

PACIFIC AGRICULTURE POLICY DIGEST

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FURTHER DEVELOPMENT FOR PACIFIC AGRICULTURAL & FISHERIES STATISTICS



About 50 planners, statisticians and policy-makers from 14 Pacific Island countries gathered in Nadi, Fiji, from 5 to 8 October 2015, for a workshop on 'Strategic planning for agriculture and fisheries statistics in the Pacific Island countries'. The workshop was organised by the EU-supported Pacific Agriculture Policy Project, and implemented by SPC and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the UN (FAO).

The workshop served as a platform to help improve the collection and use of agricultural and fisheries statistics in the Pacific. Good statistics are needed for a number of reasons, including evidence-based policy development and for the monitoring of, for example, the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Evidence-based policy-making requires effective, reliable statistics, which are accessible to policy-makers and other stakeholders, to ensure informed decisions on national development priorities, particularly those relating to food security, sustainable livelihoods and economic development in the Pacific.

The objectives of the workshop were:

- to improve the collection and use of agricultural and rural statistics in the Pacific, by bringing together key stakeholders to take stock of the current situation of agricultural and fisheries statistics, with a view to developing a shared vision on scope and coverage of a proposed Pacific Strategic Plan for Agriculture and Fisheries Statistics; and



strengthening agricultural statistics in the Pacific is challenging given limited resources and the informal nature of agriculture. However, he believed the meeting would make a positive difference.

– EU Ambassador, Andrew Jacobs



- to share the latest methodological developments by FAO within the framework of the Global Strategy to Improve Agricultural and Rural Statistics, coupled with recent work carried out by other agencies and Pacific countries on agricultural and fisheries statistics.

In addition to the workshop, an online discussion was hosted with the Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) on the topic 'Agricultural statistics for evidence-based policy-making in the Pacific', as an extended activity following the workshop.



BUILDING AGRICULTURE POLICY SUPPORT IN TIMOR-LESTE

Representatives of the Pacific Agriculture Policy Project met with the Ministry of Agriculture in Timor-Leste to make arrangements for policy support activities and pre-planning ahead of the launch of the country's agriculture policy bank in 2016.

The two-day visit, in mid-October, aimed at establishing a solid relationship with the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries, as well as donor agencies and related organisations working in the agriculture sector. The team also made arrangements for the policy bank launch and related activities. The Cook Islands delegate and current chairman of the PAPP steering committee, Patrick Arioka, also took the opportunity to conduct a scoping study for a market information system (MIS) for coffee, following the one already established in Cook Islands with support from PAPP. The visiting team also shared Pacific experiences at the first celebration of World Rural Women's Day in Maubisse.



REVOLUTIONISING SOLOMON ISLANDS AGRICULTURE CAPACITY

September 19, 2015 marked the launch of the Solomon Islands Agricultural Policy Bank. The collaborative efforts between Solomon Island's Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) and SPC, through the European Union (EU) supported PAPP, helped pave the way for easy access to key policies, plans and documents and key commodities for the sector through the newly introduced policy bank repository.

The two day workshop and launch was held to provide national stakeholders the outline of the recent National Agriculture and Livestock Sector Policy - 2015-2019 (NALSP) draft contents and MAL's implementation plan. The event was hosted in Honiara consisting of 44 participants comprising farmers, Agriculture Ministry officials and other development partners.

According to the Minister for Agriculture and Livestock, Hon. Dudley Kopu, given that agriculture is the most important sector for their economy, the policy bank initiative would provide exciting opportunities to engage youth and students through research and knowledge management as a result of the increased visibility and accessibility.

Clear evidence-based national agriculture and forestry policies are critical to ensure that there is a coherent plan for governments, farmers, private sector and other stakeholders to secure rural livelihoods, ensure food security and collectively grow the agricultural sector and its contribution to national development. The Solomon Island's Ministry of Agriculture has finalised the draft National Agriculture & Livestock Sector Policy 2015-2019, with technical assistance from the UNDP's Strongem Waka lo Community fo Kaikai (SWoCK) Project. The draft policy was established as a tool to set the sector's medium to long-term agenda which would help maintain a sustainable and productive agricultural sector. However, some of the sub-sectors plans/policies are still in draft

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It is estimated that approximately 80% of the Solomon Islands population live in rural areas with subsistence agriculture being their predominant occupation.

– Hon. Dudley Kopu, Minister for Agriculture and Livestock

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form as the prioritise areas are yet to be endorsed by the Solomon Islands government.

Part of the challenge in the Solomon Islands is the lack of up-to-date statistics to support evidence based policy formulation. This is compounded by policy incoherence at national level to coordinate development on the country's primary industries i.e. agriculture, forestry, and mining.

The SPC PAPP project has been working with the Solomon Islands MAL's team to raise national level awareness activity to promote the new sector policy, and garner support from NGOs and development partners to assist the Ministry's effort in its implementation.

FIJI CROP SECTOR FORUM

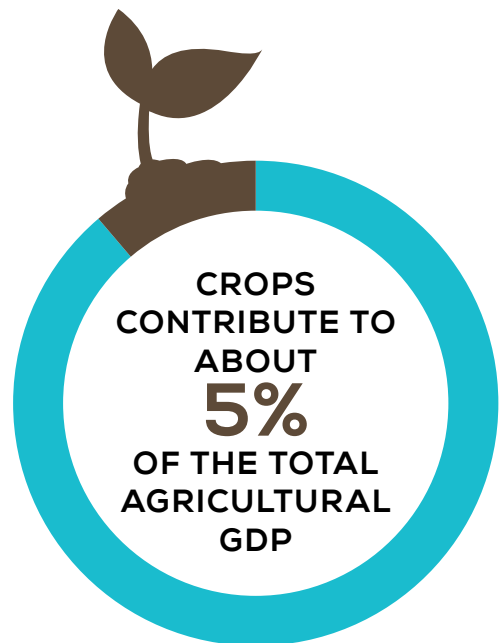


The Fiji Crops Sector Forum Meeting held from 23-27 November, 2015 at the Tanoa International Hotel, in Nadi, Fiji, aimed at identifying constraints as well as potential strategies as a means to help develop the Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda.

The LRD PAPP Project in partnership with the Fiji Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) has been working to facilitate the sector ground development through Industrial Plans in the area of Crop Export, Import, Food Security, Value Added and AgriTourism in Fiji.

This collaboration brought together over 90 MoA staff, farmers and farmers' organisation representatives as well as other relevant stakeholders from the private sector, to help develop a framework for Fiji's agriculture economy by addressing emerging domestic and global challenges, including food and nutrition security and climate change.

The development of the crop industry is of fundamental economic importance for Fiji. According to the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture, Mr. Uraia Waibuta, "Crops contribute to about 5% of the total agricultural GDP through exports of Bilateral Quality Agreement (BQA) commodities, root crops, fruits and vegetables.



It is estimated that 80% of the rural population relies on the crops as a source of income for their livelihood." This shortage indicates a need to bridge the gap between the supply and the demand of commodities.

The objectives of the Forum were:

1. To raise awareness of stakeholders on:
 - a). The Fiji 2020 Agriculture Policy Agenda
 - b). The Draft Industry Plans for Crops
2. To obtain stakeholder inputs on identified Crop Industry Plans including key results to be achieved over the next five years.
3. To determine best option industry structures to drive these Industry Plans, including Working Group formation.
4. To form Industry Plan working groups that will finalise the specific Industry plans for validation by March 2016 and launching by June 2016.

SAMOA AGRICULTURAL POLICY REVIEW & AGRICULTURE KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT WORKSHOP

Knowledge management training for the sector was carried out in Samoa in November 2015 through PAPP assistance to complement its new agriculture sector plan which is currently being reviewed through SPC (PAPP), FAO and the Government.

This Workshop was also to provide a baseline analysis of management information system (MIS) needs for Samoa, a project that the World Bank has already signalled its intention to support. 35 policy makers and stakeholders attended the event and training included looking into ways of effective monitoring and evaluation of the new Agriculture Sector Plan (ASP) to assess the impact of agricultural and fisheries projects.

Workshop key objectives:

- Initiation of KM workshop for Ministry staff through consultation with Samoa Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Inventory of current Samoa MAF knowledge products and services formulated
- Develop a KM action plan for Samoa Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries
- Input to World Bank scoping study on Management Information System (MIS)

Samoa's Agriculture sector plan is expected to be finalized by March. This complementary work is expected to provide some interesting lessons between the ability to implement and track policy implementation and the quality of internal information systems.



CAPACITY BUILDING FOR WOMEN'S FARMER ORGANISATION (PNG)

PAPP and the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) in joint collaboration with the PNG Women in Agriculture Development Foundation (PNG WiADF) under the SPC organised a Learning Exchange and Women's Leadership Training in Lae, PNG from 19 – 22 October, 2015.

This exchange was a two part event that focussed on the capacity building component of the SPC PAPP - PIFON Partnership, which supports regional technical exchanges on farmer organisation management, governance and administration. The aim of the exchange was to collate information about the organisation and provide recommendations related to strategic planning and governance.

The event consisted of a two day PNG Farmer Organisation Learning Exchange bringing together PNG FOs, regional FOs, public and private sector partners to discuss the successes and constraints of farmer organisations. The latter part of the event consisted of a two day Women's Leadership Training from Oct 21-22. The training brought together farmer organisation leaders, entrepreneurs and public sector women to encourage and foster strong leadership values and skills.



These leaders will also have the opportunity to develop new networks and identify new opportunities to work together in the interest of improved agriculture development.

– PNG Women in Agriculture Development Foundation



According to PNGWiADF president Maria Linibi, leaders in agri-business and innovative agriculture will have the opportunity to share their experiences and challenges through this training.

Being a non-government organisation (NGO) established with a vision to assist PNG families and community's development, PNG WiADF also seeks to promote the recognition of women as equal partners in Agriculture for progress.

PNG WiADF hopes to empower its members by building their capacity to be good leaders and to develop strategic plans for their farmer organizations as a key objective.



PAFPNET HAVE YOUR SAY

The Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network (PAFPNet) is a regional network that helps connect the people of the Pacific by facilitating sharing of experiences on issues related to agricultural and forestry policy at home and further afield.

This newsletter will feature PAFPNet discussion topic for the month of October.

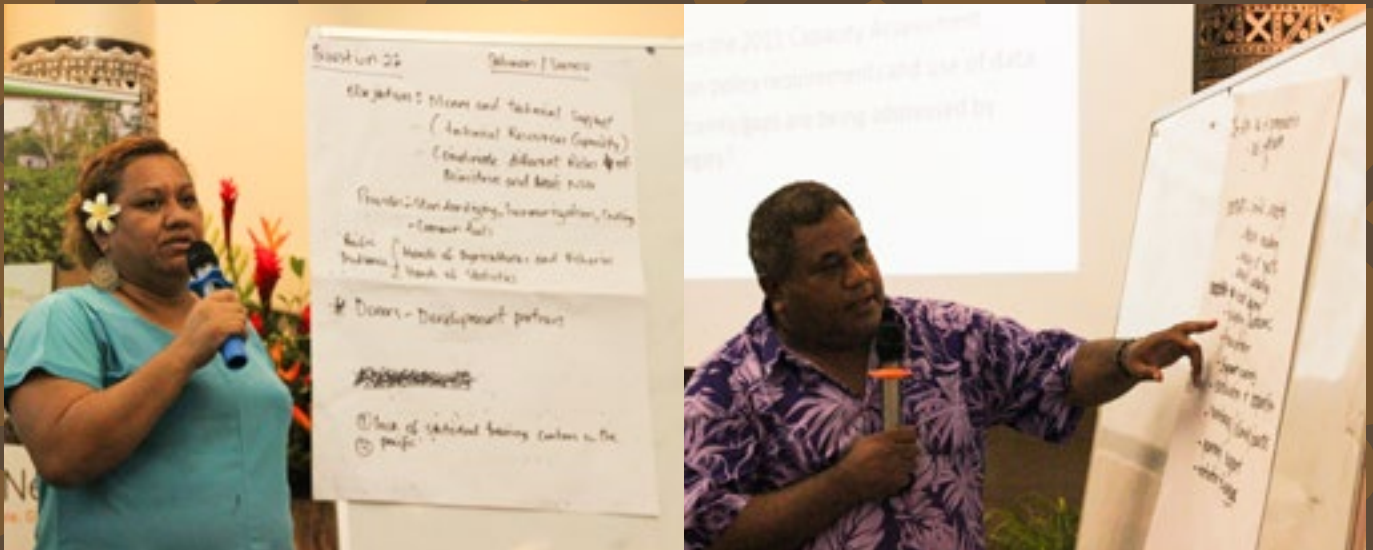
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For the month of October, PAFPNet hosted the discussion topic themed, "Agricultural Statistics for evidence based policy making in the Pacific". Evidence based policy making requires effective, reliable statistics which are accessible to policy makers and other stakeholders. Statistics are important for informing decisions on national development priorities and for monitoring countries' progress towards achieving them.

This month's discussion was designed around key aspects following a regional workshop on agricultural and fishery statistics which resulted in the decision to develop a Pacific Strategic Plan. Three questions were underlined for the discussion that triggered an extensive and thorough exchange of views.

For more information regarding this discussion, please follow the link:

<http://www.spc.int/pafpnet/pafpnet/discussion-summaries/480-agricultural-statistics-for-evidence-based-policy-making-in-the-pacific>





WHAT'S COMING UP

DATE	EVENT	VENUE
February		
1 – 29	FSM International Agriculture Census Pre-Test Training	Pohnpei, FSM
17 – 19	Livestock strategy validation workshop	Fiji
22 – 26	Asia and Pacific Forestry Week	
March		
9 - 11	Vanuatu Knowledge Management Scan/Analysis workshop	Vanuatu
22-23	Regional Ag strategy Technical Working Group	Suva, Fiji
30 – 1 April	Capacity Building to Support National Agriculture Policy Awareness and Adoption Train the Trainers Workshop	Suva, Fiji

PAPP operates in the 15 Pacific ACP countries (Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu), and Timor-Leste.

PAPP aims to improve the livelihoods of smallholder farmers by strengthening their linkages to markets, improving access to information, research, and knowledge, and by improving the policy and operating environment for farmers through evidence based policies.

Within the twelve months since the commencement of the project there have been a number of activities, as detailed in this newsletter, structured around PAPP's 3 Key Result Areas (KRA):



1. Strengthened regional agricultural development strategy



2. Improved dissemination and adoption of applied agricultural production research



3. Agricultural enterprise development through improved market linkages

For additional information on the PAPP project,
visit our website PAFNet web portal:

<http://www.spc.int/pafpnet/>

For feedback, comments and contributions please contact:

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D I S C L A I M E R

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