



# SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC) ANNUAL REPORT 2010



PART 1 - ANNUAL OVERVIEW



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

## **ANNUAL REPORT 2010 – PART 1 - ANNUAL OVERVIEW**



Secretariat of the Pacific Community  
Noumea, New Caledonia, 2011

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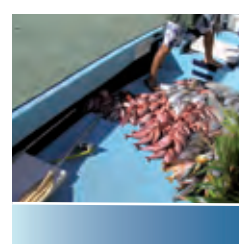
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## Director-General's review – 2010

by Dr Jimmie Rodgers



We invested considerable effort in revising and updating our policies and systems in 2010 to ensure that SPC continues to be flexible and responsive as a larger organisation

**I** have pleasure in presenting the annual report of SPC's activities for 2010.

*It was a year when we delivered an increased level of services to members. It was also a year in which we took steps to address the expansion resulting from finally implementing the decisions of Pacific leaders on the reform of the region's institutions.*

*SPC's success as an organisation is based on our ability to respond to our members' real needs. In 2010, we invested considerable effort in revising and updating our organisational policies and systems to ensure that we can continue to be flexible and responsive as a larger organisation.*

*These efforts are described below, as are highlights of 2010 and our achievements in implementing the decisions of the 6th Conference held in Tonga at the end of 2009.*

**Joint Country Strategies (JCS)** – We completed JCS missions to Fiji Islands, Guam and Vanuatu and began finalising the strategies with these three countries. Samoa and French Polynesia approved their JCS and preparations began for joint reviews

in 2011 of JCS that were first completed three years ago. A major development this year was the decision by heads of CROP (Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific) agencies at their June meeting in Apia to conduct joint missions with a view to developing CROP-wide JCS with countries and territories.

**CRGA subcommittee to develop a long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC** – The CRGA (Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations) subcommittee, which was established by the 6th Conference, met three times in 2010, with Australia providing the chairperson. The draft strategy is expected to be completed for consideration at CRGA 41 and the 7th Conference, to be held in Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands, in late October–early November 2011.

**Tracking development progress in Pacific Island countries and territories** – A draft minimum core set of development indicators, which was endorsed at the 2010 meeting of Pacific heads of statistics and planning, was circulated to members for final comments. The core set of indicators will be used by SPC to track development progress in all the sectors it works in from 2011 to assist in monitoring progress in areas such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

**Support for 'Cairns Compact' implementation** – The Secretariat provided input to the MDG tracking report through the Statistics and Demography Programme.



**Amena Yauvoli**  
 Manager of North Pacific  
 Regional Office  
**Anaseini Kuboabola Ravolce**  
 Director of SPBEA  
**Leslie Walker**  
 Director of  
 Corporate Services  
**Dr Russell Howorth**  
 Director of SOPAC  
**Richard Mann**  
 Deputy Director-General  
 Noumea  
**Michael Batty**  
 Director of Fisheries,  
 Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems  
**Dr Jimmie Rodgers**  
 Director-General  
**Fekitamoealoa Katoa 'Utoikamanu**  
 Deputy Director-General Suva  
**Inoke Ratukalou**  
 Acting Director of  
 Land Resources  
**John Hogan**  
 Director of Economic Development  
**William Parr**  
 Director of Public Health  
 and Social Resources

*Decentralisation* – On 12 October 2010, the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu signed a host country agreement with SPC for the establishment of a country office. SPC has a large in-country programme in Vanuatu, which makes this office important in coordinating activities. The country office also hosts two technical staff from SPC's Pacific Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT), a regional programme that provides technical assistance and training in human rights-related areas to members. The establishment of the Vanuatu Country Office brings the number of formal SPC offices to five. Further decisions on other country offices will depend on the outcome of the work on the long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC.

## Implementing the revised Regional Institutional Framework (RIF)

An immense amount of time was dedicated to RIF implementation during the year, but it was time well-

spent, principally because the focus was solely on implementing the decisions in a way that fulfilled the instructions of Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and met the expectations of the SPC, SOPAC (Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission) and SPBEA (Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment) governing bodies. It was also important to allay the concerns of members and staff regarding our ability to achieve the RIF objective of 'no diminution of services to members'.

With respect to SOPAC, I pay tribute to the Chairperson of the SOPAC Council, Hon. Paul Telukluk, Minister for Lands, Geology, Mines, Energy and Rural Water Supply of the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu, and all the members of the SOPAC Council for their goodwill and commitment to completing the implementation of the RIF decision. I also acknowledge my colleague Dr Russell Howorth, Director of SOPAC (and before him Ms Cristelle Pratt), for his dedication and pragmatism in ensuring the effective implementation of the RIF decisions relating to SOPAC and SPC.

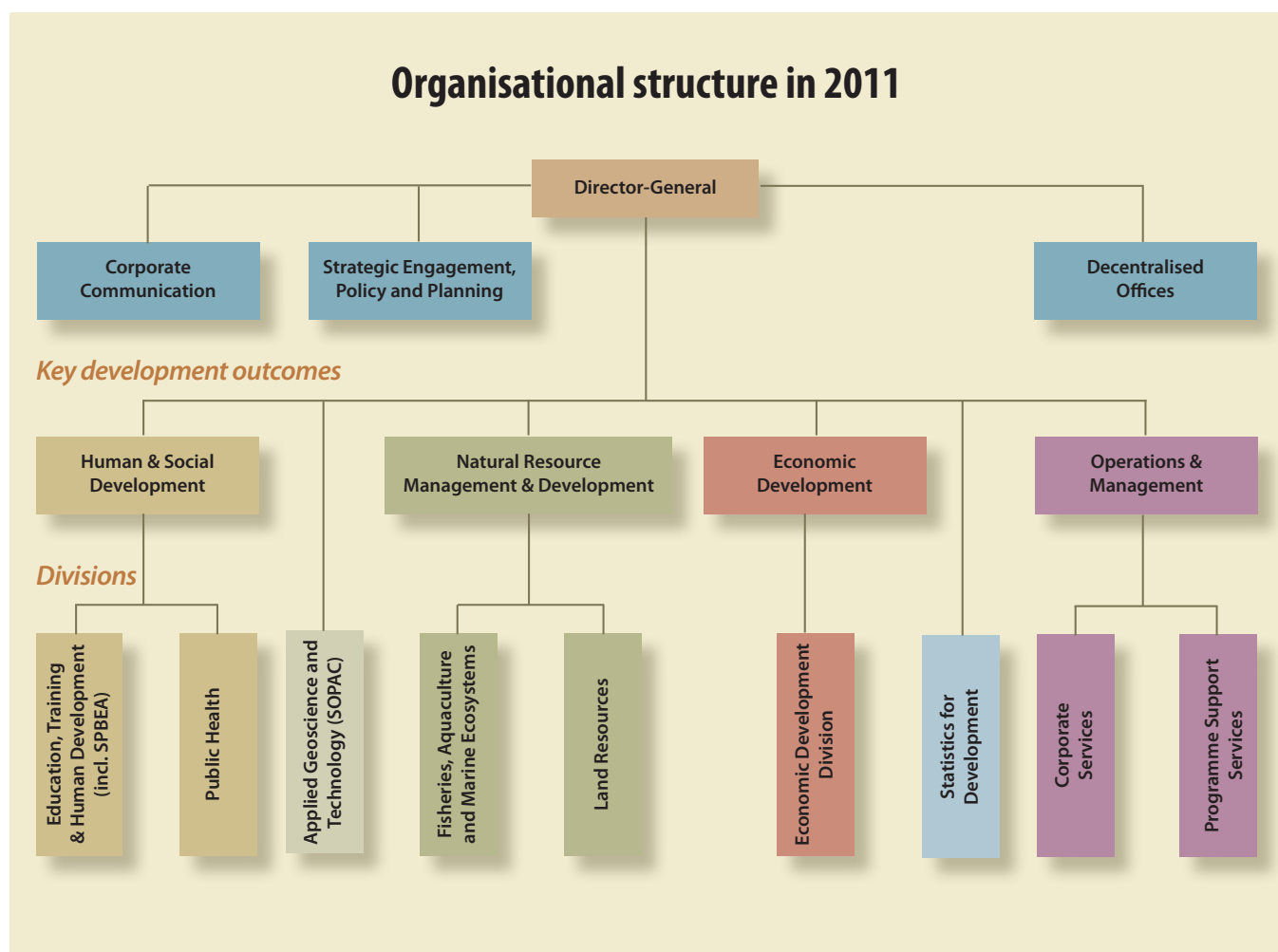
Similarly, Dr Viliami Fukofuka, Director of Education of the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga and Chairperson of the SPBEA Board, the members of the Board, and the Director, Ms Ana Raivoce, provided continuing support and commitment to the process of fully integrating SPBEA with SPC.

I also acknowledge with sincere gratitude the tremendous assistance I received in 2010 from my two deputies, Richard Mann and Fekitamoeola ‘Utoikamanu, who took on much of the organisational responsibility while I was involved in the RIF process.

## Major policy initiatives and reforms in 2010

### Organisational restructure

CRGA 40 was updated on changes in the organisational structure of SPC, as earlier endorsed by CRGA 39. The changes are designed to align SPC’s service delivery under three major sustainable development outcomes – **sustainable human and social development**, **sustainable natural resource management and development**, and **sustainable economic development**. A fourth development outcome relates to the **operational efficiency** of the organisation. The restructure is being undertaken in steps and further alignment will occur in 2011. The diagram below gives an overview of the structure in place from January 2011 with divisions and programmes aligned to the top-level outcomes.





### *New meeting arrangements*

***Two-part structure for CRGA meetings*** – The structure and agenda for CRGA meetings has been reformed to ensure that the dual role of CRGA in relation to (1) the oversight of technical programme delivery, and (2) policy and governance, can be carried out effectively. As part of this reform, the Secretariat has requested members to include representatives from their technical ministries/ departments in their CRGA delegations.

### ***New policy for hosting the two-yearly SPC Conference***

– As already arranged, the 7th SPC Conference will take place in the Marshall Islands at the end of 2011. Subsequent meetings will be held under the new policy adopted by CRGA 40. Under this policy, which is designed to contain costs, the Conference will alternate between SPC headquarters in Noumea and the Fiji regional office. Any member may still offer to host the Conference, but the Secretariat's financial responsibility will be equivalent to the maximum cost of hosting the meeting in Fiji or New Caledonia, with the difference in cost to be borne by the member. In the years that the Conference is held, the CRGA meeting will as usual take place immediately beforehand, and at the same venue.

### ***New arrangements for regional technical meetings***

– CRGA 40 adopted new arrangements for convening and hosting major regional technical meetings. Instead of holding individual sector-specific regional meetings, SPC will convene joint ministerial meetings (to be preceded by officials' meetings) in accordance with its three key development outcome areas (sustainable economic development, sustainable natural resource management and development, and sustainable human and social development). This arrangement will provide opportunities for making joint decisions on cross-cutting issues, while enabling consideration of sector-specific issues. Under this new approach, one major joint regional meeting will be convened each year on a three-year rotation. It is anticipated that this move will reduce the number of SPC-convened ministerial meetings held in a three-year period from nine to three. The first such meeting – the regional meeting of ministers of energy, ICT and transport – is scheduled for April 2011 in Noumea.

***Sharing the costs of meeting attendance*** – CRGA 40 also approved a new cost-sharing policy for member delegates attending SPC meetings (it does not apply to meetings that have already been arranged for 2011). For CRGA meetings, SPC will provide either return economy airfares or per diems for two delegates, with members paying other costs. Similar arrangements will apply to regional technical meetings, with SPC paying either the per diem or the airfare for one delegate per sector. We note the concern of some members that the new policy may put meeting attendance out of their reach and hope to be able to address this issue through the long-term sustainable financing strategy.

### ***Operational policies***

SPC is developing policies to guide any further decentralisation of the organisation and the location of technical programmes. It is also putting in place formal anti-fraud measures and policies in the areas of procurement and supply and risk management.

### ***Engagement policies***

***Maximising aid effectiveness*** – SPC subscribes to the aid effectiveness principles outlined in the Paris Declaration, Accra Accord and Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles and is taking a corporate-wide approach to mainstreaming these into its work programme planning and delivery.

***Organisation-wide engagement strategies*** – We have embarked on a process to develop strategies in three key areas that SPC's programmes will be engaged in over the long-term: (i) climate change, (ii) food security, and (iii) gender issues. These engagement strategies will ensure the three areas are mainstreamed in all our programmes, and will also link SPC's work to broader regional and international frameworks.

***Regional frameworks*** – In 2010, SPC led the development of Pacific frameworks for action on energy security and ICT. The World Health Organization (WHO) led the development of the framework for action on food security. A major feature of all three frameworks was the

consultative process involved in their development. SPC has been identified as the lead coordinating agency for the three frameworks.

## Reporting

### *Standardising reporting processes*

A considerable amount of the Secretariat's time is spent on compiling reports for meetings, members and development partners. We have begun work on synchronising reporting by using a standard reporting framework across all SPC programmes and for all reporting requirements. However, we will need the support of development partners in agreeing on a standard process. A progress report will be presented to CRGA 41 in 2011.

### *SPC publications*

In addition to producing numerous corporate and project reports and analyses in 2010, SPC published:

*SPC and the Pacific Plan Volume 2, July 2009 – June 2010* This well-received publication describes in detail how SPC's work contributes to achieving Pacific Plan priorities.

*Future of Pacific Fisheries* This major study, jointly carried out with the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), provides possible scenarios for Pacific fisheries over the next 25 years and policy options for decision-makers.

*Vulnerability of Fisheries and Aquaculture in the Tropical Pacific to Climate Change* This publication, which is still in preparation, brings together the research findings of world-renowned scientists. It focuses on the impact of climate change on fisheries, aquaculture and ecosystems in the Pacific Islands region. The information provides a 'first of its kind' baseline for future assessments, and together with the *Future of Pacific Fisheries*, makes available knowledge and analysis that will inform policy-making on

development potential in the region's fisheries sector in the years to come. SPC plans to launch the publication (in electronic and print formats) at the 7th Conference.

We also plan to produce other publications similar to *SPC and the Pacific Plan* as resources allow, including *SPC and Climate Change* and *SPC and Food Security*.

## Implementing the three pillars of the Corporate Plan 2007–2012

**Pillar 1 – Increased focus on members' priorities** This pillar again dominated our focus in 2010. We continue to push the boundaries in our efforts to deliver on and safeguard our core business of addressing members' priorities. These efforts are detailed in the reports from each of SPC's technical divisions.

The signing of the Vanuatu–SPC host country agreement on 12 October 2010 is another example of our increased focus on members' priorities. Consultations on the Fiji–SPC host country agreement are at an advanced stage. The agreement will incorporate SOPAC and SPBEA.

**Pillar 2 – Strategic engagement at national, regional and international levels** In relation to SPC's founding members, 2010 has been an exceptional year. The strong support from Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States of America continued with these members, led by Australia, providing the highest percentage of SPC's funding. For the first time, SPC rated a special mention in the United States Policy in the Pacific Islands.

The new Australian Parliamentary Secretary for Pacific Island Affairs, the Hon. Richard Marles during his visit to SPC headquarters in 2010 reconfirmed the Australian government's view that SPC is a key regional partner.

New Zealand's Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Hon. Murray McCully, during his visit to SPC headquarters



Member representatives at CRGA 40.

in July, stressed the importance of linking SPC's work directly to areas that will bring sustained economic benefits for its island members.

The government of France continues to emphasise the importance of SPC in the region both as an implementer of highly valued priority programmes that benefit members and also as a channel for enhancing opportunities for intellectual exchange and partnership between the French territories and the other countries and territories of the Pacific.

At the international level, we continued to strengthen important partnerships with the European Union (EU). EU will be the second largest funder of SPC programmes in 2011, providing 20.7 million CFP units or 23 per cent of funding. The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria will be our third largest funder, providing 13.9 million CFP units or 15 per cent. Other major development partners include the Asian Development Bank (ADB), WHO, United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the World Bank. We are exploring new opportunities with other key stakeholders in the region.

At the regional level, CROP heads have taken a collaborative approach to many of the key challenges facing the region. In fact, 2010 has seen a new level of cooperation that will put CROP in good stead. In this regard, credit must be given to the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Tuiloma Neroni Slade, for his leadership and also to all the heads of CROP agencies for the genuineness of their intent to move forward.

***Pillar 3 – Strategic positioning of the organisation*** In 2010, we took some important steps under this pillar, which provides essential support for Pillars 1 and 2. These steps included:

- ▣ Implementing the two-phase organisational restructure endorsed by the 6th Conference in 2009.
- ▣ Further strengthening the Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility. Outputs for 2010 included coordinating the JCS missions; developing country profiles; coordinating the publication *SPC and the Pacific Plan*; leading major research on the impact of climate change on Pacific fisheries;



coordinating the organisation's engagement in climate change issues; and providing a focal point for major development partners including the European Commission, ADB and the World Bank.

- ▣ Facilitating the work of the CRGA subcommittee on the long-term sustainable financing strategy for SPC. The outcome will determine the future financing of SPC's work.

## Divisional highlights

### *Economic Development Division (EDD)*

EDD was established in January 2010 as a result of SPC's internal reform process and as a specific response to the broader reform agenda driven by the RIF process. The division pulls together four key drivers of economic growth – transport, energy, infrastructure and information and communication technology (ICT). The infrastructure programme will be implemented when funding becomes available.

*Energy Programme* – This programme was formally established in EDD in April 2010 following the transfer

of the energy programme from SOPAC to SPC. The major highlight of the programme's work in 2010 was the development of the new energy policy document – the *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific*. This work, which was funded by the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), involved stakeholders in, or contributing to, the energy sector in the region from all member PICTs (government, private sector – power utilities, NGOs), regional organisations, international organisations and development partners. The process of developing the framework set a new benchmark in cooperation, generating broader ownership of both the process and the product.

*Pacific ICT Outreach Programme* – The programme was established in April 2010 following a merger of the ICT outreach activities of SOPAC and SPC. In 2010, the programme led the development of a regional ICT policy document – *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific*. The framework was endorsed by ICT ministers in June 2010 at their meeting in Tonga. The ministers further requested SPC to coordinate the implementation of the framework in collaboration with the University of the South Pacific (USP) and other development partners.





*Transport Programme* – The renaming of this programme (formerly the Regional Maritime Programme) demonstrates the shift in emphasis to providing support to members in the broader transport area. Major achievements in 2010 included the development of a memorandum of understanding with the Pacific Aviation Safety Office (PASO), the launch of the Central Pacific Shipping Commission (CPSC) and the start of domestic shipping audits in Kiribati and Tonga.

EDD had 30 staff by the end of 2010, and a revised budget for the year of 3.9 million CFP units.

#### *Social Resources Division (SRD)*

SRD's work encompasses statistics and demography, human development (including youth, gender, community education and culture), media and human rights with staff spread between headquarters and the regional offices in Fiji and FSM. In addition, some project staff have been based in Honiara, Solomon Islands. Recent decentralisation has resulted in a small number of staff relocating to Vanuatu.

At the end of August 2010, the division had 56 staff. The 2010 (revised) budget for SRD totalled 7.0 million CFP units.

Highlights of 2010 for SRD included the success of the 11th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women in Noumea; the finalisation of the Pacific Culture and Education Strategy 2010–2015, which was endorsed by the Council of Pacific Arts and Culture and by Heads of Education Systems; and the high level of in-country training delivered by the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) and the Regional Media Centre. In addition to providing technical support for 2010 censuses in FSM and Kiribati, and for the 2011 censuses in the Marshall Islands, PNG and Samoa, the Statistics and Demography Programme completed Household Income and Expenditure Surveys (HIES) for Tonga and Tuvalu and a Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) for Kiribati, with planning ongoing for similar surveys in other PICTs. Data and information generated by



these surveys provide much needed factual evidence for policy development and planning, including the regular monitoring of policy performance and impact. In November 2010, the programme was renamed the Statistics for Development Programme and became a stand-alone programme.

### *Public Health Division (PHD)*

PHD has developed a new operating structure that aligns with its strategic plan. It now has four units as follows:

Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit – supports members to address priority diseases such as communicable, non-communicable, emerging and re-emerging diseases through effective prevention, control and management.

Health Advancement Unit – supports members to address the fundamental social, environmental, political and economic determinants of health with the aim of increasing the resilience of communities.

Grant Management Unit – supports overall SPC and PHD goals, priorities and requirements related to grant management and country-based approaches, including compliance with national systems, and grant- and donor-related rules and regulations. The unit develops and tracks grant budgets, and recommends policies for all SPC-supported grants.

Quality, Performance and Management Support Unit – provides strategic and operational performance monitoring and measurement, quality management and systems development and project administration support.

PHD lost some capacity to deliver a number of core functions as a result of projects coming to an end during 2010, or as a result of delays in securing additional funding commitments. Some relief will be obtained in this area following the confirmation of Global Fund Phase 2 funding for HIV.

At the end of June 2010, PHD had a total staff of 62, based in five locations. The division's 2010 revised budget was 25.6 million CFP units, with 95 per cent of this amount consisting of project funding including grants earmarked for disbursement to countries.



### *Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division*

FAME was previously called the Marine Resources Division. This division now focuses solely on fisheries and aquaculture, with the Transport Programme (previously the Regional Maritime Programme – RMP) having shifted to the new Economic Development Division in 2010. The main programmes in FAME remain the Coastal Fisheries Programme, Oceanic Fisheries Programme, and Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP) project.

As at 1 September 2010, the division had a total of 64 staff and a revised budget for the year of 10.8 million CFP units. As expected, funding was tight during the first part of 2010 for the Coastal Fisheries Programme, although a small increase in programme funding relative to 2009 was made possible by a return to more normal exchange rates. The Coastal Fisheries Programme benefited from a new AusAID project to develop monitoring of the impact of climate change on coastal fisheries. The Oceanic Fisheries Programme secured additional funding from the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) for scientific services as well as a grant from the Government of New Caledonia to support data entry work. The start of the European Union-funded Scientific Support for the Management of Coastal and Oceanic Fisheries in the Pacific Islands Region (SciCOFish) project mid-year also made substantial extra resources available to both programmes. In a first of its kind by an island member of SPC, the Papua New Guinea (PNG) National Fisheries Authority has allocated one million US dollars per year for the next three years (USD 3 million or 2.84 million CFP units) to undertake more comprehensive tuna tagging in PNG waters.

### *Land Resources Division (LRD)*

LRD covers three sectors – agriculture, forestry and land. Its strategic plan for 2009–2012 has three objectives: (1) improved food and nutritional security; (2) integrated and sustainable agricultural and forestry resource management and development; and (3) improved and increased trade in agriculture and forestry products.

The division continued its role in facilitating policy, legislation and planning development in 2010. LRD also ensures that the Pacific Islands' voice is heard beyond the region by actively engaging at relevant international forums.

The Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT) began operating from its new facility at SPC's Narere compound in Suva, Fiji Islands. Plant health, and biosecurity and trade facilitation continue to be hallmarks of the division's functions, with substantial assistance provided to PICTs in this area.

The revised budget for the division for 2010 was 10.2 million CFP units, and as at 1 September 2010, LRD had a total of 88 staff. The present science and technology capacity of LRD has decreased with the completion of some relatively big projects. However, ongoing initiatives that began in mid-2010 have eased some of the staffing and operational difficulties faced by the division. These include two SPC–AusAID initiatives: Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA) and International Climate Change Adaptation (ICCAI), and the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research's (ACIAR) Pacific Agribusiness Research and Development Initiative (PARDI). Several new projects will begin in 2011.



Photo: Chris Palethorpe

### *Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA)*

SPBEA (formerly the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment) merged with SPC in January 2010 as a stand-alone programme. Full integration will occur in January 2011. SPBEA continued to deliver excellent services to its members. Its work encompasses the regional senior secondary school qualifications, regional qualifications register, assessment, curriculum and standards, provision of scholarship services, and research, monitoring and evaluation. SPBEA supports the Pacific Plan through the Pacific Education Development Framework (PEDF) as well as the MDGs and the Education for All (EFA) goals. The new AusAID project being introduced to SPBEA's work programme for 2011 and 2012 will build SPBEA's capacity in the area of literacy and numeracy assessment.

In 2010, SPBEA had a staff of 25, also employing about 250 temporary personnel (e.g. examiners and moderators). The revised budget for SPBEA in 2010 was 2.9 million CFP units.



### *Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)*

The core work programme of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) will formally integrate with SPC from January 2011. SOPAC's programmes are organised under three headings: Water and Sanitation, Disaster Reduction, and Oceans and Islands.

## Corporate highlights

**Executive team** – Aleki Sisifa, LRD Director, left SPC in April 2010 and Inoke Ratukalou of Fiji, Land Use and Resources Policy Adviser, was appointed acting director. Except for this departure, SPC has enjoyed having a full executive team onboard to provide leadership to its various divisions in 2010.

**Managing a decentralised organisation** – SPC continued to focus attention on improving systems to support decentralisation in 2010. We have implemented administrative and management reforms that enabled more delegation across various areas and levels of the organisation.

**CROP remuneration** – CRGA 40 approved SPC's implementation of the new CROP salary banding structure. The model has 18 bands, with bands 1–7 for staff recruited locally, bands 8–16 for staff recruited internationally (with band 16 for Deputy Directors-General at SPC), and bands 17–18 reserved for CEOs (with band 17 for CEOs of smaller agencies and band 18 for CEOs of larger agencies). The 18 bands are a huge improvement for SPC; however, we will be working with the consultants to further refine the banding structure during 2011. The small increase in expenditure resulting from implementing the new structure and new salary scale has been accommodated in SPC's 2011 balanced budget.

**2010 budget** – The recovery of the Australian and New Zealand dollars enabled SPC to reinstate its previous level of service provision to members across many of its

programmes in 2010. It also allowed SPC to implement the CROP remuneration increases that were frozen for one year (in 2009) due to the global economic crisis. In addition to reinstating all technical and scientific services we were able to meet increases in inescapable costs in corporate services in Suva and Noumea, increase our support to our decentralised offices in Pohnpei and Honiara, increase support to SPBEA and provide some support for organisational reform-related expenses in the Director-General's office.

**Audit report for FY 2009** – The Secretariat received a clean audit report for the 14th year in a row.

## Looking ahead – SPC's role in a changing regional environment

Major milestones for 2011 include the following:

- ▶ Continued full and effective delivery of all key technical and scientific services from existing SPC programmes and all new SPC services resulting from the transfer of programmes from SOPAC and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat under the RIF reform.
- ▶ Implementation of Phase 2 of the organisational structural reforms endorsed by the 6th Conference of the Pacific Community.
- ▶ Restructuring of the budget and work programme format for the 2012 budget.
- ▶ Analysis and strengthening of corporate (finance / administration / human resources) services, programme support services and ICT services.
- ▶ Drafting of the long-term sustainable financing strategy for consideration by CRGA 41 and the 7th Conference of the Pacific Community in 2011.
- ▶ Reviewing and updating the organisation's legal and strategic documents – the Tahiti Nui Declaration and SPC's corporate plan.
- ▶ Continued engagement with regional processes and mechanisms, in particular with CROP heads.
- ▶ Increased engagement with new development partners.





Photo: David Becker

## Conclusion

The work involved in implementing the decisions on RIF was time consuming, politically challenging, and exhausting and I am happy that the consultation / negotiation phase of RIF will come to a close in January 2011 and we can wholly focus on delivering services to members.

In terms of delivery of services, the year was a rewarding one for our relationships with a number of major development partners, setting the foundation for a boost in resources for 2011.

The balance between recurrent and non-recurrent funding is always a challenge and will remain so for the foreseeable future unless the long-term sustainable financing strategy provides a workable solution. The proportion of recurrent funding in the 2011 budget is about 31.8 per cent, with the remainder being non-recurrent, mostly project funding.

I wish to put on record my sincere appreciation and thanks to all SPC staff and their families. Our staff have continued to deliver the services expected of

them, while in most cases being required to do much more than their respective job descriptions state to ensure that SPC's work is accomplished efficiently and effectively.

Finally, we thank our members for their confidence that SPC can assist their development processes and support the achievement of their development goals.

We also extend our gratitude to our development partners for their trust in SPC, their belief in the value of our work, and for the resources that enable us to make a difference in the lives of Pacific Island people.

**Dr Jimmie Rodgers**  
Director-General

# CRGA 40

## Decisions and discussion

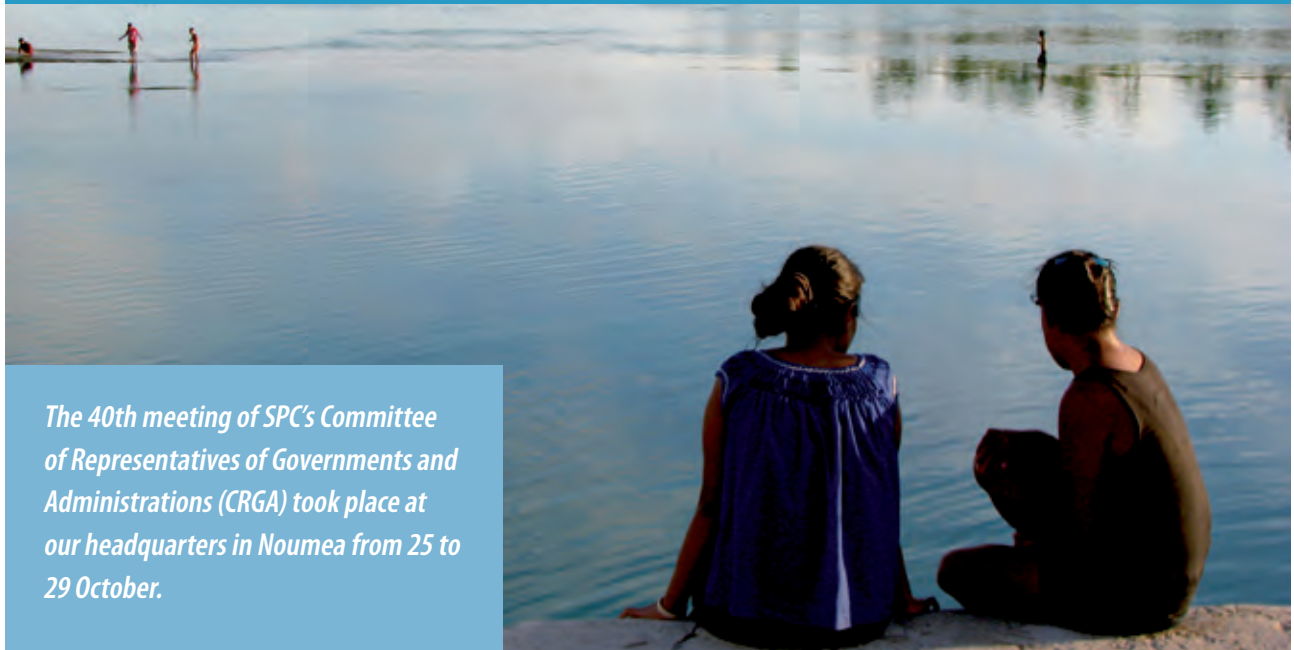


Photo: Henriette Jansen

*The 40th meeting of SPC's Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) took place at our headquarters in Noumea from 25 to 29 October.*

CRGA endorsed plans for the organisational re-structure needed to cater for SPC's growth and continued delivery of effective services, especially with the integration of SOPAC and SPBEA. In addition, CRGA was informed of the status of an agreement on the transfer of functions in energy, ICT, infrastructure and transport from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to SPC.

The meeting agreed that the restructure will set the foundation for realising the longer-term benefits intended by the reform of the regional institutional framework, with the organisations involved committed to ensuring 'no diminution of services to members'.

To meet this commitment, a subcommittee was set up by CRGA 39 to develop a long-term sustainable funding strategy for SPC. CRGA 40 participants met before the official opening of their meeting for an update on progress to date in developing the funding strategy and made several requests on the information they wanted to see provided by SPC as a basis for the strategy.

Part of the subcommittee's brief is to identify the SPC services that are critical to members and the best method of funding them. At present many services are funded through short-term projects. When these end, there are often gaps that must be bridged to ensure essential services can continue. The subcommittee will present a draft report to CRGA 41 in 2011.

As well as considering organisational issues, CRGA heard presentations on SPC's work in agriculture, aquaculture, biosecurity, culture, education, energy, fisheries, forestry, gender, ICT, human rights, public health, statistics and demography, transport, youth, and cross-cutting areas including food security and climate change.

The discussions that followed included strong support for scientific services in economically important natural resources sectors. There was disquiet at the imminent end of project funding for critical areas including non-communicable diseases, which cause high levels of disability and premature death for Pacific people.



Member representatives and SPC staff who took part in CRGA 40.

SPC leads regional initiatives in many of these sectors in partnership with other regional and international organisations.

Several members expressed the view that resources should be sought from non-traditional donors if necessary. While acknowledging this view, the Director-General emphasised that SPC's founding members, Australia, France, New Zealand and the United States of America, continue to provide generous support for SPC.

He said SPC had for the first time rated a special mention in the United States Policy in the Pacific Islands with a statement made to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment that '...SPC is a natural partner to advance U.S. and regional agendas in climate change adaptation, food security, fisheries, health, and other priority sectors'.

During CRGA 40, France's Ambassador, His Excellency M. Hadelin de la Tour-du-Pin (Permanent Representative for the Pacific), noted the importance of SPC's work in fisheries and the specific funding that

France provides in this and other sectors, both directly and through European Union funding mechanisms.

After discussion of the appointment of the Director-General for the 2012-2014 period, CRGA 40 agreed to recommend to the 7th Conference of the Pacific Community that the incumbent Director-General, Dr Rodgers, be offered 'an exceptional further and final two-year term', to ensure continuity in the direction of SPC during a period of transition.

The meeting noted that as agreed by the 6th Conference in Tonga, the 7th Conference of the Pacific Community will be held in 2011 in Majuro, Marshall Islands, to be preceded by CRGA 41.

CRGA 40 was chaired by Dr Jim Gosselin, Secretary of Cook Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration, who concluded the meeting by saying: 'SPC is a unique institution that brings us all together. On the basis of the decisions made this week, we can move forward in a true Pacific spirit.'

The decisions of CRGA 40 are available on-line at [www.spc.int/en/publications.html](http://www.spc.int/en/publications.html).



# Cross-cutting issues

SPC is focusing on organisation-wide engagement on issues of critical importance to members, including climate change, food security, gender equality and youth. For all of these issues, a regional approach and strong collaboration with members and development partners offers greater opportunities for progress.

## SPC's engagement in climate change

*In their 2009 Cairns Communiqué, Forum Leaders concluded that 'climate change is the great challenge of our time' and adopted the 'Pacific Leaders' call for Action on Climate Change,' which underpins SPC's climate change engagement process.*



SPC has for several decades provided scientific and technical support to its members across many different sectors, most of which are highly susceptible to the impacts of climate change. In recent years, much of this support has had either a direct, or indirect, link to how members can reduce their vulnerability to climate change. While climate change related technical assistance has been a key feature of SPC's activities for some time, the organisation is now embarking on a process of building a more explicit and broad-based programme to increase the level of specific technical support to members over the coming years.

### Developing a strategy

In 2010, SPC established the new position of Senior Climate Change Adviser to help strengthen its engagement in, and coordination of, climate change issues across all its programmes. The first task of the Adviser, who began work in September 2010, has been to develop a climate change engagement strategy for SPC. The strategy will guide the process of integrating climate change within the organisation, highlight areas

where SPC can increase its support to members, and provide a framework for coordinating climate change activities across SPC and with other key stakeholders in the region.

### Implications for food security

The impact of climate change on coastal and oceanic fisheries has major implications for food security in the Pacific Islands. SPC is nearing the completion of a major three-year vulnerability assessment study, funded by AusAID, which involves more than 70 leading fisheries scientists and managers from 30 institutions across the globe. The results, to be released during 2011, will provide the most authoritative and wide-ranging assessment of the impact of climate change on fisheries to date. The findings will inform fisheries managers and policy makers on the projected timing and magnitude of the impacts on fisheries production and the implications for food security, and guide decisions on strategies to respond to these impacts. The work will also feed into the preparation of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) 5<sup>th</sup> Assessment Report, the world's most comprehensive document on global climate change.



## Tuna stock impacts

In addition to the vulnerability assessment project, the Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division (FAME) has begun modelling the impact of climate change on the health and distribution of the region's tuna stocks. Tuna fishing is one of the major sources of foreign income for many SPC members and any changes to the size and quality of the catch will have significant socioeconomic repercussions. It is essential that we enhance our understanding of the implications of climate change on this important resource. While considerable uncertainty remains, initial results from SPC's modelling work suggest that there may be a general eastward movement in tuna stocks over the course of this century.

## Effects on agriculture

The impacts of climate change on agricultural yields and production is also an issue that the region will need to carefully manage. Climate induced changes to the quantity and distribution of rainfall, increasing temperatures and storm intensity, and a range of other variables are expected to have adverse effects on agricultural productivity. Through the Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT) SPC has been evaluating a range of crop species (cassava, taro, yams and others) for their tolerance to changes in environmental conditions such as periods of drought, floods and increased salinity. CePaCT is also assessing early maturing varieties suitable for post disaster recovery. To date, over 60 varieties of key subsistence crops have been selected for specific climate tolerance traits and field testing of these is either underway or soon to commence in nine member PICTs. This work is making a valuable contribution to increasing the climate resilience of traditional food production systems across the Pacific.

In addition CePaCT has commenced work, in partnership with CSIRO (Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation) in Australia, to evaluate the impact of increased atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations on selected crops. CePaCT is also engaged in assessing the impact of climate change on agrobiodiversity. In the coming years, SPC will scale-up national-level dissemination of the climate ready crops and work across several other areas that directly contribute to reducing the vulnerability of food supplies to the impacts of climate change.

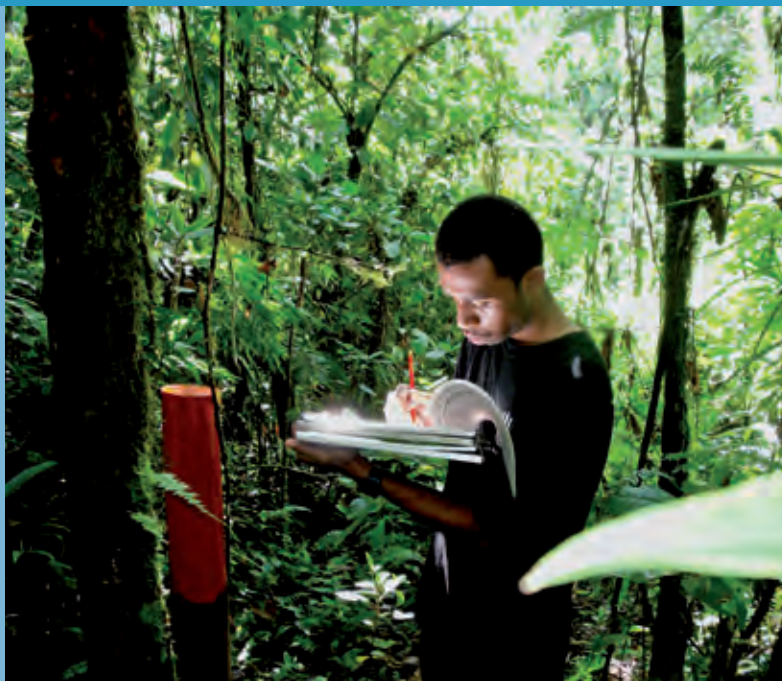
## Increased support for members

As part of SPC's strategic objective to increase the level of climate change related support to members, there was significant progress in attracting more resources from several key development partners. In addition to the existing support being provided by Australia for SPC's work in mainstreaming food security and climate change into its programmes, SPC has been working in partnership with GTZ (supported by funding from the Government of Germany) to assist members in forestry and agriculture. During 2010, the SPC/GTZ programme was substantially expanded to include a range of other sectors (for example, fisheries, tourism, education and energy) under the 'Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Islands Region' project. An agreement between SPC and the European Union to provide increased climate change support to selected members through the 'Increasing the Climate Resilience of Pacific Small Island States' project was also advanced during 2010. The four-year programme is expected to commence in early 2011.

With the full integration of SOPAC's work programme from 1 January 2011, SPC's work will cover a wider range of climate change relevant activities, including water management, coastal zone management and disaster risk reduction and management.

## Fiji develops and endorses REDD-plus policy

*The SPC/GTZ (German Technical Cooperation) Regional Programme, Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region, aims to build the capacities of member PICTs and organisations to adapt to, and mitigate, climate change impacts in the agriculture, forestry and land management sectors. This includes assisting PICTs in developing appropriate policy frameworks to allow them to participate in global mechanisms to link financial incentives to reduction of emissions from deforestation and forest degradation.*



**D**eforestation and forest degradation affect the ecosystem services provided by forests. These services include provision of clean water and fertile soil, moderation of weather conditions, habitats for wild plants and animals, protection of biodiversity and sources of livelihood for forest communities.

Deforestation and forest degradation are also significant contributors to climate change. When forests are cleared, carbon stored in trees and as organic matter in soil is released into the atmosphere as carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide is a greenhouse gas that traps heat, and more of this gas in the atmosphere will lead to a warmer climate. Since trees absorb carbon dioxide, the removal of trees means less carbon dioxide is sequestered from the atmosphere. Scientists estimate that deforestation and forest degradation account for around 20 per cent of the annual greenhouse gas emissions that fuel climate change.

REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) is an approach that uses financial

incentives to reduce the 20 per cent of emissions related to forests. Forests are generally regarded as sources of financial and economic gain (agriculture, logging, land development, etc.) and this attitude often takes precedence over concerns about forest conservation or sustainable management. The REDD-plus concept, however, links financial incentives to forest conservation, sustainable management, and enhancing and increasing carbon stocks, awarding credits for carbon emissions avoided and/or carbon sequestered.

Fiji recognises REDD-plus as an opportunity to contribute towards global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, to strengthen the socio-economic status of its forest resource owners, and to protect its forest ecosystems. The SPC/GTZ programme is supporting Fiji in its efforts to engage in a REDD-plus carbon financing mechanism through a REDD-readiness programme. Stakeholders identified the immediate need for a suitable policy framework to ensure that REDD-plus projects in the country are carried out



sustainably and appropriately within a transparent and accountable environment. This prompted the development of a national REDD-plus policy that was first drafted in September 2009. More than 50 stakeholders from various sectors and agencies defined the appropriate scope and scale of the policy, as well as the measuring, reporting and verification (MRV) approach, the distribution of benefits, institutional support, and safeguards for REDD-plus in the country. The presence of a multi-sectoral group ensured that interests such as social needs, cultural values, indigenous rights, transparency and good governance were appropriately addressed. Extensive consultations continued into 2010, supported by international experts on REDD-plus.

The strong support from Fiji stakeholders for the REDD-readiness initiative may be attributed to the existing strong legal and institutional frameworks that support community-based forestry initiatives and protect indigenous land and cultural rights, as well as a genuine desire to protect forest resources and improve the livelihoods of resource owners. Another

contributing factor is the trust between forestry sector stakeholders, developed over many years of close collaboration. GTZ and SPC have played an important role in facilitating participatory processes during policy development. Whilst REDD-plus is acknowledged to be a complex mechanism, the wide participatory consultation process, along with relevant capacity development, ensured a common understanding of REDD-plus and that associated issues were openly addressed. This, in turn, facilitated consensus building and saw stakeholders agreeing on the policy framework required for REDD-plus to be implemented in Fiji.

The Fiji National REDD-plus Policy was endorsed on 7 December 2010. The policy is a first for the region and the process carried out in Fiji has been hailed as an exemplar for other Pacific countries preparing for REDD-readiness. The development of the policy is very timely, with growing interest from private investors and donors to establish REDD projects in Fiji. Investors, donors and project implementers will refer to the policy as a guiding framework for the implementation of REDD projects.



## Food security – leading a regional approach

*SPC is the lead coordinating agency for the implementation of the Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific, which was endorsed at the Pacific Food Summit held in Port Vila, Vanuatu, in April 2010. More than 170 delegates from Pacific Island countries and territories, Australia and New Zealand attended the summit.*



**T**he *Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific* outlines areas considered key to tackling the growing burden of poor food security in the region and the diet-related health problems that result. Focus areas include leadership and cooperation; better infrastructure (land, transport, energy and ICT); sustainable production, processing and trading of safe and nutritious local food; protection of infants and vulnerable groups; education, food security information systems and consumer empowerment; public-private sector collaboration; and regulatory frameworks, enforcement and compliance.

Development of the framework was coordinated by the Food Secure Pacific Working Group, which includes the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), Global Health Institute, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, SPC, United Nations Children's Fund and WHO.

### Calls for regional action

The call for a regional approach to food security was first made by Pacific health ministers at the joint SPC-WHO Pacific health ministers meeting hosted by Vanuatu in 2007. The need for action has since been emphasised in Forum communiqués and by meetings of Pacific ministers and heads of agriculture and forestry.

Priority actions for addressing threats to food security in the region include boosting local food production, strengthening infrastructure for food distribution, reducing the burden of higher food prices, providing incentives for economic growth, diversifying production systems to adapt to climate change, developing urban agriculture, and raising awareness of the benefits of a nutritious diet and consumption of local produce. All of these actions require a multi-sectoral approach involving the whole of society and whole of government.



*Food security exists when all people at all times have physical, social and economic access to sufficient safe and nutritious food to meet their needs for an active and healthy life*



## Organisation-wide involvement

SPC's work on food security spans the breadth of the organisation and includes projects on land, agriculture, fisheries, forestry, gender issues, culture, youth, statistics, public health, trade, transport, energy, ICT and media communication, education, parliamentary processes and climate change. For example:

- ▶ SPC collaborated with FAO to improve national statistics that contribute to food security assessments.
- ▶ SPC's Centre for Pacific Crop and Trees (CePaCT) provides technical support for national food production systems through its work on improved multiplication of crops in vitro, especially nutrition-rich varieties of traditional crops. CePaCT is also continuing research on salt-tolerant seeds for atoll countries, flood tolerant seeds for lowland and 'flood-prone' areas, and climate-ready crops for highland agriculture.
- ▶ The EU-funded project Facilitating Agricultural Commodity Trade (FACT) being carried out by SPC is assisting the development of commercially viable, sustainable, market-oriented production of agricultural and forestry products, improving

the ability of PICT food producers to earn a good income.

- ▶ SPC supports the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom). Organics associations in Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu are developing local organic production and marketing systems, which fit well with traditional systems of food production.

## Framework implementation

An implementation plan and monitoring and evaluation mechanism for the Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific are being jointly developed. A dedicated position will be established within SPC's Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility to coordinate the mainstreaming of food security in all related SPC programmes and to take on the lead coordination role.



## Gender mainstreaming in SPC

An important year for progressing this initiative



*In October 2010, the Director-General announced the establishment of a Gender Mainstreaming Committee to coordinate and monitor the implementation of gender equality commitments across the organisation.*

**T**he new Gender Mainstreaming Committee is a critical step in ongoing efforts to continually improve the way SPC works and to ensure that services to member countries and to the region as a whole are responsive to the differing needs and priorities of all Pacific women, men, girls and boys, and that all of our work – across the organisation – is contributing to the achievement of gender equality. Gender equality is a priority objective of regional and international development frameworks such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Pacific Plan and a legal obligation under international human rights law.

SPC's Corporate Plan (2007-2012) affirms that the organisation is committed to being a gender-focused regional organisation, and SPC's Equal Opportunity Policy (Gender Policy, 2007) recognises that gender is a factor that 'must be taken into account in planning and implementing the Secretariat's work programme and in the management of the organisation'. SPC is also party to the CROP Gender Strategy (1998, revised 2005).



'... responsibility for implementation rests with the whole organisation, and as such all staff are requested to work openly and constructively with the Gender Mainstreaming Committee as new measures and practices are developed'.



These policies require that specific institutional measures be taken to ensure that, as an organisation, we are acting on our commitments and also supporting the gender equality commitments of our members.

The executive recognises that while some positive steps have been taken, implementation of gender related commitments to date has been ad hoc, largely due to a lack of clear systems and structures for guiding and monitoring this work across the organisation.

The Human Development Programme took the lead in developing a planning and monitoring mechanism that will allow SPC to systematically track, plan and report on implementation of the different institutional measures that the executive has committed to and that are required to ensure SPC is a fully gender-integrated

organisation. This mechanism is being rolled out not only in SPC but also across CROP agencies in a harmonised fashion.

The mechanism was endorsed by the executive in December 2010. The Gender Mainstreaming Committee will meet each January and July, commencing in January 2011, to track implementation and ensure gaps are filled over the short (6 months), medium (6–18 months) and long (18–36 months) term.

The goal is to have fully implemented SPC's gender equality commitments and requirements by 2015 and sustainably thereafter, and to be a model of good practice in the area of gender equality and gender mainstreaming for the region.

The Gender Mainstreaming Committee is made up of the two Deputy Directors-General of SPC, Fekita ‘Utoikamanu (Suva based Chair) and Richard Mann (Noumea), SPC’s Change Manager, the Gender Equality Adviser, representatives of both the Staff Advisory Committee (Noumea) and the Staff Representative Committee (Suva), human resource officers in both Suva and Noumea, and a representative of the Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility. These members were appointed by the Director-General based on their specific roles and expertise.

The planning and monitoring mechanism that will guide the committee allows for transparent reporting on the status of implementation, and importantly on progress over time in strengthening implementation. The reporting will be included as a regular item in SPC’s Annual Reports as well as at CRGA.

In announcing this development, the Director-General reminded staff of the SPC Gender Policy, which states that:

*‘... responsibility for implementation rests with the whole organisation, and as such all staff are requested to work openly and constructively with the Gender Mainstreaming Committee as new measures and practices are developed and institutionalised to improve the way we work.’*

He also made a personal commitment to staff and to member countries and territories that this new process will be both systematic and transparent and agreed to take responsibility for ensuring that SPC takes seriously its obligation to ensure that all of our work is contributing to gender equality in the region, for the benefit of all Pacific Island peoples.

This initiative was announced and supported at the 11<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, held in 2010, and at CRGA 40.



Delegates at the 11th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women hosted by SPC at its headquarters

## Increasing employment for Pacific youth

### Promoting opportunities in agriculture

*Pacific Island countries and territories have identified a need to encourage young people to become involved in agriculture. In 2010 SPC coordinated the development of the Pacific Youth in Agriculture Strategy, which emphasises participatory approaches and the need for an enabling environment for young farmers.*



SPC's Land Resources Division (LRD) and Human Development Programme (HDP) coordinated the development of the *Pacific Youth in Agriculture Strategy*, which is aimed at addressing issues of youth unemployment and lack of career skills, declining food security and weak economic growth.

While the focus is on increasing the involvement of young people in agriculture to enable their participation in formal and informal economic areas, SPC is also mainstreaming youth development into its technical programmes.

In surveys conducted in 2009 with young people and agriculture stakeholders, responses identified the family, the community and church as the most significant sources of support for youth. Hence the strategy places emphasis on participatory and integrated approaches, and community and parent engagement to achieve the goal of increasing youth participation in agriculture. It is envisaged that the recommendations set out in the strategy will promote multi-sectoral collaboration to develop sustainable agriculture and forestry ventures and create realistic opportunities for young people to participate in national economic growth.

LRD and HDP will continue to engage with donors and members to mobilise resources to support the implementation of the strategy.

The involvement of the business sector is also crucial in ensuring the support needed to manage the semi-commercial and commercial undertakings of young people. For young people to see agriculture as a possible career option, they must be supported in developing appropriate business skills, have access to land and credit and have control over the financial returns resulting from their activities.

SPC will utilise the lessons learned from the now completed Development of Sustainable Agriculture in the Pacific (DSAP) project and build on these initiatives to continue its support for youth in agriculture. An example of best practice from DSAP's participatory approach was the involvement of young farmers in Tonga and Kiribati in activities such as identifying land accessible for farming and adapting appropriate technology to increase crop production.

The *Pacific Youth in Agriculture Strategy* was endorsed by the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Meeting in Nadi, Fiji Islands, in September 2010 and countries and territories have pledged to facilitate the adaptation of this regional strategy to their own national strategies. The development of the strategy was supported by the Pacific Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network with funding from CTA (Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation ACP-EU) and SPC.



# Divisional activities

## Economic Development Division

### Overview

*The Economic Development Division (EDD) is a new SPC division based in Suva. It currently has three active programmes: Energy, Pacific Information and Communication Technology Outreach (PICTO) and Transport.*

**E**DD’s Energy Programme, as the lead coordinating agency for energy in the region, drafted a *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific* based on a series of regional consultations with all stakeholders. The framework, which was endorsed by Forum Energy Ministers, acknowledges the primacy of national energy policies and plans/roadmaps as the principal means for achieving energy security.

Some progress has been made on bulk fuel purchasing, which SPC is working on in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). The outlook for 2011 and beyond includes plans for coordination of regional work in the energy sector with an emphasis on strengthening data collection, analysis and research to feed into energy planning and policy formulation and reviews.

Similarly, the PICTO Programme drafted a *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific*, which was endorsed by Pacific ICT Ministers at their 2010 meeting in Tonga in June (see page 32). The ministers committed to using ICT as a key tool for development, governance and sustainable livelihoods, and agreed that the framework would be reviewed before mid-2013.

Other noteworthy developments in the ICT sector include progress on appropriate cyber legislation for the Pacific; development and launch of an online ICT information portal ([www.e-pic.info](http://www.e-pic.info)) to improve access to ICT data; review and development of national ICT policies; raising awareness among Pacific legislators



of the importance of ICT legislative frameworks and improving ICT access in rural and remote communities; and e-waste management initiatives.

Achievements include the economic sustainability of the Pacific Rural Internet Connectivity System (PacRICS) and the expansion of the One Laptop per Child (OLPC) project. PacRICS has been established in 130 locations throughout the region and is now economically sustainable. There are seven OLPC pilot country projects and two trial projects, with evaluations showing strong support from teachers, parents and students. Plans for 2011 include promotion of better coordination across various sectors to improve efficiency in ICT infrastructure development.

The role of SPC's Transport Programme has expanded considerably, with shipping and air transport issues, in particular those of small island states (SIS), now part of its core focus. In addition to this function, SPC has a major regional role to play in supporting PICT compliance with international and regional instruments relating to

transport and ensuring there are systems and structures in place to align national frameworks with these ratified requirements. SPC is the only regional agency dealing with maritime matters in the Pacific Islands region and is the implementing body for the activities of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Technical Cooperation Division. To address transport issues in the Pacific at a regional level, a draft transport framework was developed for consideration in 2011.

In 2010, the following key transport services were delivered: establishment of the Central Pacific Shipping Commission (CPSC), continuation of the compliance audit regime, commencement of a pilot project on domestic safe ship management, and the first SPC-hosted heads of aviation meeting. In addition to continuing technical assistance and training in SIS shipping, ports, security and legal areas, transport activities for 2011 and beyond will include recruitment of an air transport specialist to collect and collate data and information, expansion of the audit regime to domestic fleets and work on other subregional shipping commissions.



Renewable energy-based systems like this two-kilowatt solar system installed at Coconak Primary School in Vanuatu under a SOPAC project bring electricity and lighting to isolated rural areas. EDD evaluated the implementation of the project.



## Towards an energy secure Pacific

Energy security depends on the availability, accessibility, affordability, stability, and uses of energy. These factors are in turn influenced by multiple sectors, groups and environments. To ensure energy security, actors in different sectors, the region's governments and regional and international stakeholders need to work together.

The *Framework for Action on Energy Security in the Pacific* was formulated in response to the call from Pacific leaders at the 40<sup>th</sup> Pacific Islands Forum in Cairns (August 2009) for greater energy security.

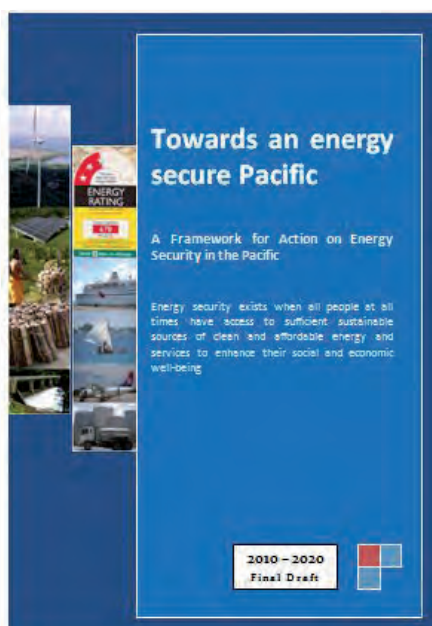
The framework promotes a 'whole-of-sector' approach, based on the concept of 'many partners, one team'. This approach recognises that numerous stakeholders contribute to energy security in the region and accepts them as equal partners.

PACT energy supplies are based on using petroleum fuels and some use of indigenous sources such as hydro and biomass. Recently, new renewable energy technologies have provided other means of producing energy. However, changes in both the supply of energy and demand, including for services, pose an increasing threat to energy security for Pacific populations.

Energy security is affected by numerous socio-economic, physical and technical factors, including population growth, GDP (gross domestic product) and affordability. Supply is affected by cost of fuel, existing generation and supply networks (electricity, LPG [liquefied petroleum gas], petroleum), infrastructure, technical capability to maintain supply technologies, and national policies and regulations. Other factors such as the occurrence of natural disasters also impact on energy security.

Petroleum products will remain the major source of energy for the region for a long time to come. Changes in their availability, quality and cost therefore have a significant impact on small island economies. Investment in clean and affordable energy, with a focus on renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation, needs to be stepped up to diversify the sources of energy in the region and to help mitigate the environmental effects of using fossil fuels. Importing higher quality refined petroleum products may be more expensive but is likely to produce long-term economic benefits in terms of cleaner and more efficient energy. In this regard, the petroleum industry, both internal and external to the Pacific, has an important role in improving the supply, quality and affordability of petroleum products available to PICTs.

SPC's Energy Programme is supporting PICT efforts to develop and invest in effective clean energy programmes, both to improve the ability of PICTs to withstand and adapt to economic shocks and to contribute to wider efforts on climate change mitigation and adaptation.



## North Pacific ACP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Project (North-REP)

Access to affordable and reliable sources of energy is key to enhancing sustainable livelihoods in PACP countries (Pacific members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific [ACP] group of nations) and contributes to their economic growth and development.

In April 2009, PACP energy ministers expressed alarm at their countries' heavy reliance on imported petroleum products, which is seen as a major threat





*Access to affordable and reliable sources of energy is key to enhancing sustainable livelihoods.*

Solar panels in Marshall Islands

to energy security in the region. Significant increases in petroleum prices over the 2007–2008 period had serious implications for PACP economies, constraining growth and development prospects, and in some cases marginalising socio-economic gains and threatening stability.

While many PACP countries have set ambitious renewable energy targets and implemented energy efficiency measures, progress towards achieving these targets has been slow. A contributing factor is limited national expertise in renewable energy and energy efficiency strategies and low planning capacity.

To address these challenges in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and Palau, the EU is funding a multi-country programme implemented by the SPC Energy Programme.

The programme provides EUR 14.44 million (approximately USD 20.5 million) in assistance for a renewable energy and energy efficiency project that will help improve the quality of life on the outer islands and reduce dependency on fossil fuels. The project, known as the North Pacific ACP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Project (North-REP), complements the bilateral cooperation programmes of the individual EU member states. It is the single largest financial commitment ever made by EU in these three countries.

North-REP is fully consistent with the policy objectives of participating governments and will carry out various activities at national and local government levels to raise the profile of renewable energy and energy efficiency and conservation. In the outer islands, it will provide renewable energy based electricity to households, schools and health centres. This is expected to have a positive impact on income generation and the quality of education and health services and result in poverty reduction, and increased employment opportunities.

## A multi-sectoral approach to implementing the ICT framework

Following the review and update of the Pacific Plan Digital Strategy, SPC in collaboration with partner agencies and stakeholders developed a regional *Framework for Action on ICT for Development in the Pacific* (ICT framework) in 2010.

The framework was endorsed by Pacific ICT Ministers at their meeting in Tonga in June 2010 and by CRGA 40 in October 2010 in New Caledonia. SPC is to coordinate the implementation of the framework in collaboration with the University of the South Pacific (USP) and other regional agencies and development partners.

As stated in the ICT framework: *‘Strong leadership with appropriate governance mechanisms are needed to ensure that the benefits of ICT are fully realised and contribute to the livelihood of the people of the Pacific. Better coordination of ICT interventions is needed to ensure that efforts are not duplicated and that limited resources are wisely utilised’.*

Lack of coordination and collaboration has been identified as a major challenge that needs to be addressed to ensure effective use of the limited resources available to the ICT sector. The recurring premise of the ICT framework is effective utilisation of ICT as a tool for development.

SPC and development partners adopted a cross-sectoral approach focusing on raising awareness of benefits of ICT in priority sectors such as agriculture, transport and education as well as in high-level forums.

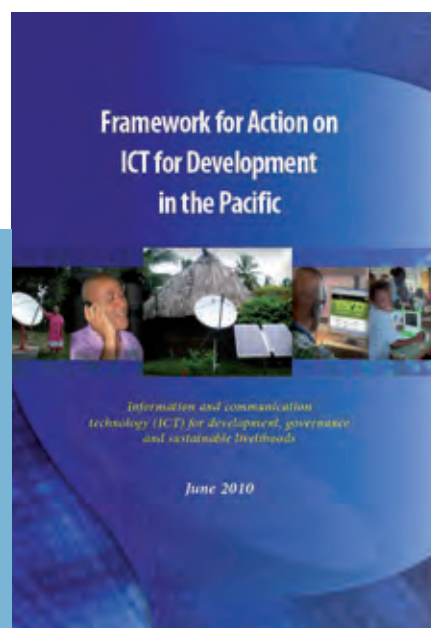
SPC also tabled the ICT framework in July for consideration by the Pacific Plan Action Committee (PPAC) at its meeting in Fiji Islands and in August at the Forum Leaders meeting in Vanuatu.

The framework was discussed at the Fourth Regional Meeting of the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) held in September 2010 in Fiji Islands with a special focus on ‘e-Agriculture’.

The meeting agreed that ICT can help address challenges in agriculture such as lack of access to information and services, lack of market access, lack of extension staff and remoteness.

In addition, the ICT framework was presented to the meeting of the Pacific Islands Maritime Association (PacMA) in September 2010 in Fiji Islands.

*‘Strong leadership with appropriate governance mechanisms are needed to ensure that the benefits of ICT are fully realised and contribute to the livelihood of the people of the Pacific. Better coordination of ICT interventions is needed to ensure that efforts are not duplicated and that limited resources are wisely utilised’.*





Pacific Regional ICT Ministers Meeting, Tonga, 18 June 2010

Areas discussed included electronic payments, scheduling, tracking containers, and the need for business continuity planning and sharing of information via websites.

USP, in partnership with SPC, developed a joint paper on using ICT to assist in overcoming the challenges faced by the education sector. The paper highlighted the need for a multi-stakeholder approach and recommended the establishment of an ICT for Education Working Group. This recommendation was duly endorsed by Forum Education Ministers in PNG in October 2010, showing their recognition of the key role of ICT in supporting and developing the sector.

SPC, through its PICTO Programme, intends to continue liaising and collaborating with these sectors as well as others such as health, disaster risk reduction and disaster management, and climate change.

## Central Pacific Shipping Commission (CPSC) launched

CPSC was officially launched on 4 August 2010 in a special event organised by SPC. The transport ministers of Kiribati, RMI, Tuvalu and Nauru, who have been strongly advocating for the establishment of CPSC over the past four years, joined the celebrations and endorsed a promulgation statement to mark the historic occasion.

The launch followed the signing of the Agreement on Regional Cooperation in Matters Affecting International Commercial Shipping in the Central Pacific Region by SIS Transport Ministers in June 2010 in Tonga. CPSC is now ready to take its first steps as an intergovernmental commission that will oversee cooperation on shipping issues and coordination and monitoring of commercial shipping services in the central Pacific region.

Participating governments have very high expectations of CPSC in relation to facilitating regular, efficient and affordable shipping services, similar to those resulting from the operation of the Micronesian Shipping Commission (MSC) in the northern Pacific region.





Signing of the agreement establishing the Central Pacific Shipping Commission: SPC Director-General Dr Jimmie Rodgers (standing) and representatives of central Pacific small island states (left to right) – Honourable Temate Ereateiti, Minister for Communications, Transport & Tourism Development, Kiribati; Honourable Taukelina Finikaso, Minister for Communications, Transport & Tourism, Tuvalu; Honourable Kenneth Kedi, Minister for Transportation & Communications, RMI; Christopher Stephens, Secretary for Transport & Telecommunications, Nauru.

RMI's Minister for Transportation and Communication, the Honourable Kenneth Kedi, was elected chair of the commission. He is also the current chair of MSC. His vast experience in shipping commission operations will be particularly useful for the new commission in its initial stages of development. Nauru's Minister for Transport and Telecommunications, the Honourable Sprent Dabwido, was elected vice-chair of CPSC.

It was agreed that SPC would initially provide secretariat services to CPSC and assist in setting up the commission in partnership with its members.

The two AusAID-funded pilot projects are part of the Pacific Islands Domestic Ship Safety programme formulated by SPC. The impetus for this project came from the tragic maritime incidents that occurred in Tonga and Kiribati in 2009, which resulted in the loss of many lives and led to calls for stringent safety measures to be put in place. This project may be extended to other PICTs upon request and availability of funding.

The pilot projects have seen increased interaction among the various players in the maritime sector in the two countries. For the first time, transport ministry and

## Domestic fleet safe ship management system and safety audits

In Tonga and Kiribati, pilot projects have begun on implementing safe ship management practices in domestic shipping companies prior to the 2011 safety audits to be conducted by SPC-trained and qualified Pacific Island maritime auditors. SPC has recently appointed a ship safety auditor and further work is being developed to ensure successful utilisation of SPC's expertise in safety.



Domestic ship safety training in Kiribati

maritime administration personnel and ship owners have sat down to address common issues, including the need for an effective ship-owners association to move the industry forward. The ship owners have also shown keen interest in being involved in the regulation of the industry and implementing the Safe Ship Management system.

## Regional maritime compliance audit regime

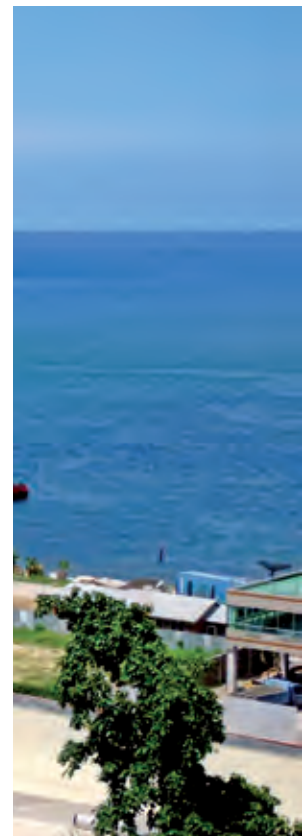
SPC's Transport Programme continues to provide maritime compliance auditing services to PICTs. Results show that ports, companies and maritime entities audited in 2010 remain compliant with current IMO safety and security requirements.

The audit regime is now being expanded to cover domestic fleet safety systems as well as to report on the extent to which PICTs have implemented IMO instruments that they have signed. Further work needs to be conducted in PICTs to ensure continued compliance with revised IMO instruments and to improve the quality of audit reports from recently qualified lead auditors.

SPC has also begun work on developing security frameworks for ports to implement the ISO 28000 standards, which provide a management framework for ports to systematically plan, implement, monitor and continually improve their security systems. Solomon Islands Ports Authority (SIPA) and Samoa Ports Authority (SPA) are working with SPC to develop this framework, and once it is successfully implemented they will become the first ISO 28000 certified ports in the Pacific Islands region.



Port of Honiara in Solomon Islands





## Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems (FAME) Division

### Overview

*SPC'S Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division (FAME) is made up of the two Fisheries Programmes (Coastal and Oceanic) of the former Marine Resources Division, as well as the Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific (CRISP) project.*

The division is working under a new four-year strategic plan, with the goal of ensuring that the marine resources of the Pacific Islands are sustainably managed for economic growth, food security and environmental conservation.

Under FAME's new structure, the Fisheries Information Unit comes under the office of the Director. The objectives of the Director and the Information Unit are to:

- ▶ develop and sustain effective relationships between the division and its stakeholders; and
- ▶ promote informed policy decisions and public awareness of marine resource issues in PICTs.

The Information Unit continued to produce the range of high-quality fisheries publications for which SPC is known, as well as organising training attachments for information officers of national fisheries departments. Staff of the unit, together with IT experts of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme, have also launched a redesigned website for the division as part of wider SPC efforts to update this important resource.

FAME works closely with other regional agencies, notably the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), which has the mandate of developing (with its members) sustainable management of tuna resources based on the scientific assessments of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme. A meeting of technical staff of both agencies, followed by a colloquium between the two







Directors-General early in the year led to agreement on a number of joint activities, including scientific services and the development of a joint proposal to strengthen the ability of both agencies to support national programmes for fisheries observers. An informal one-day meeting of Heads of Fisheries was organised in tandem with the Forum Fisheries Committee Officials meeting in Honiara. The Development of Tuna Fisheries in Pacific ACP Countries Phase II (DevFish 2) project, which is implemented by FFA and SPC, started towards the end of the year, with the signature of agreements between both agencies and the European Union (EU) Delegation to PNG.

The joint SPC/FFA 'Future of Pacific Island Fisheries' study was completed in early 2010 and was presented for endorsement by the Forum Fisheries Committee Ministers, Forum Leaders and CRGA. The report stated that many of the region's fisheries face collapse over the next 25 years, and major development opportunities may be missed unless strategic action is taken now. This rather negative prospect was widely reported in the international media. Somewhat less media attention was paid to the proposed solutions – 15 priority actions in seven strategic areas that SPC will assist its members to implement.

As well as the DevFish 2 project, two other significant funding initiatives – with components in both the Oceanic and Coastal Fisheries Programmes – were approved during the year. The EU-funded Scientific Support for the Management of Coastal and Oceanic Fisheries in the Pacific Islands Region (SciCOFish) project commenced with signature of the agreement in April, while the AusAID Fisheries for Food Security Programme was agreed in November.

The FAME Director was also the convener of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) Marine Sector Working Group, which met three times during the year. This group, which had been inactive for some time, has been expanded to include a number of non-governmental organisations (NGOs) that have relevant programmes. Its main task during 2010 has been to develop the Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape, a wide-ranging ocean policy initiative. The framework was endorsed by Forum Leaders, and the working group has now been given the task of progressing its implementation (see box).

## Framework for a Pacific Oceanscape *Our Sea of Islands – Our Livelihoods – Our Oceania*

At the 40th Pacific Islands Forum convened in Cairns, Australia, in August 2009, Kiribati shared with other Forum countries a vision for a secure future for Pacific Island nations based on ocean conservation and management, under its Pacific Oceanscape concept. Kiribati suggested that the success of a Pacific Oceanscape will depend on strong Forum leadership and regional cooperation, responding to national development aspirations and priorities. The framework based on this concept was developed as an implementation tool for the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy and related ocean and marine priorities of the Pacific Plan.

The framework has three main objectives:

- **Integrated ocean management** – to focus on integrated ocean management at all scales;
- **Adaptation to environmental and climate change** – to develop suitable baselines and monitoring strategies;
- **Liaising, listening, learning and leading** – to articulate and use appropriate facilitative and collaborative processes, mechanisms, systems and research.

Six strategic priorities provide the basis for developing these objectives into more concrete proposals for action.

The CROP Marine Sector Working Group judged that while some of these areas are already addressed by the current work programmes of regional organisations, there are important gaps and issues. A recommendation for immediate action is the appointment of an Ocean Commissioner – a high level position to drive the initiative. A proposal will also be developed for funding to implement other aspects of the framework.



Trainee Fisheries Officers rigging a fish aggregating device

## Oceanic Fisheries Programme

*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.*



Bigeye tuna tagging aboard the *Pacific Sunrise*, SPC's chartered tuna tagging research vessel for central Pacific tagging cruises.

In 2010, OFP continued to focus on its key objectives:

- ▶ high-quality scientific information and advice for regional and national fisheries management authorities 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 for regional and national fisheries management authorities 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, with a focus on the western tropical Pacific (Ecosystem Monitoring and Analysis Section).

Tuna fisheries have continued to expand, with a record catch of 2.46 million tonnes recorded for the 2009 calendar year in the western and central Pacific region (Figure 1), about half of which occurred in the exclusive

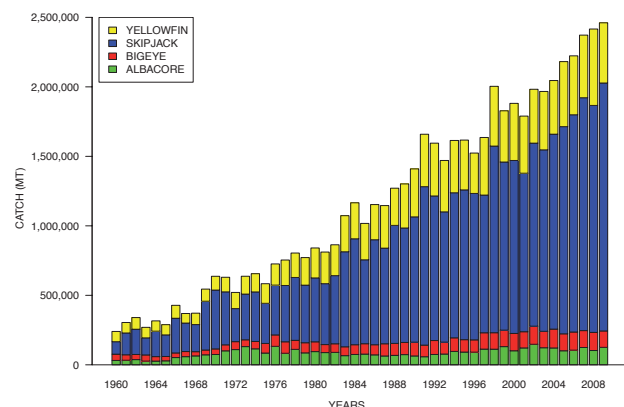
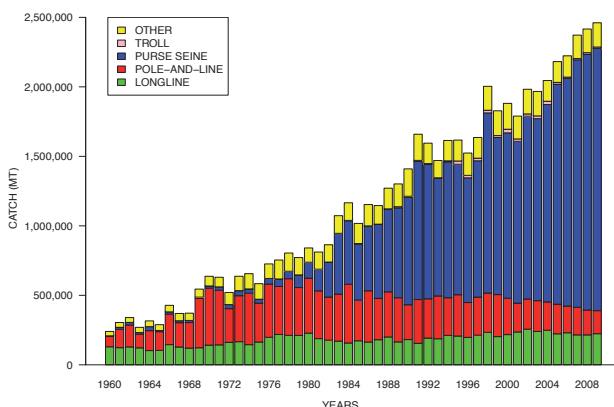


Figure 1. Total catch of tuna in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission area, by gear type (left panel) and by species (right panel).



economic zones of SPC members. Approximately three-quarters of this catch was taken by the purse-seine fishery, which targets skipjack and yellowfin tunas for the canned tuna market. Skipjack tuna dominates the catch, with approximately 1.8 million tonnes landed in 2009. Yellowfin tuna catches dropped from their record high in 2008 to 433,000 tonnes, and catches of bigeye tuna also declined to 118,000 tonnes, driven mostly by the lowest longline catches in 13 years. Catches of albacore tuna in the South Pacific bounced back from their low point in 2008 to a record catch of 67,000 tonnes in 2009.

## Stock assessment and fishery monitoring

Regional stock assessments were completed for bigeye and skipjack tuna in 2010. The assessment for bigeye continues to show that this stock is being fished well above sustainable limits. The assessment for skipjack indicates that stock and fishing effort levels are sustainable, but that there is probably limited scope for increases in long-term catches. The most recent assessment of yellowfin (2009) shows that it is being fished close to the sustainable limit, particularly in the core western tropical region, and the assessment for South Pacific albacore (2009) indicates that albacore catches are within safe levels but that further increases could impact on the catch rates in the domestic longline fisheries.

OFP has continued its evaluation of management measures introduced by the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC). These evaluations concluded that while some of the measures can be expected to reduce catches of bigeye, the failure to constrain the increase in purse-seine fishing effort, various exemptions on the cuts in longline catch and the exclusion of archipelagic waters from the coverage of the measures mean that the management measures will not achieve their aim. Also discovered was evidence that some fleets used loopholes in the ban on fish aggregating devices (FADs), reducing the benefit provided by this measure. Much tougher management action is required if bigeye tuna is to be exploited in

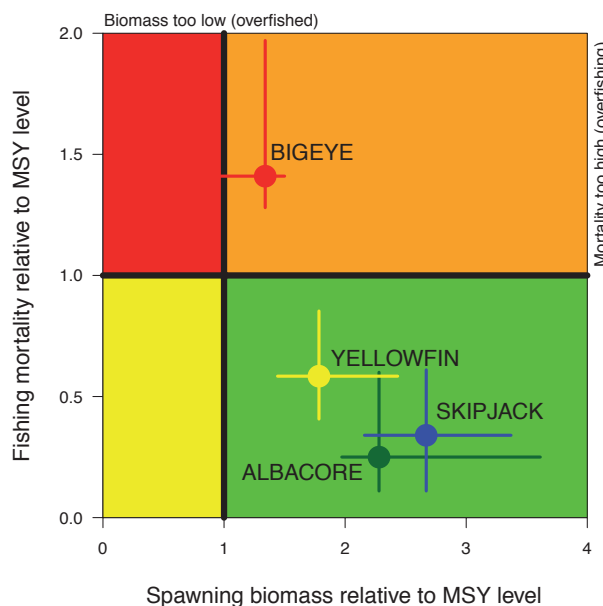


Figure 2. Current stock status of four commercially important species of tuna. The horizontal axis represents the level of spawning biomass (population of mature fish) relative to the level resulting in the maximum sustainable yield (MSY) and the vertical axis represents the level of fishing mortality (intensity of fishing) compared to the level resulting in MSY. The area of the graph above the horizontal line (red and orange) indicates that overfishing is occurring, while the area to the left of the vertical line (red and yellow) indicates an overfished stock status.

a manner that is consistent with the objectives of the WCPFC Convention. OFP expects considerable work in this area in 2011.

At the subregional level, OFP continues to work with colleagues from FFA and the newly established PNA (Parties to the Nauru Agreement) Office and Te Vaka Moana group on issues of regional importance. In 2010, highlights included work on a new management system for managing the tropical tuna longline fishery and work to determine optimum levels of exploitation for the South Pacific albacore stock.

At the national level, national tuna fishery status reports were completed for Samoa and Tokelau. Reports for Kiribati and Marshall Islands are near completion and incorporate new research on the impacts of climate factors on purse-seine fishing. Work is ongoing on reports for Cook Islands, Tuvalu and Solomon Islands. These reports provide an essential resource to PICTs for planning tuna fisheries management and development at the national level.

OFP provides considerable assistance to members in the area of tuna fisheries data collection and management. A comprehensive observer database management system (TUFMAN-TUBS) was completed in 2009. This system will provide national fisheries offices with a useful tool to manage their observer data.

### Tuna tagging

The Pacific Tuna Tagging Programme (PTTP) was fully operational through 2010. Two cruises lasting four–six weeks were completed in the central Pacific region. The first cruise used a long-range hand-line vessel based in Hawaii for tagging in and adjacent to the Line and Phoenix Islands of Kiribati during May–June 2010. The cruise concentrated activities within the 170° and 155° W meridians between 5° N and 5° S. The second cruise used a modified long-line vessel from Tonga for tagging at the 170° and 180° W meridians between

5° N and 5° S. Tagging activities during these cruises targeted mainly bigeye tuna. The cruises were very successful, with a total of 8,770 tropical tuna tagged and released during the cruise, comprising 8,375 bigeye, 47 skipjack and 348 yellowfin tuna. These totals include 97 bigeye tuna and 20 yellowfin tuna that were released with electronic archival tags that provide detailed information on horizontal and vertical movements.

Overall, PTTP has now tagged over 270,000 tuna, including 1,998 with archival tags. It is the largest tuna tagging programme ever implemented.

By the end of 2010, approximately 42,000 tagged tuna had been recaptured and the information reported back to SPC, representing an overall tag recovery rate of 15.2 per cent. Tag recaptures are expected to continue for several years, with final tag return rates expected to be between 15 and 20 per cent. These data will provide a vast amount of information that will inform tuna stock assessment and related work for many years.

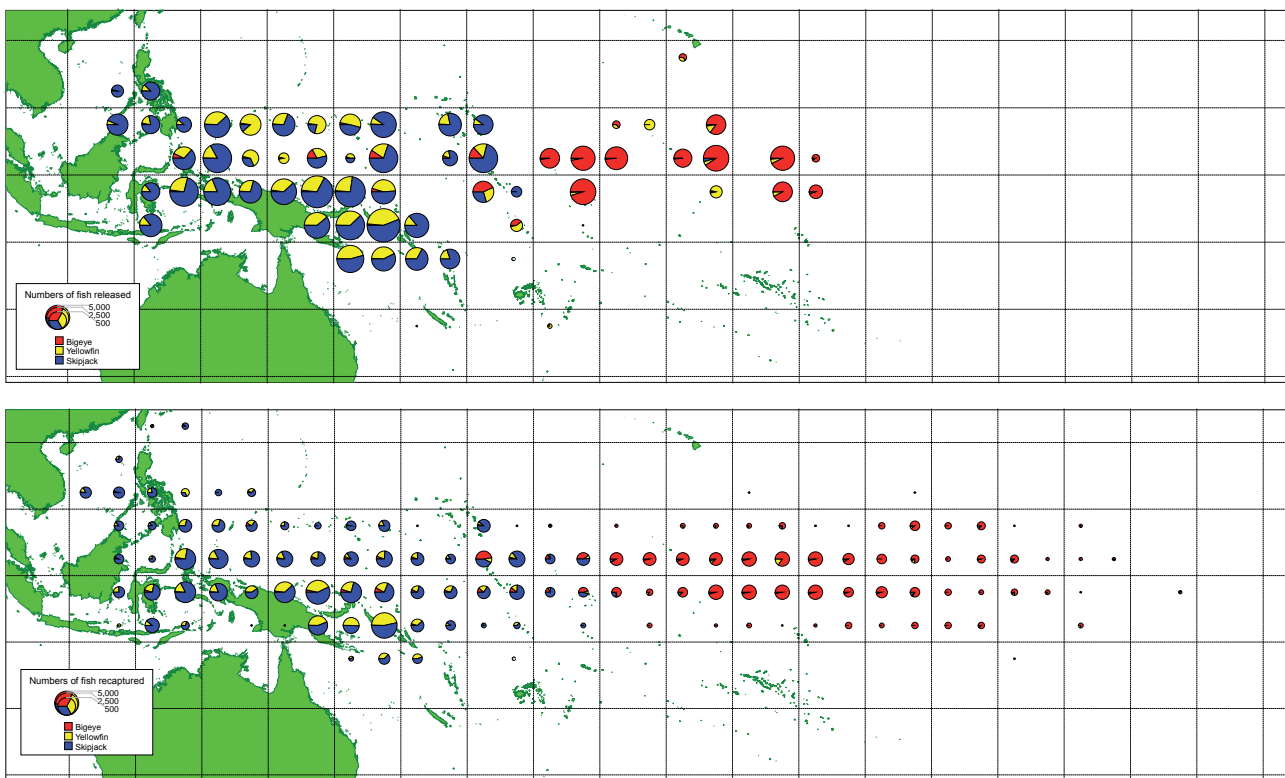


Figure 3. Distribution of PTTP tagged tuna releases and recaptures: blue = skipjack, yellow = yellowfin, red = bigeye.

The programme is currently planning tagging activities for 2011, including a return to PNG for intensive tagging in the western Pacific and two additional cruises in the central Pacific region. The establishment of this ongoing programme and continuous stream of data have enormous value in monitoring the condition of tuna stocks and the impacts of fishing.

A separate tagging project to improve understanding of albacore tuna resources (which form the basis of many of the longline tuna fisheries in the south of the region) was continued in 2010. This involved the capture of adult albacore in the coastal waters of New Zealand, New Caledonia and Tonga and tagging them with miniaturised satellite tags to measure large-scale movement. Fish condition was generally poor and only 19 fish were tagged.

## Ecosystem monitoring and analysis

OFP continues to provide information to SPC members and regional authorities on the ecosystem effects of fishing and how tuna resources respond to environmental variability. Highlights for 2010 include the completion of analyses that assess the vulnerability of tuna resources to climate change and the modification of the SEAPODYM model allowing high resolution modelling of tuna distribution and abundance within the exclusive economic zones (EEZs) of SPC members.

## Capacity building

In addition to directly providing scientific services to SPC members, OFP continues to conduct national capacity-building activities in the key areas of fishery monitoring and data management, and provides training in tuna stock assessment interpretation and direct support for observer coordination and port sampling. This support assists members to meet their obligations to WCPFC and to undertake informed management of tuna fisheries within their EEZs.

As in 2009, a strong focus of capacity-building efforts in 2010 has been the training of a large number of new observers, required to meet the Regional Observer Programme target of 100 per cent observer coverage on purse-seine vessels. This increased coverage allows monitoring of compliance with new management measures designed to reduce the catch of bigeye tuna. SPC staff were involved in national observer training courses in FSM (2), Kiribati (2), Marshall Islands, PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and one subregional course held in FSM for participants from FSM, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Palau. This has been a considerable achievement. However, with a target of 100 per cent coverage year-round on purse seiners, challenges remain for 2011 in terms of the numbers of observers needed, coordination and management, data processing, and maintaining the quality of the programme.



OFP provides training in tuna stock assessment interpretation and direct support for observer coordination and port sampling.

Training fishery observer trainers



## Coastal Fisheries Programme

*The Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) assists SPC member PICTs to manage and benefit from coastal and nearshore fisheries and aquaculture by providing advice, training and information. It supports the sustainable development of the region's fisheries at the subsistence, artisanal and small- and medium-scale commercial levels.*



The objectives for the Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP) have changed somewhat from 2009 with the implementation of the new FAME Strategic Plan (2010–2013). Each of the three objectives covers one of the CFP work areas: coastal fisheries science and management, aquaculture, and nearshore fisheries development. The objectives 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 (The Pacific Islands Regional Coastal Fisheries Management Policy 2008–2013, endorsed by the 4<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Forum Fisheries Committee in 2008).

**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.

## Improving fisheries management

The first objective largely involves improving the ability of PICTs to evaluate and manage coastal fisheries resources, including the review of national legislation to better support both national and community-based coastal fisheries management.

As a result of training, national staff from FSM and Kiribati now have the capacity to carry out assessments of aquarium fish resources. Fishery management plans for specific fisheries were agreed with stakeholders in Cook Islands, Kiribati and FSM. Improved legislation for coastal fisheries and aquaculture was developed in Fiji Islands, Samoa and Tuvalu, although this is a multi-year task. Community-based management programmes were strengthened in American Samoa, Pohnpei (FSM), Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Samoa, empowering communities and improving resource management.

There are two main highlights of work conducted under Objective 1. The first was a five-day workshop involving representatives from national government conservation and fisheries departments and regional and national NGOs held in Noumea from 29 November to



Loading anchors for deployment of fish aggregating devices in Kiribati

3 December 2010. The meeting brought together the main stakeholders working in the area of implementing CEA FM (community-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management) to discuss management and monitoring activities, and the challenges faced; find common ground between conservation and fisheries management and monitoring approaches in the Pacific; and develop and strengthen partnerships for collaboration. This is the first time such a workshop has been held.

A total of 12 recommendations came from the workshop, with the main ones covering the need for SPC to facilitate, encourage and support national and regional forums to exchange ideas and lessons learned and accelerate introduction of adaptive management approaches suited to national contexts. It was also recommended that SPC support national arrangements to develop or use existing multi-sectoral committees that recognise and incorporate NGOs, are of sufficiently high level, and have a legal mandate with appropriate community representation. And it was recommended that SPC work closely with NGOs under formal consultative arrangements, using joint implementation strategies, as guided by national forums, to extend regional initiatives at the national and community level.

## Advances in aquaculture

The second highlight was the commencement of the EU-funded SciCOFish project in the second half of 2010, strengthening scientific support for coastal fisheries. Several PICTs have requested assistance with invertebrate surveys and capacity building in this area. In November, the first major national training was undertaken in Tonga when a two-week workshop on survey methodologies for trochus and sea cucumbers was undertaken. Three fisheries and two conservation department staff received formal training in these methodologies, including the commencement of specific surveys in several locations in the Vava'u area. After the training, the trainees undertook similar surveys in the Ha'apai group. Further assistance will be provided to Tonga in early 2011 with the analysis of the data collected and the development of management advice based on interpretation of the data.

In the field of aquaculture (Objective 2), Wallis and Futuna, Tonga and CNMI have new plans to guide the development of this growth industry. SPC staff continued to support ACIAR (Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research) mini-projects, with 13 projects underway in six countries (Kiribati,

Samoa, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Fiji Islands). These projects generated useful research results as well as enabling five students to achieve postgraduate qualifications in aquaculture this year. Staff in nine PICTs that export cultured species for the aquarium trade have a better understanding of the processes required by the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) following a workshop held in Honiara by the Aquaculture Section. This will facilitate trade in these commodities.

SPC was also an organiser of the regional conference 'Tahiti Aquaculture 2010', which included the presentation of a review of the marine shrimp industry. The conference was held in Papeete, French Polynesia, from 6 to 10 December 2010 and brought together aquaculture scientists, researchers, managers and industry from across the region as well as the rest of the world. The conference focused on all areas of aquaculture (including tilapia) and mariculture of marine species excluding pearls. Biosecurity for introduced species was identified as an area that needs urgent attention, with PICTs suggesting the need for one or two central locations within the region to produce seed or broodstock for local distribution. Tilapia remains an important species for aquaculture for food security in the region, and biosecurity issues surrounding the introduction of this species must be addressed. Another key outcome was identification of the need for a regional approach to advance the current knowledge on sea cucumber growout for both restocking and mariculture (in sea cages). This will be the focus of a workshop organised by the Aquaculture Section for February 2011.

## Improving productivity of nearshore fisheries

Achievements under Objective 3 have included training of fishers as well as search and rescue staff, leading to improved understanding of sea safety issues; and successful hook exchange experiments/demonstrations in New Caledonia and American Samoa to minimise the accidental catch of turtles by tuna longliners.

Studies have consistently shown that the provision of fish aggregating devices (FADs) is one of the most effective ways of improving the productivity of coastal fishing, exploiting sustainable resources of surface tuna. However, relatively few PICTs are able to maintain FAD programmes. During 2010, Fishery Development Officers focused their efforts on building the capacity of fisheries departments to order suitable materials and deploy and maintain FADs as well as providing training in fishing skills and monitoring catches to demonstrate the benefits. Programmes are in place in Samoa, FSM, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Nauru and Marshall Islands, and have led to improvements in food security and income.

In Kiribati, SPC staff trained 12 fisheries officers and trainees in early 2010 in the construction of 33 nearshore FADs and the deployment of 11 of these around 11 atolls in the Gilbert Islands. This was followed up later in the year with training of 11 fisheries staff members and fishers in small-craft sea safety and the introduction and distribution of sea safety 'grab bags' with the goal of reducing accidents at sea involving small craft and preventing loss of life due to a lack of preparedness by small-craft operators when embarking on fishing trips or inter-atoll travel. The project also included the introduction of lagoon-bottom FADs, with 23 villagers on the atoll of Nonouti trained in the construction and deployment of six units in the lagoon.

### *Integrated approaches*

While the preceding paragraphs highlight outcomes of work by the three sections making up CFP, there is often a need for an integrated approach. The development of sport fishing for bonefish in Cook Islands, for example, involved development of a management plan for the fishery, development of training guides, and publicising the opportunity to sports fishers overseas. The result is several new business enterprises and more tourist arrivals, with reduced commercial fishing pressure on lagoon stocks.



## CRISP – Protecting the region's coral reefs



*The aims of CRISP (Coral Reef Initiatives for the Pacific ) are to develop a vision for the future of these unique environments and of the people who depend on them and to introduce strategies and projects to conserve their biodiversity while developing the economic and environmental services that they provide both locally and globally.*

The CRISP project, mainly funded by the French Agency for Development (AFD), the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) and the French Pacific Fund, has enabled multiple new partnerships within the Pacific region, involving French and English speaking countries and territories, local and international NGOs, research institutes, universities and CROP agencies.

This was the last full year for the project, and in 2010 much emphasis was placed on publishing and disseminating results. Major publications have ranged from handbooks on the management of marine protected areas to analysis of potentially valuable biochemical extracts from sponges. The project has achieved a high degree of visibility, particularly in the francophone territories.

CRISP continued some field activities during 2010. These included trials of post-larval capture and culture (PCC) in Kiritimati Island (Kiribati), French Polynesia and Solomon Islands; further work on shark tagging; and a marine resource and biodiversity survey of the Chesterfield Islands of New Caledonia carried out with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) (see box). A workshop on approaches to assessing the economic value of coral reefs and the economic efficiency of marine protected areas was held towards the end of the year.

## The Chesterfield archipelago

### *A multi-disciplinary assessment of an oceanic crossroads*

Located in the middle of the Coral Sea, halfway between the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park (Australia) and the lagoons of New Caledonia – both UNESCO Heritage List sites – the Chesterfield archipelago is a key biodiversity site.

The main goal of a mission led by SPREP and Conservation International was to conduct a rapid assessment of the biodiversity of the islands, focusing on corals, invertebrates and commercial reef fish. Five scientists were responsible for underwater surveys and inventories aimed at providing synthesised data and practical recommendations for resource managers in New Caledonia. An ornithologist and a marine mammal specialist completed the team.

A second team, which brought together French and Australian experts, was dedicated to a large shark tagging programme called ‘SharkCal’. This programme, led by Eric Clua (CRISP/SPC) and Jonathan Werry from Griffith University, is assessing the connectivity between New Caledonia and Australia in relation to large sharks (tiger, bull and white sharks), and at the same time improving knowledge of their ecology. It is based on tagging (acoustic tags, SPOT5 tags and archival tags), photo identification and DNA sampling.

A third team developed a 52-minute documentary film co-produced with Cinemarine, the French Agency for Marine Areas, and ARTE Germany. The film will present the Chesterfield archipelago from a biological and historical point of view, including pictures and information on the fauna, stories of famous wrecks such as that of the Isabella, and a look at the whaling and guano exploitation that took place in this remarkable area.



## Land Resources Division

### Overview



*In partnership with international organisations, national governments, donors and strategic partners, the Land Resources Division (LRD) continued to work towards its goal: 'To assist the Pacific Community to improve food, nutritional and income security and manage agricultural and forestry resources in a sustainable way'.*

A highlight of 2010 was the two-yearly meeting of Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry (HOAFS) that took place in Fiji in September. In recent national and regional forums, there have been strong expressions of concern and calls for more concerted efforts to address issues such as climate change, food security, biosecurity and trade, pest and disease incursions, organic agriculture, and the place of youth in agriculture. The meeting addressed these issues within the context of the theme Agrobiodiversity to address climate change, food security and trade, which recognised the UN International Year of Biodiversity 2010.

This year, LRD staff have been actively involved in the work of SPC missions for developing joint country strategies in Vanuatu, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Fiji. The process has assisted the division to focus its activities at the national level on priority areas identified in national and sectoral strategic plans.

### *Improving food production*

Activities relating to the strategic plan objective of improving food and nutritional security include pest and disease surveys; control of invasive species; the use of integrated pest management, research and development for pest and disease control; quarantine treatments of fresh produce; and harmonisation of national legislation to comply with sanitary and phytosanitary requirements.

The Pacific's regional genebank, the Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT), is now operating from the new purpose-built facility at Narere, Fiji, which offers more space for the conservation of the region's crop diversity and has enabled SPC to establish its own virus indexing facility. This work supports the efficient and safe release of planting material to Pacific Island nations.



Improving the competitiveness of agricultural products and increasing market access



*Atoll agriculture*

The International Fund for Agricultural Development has supported LRD in conducting atoll agriculture research and development at the Centre of Excellence for Atoll Agricultural Research and Development in Tarawa, Kiribati. Areas of work include atoll soil management, water management, cultivar evaluation, and improving the resilience of food production systems to climate change. The Centre is also documenting sustainable food production systems, and food preservation and utilisation methods for atolls.



*Forestry management*

In realising the second objective – integrated and sustainable agriculture and forestry resources management and development – several Pacific nations have been assisted in developing or reviewing relevant policies and legislation. This work has included amendment of the Tonga Forestry Policy and drafting of the Fiji Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) policy. With the SPC/GIZ Pacific German Regional Programme on Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region, LRD helped to develop a national climate change adaptation strategy for Tonga and Vanuatu and conducted workshops and awareness sessions on climate change

for local communities and government organisations in several PICTs.

*Increasing trade*

In collaboration with ACIAR, the University of the South Pacific and several other universities, LRD has begun implementation of the Pacific Agribusiness Research and Development Initiative (PARDI), the main objective of which is to improve competitiveness and market access for agricultural products.

The third LRD strategic plan objective is to improve biosecurity and increase trade in agricultural and forestry products. The division works to facilitate inter-regional and international trade and capacity building in a broad range of technical areas. In 2009, the EU-funded Facilitating Agricultural Commodity Trade (FACT) project undertook studies of 14 enterprises

in six ACP countries and this year began to facilitate the development of commercially viable production programmes for these enterprises.

Under the guidance of the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom), the national organics associations of Cook Islands, Fiji Islands, French Polynesia, Kiribati, New Caledonia, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu have continued to develop and promote local organic production and marketing. Some national associations have commenced exports, e.g. coffee from Papua New Guinea and Vanuatu and organic coconut oil from Samoa and Solomon Islands.

Active involvement at the international level with forums such as the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification, Convention on Biological Diversity, Framework Convention on Climate Change, the United Nations Forum on Forests and the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture is a vital aspect of LRD's work as it ensures that the Pacific region is not isolated or ignored but is part of the global food producing community.

Some of these LRD activities are described in more detail in the articles that follow.

The science and technology capacity of the division decreased as several projects came to an end this year. The affected teams were those working in plant health; crop production and soils management; animal health and production; and information, communication and extension.

New initiatives began that helped to bridge the gaps, and others are due to begin in 2011, including the AusAID Pacific Regional Land Programme and the FAO project, Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods in the Pacific.

## LRD structure

LRD's integrated mode of operation is based on teams working in seven thematic areas – genetic resources; forestry and agriculture diversification; forest and trees; plant health; animal health and production; biosecurity and trade facilitation; and crop production. There are also three support teams: information, communication and extension; land management and resources policy support; and administration and finance. The 10 teams, comprising 88 staff as of 1 September 2010, work together with stakeholders to identify and prioritise issues and jointly implement solutions.





## New Caledonia gets organic certification system

*Under an agreement signed at SPC headquarters in Noumea, New Caledonia, the association Bio Calédonia will manage an organic certification and labelling system in New Caledonia.*

New Caledonia's organic certification system is adapted to smallholders and the local market. It will allow certified produce sold in New Caledonia to carry the Organic Pasifika label. This is the first time such a participatory guarantee system has been set up in the Pacific region.

There is a growing demand for organic food – healthy, chemical-free food – and a need for reliable assurance of quality in the form of certification. For a food product to be certified 'organic' it must comply with a set of standards that cover production, processing and marketing. Many of the standards prohibit use of chemicals in the form of fertilisers and pesticides in the soil and additives in the processing of food.



The Organic Pasifika label is a guarantee that products meet the Pacific Organic Standard (POS), developed by the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom), the 'governance' body of the organics movement in the Pacific. All PICTs recognise the POS, as does the International Federation of Organic

Agricultural Movements. SPC acts as the secretariat for POETCom and is the custodian of the Organic Pasifika label.

The POS sets out the objectives and principles of organic farming in the Pacific. Its overall aim is to protect current and future generations and the environment they live in. The standards are underpinned by principles relating to the good health of the soil, plants,



In May 2010, Vanuatu organic growers and stakeholders met to form an interim committee to spearhead the organic agriculture movement in Vanuatu. They took advantage of the Pacific Islands Forum Meeting held in Vanuatu in August to highlight the significance of organic products by presenting each head of delegation with a Fair Trade pandanus basket from a community on Ambae Island and a Venui Vanilla basket containing dried vanilla beans, black pepper and honey-coated Pacific almonds.

Head of the Pacific high-level organic group, the Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele, Prime Minister of Samoa (pictured above), said that the gift should remind leaders to promote organics in their home islands.

animals and people. These principles recognise farmers in rural communities, traditional farming practices and Pacific cultures, and they are concerned with adapting, imitating and maintaining ecosystems.

SPC Director-General Dr Jimmie Rodgers noted that the certified products would meet standards equivalent to those of the European Union, and that once a system of third party certification was in place, products would be eligible for export to Europe.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Jean-Louis D'Anglebermes, Member of the Government of New Caledonia, noted that in addition to the benefits stemming from regulations on pesticide use and environmental impact, organic fruits and vegetables 'tasted better than their non-organic counterparts'.



## FACT project expands assistance to private sector agricultural enterprises

*2010 saw an expansion in the work of the Facilitating Agricultural Commodity Trade (FACT) project, which directly assists private enterprises to overcome barriers to exporting their products.*

FACT Award recipients Louise Rodan (Balthan Western Ltd, Fiji Islands), Gary Tarte (Wainiyaku Estate, Fiji Islands) and Sharmayne Ryan (Amruqa, Papua New Guinea) were recognised for their outstanding contributions to trade and value-added agricultural and forestry products in the Pacific



**D**uring 2010, the EU-funded FACT project expanded its work with the private sector to sustainably increase the value of exports of agricultural and forestry produce from the 14 Pacific members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States (ACP). In late 2009, FACT's independent technical advisory group selected four additional private sector partners for the project in addition to the 15 enterprises it already assists. These new partners are Growers Commodities Marketing Group (Grocom) in Tonga and three coffee enterprises from PNG: Monpi Sustainability Services; Mainland Holding – Niugini Coffee, Tea and Spices; and Earth and Spirit Products Ltd.

FACT is based in the LRD's Forestry and Agricultural Diversification Group. During 2010, FACT staff worked with private sector partners in raising awareness regarding certification for fair trade, organic production and sustainability; training in coffee processing; and providing 'farming as a business' training in PNG. Whilst FACT works directly through private sector export partners, its aim is to maximise distribution of benefits to smallholder growers and suppliers. Each export partner enterprise typically has an extensive grower and supplier network and a number of permanent and casual employees. For example, Monpi Sustainability Services has approximately 1500 coffee growers, Mainland Holding has approximately 1900 coffee and vanilla growers, and Earth and Spirit

Products has a supplier network of 2300 coffee and chilli growers. With FACT's assistance with solar drying facilities, Earth and Spirit Products exported containers of dried chillies to Australia and Sweden during 2010 – the first such large-scale chilli exports from PNG since the 1980s.

In the areas of food standard certification and quality control, FACT also provided HACCP (Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points) assistance and training and virgin coconut oil (VCO) laboratory analysis to a number of processors and stakeholders around the region.

In Tonga, farmers were badly affected by a drought linked to El Niño, but in the second half of 2010, Grocom has managed to export major consignments of fruits and vegetables to New Zealand. Fiji exporters have also suffered floods and cyclones, but this has not prevented some from consistently increasing their exports. For example, FACT partner Kaiming Agro Ltd doubled its agricultural exports in 2009 from FJD 800,000 to more than FJD 1.6 million in 2010, and is looking to increase it by another 50% in 2011 with major growth in ginger exports.

In 2010 for the first time FACT presented awards to outstanding exporters around the region. Recipients included two outstanding woman exporters.



Coffee farmers from Buang Village in Papua New Guinea's Morobe Province learn about bean quality at an SPC workshop



SPC Resource Economist Tim Martyn and Sanfred Smith conduct Fair Trade pre-certification training with highland coffee farmers in Papua New Guinea



## Support for Papua New Guinea's rural coffee growers

Who knew your morning cup of coffee could be a driver of change? That is certainly the case for Papua New Guinea-based Earth & Spirit Products (ESP), one of 18 partner enterprises supported by the FACT project. Located in Oro Province, ESP works with an extensive network of smallholder coffee farmers in the Mangalas Plateau, a volcanic plateau about 1200 metres above sea level, to produce certified organic coffee, targeting Australian and US markets.

The agricultural enterprise has received technical assistance from FACT, which enabled the company to increase the number of rural farmers in its production supply chain from 2235 in 2008 to 2345 in 2010. The majority of these smallholders rely on coffee as their primary source of livelihood.

FACT financed ESP's Rainforest Alliance certification, a globally recognised stamp for environmentally sound business. That enabled the company to put a higher price on the coffee, in turn yielding a higher farm gate price for the farmers. For the year ending 2010, Earth & Spirit exported a total of PGK 2 million worth of coffee, approximately double its 2009 exports.

## Diversification brings benefits

To help its network of farmers in these remote areas to earn an income between coffee harvests, Earth & Spirit expanded into the production of bird's eye chilli, in 2010. Again FACT provided assistance.

The project engaged a specialist to convert an existing warehouse space to a passive solar dryer, which helped the company meet the standard moisture content of 11% required for the storage and sale of chilli. By reducing transport costs and improving quality, farmers were able to make a bigger profit on their chilli crop.

Subsequently, Earth & Spirit exported a total of PGK 70,000 worth of chillies to Australia in 2010, and in 2011, the company is looking to export a container of chillies every four or five weeks, as well as a container of ginger, a crop it is diversifying into, every six weeks, starting in April 2011. Here too, FACT will provide technical assistance and training through its ginger expert and export processing and marketing officer, Ms Apiame Cegumalua. Gains made by the business will directly benefit farmers.

**New PARDI project works to strengthen market chains for Pacific agricultural products**



*The Pacific Agribusiness Research for Development Initiative (PARDI) is a new project aimed at improving livelihoods by supporting the development of more competitive high-value agricultural, fisheries and forestry products.*

Agricultural development projects in the region have often focused on building production. However, to give farmers incentives to increase their production, more attention must be paid to marketing. The strategy of PARDI has been designed around supply chain, market and business analyses with the objectives of:

- ▶ identifying opportunities for high-value Pacific products based on market and supply chain analysis;
- ▶ developing strategies to address constraints through identified intervention points;
- ▶ focusing interventions at a value-adding level;
- ▶ using interventions to improve chain competitiveness; and
- ▶ applying lessons learnt on improving competitiveness to influence supply chains in other sectors.

Launched in June 2010, PARDI is a partnership involving SPC, the University of the South Pacific (USP) and a consortium of Australian agencies: the University of Queensland; the University of Adelaide; the University of the Sunshine Coast; James Cook University; the

Queensland Department of Employment, Economic Development and Innovation; and the South Australia Department of Primary Industries and Resources. The initiative has been made possible through a four-year, AUD 10 million commitment from Australia focused on opportunities for developing high-value agriculture, forestry and fisheries products in Pacific Island countries.

Initially the project will focus on Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji Islands, based upon current capacity and products, with likely expansion into Tonga and Samoa. Analysis will also be conducted on the likely impact of PARDI activities in Kiribati.

Since the project's inception, SPC has been working with the University of Adelaide and component leaders to develop project proposals for review by the PARDI Advisory Group. These proposals include work on integrated coconut processing, taro and cocoa. Work is expected to begin on these in early 2011. Further projects and collaboration are expected in 2011, especially in relation to high-value timber and breadfruit.





### Controlling Kiritimati Island's invasive weeds

SPC Plant Health Coordinator, Warea Orapa, conducted weed surveys on Kiritimati Island, Kiribati, in August 2010. There is very little agriculture on this island, and many invasive weeds, the most troublesome of which are the puncture vine (*Tribulus cistoides*), and the shrubs *Pluchea carolinensis* and *Pluchea indica*, both commonly called fleabanes because their strong smell is said to drive away fleas.

The puncture vine is of particular concern on this remote island of 7000 inhabitants because its fruit has sharp burrs that can pierce the soles of shoes and even bicycle and car tyres. The invasive weed is common in the low, dry, grassy areas of the island and can be a good deterrent against thieves looking for seabird eggs in the national park. It is, however, a problem for people who want to access land near their homes.

The Plant Health Coordinator has suggested bio-control to manage the troublesome weed. A potential solution is the introduction of stem-boring beetles, which were released on puncture weed in Papua New Guinea in the 1970s and were very effective.

During the visit to Kiritimati Island, SPC also assisted agriculture extension staff with the correct care and transplanting of tissue cultured plantlets of sweet potato, yam, taro, breadfruit and cassava, which were produced by CePaCT.



AAACP – helping agricultural producers cope with fluctuating commodity prices



*SPC is the Pacific focal point for the EU-funded All ACP Agricultural Commodities Programme (AAACP), which aims to improve incomes and livelihoods for producers of traditional or other agricultural commodities, and to reduce income vulnerability at both producer and macro levels.*



**A** AACCP is a multi-regional programme stretching across Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands. It is designed to improve the ability of stakeholders in agricultural value chains to develop and implement sustainable strategies for their products.

Funded by the EU, AAACP began in the Pacific in February 2008. Since January 2010, SPC has operated as the Pacific focal point to help create greater awareness about the programme and improve coordination among its stakeholders.

The project held a workshop in May 2010 for farmer associations from around the region. The training focused on the role of farmer organisations and networks in linking small farmers to markets, and on building skills and knowledge in business management and marketing.

Other project outputs in the Pacific region include the development and implementation of a fruit and vegetable strategy for Samoa and a coffee industry strategy for PNG, and ongoing work on improving market information systems, farmer networks, access to supply chain finance, supply chain risk management and access to information on certification.

Five international organisations are involved in the programme: the Common Fund for Commodities, the FAO, the International Trade Centre, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development and the World Bank.



## SPC collaborates in project to improve market access for high value Pacific commodities

*The key objective of the Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA) programme is to gain, maintain and improve access to key markets for selected high-value primary products – fresh and processed – particularly agricultural and horticultural products but also fish and forestry products.*



**P**ICT economies are primarily based on agricultural production, but export performance in primary products, especially high-value products, is poor. This is despite the comparative advantage often identified in the production and export of a wide range of agricultural and horticultural products and proximity to affluent markets, such as Australia and New Zealand.

A major reason for this poor performance is the difficulty faced by PICTs in managing the regulatory processes associated with accessing key markets. The imposition of stringent market access protocols for products that were historically traded with ease has created frustration within the industry and has also meant the loss of many export opportunities. Conversely, some developing countries have taken advantage of this revolution in the trade in high-value primary products (including horticultural products, livestock, fish, cut flowers and organic products) over the past 20 to 30 years. Exports of this nature now make up 66% of all developing countries' agricultural exports, but in PICTs they account for only 32%.

Another constraint has been the limited capacity of PICTs to conduct the research and development required to establish and maintain market access.

The PHAMA programme has four components:

- ▶ Component 1 – preparation and processing of market access submissions.
- ▶ Component 2 – implementation of market access requirements through developing the capacity of

exporting countries to meet critical biosecurity and quarantine requirements.

- ▶ Component 3 – research and development to gain and maintain market access, e.g. through pest surveys and updating pest lists.
- ▶ Component 4 – support to strengthen the capacity of SPC to provide core regional market access support services to all PICTs, in line with SPC's regional mandate.

Phase 1 of the programme will focus on Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, costing an estimated AUD 14 million over the four year implementation period. Over half of this amount will be allocated to Components 1–3 for establishing new or improved market access arrangements. While the major focus will be on Australian and New Zealand markets, improved access to other markets (e.g. Japan, EU, USA, Canada and Pacific Island markets) will also be pursued. Phase 2 of the programme could expand to other PICTs deemed to have strong export opportunities.

The private sector will drive the identification of products for market access. Stakeholders from this sector will be fully consulted during the development of market access submissions and agreements, and will be important partners in the implementation of market access protocols. Capacity building will focus on national organisations (public and private) to manage market access issues. The ability to resolve market access issues relating to sanitary and phytosanitary measures for fresh products, food safety issues for processed products, and maximum residue levels for fresh fruits and vegetables is critical to the development of a robust export industry in high-value primary products.



## Public Health Division

### Overview



Photo: Henriette Jansen

*The Public Health Division (PHD) supports the development of healthier Pacific Island communities through four broad objectives, as outlined in its strategic plan for 2010–2014:*

- *Combat and reduce the overall impact and burden of diseases*
- *Contribute to strengthening national health systems*
- *Increase the capacity of PICTs to address non-health sector determinants of health*
- *Increase the efficiency and impact of interventions*

**I**n 2010, PHD underwent extensive organisational reform. Its new structure is designed to increase the reach and impact of its work through a ‘whole of health’, country-based approach to health care in the region. The division now consists of four units: Disease Surveillance, Control and Research; Health Advancement; Grant Management; and Quality, Performance and Management Support.

The Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit addresses country priority diseases in an attempt to reduce the overall impact and burden of communicable, non-communicable, emerging and re-emerging diseases through effective prevention, control and management measures.

This unit develops mechanisms and maintains several core functions to enhance surveillance capacity and disease control within the region (e.g. regional surveillance communication; strengthening national and regional surveillance, laboratory systems and response capacity; and improving preparedness). The unit also contributes to SPC's crosscutting work on disasters, climate change and environmental issues through the use of surveillance and research to gather evidence and identify best practices.

The Health Advancement Unit contributes to increasing PICT capacity to address the social, environmental, political and economic determinants of health through developing partnerships and multi-sectoral policies and programmes to enhance equity and services for vulnerable groups and increase community resilience. The unit's mandate also includes developing PHD's approaches to reduction of risk factors, and health promotion, advocacy and prevention, including through making prevention 'everybody's business'.

The Grant Management Unit manages public health related grants to subrecipients including PICTs, NGOs, and regional and civil society organisations. The unit aims to provide best grant management practices and ensure effective management of high-level projects. It will initially concentrate on harmonising and standardising grant management processes and procedures for two of the largest donor projects managed by PHD – the Global Fund Multi-country Western Pacific Programme and the Pacific Response Fund – in order to deliver high quality, performance-based funding services to countries and regional partners.

The Quality, Performance and Management Support Unit provides strategic and operational performance monitoring and measurement support, as well as pooled project administration services for the division.

During 2010, PHD continued supporting the implementation of a number of high-level declarations that set the direction for public health initiatives and work in the region, including the Millennium Development Goals and the objectives of the Pacific Plan.



PHD has also been an active member of the Food Secure Pacific working group and has sponsored a number of national food summits. The regional summit held in Vanuatu in April led to a Declaration on Food Security by Pacific Forum Leaders in August 2010. A framework is now being progressively introduced across all SPC technical divisions to identify how their initiatives contribute towards food security in the region.

Working together with other regional and international health agencies and partners, PHD has seen encouraging results for health outcomes in some areas. As examples, tuberculosis (TB) mortality and prevalence have been further reduced, malaria has continued to decline (by an estimated 60% or more) in both Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, and the diagnosis and, importantly, treatment of sexually transmitted infections (STIs) among pregnant women have increased after new testing regimes were developed. PHD is a member of a multi-agency STI working group that has jointly developed a comprehensive and aggressive strategy to reduce the prevalence of STIs and prevent an increase in HIV in the region. More people now receive HIV counselling and testing (including the provision of test results). Finally, most PICTs have endorsed and are implementing national non-communicable disease



(NCD) strategies in an effort to reduce the prevalence of NCDs such as cardiovascular disease, diabetes and cancer, which impose a high burden on health systems and are estimated to cause 75 per cent of deaths in Pacific Island populations.

## Emerging trends

The high cost of delivering health services to small, geographically dispersed communities in PICTs is a significant factor in limiting people's access to basic services. The provision of drugs and maintaining inventory and reporting systems also remain a challenge in many PICTs. This is particularly critical in providing antiretroviral therapy, STI services and multi-drug resistant TB treatment.

Risk factors and morbidity and mortality patterns are changing rapidly and are not uniform across the region. For example, life expectancy is 54 years in PNG but 75 years or more in some French territories. Data from Solomon Islands, Kiribati and Tuvalu (reported from January to June 2010) show that the prevalence of chlamydia in the Pacific is 19%, and that one in four sexually active young people has an STI. These rates remain stubbornly high despite a number of years of investment in behavioural change communication and awareness, highlighting the urgent need to adopt a more aggressive strategy for STI prevention and treatment in the region.

With the exception of PNG, HIV prevalence rates continue to remain relatively low across the Pacific, although this is not a reason for complacency because new cases are being identified each year. In particular, prevention of mother-to-child transmission needs strengthening as a number of HIV-positive babies are born each year despite readily available prophylactic treatment.



Although overall TB rates in the Pacific Islands region have decreased over the last four years, rates have increased in the Micronesia subregion, particularly in Marshall Islands, Kiribati and Federated States of Micronesia, where they have doubled in recent years. New efforts are needed to reverse this trend.

Despite the size of the overall health budget for the region, significant funding gaps remain for many PICTs in priority areas that are not well addressed by current financing approaches. There is some uncertainty over continued funding during and beyond 2011 in a number of these areas, including for NCDs, pandemic/epidemic response preparedness, and adolescent health and development. There is a clear need for donors, development partners, PICTs and PHD to jointly adopt a longer term strategy to bring some predictability to financing priority health concerns in the region.

PHD's ability to respond to all of these emerging trends is in fact hampered by the current structure of its funding, which is primarily project-based and disease-focused. With more than 90% of its 2010 budget being derived from project-based funding, PHD relies heavily on this often volatile source to fund the provision of key services, including technical assistance on which PICTs depend. This situation creates significant challenges for the development of PHD's core functions and systems, its sustainability, and the success of its restructure.



## Health Advancement Unit

### Tackling non-communicable diseases through healthy Pacific lifestyles

*PHD helps PICTs address non-communicable diseases (NCDs). These diseases, which include heart disease, stroke, cancer, diabetes, respiratory diseases and injuries from accidents, are responsible for a large percentage of deaths in the region.*



The division works closely with the World Health Organization (WHO) to implement the 2-1-22 Programme (two organisations, one programme, serving 22 countries and territories) to assist PICT efforts to deal with NCDs. In 2010 the programme reached full implementation thanks to the completion of agreements with members, enabling them to accelerate the fight against NCDs. During the year, the programme provided financial support for implementation of NCD plans and projects in several PICTs. Funds were made available through AusAID and the New Zealand Aid Programme.

The programme assists PICTs to improve the health of their populations by establishing a comprehensive approach to profiling, planning, implementing, and monitoring and evaluating sustainable initiatives to combat NCDs and their risk factors. The programme has the following strategic objectives:

1. *Strengthen national plans* – support development of comprehensive, multi-sectoral, national NCD strategies
2. *Support implementation* – assist PICTs to implement their NCD strategies
3. *Support sustainable funding mechanisms* – assist with the development of sustainable funding mechanisms to deliver NCD strategies

4. *Strengthen national health systems and capacity* – build national health systems and capacity to prevent and control NCDs
5. *Strengthen monitoring and evaluation and surveillance systems* – reinforce regional and country-level monitoring and evaluation and surveillance systems

The goal is to reduce morbidity, disability and mortality caused by NCDs, and thus contribute to the global goal of reducing death rates from NCDs by 2 per cent a year over and above existing trends until 2015. The programme provides technical support through an ‘NCD Team’ consisting of technical experts from SPC, WHO and other partners.

### Good progress

The bulk of 2-1-22 funds were distributed to countries in 2010 through large country grants to ministries of health and small grants to civil society groups. Twelve letters of agreement for large country grants were finalised and signed by SPC and ministries of health in 2010. The number of national programmes increased, as did the speed at which civil society groups conducting ministry of health-approved NCD activities took up

small grants. At the end of 2010, 78 small grants for activities addressing the key NCD risk factors had been approved.

Under the first objective of the programme – *strengthen national plans* – thanks to 2-1-22, 18 PICTs now have costed workplans contributing to the implementation of national NCD strategies. Multi-sectoral collaboration is achieved through national NCD committees and taskforces. Tobacco and alcohol continue to be excluded from the Pacific Island Countries Trade Agreement (PICTA), allowing PICTs to maintain higher prices for these products with the goal of discouraging their use.

As far as the second objective – *support implementation* – is concerned, activities were scaled up in 2010, mostly in disbursement of grants, review of policy and legislative frameworks, healthy lifestyle interventions in various settings, and social marketing campaigns. This funding stream is managed by SPC and grants range from AUD 75,000 to 150,000 a year over three years. A second stream of 78 small grants of AUD 10,000 was made available to non-governmental organisations and community groups. Implementation has progressed in all PICTs, with a focus on community-based interventions. Some PICTs have implemented legislation and developed new policy.

New programmes in countries addressed marketing of foods and non-alcoholic beverages to children, alcohol harm reduction and salt reduction. Community-based projects to promote healthy diets, physical activity, tobacco control and alcohol harm reduction were also supported. These included a joint project by SPC and SHORE (the Centre for Social and Health Outcomes Research and Evaluation) at Massey University, New Zealand, to implement a national alcohol workshop in PNG as the first step in developing a comprehensive National Alcohol Plan. This process will also be undertaken in Solomon Islands. Interventions in key settings such as workplaces, schools, churches and villages continued to be strengthened. The development of strategic health communication plans has progressed, with Tonga, Tuvalu and Nauru receiving training in 2010. Risk factor-based communication plans were also produced.

Under the third objective – *support sustainable funding mechanisms* – Fiji Islands and Tonga increased funding for NCDs through the regular government budgeting process, ensuring sustainability and greater net resources. A survey showed some interest in the health foundation model, but these ideas are hampered by limited human resources, opposition to tied taxes and new institutions, and community and political attitudes that do not place a high priority on health promotion. Solomon Islands and Kiribati have both committed to further advance their plans for establishing funding mechanisms modeled on the Tonga Health Promotion Foundation. Vanuatu and Fiji Islands advanced their health promotion bills for enactment, but securing sustainable funding for health promotion requires political commitment that can be difficult to obtain.

On the fourth objective – *strengthen national health systems and capacity* – in-country training has been conducted on strategic health communication, integrated approaches to selected NCD risk factors, work plan development and reporting. Food security was addressed at the Pacific Food Summit in Vanuatu in May 2010, resulting in a Pacific framework for action in this key area.

Finally, on the fifth objective – *strengthen monitoring and evaluation and surveillance systems* – monitoring and evaluation was the theme for the Pacific NCD Forum in June 2010, in recognition of the need to build capacity in this area. Monitoring and evaluation frameworks have been developed in collaboration with NCD coordinators in Niue, Tokelau, Kiribati and Vanuatu. In 2010, a stocktake of data sources for NCD surveillance was carried out in Niue, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Palau, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu. Assessments were conducted on the quality, accessibility and timeliness of NCD-related data from population-based surveys, sentinel surveillance surveys and routine surveillance systems. The programme also provided assistance to Kiribati for a TB–diabetes study.

*The bulk of 2-1-22 funds were distributed to countries in 2010 through large country grants to ministries of health and small grants to civil society groups.*



Dr Rangiau Fariu (Cook Islands) at the Pacific NCD Forum in Nadi in June 2010

(Left to right) Ms Malia Lape and Marie Isabelle Lisiahi, Wallis and Futuna, Ms Lone DeBrum, Marshall Islands, and Mr Saula Volavola, Fiji Islands, at the Pacific NCD Forum in Nadi in June 2010



## Pacific NCD Forum

The 2-1-22 Programme funds the Pacific NCD Forum, which brings the region's NCD specialists together each year. At the 2010 meeting in Nadi, Fiji Islands, country representatives were encouraged to urge their governments to take advantage of growing international support for action on NCDs. This followed the May 2010 declaration of a state of emergency on NCDs in US-affiliated PICTs (American Samoa, FSM, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, Palau, Marshall Islands) by the Pacific Islands Health Officers

Association (PIHOA). In a move to further focus PICT attention and resources on NCD prevention and control, the 2010 forum backed calls for a UN global summit on NCDs and the suggestion that they be included in the Millennium Development Goals. The forum sought the creation of a global fund to fight NCDs and proposed collaboration with the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) to enable the 57 countries in the two regions to speak with a single voice. The forum also promoted collaboration with academics and research organisations.



## Support for adolescent health and development in the Pacific

*The Health Advancement Unit's Pacific Adolescent Health and Development (AHD) Programme works to address the health of young people in the Pacific, especially their sexual and reproductive health.*

It has been a decade since SPC and UNFPA initiated the Adolescent Reproductive Health Project. In 2005, UNICEF came on board and now the project, jointly managed by the three organisations, is coordinated by SPC's AHD Programme.

AHD works to create a supportive and enabling environment, and to strengthen information and education available to young people through life skills training, youth-friendly services, and project management and delivery.

A meeting in August 2010 attended by senior government public health officials from the 10 countries supported by the Pacific AHD Programme – Cook Islands, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu – produced a communiqué that forms the basis for effectively mainstreaming adolescent health and development into national organisational structures and functions, and their alignment with national priorities and plans. This was a milestone for AHD in the region and something that has long been advocated.

Mainstreaming AHD will allow better understanding of countries' specific needs for technical assistance and other kinds of support from the Pacific AHD Programme. Public health directors will share their visions for better management and implementation of the Pacific AHD Programme over the next few years



and agree on practical and feasible ways of repositioning AHD in the mainstream of public health.

In 2010, minor changes were also made to improve the quarterly reporting system and the planning time frame. More emphasis is to be placed on reporting youth data and on institutional outcomes that strengthen the services provided to young people. With improved templates and reporting systems in place, clearer evidence of the effectiveness of the services in terms of access, efficiency and quality during the next two years, (2011 and 2012) can be collected.

The youth friendly services (YFS) survey undertaken from January to June in 2010 provided baseline data and information from nine of the countries supported by the Pacific AHD Programme. The survey showed that while YFS clinics and centres offer basic sexual and reproductive health services to adolescents, the skills, knowledge and practice of the service providers could be significantly improved.

The AHD Programme's *Pacific regional guideline on standards for youth friendly services*, currently in prepa-



ration, will provide sets of standards to guide countries in ensuring the quality, accessibility and efficiency of their sexual and reproductive health services for adolescents. The *National youth friendly health services guide*, developed this year by UNICEF in consultation with the Pacific AHD Programme, will provide operational steps for establishing centres in four Pacific nations.

Whilst evaluation of the impact of the Pacific AHD programme is still in progress, data collected so far (January

to September 2010) show the effectiveness of peer-to-peer training in personal development of positive attitudes to sexual and reproductive health issues – imperative for reducing teenage pregnancy and STIs among young people.

AHD Cook Islands has effectively used young people to reach their peers, giving advice through testimonial speeches at seminars and community outreach activities. In Samoa, the Ministry of Health created a link with the youth community that paved the way for the AHD Programme. Similarly, in Tonga the tireless efforts of the Tonga Family Health Association and the Ministry of Health resulted in the draft declaration by parliamentarians: *Accelerating AHD activities through partnership with our parliamentarians 2011–2012*. In Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and Kiribati, the strength of their AHD programmes lies in their peer education community outreach activities. Pohnpei State (FSM) has the highest coverage of youth friendly services in high schools.

Solomon Islands Planned Parenthood Association has been the major service provider for adolescents in Honiara. Marshall Islands Youth to Youth in Health continues to reach out to teens, driving efforts to prevent teenage pregnancy and STIs. And AHD Fiji continues to reach out to adolescents in over 150 secondary schools, playing a key role in developing the curriculum framework and delivery of the Family Life Education course, currently being piloted in Fiji schools.

### Family Life Education – Laucala Bay Secondary School, Suva, Fiji

Laucala Bay Secondary School is a government co-educational school, catering for students from the Raiwaqa district of Suva. The school also accepts students from all over Fiji who have been forced to find another school for one reason or another, giving them a second chance at schooling. The school trialled the Family Life Education (FLE) curriculum in Form 3 and, according to Mr Savena, the FLE coordinator and school counselor, the school has recorded an improvement in academic work and a decline in truancy, bullying, and teenage pregnancy. Students strongly support the FLE course, which includes community work, leadership seminars and drama.

## Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit

### Surveillance and control of communicable diseases

*PHD's Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit works to strengthen capacity in the region to respond to communicable diseases. The unit is the focal point of the coordinating body of the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PPHSN).*



An important part of the work of the Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit centres on building links between the fields of animal and human health. This is the focus of the Pacific Regional Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Project (PRIPPP), which brings together specialists from the two fields to combat the potential threat of pandemic influenza and other emerging diseases.



### Syndromic surveillance

At a major meeting on syndromic surveillance co-organised by WHO and SPC in March 2010, participants agreed that PICTs should adopt a standardised syndromic surveillance system as proposed by WHO and SPC following recommendations from PICTs. Rather than reporting specific diseases, which often requires time-consuming laboratory confirmation, the system focuses on reporting clinical symptoms defining at least four core syndromes with standardised case definitions: acute fever and rash, diarrhoea, influenza-like illness and prolonged fever. This approach will shorten the time before outbreaks are detected at the country level, making timely response and control possible. It should also be easily sustainable because it does not require complex procedures and high levels of resources. Meeting participants emphasised the importance of regular feedback from the national level to clinicians and public health workers in the form of a surveillance bulletin.

### Epidemiology training

Fourteen health workers in Solomon Islands and 17 health workers in Fiji received Postgraduate Certificates in Field Epidemiology and Data for Decision Making (DDM) from the Fiji School of Medicine in 2010. These are the first graduates from an accredited course developed in a partnership between SPC and the school.

By providing Pacific health workers with recognised qualifications in health outbreak investigation and evidence-based decision-making, the DDM course will help build a pool of Pacific epidemiological capacity. Over the long term, this will reduce reliance on external support, as well as improve health planning and resource allocation decisions within PICTs.

The DDM course was discussed at two meetings of the PPHSN (Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network) Coordinating Body. The Coordinating Body members agreed that this training should be continued together



with basic epidemiology courses. A working group was tasked with evaluating the courses and exploring possibilities for obtaining sustainable funding.

## Identifying and controlling vector mosquitoes

In collaboration with the Pasteur Institute of New Caledonia, the unit also organised a training course on surveillance, identification and control of vector mosquitoes (those that can transmit diseases) in Fiji Islands in September. Dengue fever and filariasis are among the mosquito-borne diseases that affect Fiji Islands and other PICTs, and identifying vector mosquitoes is key to fighting them.

## Strengthening links between the fields of animal and human health

PRIPPP provided technical support to PICTs following the H1N1 pandemic to facilitate the review of their response and updating of national influenza preparedness plans. Feedback from PICTs indicated that they saw the H1N1 outbreak as an important test of their response capabilities for health emergencies.

Animal health laboratory infrastructure and capacity were strengthened, with ongoing support for regional referral mechanisms. PRIPPP has actively worked to bring animal health and human health lab technicians together, recognising that for small Pacific nations these parties need to work together to make the most efficient use of their limited laboratory resources. In particular, animal health laboratory workers can benefit from resource sharing with their human health laboratory counterparts, who tend to have better resources.

A third meeting of the Pacific Avian Pandemic Influenza Taskforce (PAPITaF) was held in 2010. The

taskforce provided recommendations for the final implementation of PRIPPP. Lessons learned from the H1N1 response were a key agenda item for the meeting.

The 4<sup>th</sup> LabNet Regional Meeting, focusing on facilitating stronger links between agriculture and health in disease diagnostics capability in the region, was held in November 2010. It brought together Pacific laboratory technicians from 18 PICTs through PPHSN.

The meeting was particularly useful for small PICTs, as they are looking to maximise their limited animal health resources by sharing, where possible, with human health laboratory resources. SPC provides advocacy in regional and international settings to allow appropriate resource sharing between the two in recognition of the limited resources in small countries and territories.

Panel discussions included assessment of the current status of laboratory training, laboratory testing, specimen shipment, links and support available through reference laboratories, and guidelines to manage PPHSN target diseases and other animal diseases of public health importance.

Actions proposed at the meeting included the completion of human and animal health laboratory policies, improving laboratory procurement and the establishment of systems for referring samples between human health and animal health laboratories.

The need for careful selection of training participants was highlighted to ensure PICTs benefit at national level from this regional training.

The LabNet Technical Working Body, formed at the first LabNet meeting in 2000, is to be revived with updated terms of references that take into account animal health issues and interests. A similar laboratory network platform, the Pacific Animal Health Laboratory Network (PAHLNet) was established in 2009 through PRIPPP and is taking on activities similar to those that made PPHSN LabNet a success.

## Reducing the toll of HIV and STIs

*PHD's Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit also works in the area of HIV and STIs. The unit runs the HIV and STI Programme, which focuses on delivery of technical support in the areas of prevention, surveillance, clinical services, and monitoring and evaluation.*

The unit monitors and coordinates the implementation of the Pacific Regional Strategic Plan (PRSIP) on HIV and STIs with other regional partners and donors. The main objective of PRSIP 2009–2013 is to reduce the overall prevalence of STIs. In addition, the unit manages the Pacific Response Fund on HIV and STIs, including assuming the secretariat function of the Pacific Response Fund Committee.



## Surveillance

The number of new HIV cases reported in PICTs (excluding PNG) was 85 in 2008 and 82 in 2009. There has tended to be a steady increase in the number reported annually since 1985, due primarily to the increase in cases reported in Fiji. In Polynesia, the number has been relatively constant since 1986, and in Micronesia it has fallen steadily since a peak in 1998. As the number of HIV tests carried out each year has not been previously reported, it is not possible to determine from this data whether there has been any change in the HIV positivity rate.

There are significant limitations to data obtained from routine surveillance. Testing is predominantly undertaken among populations with low levels of

risk behaviour, primarily blood donors and women attending antenatal clinics. With limited testing of most-at-risk groups, it is likely that there is under-reporting of HIV in the Pacific region.

While PICTs have been collecting HIV and AIDS case data for many years, 2009 was the first year in which routine data on other STIs were collected and reported. Eleven PICTs with access to laboratory testing facilities (either in country or by referral) reported on three STIs: chlamydia, gonorrhoea and syphilis. On average, one in four sexually active young people in the Pacific has an STI. In some PICTs up to 40% of sexually active young people have an STI.

Not all PICTs were able to provide complete data for the 12 months under review, either because testing was introduced part way through the year or because the data collection system was inadequate. Furthermore,

the quality assurance of the laboratory testing is poor, and demographic data is missing for a proportion of the cases. The data should therefore be interpreted with caution.

## Prevention

Technical assistance was provided to Marie Stopes International Pacific in Cook Islands, Kiribati and Tonga on behaviour change communication (BCC) and strategic health communication (SHC).

In Cook Islands, joint SPC, UNFPA and WHO SHC training for 25 participants from government ministries and NGOs was conducted. Results from the latest second generation surveillance (SGS) survey report were presented to ensure evidence-based campaigns were developed. Given the high prevalence of STIs, an STI campaign is being developed as a result of the training.

In Tonga a workshop was conducted to assist with the development of a targeted HIV and STI prevention action plan. The objectives identified during the workshop included increasing condom use and reducing the frequency of binge drinking.

## Clinical support

A review of the work of the HIV and STI Programme suggests that the focus should move from resource intensive surveys to improving the quality of laboratory testing and data collection systems. There is also a need to expand reporting to all PICTs to provide timely, routine laboratory data to monitor STIs in the region and inform programme development. A step in this direction was the engagement of an HIV and STI laboratory consultant to review testing techniques in the region and conduct refresher training sessions for laboratory technicians.

The review also included piloting of the use of Pima Analyser machines for HIV testing at the Pasteur Institute in New Caledonia. The result, published in a report in March 2010, was excellent in terms of their suitability for the Pacific context. During the reporting period, these machines were installed in Fiji, Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. The machines will enable PICTs to get more accurate results in comparison to previous manual test analysis methods.

The HIV rapid test algorithm and early infant diagnosis using dry blood spot kits were rolled out in Kiribati, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu during the reporting period. This is a very important development which enables countries to perform in-country HIV confirmatory testing for the first time.





## Supporting PICTs in the fight against TB

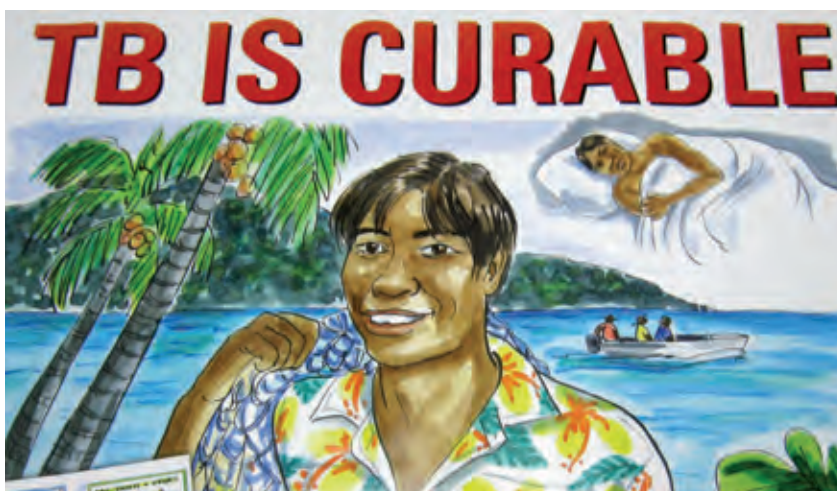
*PHD's Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit works to strengthen national tuberculosis (TB) programmes by supporting implementation of the internationally recommended TB control strategy (Directly Observed Treatment Short-course—DOTS), and ongoing national TB surveillance efforts across the region.*



Tuvalu nurses undertaking practical training in TB contact tracing

**P**HD's Grant Management Unit oversees Global Fund TB and health systems strengthening grants in 12 PICTs, and ongoing national TB surveillance efforts across the region.

In February and March 2010, PHD worked closely with staff from WHO to develop the Phase 2 proposal for the Round 7 Multi-country Western Pacific TB grant (funded by the Global Fund). The proposal was successful and the grant will bring USD 7.36 million into the region to strengthen TB control over the next three years. The division also prepared the documentation for the Round 8 TB and Health Systems Strengthening grant for Solomon Islands. Phase 1 of this grant will bring USD 3.96 million to Solomon Islands to improve the health system and TB control over two years.



Poster designed for Kiribati

In conjunction with WHO, the TB team (Disease Surveillance, Control and Research Unit) convened the bi-annual Pacific Stop TB Meeting in May 2010. The meeting was attended by 85 representatives from national TB programmes from 19 PICTs and technical experts from SPC, WHO, the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the International Union Against Tuberculosis and Lung Disease and the Global Fund. Discussions highlighted the importance of political will to control TB



Kiribati nurses, with CDC physician, preparing for field testing as part of research on the association between TB and diabetes

and the need for a commitment from PICT governments to sustain TB efforts. The meeting also called for sustained and continuous funding to address emerging threats to effective TB control in the region, including multi-drug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and TB-HIV co-infection.

In August 2010, the TB Control Centre was opened in the Republic of Kiribati. The centre, which is part of the Quality TB Epidemic Control Project funded by AusAID, provides high quality TB services for people in Kiribati diagnosed with TB and those thought to have it. The centre includes a TB laboratory, and in 2011 the laboratory plans to introduce TB culture services as part of a comprehensive service for the community.

The unit, in conjunction with the Kiribati Ministry of Health and Medical Services and CDC, also started an operational research study to assess the association

between TB and diabetes in Kiribati (see photo). This is the first study of its kind in the Pacific and will add to the local body of knowledge on the interaction between the two diseases. The results may have policy implications in the region.

Other activities carried out in 2010 included national monitoring and evaluation visits to Vanuatu and Nauru, a subregional laboratory training workshop for TB laboratory technicians in the US-affiliated Pacific Islands, development of national TB guidelines for Federated States of Micronesia and Palau and publication of technical documents such as *The framework to address MDR-TB in the Pacific Island countries and territories* and *Guidelines for TB contact tracing in the Pacific Island countries and territories*. PHD also published its annual TB surveillance report at the end of the year, which describes the epidemiology of TB in the Pacific Islands region.



## Social Resources Division

### Overview



*In 2010, the four programmes in the Social Resources Division (SRD) made considerable progress in their efforts to help PICTs meet their commitments to the MDGs and international treaties such as CEDAW (UN Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women).*

### Human Development Programme

The Human Development Programme has staff at Noumea headquarters, the regional offices in Fiji Islands and Federated States of Micronesia, and the Solomon Islands Country Office. The programme works in culture, community education and training, gender equality and youth and collaborates with other SPC programmes to mainstream these issues in all SPC-initiated interventions.

A highlight of the year was the convening of the 11<sup>th</sup> Triennial Conference of Pacific Women, which attracted a record number of participants and endorsed a range of strategies to accelerate progress on gender equality commitments previously made but not yet implemented.

The Pacific Culture and Education Strategy 2010–2015 was finalised and subsequently endorsed by the

**T**he Human Development Programme, Regional Media Centre, Regional Rights Resource Team and Statistics and Demography Programme contribute to a number of objectives under the Pacific Plan, with a major component of their respective budgets and work plans being devoted to the cross-cutting provision of education and training, including through regional TVET programmes.



23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Council of Pacific Arts (now the Council of Pacific Arts and Culture) as well as the 16<sup>th</sup> Consultation of Heads of Education Systems. A summary of the strategy was noted by CRGA 40.

Following extensive support from the Human Development Programme for national efforts to eliminate violence against women, in 2010 the Solomon Islands cabinet approved a policy and national action plan (NAP). The Kiribati NAP was presented to cabinet for consideration in September and the Government of Tokelau endorsed a national women's policy. Implementation of two major initiatives – the Pacific Regional Gender Statistics Framework and the Stocktake of PICT Gender Mainstreaming Capacity – also continued throughout 2010, in the former case with the commencement of compilation of existing data and provision of national level technical support in Fiji and Vanuatu, and in the latter case with the commencement of training and technical support to build capacity in Solomon Islands and planning for similar support in PNG, Tonga, RMI, FSM and Cook Islands.

## Regional Media Centre

The Regional Media Centre continues to raise awareness of PICT development successes through the weekly Pacific Way television show, which is broadcast throughout the region and featured on Air Pacific's international flights. Pacific Way is also broadcast in the form of a monthly radio programme.

In 2010, the centre undertook media production work for SPC programmes covering a range of issues from non-communicable diseases to fisheries and transportation. It also supported the work of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) as well as that of the Fiji Audiovisual Commission. Over 30 students from throughout the region received multimedia training during the year, including training in developing and broadcasting local content.

## Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT)

RRRT is a technical advisory and training team specialising in human rights and governance issues. At the policy level, RRRT works in partnership with PIFS.

The year was a challenging one for RRRT because of funding uncertainty with New Zealand phasing out its support to RRRT, and ongoing discussion about the most appropriate location of the team (staff are now based in Fiji Islands and Vanuatu). Despite this, RRRT delivered a high level of services to members including assisting 10 PICTs to submit their first reports to the UN Human Rights Council for the Universal Periodic Review process. Fiji Islands and Kiribati produced updated CEDAW reports with technical assistance from RRRT, and support was also provided to Nauru for ratification of CEDAW.

To support the ability of government and civil society to influence good governance, RRRT provided training to 45 community paralegals in eight PICTs and is considering ways to increase the sustainability of the community paralegal training programme through the development with USP of a distance education course in human rights.

The potential value of a regional human rights mechanism is the subject of consultation with members. CRGA 40 endorsed continued exploration of a suitable mechanism with progress to be reported to CRGA 41.

## Statistics and Demography Programme

The Statistics and Demography Programme (SDP) is based in Noumea and also has two staff members in the North Pacific Regional Office in Federated States of Micronesia. The programme works closely with national statistics and planning offices and provides technical assistance, capacity supplementation and training related to population censuses, household surveys, administrative databases and other aspects of data collections and analysis.

The outcomes of the regional statistical benchmarking study and the release of a comprehensive report entitled ‘A Pacific Island region plan for the implementation of initiatives for strengthening statistical services through regional approaches, 2010–2020’ influenced SDP’s 2010 work programme, as did the decisions and recommendations of the 3rd Regional Conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics held in Noumea in July 2010.

In 2010, SDP took part in all SPC joint country strategy missions throughout the year and was involved in substantial cross-programme collaboration. Household income and expenditure survey reports (HIES) and demographic and health surveys (DHS) were finalised for several PICTs. DHS guide policy development work and indicate future demand for social and other services, including health, education and housing, while HIES assist in the rebasing of consumer price indices (CPIs) and provide critical poverty benchmarks.

### SRD changes

The Social Resources Division in its current form will disappear at the beginning of 2011. The Human Development Programme will become part of the new Education, Training and Human Development Division as part of Phase 2 of the reform of SPC’s organisational structure. The Statistics and Demography Programme has been renamed the Statistics for Development Programme (SDP) and reports directly to the Director-General.



Statistical training workshop at SPC headquarters for national officers

## Progress on gender equality in the Pacific

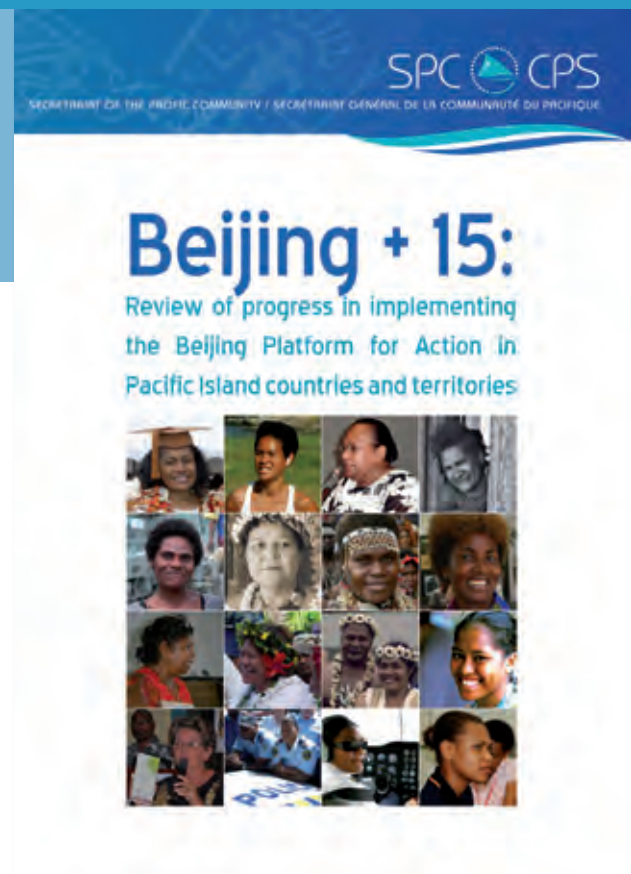
*Fifteen years after the adoption of the Beijing Platform for Action by the United Nations 4th World Conference on Women (1995), and 16 years after the adoption of the Pacific Platform for Action, some progress has been made toward gender equality in the Pacific.*

Much work remains to be done, particularly in areas such as inclusion of women in parliaments and decision-making at all levels, with current rates among the lowest in the world. Violence against women also occurs at very high rates in the Pacific.

This was the message in the report *Beijing +15: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories*, which SPC compiled. The report was presented to 150 participants from 22 countries, non-governmental organisations, development partners and funding agencies from around the region at the 11th Triennial Conference of Pacific Women held in August 2010. The meeting – a major forum held every three years – was hosted by SPC at its headquarters in Noumea.

### Economic empowerment

The report documented low levels of participation by women in the formal economy, and a corresponding lack of recognition of women's contribution in the informal and subsistence sectors. Women's work in areas such as creation and sale of handicrafts and marketplace sale of fruits and vegetables often plays a key role in household livelihoods but is frequently ignored by economic analysis and policy-making. In virtually all PICTs, women are under-represented in the formal labour force – both the public and private sector – and are typically relegated to lower level posts. Subsistence labour, which represents a large proportion of economic activity in many PICTs, is not counted in systems of national accounts, despite international



rules. The conference recommended improvements in data collection, and steps to ensure women's economic empowerment is included on the regional development agenda and in national policy-making.

### Human rights

The conference noted progress made in increasing understanding and application of women's human rights in the region and stated its support for the creation of a regional human rights mechanism to assist Pacific countries in advancing women's human rights and in meeting their international obligations. Among the major human rights issues faced by Pacific women are gender-based violence, lack of political voice, forced prostitution, and legal and customary systems that discriminate against women in areas such



as employment, minimum age of marriage, land and housing rights, family law and customary leadership.

### Health

The conference found that health care services often do not meet the needs of women in the Pacific. In addition to the health-related consequences of violence against women, the region has very high rates of unplanned pregnancies and sexually transmitted infections such as chlamydia. The conference recommended that (a) health services addressing these challenges take better account of the complex socio-cultural issues around them, including gender inequality, (b) better data be collected regarding women's health, and (c) health services be improved in rural areas to make them more accessible to women.

### Regional development frameworks

Speaking at the conference, SPC Deputy Director-General Fekita 'Utoikamanu noted that despite progress in drawing the attention of Pacific Forum Leaders to the issues of women's political participation and the need for action to eliminate violence against women, the region still has much work to do to ensure that gender equality is included in regional development frameworks. Indeed, the conference noted that a particular challenge lay in ensuring that gender equality is integrated into all development activities rather than being relegated to a single department or programme. To this end, SPC's Human Development Programme proposed that clear regional approaches be developed for moving gender equality forward in the Pacific. The conference agreed and proposed that regional sectoral meetings, such as those being convened for energy, climate change, health, statistics, transport,

trade and ICT, include as official delegates at least one representative of national women's departments per subregion (Micronesia, Melanesia and Polynesia) and a regional sectoral gender expert. SPC will seek to work with the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (as the two principal organisations convening regional high level sectoral meetings), commencing in 2011, to see that these recommendations are implemented.

### Regional organisations

The conference also called for improved transparency and accountability in the way regional organisations making up the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) address gender equality. All CROP agencies are party to a CROP Gender Strategy (1998, revised in 2005), which sets specific targets for ensuring that the work of these multi-sectoral technical agencies is contributing to gender equality, including through gender training for all programme staff and the development of implementation plans and budgets for mainstreaming gender and women's human rights into all areas of work. SPC has developed a monitoring, planning and reporting mechanism that will enable CROP agencies to track implementation and systematically report back to countries and territories on their progress.

Delegates agreed that among the most encouraging developments was the widespread awareness of the importance of education and economic empowerment of women for overall development.

To download an electronic copy of the regional report *Beijing +15: Review of progress in implementing the Beijing Platform for Action in Pacific Island countries and territories*, go to the following link: [http://www.spc.int/hdp/index.php?option=com\\_docman&task=cat\\_view&gid=85&Itemid=44](http://www.spc.int/hdp/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=85&Itemid=44).

## RRRT – Support for legislative change to protect women

*In 2010, the Regional Rights Resource Team (RRRT) continued to work according to its 2009–2012 strategic plan, which focuses on providing technical support and training in human rights education and the law.*



Photo: FWCC

While it is based in Suva, RRRT has continued to liaise with the Government of Vanuatu to initiate a small subregional office there. Currently there are three staff members in Port Vila. RRRT has also expanded its staff to include country focal officers, who are based in relevant government ministries in Tonga, Tuvalu, Nauru, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Samoa. They are specifically tasked with assisting national committees through the provision of information and, where applicable, training.

RRRT's largest project, for which it received funding from the UN Trust Fund to eliminate Violence Against Women (UNTF VAW), is *Changing laws, protecting women*. The project's primary focus is on examining and reviewing legislation to address violence against women in Cook Islands, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Tuvalu. Vanuatu and Federated States of Micronesia are included in subregional support activities.

The project is using global best practices described by the UN Expert Group on Violence Against Women in the publication *Handbook for Legislation on Violence against Women*. RRRT contributed to the handbook, which provides a model for addressing multiple forms of violence through legislative reform.

This model was used by RRRT to develop training and information materials relevant to the Pacific region. At the national level, instructions for legislative drafters were developed for Kiribati, Samoa, Tuvalu and Solomon Islands and instructions for two more countries will be completed by the end of 2011. The instructions include analysis of the current state of legislation in those countries, a comprehensive look at all forms of violence against women, and options for best practices in addressing such violence. The analyses are being used to develop policy notes, and are being considered by legislators in these countries in drafting relevant new laws.

In summary, RRRT has assisted countries through the following activities:

- ▶ conducting desk reviews of all studies and reports on violence against women, as well as reviewing national legislation that addresses such violence, with the results distributed to national task forces and stakeholders;
- ▶ establishing six national committees/taskforces to implement and monitor legislation reform campaigns;
- ▶ providing training and technical advice on legal and policy issues, including on the UN experts' model *Framework for legislation on violence against women*;
- ▶ developing legislative drafting options for law changes.

## Telling Pacific human rights stories to the world

RRRT has provided strong support for Pacific countries taking part in the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review process. Every four years, all UN member countries must send reports on the status of human rights in their country. RRRT has worked in partnership with the Regional Office for the Pacific of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) to provide training and support in the development of these reports. Funding support from the Netherlands Embassy in Wellington enabled training to be provided at the national level in 2010 for Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI), Palau, Papua New Guinea, Nauru, Solomon Islands and Samoa. In addition, mock review sessions were held for FSM, Marshall Islands and Kiribati, which appeared before the UN HRC in September 2010. Training and support focused on the compatibility of human rights with development concerns in the Pacific and enabled to present Pacific human rights issues at the international level.



To facilitate future support for reporting before the UN HRC, RRRT prepared the publication, *Telling Pacific human rights stories to the world: A road map for reporting before the UN Human Rights Council's Universal Periodic Review*. This publication provides step-by-step guidance on the reporting process and is used both as a teaching tool and a guidebook. Over 500 copies have been distributed to 14 countries in the Pacific and it has been described by Pacific delegates as 'an invaluable tool for any Pacific State attending the UPR'.

**KARIKA MWENGAM BWA TE MWENGA N TANGIRA  
AO NI KUKUREI N AKEA TE IOAWA**



**KATOKA  
TE IOAWA  
NAKOIA  
AINE!**

**KO ATAIA?**  
"68% aine i Kiribati ake a tia n rinanon te batiboaki/kaikoakaki ke n taumatoaki nakon te wene n taanga irouia buuia ke raouia?"

**TERA AE I KONA NI BOUTOKAIA?**

- BOUTOKAA TE TUA IBUKIN KAMANOAIA AINE MA ATA EI MAN TE BWAINIKINAKI
- BITAKI NAKON TAIAN TUA IBUKIN KAMANOAIA AINE MA ATA EI
- REITAKI MA AM TIA TEI AO IANGO A TE BITAKI NAKON TE TUA





Billboard in Kiribati addressing violence against women



## Human rights consultation

In December 2010, RRRT organised and hosted a consultation in Auckland, New Zealand, between Pacific judges and magistrates on judicial use of human rights norms. The Chief Justice of New Zealand, Dame Sian Elias, opened the consultation.

In the past 10 years, there has been a rise in the number of cases where human rights treaties such as the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) and Convention on Elimination of all forms of

Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) have been applied by Pacific judges and magistrates.

During the three-day meeting, representatives of the Pacific Islands judiciary reviewed human rights issues including disability rights and legislation on violence against women.

The consultation was funded by AusAID.

### Pacific Regional Judges and Magistrates Consultation, Auckland, December 2010



**(Standing from left):** Graham E Leung, Commissioner Togiavalu Pihigia, Salote Kaimacuata, Chief Justice Michael Scott, Raksha Ben, Ratu Joni Madraiwiwi, Danielle Kelly, Magistrate Paula Tatafu, Seema Naidu, Chief Justice Carl Ingram, Doreen Buettner, Magistrate Leonard Maina, Father Sam Ata, Heilala, Mr Filimone Jitoko, Magistrate Peter Law, Filipo Masaurua

**(Seated from left):** John Kenning, Justice Rapi Vaai, Justice Dennis K Yamase, Mere Pulea, Rt Hon Dame Sian Elias, His Excellency Mr Mike Mitchell, Magistrate Teauama Ioteba, Justice Kathleen Salii, Senior Magistrate Afele Kitiana

## Community Education and Training Centre

*The vision of the Community Education and Training Centre (CETC) is to be a centre of excellence in community development in the Pacific.*

In seeking to become a centre of excellence, CETC evaluated its organisational effectiveness and used the results as a basis for drafting a ‘continuous improvement strategy’, which included a staff development programme. Among the many outcomes of the work, two stand out: the Centre received an award for Achievement in Quality Management at the Fiji Business Excellence Awards 2010, and CETC was the first provider to be granted registration status by the Fiji Higher Education Commission.

The second part of the CETC vision involves ‘offering flexible, relevant and responsive human development approaches and services to SPC’s members’. To this end, CETC continues to refocus its courses to ensure they include key workforce employment skills and to meet new skills demands.

The Centre has piloted several new courses in niche areas at regional and national level: Improving your business; Making craft your business; Start your own business in food processing (with FACT); Basic occupational health and safety elements and measures; Basic food safety standards; Guesthouse operation; and Basic homestay operations.

Other firsts this year were the publication of the CETC staff manual and student handbook; the establishment of a new position of Information and Communications Assistant; and the development of the first set of Community Development and Management modules for multi-modal delivery.

As part of decentralising CETC services, an MOU was signed in August 2010 by SPC Director-General



Dr Jimmie Rodgers and the Director of the Vanuatu Rural Development Training Centre Association (VRDTCA), Kathy Solomon. The partnership will enable CETC courses to be made available to a large number of people in 38 Rural Training Centres (RTCs) in Vanuatu. For its part, CETC will upgrade RTC trainers and will ensure the quality of course delivery. Following the MOU, two senior trainers and managers of VRDTCA spent a two-week attachment with CETC to familiarise themselves with its programmes and operations.

In terms of staff development, staff received training in business excellence. In-house training in occupational health and safety and customer service was carried out by an external consultant, who also provided three audits of the centre from office to outside operations. Two instructors, Aminiasi Driu and Atelini Koroiwaca, were awarded certificates by the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji, qualifying them to be part of a pool of general and trade specific assessors used by the Fiji Qualifications Council and similar bodies in other countries.



CETC's Radio FM95.2, which is run by students studying radio programming and broadcasting, is currently being refurbished with new technology. CETC Head, Dr Lia Maka, attended a Commonwealth of Learning Summit on the use of community radio as well as other flexible and blended delivery methods to widen access to training.

In 2010, 30 women from 14 countries graduated in Level 2 & 3 Certificates in Applied Community Development Studies, 20 business trainers were added to the pool of business facilitators in Tonga through a training-of-trainers course in Tonga, 18 business trainers and micro-entrepreneurs from four countries (Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Samoa, Tonga) participated in a business improvement course specially developed by CETC, 40 handicraft producers and operators from Tonga participated in two technical workshops, 20 youths from Solomon



Islands received training in food processing through a partnership between CETC and FACT, and 18 participants from Marshall Islands, Kosrae, Chuuk, and Pohnpei participated in pilot training of the new module, Start Your own Business In Food Processing.

## Higher Education Commission registration

For some time CETC has been working towards gaining recognition, registration and accreditation for its programmes with the Fiji Higher Education Commission (HEC) in accordance with Fiji's Higher Education Promulgation 2008. This year, it became the first educational institution in Fiji to be registered, meeting all the requirements relating to the interests of staff and students, corporate and academic governance, quality assurance and infrastructure. These aspects of higher education institutions are assessed by the HEC to assure students and the public of the delivery of good quality education. The registration status will enhance the credibility of CETC and the qualifications it provides.





### Business excellence award

After being assessed by a team of external assessors from top performing agencies and industries in Fiji based on international best practice benchmarks, CETC received an award in the Achievement in Quality category at the 12th Fiji Business Excellence Awards organised by the Training and Productivity Authority of Fiji on 6 November 2010.

The President of Fiji, His Excellency Ratu Epeli Nailatikau (pictured centre), was chief guest at the event.

SPC Deputy Director-General, Ms Fekitamoeola 'Utoikamanu (left), received the trophy from the President on behalf of CETC.

Head of CETC, Dr Lia Maka (right) said the award was the sum of a number of continuing improvement strategies that CETC has implemented over the last three years, following a scoping review in 2008 that projected a role for CETC as a centre of excellence in community development. CETC has developed performance standards around seven frameworks of business excellence and used them to drive its improvement strategies.



Comparing crop productivity in various growing conditions



CETC's community radio in action

## Statistics for Development Programme

*The programme works closely with national statistics offices and provides technical assistance, capacity supplementation and training across a broad spectrum of activities related to population censuses, household surveys and administrative databases. The activities range from project design and inception to the dissemination of data.*



In 2010, the name of the programme was changed from the Statistics and Demography Programme to the Statistics for Development Programme to reflect the overall purpose of statistics in the context of broader regional and national development.

Major policies that have guided 2010 SDP activities, and will continue to guide work plan priorities for the coming years are the 2006–2010 CRGA-endorsed strategic plan and the 10-year Pacific statistics strategy resulting from the regional benchmarking study. The 3rd Regional Conference of Heads of Planning and Statistics held in Noumea 12–16 July endorsed this strategy, and also set up a Pacific Statistics Committee to guide its implementation.

### Technical assistance

Technical assistance with population censuses and household surveys totalling over 138 person weeks was provided this year in support of national statistical systems:

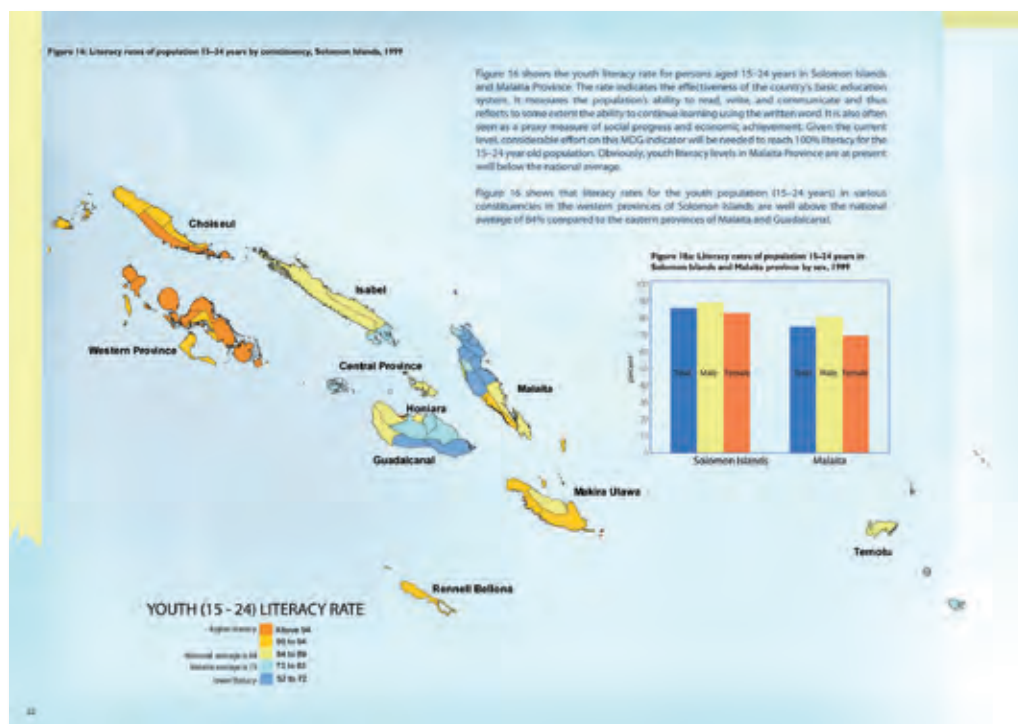
- ▶ 2010 census technical assistance (Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Samoa, PNG)
- ▶ 2009 census data dissemination/report writing/tabulation analysis/data processing (Solomon Islands, Vanuatu)

- ▶ household income and expenditure survey and report writing (Tonga, Tuvalu)
- ▶ demographic and health surveys (Kiribati, Tonga – planning phase).

Demographic and health surveys (DHS) guide policy development work and project future demand for social and other services, including health, education and housing, while household income and expenditure surveys (HIES) assist in the rebasing of consumer price indices and provide critical poverty benchmarks, as well as important benchmarks and indicators pertaining to food security.

### Published data

In 2010, the range of published data, indicators and reports produced by national statistical systems (NSSs), national planning agencies and SPC increased substantially. In Tuvalu, senior health planners are better informed on a range of issues relating to inequitable access to health services and other health concerns following the publication and dissemination of the *Tuvalu DHS Report* and the set of factsheets entitled *Tuvalu DHS Facts and Figures at your Fingertips*.



Presentation of statistical information in an easily understood format

Tonga's HIES report was endorsed by the government, and a similar report for Tuvalu is in preparation. A first draft of the Vanuatu 2009 census has been completed and the Solomon Islands census report is expected to be produced early next year.

As in earlier years, SPC's Development Indicator Database has been updated and will feed into the PIFS-coordinated Millennium Development Goal annual tracking report.

### Training

Capacity transfer and skills development empower national statistical officers to undertake field operations, including field edits and questionnaire processing (data capture), thus ensuring the sustainability of data and information collection in PICTs. Much work was done this year to train PICT staff in data collection, analysis and management.

- ▶ Six staff from four PICTs received a total of 75 days' training in Noumea in national census and survey analysis, GIS/satellite imagery and economic statistics.

- ▶ Seventy-four national statistical office and field staff from seven PICTs received a total of 490 person days of training in numerous statistical matters, ranging from data processing to population projections to compiling national annual accounts.
- ▶ At a subregional workshop, 20 staff from seven PICTs were trained in the use of the IHSN Toolkit that was developed by the World Bank Data Group for the International Household Survey Network. It aims to promote the adoption of international standards and best practices for microdata documentation, dissemination and preservation.
- ▶ Four staff from Kiribati received 20 days' training in international trade statistics.

Formal workshop evaluations and the outputs produced by participants demonstrate increased skills, confidence and experience by national staff in undertaking statistical activities across a broad spectrum of statistical operations, including census and survey planning and implementation, population projections and economic statistics.





## PRISM and PopGIS

SDP’s Pacific Regional Information System (PRISM), which provides easy access at national, regional and international levels to a broad range of PICT statistics and indicators on NSO websites, has been re-developed to include:

- ▶ an interactive map viewer
- ▶ a central database of regional data
- ▶ customisable regional tables
- ▶ a comprehensive administration section
- ▶ a catalogue of surveys.

Comprehensive analyses of national statistics office website requirements were undertaken in Fiji, Samoa and Vanuatu, with training in article maintenance, file uploads and menu management.

The population-based national geographic information system (PopGIS) now includes an application for French Polynesia, and system updates were undertaken in countries where new census data became available.

## Strategic and corporate activities

Long-term strategies for developing functioning national statistical systems are being guided by the gradual introduction of *National Strategies for the Development of Statistics* (NSDS), which is being undertaken by SDP in close collaboration with Paris 21 – the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – a global partnership of statisticians.

## SDP cross-programme collaboration

There was substantial cross-programme collaboration with other SPC programmes in gender statistics, food security, climate change and the ongoing development of the National Minimum Development Indicator database.

The Statistics for Development Programme is based in Noumea. Twelve staff members work there and two staff members serve the northern Pacific from the subregional office in Federated States of Micronesia. Each member of staff is a specialist in a particular area of statistics, enabling the programme to offer a wide range of services and advice to member countries.

## Regional Media Centre



*In line with its mandate, the Regional Media Centre (RMC) works closely with a number of SPC programmes and member countries, providing advisory and media production services and training.*

Commissioned by the Melanesian Spearhead Group and funded by the New Caledonian government, a film crew from RMC attended the 4<sup>th</sup> Melanesian Arts Festival held in New Caledonia in September to capture the colour and vibrancy of Melanesian arts and culture. The ‘stories’ will feature as a series in ‘Pacific Way’ in 2010 and 2011.

Training remains an important part of RMC activities. For the last three years, RMC has worked closely with the Fiji Audio Visual Commission to train young high school students to make short films which are then submitted as part of the annual Kula Film Awards, in which more and more schools participate each year.

In October, the Tonga Ministry of Youth together with the Tonga Family Health and Tonga Broadcasting Commission requested a training workshop for their staff on video production and graphics. RMC, with funding support from SPC’s HIV Section and the Human Development Programme’s EU-funded project, ran the workshop, which trained 39 people in camera use, editing, and other skills needed to make films and documentaries.

**T**he Pacific Way television programme produced by RMC is now in its 16th year, broadcasting a half-hour weekly show in 20 PICTs. The programme provides an insightful look into developments in the Pacific in relation to the culture, heritage and traditions of its people.

RMC also produces two radio programmes: the Pacific Way Radio programme, now in its fourth year, which features development-related stories from around the Pacific and from SPC programmes; and a monthly programme featuring news from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (which commissioned the programme in 2007) and other CROP agencies.

RMC participated in the Guam JCS mission and used the opportunity to produce a series of stories from the North Pacific for 'Pacific Way'. In collaboration with WHO, RMC assisted in a workshop to train journalists in more effective reporting on food security issues. The workshop was part of the first regional Pacific Food

Summit held in Vanuatu. RMC also conducted training in video production and scriptwriting for Vanuatu Broadcasting Television Corporation and visited Federated States of Micronesia to attend and film the Micronesian Youth Seminar Network.

Community radio is becoming an increasingly popular form of broadcast. Set up by communities themselves, it is easy and reasonably inexpensive to run. RMC is strengthening its training in this area, holding workshops to train people in small settlements to write scripts, conduct interviews, and become announcers, news gatherers and technicians. In collaboration with the Commonwealth of Learning, RMC ran three such workshops this year. The first was in Niuatoputapu, an island in Tonga that was hit by a tsunami in 2009. Community radio is now used to disseminate information in this isolated community as there is no other formal way of communicating locally.

The second workshop, in Honiara, was attended by representatives from the Ministry of Health, Isabel Provincial Government, civil society and the Isabel community. They discussed health issues relevant to Isabel Province and designed several programmes, e.g. on issues affecting youth, mental health, and the effects of betel nut chewing.

At the third workshop, held in Buka, Bougainville, a group designed a series of programmes on women's health. On the last day of the workshop, the team produced and broadcast a live twenty-minute radio programme introducing this new learning initiative to the community.

On home ground, RMC trains students enrolled at CETC in the skills needed to run their own community radio station at Narere, skills they take back to their own communities.





## Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment

### Overview

The South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment merged into SPC on 1 January, 2010, and underwent a name change to the Secretariat of the Pacific Board for Educational Assessment at its 30<sup>th</sup> and last Annual General Meeting on 11 November 2010. Unchanged, however, is its work with member countries, through their requested work programmes, to ensure that the Pacific Education Development Framework vision – Quality education for all in the Pacific – is achieved. As stated in its 2010–2012 Strategic Plan, ‘what SPBEA brings to SPC is an organisation with a strong educational assessment foundation, but at its heart is a genuine interest and desire to improve the quality of children’s learning’. This credo is entirely transferable to SPC as the mission and vision of the new Education, Training and Human Development Division.

Since its establishment in 1980, the range and volume of services provided by SPBEA, primarily to its member states, has increased significantly. These services are executed by a variety of methods, but the focus of all of them is the use of educational assessment to improve the quality of education. Educational assessment and training are underdeveloped in most countries. In its capacity as regional advisor on educational standards, SPBEA has been encouraging countries to adopt new forms of assessment, such as assessment **for** learning and assessment **as** learning, a paradigm shift from assessment **of** learning.

While the provision of assessment services is still a core function, a number of regional initiatives in education



were also directed to SPBEA for facilitation and management. These initiatives reflect the emerging needs of member countries, the changes and reforms taking place across the Pacific region, and global trends in the area of assessment.

In response to increased demands for its services, SPBEA has expanded its mandate of educational assessment and training services to include monitoring of national and regional educational standards; teacher competencies; safekeeping and processing of key educational data; and provision of qualification services.

SPBEA’s responsibilities include:

- ▶ assuring the quality of the national assessment policies and frameworks that are developed for member countries;
- ▶ overseeing the delivery of national assessments by the national assessment units;
- ▶ improving and modernising the examinations system for countries by leading the move towards assessment for learning outcomes, increasing the professionalism of teachers through targeted training and streamlining the processes of

*In its capacity as regional advisor on educational standards, SPBEA has been encouraging countries to adopt new forms of assessment, such as assessment for learning and assessment as learning, a paradigm shift from assessment of learning.*



examinations/assessment units in countries;

- ▶ accrediting and monitoring schools that participate in the two regional qualifications (the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate and the South Pacific Form Seven Certificate) to ensure that the assessments offered are fair and that standards are maintained over time;
- ▶ accrediting and monitoring qualifications to ensure they are of an appropriate standard and form a progressive learning programme for life;
- ▶ ensuring that qualifications provide links between schools, colleges, universities and employers, facilitating equivalence of qualifications and mobility of workers;
- ▶ providing technical support to scholarship agencies through short-listing of candidates using agreed criteria for various countries of the region.



qualification, the Pacific Senior Secondary Certificate (PSSC) in 2010. Countries have been encouraged and supported to take ownership and develop capacity to nationally administer the PSSC, which was first offered in 1989. SPBEA will continue to provide technical assistance and support in this area, ensuring that quality assurance and control processes are maintained. The nationalisation process is expected to be completed by 2012.

SPBEA fulfils its mandate through its six key operational areas: Assessment, Curriculum and Standards; Senior Secondary School Qualifications; Pacific Qualifications Register (PQR); Research, Monitoring and Evaluation; Corporate Services; and the Scholarship Unit.

A significant step for SPBEA and culmination of its commitment over the past two decades has been to begin the nationalisation process of the Form 6 regional

Support for member countries also included the development of in-house software to record, analyse and report assessment data, and the setting up of school-based management information systems such as ATLAS, STALLIAN, SMITE,



TITAN and SMIS. The findings from data analysis are useful in designing intervention strategies and two such interventions were implemented in 2010, an assessment resource tool for teaching and learning and 12 teacher competency modules for use in teacher education institutions.

Increased support for improving literacy and numeracy has been achieved through a number of activities. The assessment and monitoring of literacy and numeracy standards has been undertaken in five Pacific Island countries, for which literacy and numeracy baselines have been established at national, gender and district levels. Secondly, community awareness programmes in literacy and numeracy have been developed.

Following literacy and numeracy monitoring, the development of life skills assessment instruments for Years 4 and 8 started in two countries.

PQR has continued to provide advice and assistance to PICTs in the work of establishing national qualifications frameworks, which are at different stages of development across the region.



Currently, PQR is focusing on development of criteria for accrediting national qualifications authorities and procedures for registration of country qualifications. This work has progressed and drafts were completed for circulation. The work on the development and implementation of the PQR database has commenced.

At the end of August 2010, SPBEA had a total of 26 staff members, comprising 11 professional staff and 15 support staff. The gender balance overall is 17 (65 per cent) females and 9 (35 per cent) males. All professional staff members are Pacific Islanders. Towards the end of 2010, the number of staff increased by 11 due to the new AusAID project – *Improvement of literacy and numeracy assessment across the Pacific* – which will run for 18 months. Ground work on this project has already begun, as it has also for other initiatives: *2011 Pacific Language and Literacy Conference*; *Regional Assessment Resource Tool for Teaching and Learning*; and *Benchmarking the Quality of Education in the Pacific*.

SPBEA will continue to work closely with member countries and development partners while venturing to form new linkages and partnerships under the SPC umbrella.



## Corporate Services Division



*The challenge for the Corporate Services Division has been to maintain the high-quality support services needed by the organisation through this period of rapid growth and decentralisation, in what is a truly multi-national corporate environment.*

In accordance with the strategic plan, the focus throughout 2010 has been on professionalising the human resources function; continuing the process of upgrading financial management systems and procedures; fostering an institutional culture that promotes continuous improvement, embraces change and innovation, and promotes teamwork and a collegiate approach; and supporting further decentralisation of SPC services beyond current locations. These reforms have been supported on the level of people (capacity building), systems (enhanced functionality) and procedures (improved efficiency).

Specific activities undertaken by the Corporate Services Division during 2010 include:

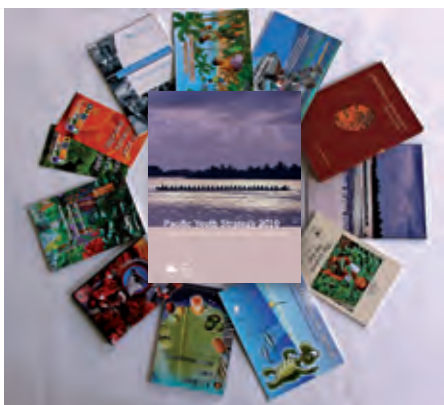
- ▶ Support for the continued integration of SPBEA with SPC following the merger of the two agencies at the beginning of 2010.
- ▶ Implementation of financial and human resource management systems, ICT systems, administrative arrangements and change management initiatives in preparation for the integration of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) with SPC as from 1 January 2011.
- ▶ The introduction, in conjunction with the other participating members of CROP (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme and Forum Fisheries Agency), of a new job evaluation model supported by revised job description templates and the implementation of an 18-grade job banding and job families model to better differentiate roles and responsibilities in an organisation that is increasingly complex both in terms of its technical scope and geographic spread across the region.
- ▶ Implementation of a best practice performance development scheme and associated remuneration policy directly linking salary advancement with proven performance.
- ▶ Implementation of a full online recruitment system to facilitate a more efficient and strategic approach to staff recruitment and selection.
- ▶ Implementation of helpdesk arrangements in the areas of finance, procurement, human resources, medical benefits, travel, housing and maintenance aimed at improving efficiency and service delivery.
- ▶ Policy development in the areas of procurement, fraud prevention and risk management.
- ▶ Support for SPC gender mainstreaming initiatives, including the prevention of harassment and gender-based violence.

## Programme Support Services



*In 2010, SPC's Programme Support Services included the Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility, Information and Communication Technology, Publications, Translation and Interpretation, and the SPC Library.*

- ▶ In August 2010, SPC received a grant from AusAID to upgrade its ICT infrastructure. The ICT Section has started converting physical servers to virtual servers and has been able to turn off around 15 physical servers. As well as an eventual 50% reduction in electricity consumption, the virtual environment will provide much greater flexibility in providing ICT support that meets different organisational and programme needs.
- ▶ The Strategic Engagement, Policy and Planning Facility expanded its capacity with the appointment of a climate change adviser. The facility is already leading a project to compile the results of research on the impact of climate change on Pacific fisheries. The climate change adviser will coordinate SPC's engagement in climate change issues.
- ▶ Plans were made to move SPC's Suva library to a more suitable location at the Nabua site. SPC also hosted the first official meeting of the CROP Library, Archives and Information Management (CLAIM) working group.
- ▶ The Publications Section reinforced its support for programmes based at the Suva Regional Office with the appointment of an editor there. In 2010 SPC published over 100 mainly technical publications in various formats in addition to producing a wide range of newsletters, meeting papers, website content, information posters and leaflets. Publications are widely distributed to members in both electronic and printed forms.
- ▶ The Translation and Interpretation Section appointed an interpreter at the Suva Regional Office to better meet the needs of programmes based in Suva and provide increased support for an expanding schedule of meetings.



## Organisations co-hosted by SPC

### Pacific Legislatures for Population and Governance



*SPC and UNFPA co-host the secretariat for Pacific Legislatures for Population and Governance (PLPG), which was formed in 2009 through the merger of the Pacific Parliamentary Assembly on Population and Development and the Forum of Presiding Officers and Clerks. The organisation's mission is to 'engage and support legislators in advocacy and legislative actions to promote population and development issues and to improve the quality of governance in the Pacific'.*

**I**n 2010 the PLPG secretariat was relocated from Suva to Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

The ongoing operations of PLPG are guided by a constitution and presided over by an Executive Committee that provides strategic oversight to the PLPG Secretariat. The committee includes five Speakers of Pacific legislatures – a Chair (Cook Islands), three Vice Chairs (Papua New Guinea, Marshall Islands and Tokelau) and a Treasurer (Federated States of Micronesia [FSM]). The Executive Committee also includes seven non-voting ex-officio members, namely SPC, UNFPA, PIFS, UNDP, Asian Forum for Parliamentarians on Population and Development, Australia and New Zealand.

In 2010, PLPG provided support to legislators to promote population and development and governance issues (e.g. HIV/AIDS and STIs, youth, climate change, gender, and governance) through workshops in Marshall Islands, Kiribati, FSM and Vanuatu. New parliamentary groups on population and development were established in FSM, Kiribati and Marshall Islands. These groups, which are chaired by the Speaker of the legislature in each country, work to promote laws and policies and conduct advocacy initiatives aimed at effectively addressing priority population and development issues.

During the year PLPG provided support to national and regional legislative capacity building initiatives. It facilitated the establishment and work of national and regional parliamentary champions in sectors such as gender, HIV/AIDS, climate change, governance and youth. It supported the preparations for the Climate Parliament regional parliamentary hearing for Pacific Island countries held in Fiji Islands. It also conducted an informal review of the Cook Islands Parliament and presented several recommendations to build its capacity and improve its processes through training, adoption of best practices and stronger planning. Similar exercises will be undertaken in all other member countries, with reviews in Palau, Nauru, Niue, Tuvalu and Tonga planned for 2011.

In 2010 the organisation also facilitated forums on youth and on women in politics in Cook Islands, and undertook several activities relating to that country's elections. This included two candidates' forums – one of which was specifically for young people, provision of feedback to the Elections Monitoring Team sent by PIFS, and facilitation of the publication of the Forum Principles of Good Leadership and Accountability in local newspapers.



## Pacific Youth Council

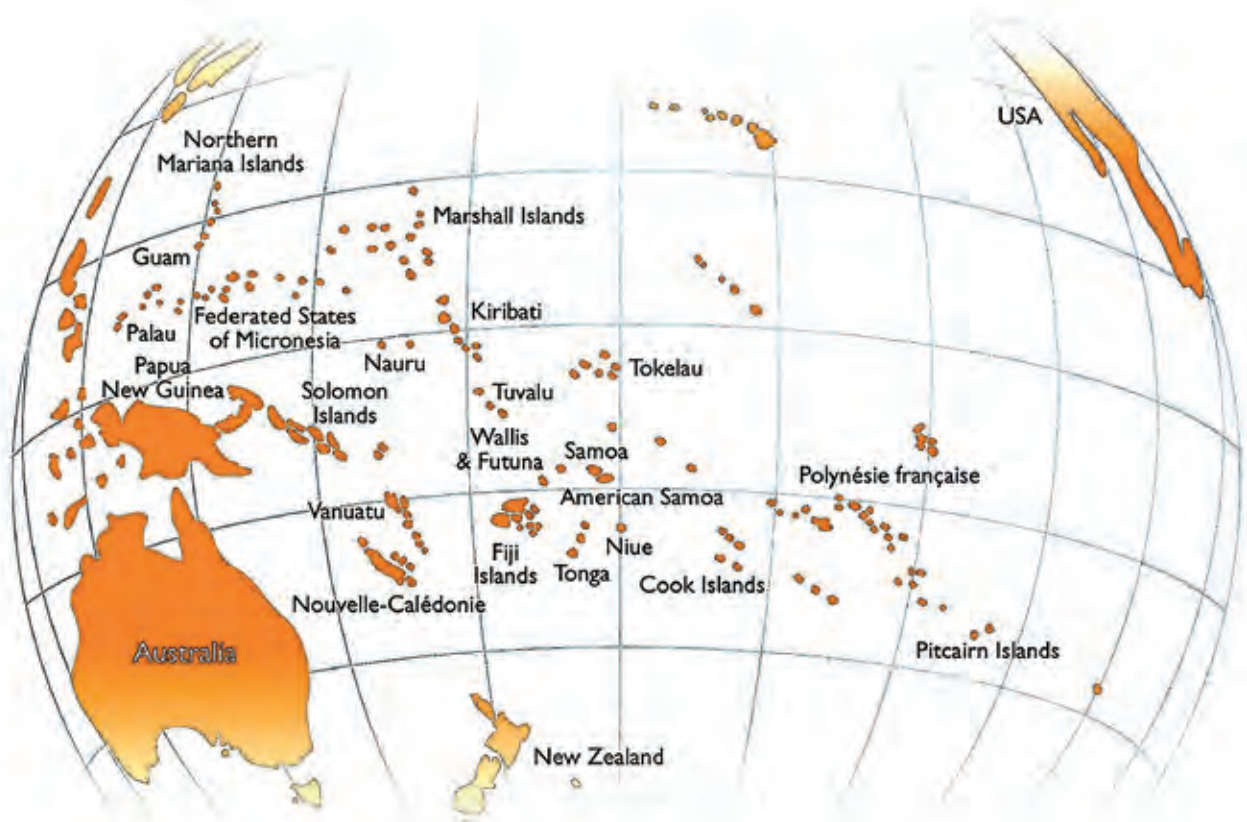


*SPC hosts the secretariat of the Pacific Youth Council (PYC), which was re-established in 2009 with funding from AusAID's Pacific Leadership Program after being dormant for nearly 10 years. The council is responsible for coordination, advocacy and building partnerships with other agencies to support National Youth Councils, which represent non-governmental youth organisations. These councils work closely with government youth departments to implement action on national youth priorities.*

**T**he council's current membership includes National Youth Councils from Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

In 2010, PYC launched an initiative to raise awareness on issues relating to youth employment. The initiative is in response to the challenges facing youth in the Pacific, including urban migration and high youth unemployment and underemployment.

The PYC secretariat is based in SPC's Suva Regional Office.







## MEMBERS

American Samoa

Australia

Cook Islands

Federated States of Micronesia

Fiji Islands

France

French Polynesia

Guam

Kiribati

Marshall Islands

Nauru

New Caledonia

New Zealand

Niue

Northern Mariana Islands

Palau

Papua New Guinea

Pitcairn Islands

Samoa

Solomon Islands

Tokelau

Tonga

Tuvalu

United States of America

Vanuatu

Wallis and Futuna

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