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Title:	Report to HoF12 from the 3 rd SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries
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Summary/short description/key points:

The Third SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries (RTMCF3) took place at SPC Headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, on 5-8 November 2019.

The purpose of RTMCF3 was to discuss and address some of the main technical issues affecting coastal fisheries and aquaculture in support of better science-based resource management and equitable access to resources.

The RTMCF3 was the first phase of the new, but still evolving, strategic direction setting framework, information flow and decision-making process for Pacific coastal fisheries and aquaculture, from the RTMCF to the HoF to the Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting.

The RTMCF3 participants were asked to identify, discuss and agree on clear priority coastal fisheries and aquaculture technical issues and opportunities that the RTMCF3 could submit to HoF12 for consideration and action.

Recommendations:

Members are invited to:

1. Note the outcomes and agreed actions from the RTMCF3 (provided as [Background Paper #4](#)).
2. Consider and make a determination on the specific requests from the RTMCF3 to the HoF12 (bold items in Table 1).

Report to HoF12 from the 3rd SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries

Background

3. The Third SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries (RTMCF3) took place at SPC Headquarters in Noumea on 5-8 November 2019, and chaired by Mrs Tooreka Teemari, Director, Fisheries Division, Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development, Kiribati. The meeting was officially opened by Cameron Diver, Deputy Director General, SPC.
4. The purpose of RTMCF3 was to discuss and address some of the main technical issues affecting coastal fisheries and aquaculture in support of better science-based resource management and equitable access to resources. It links back to the direction set out in *A New Song for Coastal Fisheries – Pathways to Change: The Noumea Strategy* and the *Future of Fisheries: Regional Roadmap for Sustainable Pacific Fisheries*.
5. The RTMCF3 was the first phase of the new, but still evolving, strategic direction setting framework, information flow and decision-making process for Pacific coastal fisheries and aquaculture, from the RTMCF to the HoF to the Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting. This was introduced by the 11th Heads of Fisheries Meeting (March 2019), endorsed by the Special Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting (June 2019) and the 49th Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (June 2019).
6. The RTMCF3 participants were asked to identify, discuss and agree on clear priority coastal fisheries and aquaculture technical issues and opportunities that the RTMCF3 could submit to the 12th SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting (HoF12) for consideration and action.
7. SPC acknowledges the financial support of the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) for RTMCF3, and the linked Workshop on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Monitoring, Control, Surveillance and Enforcement was supported by the Australian and New Zealand Governments.

Actions Identified by the RTMCF3 for HoF12 Consideration

8. The "Outcomes and Agreed Action Plan from the 3rd SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries" is provided as [Background Paper #4](#), and should be read as background to this Working Paper.
9. The Action items in the RTMCF3 "Outcomes and Agreed Action Plan" for consideration by HoF12 are provided in Table 1 below. Next to each action is the requested HoF action for consideration. These fall into two categories:
 - a. Actions the RTMCF3 request the HoF to "note"; and
 - b. Actions the RTMCF3 request the HoF to consider and make a determination on.

10. The Members are invited to:

- a. Note the outcomes and agreed actions from the RTMCF3 (provided as [Background Paper #4](#)); and
- b. Consider and make a determination on the specific requests from the RTMCF3 to the HoF12 that are indicated in **bold** in Table 1. In summary, these include:

Updates on RTMCF1 and RTMCF2 Action Plans:

- **Action 3 a.** : *HoF is requested to endorse SPC to establish a regional process to develop minimum requirements, standards and protocols for data collection for coastal fisheries*

Science – New technologies, e-data processes and systems:

- **Action 9 a., b. and c.** : *HoF is requested note the concerns expressed by the RTMCF and to discuss and agree to national-level action to address*
- **Action 13 a.** : *To discuss and endorse*

Aquaculture – Implementation of the regional action plan on aquatic biosecurity:

- **Action 14 a.** : *HoF to endorse the “[Regional framework on aquatic biosecurity](#)” (BP3) and the associated “[Policy Brief #34: The importance of aquatic biosecurity for the Pacific Islands region](#)”*
- **Action 16** : *To note and endorse*

Community-based fisheries – Scaling-up community-based fisheries management:

- **Action 18 a.** : *To note and endorse*
- **Action 19 a.** : *To note and endorse*
- **Action 20 a.** : *To note and endorse*
- **Action 21** : *To note and endorse*
- **Action 23 a.** : *To note and endorse*

Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture MCS&E Workshop

Fisheries data and information collection and exchange:

- **Workshop Action 1 a., b. and c.** : *To note and endorse*

Professionalisation of the coastal fisheries sector:

- **Workshop Action 2 a., b. and c.** : *To note, endorse and support nationally, where feasible*

Awareness raising and education:

- **Workshop Action 3** : *To note and endorse*

Simplified enforcement of coastal fisheries and aquaculture regulations:

- **Workshop Action 4 a., b., c., d., e. and f.** : *To note, endorse and support nationally, where feasible*

Table 1: Actions items from the RTMCF3 outcomes and Agreed Action Plan

Actions Items	HoF Action ¹
<i>Coastal fisheries report card and indicators</i>	
Action 1: SPC and members agreed to confirm Coastal Fisheries Report Card focal points to ensure all Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) are covered	To note and confirm.
<p>Action 2: SPC will circulate a draft national Coastal Fisheries Report Card template to members for their feedback via the Coastal Fisheries Report Card focal points and RTMCF3 member representatives</p> <p>a. SPC will present a finalised national Coastal Fisheries Report Card template to HoF12 in March 2020 for their input and endorsement</p>	To note: Due to the change to a virtual HoF12, the draft national Coastal Fisheries Report Card template will be circulated separately for input and endorsement.
<i>Updates on RTMCF1 and RTMCF2 Action Plans</i>	
Action 3: Members request SPC to establish a regional process to develop minimum requirements, standards and protocols for data collection	

¹ Bold items require HoF consideration.

Actions Items	HoF Action ¹
<p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to identify the establishment of this regional process to develop minimum requirements, standards and protocols for data collection as a priority and ensure that adequate funding is made available for its establishment and implementation</p>	<p>HoF is requested to endorse SPC to establish a regional process to develop minimum requirements, standards and protocols for data collection for coastal fisheries</p>
<p>Action 4: Participants welcomed the possibility of organising technical exchanges between OCTs and other PICTs under PROTEGE and PEUMP. SPC PROTEGE and FAME to examine opportunities to initiate exchanges</p>	<p>To note. FAME and PROTEGE have initiated exchange options, but postponed due to COVID-19.</p>
<p>Action 5: SPC and members agreed to identify effective ways to include additional subnational legislation and management plans in the REEFLEX database, in collaboration with national legal officers</p>	<p>To note.</p>
<p>Action 6: RTMCF recommends that members, where possible, share successful initiatives through presentations at the next RTMCF for the benefit of all other members and that SPC continue to provide similar opportunities during future RTMCFs</p>	<p>To note.</p>
<p><i>Science – New technologies, e-data processes and systems</i></p>	
<p>Action 7: Building on previous RTMCF Action Plans, SPC was requested to continue working with countries and territories to establish e-data collection systems that can accommodate the various fisheries data types and surveys, including use of e-data systems to improve efficiency and robustness of data collection and dissemination and migrating existing coastal fisheries data into the new e-data systems</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to continue to support the development by SPC of standardised, centralised databases, tools and approaches for fisheries data as a priority, recognising the need for increased support to SPC to undertake this work in a timely manner</p>	<p>To note: FAME has continued and expanded this activity within the limits of current funding and capacity.</p>

Actions Items	HoF Action ¹
<p>b. RTMCF requests HoF to strongly endorse and designate as a priority, a regional approach to standardised minimum data requirements (e.g. size, weight and reproductive data), developed in response to actions set out in previous RTMCF Action Plans, which support coastal fisheries management so that monitoring programs can be sustainable and comparable</p>	<p>To note: Linked to Action 3a. above.</p>
<p>Action 8: Members request SPC to develop training programmes on the uses of new e-data tools and provide clear training in their use and application. A clear communication strategy on data simplification and its long-term implications for fisheries management is needed</p>	<p>To note: FAME has continued and expanded this activity within the limits of current funding and capacity.</p>
<p>Action 9: Members identified the need for countries to address chronic understaffing of science and fisheries staff to conduct fishery and socio-economic surveys</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to discuss and agree on a plan to address the capacity limitations, which is limiting effective coastal fisheries data collection, analysis and use in management</p> <p>b. RTMCF requests HoF to discuss the need for clear and delineated roles for fisheries staff (e.g. the need to separate compliance from science roles)</p> <p>c. RTMCF recognises the problems related to short-term funding arrangements and requests HoF to consider ways to build longevity in funding programmes, through government and donors, for coastal fisheries science and management</p>	<p>HoF is requested note the concerns expressed by the RTMCF and to discuss and agree to national-level action to address Action 9 a., b. and c. below.</p>
<p>Action 10: SPC agreed to work with countries to develop an awareness raising campaign that informs local communities of the context and importance for fisheries monitoring tools (e.g. awareness before surveys)</p>	<p>To note.</p>

Actions Items	HoF Action ¹
<p>Action 11: SPC agreed to work with countries to increase community involvement in collecting data; Members request SPC to use existing e-data apps for community based reporting and develop associated training for communities to implement community monitoring</p>	<p>To note.</p>
<p>Action 12: Members request SPC to develop a policy brief outlining the importance of fisheries data and the contribution of coastal fisheries to GDP, health and well-being for local communities</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to review, endorse and submit a policy brief outlining the importance of fisheries data and the contribution of coastal fisheries to GDP, health and well-being for local communities, to Ministers for their consideration</p>	<p>To note: Initiated by FAME.</p>
<p>Action 13: SPC and members note the need for management strategies to require data input to fisheries management (e.g., make mandatory the reporting of exports of coastal resources from licenced exporters and/or suppliers) and build this into existing e-data tools</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to ensure that data collection is made mandatory for commercial operators under national legislation and management plans</p>	<p>To discuss and endorse.</p>
<p><i>Aquaculture – Implementation of the regional action plan on aquatic biosecurity</i></p>	
<p>Action 14: Members endorse the draft Regional Action Plan on Aquatic Biosecurity</p> <p>a. RTMCF recommends that HoF endorse the draft Regional Action Plan on Aquatic Biosecurity</p>	<p>HoF to endorse the “Regional framework on aquatic biosecurity” (BP3) and the associated “Policy Brief #34: The importance of aquatic biosecurity for the Pacific Islands region”</p>

Actions Items	HoF Action ¹
<p>Action 15: Members request SPC to provide technical assistance, resources and capacity-building in aquatic biosecurity planning, implementation and development of protocol</p>	<p>To note: FAME has continued this activity within the limits of current funding and capacity.</p>
<p>Action 16: RTMCF encourages PICT governments and administrations to share national Aquatic Biosecurity strategies, legislation, policies and plans, and provide resources in order to capture the benefits of effective biosecurity at the national level</p>	<p>To note and endorse.</p>
<p>Action 17: RTMCF requests that technical assistance and capacity building in aquatic biosecurity in the Pacific region shall include actions in support of improved food safety, such as in ciguatera outbreaks, seafood poisoning, and zoonoses from seafood-borne pathogens</p>	<p>To note: FAME has continued this activity within the limits of current funding and capacity.</p>
<p><i>Community-based fisheries – Scaling-up community-based fisheries management</i></p>	
<p>Action 18: Members agree on the need to address existing gaps in legislation in order to support CBFM and enforcement of community management plans</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to recognise the importance of CBFM and to encourage the adoption of adequate legislation and policies to up-scale CBFM in each country or territory, with the participation of provincial and local governments</p>	<p>To note and endorse.</p>
<p>Action 19: Members call for SPC to support further south-south exchange programmes on community-based management, assist with the development of appropriate awareness materials/media including a training toolbox, and facilitate various stakeholders to develop appropriate monitoring and evaluation processes</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to endorse the development of national programmes to address the need for alternative livelihoods for communities when implementing management strategies that leads to restriction of their catches</p>	<p>To note and endorse.</p>

Actions Items	HoF Action ¹
<p>Action 20: RTMCF requests members to clearly identify roles of different stakeholders involved in the establishment of CBFM programmes and ensure allocation of funding to support those programmes</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to support the clear identification of roles of different stakeholders involved in the establishment of CBFM programmes and ensure allocation of funding to support those programmes</p>	<p>To note and endorse.</p>
<p>Action 21: Members call for donor partners to ensure funding flexibility in the implementation of CBFM programmes in order to allow programmes to adapt to stakeholder needs</p>	<p>To note and endorse.</p>
<p>Action 22: RTMCF requests members, SPC and partners to prioritise a collaborative, coordinated, gender-sensitive and holistic multi-stakeholder approach to CBFM</p>	<p>To note.</p>
<p>Action 23: RTMCF requests members and partners to prioritise the implementation of CBFM, addressing the need for increased resources for existing CBFM programmes, as well as new CBFM programmes</p> <p>a. RTMCF requests HoF to support members and partners to prioritise the implementation of CBFM, addressing the need for increased resources for existing CBFM programmes, as well as new CBFM programmes</p>	<p>To note and endorse.</p>
<p>Action 24: Members request SPC to undertake a review of CBFM experiences in the Pacific region and identify lessons learnt</p>	<p>To note: FAME is actioning this activity within the limits of current funding and capacity, but has had to postpone a lessons learnt workshop due to COVID-19 travel restrictions.</p>

Priority, new and emerging coastal fisheries and aquaculture issues and opportunities

Action 25: The meeting requests SPC to provide an update report to HoF on sea cucumber fisheries management and monitoring

To note: Due to the change to a virtual HoF12, this update will be circulated separately at a later date.

Workshop: Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture MCS&E

Fisheries data and information collection and exchange

Workshop Action 1: The workshop calls for HoF to:

- a. Consider the establishment of fisheries bodies or services including recognition of community contribution in collecting coastal fisheries and aquaculture information
- b. Develop tools to share information and enhance collaboration among government agencies and NGOs within each country or territory
- c. Promote exchanges between countries/territories to share best practices

To note and endorse.

To note and endorse.

To note, endorse and support nationally.

Professionalisation of the coastal fisheries sector

Workshop Action 2: The workshop requests HoF to take steps to increase the professional profile of both fishers and authorised officers in each country or territory by:

- a. Creating a statute for small-scale fishers that would ensure social security, sea safety and access to incentives (e.g. tax exemption or other benefits)
- b. Enhancing the visibility of authorised officers through the use of identification badges and distinctive uniforms
- c. Where possible, enhance the visibility of community wardens as well

To note, endorse and support nationally, where feasible.

To note, endorse and support nationally, where feasible.

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Awareness raising and education

Workshop Action 3: The workshop recommends that HoF promote the use of media and other awareness tools to explain regulations and publicise violations, and include coastal fisheries law and compliance in education curricula

To note and endorse.

Simplified enforcement of coastal fisheries and aquaculture regulations

Workshop Action 4: The workshop requests HoF to raise the profile of coastal fisheries and aquaculture MCS&E in each country or territory through any or all of the following, as applicable:

- a. Training of authorised officers on regulations and case file building for prosecution
- b. Use of a step-by-step incident-interview book to facilitate case building
- c. Development of a tailored app and database for preparation of case files
- d. Adoption of an enforcement policy for coastal fisheries and aquaculture violations
- e. Establishment of administrative (or civil) penalties to deal with minor offences, including a demerit point system
- f. Review of fisheries by-laws and regulations applicable in each country or territory

To note, endorse and support nationally, where feasible.

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