

■ COASTAL FISHERIES MANAGEMENT SECTION

Subregional workshop on ecosystem approaches to management of coastal fisheries in PICTs

17–21 November 2008 Nadi, Fiji Islands

Through joint efforts by SPC, the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and The Nature Conservancy (TNC), a subregional workshop on ecosystem approaches to coastal fisheries management in the Pacific Islands was held in Nadi, Fiji Islands. The main objective of the workshop was to provide an opportunity to further discuss, at a regional level, the concept and practice of the ecosystem approach to fisheries (EAF) and to consider the way forward in implementing EAF in PICTs. The workshop targeted decision-makers, Heads of Fisheries Administration and Heads of Environment Administration. It also built on other regional efforts toward implementing EAF management, such as those by the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) for the management of the region's tuna resources.

The workshop concluded with the following recommendations to achieve better fisheries management outcomes.

- Regional and international agencies should provide the resources needed to progress with the application of EAF in the region, in particular for:
 - generating background reports, developing appropriate legislation, data collection and monitoring systems, establishing committees, etc.;
 - completion of EAF pilot and case studies;
 - capacity building for agency staff and stakeholders;
 - formal and 'on the job' training exercises on various EAF-related processes relevant to PICTs; and
 - assisting with extension of, or the development of, overall country plans for coastal fisheries and other related planning processes.
- A short document should be generated that outlines how the different approaches all fit together. This should first focus on the SPC-generated community-based processes and the FAO-generated processes.
- New and improved tools/mechanisms should be developed to assist PICTs to determine how to link the various levels of management — community, provincial, national, regional — as part of the process for the formulation of an EAF management tool box.
- The current management plans and activities should be extended/adapted to include any missing EAF components to form part of general guidelines for the implementation of EAF.
- Regional workshops should be conducted that:
 - share experiences in applying EAF using the various methods and principles; and
 - detail the use of specific tools (e.g. risk analysis, community-based consultation) rather than try and cover all the EAF-related methods at once.
- A regional EAF network should be established, which

Participants at the EAF management workshop



may include the establishment of an EAF interest group operating in a manner similar to other interest groups established under SPC's Coastal Fisheries Programme (CFP).

- Processes should be harmonised among institutions (e.g. fisheries and environment agencies plus others).

The workshop was attended by 38 participants from 12 PICTs including representatives from a range of national, regional and international inter-governmen-

tal organisations (IGOs) and NGOs, including SPC, FFA, SPREP, TNC, JICA, and FAO. A similar workshop for the Northern Pacific was held in Guam in March 2009.



Technical assistance to Tonga Department of Fisheries

The Coastal Fisheries Management Adviser visited Tonga to offer advice on Tonga's Community-Based Fisheries Management Programme (CBFMP). The visit was requested by the Government of Tonga through a project proposal to SPC to assess the present development of its CBFMP and to provide advice as to how the programme may proceed after the termination of the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID)-funded Tonga Fisheries Project (TFP)

Tonga's CBFMP

The establishment of Tonga's CBFMP came under the fourth component of the TFP and has been operated as a major part of the Community and Outer Islands Development and Advisory Section (CDAS) of the Department of Fisheries. The TFP's main objective was to contribute to the economic development and social well-being of the people of Tonga through sustainable development and management of living marine resources, with attention to remote and disadvantaged communities. To achieve this goal the TFP focussed on capacity building in the Department of Fisheries, assistance to small-scale fisheries, developing an environment that enables industrial fisheries to increase export income and enhancing sustainable community-based management of inshore resources.

The CBFMP approach is for CDAS to work closely with coastal communities to develop community coastal management plans (CCMP) which obligate communities that own the plans to take action to conserve and manage their special management areas (SMA). The Minister of Agriculture & Food, Forests and Fisheries under the Fisheries Act of 2002 is empowered to declare SMAs for conservation and management of fisheries resources by coastal communities. To manage these SMAs, the Department of Fisheries was tasked under CBFMP with promoting working relationships with coastal communities to manage the SMAs.

The CDAS has so far worked with six coastal communities (three in Haapai, one in Vavau and two in Tongatapu) on the development of their CCMPs. The CCMPs of the Haapai group were developed under AusAID assistance and the ones for Vavau and Tongatapu were developed by the CDAS on its own. The CCMPs for the Haapai communities have been completed and are being implemented. The CCMPs for the Vavau and Tongatapu communities are nearing completion.

The assignment

With direction from the Department of Fisheries, the assignment was carried out under the follow-

ing terms of reference. The plan of work was structured to obtain as much information as possible in order to present a reasonable assessment of the work done under CBFMP.

- Hold discussions with the Department of Fisheries and the Ministry of Agriculture & Food, Forests and Fisheries (MAFFF) to receive views on CBFMP.
- Hold discussions with coastal communities that have worked under CBFMP to hear their opinions.
- Meet with other government agencies and NGOs that may have interests similar to those of CBFMP.
- Take into account views presented in various reports relevant to CBFMP and formulate an independent opinion.
- Based on the results of the meetings and discussions described above, assess the CBFM programme and provide advice on how it should progress.
- Identify ways that SPC could help with future improvement of CBFMP including suggestions regarding external funding sources that may be of assistance in implementing CBFMP in Tonga.

Recommendations

At the conclusion of the assignment, a draft report was presented to the Department of Fisheries. The report's recommendations included a national workshop to seek more opinions on the legality of restricting the harvest of SMA fishing to communities responsible for the SMAs, capacity building for programme staff, legislation review, programme activities to

support participating communities, and partnership with SPC in developing project proposals and national workshops for the implementation of EAF management.

The integration of EAF management into CBFMP will be an important activity of the programme in the near future. This will be jointly organised by SPC and the Department of Fisheries through a national workshop

with SPC providing resources. SPC is also committed to assisting the development of CBFMP in Tonga through: 1) development of an EAF management model, 2) production of awareness materials, 3) development of the first community-based EAF management model, and 4) timely reviews of the programme when needed.



Developing Yap's sea cucumber regulations

One of the major activities during this period was to assist the Marine Resources Management Division (MRMD) in the State of Yap, Federated States of Micronesia, in developing regulations for the sea cucumber fishery. The harvesting of sea cucumbers in the State of Yap has been an important activity, especially in outer-island communities, as it provides significant income. Over recent years, harvesting and export of the animals has greatly increased.

By law, customary marine tenure in Yap allows resource and reef owners full authority to own and harvest the resources of their respective marine areas. Because of the way the law is structured, MRMD cannot limit the harvest of the animals. The only strategy for the state government to control exploitation of the resource was to apply restrictions on the size and volume of products to be exported. Therefore, the state government placed a moratorium on the

export of sea cucumber until regulations to control and monitor exports are ready. SPC was asked to assist with the development of those regulations.

The draft regulations have been submitted to the Attorney General's Office and the legislative authority for public hearing and gazetting.



NEARSHORE FISHERIES DEVELOPMENT AND TRAINING SECTION

During September and October 2008 Fisheries Development Officer (FDO) Steve Beverly assisted the Vanuatu Maritime College (VMC) in Santo, Vanuatu, with the practical fishing modules for a course called Sea Safety and Fishing for Pacific Island Fisheries Officers. Following the course at VMC Steve left for Nelson, New Zealand, to participate in the Fourth Regional Course for Managers of Medium-to-Large Size Fisheries Enterprises at the New Zealand School of Fisheries (25 to 29 October).

The course at VMC was conducted over a four-week period by VMC staff with assistance

from the FDO. There were 11 students in the course, each from a different PICT. The students were:

- Nonu Tuisamoa from American Samoa;
- Joe Kaukura from Cook Islands;
- Alvin Sinem from Yap;
- Nena William from Kosrae, Federated States of Micronesia;
- Semiti Korovavala from Fiji Islands;
- Iareta Awerika from Kiribati;

- Lee Polin from Marshall Islands;
- Jeb Bop from Nauru;
- Ben Logai from PNG;
- Solomona Tufuga from Samoa; and
- Maani Petaia from Tuvalu.

The first week of the course was dedicated to introductory material including an overview of fishing methods, sea safety and survival (Figure 1), safe operational plans (SOPs), fire fighting, first aid, seamanship, knots and splicing, chartwork and navigation, and boat handling.