

SECRETARIAT OF THE  
PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC)



Annual Report 2011

PART 1 - ANNUAL OVERVIEW





# **SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC)**

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2011 – PART 1 - ANNUAL OVERVIEW**



Secretariat of the Pacific Community  
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## Director-General's review - 2011

Our ability to meet our members' needs for assistance has been strengthened by the changes that have taken place in SPC over the past six years



Dr Jimmie Rodgers, Director-General

Photo: Jipé Le-Bars

I am pleased to present Part 1 of SPC's annual report for 2011, which provides an overview of our work during the year. Part 2 of the annual report, published mid-year, will present the annual accounts for financial year 2011.

The major event of the year was the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Pacific Community in November, which was attended by government leaders, deputy leaders, ministers and ambassadors from our member countries and territories. It was officially opened by the President of the Government of New Caledonia. This high level of political representation is important for SPC because the decisions of leaders impact significantly on our core business.

In addition, as the organisation emerges from a period of substantial change, there are new opportunities for governments to engage with us in applying SPC's scientific and technical expertise to their national development priorities.

The theme of the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference was 'Climate change and food security – managing risks for sustainable development'. It brought together regional policy makers and a panel of experts with Pacific experience to exchange scientific information and national viewpoints on climate change. In the discussion that followed the panel's presentations, members shared country approaches and mechanisms, showing that they are moving ahead in this area – including promoting international action – and they were clear in expressing their national needs and expectations for SPC's technical support across the sectors we work in.

Our ability to meet our members' needs for assistance has been strengthened by the changes that have taken place in SPC over the past six years with the reform of the regional institutional framework, the development of joint strategies targeting members' national priorities and the fostering of regional and international partnerships.

The integration of SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) with SPC in January 2011 marked the final stage of the

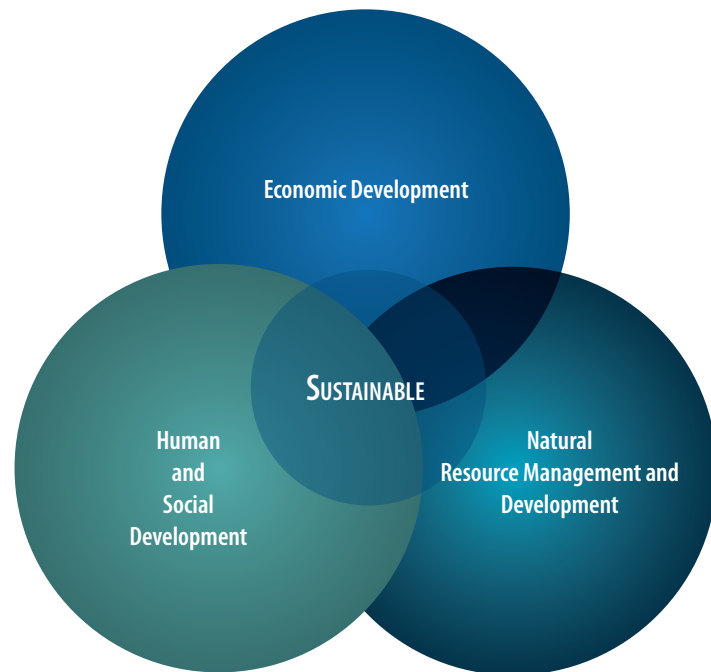
regional institutional reform process. It followed the integration of SPBEA (Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment) with SPC in 2010. The legal requirements for the final closure of SOPAC the Commission and SPBEA will be completed by February 2012, ending their legal status as separate organisations.

Such extensive change cannot be implemented without disruption and difficulties, but we are pleased to say that there has been 'no diminution of services' following the mergers. We knew that meeting this commitment during the last two years would be a challenge, but this was one of our goals and it was achieved largely due to the capable leadership of division, programme and section heads, coupled with the professionalism of all staff and their commitment to continuing to deliver high-quality services.

We are already seeing synergies resulting from the integration of the three previously separate organisations. The goal now is to take advantage of these synergies for the benefit of members, and to work on achieving the efficiencies that Pacific leaders anticipated when they decided to embark on the reform process.

## Independent review

The institutional reform has expanded the role and scope of SPC's work. Now the task of consolidating the 'new SPC' presents a tremendous opportunity to redefine our core business and affirm our role as



## Synergies

Some early synergies are already apparent from the integration of SPC and SOPAC. They include:

- Closer collaboration between SPC's fisheries, transport and maritime boundaries programmes and the FFA (Forum Fisheries Agency) in assisting members on maritime boundary matters.
- Under its Seabed Minerals Project, the new Applied Geoscience and Technology (SOPAC) Division is working with the Land Resources Division, Human Development Programme and UNDP Pacific Centre on joint activities in the mineral resources sector.
- Signing of an MOU between SPC and the International Hydrographic Organisation in April 2011 to facilitate their engagement in the region in hydrographic survey work led by the SOPAC Division, and the Economic Development Division's work on safety at sea.
- Deployment of a Disaster Reduction Programme Officer based in the North Pacific Regional Office of SPC from March 2011.
- Increasing involvement of SPC's North Pacific Regional Office in the coordination and facilitation of water and sanitation activities for Palau, FSM and Marshall Islands, especially in supporting national water summits.
- Further GIS and RS (geographical information system and remote sensing) joint activities for members, including joint funding of a staff position in the SOPAC Division to work on vegetation mapping with the Land Resources Division and GIZ (German Society for International Development) Project.
- Installation of early warning systems to support disaster preparedness and communications through partnership between the Disaster Reduction Programme and the Pacific Rural Internet Connectivity System (PacRICS); the Economic Development Division facilitated the supply of equipment and the SOPAC Division met the cost of the equipment and initial bandwidth.
- Collaboration across the organisation in preparing the new SPC-wide Internal Climate Change Engagement Strategy.

the region's principal technical organisation.

As the first step, we invited an expert reference group to carry out an analysis of our core services in late 2011 and to propose a list of the services that SPC should focus on in the long term. The recommendations of these sector specialists will feed into the independent external review of SPC beginning in February 2012.

The terms of reference for the review were agreed on by the 7th Conference. A seven-member team, led by James W. Adams, until recently World Bank Vice President for East Asia and the Pacific, will examine SPC's focus, governance, management, mode of delivery, financing and performance monitoring. Based on the assessment, the team will then make recommendations on our core business; governance, decision-making and membership; organisational structure; strategic planning; priority setting; business practices; financial management; resources; and performance monitoring and assessment.

Other team members are Dr Norman Barth (USA), Alan Morris (Australia), Bruno Peaucellier (French Polynesia), Noumea Simi (Samoa), Dr Collin Tukuitonga (Niue) and Peter Winder (New Zealand).

This is a strong team and the review is seen as a key milestone for SPC. Its outcome will be a clear and agreed definition of SPC's long-term core business, which will be the basis for a new Corporate Plan for the period 2013–2017. This will be supported by optimised governance arrangements and structures to ensure the most effective service delivery to members. Aligned with the new Corporate Plan will be a long-term sustainable

financing strategy, which will provide greater certainty of funding to support SPC's work into the future. The final component of this new approach for SPC will be an organisation-wide monitoring and evaluation framework that will enable consistent measuring of the results, outputs and impacts of SPC's work and its effectiveness at national level.

### Key development outcomes

SPC has already defined the three key development outcomes that drive its efforts:

- sustainable economic development
- sustainable human and social development
- sustainable natural resource management and development.

As part of redefining SPC's core business, all SPC programmes and key strategic documents will be aligned to deliver on these outcomes. We also plan to link future budgets directly to the key development outcomes, as well as to the joint country strategies that we develop with each island member. This will be facilitated by the new monitoring and evaluation framework, which will enable tracking and linking of the budget to results and sources of funding.

### Joint country strategies completed for 22 members

This year saw the completion of the JCSs for New Caledonia and Papua New Guinea. All 22 island members now have JCSs that constitute SPC's work programme in each country or territory. The first of the strategies put in place are now being reviewed and second-generation versions will soon be produced, with the process evolving based on lessons learned from the first round.

### Decentralised offices

SPC's offices in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), and Honiara, Solomon Islands, continue to operate well in their role of moving SPC's services 'closer to people'. The Government of FSM has been extremely helpful in providing office accommodation to SPC, with three floors of an office block plus an adjacent building now occupied by the North Pacific office. The office is providing essential support for the delivery of services and management of projects in this subregion, including the EU-funded North Pacific ACP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Project (North-REP).

The country office in Honiara continues to support SPC activities in a range of sectors at national level. A major challenge faced by the decentralised offices is the length of time taken to receive decisions on matters that impact on their own decision-making process and implementation of activities. In 2012 we will look at ways to enhance the capacity of decentralised offices for decision-making, where appropriate, at the local level.

### Fostering partnerships

In 2011 SPC strengthened its relationships with several new and existing partners. Such alliances are at the heart of our efforts in strategic engagement at national, regional and international levels, which is one of our corporate objectives.

SPC engaged constructively at various regional forums, including meetings of CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) Heads and CROP working groups on human resources and remuneration, the marine sector,



human resources and sustainable development.

CROP Heads, which brings together the CEOs of the nine CROP agencies, can be considered the region's highest-level technical advisory body. Important initiatives of CROP Heads in 2011 included the setting up of a CROP executive subcommittee on climate change co-chaired by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) Secretary General and the Director of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), which is the region's lead agency on climate change. The subcommittee will work to ensure CROP agencies take a coordinated approach to supporting the region on climate change and the appointment of the PIFS Secretary General as the Pacific region's Oceans Commissioner.

SPC also signed a number of memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to enhance cooperation and collaboration with other agencies and minimise potential for duplication of activities. MOUs were signed with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), Australian Volunteers International (AVI), International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO), Pacific Aviation Security Office (PASO), Pacific Power Association (PPA), SPREP, South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO) and the University of the South Pacific (USP).

At the international level, we have continued to strengthen important partnerships with the European Union (EU) and the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria, which were the second and third largest funders of SPC respectively after Australia in 2011 and will remain so in 2012.

## Division highlights

SPC's work is carried out under our six technical divisions – Applied Geoscience and Technology (SOPAC); Economic Development; Education, Training and Human Development; Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems; Land Resources; and Public Health – and the Statistics for Development Programme and Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility. Supporting the work of these divisions and of the SPC executive is the Directorate of Operations and Management, which includes Corporate Services and Programme Support Services.

### Applied Geoscience and Technology (SOPAC) Division

This new division of SPC was established with the transfer of the functions and services of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience

Commission to SPC and SPREP. While certain services and functions of SOPAC were transferred in 2010, the majority of staff and the core work programmes began operating as the Applied Geoscience and Technology (SOPAC) Division of SPC from January 2011.

The division came into SPC with a new five-year strategic plan for the period 2011–2015. Its work is organised primarily under three major programmes: Ocean and Islands, Water and Sanitation and Disaster Reduction. Six cross-cutting services support the work programmes within the division: Natural Resource Economics, GIS (geographic information systems) and Remote Sensing, Technical Equipment and Services (managed under the Ocean and Islands Programme), Data Management, Publications and Library, and Finance and Administration. This work is described in more detail in the divisional overviews.



Photo: SOPAC



### Economic Development Division

The Economic Development Division (EDD) has three programmes that focus on key drivers of economic growth – energy, information and communication technologies (ICT) and transport. In 2011 considerable time was devoted to completing the strategic plan (2012–2017) of this relatively new division and related documents that will guide its work in future.

In April, EDD facilitated a regional meeting that brought together for the first time Pacific ministers for the energy, ICT and transport sectors. The meeting endorsed new Frameworks for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific, and on Transport Services (the Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific had already been endorsed in 2010).

Highlights of the year for the Energy Programme included reviews of petroleum and liquid petroleum gas pricing templates in Tonga and Solomon Islands resulting in huge savings for both countries. The programme also provided monthly verification of fuel prices for Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, Niue,

Palau, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. The North-REP project began in FSM, Marshall Islands and Palau.

The Pacific ICT Outreach Programme provided practical help with internet connectivity to the governments of Tonga, Samoa and Solomon Islands, as well as helping Solomon Islands and Kiribati with their national ICT policies. The programme strengthened relations with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) at a special SPC–ITU meeting, and also convened the inaugural Pacific Internet Governance Forum (PIGF).

The Transport Programme focuses on sea and air transport. Improving maritime safety was high on the agenda in 2011, and work included development of a regional port pilot training standard, updating and publishing the Pacific Port Workers Training Standards, a search and rescue workshop, and preparations to assist members meet the requirements of the 2010 Manila Amendments to the International Convention on Standards for Training, Certification and Watch-keeping for Seafarers (STCW).

### Education, Training and Human Development Division

This new division, which brings together SPC's work in education, training and social development, includes the newly integrated SPBEA, Community Education and Training Centre (CETC), Human Development Programme (HDP), Regional Media Centre (RMC) and Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT).

SPBEA continued its vital work supporting the education systems of the region and member countries.

Highlights included developing and trialling a School Management Information System–Education Management Information System, and reviewing all manuals and documents to ensure continuing high quality of the two secondary school qualifications that it administers. A database that will hold the Pacific Register of Qualifications and Standards (PRQS) is close to completion.

CETC training highlights in 2011 included courses in food processing, food safety standards and virgin coconut oil production in Fiji, Wallis and Futuna and Solomon Islands, training of trainers for the Vanuatu Rural Development and Training Centres Association, training of trainers in the Marshall Islands, training in small business development in Tonga, and business skills in Solomon Islands. CETC also worked on developing its distance learning programme, which will greatly increase the availability of its training.

A highlight for HDP was the 4th Pacific Women's Ministerial Meeting in July, which produced a set of recommendations to promote gender equality at national and regional levels. HDP also produced the 2011 State of Pacific Youth Report in partnership with UNICEF.

RMC continued to successfully produce the Pacific Way television and radio series, and the Forum Report radio series. Media training during the year included radio broadcasting and video production.

RRRT reached more than 200 people with its training activities in 2011. Focusing on human rights, particularly in relation to violence against women, the team also provided support to several Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) during the

reporting and review process for the Universal Periodic Review conducted through the UN Human Rights Council.

## Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division

The Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division has programmes on oceanic and coastal fisheries. The Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) is the regional centre for tuna fisheries research, fishery monitoring, stock assessment and data management. The Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) works to develop sustainable nearshore fisheries through supporting member governments to develop effective and appropriate policy and providing technical advice on, for example, resource management.

In late February FAME hosted a successful Seventh Heads of Fisheries Meeting at SPC headquarters in Noumea. The biennial meeting provides technical oversight of all SPC work in fisheries and aquaculture as well as opportunities to discuss areas of special interest. Projections for the effects of climate change on fisheries were on the agenda of this year's meeting.

In 2011, the Marine Stewardship Council designated a large part of the fishery for skipjack tuna in the waters of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) as a 'sustainable fishery'. This is the first major tuna fishery in the world to receive this seal of approval, thanks largely to the high quality data and stock assessments provided by OFP.

Aquaculture, including mariculture (marine aquaculture), holds great potential for the Pacific Islands but there are also many limitations for developing viable enterprises. In



2011 a major study was carried out on the opportunities and constraints to development of mariculture in the Pacific Islands and the results were presented at a regional meeting jointly organised with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This should provide new directions for this sector, which has been slow to take off.

The Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP) project hosted by SPC ended in December 2011. Much of the final year was devoted to drawing out the main results of this important project. A DVD providing access to over 800 outputs of the project is now available.

## Land Resources Division

The Land Resources Division provides regional expertise in genetic resources, forestry, agriculture, plant health, animal health, biosecurity and trade. Its three objectives are: improved food and nutritional security; integrated and sustainable agriculture and forest resource management; and improved biosecurity and trade in agricultural and forestry products. In 2011, the regional genebank CePaCT (Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees) distributed over 10,000

plants (1140 accessions) of the staple crops banana, taro, potato, cassava, cowpeas, yam, swamp taro and sweet potato to 16 countries, while 273 new accessions were added to the collection. A new tree seed centre began to take shape. It will facilitate exchange of seeds of key tree species among Pacific Islands, as well as carrying out research and training on tree seed collection, storage and propagation.

Climate change featured strongly in LRD's work in 2011. A new project began called Climate Protection through Forest Conservation in the Pacific Island Countries, while a workshop in August gathered baseline data to begin assessing the impacts of climate change on livestock populations in the region.

Three agricultural market-focused projects continued their highly successful activities in building and supporting market chains.

## Public Health Division

PHD's new structure contributed to a largely successful year for the division. The three new operational units are the Disease Surveillance, Research and Control Unit, Health Advancement Unit and Grant Management Unit. The division's four strategic objectives are to reduce the impact and burden of disease, strengthen national health systems, increase the capacity of PICTs to address non-health-sector determinants of health, and increase the efficiency and impact of interventions.

Non-communicable diseases (NCDs) are one of the region's biggest health problems, as recognised by the Forum Leaders' declaration of an 'NCD crisis', which was strongly supported by SPC. In 2011, PHD worked with French Polynesia, Guam, Tuvalu and Papua New Guinea to finalise their national



NCD plans, and helped a further 12 countries develop monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems for their NCD plans.

PHD also looked at climate change issues as they relate to health, including hosting a workshop to investigate possible impacts on health in future to inform health strategies.

Preparedness is key to reducing the impact of disease outbreaks and by the end of 2011, PHD had assisted 15 countries and territories to prepare national pandemic preparedness plans. A further five have draft plans ready.

The division's Grant Management Unit put a great deal of effort into improving the way grants are managed and reported on in 2011. SPC is seeking to discontinue its role as Principal Recipient (PR) of Global Fund grants because of the increasing burden of liability placed on PRs, which is especially worrying in a multi-country grant environment. However, when the question was discussed by CRGA 41, members requested the secretariat to continue in the role for the present.

### Statistics for Development Programme (SDP)

SDP continued its strong support in 2011 for building PICT statistical capacity with the goal of strengthening national statistical systems to ensure policymakers and analysts and other international stakeholders have the data they need to make evidence-based decisions and also to enable PICTs to respond to the many requests they receive for information. A notable breakthrough for SDP was the initiative by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) to publish two data series for its official Millennium Development Goal



Photo: David Becker

indicators: one showing UNSD figures and the other showing Pacific Island statistics and indicators, including those supplied by regional agencies such as SPC on behalf of countries. Unlike other UN agencies, UNSD has not previously made use of data and development indicators from SDP.

### Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility (SEPPF)

SEPPF's role in developing corporate systems, mobilising resources and mainstreaming and coordinating cross-cutting issues such as climate change is becoming increasingly important with the growth of SPC. In addition to its focus on developing and reviewing the joint country strategies, in 2011 SEPPF has been working on the development of a corporate-wide monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework. The online system will aid work planning, budgeting and reporting, and support the tracking of activities and initiatives to facilitate reporting to members and development partners.

### Operations and Management

The Operations and Management Directorate, which includes Corporate Services and Programme Support Services, has been fully involved in supporting a revision of our work programme and budget presentation and associated organisational changes.

To pave the way, in 2011 we invested in an update of organisational policies and procedures to improve the efficiency and transparency of our operations and interventions. We have developed and are implementing new policies on procurement and supply, risk management, anti-fraud, and performance development and management.

We have synchronised our ICT, finance and human resources (HR) systems in all our locations, and we are updating our HR systems and implementing a new organisation-wide electronic document and records management system. We are also coordinating the implementation of a CROP HR information system, which will standardise systems and processes in the participating agencies.



## SPC staff profile

As of 15 October 2011, out of a total of 547 people employed by SPC in all of its locations, 69% (379) were Pacific Islanders. Forty-seven per cent (254) of all staff were recruited internationally, of which 54% (136) were Pacific Islanders and 36% (92) were women. Of the staff recruited locally, 60% (177) were women. The overall gender ratio for all staff was 49% (269) women and 51% (278) men. As these figures show, more than half of SPC's internationally recruited staff members are Pacific Islanders. It is important to note that the number of women in the internationally recruited category has risen from previous years, and we are working hard on increasing the percentage further, noting the principle of appointments based on merit.

## SPC in 2012

Pending the recommendations of the external review team on SPC's organisational structure, SPC is planning to establish a third DDG position if and when resources become available. This third position will reduce the large number of direct reports the Director-General currently has.

A feature of the proposed new structure is increased delegation to DDGs and to division directors, which will help avoid decision-making bottlenecks.

## Conclusions

We are well on the way to a better SPC – an efficient organisation that has a clear focus on its members' priorities and makes optimal contributions to their national development. In the coming months we will dedicate further time and energy to reviewing and refining our core business, and redeveloping our strategic documents to align our work programmes and budgets with our key development outcomes.

We thank all our members for their patience during the reform process, and now during the reshaping of the new SPC. We also thank you for your confidence in our work, and your recognition of its continuing – and indeed growing – importance to your countries and territories. SPC has a vital role to play in the region and we are committed to filling this role to the very best of our abilities, guided by our principles of integrated and sustainable development of the Pacific's social, economic and natural resources.



**Dr Jimmie Rodgers**  
Director-General

## Financial management

We were pleased to receive a clean audit report for SPC's 2010 accounts for the 15th year in succession. However, our auditors have reiterated that outstanding membership arrears are cause for concern. CRGA 41 acknowledged the difficulties faced by some members but recommended continuing the policy of not writing off arrears, instead asking that a feasible payment plan be developed between the secretariat and government concerned.

### Internal audit function

The 7<sup>th</sup> Conference approved the establishment of an internal audit function and a CRGA Audit Committee to strengthen the governance framework of SPC. Both will provide independent advice to CRGA and will also support the transparency of our operations, which – as the USA representative commented at CRGA 41 – 'is the main factor underlying the confidence that the USA and other members have in SPC'. Australia will chair the Audit Committee for the first two years.

### Funding challenges

A severe challenge in 2011 was an unexpected reduction in New Zealand's programme funding in May following concerns expressed by New Zealand, in particular about the impact of SPC's regional programmes at the national level. The cut was

mitigated by favourable exchange rates for both the New Zealand and Australian dollars. Nevertheless, a decrease of approximately 1.7 million CFP units in expenditure from financial year 2011 was required. This was achieved by some decreases in operational funding for technical assistance and training, and freezing of 19 positions, resulting in gaps in SPC's capacity to deliver services across the range of its core business areas. In addition, SPC decided not to implement the CROP-recommended salary increases for international staff in 2012.

Although this was clearly a disappointing event, we are committed to improving our focus on national priorities as described above, and to improving the quality of our reporting to fully demonstrate the value added by SPC's programmes at national level. We also realise the need to show how SPC can stretch the value of our development partner dollars through working with members to implement well-targeted, well-managed projects.

While we continue to receive strong support from our other funders, we are taking this opportunity to seek efficiency gains that can be built into our 2012 work programme and budget and beyond, including through the independent review.

# 7<sup>th</sup> Conference and CRGA 41

The theme of the Conference was *Climate change and food security – managing risks for sustainable development*.

The 7<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Pacific Community and 41<sup>st</sup> Meeting of the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) took place at SPC headquarters in Noumea from 1 to 8 November. The Conference of the Pacific Community – SPC's governing body – is held every two years and is immediately preceded by the meeting of CRGA, which makes recommendations to the Conference.

The Conference was originally planned to be held in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, but unfortunately the costs involved required the change in venue. Marshall Islands continued to act as host and chair of the Conference with the support of the government of New Caledonia, which extended formal courtesies and generous hospitality to government leaders, ministers and all delegates.

## Seventh Conference

The Communiqué of the 7th Conference appended to this report gives details of the discussions and decisions reached.

The theme of the Conference was Climate change and food security – managing risks for sustainable development, and in addition to en-



dorsing the recommendations made by CRGA, the Conference considered the wide-ranging projected impacts of climate change – in particular to food and water security – in the Pacific Islands region. The Conference emphasised the importance of planning for climate change by determining the level of acceptable risk at all points and preparing to respond effectively through adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

The Conference commended SPC on publishing a groundbreaking collection of research in the book, *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change*, which was launched by Mr James Batley, Deputy Director Gen-

eral of AusAID. He said Australia was proud to be part of this important study, which made a wealth of information available on the projected impact of climate change on fisheries and aquaculture across the region. A large part of the expertise reflected in the book comes from within the region, which is an important testament to its ability to confront the challenges.

**Reappointment of the Director-General** – The Conference reappointed Dr Jimmie Rodgers for a fourth and final two-year term as Director-General of SPC, commending his leadership throughout the process of the reform of the regional institutional framework and





Photo: Jipé Le-Bars



Photo: Jipé Le-Bars

Mr Harold Martin, President of the Government of New Caledonia, at the official opening of the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference.

the resulting period of change for the Secretariat, and noting the need to now consolidate the 'new SPC'.

## CRGA 41

### *Director-General's report to CRGA*

- In reporting on the past year to CRGA 41, the Director-General focused on plans to consolidate SPC's role as the principal technical organisation for the region. These plans include a wide-ranging independent external review of SPC to be preceded by an assessment of SPC's core business and services by an expert reference group made up of sector specialists. He said the outcome of the independent review would provide a basis for the corporate plan for 2013–2017.

CRGA 41 commended the Secretariat on the progress made in the first year of full integration of SPBEA and SOPAC and welcomed the Director-General's initiative in proposing an organisational review following the completion of this process. A CRGA subcommittee was formed to finalise the terms of reference for the review.

***Tahiti Nui Declaration revised*** – An important item on the agenda was an update of the Tahiti Nui Declaration, which describes SPC's operating policies and mechanisms. The

revision incorporates recent decisions by CRGA and Conference, including the expansion of the scope of SPC's work as a result of the reform of the regional institutional framework. It also describes new procedures relating to the appointment and assessment of the position of Director-General.

***Pacific NCD crisis*** – Representatives of several members praised SPC's work on non-communicable diseases (NCDs) and its close cooperation in this area with the World Health Organization. The meeting welcomed

the strong message sent by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders in declaring that ‘the Pacific is in an NCD crisis’.

**Climate Change Engagement Strategy** – CRGA discussed the Internal Climate Change Engagement Strategy for SPC, which is designed to ensure integrated delivery of climate change related services, including multi-sectoral support for adaptation, mitigation and risk management, to each member across the 20 sectors SPC works in. The strategy recognises SPREP’s role as the region’s lead agency on climate change and defines SPC’s engagement in its mandated areas.

**Delivery of technical services** – CRGA heard presentations from the directors of SPC’s six technical divisions and from the Manager of the Statistics for Development Programme and the Acting Head of the Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility, outlining achievements in 2011 and programme plans for 2012 (see divisional overviews for more detail). The meeting commended SPC’s delivery of essential technical services, e.g. science provision to the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission; development of integrated approaches to water and sanitation resources management; strengthening of the capacity of national statistical systems to provide accurate information to policy makers; assessment of education quality; conduct of audits to ensure compliance with international maritime safety law; and support

## Financial matters

**2011 revised budget** — As required by SPC’s financial rules, CRGA noted the revision of the 2011 core, programme and project funding budget. The revised budget was a balanced budget that totalled 97,030,640 CFP units, (core 14,416,740 CFP units; programme funding 10,755,300 CFP units; project funding 71,858,600 CFP units) in income and expenditure

**2012 budget** — In recommending SPC’s 2012 budget to the Conference for its approval, CRGA noted that the budget followed the new organisational structure and included a multi-year outlook. The total of 97,596,600 CFP units comprised a recurrent budget of 25,128,400 CFP units (core funding of 14,718,700 CFP units and programme funding of 10,409,700 CFP units) and project funding of 72,468,200 CFP units (74% of the total).

for regional biodiversity through the Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees. Noting the need to prioritise among objectives to ensure the best use of resources, CRGA recommended that planned services be evaluated in terms of members’ priorities, SPC’s comparative advantages in the field, whether a service would be best delivered through a regional or national programme, value for money, and impact at national level likely to be achieved through SPC’s provision of the service.

**Administration and HR** – CRGA noted the ongoing review of SPC’s Corporate and Programme Support Services. The review is assessing the most efficient structure for providing these services, particularly with the expansion of staff numbers in Suva. CRGA also noted the internal revision and updating of SPC policies, rules and regulations to ensure they are clear and consistent and fit the needs of a larger organisation.

CRGA agreed with the Secretariat’s recommendation that there be no increase in salaries for international positions for 2012, given the financial climate. Market rate increases were approved for some locally advertised positions based in Suva. The meeting also noted progress in implementing a joint CROP human resources information system, which will progressively be available on-line from the first quarter of 2012.

CRGA discussed the Secretariat’s implementation of an internal audit function and CRGA Audit Committee to provide independent advice to CRGA and strengthen SPC’s governance framework. An Audit Charter describes the function’s purpose, authority, scope of work, responsibilities and relationship with the external auditor.







Photo: Jipé Le-Bars



# Divisional activities

The new Applied Geoscience and Technology (SOPAC) Division of SPC was established in January 2011 when the majority of the functions and services of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission merged with SPC.



## Applied Geoscience and Technology Division

### Overview

The division has three major programmes:

- 1) Ocean and Islands,
- 2) Water and Sanitation, and
- 3) Disaster Reduction.

### Ocean and Islands Programme (OIP)

OIP's primary technical role is gathering baseline data such as bathymetric products; collecting maritime boundary, oceanographic and geophysical, and geodetic data; undertaking geological and geomorphologic assessments; establishing environmental baselines through activities such as mapping marine ecosystem habitats; modelling hydrodynamic processes; undertaking sea-level and shoreline monitoring; as well as collecting data and providing support in the

area of vulnerability reduction and climate change adaptation. OIP also supports decision-making and policy development in these sector areas, for example to support growing regional interest in the deep sea minerals sector.

OIP delivers such work through mechanisms including direct capacity supplementation to PICTs, partnerships with governments and agencies (e.g. SPREP, United Nations Environment Programme, Commonwealth Secretariat, Australia's Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, New Zealand's National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, Geoscience Australia) and through multidisciplinary approaches where OIP delivers 'end to end' services or fulfils a portion of a broader programme or project of work. OIP may also compete for commercial contracts where the objectives of those contracts are aligned with country assistance needs.



Photo: SOPAC





OIP uses tools such as resource economics, remote sensing and GIS and maintains a multi-million dollar technical workshop which provides support to in-house technical and scientific teams as well as direct support to PICTs. OIP is active in the preservation and management of geoscience data and information and is continuing to develop a web-accessible 'Geonetwork' data management and access system (<http://geonetwork.sopac.org/geonetwork/srv/en/main.home>).

OIP annual outputs are organised under the following sectors: Marine, Coastal Science and Survey; Geology, Minerals and Hydrocarbons; South Pacific Sea Level & Climate Monitoring Project; Regional Maritime Boundaries; Data & Information Management; and Technical Workshop.

### **Marine, Coastal Science and Survey**

The largest section within OIP works in the main functional areas of oceanography, hydrography, coastal processes and geomorphology, geophysics, hydrodynamic modelling, habitat mapping, geodesy and cartography. A large proportion of the Technical Workshop sector's tasks are in support and facilitation of this sector's work given its heavy dependence on fieldwork, use of technical equipment and substantive requirements for specialist logistical and mobilisation support.

The range of assessments, reviews and surveys undertaken have been diverse. However, a growing trend towards the secondment of services to address issues of climate change adaptation and extreme event vulnerability is evident. Most of these tasks

and requests are associated with issues in the nearshore and coastal zone.

This section also undertakes a range of ad hoc tasks in response to member requests for technical review of documents such as environmental impact assessment (EIA) submissions, coastal engineering plans and development applications and proposals. Similarly, ongoing regional monitoring efforts such as PRISMS (Pacific Regional Island Shoreline Monitoring System) and salinity monitoring in swamp taro pits in Tuvalu are continued in recognition of the importance of such issues in the region and the fact that OIP is unique in having the technical capacity to implement such work.

## Geology, Minerals and Hydrocarbons

The Geology, Minerals and Hydrocarbons sector traditionally covers terrestrial and deep sea mineral resources, geology and aggregate resources. The sector undertakes technical assessments and provides support to members in mineral resource management and policy development.

### South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project (SPSLCMP)

The South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project (SPSLCMP) was implemented due to increasing regional concern over climate change associated sea-level rise and the poor understanding of sea-level variability in the region. Between 1991 and 2001 the project established a network of high-resolution sea-level monitoring stations around the Pacific. Overall management of this long-term multi-million dollar AusAID-funded initiative is provided by the Bureau of Meteorology Australia (BoMA); however, the project's ongoing activities are also implemented in partnership with OIP, Geoscience Australia and the participating countries. Since its establishment, the array has captured a mostly uninterrupted stream of high quality, accurate data on sea level, temperature (water and air), barometric pressure and wind speed and direction. Associated CGPS (Continuous GPS) stations have also been established in each country to account for tectonic movement.

### Regional Maritime Boundaries

Funded by AusAID and the New Zealand Aid Programme through the recurrent programmatic budget, work on the Regional Maritime Boundaries Sector has been implemented by SOPAC since 2001, when



Photo: SOPAC

the project was transferred from FFA. Subsequent work under this sector had until 2007 been mainly concerned with the development of Pacific Island country baselines, including archipelagic baselines where applicable, and computation of subsequent marine zones in accordance with the provisions of the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea. Much of this work started in 2001, and by 2005 OIP had developed data reports suitable for declaration purposes for Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue and Tuvalu.

The development of satellite-borne imagery with a very high level of positional accuracy has brought a powerful new tool to bear on the issue of boundary development. New imagery products combining high resolution and excellent positional accuracy can now be used to derive baselines with an unparalleled level of accuracy and confidence, negating the need for *in situ* survey.

### Data and Information Management

Very good progress was made on improving methods of collating and providing access to historical

and newly collected data via a web-accessible Geonetwork system (<http://geonetwork.sopac.org/geonetwork/srv/en/main.home>).

Geonetwork became operational in 2008 and has some 334 GB of uploaded data, representing a 42% increase over the amount reported in 2010.

### Technical Workshop

The work of the Technical Workshop is indispensable to the achievements of the other OIP sectors, particularly where mobilisation and deployment of equipment and field surveys have to be undertaken. The Technical Workshop has a direct role in the procurement, servicing, modification, repair, calibration and cataloguing of the marine, geodetic and geological equipment and instruments held by the SOPAC Division, and it is an intrinsic part of the upkeep, deployment and mobilisation/demobilisation of millions of dollars worth of equipment every year. The Technical Workshop also oversees occupational health and safety issues.



## Water and Sanitation Programme (WSP)

Technical support to PICTs is delivered by the programme through capacity building, awareness raising and advocacy related to the management of water resources and the provision of water supply and sanitation services. WSP is structured to deliver its services in the three following areas:

### *Water Resources Management*

This area includes rainwater, surface water and groundwater resources monitoring, assessment, development, management and protection, with a particular emphasis on water resources management in climatic extremes.

The Water Resources Management team was responsible for the implementation of the Pacific Hydrological Cycle Observing System (HYCOS) project, which officially ended in December 2011, having started in June 2008. The project focused on in-country activities: installation of new technologies and hydrological equipment, in-country training and capacity development, provision of hydrological databases, and ongoing technical support from the Project Regional Centre in Suva. During implementation, 56 rainfall stations and 27 water level stations were installed in over 14 countries directly under HYCOS, with an additional 11 water level stations being supported as well. The HYCOS website continues to be maintained, and there are plans for content to be moved to the PacificWater website (<http://www.pacificwater.org/>).

The programme provided support to the government of Kiribati in the development of a drought declaration methodology for the Kiribati Water



Engineering Unit in February 2011, for cabinet approval.

A project focusing on vulnerability assessment and adaptation to sea-level rise in Lifuka, Tonga, commenced in August 2011 with the support of AusAID and in partnership with OIP and the Human Development Programme.

### *Integrated water resources and wastewater management demonstration*

A significant amount of work was implemented during the year under the GEF-funded Sustainable Integrated Water Resources and Wastewater Management Project in Pacific Island Countries being executed by SOPAC in collaboration with UNDP and UNEP for the period 2009 to 2013.

The mid-point of the project saw the withdrawal of Papua New Guinea. The 12 remaining country demonstration projects focus on the capture and presentation of on-the-ground IWRM interventions. The regional component focuses on national policy reform, improved institutional capacity and change, and develop-

ment of IWRM indicators through multi-county collaboration to address regionally coordinated solutions. There was significant project activity at the national level during the year.

### *Water Services*

This area comprises sanitation and drinking water supply services, including aspects relating to capacity for monitoring drinking water quality; introducing drinking water safety planning; improving water demand management; and promoting rainwater harvesting. Under the general Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) subcomponent, WSP promotes the use of appropriate technologies and approaches for domestic water supply and sanitation issues through awareness raising, demonstration of best practice and advocacy. This includes the mainstreaming of gender and community participation in water supply and sanitation, the coordination of activities of the Pacific WASH Coalition, and engaging in response to natural disasters through the coordinated responses of the Pacific Humanitarian Team.

## Water Governance

This area covers water governance, awareness and advocacy and combines a number of different areas which together contribute to better institutional arrangements in the water sector. These include national level policies, plans and strategies; institutional instruments such as legislation and institutional strengthening; multi-stakeholder national water partnerships; and integrated water resources management (IWRM) and catchment level management.

### *The IWRM Planning Programme*

The IWRM approach of ‘ridge to reef’ and ‘community to cabinet’ has much to offer water governance in the Pacific, and WSP is assisting in the practical application of IWRM governance approaches through a range of initiatives.

Since 2008, the EU-funded National IWRM Planning Programme has supported 14 Pacific Island countries to improve their governance of water resources, water supply and sanitation services, initially for three years and now with an 18-month extension to June 2012.

The past 12 months have seen marked progress in advancing programme activities at a national and regional level, and continued successful collaboration with the GEF-funded Pacific IWRM project.

Support to national water committees and policy support officers increased, with four new policy officers recruited in Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau and Marshall Islands while continuing support was provided to the Niue and Tonga policy officers. Support to other national water committee operations and consultations



continued; and this was enhanced in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Cook Islands, Nauru and Tonga by the placement of junior professionals to assist in the committees’ development of draft national outlooks for water, sanitation and climate.

Key to improved water governance is the sharing and application of practical knowledge, and this continues to be a cornerstone of the SOPAC Division’s water governance efforts. These include the continued collection and compilation of lessons learnt and best practice from the region, made available through the programme’s online resource centre.

### *The Asia Pacific Water Forum and the Pacific Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Water Management*

At the final SOPAC Commission Governing Council meeting in October 2010, the secretariat was instructed to initiate a consultative process in order to update a number of important regional frameworks for water and sanitation, including the 2002 Pacific Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Water Management.

The intention is to hold consultations in the coming year in collaboration with members and with the support of regional partners through the Pacific Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Water Management. This partnership, designed to assist in the harmonisation of the many water and sanitation programmes active across the region, continues to be coordinated and supported by the SOPAC Division through the facilitation of Pacific participation in global and regional water forums, the maintenance of regional action matrices and databases, and the production of quarterly newsletters.

The division, as Oceania’s sub-regional representative for the Asia Pacific Water Forum, actively supports higher level engagement by members in forums such as the Asia Pacific Water Summit. Preparations are already underway for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Asia-Pacific Water Summit to be held in January 2012 in Bangkok, Thailand, and also the 6<sup>th</sup> World Water Forum in February 2012 in France. SPC SOPAC Division, through WSP, will undertake a coordinating role for the contributions from the Pacific.

## Disaster Reduction Programme (DRP)

DRP provides PICTs with technical and policy advice and support to strengthen disaster risk management practices. DRP carries out this responsibility in collaboration with other divisions of SPC, and a range of regional and international development partners and donors.

DRP comprises six technical teams: DRM Policy & Planning, Risk Reduction, Training & Capacity Building, Information Management/Pacific Disaster Net, EU EDF 9 B Envelope Project and EU EDF 9 C Envelope Project.

### DRM Policy and Planning

The Pacific region currently benefits from the support provided by a range of donors and development partners to address imperatives for DRM. The funding support channelled through DRP in 2011 came from AusAID, the EU, USAID through The Asia Foundation/Office of US Foreign Disaster Assistance, the UN International Strategy for Disaster Reduction and the World Bank and had an overall value of around FJD 13 million.

From a five-year period projected to commence in 2012, members will benefit from further funding support for DRM through two major facilities. The ACP-EU Natural Disaster Facility under the 10th European Development Fund will provide Pacific ACP States (including Timor Leste) with approximately EUR 20 million to be managed through the SOPAC Division. In addition, the World Bank's Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (with support from ACP-EU) will provide approximately EUR 11.8 million



for DRM, including climate change adaptation (CCA).

As part of its advocacy for improved DRM within members, DRP has recently produced DRM investment profiles for Vanuatu, Cook Islands and Fiji. These profiles present a high-level desk-based assessment of the potential economic costs of a disaster and identify the level of investment in DRM to draw attention to the benefits of investing in disaster risk reduction (DRR) versus the cost of a disaster.

Another area in which DRP works is integrating DRM and climate change response. The shared aim of DRM and climate change adaptation and mitigation is to reduce the vulnerability of societies to hazards by improving the ability to prepare for, respond to and recover from their impacts. A number of PICTs have acknowledged the importance and advantage of integrating their national DRM and climate change agendas and implementation programmes through what are now commonly referred to as joint DRM and climate change national action plans. At the regional level, key stakeholders representing PICTs as well as donors and development partners have acknowledged the need to develop an integrated regional strategy for DRM and climate change adaptation and mitigation and

commence its formal implementation in 2016 after the existing separate regional policy frameworks for DRM and climate change have run their course in 2015.

DRP has also worked to strengthen the coordination of partnership activities, and progress in this area included the revision of the operating framework for the Pacific DRM Partnership Network. To improve the coordination of support from development partners and donors under the umbrella of the Pacific DRM Partnership Network, a new operating framework has been developed which establishes a Coordinating Committee to provide oversight of partnership activities and support to PICTs in the period between the annual meetings.

### Risk Reduction

In 2010, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank and their respective consultants, AIR Worldwide and GNS Science, collaborated with the Pacific Disaster Center and SOPAC on work towards developing disaster risk assessment tools for the 15 countries involved. The exposure data collected *in situ* during the initiative were processed and verified before being delivered to AIR to include in the risk modelling work.

As part of another regional initiative, 14 members received reports assessing their national capacity in the area of tsunami warning and mitigation systems in March 2011. The reports provide an assessment of the capacity of PICTs to receive, communicate, prepare for, and respond to tsunami warnings. They identify requirements for further capacity building programmes and assist in directing funds from various potential sources to address these requirements.



### **Information Management/Pacific Disaster Net**

The Pacific Disaster Net DRM web information portal was launched in 2008 and since then has steadily increased its reservoir of information and resources to support DRM and development decision making in the Pacific region. The expansion of the Pacific Disaster Net initiative across the Pacific is being made possible with the support of donors such as AusAID and the EU. Training/exposure missions were conducted in 2010 and 2011 targeting representatives of PICTs and partner organisations. The portal has been acknowledged as being amongst a group of key web information portals globally and within the region, and further support is anticipated after the current development process for the PDN Strategic Plan was concluded.

### **Training and Capacity Building**

The programme delivered DRM training to participants from around the Pacific, and provided technical assistance to the Fiji National University and the University of the South Pacific for the development of accredited graduate courses in DRM (the courses were on offer from the second semester of 2011). It also provided support in collaboration with the Australian Federal Police for DRM training for police and other key response personnel in the region.

As part of its work to build institutional capacity, the programme provided technical assistance to national disaster management offices to develop initial damage assessment processes, supported the Fiji Public Service Commission in institutionalising 'Introduction to Disaster Management' training for implementation across the public service,

and supported the strengthening of national DRM governance arrangements.

### **EU EDF 9 B Envelope Project**

The project supports eight Pacific ACP states to utilise their remaining national EDF 9 B Envelope funds in a multi-country project aimed at building or strengthening national actions to reduce vulnerability to natural disasters. A time extension and budget increase were approved in 2011, with the project now scheduled to close in June 2012 with a budget of EUR 9.7 million. The eight participating countries are: FSM, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. The project purpose is to strengthen access to safe drinking water in selected communities and to strengthen early warning through infrastructure development and emergency communications.

Marshall Islands, Nauru, Tonga and Tuvalu decided to use their allocation of funds to address issues relating to the provision of safe and clean drinking water. FSM, Palau, PNG and Solomon Islands focused their priorities on strengthening emergency communications capacities and overall national disaster management coordination.

### **EU EDF 9 C Envelope Project**

Under the EDF 9 C Envelope project Supporting Disaster Risk Reduction in Pacific Overseas Countries and Territories (OCTs), the European Union provided EUR 5.6 million over four years to assist New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Pitcairn Islands and Wallis and Futuna with the implementation of actions to reduce their vulnerability to losses from natural and anthropogenic disasters and from climate and weather extremes.

### **Regional GIS and Remote Sensing Service**

The GIS and Remote Sensing Service at the SOPAC Division supports the utilisation of remote sensing and geographic information systems (GIS) in the Pacific. Though they are generally not well established in PICTS, GIS and remote sensing tools are becoming recognised and integrated into standard office and field operating procedures for major water and power utilities in the region.

The GIS and Remote Sensing Service acts as an intermediary between customers from member countries that purchase satellite data infrequently and are thereby under informed regarding the variety of data available and the best applications, and image data distributing agencies that may not be accustomed to dealing with 'small' customers. The service provides the specialised, technical knowledge base, hardware and software that would be difficult to maintain within an island member country. It also provides spatial data backup, pre-processing and systems installation, which require considerable digital storage space beyond the capacity of most standard office computer systems. GIS system installation and maintenance are most often requested and paid for by the national utilities, but in the last three years many more forestry and environment departments are requesting the service.

In 2011, forest and vegetation change detection mapping were carried out for various islands in Fiji, Kiribati and Tuvalu to collect baseline data to contribute to planning for national food security and climate change adaptation as well as provide an estimate of coconut resources for alternative fuel. The mapping in Kiribati and Tuvalu was

done in collaboration with the Land Resources Division (LRD), and the national departments of agriculture, environment, forestry and lands were involved (where they existed) in all three countries. As part of the mapping work the SOPAC Division purchased and pre-processed image data and also provided training at appropriate intervals for national officers in the comparison of imagery over time to detect changes.

Advanced training was conducted late last year on GIS models for utilities, with participants from power utilities in Samoa, Fiji and Solomon Islands.

The division also assisted the Water Authority of Fiji, the Tonga Communication Corporation and the Tonga Forestry Department in establishing GISs.

### **Geology, minerals and hydrocarbons work**

The largest component within the sector at this time is the EU-funded Deep Sea Minerals (DSM) in the Pacific Islands Region Project, which will develop legal and fiscal frameworks for sustainable deep sea mineral resource management. There is growing interest in the region in seabed mining, with the first commercial mining lease being granted in PNG territorial waters to mine 'high grade' seafloor massive sulphide (SMS) deposits. SMS deposits include copper, gold, silver, zinc and lead. In addition to SMS, the seabed of the region is abundant in manganese nodules and cobalt rich crusts. To brief and update members on the scope and aims of the DSM project as well as the current status of understanding of regional DSM resources, and the state of the fledgling industry, the project held its inaugural meeting in



Photo: SOPAC

June 2011. Participants from across the region joined with experts from around the globe to provide presentations and briefings on the status, opportunities and risks relating to these resources and the industry.

### **Aggregate Resources**

Another important area of work for the division is finding sustainable sources of construction aggregate to replace beach mining. This is a major issue around the region, and arriving at integrated solutions usually involves OIP's Marine, Coastal Science and Survey sector as well as the SOPAC Division's Resource Economics sector. This is because beach mining undertaken to supply regionally growing demand for construction aggregate is an unsustainable and dangerous practice with immediate negative impacts on shoreline systems, processes and coastal vulnerability. The development of alternatives requires resource economics to articulate cost-effective solutions.

The division's work in construction aggregates was dominated by OIP's role in the EU-funded Environmentally Safe Aggregates for Tarawa (ESAT) Project – Kiribati. Jointly implemented with the Government of Kiribati's Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resource Development, the ESAT

Project is a natural progression of the sustained technical effort by SOPAC to investigate the feasibility of developing a lagoon basin aggregate resource to replace the unsustainable volumes of beach aggregate (up to 70,000 cubic metres) removed from South Tarawa beaches every year. The obvious links to shoreline vulnerability issues in atolls and ongoing concern over sea-level rise and other threats associated with climate change impacts in atoll islands have seen this project widely heralded as one of the most successful examples of climate change adaptation response in the region.

### **Terrestrial Mining**

In the area of terrestrial mining, a long-term and logistically challenging venture funded by the Government of Kiribati to undertake an evaluation of the remaining phosphate deposits on Banaba Island was completed during 2011. Initiated in 2007, the work included drilling and surveys at strategic locations on Banaba Island and interpretation and geochemical analyses of the core samples.

Additionally, the sector supported the Government of Solomon Islands in the development of the Isabel Nickel Mine tender and the Government of Fiji in its Mt Kasi Gold Mine tender process.



The Economic Development Division (EDD), based in Suva, has programmes in three areas that are key for economic growth – energy, information and communication technology (ICT) and transport.



Solar photovoltaic systems in FSM.

## Economic Development Division

### Overview

The division has five objectives for the period 2012 to 2017:

- ▶ Strong leadership, good governance, and effective multi-sectoral coordination and strategic partnerships, including monitoring and evaluation, in the energy, ICT and transport sectors;
- ▶ Effective policies, plans and regulatory frameworks that provide an enabling environment for economic development;
- ▶ Strengthened institutions and expertise in the energy, ICT and transport sectors;
- ▶ Improved access to affordable and efficient energy, ICT and transport services; and
- ▶ Secure, safe and environmentally friendly energy, ICT and transport services.

The Energy Programme's key role as the lead coordination agency for the

regional energy sector is to provide leadership for and raise the profile of energy as a priority sector in the Pacific Island region.

The key role of the Pacific ICT Outreach Programme (PICO) is to coordinate ICT development in the Pacific focusing on national priorities, including establishing ICT policy and regulatory frameworks that are conducive to development, enhancing government services, building local ICT capacity and facilitating provision of accessible and affordable ICT services.

The key role of the Transport Programme is to coordinate development of maritime and aviation transport in the Pacific, focusing on national priorities, including developing transport policies and regulatory frameworks to ensure safe and secure transport services.



Inaugural Regional Meeting of Ministers of Energy, ICT and Transport





EU-funded grid-connected solar system near capitol building, Koror, Palau.

## EDD architecture

Having been established in 2010, EDD is a relatively new division. In 2011, considerable effort was put into constructing a divisional architecture to ensure the work of the Energy, ICT and Transport Programmes is integrated and interlinked to increase efficiency in service delivery. Several plans and processes were completed as part of this effort, including:

- ▣ Sectoral frameworks (2010–2020);
- ▣ Implementation plans (2010–2020);
- ▣ The EDD strategic plan (2012–2017), which was endorsed by the 7th Conference of the Pacific Community (the plan included key divisional performance indicators);
- ▣ A three-year work programme and budget (2012–2014); and

- ▣ Establishment of the Director's Office, with multidisciplinary expertise and cross-cutting support to improve efficiency and strengthen the integration of the three programmes.

## Inaugural Regional Meeting of Ministers of Energy, ICT and Transport

A key event for the division in 2011 was the Inaugural Regional Meeting of Ministers of Energy, ICT and Transport for the PICTs. The meeting, which was held in April in New Caledonia, was the first time SPC had brought together ministers from the three sectors. The aims of the joint meeting were to take advantage of opportunities for pooling resources, rationalising regional mechanisms and streamlining regionally delivered services to PICTs, as

directed by Pacific Forum Leaders in their decisions on the reform of regional institutions. The meeting endorsed the *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific* and its implementation plan, and the *Framework for Action on Transport Services*. The *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific* was endorsed by PICT ICT ministers in June 2010.

## SPC joint country strategy consultations

EDD participated in the SPC joint country strategy (JCS) consultations with PNG, New Caledonia and Fiji in 2011. The overall purpose of the consultations with each government was to develop the strategies that will guide the provision of SPC services to these members over the next five years (2011–2015).

### Petroleum advisory services

The *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific* emphasises a whole-of-sector approach to addressing the energy security challenges of PICTs. While some PICTs have adopted renewable energy targets and are pursuing energy efficiency, the region will continue to be heavily reliant on fossil fuel, and prices of petroleum products will remain a key factor influencing national economies.

Given this fact, the division added an internationally recruited Petroleum Officer to its Energy Programme and is looking forward to adding a Petroleum Adviser in 2012.

Volumes for petroleum products are often in the millions of units, and a variation of a fraction of a cent per unit can add up to a significant amount. Therefore, the Energy Programme provides technical assistance to PICTs to ensure that their petroleum pricing policies, practices, information and skills are up to date with developments in the petroleum industry.

The Energy Programme undertook a review of the Tongan Petroleum and Liquid Petroleum Gas Pricing Template. As a result of adopting the revised template, Tonga will save approximately 2.5 million pa'anga (roughly USD 1.5 million) per year. Similar assistance was provided to Solomon Islands with benefits estimated in the millions of dollars.

The Energy Programme provided monthly verification of fuel prices for Cook Islands, Fiji, New Caledonia, Niue, Palau, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu to ensure that any increases or decreases in fuel prices were justified based on benchmarked international prices. It provided advice on bulk fuel procurement, in collaboration with PIFS, and assisted with pricing of petroleum products for and benchmarking of power utilities. The programme also provided technical assistance to Tuvalu on: the country's fuel price template and benchmarking it against published data, fuel quality standards, storage and handling requirements for petroleum and LPG, petroleum pricing regulations and policy, and migration to low sulphur diesel.



Petroleum storage tank in Tuvalu. The country benefited from SPC's petroleum

### Energy plans, policies and roadmaps developed and reviewed

The Energy Programme also participated in the following activities: reviewing the Tonga Energy Roadmap; drafting the Cook Islands renewable energy chart; reviewing the energy implementation plan for Kiribati; assisting Samoa in relation to regular publication of the Samoa Energy Review; assisting Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu in constructing national energy balances; and amending the petroleum component of the Cook Islands Dangerous Goods Act.

### Mainstreaming gender in energy planning and policy

The Energy Programme secured funding of EUR 161,000 for mainstreaming gender into small island states' climate change and energy policies. A regional training of trainers workshop in May 2011 reviewed the gender consciousness of the implementation plan for the *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific*. National workshops on gender mainstreaming were also conducted in Fiji, Niue, Kiribati and Tuvalu.

### North-REP project to provide first-time access to electricity

The North Pacific ACP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Project (North-REP), funded by EU and implemented by the Energy Programme, commenced in FSM, Palau and RMI. In practical terms, it is envisaged that North-REP will reduce average monthly electricity consumption in urban households by at least 10%, provide a total of 12,739 people with first-time access to electricity in FSM and RMI, and assist 21 health centres and 32 schools to gain access to basic electricity services.

### Energy security indicators developed for six PICTs

Another notable activity of the Energy Programme this year was the calculation of energy security indicators (37 in total) for Niue, RMI, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu using 2009 as a baseline. A funding proposal was submitted to and approved by the EU Policy Dialogue Facility to extend the exercise to Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, PNG and Vanuatu. A similar funding proposal has been prepared for the French Pacific Fund to enable the exercise to be extended to the French territories.



um advisory services in 2011.



Legislative Assembly of Samoa staff receive ICT training from SPC.

## Empowering legislators to champion ICT development

Under the EU/African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP) ICT Access for the Poor project, PICTO provided technical assistance this year to the parliaments of Cook Islands, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. The focus was on raising awareness among legislators regarding the importance of ICT in sustainable development and on building the capacity of parliament staff in ICT using a train-the-trainer approach that will enable the trained staff to deliver in-house ICT courses to improve efficiency in parliamentary services.

Overall, members and staff of the parliaments benefited from learning about:

- how ICT can contribute to development of other key sectors such as health and education;
- development of national ICT policies to address national development priorities;
- legislation to address ICT issues such as cybercrime and e-commerce;
- development of ICT strategic policies and ICT acceptable use policies for parliaments;
- development of websites for parliaments to share and disseminate information; and
- the use of ICT for effective and efficient communication among members and staff.

Under this project, PICTO assisted the parliaments of Samoa and Tonga to gain better access to ICT, specifically the Internet, by (i) setting up an e-centre with computers, printers and uninterruptible power supplies for members of parliament in Samoa, and (ii) providing equipment to support the outreach programme of Tonga's parliament.

strengthened their collaboration to advance ICT development in the Pacific. PICTO also formed the following strategic partnerships with key development partners:

- a. an MOU with the Asia Pacific Network Information Centre to work together in assisting PICTs in their transition from Internet Protocol version 4 (IPv4) to IPv6;
- b. a memorandum of understanding with New Zealand nonprofit NetSafe to develop an internet safety programme for PICTs; and
- c. a partnership arrangement with the UN Asian and Pacific Training Centre for Information and Communication Technology for Development (APCICT) to build the capacity of PICTs, especially in ICT for development.

PICTO has also undertaken joint initiatives to advance ICT development in the region. Examples include establishing the Academy of ICT Essentials for Government Leaders in the Pacific and conducting national workshops with APCICT, and promoting e-government with the Commonwealth Secretariat.

## National ICT policies developed and reviewed

PICTO assisted the Solomon Islands Government, through the Communications Unit of the Prime Minister's Office, in developing a draft national ICT policy. Technical and policy advice was provided to the Government of Kiribati, through the Ministry

of Communications, Transport and Tourism Development, in reviewing its national ICT policy.

## Strategic partnerships formed to advance ICT development

SPC and the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) held a special SPC-ITU ministerial meeting in April 2011 and have





An SPC-organised regional cybercrime legislation workshop in Tonga in 2011 was opened by Prime Minister Lord Tu’ivakano.

### Supporting internet governance

SPC convened the inaugural Pacific Internet Governance Forum (PIGF) in Noumea on 9–10 April 2011, as directed by Pacific ICT Ministers at their meeting in Tonga in 2010. The forum, which raised awareness on emerging internet governance issues and established a network for continuing discussion, was a result of collaboration with key partners including the Pacific Internet Partnership (PIP), DotAsia Organisation, Internet Corporation for Assigned Names and Numbers, InternetNZ, and Asia Pacific Network Information Centre.

### Addressing cybersafety and security

SPC, the Council of Europe and the Australian Government Attorney-General’s Department conducted a workshop in Tonga in April 2011 to build the capacity of Pacific countries in developing cybercrime legislation and to explore the possibility of international collaboration. The workshop resulted in improved awareness of cybercrime among PICTs, development of country profiles based on assessment against the Budapest Cybercrime Convention, greater understanding of various clauses of the convention and its application, and a way forward for Pacific countries in addressing cybercrime legislation

issues. A partnership was formed with NetSafe to develop a regional Internet safety programme to assist PICTs in making ICT use safer, especially for children.

### Managing e-waste in the Pacific

SPREP and SPC signed an MOU to develop a regional programme to ensure that e-waste is recycled or disposed of safely. A regional e-waste strategy has been drafted to guide further work in this area. An e-waste day was jointly organised by SPREP, PICTO and e-Day Trust New Zealand in Cook Islands in 2011. Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Samoa have expressed interest in running similar programmes.





A domestic ship in Tarawa Port in Kiribati. SPC conducted domestic ship audits in Kiribati in 2011 under the Pacific Islands Domestic Ship Safety Programme.

## Improving maritime safety

Improving maritime safety in the Pacific was high on the agenda for the Transport Programme this year as reflected in the success of the Pacific Islands Domestic Ship Safety Programme (PIDSS) in Tonga and Kiribati. This project introduced a system of domestic ship audits to assess the condition of vessels. The project, which finishes in August 2012, is expected to result in the following:

- Enactment of non-convention and small vessel regulations under a shipping act
- Harmonisation of shipping acts, regulations, policies and survey checklists
- Establishment of approval standards for buoyant apparatus, compasses, first aid kits, engine tool kits, etc.
- Development of a comprehensive survey checklist that encompasses all aspects of a regulatory survey and references the applicable acts, regulations and policies
- Improved surveyor professionalism
- Establishment of a minimum baseline operating standard for all types and classes of vessel
- Enforcement of a level playing field among common vessel operating types and areas of operation
- Improved domestic vessel compliance and operational safety as a result of improved levels of enforcement and the increased use by owners and operators of preventative maintenance systems and International Safety Management/Safe Ship Management Plans

In addition to the PIDSS work, other maritime safety-related initiatives by the Transport Programme included: development of a *Regional Port Pilot Training Standard*, reviewing and updating the *Pacific Port Workers Training Standards*, pilotage training in FSM, a search and rescue workshop, and preparations to assist members in meeting the requirements of the 2010 Manila Amendments to the International Convention on Standards for Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers.





Port of Port Moresby in PNG

### Search and rescue MOU endorsed by ministers

An MOU developed by SPC last year with the assistance and support of Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States aims to improve coordination of search and rescue between these countries and PICTs. It was endorsed by PICT Energy, ICT and Transport Ministers at the joint ministerial meeting in April 2011 but is awaiting signature by the parties involved. PICTs are encouraged to subscribe to this important agreement, which will be invaluable in the event of a mass rescue operation.

A search and rescue workshop organised by SPC in June 2011, in collaboration with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, the International Maritime Organization, Maritime New Zealand and the United States Coast

Guard, improved understanding of search and rescue response plans and mass rescue operations among personnel responsible for search and rescue in PICTs.

### Maritime audits ensure compliance with international maritime conventions

The Transport Programme continues to undertake compliance audits to ensure countries maintain compliance with international maritime safety and security standards. Security audits were done on the ports of Arutanga and Avarua in Cook Islands and on the Designated Authority (maritime administration) in PNG.

Twelve Pacific Islanders from Cook Islands, PNG and Solomon Islands improved their internal auditing skills and knowledge following a basic train-the-trainer course organ-

ised by SPC. The training will assist them in undertaking internal audits in their organisations to ensure they comply with international safety and security standards. SPC has trained over 100 auditors since 2001.

### Aviation

There is clearly support for the Transport Programme to provide specific assistance in the area of aviation. PICT Civil Aviation Directors, at their 2011 meeting, agreed that the Transport Programme was the appropriate mechanism for collecting and disseminating information and coordinating aviation activities among regional partners. To expedite work in the aviation area, SPC is hoping to recruit a part-time staff member.





SPC maritime auditors conducting a security audit on Rabaul Port in PNG

### Supporting regional maritime associations and shipping commissions

SPC continues to engage with regional maritime associations to advance work in the maritime sector. This year, work continued with the Maritime Education and Training Subcommittee of the Pacific Islands Maritime Association to develop a plan of action to address implementation of the 2010 Manila Amendments to the International Convention on Standards for Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers. SPC also engaged with the Pacific Maritime Transport Alliance to address port issues in the region, including updating and publishing the Pacific Port Workers Training Standards and developing a Regional Port Pilot Training Standard.

The Micronesian Shipping Commission and the Central Pacific Shipping Commission signed an MOU in August 2011 under which they agree to share information relevant to government regulation of commercial shipping in the western and central Pacific. A similar arrangement is envisaged for the eastern Pacific. SPC has been providing secretariat services to the Central Pacific Shipping Commission since its establishment in 2010.

### Improving feeder shipping services and intra-regional trade

Technical and shipping advice was provided to facilitate intra-regional trade between Tuvalu and Rotuma in Fiji, with possible extension to Kiribati and neighbouring islands.

SPC has been monitoring the service provided by Kiribati Shipping Service Limited and noted significant success in the provision of affordable and regular services to Tuvalu, Nauru and Kiribati, using Suva as a transshipment point. Research showed that as a short-term measure the service was effective. However, in the medium term (after 18 months of operation), the service has been struggling due in part to reliability and scheduling issues. The company has advised that these issues have now been addressed with the purchase of another vessel.

Communication is also ongoing with the Samoa Shipping Corporation Limited looking into the possibility of a similar service to the eastern Pacific Islands and a suitable vessel for the service. There has also been communication with Wallis and Futuna, Samoa, Cook Islands and Niue on the subject.



The Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division works under the SPC key result area of 'natural resource management and development' focusing on fisheries resources.



## Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems

### Overview

**I**n 2011, as in previous years, the division was headed by a Director with a small support unit responsible for information and project management, while services to members were mainly delivered by the two programmes – Oceanic Fisheries (OFP) and Coastal Fisheries (CFP).

2011 saw the successful conclusion of the seventh Heads of Fisheries meeting, which provided guidance for the future direction of the programmes; and the development of fisheries components for the joint country strategies of PNG and New Caledonia. Relations with regional organisations involved in the management of tuna fisheries remained strong, and a new MOU

agreed with the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) formally appoints SPC to provide scientific services to this important group.

In the area of resource mobilisation, a joint Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)/SPC project was signed with the New Zealand Aid Programme in March that will provide SPC with more than USD 2 million over three years to support the development of national fisheries observer programmes. Agreement was also reached with AusAID for a second phase of the Pacific Fisheries for Food Security project. This will provide AUD 4.7 million over four years for inland aquaculture development, national tuna fisheries monitoring and data





Photo: William Sokrini

management, and deepwater snapper stock assessments.

The Fisheries Information Unit continued to produce a range of high-quality publications, including the SPC *Fisheries Newsletter*. Other work included regular updating of the website, incorporation of new publications in the fully searchable digital library (available on the Web or on CD), and the 2011 Fisheries Address book providing over 1,700 fisheries related regional contacts. An inventory of all print materials held at SPC was completed, and distribution of these to member countries is a priority. A large order of training materials was supplied to the National Fisheries College in PNG.

A new information initiative has been the production of a series of fact sheets for community workers on important groups of fish and invertebrates. These provide accurate, easily understood information for use when developing community based management measures. This has drawn on the expertise of CFP staff as well as that of non-government organisations working in marine conservation, and this new resource has been enthusiastically received both within the SPC region and in other parts of the tropical Indo-Pacific. Communications targets for the year have been achieved, with several articles in regional and national print media and radio interviews given to inform the wider public on fisheries

issues. It has recently been decided to outsource the communication of the results of some of the division's major projects, and a specialist has been selected following international tender to develop material using print and video media.

The Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP) project ended in December 2011 and much of the final year was devoted to drawing out the main results of the project in a process that included four subregional workshops. A DVD providing access to over 800 outputs of the project is now available. Fieldwork was also supported on developing the capture and culture of post-larvae of fish and invertebrates for the aquarium trade.



The Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) is the Pacific’s regional centre for tuna fisheries research, fishery monitoring, stock assessment and data management. It provides scientific information and advice to SPC member countries and territories on the status of stocks of tuna and other important species, the ecosystems in which they live, and the fisheries targeting them.



## Oceanic Fisheries Programme

The tuna catch in the western and central Pacific Ocean in 2010 was 2.4 million tonnes, only slightly less than the previous year’s record. As in previous years, the purse-seine fishery provided around three quarters of the total catch, while skipjack tuna, the main target

species of the purse-seine fishery, made up about two thirds of the total catch.

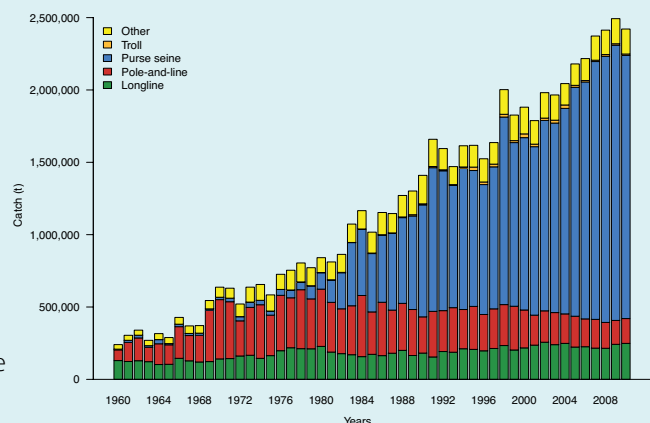
An important milestone in the management of the region’s tuna resources was reached in 2011 with the designation of a large part of the

### Tuna catch – 2010 second highest on record

The provisional total tuna catch for 2010 is:

- 2,421,113 tonnes (t)
- the second highest annual catch recorded
- 71,673 t lower than the 2009 record (2,492,786 t)
- 83% of the total Pacific Ocean catch (2,911,918 t)
- 60% of the global tuna catch (4,017,600 t, provisional)

Over the history of the fishery, there has been an upward trend in total tuna catch, mainly due to increases in purse-seine fishery catches since the 1980s.



## Stock assessment

Regional assessments were completed on all four of the major tuna stocks (skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye and South Pacific albacore) and accepted by the Scientific Committee of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). These assessments, which were recently summarised in Policy Brief 14/2012 ([http://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Brochures/Policy\\_Brief14\\_12.pdf](http://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Brochures/Policy_Brief14_12.pdf)), will form the scientific basis of a new management measure, aimed at further reducing catches of bigeye tuna, as well as establishing exploitation targets for skipjack and yellowfin tuna. Management measures agreed at WCPFC are largely driven by the FFA member countries and the subregional groupings, which also develop measures for application in their own areas of jurisdiction. Considerable effort was devoted to providing these groups with the scientific advice and support that they require, including provision of a scientist to work full-time on such initiatives, with support from other programme staff.

The programme released two new products during the year to assist national fisheries administrations. Secure national webpages for each

has been made possible partly by the high quality of fisheries data and rigorous stock assessments provided by OFP, as well as the comprehensive fisheries observer coverage developed with training and support from SPC. OFP will continue to provide scientific advice to PNA in meeting the conditions for this certification, which will ensure a price premium for catches from their waters in international markets as well as giving an incentive for further improvements in the management of the fishery.

In 2011, OFP continued to focus on its key objectives:

- ▶ high-quality scientific information and advice on the status of, and fishery impacts on, stocks targeted or otherwise impacted by regional oceanic fisheries (Stock Assessment and Modelling Section);
- ▶ accurate and comprehensive scientific data on fisheries targeting the region's resources of tuna, billfish and other oceanic species (Fisheries Monitoring and Data Management Sections); and
- ▶ improved understanding of pelagic ecosystems in the western and central Pacific Ocean (Ecosystem Monitoring and Analysis Section).

fishery for skipjack tuna occurring in the waters of the Parties to the Nauru Agreement (PNA) as a 'sustainable fishery' by the respected certification body, the Marine Stewardship Council. It is the first major tuna fishery in the world to receive this seal of approval, which



Photo: Malo Hosken

## Catch by tuna species

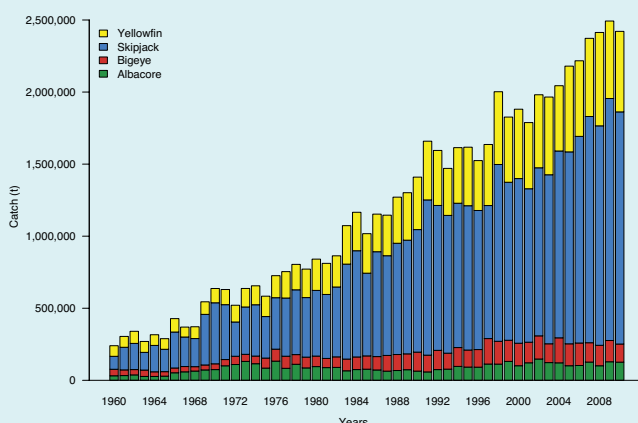


Photo: Bruno Leroy





member now provide regularly updated analysis of the key features of the tuna fishery in their waters. This supplements, but of course does not replace, direct national-level advice – which has recently focused on supporting the development of a new tuna management plan in Solomon Islands. A second product – the TUNA Management Simulator (TUMAS) can be downloaded from the Internet and – based on the current stock assessments for skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye – allows anyone to model the effects of expanding or reducing the various fishing fleets. This allows fisheries managers to test for themselves the likely impacts of management measures. The capacity of national tuna managers to interpret stock assessments was developed with workshops both at the advanced level and for less experienced staff – part of the ongoing series of stock assessment training workshops. Twenty-one

of SPC's twenty-two members participated in this training, with many sending extra participants at their own expense.

### Fisheries monitoring and data management

The programme continued to tackle the huge volume of data entry and analysis needed to maintain an accurate picture of the region's oceanic fisheries. The volume of data processed has grown enormously with increased observer coverage, and additional data entry and quality assurance staff have been employed in Noumea and Pohnpei to handle this workload. In the last 12 months, information from 191,663 fishing operation records on logsheets (including catch by species, effort and positional information), 156,773 fishing operations recorded by observers (including detailed catch by species, detailed effort and

positional information), and 1,723,996 individual fish measurements collected by observers and port samplers have been processed by OFP staff.

Data analysis tools are provided to countries and regional groupings on a regular basis through a software package known as CES – the Catch and Effort System. Training was provided to FFA fisheries managers to improve their skills in using CES, which itself has been upgraded recently by including data from the region's vessel monitoring system. The system for management of data at the national level, TUFMAN, also continues to be refined and now incorporates new routines to help detect illegal fishing. TUFMAN training was conducted at a regional Tuna Data Workshop, and in-country in FSM, Fiji, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. OFP provided data audit services to FSM and Fiji in 2011 to identify gaps in data coverage; audits will be conducted in other countries over the coming years.

A further 100 trained observers will be available for deployment by the end of the year, bringing the total in the region up to 660; this is a significant number of jobs and represents an improvement in the monitoring of the fishery. OFP staff are increasingly turning their attention to the personnel and systems needed to support the rapid growth of this activity, with training of trainers and debriefers, as well as support to national observer coordinators in managing their national observer programmes.

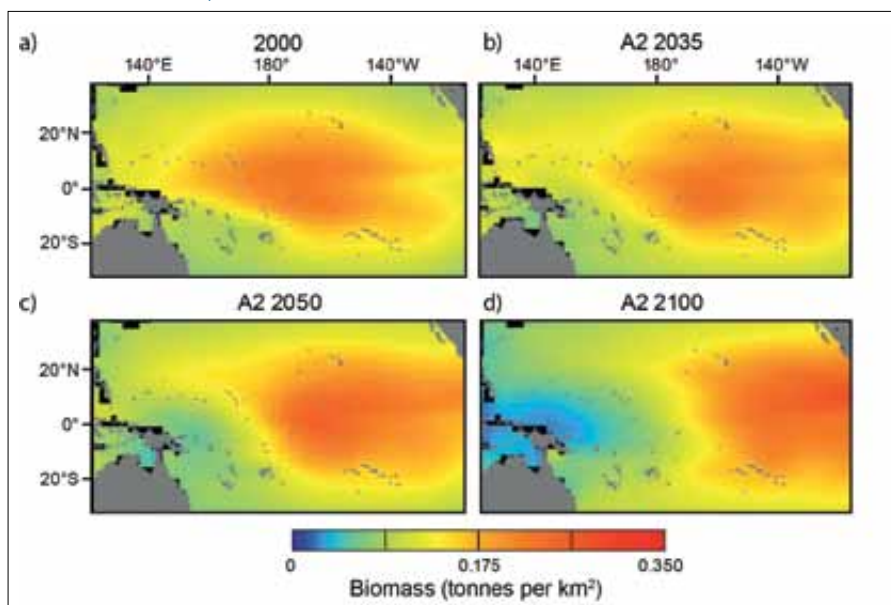
### Ecosystem monitoring and analysis

The 'flagship' project in support of this activity in 2011 was the new





Projected estimates of total biomass (tonnes per km<sup>2</sup>) of skipjack tuna from the SEAPODYM model based on average (1980–2000) fishing effort in (a) 2000, (b) 2035, (c) 2050 and (d) 2100. Projections are for a high (IPPC A2) emissions scenario (source: P. Lehodey)



PNG-funded tagging project, which completed its first year of activities, including tagging operations from April to July with 40,000 tuna tagged and released. Two central Pacific cruises in October and November resulted in a further 8,000 tagged fish, almost all of which were bigeye tuna. Since the start of the current programme of tagging operations, over 317,000 tuna have been tagged, with total tags recaptured and returned to SPC now nearing 50,000 (approximately 16% of releases). Data from the tagging

programmes were used this year to improve the stock assessments of skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye tuna. SPC has, for some time, been working with Collecte Localisation Satellites of France (CLS) on the development of a new tuna population modelling programme called SEAPODYM. This system relies less on information from the fishery, but estimates the abundance and distribution of tuna from knowledge of their behaviour in response to the availability of food and oceanographic conditions

(see figure). This allows prediction of the impacts of changes in climate, as well as the opportunity to look at what will happen in relatively small areas of ocean (national exclusive economic zones [EEZs] or even parts of an EEZ). The system is now fully functional for three species (skipjack, bigeye and South Pacific albacore) and should include yellowfin in the near future. The model has already been used this year to predict climate change impacts on tuna, as well as to produce two national tuna resource profiles.





The objectives of the Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) are:

**Objective 1 – Assist governments and administrations in the development of scientifically informed and socially achievable coastal fisheries management policies and systems in line with the guiding principles of the Apia Policy.**

**Objective 2 – 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.**

**Objective 3 – Develop sustainable nearshore fisheries in PICTs to provide food security, livelihoods and economic growth.**

### Coastal Fisheries Programme

CFP focuses on improving the ability of PICTs to evaluate and manage coastal fisheries resources. CFP has been helping countries tackle the problem of managing their beche-de-mer resources, working with national fisheries departments (most recently in Tonga, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) to develop capacity to assess the resource and recommend management measures. Beche-de-mer, which can be valuable in generating cash income for coastal communities, has been fished almost to extinction in many areas. We commend those member countries that have closed the fishery to allow stocks to recover, and encourage them to hold fast to this decision and not be misguided by short-term political expediency. We also urge other members to follow the scientific advice, from SPC and their own fisheries authorities, to protect this resource so that it can deliver future benefits – before it is too late.

Improved legislation and management measures have also resulted from work under this objective. Tuvalu has a draft Fisheries Management Bill with the Crown Law Office for submission to Cabinet (FFA provided support for oceanic fisheries components, while SPC helped to develop the coastal measures). Assistance in developing national management plans for specific fisheries was provided in Tonga, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, PNG, Solomon Islands and Cook Islands. Tonga, Samoa, Nauru and Kiribati have all been able to expand the range of their community based management arrangements with SPC help.

Climate change represents a major threat to coastal fisheries resources, and PICTs need baseline data to monitor its impact. Teams in Marshall Islands, Tuvalu and Kiribati can now conduct baseline surveys for finfish and invertebrate resources and their habitats, thanks



mariculture in the Pacific Islands was conducted and the draft results were presented at a regional meeting jointly organised with the UN Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). This will provide new directions for the future of this sector, which has previously been slow to take off in most SPC members.

To increase sustainable fishing opportunities (objective 3), Solomon Islands, FSM (Pohnpei) and Kiribati have been provided with the necessary skills to construct and deploy fish aggregating devices (FADs). Associated with this programme has been training in new fishing skills to enable dozens of fishers to increase their effectiveness in fishing around FADs. As part of this capacity building, fishers and government staff are also being made more aware of sea safety issues.

Fishing associations have been supported in Cook Islands, Tuvalu and Solomon Islands under the EU-funded Development of Sustainable Tuna Fisheries in Pacific ACP Countries – Phase II (DevFish2) project, providing stakeholders with a voice in the formulation of tuna fishery development and management arrangements, and providing a direct channel for support to the private sector. Two new services provided in support of this objective have also been greatly in demand. Economic analysis has been provided for a number of projects, including the FAD programme in Niue, and longline fishing trials in Wallis and Futuna to inform future development; and the authorities involved in certifying seafood exports to Europe ('competent authorities') in Solomon Islands, Fiji, PNG and Vanuatu have received the first parts of an extended programme of technical assistance to help meet the demanding requirements.

to support provided through the climate change project. Under this project, two trainers will themselves return to Samoa and Fiji with new skills and experience after the end of their 12 month contracts as junior professionals.

Beche-de-mer was also a focus of the Aquaculture Section at the start of the year (objective 2), when SPC co-hosted with the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) an international meeting to review experience with the culture and stock enhancement of sandfish (one of the more valuable species). Fisheries staff members from Cook Islands, Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu are now fully up to date regarding opportunities and constraints in this area. There was also strong interest from New Caledonia, where there are ambitious plans to restock and farm sandfish. As usual, technical advice was provided across a wide range of aquaculture activities

– from the design of a milkfish hatchery in Nauru to the compilation of an aquaculture development plan for the Northern Mariana Islands. The completion of a risk assessment for the introduction of Nile tilapia into Solomon Islands will allow the government to make an informed decision on whether to use this species to boost production for food security.

Building skills in aquaculture is essential for the development of this fledgling industry. SPC staff completed a training needs assessment for PNG – a country that has many more inland fish farmers than the rest of the PICTs put together – and will help develop the curricula for the necessary courses, which will be delivered mainly by the National Fisheries College. Two MSc students completed their projects under the supervision of SPC aquaculture staff, and two more are in progress. A major study on the opportunities and constraints to development of





Three years into its four-year strategic plan, the Land Resources Division (LRD) provides a well-established regional platform of expertise in genetic resources, forestry, agriculture, plant health, animal health, biosecurity and trade, and policy. The strategic plan has three objectives: improving food and nutritional security, promoting integrated and sustainable agriculture and forest resource management, and improving biosecurity and increasing trade in agricultural and forestry products.

## Land Resources Division

### Overview

#### Improving food and nutritional security

Promoting locally grown food is key to improving food and nutritional security in the Pacific Islands. In 2011 SPC was an active member of the Food Secure Pacific Working Group, which is working to implement the Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific and contribute to increased production and consumption of locally grown food.

A second area of focus is conservation and use of agrobiodiversity, and promotion of diverse food systems. The Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT) lies at the heart of this endeavour. As well as continuing its core activity of maintaining the region's largest crop genebank, in 2011 CePaCT distributed over 10,000 plants (1140 accessions) of

the staple crops banana, taro, potato, cassava, cowpeas, yam, swamp taro and sweet potato to 16 countries. A total of 273 new accessions, including 200 of taro, were added to the collection during the year. Capacity in the centre's virus indexing facility – which ensures safe movement of virus-free plants – was given a boost in November when an LRD staff member underwent training in sweet potato virus testing at the Gatton Research Station in Queensland, Australia. A new initiative to strengthen the forests and trees component of CePaCT also got off the ground in 2011 when the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provided essential equipment that will be used to establish a new tree seed centre.

The importance of traditional knowledge to food and nutritional security is recognised in LRD's



strategic plan. In 2011, Cook Islands, Fiji and Samoa were the focus of a study on indigenous agricultural knowledge and the findings were published in a report. Stories of traditional knowledge of agricultural practices were also compiled in collaboration with the Pacific Island Extension Network.

### Promoting integrated and sustainable agriculture and forest resource management

Under this objective, LRD helps develop appropriate plans, policies and legislation, as well as appropriate practices; builds capacity for dealing with climate change and natural disasters; provides assistance in the management of pests, diseases and invasive species; and builds capacity in extension and information services. 2011 was the International Year of

Forests, and LRD took the opportunity to produce an awareness-raising book on the forests of the Pacific Islands, highlighting the challenges they face as well as ways forward for their sustainable management. One promising initiative is community-based forest management, and the division continued to support the model project in the Drawa community in Fiji. In 2011 the focus was on helping the community secure long-term funding for the project.

Sustainable forest management is also vital to managing climate change and natural disasters. A new project, Climate Protection through Forest Conservation in the Pacific Island Countries, began in 2011, adding to the SPC-GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) portfolio of projects addressing climate change in the region. Meanwhile,

AusAID continued to support the International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative, which is evaluating climate-tolerant crops from CePaCT in 14 countries, with the aim of developing climate-ready collections within the countries.

Livestock are also vulnerable to climate change, and a workshop in August gathered baseline data in order to begin assessing the impacts of climate change on livestock populations in the region. LRD also continued its paraveterinary training programme, which has so far trained more than 250 paravets across the region.

Plant health is one of the division's core areas of expertise. In 2011, the plant health team provided technical assistance towards management of fruit fly in Marshall Islands, Samoa and Pitcairn Islands; thrips in Cook Islands; coconut scale, mealy-



## Land Resources Division

bugs and sooty mould in Marshall Islands; an invasive moth in Tuvalu; anthracnose on yams in Tonga; and Bogia coconut syndrome in PNG. Plant health surveys were carried out in Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, and the pest databases in those countries were updated.

Organic farming is on the increase, globally and in the Pacific region. LRD continues to coordinate the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom), and carried out awareness raising at the highest level when it hosted an organic luncheon during the Pacific Island Forum Leaders' Meeting in New Zealand in September.

### Improving biosecurity and increasing trade in agriculture and forestry products

Boosting regional and international trade in agricultural and forestry products is vital for sustainable island economies. Several major projects were in progress in 2011 contributing to this objective. The Pacific Agribusiness Research and Development Initiative (PARDI), which began in 2010 and is funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), is focusing on developing effective market chains for high-value products such as pearls, canarium nuts, breadfruit and taro. The AusAID-funded Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA) initiative also began in 2010, and focuses on the constraints faced by exporters and importers of agricultural and horticultural products, such as biosecurity and quarantine requirements. Both of these projects hit their stride in 2011. Meanwhile, the EU-funded All ACP Agricultural Commodities



Programme (AAACP) came to a successful end in December 2011, with plans to scale up lessons learned in a new Agriculture and Rural Development Project due to start in January 2012.

Also funded by the EU, the Facilitating Agricultural Commodity Trade (FACT) project has over the last cou-

ple of years built a successful model for developing public-private partnerships for agricultural trade. As this pilot project draws to a close in 2012, a new project – Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (IACT) – will build on the model to expand trade opportunities in the region. IACT was launched in June 2011.

In building international trade, it is essential to comply with international requirements and standards. In 2011, LRD helped several countries set up biosecurity information facilities by providing equipment and training. Countries were also assisted in meeting international phytosanitary standards. During the year, LRD staff provided technical and scientific advice relating to the import of livestock and livestock products to Fiji, Kiribati and Niue. Animal disease data were also compiled for several countries and submitted to the World Organization for Animal Health's online reporting system.



FACT provided training in breadfruit processing

## Climate change initiatives

### Implementing REDD+

SPC is receiving support from Germany's International Climate Initiative (ICI) for a regional project titled *Climate protection through forest conservation in the Pacific Island countries*. The project, which is being implemented by SPC/GIZ, is working to develop regional and national policies as well as institutional capacities for the implementation of a REDD+ carbon financing mechanism. REDD stands for reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation; REDD+ also covers activities such as sustainable forest management.

Deforestation and forest degradation are significant factors in global greenhouse gas emissions, contributing around 17%. Although the PICT contribution may be small, the region's larger forested countries can play an important role in reducing global carbon emissions. These countries can also benefit financially from maintaining and establishing forest areas to mitigate climate change.

The project is to receive funding of EUR 4.9 million over a four-year period from November 2010 to the end of October 2014. The three components of the project are:

- ▣ Pacific Regional REDD+ Policy framework
- ▣ REDD+ Information and support platform
- ▣ REDD+ Readiness on the national level

The regional component covers all SPC member countries and



territories, but national activities are focusing on three countries, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, which have large forest cover. REDD+ strategies include establishing national reference levels, institutional and legal infrastructure and forest carbon monitoring systems. In Fiji, REDD activities are currently supported under the existing SPC/GIZ Program on Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region.

### Climate resilience project to support small island states

Pacific small island states will benefit from a new EU-funded climate resilience project worth EUR 11.4 million to be implemented by SPC over a four year period. The project, entitled *Increasing Climate Resilience of Pacific Small Islands States through the Global Climate Change Alliance*, will support the governments of nine Pacific countries – Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, FSM, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tonga and Tuvalu, in their efforts to tackle the effects of climate change. These countries are especially vulnerable to the projected effects of climate change.

The project will assist countries to develop more detailed climate change response strategies and investment plans and to integrate these into national climate change response frameworks. It will also provide assistance to countries to help identify, design and implement practical on-the-ground climate change adaptation activities, in accordance with their established priorities. At least one concrete adaptation project will be implemented in each of the nine countries.

At the regional level, the project will strengthen the capacity of regional organisations to deliver climate change related scientific, technical and information services to countries (for example, through the development of analytical tools and information exchange mechanisms) and will reinforce regional mechanisms to coordinate the flow of climate change funding in the Pacific. SPREP will play an important role in this regard.

The project, which is funded in the framework of the Global Climate Change Alliance (GCCA), will also help translate into action the objectives of the Pacific-EU Joint Initiative on Climate Change. This joint initiative aims to enhance political dialogue on climate change between the EU and the Pacific region. It also aims to improve the effectiveness of cooperation on climate change issues in the Pacific region and mobilise funding from the EU and other international partners for climate change response in PICTs.



## Taro – supporting an important economic crop

**T**aro has a special place in the diet, culture and heritage of Pacific Islanders. It is a staple food across the region and a growing export crop for some countries, and features prominently in LRD's work programme.

Taro is one of the key crops conserved in the regional genebank, CePaCT, which is part of LRD. Established at the request of SPC member countries and territories in the late 1990s, CePaCT now holds the largest taro collection in the world, with about 900 different accessions. The collection is a vital resource for the future, but is also very much a working resource, available to plant breeders on request and allowing breeding programmes to keep up with today's pests, diseases and changing environment.

The taro collection is largely the result of an AusAID-funded project called TaroGen, which was a response to the taro leaf blight epidemic that wiped out Samoa's entire taro production in the early 1990s. TaroGen collected thousands of different taro varieties from across the Pacific and beyond, in the search for blight resistance genes. These were ultimately found in taro from Southeast Asia. Today, a new global alliance launched in 2011 is building on the partnerships developed by TaroGen to continue enhancing the taro collection and its usefulness in the region and around the world. Under the guidance of SPC, the International Network for Edible Aroids brings together scientists from many different disciplines and different parts of the world,

and unites them with farmers in a practical collaboration that is speeding up development of new taro varieties adapted to today's challenges, and ready for tomorrow's. As well as being a vital subsistence crop, taro is one of the region's most successful agricultural exports, with the main market provided by Pacific Islanders living in Australia and New Zealand. Fiji currently has the largest share of the market, followed by Tonga and Samoa. But demand is far greater than current supply. LRD has several projects that are helping growers and exporters address this shortfall.

One project, funded by ACIAR under PARDI, is helping Samoa rebuild its share of the market following the 1993 blight catastrophe which halted all exports from the country. The project is helping Samoan farmers by building a supply of clean planting material of the preferred new varieties, for example through commercial nurseries. Also to help Samoa, in 2011 the PHAMA team carried out market research and analysis that clarified consumer expectations in New Zealand. This will help suppliers in Samoa better understand and meet the demands of the overseas market.

Another project, also funded by ACIAR, is focusing on 'cleaner pathways' for taro exports from Fiji and Samoa. At the moment, a great deal of taro is rejected as substandard when it reaches Australia or New Zealand, or subjected to costly fumigation that also reduces quality. The project has identified two key problems: a lack of knowledge on







export requirements, including among national biosecurity staff, and a lack of standards that would help growers and exporters meet these requirements. By developing national standards, helping farmers, packers and exporters improve their practices to meet these standards, and building capacity among biosecurity staff, the project will contribute to more efficient export pathways with much less wastage.

But increasing taro production to supply both domestic and export markets also brings potential problems. Without adequate attention and management, the soil is quickly depleted of nutrients, pests and diseases increase, and there is an inevitable decline in yield. With few apparent alternatives, farmers usually address this problem by clearing more forest to reach new soil. The ‘garden island’ of Taveuni in Fiji, for example, is seeing serious deforestation as farmers race to supply

the growing market for taro. LRD is working to address this. A soil health project, again funded by ACIAR, is underway in Fiji and Samoa and is demonstrating how, with greater understanding of soil biology and soil health, taro farmers can develop practical and sustainable ways to manage and improve their soils. The project is also developing simple indicators that farmers and extension workers can use to monitor soil health. If successful and then scaled up, the project will help increase taro production and exports, as well as conservation of forests.

These diverse projects are designed to complement each other, and together to ultimately deliver a more sustainable and profitable production system for taro.



## Building market chains

Agricultural markets and trade are a relatively recent focus for LRD. Complementing the division's more traditional work in crop production, development of more efficient market chains brings many benefits that contribute directly and indirectly to LRD's objectives of improving food security, increasing trade and promoting sustainable resource management. Most obvious are higher incomes for farmers and traders along the chain. Improving domestic market chains brings a better supply of healthy, locally produced food contributing to food and nutritional security, while facilitating access to potentially lucrative export markets can bring significant economic benefits across the board.

Various LRD-based projects are helping improve market chains in different ways, but all share a commitment to new partnerships, better communications and capacity building to help farmers and other market chain actors understand and respond to new and changing market opportunities.

The EU-funded AAACP project completed its four-year Pacific programme at the end of 2011. The programme put its energy into linking farmers to high-value markets, such as the tourism sector and niche markets for certified products. Both of these are growing, lucrative markets that Pacific Island farmers are well placed to supply, but there are significant challenges that must first be overcome. AAACP encouraged farmers to work together in groups as a way to address some

of these challenges, and contributed on a practical level by organising workshops to help build capacity of farmer groups in areas such as business and marketing skills. The need for accurate and timely market information was also highlighted by the programme, and a pilot market information service will soon start in Fiji as a result of AAACP efforts.

Also funded by the EU, the FACT project is working with a small number of carefully selected agricultural enterprises, providing tailored support to help them address the limitations they face and build their markets, both domestic and export. The idea is to generate lessons and best practices that can then be more widely shared and adopted. Eighteen enterprises in Fiji, Marshall Islands, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu are currently working with the FACT team, which allows them to benefit from technical advice and training. For example, the FACT team has helped several of the food production and processing enterprises meet HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) standards. In 2011, FACT helped three enterprises meet these standards: Robert Reimer Enterprises in Marshall Islands, which produces juice and baby foods from pandanus; Agrana Fruit Fiji, which processes and cans tropical fruit; and TH Plantation in Samoa, which produces banana, taro and breadfruit chips. FACT is also helping develop the value-added coconut products industry, which holds great promise as a significant economic sector across the Pacific Islands.



Cleaning ginger for export at Kaiming Agro Processing Ltd in Navua, Fiji

A major initiative of ACIAR, PARDI is conducting research to underpin the development of successful agribusinesses that will contribute to economic development and at the same time benefit small-scale suppliers and traders. With a focus on relatively high-value products of fisheries and forestry as well as agriculture, the initiative uses supply chain analysis as the basis for developing projects that address critical obstacles. Supply chain analyses so far have been carried out for taro, cassava, breadfruit, coconut, pearls, canarium nut, sea cucumber, fisheries and timber. PARDI projects now underway and using the results of the analyses include a project supporting the cultured pearl industries in Fiji and Tonga, one developing products and markets based on canarium nuts in

establishment of ‘market access working groups’ in each country that bring together government and industry players to work on identifying and prioritising activities. PHAMA then provides assistance in implementing the activities. Achievements of the programme so far include helping three copra mills in Solomon Islands get accreditation from the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service, which has allowed them access to the Australian market; negotiating to reduce the severity of the sampling regime for Fiji’s papaya exports to Australia; helping Tongan watermelon exporters address some problems that might otherwise have closed down exports to New Zealand; and paving the way for pineapple exports from Fiji by clarifying import conditions in New Zealand.

Given the complexity and multi-faceted nature of this area of LRD’s work – and the fact that several of these initiatives may be addressing aspects of the same market chain – careful coordination is a high priority. During the year, LRD organised a series of workshops bringing together the various donors and implementing partners from the different projects to promote information exchange and coordinated planning. This has ensured that these initiatives work together and complement each other effectively, as well as complementing and adding value to other LRD research areas, such as crop production and plant health.



Photo: Rajan A. Sami

Solomon Islands, one supporting commercial breadfruit production in Fiji, and one helping develop a clean seed system for new taro varieties in Samoa. Other projects in the pipeline include one that will help Pacific Island cocoa growers reach premium markets, and another that will support vegetable farmers to supply the tourism sector, through development of participatory guarantee schemes.

PARDI’s emphasis is on research and capacity building to overcome obstacles along the market chain. Complementing this work, the AusAID-funded PHAMA project focuses on the regulatory constraints that are restricting access to overseas markets. Working in Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, PHAMA’s approach includes the



Photo: Rajan A. Sami

SPC’s Apiame Cegumalua inspects organic bananas at Agrana, a Fiji-based company that produces tropical fruit pulp for export



At the beginning of 2011 SPC consolidated its education, training and related activities into a new division – the Education, Training and Human Development Division (ETHDD).

The division has five programmes – the Community Education and Training Centre (CETC), the Human Development Programme (HDP), the Regional Media Centre (RMC), the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA).



## Education, Training and Human Development

### Overview

The new divisional structure required some administrative adjustments, but the five programmes continued activities under their individual strategic plans with minimum disruption. The programmes will all undergo review in the coming months, and new strategic plans will be in place from 2013, ensuring that the different programmes truly complement each other to effectively deliver services that meet the training and educational needs of PICTs.

### Community Education and Training Centre

CETC provides training that promotes development at the community level. The focus is on women and young people, and stimulating community enterprise. In October 2011, 30 women from 15 countries graduated from CETC's Community Development Programme. This took to 1,635 the total number of women trained

since CETC began operating in 1963. Joint training was also carried out with the LRD project Facilitating Agricultural Commodity Trade (FACT). Courses were in food processing, food safety standards and virgin coconut oil production and were held in three countries – Fiji, Wallis and Futuna and Solomon Islands. CETC also carried out training of trainers for the Vanuatu Rural Development and Training Centres Association, training of trainers in tailoring in the Marshall Islands, training in small business development for handicraft producers in Tonga, and business skills for food processing in Solomon Islands.

In 2011 CETC completed and published a 'graduate profile', describing how graduates have made use of their CETC training, and their perception of its value. Featuring 198 trainees who graduated between 2004 and 2010, the study found that 85% are now in full-time employment, 3% are



Photo: Muriel Bordenie



Photo: Carla Appel

## Division

self-employed, 7% have emigrated, 2% are seeking employment and 3% are pursuing further studies. These findings, along with results from an employer survey currently under way, will help CETC improve its training programmes in the future.

CETC is working to expand its impact through distance education, and in 2011 began developing appropriate course materials and learner support systems. In August, a specialist from the Commonwealth of Learning delivered training to CETC staff in distance education programme development and management. Distance learning courses will be piloted in Vanuatu in 2012.

CETC is supporting the regional TVET project. It assisted with a mapping exercise in 2011, is supporting development of a regional framework, and is contributing to an SPC engagement strategy.

## Human Development Programme

HDP works in the areas of culture, gender and youth, striving to mainstream these issues into policy and practice at all levels.

All the PICTs place very high value on their culture, and HDP is helping to develop national cultural policies, as well as a regional cultural strategy. In 2011 HDP supported FSM, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu in a cultural mapping and planning exercise as a foundation for their cultural policies. Under the same EU-funded project, a tool kit was developed which will help other countries and territories carry out similar activities.

Efforts to promote gender equality and gender mainstreaming included assisting Solomon Islands and PNG to review approaches to gender in

their governments, and Cook Islands, Niue and Tonga to review their national policies on gender. HDP also developed a 'gender monitoring mechanism' for the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP), which will enable a standardised approach to tracking gender-related commitments, addressing gaps, and monitoring and reporting on progress. A highlight of the year was the 4th Pacific Women's Ministerial Meeting in July, which produced a set of recommendations towards gender equality at the national and regional levels. The meeting included a workshop on climate change.

In partnership with the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), HDP produced the 2011 State of Pacific Youth Report, which highlights opportunities and obstacles facing young people in the region. Marshall Islands and FSM were assisted in reviews of their national





youth policies, while Nauru's national youth policy implementation plan was restructured. Youth employment advocacy training was carried out in Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, and leadership training for youth leaders from FSM, Marshall Islands and Palau was carried out in Guam.

### Regional Media Centre

RMC helps SPC and SPC member countries and territories use the media, particularly radio and television, for awareness raising and educational purposes. One of its key activities is production of the Pacific Way television series, which is broadcast weekly across the region and promotes Pacific culture and environment. In 2011 RMC produced 36 programmes in the series. Pacific Way is also broadcast in monthly radio programmes. Another monthly radio programme

– the Forum Report for the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat – was also produced throughout the year.

RMC also provides training to build PICT capacity to access and use different media. In 2011 the centre's training activities included a 5-month radio broadcasting course for 14 CETC students; a 2-day course on regional radio production for 38 participants organised by the Women's Crisis Centre in Fiji; a script-writing workshop in Vanuatu; and video production training for the Mainstreaming of Rural Development Innovations (MORDI) programme in Tonga. RMC also hosted interns for training in graphic design and multimedia skills.

At the Pacific NCD Forum held in Tonga in August, RMC hosted a training course for journalists, aiming to help them more effectively

present the issues surrounding NCDs in the press and media.

### Regional Rights Resource Team

RRRT is a technical advisory and training team specialising in human rights and governance issues, with a focus on addressing violence against women. RRRT works across the different levels of society, from governments to lawyers, police and civil society.

During 2011, RRRT provided training that reach around 200 people. This included a course for more than 80 lawyers and non-legal government and non-government workers from 11 countries and territories, funded by AusAID and the UN Trust Fund in Support of Actions to Eliminate Violence against Women; training in several



Photo: Chris Palethorpe

countries on drafting legislation to address violence against women; and training for Pacific NGOs to monitor human rights. RRRT also provided support to several PICTs during reporting and review at the UN Council for the Universal Periodic Review.

*Human rights publications*

RRRT’s key publications during 2011 were the Pacific Human Rights Law Digest Volume III, Information Kit on Regional Human Rights Mechanisms, and two policy notes: Promoting National Level Human Rights Coordination and Advancing a Pacific Regional Human Rights Mechanism.

**Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment**

SPBEA works to support the education systems of the region and member countries, towards the vision articulated by the Pacific Education Development Framework – ‘Quality education for all in the Pacific’. It does this primarily by helping to develop assessment procedures for national and regional certificates, with an emphasis on the use of assessment to improve the quality of education and to enhance learning. It also serves as the regional repository for academic and professional standards and qualifications, and administers two secondary school qualifications – the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate and the South Pacific Form Seven Certificate.

*SPBEA membership*

SPBEA member countries are Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Tokelau, Vanuatu and Samoa. Other SPC member states can access SPBEA services by becoming a member and paying an annual contribution, or through one-off costed activities.



Photo: Chris Palethorpe



## Role of assessment in quality of education

A key focus for SPBEA is ensuring that the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate (PSSC) and the South Pacific Form Seven Certificate (SPFSC) continue to be high-quality qualifications, and that the assessment for these qualifications is fair and equitable.

To support monitoring and evaluation, SPBEA worked with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to develop a SMIS-EMIS (School Management Information System–Education Management Information System), which was trialled in Tonga and presented at the 2011 meeting of Pacific Heads of Education Systems. As a central part of its work on improving the quality of learning, SPBEA also developed the regional Assessment Resource Tool for Teaching and Learning (ARTTLe), and facilitated the development of national versions of ARTTLe in Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Kiribati in 2011. In addition, the training of teachers and teacher trainers using the Teacher Competency Modules was completed in Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu, while it continued in Vanuatu, and began in Yap in collaboration with UNESCO.



In 2011, SPBEA worked with UNESCO and AusAID to develop the Pacific Islands Literacy and Numeracy Assessment (PILNA), which will assess and monitor literacy and numeracy across the region. Various review meetings were convened to review the PILNA instruments before they were trialled during the year in six countries. Leaders of literacy and numeracy panels from eight countries met to review the trial results and make recommendations for finalising the instruments.

The full implementation of PILNA across the region is scheduled for the latter part of 2012.

SPBEA also implements three projects. The first is the Literacy and Numeracy Project, which in 2011 provided technical support in Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu and Vanuatu in the development of assessment frameworks and instruments for Year 2 assessment. Year 2 assessment instruments were trialled in four countries –



Photo: Chris Paletthorpe



Photo: Chris Paletthorpe

Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu. This assessment in the early years is critical to SPBEA's efforts to support the improvement of literacy and numeracy in primary schools. The four countries are also developing long-term strategies for national assessment, monitoring and improvement of literacy and numeracy in Years 4, 6 and 8. In Fiji, national baselines for literacy and numeracy were tentatively set and presented to the Ministry of Education. A set of recommen-

dations was presented to Samoa for the improvement of its Samoa Primary Education Literacy Levels (SPELL) tests. The development of life skills assessment instruments progressed in Solomon Islands in partnership with UNICEF.

The second project, the Pacific Register of Qualifications and Standards (PRQS), is close to completing the database that will hold the register. Project staff visited several countries for consultations on policies and procedures for the PRQS.

The third project, Pacific Benchmarking for Education Results (PaBER), is in its early stages and

is currently planning a pilot project in PNG, Samoa and Solomon Islands. The design document was formulated and reviewed by the pilot countries and development partners before undergoing AusAID's review processes in late 2011.

SPBEA continued as a managing contractor for scholarship assessment and facilitated scholarship applications for AusAID through a series of analytical assessment and ranking processes to provide priority and reserve lists for Australian Development Scholarships (ADS) (including Australian Leadership Awards) for Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu.



## Cultural policy development

The cultural sector provides livelihoods and opportunities for economic growth, particularly in the area of cultural heritage and cultural industries. It also provides social security and stability through people's daily practices and traditional solidarity and knowledge systems. Government Heads of Culture throughout the region have noted that although culture and the arts are vibrant in many communities, there is a need to mobilise all stakeholders in the public, private and civil society arenas to jointly promote and strengthen the cultural sector in a systematic and deliberate way. National cultural policies are required to enhance and strengthen the potential of the cultural sector in national planning and policy, and to guide increasing private sector involvement in the cultural industries.

To respond to SPC members' calls for technical assistance in cultural policy development, the Human Development Programme (HDP) initiated a cultural mapping, planning and policy (CMPP) process at the beginning of 2010. The CMPP process is part of a larger EU-funded project titled 'Structuring the Cultural Sector for Improved Human Development'. The project, which ends in early 2013, began with a regional workshop in March 2010 facilitated by CMPP specialist Dr Colin Mercer and Pacific cultural policy specialist Dr Katerina Teaiwa. Under this project, Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu have been provided with funds to carry out a national CMPP process.

These countries have now mapped the central features of their cultural sectors – resources, assets, stakeholders, activities and issues – for the first time. The second step consisted of a cross-sectoral planning process, including local and national consultations. Five countries now have draft policies in place which will be discussed in further local and national consultations before finalisation and implementation.

As a means to strengthen the policy-making and implementation capacity of all SPC members, HDP has also published a CMPP toolkit, authored by Dr Teaiwa. The toolkit is a user-friendly, straightforward and Pacific specific guide to cultural mapping, planning and policy that can be used by national or local governments and community groups.

A second toolkit, on policy implementation, monitoring and evaluation, is currently being finalised and will provide countries with additional guidance. The development of the second toolkit followed a workshop held for the six countries in May 2011, which was partly facilitated by SPBEA (Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment) policy specialist Frank Hegerty, and the inaugural regional meeting on cultural statistics, in which nine SPC member countries participated. Statistics and indicators are essential for sound and informed policy-making and require close collaboration between departments of culture and national statistics offices (NSOs). The meeting, coordinated by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics and SPC and supported by







Photo: Carla Appel



Photo: Carla Appel

UNESCO's Apia Office, featured close partnership between SPC's HDP and its Statistics for Development Programme, and was the first time that Heads of NSOs and Departments of Culture had met to map out how to advance cultural statistics and indicators for improved policy-making. A monitoring plan for the national and regional recommendations is being integrated into the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy.

Policy-making is a long process which requires not only resources, solid data collection and wide participation but also strategic direction. It also requires integration of cross-sectoral issues such as climate change, food security and gender equality. HDP, in partnership with other SPC programmes and international and regional partners, is striving to provide this direction through its cultural policy work.



## RRRT – addressing violence against women

Violence against women is a huge problem in the Pacific. Despite the high rate of such violence, in most jurisdictions the legal frameworks and support services are not adequately structured to effectively tackle the problem.



Pacific Island countries are beginning to shake off the legacy of outdated laws and practices that are woefully inadequate for protecting women in family and criminal matters today. New laws are needed that meet international standards.

The scale of the problem was recognised by Pacific Forum Leaders in 2009. Their Cairns Communiqué identified sexual and gender based violence, primarily directed toward

women and children, as pervasive, often underreported and ‘a risk to human security and a potentially destabilising factor for communities and societies alike’.

The Regional Rights Resource Team is assisting SPC member governments to draft new comprehensive legislation to address this form of violence.

In 2011, RRRT produced analysis of legislative drafting options on violence against women for Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. RRRT also continued to provide guidance and leadership in the area of protecting women and children from violence through national and subregional consultations and in-country mentoring.



Photo: Carla Appel



Photo: Carla Appel



Photo: Carla Appel

RRRT made significant progress in partnership with the governments of Kiribati, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. It assisted with the formation of task forces on violence against women and legislative reform. The team also responded to requests for assistance in ensuring that best practice standards were incorporated in draft legislation designed to address violence against women and children and ensure the integrity of families.

As a result of these efforts, cabinets in Kiribati and Tonga have approved the drafting of new comprehensive legislation on violence against women and children. Solomon Islands has approved a budget to review, support and conduct consultations toward drafting a Family Protection Bill. And Tuvalu has drafted a Domestic Violence and Family Protection Bill that will go to parliament in 2012.

RRRT's work was integral to each of these developments.

This violence is a sensitive issue in Pacific cultures but one that needs to be urgently addressed. RRRT is working to ensure that the Pacific Community has the resources it needs to rise to the challenge.





## PHD structure

The **Disease Surveillance, Research and Control Unit** helps PICTs in their efforts to prevent, control or manage key communicable diseases. The unit works to strengthen and coordinate disease surveillance systems and to enhance preparedness for and response to disease outbreaks. The unit plays a key role within the Coordinating Body of the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PPHSN), and its work is closely aligned to the priorities and strategy of the PPHSN.

The **Health Advancement Unit** promotes good health for all Pacific Islanders, with a focus on equity and services for vulnerable groups, and increasing community resilience. The unit assists countries to address the social, environmental, political and economic factors that affect individual health, particularly in relation to non-communicable diseases.

The **Grant Management Unit** manages and disburses public health related grants to governmental and non-governmental organisations in PICTs, ensuring compliance with donor requirements. It provides oversight of two of the region's largest health-related grant streams – the Pacific HIV Response Fund and a portfolio of Global Fund grants.

# Public Health Division

## Overview

After the first 12 months since its organisational restructure, PHD ended the year with confidence that the new structure is helping the division deliver better results. The three new operational units – Disease Surveillance, Research and Control, Health Advancement and Grant Management – are described in the box at left.

The division's strategic plan for 2010–2014 has four objectives: combat and reduce the overall impact and burden of disease; contribute to strengthening national health systems; increase the capacity of PICTs to address non-health-sector determinants of health; and increase the efficiency and impact of interventions.

PHD's work is aligned to regional priorities identified by Pacific health ministers, and to the national priorities

of SPC's member countries. As part of this alignment, PHD contributes to the implementation of two regional Frameworks for Action – Healthy Islands and Food Secure Pacific.

## Reducing the burden of disease

The priority diseases in the Pacific region include non-communicable diseases (NCDs), HIV and other sexually transmitted infections (STIs), tuberculosis (TB), and malaria (in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu). In 2011 PHD made significant strides towards helping member countries reduce the impact and burden of these diseases.

Jointly with the World Health Organization (WHO), the division leads the implementation of the Pacific Framework for the Prevention and Control of NCDs. The level of



Aerobic routine in Kiribati



Love Patrol, a TV series on HIV and other STIs

attention to NCDs was significantly boosted by the declaration of Pacific Islands Forum Leaders at their 42<sup>nd</sup> meeting in September that NCDs – diabetes, cancer, chronic respiratory diseases, heart disease and stroke – have reached epidemic proportions in the region, creating a ‘human, social and economic crisis’ requiring an urgent and comprehensive response.

In 2011, French Polynesia, Guam, Tuvalu and Papua New Guinea were all given technical assistance and support with finalising their national NCD plans, bringing to 15 the number of PICTs that now have plans officially endorsed, while a further three have draft plans. Implementation of the plans was assisted through the disbursement of large grants, including funding for 10 national NCD coordinator positions, as well as smaller grants for community projects addressing

NCDs. The division also devoted significant time to advocacy within various countries, building governments’ commitments to developing policy and legislation addressing NCD risk factors.

PHD also leads the implementation of the Pacific Regional Strategy on HIV and other STIs. Thirteen countries and territories are now implementing a comprehensive STI control and prevention strategy, which includes raising community awareness through strategic health communication, a focus on antenatal clinic attendees and their partners, and introduction of HIV rapid testing. HIV and STI counselling and testing services are now available at a total of 42 sites across the Pacific Islands region.

Technical support to member countries and territories helped the region exceed the 2010 targets under

the Regional Stop TB strategy. TB mortality rates have dropped from 13 to 10.5 per 100,000 since 2000. The decrease in malaria incidence in Solomon Islands and Vanuatu is even more marked, with a 60% decline since PHD began to work with these countries under the Pacific Malaria Initiative in 2003.

Preparedness is key to reducing the impact of disease outbreaks. By the end of 2011, PHD had assisted 15 countries and territories to prepare national pandemic preparedness plans, and a further five have draft plans.

### Strengthening national health systems

Effective health information systems are essential to delivering good national health care, and PHD works to support development of such systems. Twelve PICTs now



## Public Health Division

have effective monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems in place for their NCD plans. In 2011 PHD also assisted Kiribati in a rapid assessment of its health information system.

Well-trained staff are another prerequisite, and PHD increased both the scale and scope of its training for health workers in 2011. Funding made available through PHD supported some 55 positions in national health systems.

### Determinants of health

Besides the biological causes of ill health, there are many factors that influence health. These include housing and adequate sanitation; education; sexual behaviour; use of tobacco and alcohol; diet; and availability of health care. PHD is working to help PICTs address these factors and reduce the ill health caused by inequity in accessing services.

Providing basic health care in rural areas is a challenge in many PICTs, which PHD is helping to address. In Vanuatu, for example, diagnostic services are being improved in rural health centres, with 308 facilities now able to diagnose malaria – an increase of 30% since the end of 2008. Gender inequality in access to health care is also being addressed, with an emphasis on HIV and STIs. In Kiribati and Cook Islands, a total of 32 facilitators have been trained to implement community HIV education programmes.

With help from PHD, five countries – Fiji, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tuvalu and Vanuatu – have developed national sexual reproductive health education policies, and Kiribati has a draft policy.

PHD assisted seven countries to develop or finalise legislation relating to tobacco control, while a further four countries were helped in their efforts to address alcohol misuse. A total of 12 countries and territories have now been helped to implement alcohol harm-reduction interventions in line with WHO recommendations.

A new factor potentially affecting health is climate change, and in 2011 PHD hosted a workshop to investigate the possible impacts on health as the climate changes, to inform future health strategies.

### Enhancing interventions

With limited funding available, it is important to ensure that every intervention is effective and has maximum impact. This includes ensuring that the work of different partners is coordinated and aligned with regional strategies and with countries' identified priorities. PHD contributes to this by engaging in high-level forums, helping develop regional frameworks, coordinating various working groups, and aligning its own work plan to country priorities through the joint country strategies. In 2011 the division engaged in the New Caledonia and PNG JCS missions, helping to identify priority needs in these countries.

To ensure more effective use of funding, in 2011 the division's Grant Management Unit worked on improving the way grants are managed and reported on by PICTs, with a particular emphasis on transparency and accountability. Standard operating procedures were developed and M&E improved so that it is more target and results oriented.

### *Learning life skills*

Across Fiji, Kiribati, Vanuatu and RMI, 165 primary and secondary schools now include life skills education in the curriculum as a result of technical assistance provided by PHD.

### *'Healthy Islands'*

The 'Healthy Islands' vision was first developed by Pacific Health Ministers in the mid-1990s as a holistic health strategy for the region. A call for its revitalisation, supported by PHD, led to a new Framework for Action being endorsed in 2011.

### *Youth-friendly service centres*

PHD has helped develop youth-friendly service centres that make it easier to get information and education on STIs and HIV prevention. In 2011, the number of young people using these centres increased significantly.

### *New M&E framework*

PHD has developed a new M&E framework that will be fully implemented at the beginning of 2012. Counties are being assisted to strengthen their own M&E systems for diseases such as NCDs, HIV and STIs.

### Health promotion and disease prevention

Education, health promotion and behaviour change are key to reducing the burden of communicable and non-communicable disease. In 2011, the Prevention Team within the Health Advancement Unit assisted PICTs to develop national multi-media campaigns to reduce the sexual risk behaviours that fuel high rates of STI prevalence in the region. In some PICTs, STI prevalence is more than 30% among young people under the age of 25 years.

In partnership with WHO, UNICEF, UNFPA and the Red Cross, the team undertook a region-wide training needs assessment survey to identify training priorities and the technical support required to strengthen strategic health communication and behaviour change.

PICTs identified an urgent need for training in research, monitoring and evaluation, resource development and sustainability. They also requested training in new methods of promoting behaviour change to supplement the traditional posters, brochures and flyers, which are useful for providing information but less effective in bringing about change. Results of the Training Needs Assessment will inform technical assistance provided by all regional partners and ensure harmonisation and alignment of support provided to PICTs.

## Improving TB detection and management

TB is still a serious public health problem in the Pacific – 16,107 TB cases were newly diagnosed in 2010 with 14,531 in Papua New Guinea and 1,576 in other PICTs. Rates for some PICTs are declining but in others have increased since 2000, probably due to better detection of cases that might previously have gone undiagnosed.

PHD's TB Team provides technical assistance to support region-wide implementation of the internationally recommended Stop TB Strategy in line with the objectives of WHO's Regional Strategy to Stop TB in the Western Pacific Region: 2011-2015. In 2011, the team continued to provide technical assistance to National TB Programmes in the Pacific to improve the detection,



National TB Programme staff interviewing a traditional healer in Efate, Vanuatu, for the TB and traditional healers study

diagnosis and management of TB cases. The team provided direct technical assistance to programmes in 12 PICTs and strengthened collaboration with regional partners including WHO, CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention) and the International Union Against TB and Lung Disease.

The Pacific now reports good treatment success rates. When cases are diagnosed, they have access to high-quality TB care by trained staff, effective TB drugs and good clinical and laboratory follow up according to agreed protocols. This has been a significant achievement for the Pacific and one that service providers can be proud of. However, challenges remain in providing treatment to people living in remote and overcrowded urban locations.

In Kiribati, the TB Team supported the Ministry of Health and Medical

Services to implement a national project – the Quality TB Epidemic Control Project – with a large component dedicated to improving the laboratory. The team also supported implementation of Global Fund TB projects in the region, and two projects focused on research to improve TB control. One study examined the association between TB and diabetes in Kiribati and another assessed how traditional healers contribute towards TB control in Vanuatu. The TB Team will continue this work in 2012 and will also seek additional funds to improve TB control in the Pacific.



## 'Whole of society' approach to NCDs



Working in close collaboration with WHO, SPC has been assisting its 22 Pacific Island members through the 2-1-22 (2 agencies, 1 team, 22 countries) programme to address NCDs (non-communicable diseases) through costed national NCD strategies, support for tobacco control legislation, national nutritional strategies and alcohol harm-reduction interventions, as well as other interventions targeting the four main risk factors for NCDs.

The programme also provides direct funding through NCD grants to assist countries in implementing their national strategies. The 2011 work plan focused on strengthening implementation at country level, especially through capacity building and training of national coordinators to support in-country NCD teams.

The four key risk factors for NCDs are tobacco use (including exposure to second-hand smoke); diets high in fats, salt and sugar; lack of physical activity; and alcohol consumption. Intermediate risk factors include obesity and abnormal levels of blood pressure, blood sugar and cholesterol. All these factors are prevalent in PICTs.

Underlying these main risk factors are socio-economic determinants such as poverty, inequality, unemployment, social instability and unfair trade. Increasing urbanisation in PICTs and the projected effects of climate change on food security are important considerations in addressing NCD prevention over the long term.

As SPC Director-General Dr Jimmie Rodgers has noted, 'The emphasis on a 'whole of government and whole of society' response to the crisis is critical because the major determinants of NCDs are outside the remit of the health sector, as are their solutions.' He welcomed the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' acknowledgement that NCDs have reached epidemic proportions in the region, requiring an urgent and comprehensive response.

SPC and WHO supported PICT participation in the UN High-level Meeting on Non-communicable Diseases (September 2011), which recognised the need for governments to adopt public policies and strategies to prevent NCDs.

Addressing the UN meeting, Papua New Guinea's Minister for Health and HIV/AIDS said Papua New Guinea had included NCDs in its

national plans for 2011-2020, its 30-Year Strategic Plan and other long-term strategies. He stressed that trade policies must protect the health of the country's population and governments must support the availability of healthy foods.

In July 2011, SPC and PNG signed a memorandum of understanding that provides an instrument through which SPC can support PNG's national NCD activities. A grant of AUD 450,000 over two years was made under the 2-1-22 Pacific NCD Programme in addition to SPC's technical assistance and other small grants to PNG civil society and non-government organisations.

At CRGA 41, members commended SPC on its work on NCDs while calling for continued regional support for national efforts.

Kiribati's representative acknowledged SPC's support in developing his country's national NCD plan, which promotes physical activity in maneabas (village gathering places), work places and schools, and in rural areas; anti-smoking campaigns; and home and village gardening.

The importance of trade and food safety issues, reorientation of approaches to improving diets, lowering tariffs on imports of healthy food and other uses of legislation to promote better nutrition were noted by Samoa's representative. She also emphasised the need for regional support mechanisms to recognise the work being done in countries, including through traditional structures, which have the advantage of a sustained presence.

## Support for long-term HIV care



Participants at a patient monitoring workshop

**'A patient monitoring system is the backbone of clinical care, treatment, support and prevention of HIV'**

Forty-two people – doctors, nurses, pharmacists, counsellors and peer supporters – attended the workshop from the 13 countries supported by the Global Fund: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The SPC training team, led by PHD's HIV Treatment and Care Adviser, was assisted by staff from regional partners: Fiji Pharmaceutical and Biomedical Services, Pacific Counselling and Social Services, and the Pacific Islands AIDS Foundation.

The outputs of the training include country-led preparation of action plans for implementing the new patient monitoring system; finalisation of the draft continuum of care framework for HIV developed in 2009, in line with the national strategic plans for HIV and STIs; and strengthening of in-country HIV care teams.

With increasing access to antiretroviral therapy (ART) in PICTs, health services must be able to provide and sustain efficient long-term HIV care. This requires an effective monitoring system for people living with HIV, integrated with clinical care, treatment, prevention and support services.

PHD is helping PICTs build their capacity to provide such services. As part of these efforts, a training workshop on a patient monitoring system for HIV care and ART was conducted in Nadi, Fiji, with support from the Global Fund-financed Multi-country Western Pacific Round 7 HIV Grant. The training was designed to enable participants to:

- ▶ establish a patient monitoring system for HIV care and ART in their home countries;
- ▶ utilise the data collected to support patient monitoring and management by health care facilities, and to assess the effectiveness of programmes at national, regional and international levels; and
- ▶ strengthen HIV care and ART programmes through linking or integrating them with surveillance systems, existing health services, prevention intervention and other support services.



## Disease surveillance and control in 2011



The PHD Disease Surveillance, Research and Control Unit is the focal point of the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PPHSN) Coordinating Body and its activities are closely aligned with the priorities of the network.



In 2011, the unit contributed to the strengthening of PICTs capacity to prepare for, detect and respond to outbreaks of PPHSN target diseases, i.e. dengue, influenza, typhoid fever, cholera, measles, leptospirosis and HIV/STIs, as well as emerging diseases in the region.

Information on the emergence of a new disease in the region, chikungunya fever, was shared on PacNet (PPHSN's alert and communication tool) in a timely manner with all PICTs. This mosquito-borne disease was introduced into New Caledonia

from Indonesia, where the disease is endemic. An article describing the epidemiology of chikungunya and the successful response in New Caledonia was also published in Inform'ACTION, the network's information bulletin.

An alert was sent to all PICTs through PacNet regarding the epidemic risk attributed to the re-emergence of dengue virus type 2 (DENV-2) in the region and the consecutive outbreak of DENV-2 in Yap. DENV-2 has not circulated in most of the PICTs for more than 12-15 years, except for sporadic cases, and it therefore represents a real threat for all countries.

Jointly with other PPHSN partners – WHO, CDC and the Pacific Island Health Officers Association – SPC helped Yap with the response to the dengue outbreak through the provision of supplementary staff (doctors and nurses) at its Central Hospital and laboratory equipment and supplies.



Recommendations and advice were sent to all PICTs on the preparedness measures and equipment required to organise a rapid public health response and to mitigate the spread and impact of re-emerging DENV-2 at both national and regional levels.

The unit also contributed to the provision of laboratory supplies and biological diagnostic efforts in the Marshall Islands for the identification and control of a dengue outbreak caused by another type of dengue (DENV-4).

A subregional workshop organised by SPC in collaboration with CDC in Fiji in September 2011 assisted six PICTs (Cook Islands, Kiribati,

Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu) to review and strengthen their influenza surveillance systems. This workshop was part of a project aimed at making sure that all PICTs, including the most remote islands, can send samples for testing to laboratories for detection and identification of influenza viruses.

Through this project, 14 PICTs also received technical assistance for capacity building in laboratory management and testing, including the procurement of appropriate equipment and support for the diagnosis of influenza, and quality assurance of corresponding activities.

It is crucial that PICTs can detect and confirm outbreaks of communicable diseases quickly in order to respond effectively. Arrangements for the referral of biological samples for other diseases targeted by the PPHSN were also facilitated by SPC through the PPHSN laboratory network, LabNet.

At the regional level, the unit contributed to the setting up and coordination of an ad-hoc weekly

surveillance system to ensure that information related to significant health events in each of the 22 PICTs was efficiently transmitted during the period of the XIV<sup>th</sup> Pacific Games held in New Caledonia in August-September 2011.

In collaboration with WHO, technical assistance was also provided to Nauru, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna in the review of their national surveillance systems and the implementation of a standard syndromic surveillance system adopted by all PICTs.

### Associated activity

Partnership and concerted action are key elements in the control of zoonotic diseases, such as leptospirosis. In 2011, Fiji was given assistance and support by the unit in the facilitation of two workshops involving key national partners for the development of a national strategy for the control of leptospirosis.





## Statistics for Development Programme

SDP's goal is:

To strengthen the capacity of national statistical systems and social and economic planning agencies to ensure the region's policy-makers and analysts, and other international stakeholders have access to a wide range of development statistics and key indicators to support evidence-based decision-making.

The Statistics for Development Programme is organised into three functional working groups: **data collection**, **statistical analysis** and **data dissemination**, with statistical training and professional development capacity building playing an essential role in the work of all three groups.

In 2011, SDP implemented the first year of Phase 1 (2011–2014) of the Pacific Statistics Strategy Action Plan, the first of three distinct phases in the implementation of the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy, 2011–2020. The programme's own 2011–2014 strategic plan, which is carefully aligned with the ten-year regional strategy, calls for SDP to focus on the following three areas over the next four years:

- ▶ **Improved statistical collections**, including a greater operational emphasis on assisting members in developing functioning and sustainable administrative databases across key sectors;

- ▶ **Quality analysis** and information pertaining to key demographic, economic, and social statistics, as well as addressing data and information needs covering cross-sectoral development issues and challenges, such as climate change, environment, food security and gender;

- ▶ Facilitating **user-friendly access** to such information and in the process promoting greater data utilisation.

The three areas address the widespread demands for greater accessibility of high-quality and timely statistics and development indicators.

### Highlights of 2011 work

#### *Support for census activities*

SDP support for census activities in member countries focused on providing technical assistance and training support to various censuses already undertaken or to be conducted.



In Vanuatu, SDP assisted with the publication and dissemination of the 2009 census report incorporating a comprehensive demographic analysis and new population projections.

In Solomon Islands, FSM, Kiribati and RMI, SPC provided further technical assistance relating to censuses. Final census analyses and reports from these countries are expected to be available on SPC's PRISM (Pacific Regional Information System) website in the first half of 2012. Updated Millennium Development Goal (MDG) and national development indicators for these countries will also be posted on the PRISM website ([www.spc.int/prism](http://www.spc.int/prism)).



SDP also assisted Nauru, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu with planning and technical preparation for their 2011 censuses (2012 in the case of Tuvalu). Analytical reports from these countries are expected to be available in late 2012 or early 2013.

*Data dissemination*

An important part of SDP's work has concentrated on improving access to statistical data and information derived from population censuses, household surveys and some administrative databases, to facilitate greater use by planners and policy-makers.

In close collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), SDP updated its regional MDG database in 2011 to ensure that the most up-to-date development indicators are available for the compilation of the Pacific MDG Tracking Report by PIFS prior to the annual Forum Leaders' meeting.

The programme has worked to further improve the PRISM website, adding several new features, such as interactive mapping and graphing facilities that allow users more freedom in how they access, extract and display statistical data and information. PRISM also includes more regional statistical tables to meet the growing demand for such information by regular users such as technical and financial partners and other regional agencies.

An important development was the initiative by the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) to publish two data series for its official MDG indicators: one showing UNSD figures and another showing Pacific Island statistics and indicators, including those supplied

by regional agencies such as SPC on behalf of countries. While the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UNESCAP) has for many years accepted SPC-provided statistics and indicators in their annual Asia-Pacific population updates, and SPC population projections have for years been used by the United Nations Population Division, UNSD and the UNDP Human Development Report Office have thus far not made regular use of statistical data and development indicators supplied by SPC, preferring to deal with national statistics agencies directly.

*National Minimum Development Indicator database*

Tangible progress was made in this SPC-wide initiative ([www.spc.int/nmdi](http://www.spc.int/nmdi)), which has been developed in response to Pacific Leaders' call for greater harmonisation of statistical concepts, classification and systems, as well as the compilation of statistics and indicators across key sectors. Indicator coverage continues to increase, and challenges relating to data gaps have been clearly defined. The major challenge is the unavailability or lack of access to national-level information in key sectors such as agriculture. A pilot initiative is being undertaken in cooperation with LRD to ascertain whether a comprehensive Pacific-wide agricultural sector review, along the lines of the review undertaken in the fisheries sector several years ago, might yield the desired results.

*Economic statistics*

SDP carried out various economic statistics activities in line with the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy in the course of the year. One notable undertaking was a regional workshop on consumer prices in Fiji for all SPC members. This was the first workshop ever undertaken



on price statistics in the region and it proved timely as several countries were planning a rebase of their consumer price indices.

SDP also undertook some capacity supplementation activities in member countries. The programme's economic statisticians compiled national accounts statistics for Tuvalu. SDP also supported the development of trade indices for the Kiribati and Solomon Islands national statistics offices. These activities will help harmonise economic statistics in the Pacific region and make them more easily comparable.

### Future priorities

As SDP continues the implementation of the Pacific Statistics Strategy Action Plan, Phase 1 (2011–2014), a major focus of its work will continue to be on the three areas listed above. The programme will continue to provide assistance relating to censuses and training with respect to demographic and health surveys and household income and expenditure surveys. SDP will assist countries in developing strategies and plans relating to economic statistics and in compiling national accounts and trade statistics. It will also help member countries improve the quality of vital statistics and civil registration. Many of these activities will be undertaken in partnership with other regional and international agencies. The programme will assist member countries in developing national statistical development strategies and master plans.

A key goal of the Pacific Plan that is also included in the Ten Year Pacific Statistics Strategy, 2011–2020 is greater harmonisation of statistical concepts, classifications and systems. There have been successes in this area, including the **recent agreement on**

**a core set of questions in national population censuses**, and the appointment by the Pacific Statistics Steering Committee of a technical working group to develop a **Pacific-wide household income and expenditure survey questionnaire and methodology**. This work will ensure compatibility between countries of key socio-economic statistics and indicators such as labour force participation, employment, poverty lines, expenditure and income patterns (and distribution) and daily food intake.

Concerted efforts will be necessary to **improve statistical databases** and ensure administrative records and associated systems of statistical compilations and registration at country level are sustainable and deliver tangible outcomes. SPC will provide greater leadership in ensuring its own statistical collections across sectors and programmes are maintained and expanded where necessary. The National Minimum Development Indicator database will be a major area of focus, with efforts concentrating on filling existing gaps in data for certain sectors (e.g. agriculture and forestry) and for cross-cutting priorities. The programme will also continue its collaborative work with PIFS to enhance the quality of data and information used for the MDG tracking report.

### Pacific population tops 10 million

In June 2011, according to annual SPC population estimates, the population of the Pacific Islands reached a major milestone – 10 million.

Melanesia's population is **growing** by 2% a year, faster than that of Micronesia (1.5%) and Polynesia (0.7%). The fastest growing countries and territories are Guam (2.7%), Solomon Islands (2.7%) and Vanuatu (2.6%), where high growth rates are due to migration (Guam) and continued high birth rates.

The populations of Niue (-2.3%) and Tokelau (-0.2%) have declined due to continuous emigration to New Zealand. **Sustained emigration** also accounts for recent population declines in Wallis and Futuna, which experienced a net loss of 1,500 people between 2003 and 2008, and Federated States of Micronesia, which saw a net decline of 4,000 people between 2000 and 2010.

This number is expected to continue its upward march, reaching 15 million by 2035, although SDP's analysis of data provided by SPC's 22 island members shows that there is considerable variety in population growth across the region, with some countries and territories even shrinking in population.

Population density in 2010 varied from 485 people per square kilometre in Nauru and 431 in Tuvalu to 6 people per square kilometre in Niue. The Melanesian countries of New Caledonia (14), Papua New Guinea (15), Solomon Islands (18), and Vanuatu (21) also figured among the least densely populated. Within countries, density varies considerably, with high density linked to social and health problems where there has been rapid urbanisation, for example in Kiribati.

The subregional population profiles (Figure 1) provide more information.

With high birth and low life expectancy rates, Melanesia has a 'youth explosion' pyramid shape in its population profile. Forty per cent of the population of Papua New Guinea and 38% of that of Solomon Islands consist of children under 15 years.

Although they are not growing at the same rate, Polynesia and Micronesia also have large youth populations. Marshall Islands (42%

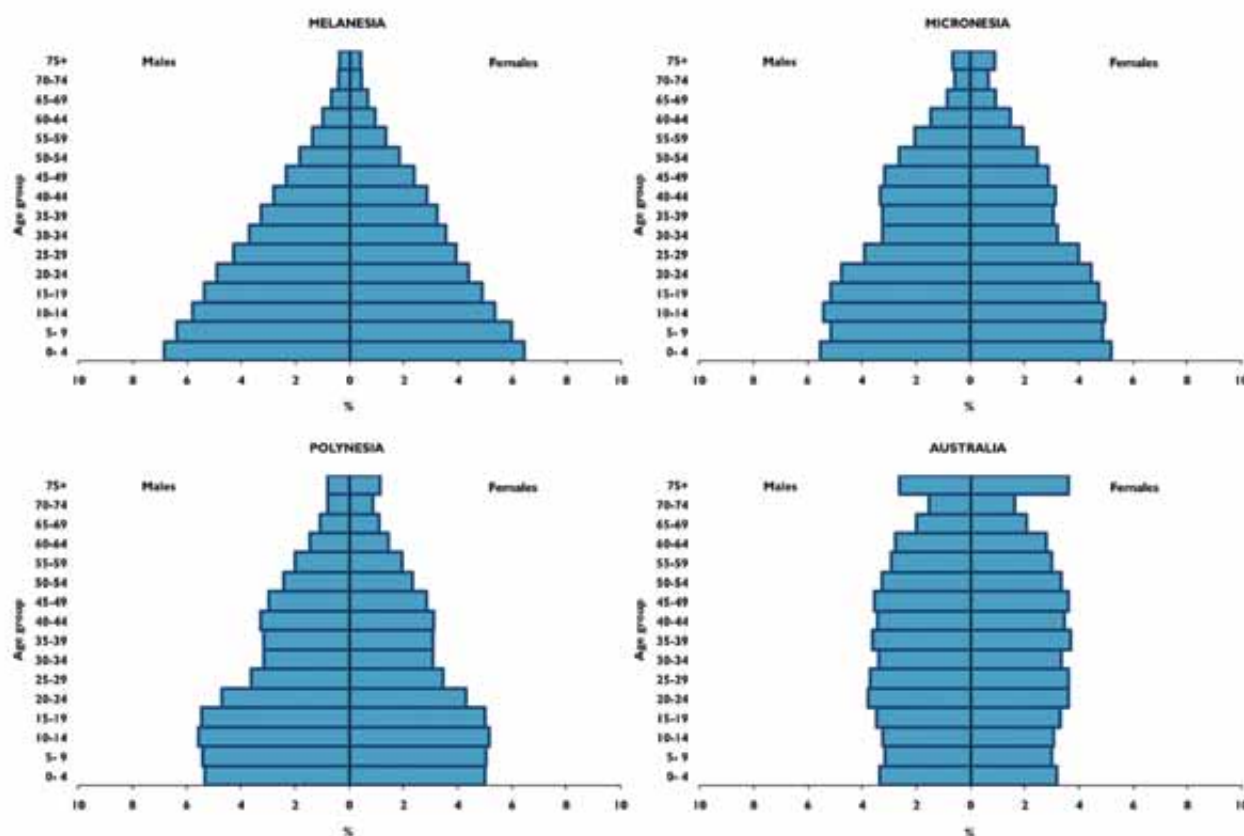


Figure 1: Subregional population profiles

of the population under 15 years), Samoa (38%) and Tonga (38%) top youth charts there.

Interestingly, both subregion population profiles have ‘tighter waistlines’, with lower numbers in the 30–40 age group, indicating that more people in this group have migrated and/or are working overseas.

This is reflected in the higher *age dependency ratios* of natural resource-poor countries. The age dependency ratio is an indicator of the economic burden the productive portion of the population must carry.

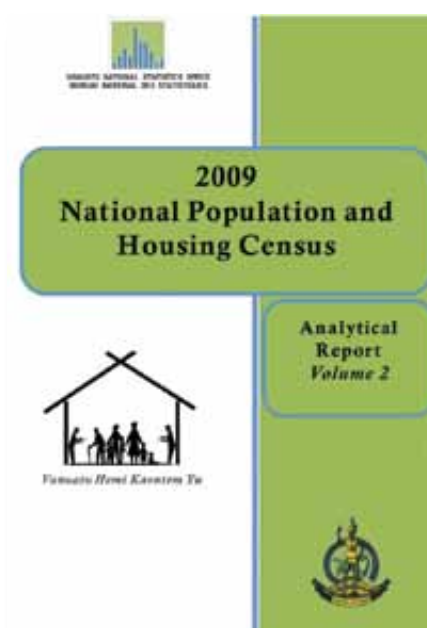
With more than 80 dependent people per 100 ‘economically productive’ people, this ratio was highest in Tonga (85), the Marshall Islands (85), Samoa (83), and Tokelau (83). When combined with the lower numbers in the 30–40 age bracket, it indicates the impact of migration on the statistics and the importance of remittances.

**The highest proportions of people aged over 60 years** are in Niue (16%), Wallis and Futuna (13%), Tokelau (12%), Cook Islands (12%), New Caledonia (12%) and Guam (11%). Excluding Pitcairn (50), the oldest median age levels are evident in Palau (35), Niue (34) and New Caledonia (31).

The story is different in natural resource-rich and more populous Melanesian countries, where labour migration has had less of an impact on population numbers.

SPC demographers note that rapid population growth affects both the overall quality of life and the quality of essential services in health and education, emphasising that at current growth rates, it will take at least one generation to slow the *momentum of population growth* in the region. This is despite a substantial decline in fertility from around 7 live births per woman 40 years ago in most Pacific Island countries to less than 4 births in most countries today.

The reason: with twice as many (or more) women today having half the number of children their mothers had, the overall number of babies being born is similar; hence, overall population numbers across the region, particularly in high-fertility countries such as Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and PNG, will continue to rise over the next 20 to 30 years, before possibly beginning to stabilise.





## Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility (SEPPF)

The Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility (SEPPF) supports SPC programmes and overall corporate planning. This work includes leading the design, implementation and monitoring of joint country strategies, which outline the full scope of SPC's assistance to individual Pacific Community members, based on national priorities, over a defined period. The facility also undertakes sectoral analyses to inform strategic decision-making at the national level.

SEPPF's four key result areas are:

- ▣ country and programme support;
- ▣ regional cooperation and strategic positioning;
- ▣ policy analysis, research and mainstreaming;
- ▣ monitoring and evaluation.

The focus is on improving SPC's operational efficiency, to ensure that in both the immediate and longer term, SPC and its programmes are best able to support member countries and territories to meet their development goals.

### Country and programme support

Joint country strategy (JCS) review and development – Joint country strategies are based on each country's priorities and national development strategy. In 2011, existing strategies with Cook Islands and Nauru were reviewed, and new strategies were developed with New Caledonia and PNG – the final two of the 22 JCS. These strategies align with



(Left to right): Cenon Padolina (SPC), Professor Simon Saulei (Director, PNG Forest Research Institute), and Joseph Turia (First Assistant Secretary, Department of National Planning and Monitoring), at the PNG JCS opening plenary in Port Moresby, 5 August 2011.

SPC's three sustainable development outcomes: sustainable human and social development, natural resource management and development, and economic development. The new format will make it easier to quantify SPC's contribution to each of the three development outcomes at the national level for each member.

SEPPF continued to support SPC programmes and divisional directors in a number of areas, including analysing services delivered in core business areas, helping mobilise resources through developing or reviewing funding proposals, developing and analysing divisional strategic plans, reviewing JCS activities implemented by the programmes, and undertaking monitoring and evaluation at divisional and programme level.

### Regional cooperation and strategic positioning

SEPPF coordinated several regional initiatives, such as the food security working group, which held meetings during the year to advance key issues relating to the regional framework, *Towards a Food Secure Pacific – Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific*, which was developed in 2010.

The facility worked with programmes to compile volume three of the annual publication, *SPC and the Pacific Plan*, which provides a detailed overview of SPC's contributions to achieving the vision, goals and objectives of the Pacific Plan for strengthening regional cooperation and integration.



Hon. John Silk (Minister for Foreign Affairs, Marshall Islands), Dr Jimmie Rodgers, Dr Johann Bell (co-editor of the book), and Mr James Batley (Deputy Director General, AusAID) at the launch of the book *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change*.

Photo: Jipé Le-Bars

SEPPF continued to support the Director-General in his role as the Deputy Regional Authorising Officer. This role entails assisting the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat in convening meetings of the Pacific members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP)

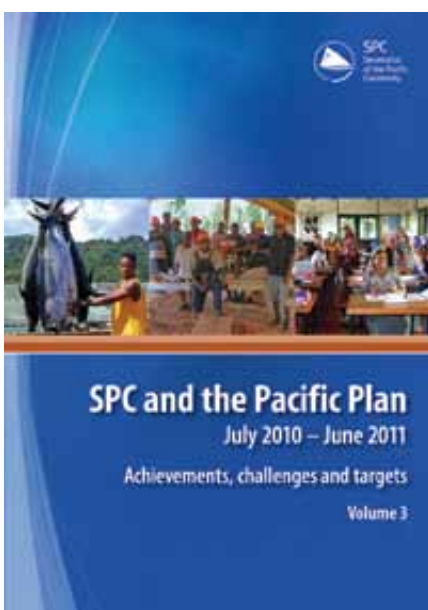
with respect to aid for trade and Economic Partnership Agreements, and meetings of Pacific trade ministers and officials.

In 2011, SEPPF was actively involved in regional cooperation initiatives with agencies making up the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) and bodies such as the Asian Development Bank, Commonwealth Secretariat, European Union, French Pacific Fund, GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), United Nations agencies, USAID (United States Agency for International Development) and World Bank. During the year SPC signed memoranda of understanding with the Pacific Aviation Safety Office, Pacific Power Association, SPREP, South Pacific Tourism Organisation and University of the South Pacific.

### Climate change – policy analysis and research

Dr Johann Bell, Principal Fisheries Scientist (Climate Change) with SEPPF was responsible for initiating and overseeing the publication of *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change* and the companion volume, *Summary for Pacific Island Countries and Territories*. The 2011 publication is the culmination of a 3.5-year, AUD 1.5 million project funded by AusAID. The study describes the implications of projected climate changes for economic development, food security and livelihoods, and the adaptations, policies and investments required to reduce the threats and capitalise on the opportunities.

Around 90 scientists and fisheries and aquaculture specialists from 36 institutions (from the Asia and Pacific region, the United States and





**Around 90 scientists and fisheries and aquaculture specialists from 36 institutions contributed to this comprehensive study.**



Europe) contributed to the work. Together, these experts assisted SPC to produce estimates of the effects of representative low and high greenhouse gas emissions on the wide range of physical, chemical and biological processes that support fisheries and aquaculture.

The companion summary describes the key policy issues and options for individual member countries and territories that decision-makers need to consider in addressing the projected effects of climate change on the region's vital fisheries and aquaculture resources. National plans for using these resources sustainably should be re-assessed regularly to take advantage of improved climate change models as they become available.

In 2011, SPC also coordinated the production of a report entitled *Food security in the Pacific and East Timor and its vulnerability to climate change*. The report, which was commissioned by the Australian Government Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, was produced by a multidisciplinary team consisting of staff from SPC and

the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and an independent consultant.

### Mainstreaming climate change and food security

SPC emphasises the value of mainstreaming cross-cutting issues across all its technical programmes. In 2011 the focus was on climate change and food security. The climate change team established within SEPPF is developing mechanisms based on SPC's *Internal Climate Change Engagement Strategy*, endorsed at the 2011 meeting of CRGA, to ensure an 'organisation-wide coordinated approach' to providing climate change assistance to members across all SPC programmes. Internally, SPC programmes have been supporting adaptation initiatives with the potential to contribute to mitigation. SEPPF has also been the focal point for SPC at climate change-related meetings and facilitated the exchange of experience and information between different CROP agencies. SPC's food security engagement strategy, which will be completed in 2012, will follow a similar process.

## Monitoring and evaluation (M&E)

SEPPF has been coordinating the development of an overarching performance management framework that will link SPC's various M&E systems together. This corporate-wide monitoring and evaluation framework will be a web-based integrated reporting information system that will aid work planning, budgeting and reporting, and support the tracking of activities and initiatives to facilitate reporting. It is designed to produce reports automatically, including on the outcomes and impacts of SPC's work in member countries and territories. The information will come from sources such as National Minimum Development Indicators or MDG tracking databases. The system will also aid in reporting the costs of activities and interventions in PICTs and the resulting outputs. This information will be sourced from reports by projects and divisions to CRGA, and annual reports on joint country strategies.

The integrated reporting system will enable systematic reporting against divisional objectives and make it possible to track and manage development outcomes in SPC's key result areas

In late 2011, pilot testing of the reporting system began with the Land Resources and Public Health Divisions, and full implementation and adoption by SPC programmes is expected by 2013.



# Operations and Management Directorate

The Operations and Management Directorate was established in January 2011 as part of the revision of SPC's organisational structure. It combines SPC's Corporate Services (finance, human resources and administration) and Programme Support Services (ICT, library, publications and translation/interpretation) and comes under the office of the Deputy Director-General (Noumea).

## Finance

SPC's 2012 budget was presented to CRGA 41 in a new format that reflects changes in the organisational structure and provides more detail on links between expenditure and outcomes. The budget now also includes multi-year figures and an income forecast.

In accordance with SPC's financial regulations, the 2010 audited financial statements for both the Secretariat and Staff Provident Fund were also presented to CRGA 41, noting that SPC had received unqualified opinions of its accounts from its auditors (PricewaterhouseCoopers) for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year. (SPC's financial records for 2011 are presented in Part 2 of the annual report, which is published mid-year.)

In response to recommendations from institutional reviews, and in line with its recent growth, SPC began work in 2011 to implement an internal audit function and CRGA Audit Committee. The internal audit function is considered increasingly necessary given the size of SPC and was also recommended by the EU.

## Human resources and administration

An important focus of the new Directorate's work in 2011 was to review and consolidate systems, structures and capacities following the integration of SPBEA and SOPAC.

- ▶ A review of Corporate and Programme Support Services was commissioned with the goal of assessing the combined structure resulting from the mergers and recommending changes to increase efficiency and ensure SPC has the appropriate level of corporate support in its various locations.

- ▶ SPC began revising its administrative and financial policies to harmonise them following the mergers and take advantage of opportunities to adopt best practices.

- ▶ New procedures were implemented in 2011 to improve procurement of travel and general goods and services.

- ▶ SPC began using a new online recruitment system during the year and also started implementing a joint Human Resources Information System with some other members of CROP. SPC is leading the implementation of the system, which will enable better strategic forecasting, improvements in human resource operations and increased efficiency. It will also provide senior management with more detailed information. Payroll and leave functions will be implemented to begin with, in the first quarter of 2012.

## Positive results of EU institutional assessment

In 2011 SPC's Corporate Services policies and procedures were the subject of a comprehensive 'Institutional Assessment' commissioned by the European Commission. During the assessment, which was undertaken by PricewaterhouseCoopers, auditors reviewed SPC's policies and standards for accounting, auditing, internal controls and procurement, and benchmarked them against the 'International Standards for Auditing' and 'International Financial Reporting Standards'.

As a result of the very positive outcome of this comprehensive assessment, SPC was advised that the Commission will continue to apply the 'joint management' mode to projects implemented by SPC. This approach allows the recipient organisation (SPC) to use its own policies and procedures as they have been verified as meeting international benchmarks.

The result reflects the benefits of SPC's continued investment in developing and updating its systems and procedures and also demonstrates the value of external feedback – no serious shortcomings were found, but a small number of lower priority recommendations will be followed up in 2012.



### Programme Support Services

After more than two years of work, implementation of a new organisation-wide electronic document and record management system (EDRMS) began in August 2011. The project is being led by the Information Communication Technology (ICT) Section, Library and Registry.

In 2011, the **ICT Section** completed work on implementing a virtualised infrastructure in Suva and Noumea, which provides much greater flexibility in supporting organisational needs. Under this major project funded by a grant from AusAID, the section has put in place cutting-edge technology with a five-year plan for upgrades and maintenance. Progress was also made in integrating SOPAC and SPBEA ICT systems. As recommended by SPC's auditors, ICT systems documentation was rewritten and updated in 2011 and back-up systems and policies were improved.

The **SPC Library** now has two branches in Suva (at Nabua and the former SOPAC) in addition to its main location at Noumea headquarters. Staff of the Suva Nabua library branch are moving all remaining records (around 30,000) from the old system to the Koha records management system. Similarly, SOPAC library staff are working to migrate their library records to Koha. Once the migration is complete, all staff will be able to work from the one SPC library system.

### Notable SPC publications in 2011

- *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change* – This major piece of scientific research, brings together the work of almost 90 world-renowned scientists from 36 institutions.
- *SPC and the Pacific Plan, Volume 3, July 2010–June 2011* – describes in detail SPC's work across 20 sectors and how it contributes to achieving Pacific Plan priorities.
- *Forests of the Pacific Islands* – With 2011 being the International Year of Forests, this book aims to raise the profile of the forests in 22 Pacific Island countries and territories and key threats to their sustainability.
- *SPC policy briefs* – Increasingly, SPC's reports and studies are being distilled into policy or information briefs of 4 pages or so to enable policy makers to quickly grasp the essentials, while still being able to refer to the full documents and research findings as needed.



To meet the increasing requests for its services resulting from growth in staff and programmes, SPC's **Publications Section** has adopted more flexible operating strategies, including using freelance editors (English and French) and graphic artists to meet spikes in demand. The section is also adapting the formats used for different publications, depending on the nature of the information and audience. Most publications are produced in multiple formats including e-books, and printing is done on demand where feasible.

During 2011, the **Translation and Interpretation Section** also implemented significant changes to cope with the increasing demands of a much larger organisation. Two Noumea-based positions that were previously translator positions only are now filled by staff who can also interpret when the need arises. This move allowed the establishment of two interpreter/translator positions in Suva to meet the demands of the growing number of staff and programmes there. The section is also making more extensive use of freelance translators and interpreters.

**Communiqué –  
Seventh Conference of the Pacific Community**





# Seventh Conference of the Pacific Community

Noumea, New Caledonia, 7–8 November 2011

## Communiqué

### INTRODUCTION

1. The Seventh Conference of the Pacific Community was held at SPC headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, from 7 to 8 November 2011. It was officially opened by the President of the Government of New Caledonia, Mr Harold Martin. The Conference was attended by heads of state and government of American Samoa, New Caledonia and Cook Islands; deputy heads of state and government of Federated States of Micronesia and Tonga; ministers of Fiji, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu; ambassadors and high commissioners of France, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, and the United States of America; and senior officials of Australia, French Polynesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Palau and Wallis and Futuna.
2. The Conference welcomed two representatives of Timor Leste, who were attending the Conference, as observers, for the first time.
3. The Conference acknowledged the attendance as observers of representatives from the Australian National University (ANU), European Union, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), University of the South Pacific and Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission.
4. The Conference expressed its deep appreciation to the Government and the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for agreeing to shift the convening of the 7<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Conference from Majuro in the Marshall Islands to SPC headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia. It also expressed its deep gratitude to the President of the Government and people of New Caledonia for their support of the meeting and the gracious hospitality extended to delegates during their stay in Noumea. The Conference acknowledged the significance of this year's meeting in that it is the first convened following the full implementation of the reform of the regional institutional framework, which resulted in the merger of both the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) with SPC.
5. The Conference welcomed with appreciation the opening address given by Mr Harold Martin, President of the Government of New Caledonia, who affirmed New Caledonia's pride in, and commitment to, hosting SPC and announced that New Caledonia will strengthen its support for the organisation's headquarters by significantly increasing its voluntary contribution beginning in 2012 and also considering other mechanisms, such as support for building maintenance and extension of office space, in an effort to achieve a balance of staff and programmes between Noumea and the Suva regional office. The Conference also welcomed the President's statement that New Caledonia will formalise a full country partnership with SPC through the joint country strategy currently being developed and optimise its long-term relationship with SPC, noting that in 2012 New Caledonia will host a number of meetings, allowing it to enhance its strong commitment to the region.
6. The Honourable John Silk, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Marshall Islands, presided over the Conference. The Conference considered and approved the recommendations presented to it by the 41st Meeting of CRGA (Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations), which was held the previous week, and noted the decisions taken by the 40th Meeting of CRGA in 2010.

7. The Conference welcomed the Director-General's report on SPC's work in 2011 and acknowledged the following important milestones for 2012:
  - a. Complete the independent external review of SPC;
  - b. Develop the management response to the independent review;
  - c. Develop the new corporate plan for the period 2013–2017;
  - d. Finalise the long-term sustainable financing strategy;
  - e. Further improve the presentation of SPC's budget to reflect expenditure by country/territory, starting in the 2013/2014 financial years;
  - f. Finalise an organisation-wide monitoring and evaluation framework.

### **'Climate change and food security – managing risks for sustainable development'**

8. Delegates welcomed the timeliness of the theme for the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference, *Climate change and food security – managing risks for sustainable development*, which highlighted the projected impacts of climate change, in particular on food and water security in the Pacific Islands region. The Conference recognised the importance of adopting a well-informed, inclusive and integrated risk reduction and management approach to ensure the adverse impacts of climate change on food and water security are minimised now and in coming decades. The Conference emphasised the importance of a paradigm shift in thinking and planning for climate change in that it is not necessarily a matter of doing different business but rather doing business differently to determine the level of acceptable risk at all points and prepare to respond effectively through appropriate mitigation and adaptation initiatives.
9. The Conference acknowledged that no single organisation can address climate change related challenges on its own and emphasised the importance of strategic and operational partnerships between those involved in the field. In this regard, the Conference welcomed the initiative by the heads of CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) organisations to establish a 'CROP Executives Climate Change Subcommittee', jointly chaired by the Secretary General of PIFS and Director of SPREP, to ensure activities undertaken by the various agencies to support members are well coordinated under a 'many partners, one team' approach, which will also contribute to meeting the objectives of the Pacific Plan. The Conference noted with interest that the CROP subcommittee will meet shortly to articulate the role of each agency in addressing climate change and agree on how they will collaborate to better support Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) in their efforts to undertake adaptation initiatives nationally and engage in international forums.
10. The Conference expressed appreciation for the statements on the theme from the Prime Minister of Cook Islands and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Marshall Islands. The Conference thanked the invited panel of specialists, Dr Gillian Cambers Program Manager, Pacific Climate Change Science Program, Dr Mike Bourke, ANU, and Mr David Sheppard, Director of SPREP, and thanked Mr Malcolm Ponton, Attaché Regional Integration, Natural Resources and Environment, European Union, for his statement. The Conference acknowledged all presenters for their expert contributions to the productive discussions that followed.
11. The Conference commended the Secretariat on developing its internal 'Climate Change Engagement Strategy', which will enhance its delivery of integrated climate change related services, including support for adaptation and risk management, to each member across the 20 sectors SPC works in. The Conference endorsed the engagement strategy, noting that as well as supporting cooperation between SPC's technical programmes, it describes how SPC will work with key partners, in particular other CROP agencies, in addressing climate change challenges for member countries and territories.
12. The Conference commended the Secretariat's efforts in producing a report, 'Food security in the Pacific and East Timor and its vulnerability to climate change', funded by the Australian Government Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, which was distributed to delegates.



### **Launch of the book, *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change***

13. The Conference commended the Secretariat for leading the ground-breaking scientific research project on the possible impacts of climate change on Pacific fisheries and aquaculture. The assessment involved around 90 renowned scientists and fisheries experts from 36 institutions, who compiled an authoritative analysis in a book entitled *Vulnerability of Tropical Pacific Fisheries and Aquaculture to Climate Change*. The publication, the first of its kind in the region, brings together current knowledge on the projected changes to surface climate, the tropical Pacific Ocean, fish habitats and fish stocks to identify the implications for future food security, economic development and sustainable livelihoods.
14. The Conference expressed its deep appreciation to the authors and institutions who contributed to the vulnerability assessment. The Conference acknowledged the urgent need to bring the recommended adaptation initiatives and supporting policies and investments to the attention of national policy makers and other stakeholders in the Pacific fisheries and aquaculture sector and their development partners. The Conference also emphasised the importance of undertaking similar detailed analyses on the likely impacts of climate change on the agriculture and forestry sectors and the health sector.
15. The Conference expressed its gratitude to the Government of Australia, which supported the vulnerability assessment for fisheries and aquaculture, and acknowledged the attendance of the Deputy Director General of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), responsible for the Asia Pacific and Programme Enabling Group, Mr James Batley, who launched the book on behalf of the Government of Australia. The Conference noted with satisfaction that the publication will provide a new resource for the 5<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report of the International Panel on Climate Change, covering a vital sector for food security and livelihoods in the Pacific islands region.

### **Implementation of the reform of the regional institutional framework**

16. The Conference commended the CEOs of the three previously stand-alone regional organisations, SPBEA, SOPAC and SPC, for their respective roles in ensuring the successful implementation of the reform of the regional institutional framework. The Conference noted with approval that the 'new SPC' continued to deliver excellent services to members and commended the commitment and professionalism of all staff in maintaining their focus on members' priorities while at the same time dealing with the change entailed in the integration of the three organisations.
17. The Conference noted that the legal requirements for the final closure of SOPAC the Commission and SPBEA will be completed by February 2012, thus ending their legal status as separate organisations.

### **SPC's planned work programme for 2012**

18. The Conference approved SPC's 2012 work programme, including the work programmes of its technical divisions – Applied Geoscience and Technology (SOPAC) Division; Economic Development Division; Education, Training and Human Development Division; Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division (FAME); Land Resources Division; Public Health Division; Statistics for Development Programme; and Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility. (Attachment 1, *Letter from the Chair of CRGA 41, including CRGA's recommendations, to the Chair of the 7<sup>th</sup> Conference*, provides more details on the work programme.)

### **Enhancing efficiency and effectiveness in addressing members' priorities**

19. The Conference noted the reduction in programme funding in 2011 and commended the Secretariat on its positive response, including reordering existing priorities to provide a balanced budget and committing to further prioritising its work programme.

20. The Conference encouraged the Secretariat to continue pursuing greater efficiency and effectiveness in providing services to members, taking into account SPC's areas of comparative advantage, the role and capacity of other partners working in the same areas and its service delivery model, noting these matters will be considered in the upcoming independent review of the organisation.

### **Pacific NCD Crisis**

21. The Conference, expressing serious concern at the impact of non-communicable diseases (NCDs) in the region, commended the statement by Pacific Ministers of Health on the rising incidence of these diseases and welcomed the message sent by Forum Leaders in declaring an NCD crisis and calling for 'whole of government' and 'whole of society' efforts to address NCDs at the national level.
22. The Conference acknowledged the crucial role played by SPC and the World Health Organization (WHO) in assisting members to reduce NCD rates, and requested SPC to work with WHO to identify areas in which they can make the highest impact on NCD control in the region and to concentrate on these.

### **Youth**

23. The Conference acknowledged the challenges faced by Pacific youth, the importance of assisting young people and SPC's commitment to supporting progress in this area, particularly through helping identify and support employment opportunities for young people and collecting employment statistics in PICTs.
24. The Conference agreed on the need for the Secretariat to focus on areas where it can add the most value, noting that it will coordinate the development of a framework for youth employment for the region, including research and data collection, support the strengthening of national youth volunteer schemes that recognise the importance of youth involvement in the economy and in nation building, and encourage the development of technical and vocational education and training (TVET) services that are responsive to the labour market and take into account market realities and employment trends.

### **Independent external review of SPC**

25. The Conference commended the Director-General on his initiative to commission an independent external review of SPC, noting its timeliness given that SPC is now a new organisation following the integration of SOPAC and SPBEA. The Conference endorsed the terms of reference for the review and the associated milestones, including the preparation of SPC's corporate plan for the period 2013–2017 and the finalisation of its long-term financing strategy to support the implementation of the new corporate plan, which will be presented to CRGA 42 in 2012.

### **Review of SPC's corporate and programme support services**

26. The Conference commended the commissioning of a review of SPC's corporate and programme support services as a result of both changes in demands on these services following the integration of SOPAC and SPBEA and also the Secretariat's expansion and decentralisation, noting that the draft report was received only recently and its recommendations are still being assessed.
27. The Conference was pleased to hear that efficiencies will be realised through the consolidation process following the integration of SOPAC and SPBEA, initially small but with the potential to increase in coming years as systems are developed and human resources are further amalgamated. The Conference encouraged the Secretariat and the consultant to look further at achieving efficiencies and to establish benchmarks for monitoring efficiency gains.



### **Internal audit function and audit committee**

28. The Conference commended the setting up of an internal audit function at SPC and a CRGA Audit Committee, noting that they will provide independent advice to CRGA and strengthen SPC's governance framework. The Conference agreed that such functions are important with the increase in the size of SPC and noted that they had been recommended by development partners such as the EU and Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria. The Conference also approved the internal audit charter and CRGA Audit Committee charter.
29. The Conference accepted the offer from Australia to chair the Audit Committee, initially for a period of two years, and agreed that the current chair of CRGA should be delegated the authority to approve two additional independent members of the Audit Committee based on the recommendations of the Chair of the Audit Committee and the Director-General.

### **Audit report (2010) and auditors for 2011–2013**

30. The Conference commended the Secretariat on receiving a clean audit opinion for the 15<sup>th</sup> consecutive year and noted that issues raised by the auditors in their management letter have been, or are being addressed.
31. The Conference approved the appointment of PricewaterhouseCoopers, Noumea, to audit SPC's accounts for the financial years 2011 to 2013.

### **Budget for 2012**

32. The Conference approved the balanced budget for SPC for financial year 2012, noting that some members continue to engage with the Secretariat on contributions for 2012 above their membership fee, and further noting the update on the levels of the general and specific reserves. The Conference commended the Secretariat on the format of the 2012 budget, in particular the presentation of a multi-year budget that includes income forecasts to 2015, noting that recurrent funding makes up 26% of the total budget and project funding makes up the remaining 74%.

### **Arrears in members' assessed contributions**

33. The Conference expressed concern that many members are in arrears and encouraged these members to settle their arrears as soon as possible, if necessary by agreeing on a payment schedule with the Secretariat, with an update to be provided to CRGA 42.

### **Corporate administration and systems**

34. The Conference
  - noted that a review of SPC's policies, rules and regulations has begun and looked forward to an update on progress at CRGA 42; and
  - welcomed the introduction of the CROP Human Resources Information System, a joint initiative led by SPC that when fully implemented will also involve PIFS and SPREP (with the Forum Fisheries Agency likely to join at a later stage), and noted progress in its implementation, with the payroll and leave management components of the package scheduled to begin operating in January 2012.

### **Non-implementation of recommended salary increases for internationally recruited staff in 2012**

35. The Conference, recognising current budgetary constraints, decided not to award CROP market-based salary increases for 2012 to internationally recruited staff. The Conference noted that this decision will mean SPC salaries for 2012 will be below recommended salaries for internationally recruited staff of participating CROP organisations.

## **Tax on Fiji nationals working with SPC in Fiji**

36. The Conference supported the Secretariat's position in its negotiations with the Government of the Republic of Fiji on deferring the implementation of tax on Fiji nationals working at SPC in Fiji from 1 January 2012, with a view to enabling SPC to address the resulting financial implications and bring them into the 2012 budget process for implementation in 2013. The Conference thanked Fiji for its confirmation that it is working with the Secretariat to resolve the issue and also to finalise the host country agreement between SPC and Fiji.

## **Tahiti Nui Declaration**

37. The Conference adopted the revised *Tahiti Nui Declaration*, which describes the major operational policies and mechanisms of SPC and which was originally adopted by the 1st Conference of the Pacific Community in Tahiti in December 1999 and last revised in 2005. The Conference noted that the 2011 revised text incorporates recent governing body decisions and the new organisational structure that was established following the integration of SPBEA and SOPAC with SPC in 2010 and 2011, respectively. The Conference further noted that the *Tahiti Nui Declaration* is not a legally binding document and does not infringe on the status of the *Canberra Agreement*, which is the international treaty that established SPC in 1947.

## **Procedure for the appointment and assessment of the SPC Director-General**

38. The Conference approved the document entitled *Procedure for the appointment and assessment of the SPC Director-General*, which was prepared by the Secretariat, at the request of CRGA 40, for approval by CRGA 41 and the 7th Conference. The Conference further noted that the procedure is based on rules and practices described in the *Tahiti Nui Declaration*, which was also revised to incorporate relevant policy decisions of recent SPC governing body meetings. The Conference noted the objection of American Samoa to paragraph 9, bullet point 'o', relating to knowledge of SPC's two working languages (English and French), in the *Procedure for the appointment and assessment of the SPC Director-General*.

## **Appointment of the Director-General**

39. The Conference reappointed Dr Jimmie Rodgers for a fourth and final two-year term as Director-General of SPC, noting in particular his outstanding leadership throughout the process of the reform of the regional institutional framework and the resulting period of change for SPC, and the need now for consolidation.

## **Other business**

### ***Provision of urgent support to Tuvalu***

40. The Conference commended the Secretariat on its rapid response to a request by the Government of Tuvalu for assistance in assessing the impact of the drought on its health, agriculture and water sectors, following Tuvalu's declaration of a state of emergency on 28 September 2011. The Conference noted that an SPC team comprising specialists in agriculture, health and water was mobilised immediately and that their preliminary assessment – after four weeks in country and visits to the northern atolls and Funafuti – would be provided to the Tuvalu government shortly.
41. The Conference also commended the responsiveness of the three staff members who were mobilised on very short notice to respond to Tuvalu's request, and noted that this is only one of the 'early wins' following the integration of SOPAC and SPC under the reform of the regional institutional framework.

### ***Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission***

42. The Conference expressed appreciation for the presentation by Professor Glenn Hurry, Executive Director of the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission, for which SPC provides underpinning scientific support.



#### ***First attendance of Timor Leste***

43. The Conference welcomed for the first time two representatives from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Timor Leste, who presented the compliments of the President of the Government of Timor Leste and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Government of Timor Leste, conveyed their gratitude for the opportunity to observe the meetings of SPC's governing body, and expressed Timor Leste's wish for increased collaboration with SPC. The Conference noted the Secretariat's intention to enhance its cooperation with Timor Leste in the coming year.

#### ***New Caledonia initiative: 'One tree, one day, a life'***

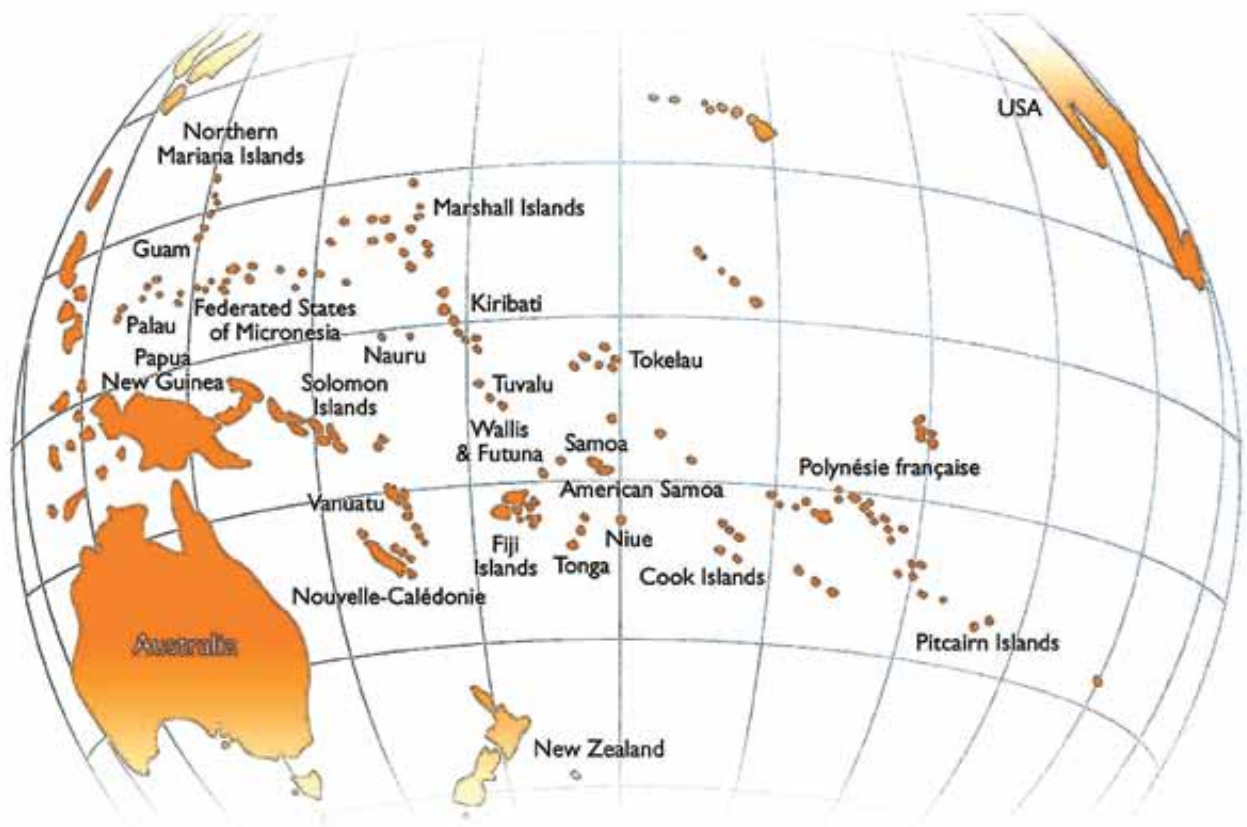
44. The Conference commended New Caledonia on its *One tree, one day, a life* initiative and expressed great interest in this holistic approach to managing and developing the natural environment through a sustainable agroforestry project under which 250,000 trees will be replanted annually as an integral part of New Caledonia's broader sustainable development plan. The Conference noted New Caledonia's interest in working with SPC with a view to exploring the potential to transform this national initiative into a regional one over time.

#### ***Statement from American Samoa***

45. The Conference noted the statement by the Governor of American Samoa, who thanked SPC for its services, especially the technical assistance provided to its population task force, and emphasised the importance of SPC using its voice in broader regional and international forums in support of its members, saying that in many instances island members were not able to be present to contribute, and that in other instances well developed and well delivered regional statements could complement those of individual island nations in 'telling the story' of important issues, such as the impact of climate change on Pacific Island countries and territories.

#### **Venue for the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Pacific Community in 2013**

46. The Conference welcomed the offer by the Government of Fiji to host the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference of the Pacific Community in 2013 and accepted with appreciation Fiji's confirmation that it will bear the costs of hosting the Conference over and above the costs of holding it in New Caledonia.
47. The Conference noted that in accordance with established procedure, Fiji will chair the 8<sup>th</sup> Conference with the Vice-Chair to be advised.





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