



Secretariat of the Pacific Community

# COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS PROGRAMME



Northern Mariana Islands



**2014**  
**REPORT**

# Northern Mariana Islands



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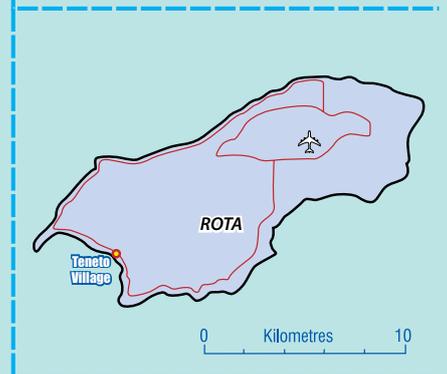
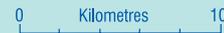
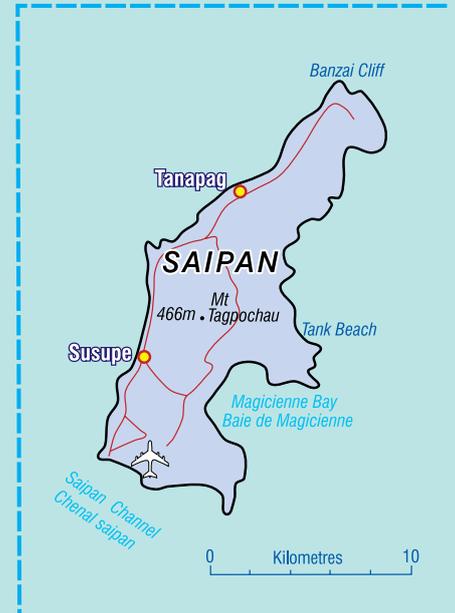
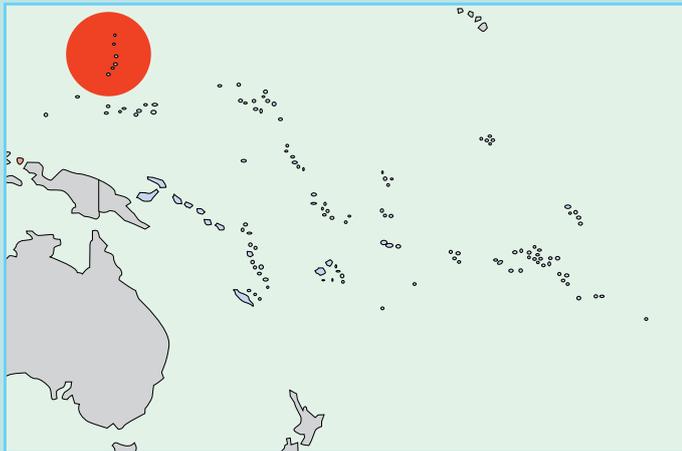
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# COMMONWEALTH OF THE NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS PROGRAMME

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2014 Report



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Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI)

## Foreword

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I am pleased to present SPC's annual report on its program with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI). The report provides a snapshot of the development results CNMI is achieving with SPC's support. It includes a feature article illustrating the effectiveness of our joint effort and how the collaboration between CNMI and SPC works in practice. A more comprehensive list of SPC's work, including training, is provided at the end of the report.

As this is the first report I have presented as Director-General, I would like to acknowledge the people and Government of CNMI as members of SPC and partners in development of the Pacific region. SPC is proud to work with CNMI, and you have my commitment that SPC will strive for continuous improvement in the work we undertake with CNMI to achieve your development objectives.

This year we have examined how SPC can further improve its role as a resource for its 22 island members. We believe SPC is uniquely positioned to support members such as CNMI to address their critical development challenges, including issues we are all familiar with in the Pacific, such as reducing non-communicable diseases (NCDs); building resilience to climate and disaster risks; accelerating economic opportunities; or enabling young Pacific people to realize their full potential. None of these issues can be adequately tackled through single-sector approaches. They can only be addressed through long-term, multi-sector approaches that use the best expertise and knowledge available.

As such, in 2015 we plan to hold discussions with members to explore how SPC can better formulate and integrate its work and expertise to focus on members' development priorities. We expect this will include a range of different ways of working with CNMI to shape future national programs.

I encourage you to look at SPC's Programme Results Report 2013–2014 to see the full range of work SPC is pursuing in the region on behalf of all members. I thank CNMI for its contribution to this work. I also take this opportunity to thank our development partners, who have invested financially and intellectually in this most important work

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Colin', with a horizontal line underneath.

Dr Colin Tukuitonga  
*Director-General, SPC*

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## SPC cooperation with CNMI

*This report provides an overview of SPC's work with the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) in 2014. It is intended to show how SPC's national-level activities, initiated by CNMI, complement our regional work to benefit the people of CNMI and the region. The report provides an overview of how SPC aligns its work with CNMI to achieve the development priorities detailed in its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan (2009–2014).*

As a development organization, SPC provides knowledge and scientific and technical cooperation to support members to achieve three key development goals:

- The Pacific region and its people benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic growth
- Pacific communities are empowered and resilient
- Pacific Island people reach their potential and lead long and healthy lives

This year, we have summarized activities and results achieved in CNMI under these three development themes so it is easier to understand the effectiveness of SPC's work as a whole. The work SPC supports builds on the specialist sector expertise for which SPC is most recognized. These sector areas include transport and energy, statistics, fisheries and aquaculture, mineral resources and geoscience (including geographic mapping and modeling), agriculture, forestry and land, health, water and sanitation, education, gender, youth and human rights.

SPC supports the development efforts of Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) with scientific and technical knowledge and good practice that are context-appropriate. In recognition of the interrelated nature of development and our commitment to maximize the effectiveness of our contribution, SPC wants to enhance the current process of program development at country level. Accordingly, country programming will be based on proactive, ongoing and broadly based consultation with each country or territory, with a view to delivering technical quality aligned with members' cross-cutting development priorities. The objective is to shape a technical cooperation program that is as developmentally effective and sustainable as possible in meeting the needs of the countries and territories SPC serves.

## Regionalism in practice

From SPC's beginning, there has been awareness of the value of a regional approach to meet common needs. Although PICTs are diverse in many respects, they share similar challenges in areas such as fisheries, transport, health, food security and emerging areas such as climate change. SPC recognizes and draws on skills and capacities from around the region, including encouraging experts from one member to share experiences and skills with counterparts in other PICTs. SPC also facilitates regional public goods that benefit all PICTs, such as the CePaCT genebank (Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees), which assists countries to conserve staple crops and introduce new plant varieties to increase crop diversity.

Our regional work complements national-level initiatives in CNMI. The tangible and practical benefits of regionalism are demonstrated by SPC's work on behalf of its members to facilitate cooperation and leverage value across a range of regional initiatives. These are outlined further in SPC's Programme Results Report 2013–2014.

SPC's regional services to members include:

- Strengthening regional partnerships to facilitate information sharing among PICTs and to connect PICTs to regional and international policy development.
- Improving management of the region's oceanic fisheries through stock assessments, scientific analysis and supporting countries to define and protect their maritime boundaries.
- Supporting evidence-based decision-making by governments through SPC's regional statistics database, sector-based information portals, GIS and mapping services, economic analysis, and other advisory services.
- Increasing access to safe and affordable shipping services through technical cooperation, regional shipping agreements, and training.
- Improving energy security and supply through petroleum advisory services.
- Enhancing food security through conservation and distribution of the region's crop diversity, improving the resilience of food crop varieties to climate conditions and researching more effective farming techniques.
- Tackling transboundary diseases threatening livestock and public health through improved animal health services.
- Detecting and controlling diseases of regional concern through the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network.
- Confronting domestic violence by supporting legislative change across the region.
- Promoting well-being through gender awareness and mainstreaming.
- Supporting science, policy and legislation to increase the potential for PICTs to benefit from environmentally and economically sustainable mining of deep sea minerals.
- Supporting PICT resilience to the impacts of natural disasters and climate change by facilitating the regional Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development and by providing training and strengthening regional partnerships.



## Examples of SPC work in CNMI

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### ➔ Addressing biosecurity needs in CNMI

Right: Biosecurity training workshop held by staff from SPC and the United States Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service



As the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) prepares to expand its aquaculture industry, it must develop rigorous biosecurity protocols to ensure that new/exotic species do not spread into the surrounding ecosystem. Failing to do so could have detrimental consequences as a stable and sustainable economy in CNMI is dependent on a healthy natural resource base. Invasive species have the potential to destroy crops, smother reefs and forests, kill unique endemic species, impact traditional practices and culture and affect the health of the population.

Around the world, invasive species have been a major contributor to the extinction of native species. Aside from climate change, invasive species are the single greatest long-term threat to Pacific Island economies, environments, cultures, people and sustainable livelihoods. They undermine the resilience of island ecosystems and their ability to adapt to climate change.

Under its current Aquaculture Management Plan 2011–2015, which was developed with assistance from SPC, CNMI has identified Nile tilapia and marine shrimp as viable species for introduction to expand its aquaculture industry. However, this must be done under strict biosecurity protocols to ensure the species do not spread outside the aquaculture farms and become invasive.

CNMI also faces risks from the accidental introduction of exotic and possibly invasive species as there is considerable movement of all types of goods (agriculture, livestock, forestry and fisheries products) and people between the Commonwealth and other countries within and outside the Micronesian region, both by air and sea. The brown

*Risk assessments have been carried out for each specific ecosystem (terrestrial, freshwater and marine), and recommendations have been developed through an extensive consultative process with countries as well as with invasive species scientists and biosecurity experts from SPC. The Regional Biosecurity Plan evaluates invasive species risks to marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems in Micronesia and Hawaii (in regard to its linkages with Micronesia), and makes recommendations to remove, minimize and manage these risks.*

tree snake, which was introduced to Guam has exterminated 10 of Guam's 12 bird species, causing cascading impacts in the island's forests. Similarly, infestations of coconut rhinoceros beetle, already in Palau and Guam, can kill over 50% of all coconut trees, causing severe economic, cultural and aesthetic damage and potentially devastating impacts on basic subsistence practises on remote islands. As such, it is vitally important that biosecurity protocols are developed locally and regionally.

Over the past few years, SPC's aquaculture and animal health experts have been working with the US Government and the Government of CNMI along with neighboring Micronesian jurisdictions to develop a Regional Biosecurity Plan for Micronesia and Hawaii. Risk assessments have been carried out for each specific ecosystem (terrestrial, freshwater and marine), and recommendations have been developed through an extensive consultative process with countries as well as with invasive species scientists and biosecurity experts from SPC. The Regional Biosecurity Plan evaluates invasive species risks to marine, terrestrial and freshwater ecosystems in Micronesia and Hawaii (in regard to its linkages with Micronesia), and makes recommendations to remove, minimize and manage these risks. Responsible use and control of exotic species should be promoted at all levels, and for all countries of this region. Scientifically sound import risk analyses should be developed prior to the introduction of any exotic species.

The overarching goals of the Regional Biosecurity Plan are to ensure that each jurisdiction has appropriate biosecurity legislation as well as policies, regulations and operational procedures in place. The plan includes support for community engagement through Invasive Alien Species (IAS) awareness programs to improve communication and cooperation throughout the region. It covers terrestrial, freshwater, and marine systems.

SPC and the University of Guam facilitated a workshop in May of this year that brought together all key stakeholders and jurisdictions to comment on and conclude the updating of the implementation component before finalizing the Regional Biosecurity Plan. The workshop also discussed establishing a regional coordinating body to further develop the plan, agreeing that as an interim solution, SPC will facilitate regional biosecurity coordination.

Based on the recommendations of the Regional Biosecurity Plan, as well as on the Micronesia subregional biosecurity training workshops (organized every year by the University of Guam and SPC), CNMI has improved its basic quarantine protocols and operations for all living organisms, including aquatic and terrestrial organisms. The Commonwealth continues to benefit from quarantine training workshops such as the one held in Guam in May, sponsored by the University of Guam and SPC. Capacity building of staff is essential to prevent the introduction of invasive species into CNMI.

The plan also provides a foundation for building biosecurity protocols that will enable CNMI to expand its aquaculture industries while maintaining the integrity of its ecosystems. It supports CNMI's economic development strategy of ensuring that future growth is based on sustainable, environmentally sound industries and activities. This work was implemented in partnership with the Government of Australia.



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## Summary of SPC development cooperation

*The feature article in the previous section provide examples of how SPC is working with the Government and people of Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands (CNMI) to support achievement of their national development goals.*

In addition to the work featured, SPC provided a wide range of support to CNMI in 2014 aligned to its Comprehensive Economic Development Strategic Plan (2009–2014). Technical cooperation and support were provided by many divisions and programs across SPC on both multi-sector issues such as disaster risk reduction and climate change, and specific-sector issues in agriculture, forestry, coastal and oceanic fisheries, public health, water and sanitation, energy, transport, human rights and development statistics. Northern Mariana Islanders took part in approximately 42 days of SPC training over the period July 2013 to June 2014 in these different areas. Details of the technical cooperation and training provided are listed in Annexes 1 and 2.

In general, members recognize that SPC's value lies in the high quality of the technical support provided across national sector areas and in its portfolio of regional work, rather than in SPC's occasional role as a conduit of donor funds. SPC promotes sustainability through working with countries to develop national capacity to design results-focused programming and where possible to leverage

additional funding. SPC's direct financial inputs are only a small part of the picture. However, SPC recognizes that individual members are interested in the financial value of SPC's work as it relates to them. For CNMI, in 2014, this is estimated at USD 93,390 (84,051 CFP units). This amount includes both the direct costs of SPC's work with CNMI (including technical staff time and travel) and an allocation of the costs of SPC's regional work and indirect costs of managing and operating SPC programs.

As highlighted in the feature article and in the following table of outputs, the collaboration between SPC and the Government of CNMI has involved considerable activity. While significant progress has been made, SPC is committed to understanding better what has worked and what has not, in order to inform and improve the value of its work in CNMI in 2015 and beyond. We want to understand whether measurable and sustainable development results are being generated by SPC's activities and, if not, try to work out why and adjust our approach accordingly.

## Annex 1: SPC training provided in CNMI: July 2013–June 2014

*Capacity building is an important aspect of SPC's overall technical assistance. It includes formal training programmes, targeted classroom training in response to members' needs, attachments and on-the-job training. The following table gives a detailed breakdown of the type of training.*

	F	M	Total trained	Total person days
Aquaponics for the Pacific Island region		1	1	5
Market access: International Standards for Phytosanitary Measures (ISPM) and surveillance/survey		6	6	2
Public health: Data for decision-making course	4	2	6	30
Statistics: Consumer price index training		1	1	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>42</b>

Note:

- The above table covers training workshops, attachments and on-the-job training. It does not include meetings, conferences, seminars and consultations.



### SPC expected contribution to national development goals

Expected long term result (impact)	Expected medium term result (outcome)	Status	Planned outputs in 2014
<b>The Pacific region and its people benefit from inclusive and sustainable economic growth</b>			
<b>Fisheries, aquaculture and marine ecosystems</b>			
Improved management of oceanic fisheries	National tuna oceanic fisheries policy and decision-making are informed by the best science-based stock assessments and advice	Completed	Updated country website for all PICTs with detailed characterization of bycatch from tuna longline fisheries
<b>Statistics for development</b>			
Pacific national and regional statistics are accessible and are being utilized	PICTs are producing the agreed core set of statistics across key sectors	Completed	National Minimum Development Indicators (NMDI) populated with figures from CNMI
	PICTs are undertaking key statistical collections as scheduled	Completed	Census plans and budgets prepared within 12 and 18 months prior to scheduled census date, and all pre-enumeration activities are completed; Technical assistance provided with household listing, updated census boundaries, staff training on GPS and the open source geographic information system QGIS
<b>Land resources</b>			
Increased contribution from agriculture and forestry sectors to inclusive broad-based economic growth	Increased capacity of PICTs to meet standards, guidelines, and conditions for exports and domestic trade	Completed	Capacity building support rendered to northern Pacific countries on the establishment of the Micronesia Biosecurity Plan and training. Training of 20 Quarantine Officers, including participants from CNMI provided
		On track	Pest incursion response support provided and plans developed for all requesting countries



SPC is a membership organisation that works in close partnership with its Members: American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, Kiribati, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu, and Wallis and Futuna. We thank them for their support.

We would also like to thank our principal donor partners for their generous support of Pacific development outcomes: Asian Development Bank, Australia, Commonwealth Secretariat, European Union, Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, France, Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ), Global Environment Facility, International Maritime Organization, Korea, New Zealand, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), UN WOMEN, United States of America, Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), World Bank.