

New expertise comes to SPC's Nearshore Fisheries Development Section

2011 marks the beginning of a new era for SPC's Nearshore Fisheries Development Section. At its inception in the early 1980s, the Section focused primarily on capture fisheries. Since then, it has undergone a number of phases, including the promotion of deep-bottom, hook-and-line fishing for snappers in the 1980s; support and development of small-to-medium scale tuna longline operations in the 1990s; and, more recently, the promotion of mid-water fishing techniques around shallow-water fish aggregation devices (FADs). However, despite the valuable assistance it has provided to fisheries throughout the Pacific Islands region, reviews of SPC's Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) regularly point to a lack of post-harvest and economic efforts. This point, however, has recently been addressed through a number of changes in the Section's structure.

One of the Section's two Fisheries Development Officer (fishing) positions was redesigned to focus on economic assessments of fishing and aquaculture ventures. While this change means a reduction in the Section's more traditional role — fishing technology and techniques — (see boxed text on next page), the new position of Fisheries Development Officer (Economics) brings new capacity in economic, financial and market evaluation that will benefit CFP and SPC member countries. This broad area focuses on the economics of coastal fisheries and generally aims to improve the efficiency and financial performance of fisheries sectors (whether for food security or income generation). Some of these capabilities include investment decisions for new projects with differing investment options, cost-benefit analyses, financial assessments of new and existing enterprises, value chain analyses, and market analyses. The Section will also be able to build capacity and provide technical advice in these areas. Michael Sharp joined the Section in February as the Fisheries Development Officer (Economics). He arrived in time to attend the 7th Heads of Fisheries meeting, which gave him the opportunity to meet with key national fisheries stakeholders. Since then, Michael has been regularly communicating with fisheries personnel from member countries, which has resulted in the identification of a number of interesting projects that will soon be implemented, including 1) a cost-benefit assessment of FAD programmes in Niue and Samoa; 2) an economic feasibility study to establish a marine ornamental trade in Samoa; and 3) some economic inputs into a regional review of mariculture in the Pacific. It is envisaged that Michael will also undertake economic analyses of fishing vessels for cost reduction, and that he will assess the benefits of sports fishing operations for coastal communities and the greater economy of island countries. Economic assessment is important for justifying investment or lending, determining initiatives' long-term financial viability, quantifying the benefits derived from an activity, and increasing efficiency or profitability of an activity. For sustainable business development, market assessment and economic feasibility studies should be completed prior to embarking on any new initiative.

In addition to economics, the Section acquired a much needed capacity in post-harvest, thanks to funding

support from the Australian government. In late 2010, AusAID approved an SPC funding proposal and the establishment of several new positions within SPC's Division of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems. One of these positions is Fisheries Development Officer (Post-Harvest and Exports), which was filled in May 2011. Timothy Numilengi, who holds this position, previously worked as the coordinator of the Food Safety Auditing and Certification Unit at the Competent Authority of Papua New Guinea. His role at SPC will be to provide technical assistance, advice and training in seafood safety, quality and value adding. Timothy will work closely with seafood companies in the region, helping them meet the importing requirements of countries such as Australia, the European Union, Japan, and the United States (USA). Timothy will collaborate with the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency's Development Section and the Dev-Fish-2 project, which are already involved in this area. The establishment and/or the strengthening of national competent authorities will be high on Timothy's agenda, and work is underway to assist the competent authorities of Vanuatu and Solomon Islands.



Michael Sharp,
Fisheries Development Officer
(Economics)

Michael is from Australia. He holds a bachelor's degree in agricultural economics and a master's degree in economics. In 2005, he worked in Vanuatu as an Australian Youth Ambassador for Development where he provided training in agriculture and small business management, and facilitated the implementation of community-based projects. Michael returned to Sydney in 2007 to work in corporate banking for the Australia and New Zealand Banking Group Ltd. In 2009, he worked for the Ministry of Amerindian Affairs (in Guyana) as a Marketing and Finance Specialist under the National Hinterland and Secure Livelihoods Programme. He provided assistance to Amerindian communities in designing, financing, and implementing agricultural, apiculture, and aquaculture development projects for the purpose of introducing non-traditional income sources.



**Timothy Numilengi,
Fisheries Development Officer
(Post-Harvest and Exports)**

Timothy is from Papua New Guinea (PNG). He holds a Bachelor of Science degree in food technology and a diploma in management. Before joining SPC, he worked for 10 years with the PNG

National Fisheries Authority as the Coordinator for Food Safety Auditing and Certification services. He has experience in establishing, implementing, evaluating and managing food safety systems, including harvesting areas and vessels, transport systems, and landing, processing and export establishments. He has experience in establishing a Competent Authority, market access requirements (e.g. for markets in Australia, the European Union, Japan, and the USA). He is also skilled in the thermal processing of canned fish having been trained in Canada, New Zealand, Thailand and the USA. Using these skills, Timothy provided technical assistance to competent authorities and the fish canning industries in PNG and Solomon Islands.

For more information,

or for assistance requests, please contact:

Michael Sharp,
Fisheries Development Officer (Economics)
(MichaelS@spc.int)

or

Timothy Numilengi,
Fisheries Development Officer
(Post-Harvest and Exports)
(TimothyN@spc.int)

The end of a 15-year cruise with SPC!



It is with heavy hearts that FAME Division staff wished all the best and said goodbye to Steve Beverly.

Steve is now a semi-retired fisheries specialist with more than 20 years of experience in the Pacific Islands region. Steve started with SPC in the mid-1990s, initially as a consultant (his first project was in Rabaul, Papua New Guinea in 1995), and then as a full-time Fisheries Development Officer. As part of his SPC duties, Steve travelled to all of the SPC member countries and territories, delivering training and conducting projects for fisheries administrations or the private sector. A well-known and respected fisherman, Steve has contributed immensely to the development of domestic tuna longlining in Pacific Island countries, the strengthening of national FAD programmes, and the increased safety of fishing vessel operations. More recently, Steve became a bycatch mitigation expert, winning the World Wildlife Fund International Smart Gear Competition in 2004. Our team is deeply grateful for his 15 years of contributing to safer and more sustainable fishing in the Pacific region.

Thanks for everything and happy sailing (and fishing!), Steve.