

9<sup>TH</sup> REGIONAL MEETING OF  
PACIFIC HEADS OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SERVICES (PHOAFS)

(15 – 17 May 2024 – virtual)

Paper reference	<b>Session 5: Agenda Item 2</b>
Title	<b>Proposed discussion paper for Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry 2025- Invasive management</b>
Action	Decision
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<b>Summary</b>
The Agenda Item provides for the discussion of Invasive species and pest and disease management as potential topics for the Ministers' meeting in 2025.
<b>Recommendation:</b>
PHOAFS are invited to <b>request</b> the Secretariat to prepare a session for the Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry for their 2025 meeting.

### Background

1. The 8<sup>th</sup> Regional Meeting of Pacific Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (PHOAFS) met on 9 March 2023 in Nadi. Invasive species management was raised as an issue during Country presentations. The ability to prevent invasive exotic pests and diseases from entering our shores is critical to maintaining both our trade and the fragile ecosystems of the Pacific. Our region holds three of the world's 35 global biodiversity hotspots. We have over 400 endemic species of plants, of which approximately 90% are native species. However, our crops, trees and livestock are threatened by the invasion of new pests and diseases, which is likely to worsen under climate change impacts.
2. Recent examples include an outbreak of the Fall Army Worm in Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands. This pest has significantly threatened global food security in a short period.
3. The invasive Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle (CRB) Guam strain (called CRB-G in short) has been found in eight Pacific countries since its discovery in Guam in 2007. ASF, a highly contagious viral disease of domestic and wild pigs that can cause severe economic and

production loss, is now present in PNG and poses a significant threat to the pork industry in the Pacific. African tulip ( *Spathodea campanulate*) trees, introduced as ornaments, threaten island biodiversity and ecosystem resilience. It is amongst the world's 100 worst invasive alien species by the International Union for Conservation of Nature ( IUCN).

#### Purpose of this paper

4. The PHOAFS should decide if an agenda item on invasive species and pest and disease management is a priority for the Ministerial meeting and discuss what form such a session would take.
5. The Agenda Item will be a facilitated discussion with the HOAFS. No additional information is presented.

#### Recommendations:

6. The PHOAFS are invited **to request** the Secretariat to prepare a session for the Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry at the 2025 meeting.