

Information Paper 3

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Progress in the implementation of RTMCF1 Action Plan

SPC's Second Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries has been organised
with funding assistance from:



1. One of the outcomes of the 1st SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries, was to agree on an action plan¹ to improve collection, sharing and long term preservation of coastal fisheries data. This document provides information on the progress made since last RTMCF meeting.

Data repository

2. Following the recommendations of the action plan, a data repository² was developed in January 2018 to assist in inventorying and storing information on coastal fisheries and aquaculture surveys, methodology and associated datasets.
3. The repository has been subsequently populated with metadata on surveys conducted jointly by SPC coastal fisheries staff and national counterparts as well as other surveys for which we found or received information. Users from fisheries administrations, NGOs and other partners can access and contribute to the inventory of surveys and datasets for their organization. They can also specify the conditions of access to raw and aggregated data and optionally upload actual datasets and reports (contact SPC to get an account if required).
4. SPC will further assist in documenting and archiving historical and on-going data collection at the occasion of country visits by the coastal fisheries database manager and IT officer.

Data dissemination

5. The Heads of Fisheries agreed at the 9th conference that validated raw data from resource surveys conducted by SPC staff with country counterparts should become open access 5 years from completion of the survey. After an update of taxonomy and final quality check, the PROCFish/C and CoFish datasets, have been published in the Global Biodiversity Information Facility (GBIF), under a joint consortium with SPREP and USP. The datasets can be accessed from the GBIF portal as well as from the coastal fisheries data repository.³
6. The Pacific Data Hub initiative has been launched by the Pacific Community mid-2018 and aims at providing platform and tools to facilitate sharing, discovery and dissemination of Pacific related (open) data, metadata and related reports and papers for various thematic areas such as climate change, economic development, fisheries, statistics etc. The platform will be publically released during the coming weeks, and populated initially with selected documents and datasets harvested from existing portals such as the FAME Digital Library and GBIF.
7. Countries, agencies and NGOs are encouraged to publish public reports and either actual data or metadata (to discover the existence of datasets) on the platform. Information gathered and stored in the coastal fisheries data repository can also serve as basic for this regional effort if agreed by the contributors (by default data and reports uploaded to the data repository are private and metadata is public).

¹ http://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Meetings/RTMCF/1/RTMCF_1_Action_Plan.pdf

² <http://www.spc.int/CoastalFisheries/DataRepository/DataRepositoryHome>

³ https://www.gbif.org/dataset/search?publishing_org=e15c40ad-b68e-4759-bab3-0c2ac9079215

Data governance

8. Along with the Pacific Data Hub platform development, the Pacific Community aims at improving its data governance and is currently reviewing its management procedures to ensure the availability, usability, integrity and security of data and services. This is a necessary step and a basis for future data sharing and service agreements with partners and fisheries administrations.

Standardisation and simplification of data collection

9. After reviewing some legacy data it appears that too often the data collected is not sufficient to provide insight on the status of the resource and does not allow good estimation of total volumes because of insufficient or non-representative data and difficulty obtaining the information required for proper extrapolation (total number of subsistence, semi-commercial and commercial fishers, or total number of formal and informal market sellers, and representative data of their activity (frequency, volume) by region).
10. Because resources for data collection are limited, it is proposed to simplify on-going surveys and concentrate on the regular monitoring of fish sizes for a larger (and representative) sample of fishers (creel-surveys) and sellers (market surveys), and only conduct ad-hoc surveys to answer specific questions when needs arise.
11. Fish sizes are already routinely collected in several countries and SPC is comparing the different methods and options for measurement, identification and data entry (directly at the jetty/market or in the office from pictures). A web/tablet regional system will then be developed to allow for expeditious data entry and processing of the fish size and associated data.
12. Finally, some work has been conducted with SPC statistics division to ensure that the fisheries and aquaculture related questions included in the national censuses can improve estimates of consumption, fish capture and aquaculture activity in the Pacific region.