing policy for survey and monitoring data collected and/or stored by the SPC Coastal Fisheries Programme on behalf of member countries

<p>42. Supported the standardisation of data collection, storage and sharing provided national policies and rules are protected, particularly those concerning sensitive data.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Processes for the standardisation of data and sampling protocols continue to be explored by SPC members under the DCC process. In coastal, discussion on this will occur at HoF10 under Working Paper 3.</p>
<p>43. Called for a need for regionally-agreed rules and procedures that SPC could apply for coastal fisheries and aquaculture data collected in-country by SPC staff – or shared with SPC staff by government services.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Internal discussion undertaken on how to take this forward which have resulted in Working Paper 3 being put to HoF10 to further discuss this issue including the possibility of forming a DCC for coastal fisheries and aquaculture data.</p>
<p>44. Reaffirmed that in the absence of a data sharing policy, SPC should continue to assume that all data requests require country authorisation and redirect requestors to country government services for approval and terms of use.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation</p>
<p>45. Indicated SPC should publish the list and description of existing datasets for surveys conducted by SPC staff and country counterparts.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>46. Reaffirmed SPC should publish the list and description of existing datasets for other types of surveys and long-term monitoring conducted independently by countries.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>47. Recommended that SPC should provide a regional central data repository so that countries can publish their own lists and descriptions of datasets.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Some progress with this, but now being expanded with a request to HoF10 under Working Paper 4 to look for historic data with SPC being the repository for this data on behalf of PICTs.</p>

48. Agreed that SPC should provide an archival service for country datasets.	Noted with appreciation.
49. Recommended that SPC should provide an online system where government services can decide by themselves the level of 'sharing' they feel comfortable with for each data type and aggregation level.	Action since HoF9: Some progress made in developing the online system and this will be available later in 2017.
50. Agreed that validated raw data from resource surveys (e.g. in-water fisheries independent surveys) conducted by SPC staff with country counterparts can become open access 5 years after the survey.	Noted with appreciation.
51. Agreed that validated raw data from socio-economic surveys (e.g. household and fisher interviews) conducted by SPC staff with country counterparts can become open access 5 years after the survey as long as it is not possible to identify specific households and individuals from the data.	Noted with appreciation.

Long-term strategy for observer training and support to the region

52. Noted the lack of adequate funding support for observer training staff and activities and reaffirmed that SPC OFP should continue to provide regional support for observer programmes.	Action since HoF9: FFC94 endorsed the establishment of the Observer Regional Cost Recovery (ORCR) that is to directly provide support for SPC OFP FEMA observer training and support staff costs as well as provide support and development activities for the national observer programmes. Sustainable funding for the ORCR is through a levy applied to all vessels at the time of the regional registration. This fee has been collected by FFA since 1 July 2016. An MOU for SPC to access these funds has been developed and is pending.
53. Reaffirmed that training of observers and debriefers and that further development of Pacific Islands Regional Fisheries Observer (PIRFO) standards are high priorities.	Action since HoF9: A full review and restructuring of PIRFO standards for observer training was completed in October 2016. SPC participated the PIRFO training of 69 new observers (from 83 trainees), certified an additional 32 debriefers and another 12 debriefer assessors to mentor the full certification of the further 36 debriefer trainees that completed their Part A training in 2016.
54. Reaffirmed that the PIRFO Certification Management Committee (CMC) is the recognised moderating body for PIRFO certification and training standards.	Action since HoF9: The CMC met after the ROCW17 on 10 February 2017. Discussions included the need to develop training and assessment packages to suit the new PIRFO standards; gaining independent recognition of PIRFO – this required the development of further PIRFO strategies and training/assessment packaging; the need to review Debriefers Assessor training and assessment strategies and a planned independent Trainer/Assessor Certification for PIRFO Trainers.

<p>55. Endorsed in principle the call from SPC OFP that the CMC should comprise one representative from FFA, one from SPC, one from WCPFC, one from PNA aligned countries and one from non-PNA aligned countries. Reaffirmed that SPC OFP provide secretariat services to and initially chairs the CMC; and coordinates the auditing and monitoring of standards under the CMC's direction. Reaffirmed that an independent consultant develops a recognised international governance framework under which the CMC can legitimately and transparently operate, including terms of reference for the CMC.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: The CMC agreed to its TOR in its second meeting in February 2015. The CMC met under the agreed TOR and with the agreed agency representatives after the ROCW16 on 10 February 2016. Discussions included the way forward for independent recognition of PIRFO and its CMC which will be continuing in 2017.</p>
<p>56. Endorsed in principle the call by SPC OFP that 3–4 institutions that have the potential to deliver best-practice PIRFO basic training be identified with the intention of providing support to establish full PIRFO training capacity.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Training relationships are established with the following maritime schools: NFC in Kavieng, PNG, VMC Espiritu Santo, Vanuatu, MTC Tarawa, Kiribati, and MVTC Majuro, Marshall Islands. Discussions are also underway with USP, Fiji. However only NFC in Kavieng have hired sufficient (3) full time PIRFO Trainer and Assessors to operate independently (but have pulled back from training new observers as PNG have enough now), MVTC in Majuro has one full-time PIRFO Trainer and MTC in Tarawa and has access to one casually hired PIRFO Trainer, though PIRFO Training policy requires that two PIRFO Trainers and one PIRFO Assessor are involved, so courses require Additional consultant trainers to be hired. MTC Vanuatu, hosts training but requires SPC support and consultant PIRFO trainers to be externally hired.</p>
<p>57. Agreed that the PIRFO website is developed to meet professional requirements at all levels of the PIRFO career framework to be hosted and moderated by the OFP.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: The PIRFO website finally came online in January 2017 and now needs to be populated with the information to be available to each level of PIRFO qualification.</p>
<p>58. Agreed that SPC OFP continues to organise PIRFO trainers workshops and ROCWs, and that SPC monitors developments in electronic recording and electronic monitoring and takes an active role in ensuring seamless incorporation of these new tools into observer information collection related activities.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: A successful PIRFO Trainer and Assessor Workshop was held in SPC Noumea headquarters in October 2016, another is planned for October 2017. The workshop focussed on the reviewed PIRFO observer standards which include elective competencies for experienced observer to be certified for E-Reporting and E-Monitoring activities. The ROCW17 was facilitated by SPC and FFA collaboratively in Nadi, Fiji during 6-10 February 2017.</p>
<p>59. Endorsed in principle the call by SPC OFP to adopt a regional cost-recovery mechanism to fund regional observer coordination and support activities, noting that this will need to be discussed at other fora.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: The Observer Regional Cost Recovery (ORCR) mechanism was endorsed by FFC94 and the funds began to be collected by FFA through the regional register in July 2016. An MOU for SPC to access these funds is pending adoption.</p>

National IMS and E-Reporting: current status and future plans

<p>60. Supported the workplan of SPC OFP to develop E-Reporting systems where requested and where infrastructure is suitable and resources are sufficient, and endorsed further collaboration among the SPC and third-party service providers used by member countries.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC OFP developed the Android based E-Reporting application TAILS which includes modules for longline logsheet, port sampling and artisanal catch landing monitoring. Trials of these different modules were conducted in five member countries in 2016. The data collected using TAILS was directly uploaded to the cloud based TUFMAN2 database system accessible to fisheries managers. SPC OFP collaborated with two E-Reporting service providers to ensure observer and logsheet data could be imported into SPC's regional database systems TUBs and TUFMAN2. Constructive communications allowed identifying inaccuracies in data quality and data flow. In terms of future plans SPC OFP intends to continue trials with at least six member countries on the implementation of E-Reporting tools for reporting longline logsheet data. Further, SPC OFP intends to continue collaborating with third party E-Reporting service providers to address inaccuracies in data quality and data flow.</p>
<p>61. Reaffirmed SPC OFP as one of the main regional agencies to improve implementation of E-Reporting (in collaboration with FFA) and requested SPC OFP assistance with E-Reporting trials.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: SPC OFP provided dedicated SPC OFP Regional E-Reporting Coordinator provided support to three member countries for the establishment, continuation and renewal of national E-Reporting Officer positions focusing on the implementation of SPC OFP and third party providers E-Reporting tools. SPC OFP collaborated with FFA on providing strategic advice to member countries on the implementation of E-Reporting and E-Monitoring systems. SPC OFP intends to continue collaborating with member countries focusing on the implementation of E-Reporting systems and E-Monitoring systems on longline and purse seine fishing vessels.</p>

How FAME disseminates information?

<p>62. Noted high costs of distributing information in the Pacific and supported the identification of cost saving initiatives. Noted that requirements for hard copies differ among PICTs and encouraged the distribution of both hard and electronic material to deposit libraries.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>63. Suggested that SPC continue to give open access to information documents to allow other countries to translate, print and distribute materials in a more cost-effective manner. Proposed that timing the dissemination of materials around meetings and trainings to 'piggyback' on existing travel could help reduce distribution costs.</p>	<p>Noted with appreciation.</p>
<p>64. Encouraged the use of new technology, in particular social media, for disseminating material, noting that this may not reach the entire target audience.</p>	<p>Action since HoF9: Better dissemination of information has been reviewed and the use of different media options including social media has been built into a concept note as part of the joint fisheries project under EDF 11 funding.</p>

65. Suggested a joint country strategy on the dissemination of material be developed.	Noted with appreciation.
Ministerial for Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture	
66. Supported the recommendation to present the outcomes of this and future Heads of Fisheries meetings to regional Fisheries Ministers for endorsement, such as the FFC Ministerial meeting and other Ministerial fora (including and in addition to CRGA).	Noted with appreciation.
67. Noted the move by SPC towards an integrated approach to programme and project development. Called for greater dialogue among SPC and other CROP agencies and relevant institutes (e.g. IRD) regarding the development of the Integrated Approach, given the complexities involved. Reaffirmed the value of Joint Country Strategies with the SPC and called for cross-cutting integrated approaches incorporating relevant agencies and Ministries (e.g. Environment) to the Joint Country Strategies to develop national rather than sectorial strategies and policies.	Action since HoF9: SPC continues to explore options for an integrated approach to programming, and this has been the basis for the development of the multi-CROP agency joint fisheries project concept, the “Pacific European Union Marine Partnership” (PEUMP) project, which is being considered by the EU for funding under EDF 11. In regard to joint country strategies, these have been discontinued and a new approach is under development for ongoing country engagement.
Ocean Acidification – an example of the Integrated Approach to Programme Development	
68. Consider ocean acidification to be a major long-term threat to the health of fisheries resources and ecosystems of the Pacific. Encouraged work that will assist the Pacific Community with implementation of monitoring and adaptations that will minimise the impact of ocean acidification, complements existing national activities (PICs and Donor Countries), and maximises consultation.	Noted with appreciation.

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| <p>69. Supported the proposed Ocean Acidification (OA) project currently under consideration for funding with New Zealand’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) presented as an example of SPC’s Integrated Approach to Programme Development. Suggested that:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> the implementation of effective adaptations requires a multi-agency and multi-sectoral approach in addition to a whole-of-ecosystem approach that complements existing OA initiatives in the region; in-country consultation be made at the grass-roots level to encourage better national support, and SPC circulate the documents from the recent Ocean Acidification project to PICTs. | <p>Action since HoF9: The OA project was funded by New Zealand with SPREP being the implementing agency, with SPC being a co-implementer. The project has been running for over a year now with several research projects underway being implemented through the OFP.</p> |
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Small Scale Fisheries Guidelines endorsed.....what are the next steps?

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| <p>70. Welcomed the endorsement by the FAO’s Committee on Fisheries (COFI) of the Voluntary Guidelines for Securing Sustainable Small Scale Fisheries (SSF) and recognised the high degree of concordance with The New Song for regional coastal fisheries management. Encouraged SPC-FAO members use of the FAO Technical Cooperation Program window for implementing the SSF and for the implementation of The New Song in an integrated and coordinated manner across the respective FAO and SPC mandates in the region.</p> | <p>Noted with appreciation. Action since HoF9: SPC and FAO are involved in mapping the activities and indicators in both the New Song and SSF Guidelines to identify synergies for implementation.</p> |
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| <p>71. Welcomed increase in technical support from the FAO through the tasking of two fisheries technical officers to the region and noted the commitment by the FAO to work with and through existing regional, sub-regional and civil society organisations and SPC/FAO member countries to achieve common objectives.</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
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Status of maritime boundaries in Pacific Island countries

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| <p>72. Noted the priority placed on the delimitation and declaration of maritime zones in the region and their importance for ocean management and securing national interests.</p> | <p>N/A</p> |
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73. Noted that an increasing number of maritime boundaries in the Pacific have been negotiated and declared; and the technical and legal support that SPC and partners continue to provide to enable PICs to delimit, publicise and deposit the remaining maritime zones.	Noted with appreciation.
74. Recognised that some PICs still have significant technical and legal work to complete before they can declare their baselines and maritime zones, whilst others are in a position to move ahead with negotiations, and that the overall process under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) is country-driven and that progress depends largely on high-level national engagement. Encouraged members to finalise the maritime boundaries in face of global change (e.g. climate change).	N/A
75. Supported SPC and particularly the work of the Maritime Boundaries Unit and partners as an appropriate and effective mechanism to facilitate national efforts to finalise maritime zones.	Noted with appreciation.

Ocean issues and the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner

76. Were invited to note the progress made in implementation in framework of Pacific Oceanscape, note progress made in establishment in the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and the Pacific Ocean Alliance and encouraged SPC members, observers and key development partners to actively participate in the work of the Pacific Oceans Alliance and to support the Office of the Pacific Oceans Commissioner.	N/A
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Forum Fisheries Agency

77. Noted the endorsement of the FFA of efforts in coastal and oceanic fisheries by the SPC.	Noted with appreciation.
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Institute of Marine Resources, University of the South Pacific

78. Noted the potential for development of short courses to address regional needs and potential for USP to collaborate with local partners to offer observer training.	N/A
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79. Noted that the Institute of Marine Resources (IMR) plan to develop a Centre of Tropical Fisheries and Aquaculture.	N/A
80. Noted the suggestion to develop a regional PNA-like body for beche-de-mer in the Pacific.	N/A
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme	
81. Noted the endorsement of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) for the New Song on coastal fisheries management, and the willingness of SPREP to fully engage in the spirit of the New Song for integrated approaches to coastal fisheries management.	Noted with appreciation.
82. Noted the efforts of SPREP (in collaboration with other regional and sub-regional organisations) to assist sustainable coastal fisheries development - through ecosystem based management of coastal and marine areas resources, improvements in waste management and pollution control, ecosystem based adaptation to climate change and assisting member countries in environmental monitoring and governance.	N/A
Japan International Cooperation Agency	
83. Noted the appreciation of JICA delegate for the invitation and the continued interest of JICA to collaborate with regional, sub-regional, national and tertiary institutions in the region.	N/A
MCT Rare Program for Island Resilience in Micronesia	
84. Noted that MCT-Rare specialize in robust community-based awareness campaigns (“social marketing”) coordinated closely with local partners that lead towards specific conservation actions; an approach which can successfully contribute to coastal fisheries management by building effective multi-tiered and multi-sectoral partnerships at local, national and regional levels when underpinned by sound implementation of technical work on the ground.	N/A

ACIAR

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| 85. Acknowledged with appreciation
funding assistance from ACIAR for
Pacific Fisheries. Noted the excellent
work program and case studies of
ACIAR and partners regarding seaweed
production. | N/A |
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New Zealand Ministry of Primary Industries

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| 86. Noted member training opportunities
available through the NZ Ministry of
Primary Industries. | N/A |
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