

## 10<sup>th</sup> SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting

Noumea, New Caledonia, 14–17 March 2017

### Working Paper 8

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## MSWG outcome on implementing the Leaders decision on strengthening coastal fisheries management and including community input

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### Introduction

1. The 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Marine Sector Working Group (MSWG) was convened in Noumea, New Caledonia at the Pacific Community (SPC) small conference room on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2017. The MSWG meeting was chaired by MS. Alice McDonald of FFA, and co-chaired by Moses Amos, SPC. Representatives from PIFS, FFA, SPC, SPREP, USP, FAO, LMMA, WWF, IUCN, Conservational International, ANCORS, NZ MFAT, Australia DFAT, and the EU participated in the MSWG meeting.
2. The meeting discussed options for the implementation of the PIF Leaders decision on strengthening coastal fisheries management and including community inputs.

### Importance and status of coastal fisheries

3. Inshore fisheries provide the primary or secondary source of income for up to fifty per cent of households in the Pacific region. Amongst rural populations, 50–90% of the animal-sourced protein consumed comes from fish. At the national level, coastal fisheries carry significant cultural and economic value. They are estimated to contribute 49% of the total fisheries contribution to GDP, demonstrating that they are central to the Pacific way of life. The

populations of many Pacific island countries and territories (PICTs) are growing but coastal fisheries resources are declining. This is causing the gap between the amount of fish required for food security and sustainable harvests from coastal fisheries to widen. Within 14 years (by 2030), it has been estimated that an additional 115,000 tonnes of fish will be needed across the region for good nutrition<sup>1</sup>. PICTs face many challenges in dealing with their changing physical and social environments but unless the food gap is minimised and filled there will be significant negative impacts on the traditions, health and wellbeing of Pacific Island communities.

### Past decisions by PIF Leaders

4. Pacific Island leaders have recognised the importance of coastal fisheries. The Vava’u Declaration in 2007 calls for effective management of coastal fisheries to support food security and sustainable livelihoods. The Apia Policy was forged as a regional response to the Vava’u Declaration to help harness the benefits of coastal fisheries. Similar themes are embodied in the Joint Forum Fisheries Agency/Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) report *The Future of Pacific Island Fisheries*; the International Union of Conservation of Nature’s call for action; the strategic plan of SPC’s Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division (FAME); the outcomes from the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States; the Melanesian Spearhead Group’s Roadmap for inshore fisheries management and sustainable development 2014–2023; the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat’s Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape; and the 2014 Palau Declaration: *The Ocean: Life and Future*. These documents collectively call on PICTs to implement integrated coastal resource management arrangements, drawing on the strengths and traditions of community, district, provincial and national levels of government to achieve sustainable island life.

### 2016 Leaders decision on coastal fisheries

5. Despite the recognised importance of coastal fisheries, unlike tuna fisheries, the number of well-managed coastal fisheries in the Pacific islands is surprisingly small. In noting that coastal fisheries management continues to receive inadequate attention at the national level, the PIF Leaders:
  - a. agreed to expand the broad heading of “fisheries” to include coastal fisheries, noting links to communities, food security, health issues and in particular non-communicable diseases;
  - b. noted the need to ensure eco-system integrity to address issues such as ciguatera outbreaks and to sustainably manage beche-de-mer; and
  - c. tasked the SPC to coordinate with National Fisheries Agencies, CROP agencies and regional and national community groups, to strengthen support and resourcing for coastal fisheries management.

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<sup>1</sup> Bell JD, Johnson JE and Hobday AJ (2011) *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change*. Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Noumea, New Caledonia

## MSWG discussion outcomes

6. In discussing a way forward to implement the PIF Leaders decision on strengthening coastal fisheries management and including community input, the MSWG agreed:
  - a. to establish a regional coastal fisheries working group whose role will be to promote proactive engagement, and encourage coordination, cooperation and effective use of regional and other support services that supports coastal fisheries management at the national, sub-national and community levels;
  - b. for a technical task force to be set up immediately, whose roles will be to:
    - i. develop a draft Terms of Reference for the regional coastal fisheries working group;
    - ii. develop governing mechanisms for the regional coastal fisheries working group;
    - iii. develop criteria for membership of the regional coastal fisheries working group;
    - iv. identify membership of the regional coastal fisheries working group; and
    - v. report back to the next meeting of the MSWG
  - c. that the MSWG technical task force shall comprise: SPC, LMMA, and ANCORS/WorldFish.

## Recommendation

7. The Heads of Fisheries are invited to approve the outcome of the MSWG on a proposed way forward to implement the PIF Leaders decision on strengthening coastal fisheries management and including community input.