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**Internal Review of the SPC Fisheries, Aquaculture
and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division
Strategic Plan 2010–2013**

FAME
Secretariat of the Pacific Community
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www.spc.int/fame/



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Secretariat of the Pacific Community
BP D5 • 98848 Noumea Cedex • New Caledonia
Tel: +687 262000 • Fax: +687 263818 • www.spc.int

Secrétariat général de la Communauté du Pacifique
BP D5 • 98848 Nouméa Cedex • Nouvelle-Calédonie
Tél : +687 262000 • Fax : +687 263818 • www.spc.int

Internal Review of the SPC Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division Strategic Plan 2010–2013

Background

1. The current FAME Strategic Plan (SP) was developed after consultations with the Heads of Fisheries meeting in 2009, and following an independent review of the division that same year. The plan was endorsed by CRGA and came into effect at the beginning of 2010. The four-year plan calls for an internal review of progress after two years, and an independent review towards the end of the plan period in late 2013. This paper reports briefly on the results of the internal review, which was carried out by the management team of the division (Director, Programme Managers and Section Heads) in February 2012.

Purpose of the review

2. The purpose of the review was to determine whether the objectives of the division are still relevant and whether or not the division is on track to achieve them. The review takes a higher-level look at the work of the division, to supplement the activity-level planning and reporting which takes place on an annual basis. Specifically the team considered the following:
 - Coherence with the SPC Corporate Plan 2007–2012 and proposed plan for 2013 onwards;
 - Relevance of the goals and objectives of the FAME Strategic Plan – coherence with objectives of major projects;
 - Progress towards achieving the goals – indicators and their measurement for the SP and major projects – revision of indicators that are not appropriate or for which data are not likely to be available on a timely basis;
 - Changes since the plan was proposed – in response to the needs of members, new external partnerships and internal SPC developments;
 - Development of new result areas and changes in emphasis as a result of the above;
 - Review of risks and risk management.

SPC Corporate Plan

3. The FAME SP is aligned with SPC's vision for the region, its mission and its core business of capacity building, capacity supplementation and regional coordination. The section of the Corporate Plan dealing with FAME comes from the old MRD (Marine Resources Division) strategic plan and is out of date. A new Corporate Plan will be developed later this year, so the review of the FAME SP is timely to ensure inputs are up to date. The new Corporate Plan will stress three work areas: natural resource management, economic development and human development. FAME's work involves all three, with emphasis on the first.

Relevance of goals and objectives

4. The goals of each programme and the Director's Office were considered to be still relevant and aligned with regional statements of policy coming, for example, from recent Pacific Island Forum Leaders' meetings. The objectives of major projects such as the Scientific Support for the Management of Coastal and Oceanic Fisheries in the Pacific Islands Region (SciCOFish) project are worded similarly to these goals; while the monitoring and evaluation framework for the AusAID food security project shows the alignment of all objectives, outcomes and outputs of the project with the FAME SP.

New organisational structure

5. The objectives, which are set at the section level, need to accommodate the establishment of separate sections for Fishery Monitoring and Data Management (reflecting the growth of staff numbers in these two areas). The objective for the former statistics and monitoring work area has thus been split as follows:
 - To provide high-quality fishery monitoring services, analysis services and capacity development to support the management of oceanic fisheries by regional, subregional and national fisheries management authorities; and
 - To provide high-quality data management services and capacity development to support the management of oceanic fisheries by regional, subregional and national fisheries management authorities.

Each work area has a similar set of results (see Annex 1).

Climate change

6. At the result level, it was noted that while climate change had been identified in the SP as one of the major challenges, there were no results to address it. Reflecting recent developments in the work of both programmes, it was proposed that new results be included as follows:
7. Under Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) Objective 1 ('To assist governments and administrations in the development of scientifically informed and socially achievable coastal fisheries management policies and systems') is added result 1.3 'Assistance to members in assessing impacts of climate change on marine environments and assisting coastal communities to respond effectively to climate change'. It should be noted that other sections (dealing with aquaculture and development) are also involved in delivery of assistance with climate change adaptation as part of their existing work programmes.
8. Under Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) Objective 4 ('To improve understanding of pelagic ecosystems in the western and central Pacific Ocean') is added result 4.3 'Improved knowledge of the impacts of climate change on oceanic ecosystems to inform adaptation'.
9. It was also recommended that the post of Fisheries and Climate Change Adviser in the Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility be transferred to FAME, reporting to the Director. This change has now been made, and the Directors objectives adjusted slightly to include climate change.

Other revisions

10. Other changes to the results were recommended as follows:

CFP Result 1.3 – ‘practical assistance to members in the designing and targeting of appropriate awareness raising and education information’ is deleted as this now comes under the information unit in the Director’s Office.

CFP Result 2.3 – the term ‘competent authorities’ for biosecurity is replaced with ‘systems’ as the former has a specific meaning in the context of seafood exports to the EU.

CFP Result 3.2 is replaced with ‘improved economic viability of fisheries investments through analysis, evaluation and capacity building in financial skills’ to reflect the new economics work area and noting that the old 3.2 was actually an activity under 3.1.

The revised table of objectives and results is attached as Annex 1.

Achievements and indicators

11. This section reviews progress towards achievement of the goals and objectives of the programmes. Where there have been difficulties with the indicators, these are highlighted, and in some cases alternative measures are suggested. Note that achieving the targets for higher-level goals and objectives is often outside the control of SPC: in some cases SPC may have performed its role but other factors negate its impact; in others SPC may have done little but the target is exceeded due to external influences. This is the nature of such indicators; and the way in which external factors may be influenced more is considered under the section on risks.

12. On the positive side:

- A substantial part of the region’s largest tuna fishery has been certified as sustainable by the Marine Stewardship Council – the first fishery in the region and the first major tuna fishery in the world to achieve this recognition;
- Pacific Island members have led management initiatives for tuna in the WCPO, and imposed measures themselves when WCPFC failed to agree;
- A number of members have shown themselves willing to act on threatened coastal resources – six PICTs, including the largest producers, now have export moratoria in place for sea cucumber fisheries, for example;
- The catch value of the tuna fishery, reflecting particularly increases in the price of purse-seine caught tuna, has risen dramatically;
- Employment in the tuna fishery and the volume processed onshore has increased since 2009.

13. On the negative side:

- Fishing effort in both longline and purse-seine fisheries has continued to increase; overfishing of bigeye continues unabated and initial assessments of key shark species give cause for concern;
- Aquaculture production value has fallen substantially due to falls in price and volume in the region’s most important commodity, black pearls;
- Management of coastal fisheries, including enforcement of agreed measures, remains weak in many members.

14. The objectives and indicators identified in the Strategic Plan are considered in detail in the following table.

Goal and indicators	Status	Comments
Overall objective		
Marine resources of the Pacific Islands region are managed for economic growth, food security and environmental conservation		
Contribution of fisheries to GDP of PICTs increases: 15–20% for locally based offshore fisheries and aquaculture.	Comprehensive data for comparison with 2007 is not available. Tuna prices have risen substantially since 2009, but are mainly tracking higher operating costs (fuel), which diminish value added. Tuna export values to EU, US and Japan have also increased. Regional aquaculture production value has dropped substantially due to a crash in pearl prices and production.	Indicator not available on a regular and timely basis. Changes in both subsectors have been driven mainly by global economic factors rather than action by SPC or its members. FFA considers exports, employment and tonnage processed onshore to be more reliable measures for offshore fisheries development and monitors these for 15 PICs. SPC will collect aquaculture production data before 2013.
Per capita fish consumption is stable or increasing.	No evaluation possible at this time, but partial data will be available by the end of the plan period.	Data points available for 13 PICs for years between 2002 and 2006. Household income and expenditure surveys planned or in progress will provide a second data point for 2012 or 2013 in 8 countries.

Goal and indicators	Status	Comments
OFP goal		
Fisheries exploiting the region's resources of tuna, billfish and related species are managed for economic and ecological sustainability using the best available scientific information		
Fishing effort on all four major tuna species is constrained within levels that provide maximum sustainable yield.	Situation unchanged from 2009. Overfishing on bigeye continues and fishing effort in purse-seine and longline fisheries increased again in 2011. Other species have moved closer to MSY levels.	This remains perhaps the biggest fisheries management challenge for the region's fisheries. Maximum sustainable yield may not be the most appropriate indicator and work on reference points is planned.
OFP objectives (summarised)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. High quality scientific information and advice 2. High quality fishery monitoring 3. High quality data management 4. Improved understanding of pelagic ecosystem 		
Tuna stock assessment results are fully accepted by WCPFC following peer review.	Assessments accepted up to and including 2011 assessment. First peer review introduced in early 2012.	On track.
Observer coverage meets agreed regional level of coverage and data standards.	100% coverage on purse seiners maintained as planned; only one national programme has failed WCPFC audit.	On track, but considerable work remains to strengthen programme management and observer support. Target of 5% longline coverage becomes effective mid-2012 and may prove challenging. Timely flow of data to SPC and quality assurance through better debriefing are also issues.
PICTs provide comprehensive data to WCPFC.	All PICTs submitted part 1 reports to Scientific Committee in 2010; four (including one territory due to report for the first time) had not done so for 2011 by the year's end.	Generally on track but requires further attention and support. Tuna data workshop in 2012 provided additional back-up.
Ecosystem based model is operational and used for developing management measures.	SEAPODYM model is now operational for the 3 of the 4 main tuna species. Initial results have been used for climate change projections and skipjack management analysis.	On track but various enhancements are required to improve realism and management applications – inclusion of tagging data, better biological information, and higher resolution data for fishing on the high seas.

Goal and indicators	Status	Comments
CFP goal - Coastal fisheries, nearshore fisheries and aquaculture in PICTs are managed and developed sustainably		
Contribution of fisheries to GDP of PICTs increases: 15–20% for nearshore fisheries and aquaculture.	See above – same indicator is used for overall goal.	As above – measure of employment, onshore processing and aquaculture production will be more valuable.
CFP objectives (summarised)		
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Coastal fisheries management policies and systems 2. Sustainable aquaculture development framework 3. Sustainable nearshore fisheries for food security, livelihoods and economic growth 		
New management arrangements in place to promote stock recovery in major fisheries in PICTs, and having an impact.	Assistance with 10 management plans provided in six countries, in some cases following support for resource surveys and assessment. Support in developing new legislation.	Generally on track – plan approval can be slow and recovery of resources will be difficult to demonstrate in some cases in the timeframe. Enforcement of management measures (coastal MCS) is a challenge.
New partnerships formed to facilitate aquaculture development; competent biosecurity services in place.	Proposals under Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (IACT) project currently being screened; assistance provided with risk assessments for three countries and World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) training planned.	Not yet on track – indicators did not really capture large part of the section’s outputs and new projects to address these areas have been delayed.
Sustainable FAD programmes and new enterprises in fishing, processing and sport fishing.	10 countries assisted with FAD programmes and fishing skills training; new enterprises in sport fishing and fish silage going well.	Mainly on track - Sustainable finance for FADs still a problem in some cases; enterprise establishment somewhat below target; indicators do not capture important work in economics and export facilitation.

Goal and indicators	Status	Comments
Director's goal		
Effective coordination and resourcing of the work of the Oceanic and Coastal Fisheries Programmes		
80% of stakeholders in PICTs satisfied with services provided	This needs to be evaluated by an independent review. The External Review of SPC found the fisheries programmes to be the most highly regarded of all SPC services.	Indicator remains appropriate and will be surveyed more comprehensively as part of the final review of the Strategic Plan.
Director's objectives		
1. Effective relationships between the division and its stakeholders. 2. Raised public awareness of marine resources issues and informed policy decisions.		
Funding maintained at or above 2009 levels.	2009 rev budget 13,181,700 CFP units 2010 rev budget 10,631,900 CFP units 2011 rev budget 13,016,300 CFP units	Dropped in 2010 due to end of EDF9 coastal projects and GEF oceanic project – back on track but the situation when EDF10 projects end in 2013 is a concern.
Improved level of reporting of issues in regional media.	New communication plan provides for around one media release per month. Surveys indicate uptake by 9–20 media covering regional outlets and 6–12 member countries for each.	On track and indicator generally appropriate, but uptake by national print and radio without online service is difficult to monitor. SPC press review is not useful for monitoring.

Risks and risk management

15. The review concluded that the risks identified in the Strategic Plan are still highly relevant, and that there are few additional strategies available to address them. More specifically:
- ***Inadequate resources*** – This remains a pressing concern, particularly due the stop–start cycle of EU funding. SPC has frozen staff costs, unlike other regional agencies, but this has impacted on staff morale and recruitment. Progress with new ways of working (e.g. home-based staff) has been slower than planned, but some new models are now being tried.
 - ***Uptake of scientific advice*** – The failure to see scientific advice translated into management action, in both oceanic and coastal fisheries, remains frustrating. Increased attention to communications seems to be the only solution. The current communications consultancy will be evaluated after two years, and a decision taken on how best to proceed.
 - ***Capacity issues*** – These issues were highlighted in the ‘future of fisheries’ study. FAME has introduced new capacity building activities such as the young professional scheme in CFP; and additional training opportunities are planned. FAME staff have also become more directly involved in bilateral institutional strengthening projects.
 - ***Enforcement of management rules*** – A particular gap has been identified in coastal fisheries for export commodities. Resources will be mobilised to develop coastal MCS capacity.

New partnerships

16. FAME continues to expand the range of its partner agencies. In oceanic fisheries the new office for the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, and the establishment of Te Vaka Moana have created new opportunities for OFP to work with subregional groups. In terms of Strategic Plan results, the term FFA is now replaced with ‘FFA and subregional oceanic fisheries management initiatives’.
17. In coastal fisheries, collaboration with the Locally Managed Marine Area Network has been productive. There has been some collaboration and support from the South Pacific Tourism Organisation on development of sport fishing tourism.
18. The Melanesian Spearhead Group (Fisheries Technical Advisory Committee) is receiving some attention from both programmes: scientific advice on oceanic fisheries, and support for cooperation on coastal fisheries management and aquaculture between members. Both programmes have also benefited from funding from new partners, notably the German Development Agency GIZ in 2012.

Conclusions and recommendations

19. FAME staff have carried out an internal review of the Strategic Plan. Implementation of the plan is generally proceeding well at the level of section objectives, but some higher-level goals are either proving hard to measure or are not yet being achieved. Some actions to address these issues will be put in place over the next 18 months or so. The plan objectives and results also require some modifications.
20. Heads of fisheries are invited to approve the revised objectives and results as provided in Attachment 1.

Attachment 1 – Revised objectives and results

OCEANIC FISHERIES PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

Objective 1: To provide high-quality scientific information and advice for regional and national fisheries management authorities on the status of, and fishery impacts on, stocks targeted or otherwise impacted by regional oceanic fisheries

Results

1.1 Regional oceanic fisheries management policy and decision-making by WCPFC are informed by the best science-based stock assessments and advice

1.2 FFA and subregional oceanic fisheries management initiatives are supported by the best science-based stock assessments and advice

1.3 National tuna oceanic fisheries policy- and decision-making by SPC MEMBERS are informed by the best science-based stock assessments and advice

1.4 Enhanced capacity of SPC MEMBERS to interpret stock assessment information and advice

Objective 2: To provide high-quality fishery monitoring services, analysis services and capacity development to support the management of oceanic fisheries by regional, subregional and national fisheries management authorities

Results

2.1 WCPFC is provided with efficient and cost-effective fishery monitoring and analytical services to support regional oceanic fisheries management

2.2 Enhanced national oceanic fishery monitoring by SPC MEMBERS to meet national and international obligations

2.3 Enhanced capacity of SPC MEMBERS in oceanic fisheries monitoring

Objective 3: To provide high-quality data management services and capacity development to support the management of oceanic fisheries by regional, subregional and national fisheries management authorities

Results

3.1 WCPFC is provided with efficient and cost-effective data management services to support regional oceanic fisheries management

3.2 The oceanic fisheries management initiatives of FFA and other subregional fisheries organisations are supported by efficient and cost-effective data management services

3.3 Enhanced national oceanic fishery data management by SPC MEMBER COUNTRIES to meet national requirements and international obligations

3.4 Enhanced capacity of SPC MEMBER COUNTRIES in oceanic fishery data management and data use

Objective 4: To improve understanding of pelagic ecosystems in the western and central Pacific Ocean

Results

4.1 Enhanced data on the biological characteristics of oceanic species and their environment are available to support stock assessment and ecosystem-based fisheries management

4.2 Appropriate ecosystem models and analyses are available to inform ecosystem-based fisheries management

4.3 Improved knowledge of the impacts of climate change on oceanic ecosystems to inform adaptation

4.4 Regional oceanic fisheries policy- and decision-making by WCPFC is informed by science-based information and advice on ecosystem issues

4.5 FFA's ecosystem-based fisheries management initiatives are supported by the best scientific information and advice

4.6 Ecosystem-based management of oceanic fisheries by SPC members is supported by the best scientific information and advice

COASTAL FISHERIES PROGRAMME OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

Objective 1: To assist governments and administrations in the development of scientifically informed and socially achievable coastal fisheries management policies and systems in line with guiding principles of the Apia Policy

Results

1.1 Assessment of the status of national coastal living marine resource user groups, impact on resources, existing impact management systems, and the current status of the resources themselves, in order to inform management

1.2 Assistance to members, in partnership with other stakeholders, in developing an appropriate mix of community-based approaches and national management arrangements, incorporation of ecosystem-based principles, and the review of coastal fisheries legislation

1.3 Assistance to members in assessing impacts of climate change on marine environments and assisting coastal communities to respond effectively to climate change

Objective 2: To provide a regional framework for sustainable aquaculture, in the areas of planning, research, development and trade, for Pacific Island governments, private enterprises and other stakeholders

Results

2.1 Improved regional and national capacity for strategic policy, planning and administration to establish clear priorities and enable the aquaculture sector to meet current and future needs, with the guidance of the SPC Aquaculture Action Plan 2007

2.2 Increased skills and knowledge base in the SPC region and its member countries and territories, so as to maximise the return on investments in aquaculture through innovative, profitable and sustainable approaches

2.3 Systems established and/or supported, using science-based approaches to manage aquatic biosecurity risks and to facilitate trade

Objective 3: To develop sustainable nearshore fisheries in PICTs to provide food security, livelihoods, economic growth and climate change adaptation

Results

3.1 Subsistence, artisanal, sport and industrial fishing activities within the sustainable production level of the available fisheries resources

3.2 Improved economic viability of fisheries investments through analysis, evaluation and capacity building in financial skills

3.3 Optimum benefits from the resource through improved seafood quality standards and value-adding

DIRECTOR'S OBJECTIVES AND RESULTS

Objective 1: To develop and sustain effective relationships between the division and its stakeholders

Results

1.1 Programme plans and activities that respond to the needs and priorities of members

1.2 Effective working relationships maintained with other regional agencies and development partners

Objective 2: To promote informed policy decisions and public awareness of marine resource issues and climate change in the Pacific

Results

2.1 Policy-makers and the general public are better informed of marine resource issues, climate change impacts, the importance of fisheries and the need for management action

2.2 Stakeholders in PICTs are fully informed of the results of SPC activities, and share experience and knowledge across the region
