

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

**Seventh Heads of Fisheries Meeting**

*(28 Feb.–4 March 2011, Noumea, New Caledonia)*

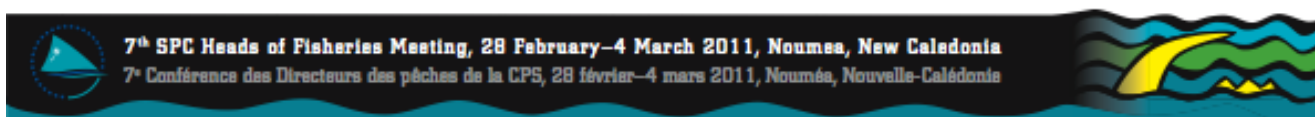
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**Regional Scoping Workshop:  
Development of a Pacific aquaculture regional cooperative programme**

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and  
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)  
Aquaculture Section

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## **Regional Scoping Workshop: Development of a Pacific aquaculture regional cooperative programme**

### **Background**

On 23 September 2010, during the FAO Global Conference on Aquaculture 2010 in Thailand, an informal meeting - “An Evening on Pacific Aquaculture”<sup>1</sup> - was held with delegates of five Pacific countries (Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, Papua New Guinea and Tonga). The meeting was attended by the delegates of the Pacific countries, and officials and representatives from ACIAR, FAO, Ghent University, JICA, NACA, SPC and the WfC<sup>2</sup>. The purpose of the meeting was to generate ideas to guide future aquaculture development initiatives in the Pacific Region and suggestions to move the ideas into actions.

To set the scene for the discussions, the meeting was informed by three sources: (1) historical and current status of aquaculture development in the Pacific; (2) persistent and emerging issues on aquaculture development in the Region; and (3) national aquaculture aspirations and constraints in the five Pacific countries present at the meeting.

Twelve major issues emerged from the discussions. These include the following: 1) food security and biosecurity – the conflicting goals of food security and international concern for biosecurity (international trade requirements, diseases, alien species, etc.); 2) lack of capacity in biosecurity to safeguard aquaculture potentials; 3) weak national capacity for aquaculture statistics and information collection and lack of uniformed statistic standard for the cultured species that are unique in the region; 4) continuing need for training on planning, management and production; 5) increasing frequency and intensity of natural hazards – cyclones, floods and drought which have tended to set back progress; 6) potential impact of seawater acidification from climate change on two important species, *i.e.* pearl oysters and marine shrimp; 7) subsidies for aquaculture enterprises being counterproductive; 8) problem of feed for finfish and crustaceans; 9) introduction of aquaculture species, many from outside the Region, some indigenous to some islands and moved around, others endemic; 10) pilot trials and initial farming on a commercial-scale of many species, but failure to attain or sustain economic viability; 11) intense focus and extended iterations of research and technology development at the research level neglected other important phase in knowledge development and utilization, and the up-scaling of research results to commercial application; and 12) traditional ownership of land and jurisdiction of water bodies and sea areas by communities have been good for community-based management projects, but somehow discouraged investments from outside owing to insecurity of tenure.

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<sup>1</sup> Izumi, M., Bueno, P. & Pickering, T. 2010. Building on Progress: An Evening on Pacific Aquaculture. FAO Aquaculture Newsletter No. 46. Rome. FAO.

<sup>2</sup> ACIAR: Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research; FAO: Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations; JICA: Japan International Cooperation Agency; NACA: Network of Aquaculture Center in Asia and the Pacific; SPC: Secretariat of the Pacific Community; WfC: WorldFish Centre.

The meeting recommended three strategic actions, namely: 1) further assistance in developing a biosecurity policy for the Region; 2) organization of a regional aquaculture development workshop in the Pacific to assess needs and develop cooperative programmes; and 3) exploring the feasibility of a networking arrangement.

The Pacific Region with its physical, natural, environmental, cultural and demographic endowments have been a source of comparative advantage or a cause of limited success in aquaculture development projects and enterprises. The recently concluded twenty-ninth session of the FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI) (29 January – 4 February 2011, Rome) and the fifth session of the COFI Sub-Committee on Aquaculture (27 September – 1 October 2010, Phuket, Thailand) recognized the need to provide more attention to aquaculture development to small island developing states including the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).

## **Purpose**

The objective of this regional scoping workshop is to engage the governments of PICTs and development partners active in the Region in a dialogue to assess the needs and map out a coordinating strategy and actions for all major regional and international agencies and other relevant stakeholders working on aquaculture development in the Region. The specific objectives are to:

- understand past and recently completed activities, existing national and regional strategies/development plans and the current status of aquaculture in the Region, including an analysis of progress;
- identify emerging issues, opportunities and required support for its development;
- exchange lessons and good practices based on the work of development partners, inspire fresh thinking and innovative initiatives; and
- build and support a potential regional aquaculture development framework and programme or road map for aquaculture development for PICTs.

## **Process**

The workshop will be organized along several thematic sessions, including keynote speeches; presentations on regional and global aquaculture status reports and SPC regional aquaculture strategy; invited lectures on hot topics and emerging issues important to the region; and statement of mandates and past/current activities from development partners. The workshop will involve working group discussions to identify and prioritise current and emerging issues, undertake a matching exercise on PICT's aquaculture aspirations with potential development partners' support according to their mandates; and plenary report-back to present and adopt working group outcomes and recommended actions.

This concept note is intended to be submitted to the SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting to be held at the SPC Headquarters in Noumea from 28 February to 4 March 2011. As soon as endorsement by the above meeting have been received, a workshop prospectus with a detailed programme and other arrangements will be prepared. FAO in partnership with SPC will take a lead in the organization of this regional scoping workshop. The workshop is tentatively planned for four days in Fiji towards the end of August 2011.

## Participation

The intention is to invite key aquaculture PICT government representatives (1 senior official and/or 1 aquaculture specialist), representatives from development partners, regional/international organizations and donors<sup>3</sup> (e.g. ACIAR, ADB, AUSAID, CITES, CRISP, EU, FAO, GEF, JICA, NACA, NZAID, OIE, PIFS, SEAFDEC, SPC, SPREP, USAID, World Bank, WfC, WCPFC) and other interested entities (academia and NGOs) who can potentially contribute to achieving the goals of the workshop. The costs of convening the workshop will be shared by FAO and SPC, in addition to possible sponsorship by other development partners and interested parties.

## Products

The expected outcome of the regional workshop is a report of the meeting and a regional strategy document (containing themes, priorities, partnerships; responsibilities; an agreed basis for detailed plans, projects and partnerships) that will serve as a package for seeking support from donors and development partners towards responsible and sustainable aquaculture for food security in the PICTs.

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<sup>3</sup> ADB: Asian Development Bank; AUSAID: Australian Agency for International Development; CITES: Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species; CRISP: Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific; EU: European Union; GEF: Global Environmental Fund; NZAID: New Zealand Agency for International Development; OIE: World Animal Health Organisation; PIFS: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; SEAFDEC: Southeast Asian Fisheries Development Center; SPREP: Secretariat of Pacific Regional Environmental Programme; USAID: United States Agency for International Development; WCPFC: Western Central Pacific Fisheries Commission).