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Final outcomes

A new song for coastal fisheries: Pathways to change

A NEW SONG FOR COASTAL FISHERIES: PATHWAYS TO CHANGE

1. Context

Inshore fisheries provide the primary or secondary source of income for up to fifty percent of households in the Pacific. Amongst rural populations, 50-90% of the animal-sourced protein consumed comes from fish. At the national level coastal fisheries carry significant cultural and economic value. Coastal fisheries are estimated to contribute 49% of the fisheries contribution to GDP, demonstrating that they are central to the Pacific way of life.

The population of the Pacific Islands is growing and coastal fisheries resources are declining in many countries. Population growth is increasing the gap between the fish required for food security and sustainable harvests from coastal fisheries. Within 15 years, it has been estimated that an additional 115,000 tonnes of fish will be needed across the region for good nutrition. The decline in coastal fisheries resources threatens to make this gap even wider. Pacific Island countries and territories face many challenges in dealing with their changing physical and social environments but unless the food gap is minimised and filled (Fig. 1) there will be significant negative impacts on the traditions, health and well-being of Pacific Island communities. Strategies to minimise and fill the gap currently lack definition.

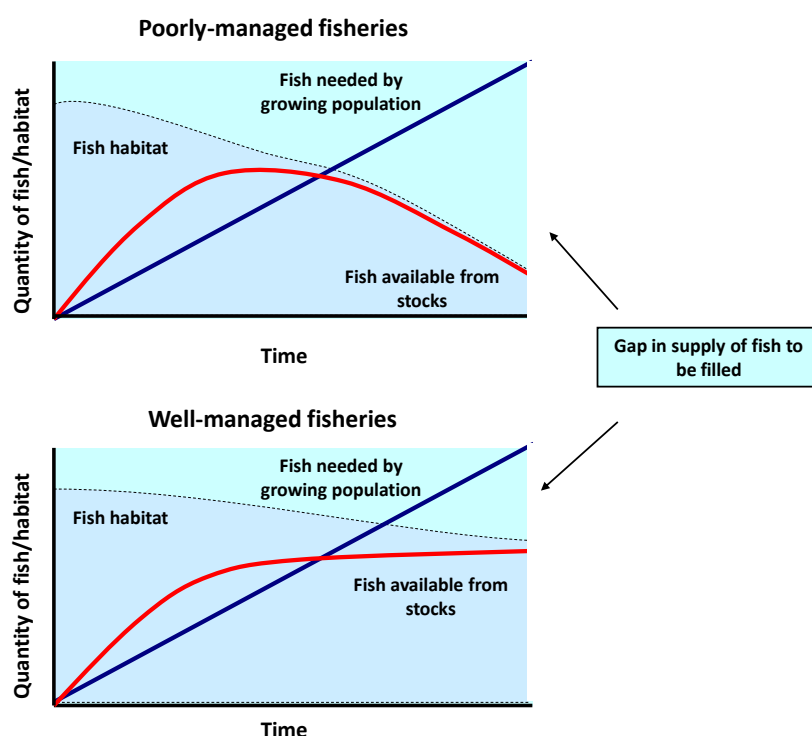


Figure 1: A stylised representation of the developing fish supply gap in the Pacific Region (Source: Bell et al 2011¹)

¹ Bell et al. (2011). Implications of climate change for contributions by fisheries and aquaculture to Pacific Island economies and communities. In, J.D. Bell, J.E. Johnson, and A.J. Hobday, eds. *Vulnerability of tropical Pacific fisheries and aquaculture to climate change*, pp 733-801. Noumea, New Caledonia, Secretariat of the Pacific Community.

Pacific Island leaders have recognised the importance of coastal fisheries. The Vava'u Declaration in 2007 calls for effective management of coastal fisheries to support food security and sustainable livelihoods. The Apia Policy was then forged to help harness the benefits of coastal fisheries. Similar themes are embodied in the Joint FFA/SPC Future of Fisheries Report, IUCN call for action, FAME Strategic Plan, the outcomes from the SIDS Conference, the recent MSG Roadmap, the Framework for the Pacific Oceanscape and the 2014 Palau Declaration on The Ocean: Life and Future.

These documents collectively call on Pacific Island Countries and Territories to implement integrated coastal resource management arrangements, drawing on the strengths and traditions of community, district, provincial and national levels of government to achieve sustainable island life.

Coastal fisheries are complex and interdependent social and ecological systems that are influenced by factors at larger scales, such as national governance, trade and land-based activities. As such, management faces many challenges in balancing development aspirations and sustainability, and in adapting to change outside the influence of coastal communities. Although many instances of local success can be found, these alone will not be sufficient to meet future national and regional food security demands. As coastal fisheries management continues to evolve, community-based ecosystem approaches to fisheries management (CEAFM) will play a central role in securing the benefits that flow from coastal resources.²

There is increasing exposure within the region to the various approaches to coastal fisheries management and considerable literature on the subject available to inform new initiatives. The importance of taking an ecosystem approach, which considers a wide range of impacts on coastal ecosystems in addition to fishing is clear and is being increasingly incorporated into CEAFM approaches. There are, however, significant challenges associated with evaluating the successes and failures of isolated CEAFM approaches and in scaling up coastal fisheries management to a national level. It is estimated that upwards of 90 per cent of coastal communities do not have viable coastal fisheries management in place and large areas are not under effective management.

2. A new approach

The convening of a dedicated CEAFM workshop attracting broad-based participation is an indication of the increased profile of the CEAFM approach. The workshop was clear that a new and innovative approach to dealing with declines in coastal fisheries resources and related ecosystems is needed. Simply put, more of the same won't do and a new 'song for change' is needed.

At the regional level, what is needed most is to bring together disconnected initiatives and stakeholders into a strong, coordinated approach with a shared vision of coastal fisheries management. At the national and sub-national level what is needed is political recognition of the value of coastal fisheries to food security and rural development and a related commitment to resource the sector. With appropriate national and regional support, coastal fisheries management, incorporating CEAFM, will be scaled up to meet domestic development aspirations.

The Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Roadmap and associated national plans provide useful guidance as to what such an approach should consider. The proposed approach in this report is complementary to, and does not duplicate, the MSG Roadmap.

² There are many terms used by countries which encompass community-based fisheries management listed below and these could be used interchangeably in the context of this document provided they encompass an ecosystem approach that will sustain livelihoods and ensure resilient communities. CEAFM = community-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management; CBNRM = community-based natural resource management, CBFM = community-based fisheries management, CEAFM = community-based resource management, CBAM = community-based adaptive management, LMMA = locally-managed marine areas

The following key needs were highlighted during discussions of a new pathway of change towards sustainable coastal fisheries based on CEA FM.

Understanding the facts. There is now a strong body of work on the projected food gap in the Pacific Islands, what works and does not work in CEA FM and the consequences of inaction. The value of coastal fisheries to communities is frequently understated and in reality, is often far greater to them than offshore tuna fisheries. The limited application of management in areas where population growth and fishing/habitat pressure is increasing is apparent. These facts speak for themselves, should be more widely publicised and must form the basis of a planned strategy to halt declines in our coastal fisheries. Further analytical work on inshore fisheries will better define problems and help to focus inputs where they will have the best effect.

Advocacy and political will. Improvements to coastal fisheries will require significant commitment in terms of resources and support at all levels – local, national and regional. But the issues of fisheries declines and the dire consequences arising need to be elevated to the highest political levels and beyond the fisheries sector. This is essential if hard decisions are to be made and real change occur at a meaningful scale. Champions for the cause of sustainable coastal fisheries will be needed at all levels.

Scaling up. Small pockets of effective coastal fisheries management will not be adequate to address the problem. Ways must be found of building on successes and expanding them to meaningful proportions of the coastal environment. The process of scaling up will commence with widespread appreciation and understanding of the process and benefits of CEA FM in the short term. This must be followed with increased support from participants including the NGO community, regional organisations and from government in areas such as legislation and staffing.

Balancing offshore and inshore fisheries. Historically, the focus of fisheries agencies has been on development and commercial fisheries, and in particular, tuna. The ongoing livelihoods and food security benefits of good coastal fisheries management are clear. Now is the time for governments to ensure there is an appropriate level of resources to securing the considerable economic and other benefits that flow from the sustainable management of coastal fisheries. Ad-hoc funding from donors and NGOs is valuable for short-term project-based initiatives, but is no substitute for the allocation of long-term funding support for coastal fisheries management from government budgets.

Supporting communities. Coastal fisheries management is about supporting people at the community level and not just managing fish. It is vital that these communities are supported empowered, motivated, and adequately resourced if CEA FM is to be successful. Traditional and local management will often be effective in their own right, but Governments have a role both in CEA FM and in those instances where different forms of coastal management are required.

Women and youth. Women and youth are integral to successful coastal fisheries management. In considering the sector their role is often overlooked or diminished. Gender relations have significant impact on the course of development and so the voice of women and youth must be heard and acted upon effectively in all future CEA FM strategies. In addition to playing a greater role in decision-making, women and youth must have more equitable access to the benefits flowing from coastal fisheries.

Closing the gap. Fish plays a central role in the diets of Pacific Islanders. In addition to improving CEA FM, minimising and filling the gap to meet increases in fish demand from growing populations will require using alternative sources of fish for food including the catch and bycatch of industrial tuna fisheries, small scale tuna fishing around FADs, aquaculture, and inclusion of small pelagic species. The existence of these sources of seafood does not remove the need for taking the hard decisions on improving coastal fisheries management. Inclusion of alternative sources of protein and other foods (as diets diversify) will require complementary strategies from communities and other sectors (e.g. Health, Agriculture, Education). Providing for future food security without an increased risk of diet-related Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) is a key consideration.

Working together. The range of stakeholders and their current and potential interactions is huge, with vast array of complex interactions. Key players include communities, government and government agencies, churches, faith-based organisations, regional agencies, private sector stakeholders, research institutes, networks, NGOs and media. If any new approach is to be successful, these stakeholders must sing in harmony from the same songbook, or risk being ineffective. Communities must have direct and effective contact and support from all relevant participants, including government — noting also the need for regional and sub-regional coordination of support services.

A holistic approach. While unsustainable fishing is a key factor in the decline of coastal resources, the need to deal with other impacts on coastal ecosystems is readily evident. Mining, logging, development associated with urbanisation, tourism and the growth of cities, climate change and natural disasters will all impact on the coastal marine environment and must be managed as effectively as possible. The same applies to catches of protected and endangered species and other activities that impact ecosystems.

Using the right methods. One size will not fit all in developing a new approach; there are clear local, sub-regional and regional differences between the circumstances of coastal fisheries. While community based management remains central to achieving our goals for coastal fisheries, other tools and mechanisms will be required, including control of exports and regulatory approaches as defined in statute. In some instances, CEA FM will not be appropriate to improved management. For example CEA FM is difficult to implement in urban areas or places with contested marine tenure. Where CEA FM is not appropriate, government will have a more critical role. Developing and resourcing relevant and effective monitoring, control and surveillance (MCS) mechanisms will be central to this challenge. Approaches must also be simple, realistic and implementable.

Maintaining livelihoods. The need for cash in coastal communities is increasing. If income is reduced from management measures in the short term, this may cause hardship and a reluctance to adopt CEA FM. While providing alternative sources of income for coastal communities will therefore need to be considered, in no circumstances should it be 'traded off' as a prerequisite to taking effective fisheries management decisions, which will secure longer-term incomes and underpin the future sustainability of coastal communities.

3. The Barriers

The workshop identified 11 key barriers that must be overcome if effective coastal fisheries management is to be implemented at a useful scale in the region.

- Geographical isolation, the extent of coastlines and the diversity of coastal communities.
- Lack of political profile, will and support in advancing CEA FM, including services delivered at the sub-national level.
- Inadequate focus on coastal fisheries management by fisheries agencies compared to the offshore tuna sector, with limited capacity and resources being applied to coastal fisheries management.

- Outdated management policy, legislation and planning, with little or no monitoring of effectiveness or sustainability.
- Lack of relevant data, analysis and knowledge to inform management at all levels.
- Inadequate empowerment of local communities and links with sub-national government.
- Poor stakeholder collaboration/connection at the national level and regional level.
- Inadequate compliance with fisheries rules and variable/inadequate sanctions.
- Lack of integration of CEAFM into national economic policy and strategies.
- Failure to adequately recognize the crucial role women play in the management and sustainable use of inshore fisheries resources.
- Limited alternative livelihoods and lack of available commercial funding mechanisms to support small-scale community livelihoods.

4. A vision for coastal fisheries

The workshop agreed to the following vision:

Sustainable well managed inshore fisheries, underpinned by community based approaches that provide food security, long-term economic, social, and ecological benefits to our communities

To give effect to this broad vision, eight outcome statements were developed and agreed, along with a number of intermediate outcomes, activities and responsibilities, as outlined in the 'pathway to change' framework below.

The suggested approach seeks to be non-prescriptive. It is designed to provide direction and encourage coordination, cooperation and an effective use of regional and other support services in the development of coastal fisheries management. It is of necessity broad in nature and it is expected that if endorsed by leaders, more detailed pathways to change will be developed and/or implemented at sub-regional and/or national levels.

A summary record of the workshop may be found at <http://www.spc.int/FAME/en/meetings/229-regional-workshop-on-the-future-of-coastalinshore-fisheries-management>

5. Outcomes from the pathway to change

Overarching outcomes

1. Improved wellbeing of coastal communities
2. Productive and healthy ecosystems and fish stocks

Key outcome areas

Under these overarching outcomes, the group noted that to reach these long-term overarching outcomes progress is needed in the eight medium term outcome areas as below:

1. Informed, empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user rights
2. Adequate and relevant information to inform management and policy

3. Recognition of, and strong political commitment and support for, coastal fisheries management at a national and sub-national scale
4. Re-focused fisheries agencies that are transparent, accountable and adequately resourced, supporting coastal fisheries management and sustainable development underpinned by CEA FM
5. Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation and planning
6. Effective collaboration and coordination between stakeholders and key sectors of influence
7. More equitable access to benefits and decision making within communities, including women, youth and marginalised groups
8. Diverse livelihoods reducing pressure on fisheries resources, enhancing community incomes and contributing to improved fisheries management

For each of the medium-term outcome areas the groups expanded them into the shorter-term outcomes that would need to be tackled over the next five years.

6. Roles of Governments, SPC and other stakeholders

The New Song initiative calls for an enhanced focus on coastal fisheries management and related development activities in the Pacific Region. To effectively implement the actions suggested in the tables, national governments, and all stakeholders, will need to commit to substantial support for a community-driven approach to coastal fisheries management. The different forms of support necessary from governments and all other stakeholders to achieve the Vision, while outlined in the following tables, will be addressed in follow-up work.

The Pacific Community, through the Secretariat will be responsible for building momentum for this new direction at the regional level and for supporting, facilitating and preparing regular assessments of progress with the New Song initiative.

Previous involvement and the broad participation and support of NGOs, communities and community based networks in the elaboration of the Song is an indication of their future engagement and commitment.

In summary, coastal communities and their environment collectively represent a complex system, facing a range of challenges beyond fisheries. The workshop noted that to be successful, implementing the initiatives in this document will require a coordinated approach. This approach will include communities and fisheries agencies working together with stakeholders from a range of other sectors, including health, environment and agriculture. Climate change will impact all these sectors.

7. Monitoring and evaluation

If the New Song is to be effective, it is vital to monitor progress and identify and address critical issues in a timely manner and take account of the dynamic nature of coastal communities and ecosystems. The tables below make preliminary suggestions as to possible performance indicators.

Monitoring of the New Song will provide an opportunity for the region to report to Leaders on coastal fisheries, including under the FFA/SPC 'Future of Fisheries' initiative. The implementation of an effective monitoring and evaluation framework will be key task for the SPC Fisheries Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Divisions (SPC FAME) as implementation of the New Song progresses. The SPC will progress endorsement of the 'New Song' through relevant regional forums in a sequenced and logical fashion.

8. Next Steps

It is recommended that HoF endorse the Strategy and the broader outcomes of the workshop. After final review, the Strategy will be sent firstly for consideration by the Forum Fisheries Committee in May and constitute the major input by SPC to the joint FFA/SPC Future of Fisheries exercise currently underway and planned for review by the FFC Ministerial in July. Within the Future of Fisheries exercise the work will also be presented to all CROP partners and represent a major input from the sector into for the relevant attention of Forum leaders. Subsequently the Strategy will be presented at the Ministerial CRGA meeting scheduled for November 2015 in Niue.

With its strong focus on the community level, the Strategy should help guide effective engagement in the sector for many years to come. The Strategy will, however, remain a dynamic document managed by SPC FAME. The design and addition of a relevant Monitoring and Evaluation (M & E) framework, drawing on the suggestions within the Strategy will be a priority task.

The Strategy and workshop outcomes together with the M & E Framework (when drafted) should be shared with all relevant stakeholders in the inshore fisheries sector. All members have a role in promoting the Strategy and in securing the future of sustainable coastal fisheries.

9. Pathways to change framework

Outcome # 1: Informed, empowered coastal communities with clearly defined user rights

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Players	Indicators
Informed and empowered communities — robust awareness and communication programmes	Community leaders, fisheries authorities, stakeholders, NGOs, women, churches, faith-based groups, youth, fishers, ministry of Education, other government departments, CEAFM networks.	Awareness surveys # of communities practicing CBNRM Compliance rates
Coastal fisheries management and marine ecosystems included in school curriculum	Ministry of Education , Minister of Fisheries authorities, regional organisations (SPC, SPREP)	Curricula # of schools using curricula
Legal and regulatory frameworks recognising community empowerment	Heads of State, Ministers, Attorneys General, fisheries agencies, traditional leaders and communities, SPC and SPREP, NGOs, departments	# national and sub-national laws updated and supporting community — based management # national and sub-national policies and strategies guiding coastal fisheries management # community-based management or action plans being implemented
Community management programmes	Traditional leaders / council / community fisheries agencies, networks, private sector, NGOs	Community management plans legally recognised # of traditional management practices supported
Strong partnerships at all levels	Traditional leaders / council / community, fisheries agencies, networks, private sector, NGOs, provincial government/equivalent	# of joint partnership programmes # of MOUs Evidence of active and strong partnerships

Outcome # 2: Adequate and relevant information to inform management and policy

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Player	Indicators
Government and community managers have quality information to inform decisions	Fishers, managers (village chief, local fisheries administrator), networks, scientists, skilled data collectors	# of active databases, disaggregated by social factors # of fishers/communities providing quality data # of trained data collectors, including in social and economic methods # of appropriate surveys and assessments completed Evidence that data is being used to inform decisions
Science is translated into simple and informative material to guide community management	Community members and fisheries staff <i>with</i> Resource management people, academics, networks, capacity providers (SPC, FFA, MPI, NGOs), scientists	Management plans guided by data # of resources available to the community # of fisheries programs integrated into school curricula # of evidence-based decisions Curricula
Communities have a greater understanding of status, biology and habitats of key species (in addition to existing local ecological knowledge)	Communities (traditional knowledge), managers, networks, government, research institutes, extension staff	# of extension staff Data easily accessible # communities receiving feedback # relevant publications being produced Incorporation of coastal fisheries management in school curricula # of schools with above curricula

Outcome #3: Recognition of, and strong political commitment and support for, coastal fisheries management at a national and sub-national scale

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Players	Indicators
Informed and supportive politicians at the national and sub-national levels	Permanent Secretaries, Directors (primary), Community Leaders/Voters, faith-based organisations, NGOs	Change in budget allocation # of policies, statements, MOUs # of workshops and trainings for members of Parliament
Raised public support of coastal fisheries through engaging awareness campaigns with consistent and community-relevant messaging and creative information-sharing tactics (e.g. use of celebrities, role models, etc.)	Communication organizations, Fisheries working groups, media, spokespersons (celebrities, etc.)	# of media material and activities produced related to coast # of people reached by media campaigns relating to coastal fisheries
Coastal fisheries management is a permanent agenda item at regional meetings (e.g. MSG, SPC, SPREP, FFA)	HOF, CROP Agencies, FTAC, SPREP	# of agenda items relating to coastal fisheries # of decisions taken at regional meetings

Outcome #4: Re-focused fisheries agencies that are transparent, accountable, and adequately resourced, supporting coastal fisheries management and sustainable development, underpinned by CEAFM

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Players	Indicators
Coastal fisheries management is adequately resourced	Ministers, Directors of Fisheries, SPC, Planning departments, donors, ministries of finance	\$ assigned to coastal fisheries management # of people assigned to coastal fisheries management # of staff with appropriate skills (social, gender, economic, ecological)
Documented coastal fisheries management activities, which are regularly reviewed	Directors of Fisheries and other relevant agencies, SPC, Planning departments, donors, communities, NGOs	# of documented activities Outcomes of review
Coastal fisheries management activities are integrated and coordinated with other relevant stakeholders	Directors of Fisheries and other relevant agencies SPC, donors, communities, NGOs	# of plans demonstrating integrated and coordinated partnerships
Reviewed and integrated coastal fisheries management activities	Fisheries Agencies, Ministers, NGOs	# of reviews
Coastal fisheries staff conducting effective CEAFM activities	Donors, regional training orgs (e.g. SPC), fisheries agencies	# of trainees Training including appropriate range of topic areas, (including social, ecological, economic)
Raised community awareness of coastal fisheries	Media, fisheries agencies, regional orgs, communities	# of published materials

Outcome # 5: Strong and up-to-date management policy, legislation and planning

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Players	Indicators
Coastal fisheries policy guiding management	All resource owners/users along with any and all agencies in charge of natural resources (fisheries, environment etc.), SPC	# of policies guiding coastal management # of countries with up to date policy
Updated legislation that allows policy to be implemented and empowers communities	Attorney General, fisheries and other national agencies, regional organisations, SPC, parliament	# of pieces of legislation guiding coastal management # of countries with sufficient legislation for effective management Compliance rates
Effective policy implementation through plans, monitoring and evaluation	Policy makers, fisheries agencies	# of updated plans # of references to regional inshore fisheries strategy
Illegal, unsustainable and unregulated fishing is minimised	Law enforcement services, community authorised officers, customs	# of prosecutions # of infringements recorded

Outcome # 6: Effective collaboration and coordination between stakeholders and key sectors of influence

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Players	Indicators
Coastal fisheries management is included in broader development processes	Ministries of strategic planning and finance, development NGOs, donors, communities	# of development programs that include CEAFM activities
National forums are coordinating and providing cross-sector advice relevant to coastal fisheries management	Governments, NGOs, churches, faith-based organisations, private sector	# of forums Frequency of meetings # of meaningful decisions relevant to coastal fisheries
Church groups are integrated into coastal fisheries management activities	Churches, communities, faith-based organisations	Evidence religious leaders advocating for good fisheries management
Private sector, finance providers and land based organisations are involved in CEAFM	Cooperatives, financial institutions, donors wholesalers, fishers' associations, land-based organisations (e.g. forestry, agriculture), finance providers	Active participation of private sector on advisory committees # of instances of private sector providing investment in support of sustainable fisheries services # of private sector investors # of communities provided with financial support # of land-based experts participating in dialogues
Regional and national coordination of policy	Regional organisations, donors, national governments	Regional commitments embedded in national policies and plans
Increased spread and quality of CEAFM among communities	Sub-national governments, communities, NGOs, CEAFM networks	Collaboration and learning among communities and practitioners Country-specific indicators of spread

Outcome # 7: More equitable access to benefits and decision making within communities, including women, youth and marginalised groups

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Players	Indicators
Equitable access to the resource and benefits from coastal fisheries within communities	Communities, champions for change; gender researchers	<p># of gender-differentiated studies</p> <p># of community action plans in which access to benefits for women, youth and marginalised groups are improved</p> <p>Indicators of well-being are gender-differentiated and socially disaggregated</p> <p>Engagement of women and youth in fisheries activities</p>
Greater inclusivity of decision-making while acknowledging cultural norms and traditional values	All demographic and social groups within a community, including village leaders	<p># of women, youth, others involved in decision making forums</p> <p>New stakeholder groupings are developed in decision-making forums</p>
Decision-making processes are transparent and the roles of government and traditional authorities are clear	Communities, leaders	# of community members aware of decisions and decision-making processes
Plans take account of equity issues, especially those involving gender and youth	Communities, leaders, women and youth	# of plans that explicitly address equity issues

Outcome # 8: Diverse livelihoods reducing pressure on fisheries resources, enhancing community incomes, and contributing to improved fisheries management

Intermediate Outcomes	Key Players	Indicators
Diverse livelihoods, contribute to coastal fisheries management	Communities, private sector, fisheries agencies	Healthy stocks Diversity of livelihoods Proportion of income from coastal fisheries
Enhance value of wild-caught fisheries	Fishers, private sector	Total household income
Aquaculture, tourism and inshore FADs cost effectively contribute to sustainable livelihoods	National departments, private sector, communities, SPC and NGOs	Household income Status of fish stocks