

## Contributing to food security in post-cyclone Vanuatu and Federated States of Micronesia

*Two 20-foot containers filled with materials for constructing fish aggregating devices were sent from Taiwan to Port Vila, Vanuatu in support of the Cyclone Pam Recovery Program, and to Chuuk, Federated States of Micronesia, in support of Chuuk's rehabilitation efforts in the wake of devastating super Typhoon Maysak. The purchase and delivery of the two containers had been made possible by the European Union-supported Development of Tuna Fisheries in the Pacific Project (DevFish2) project, which is implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC).*



### Vanuatu

In April 2015, Cyclone Pam left a swathe of destruction across the western Pacific, with Vanuatu being hit the hardest. The Vanuatu government estimated that half of the country's population – about 166,000 people – were affected by the cyclone. Across the country, 50–90% of homes were damaged, leaving 65,000 people in need of shelter, food, water and medical care.

Following the devastation, SPC's Division of Fisheries Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystem dispatched a team who collaborated with the Vanuatu Fisheries Department to undertake a post-cyclone needs assessment for the fisheries sector. Through that assessment, a recovery strategy for Vanuatu was developed, identifying priority areas for intervention support and potential sources of assistance. The Vanuatu fisheries FAD programme is part of the Cyclone Pam food security measure and recovery programme.

The EU-funded DevFish2 project focuses on assisting small-scale fisheries development, and acknowledges that this sector plays a significant role supporting rural community livelihoods.

With coastal marine resources severely impacted by Cyclone Pam, the deployment of FADs – which help small-scale fishermen to access offshore resources such as tunas – was hoped to be an efficient way to quickly “bring some food to the table”. Furthermore, the 20-foot container in which the materials were shipped was purchased by the DevFish2 project. In Vanuatu, the container now serves as a temporary storage facility for the Fisheries Department, and replaces some of the storage sheds destroyed during the cyclone.

## Chuuk

In December 2015, 20 FADs — worth USD 23,400 — were delivered to the Chuuk State Department of Marine Resources in Chuuk to assist with rehabilitation efforts in the wake of devastating super Typhoon Maysak.

Chuuk State, which is home to about 50,000 people, was hit the hardest of the four states within the Federated States of Micronesia. Typhoon Maysak affected most of Chuuk's lagoon resources and habitats, which communities depend on for food and livelihoods.

"These FADs are the result of an ongoing collaboration between SPC and the Chuuk State Department of Marine Resources and FSM's Department of Resources and Development (DRD) to help rebuild and bring back to normal what was destroyed by super Typhoon Maysak in April," said SPC's Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystem (FAME) Division officer, Etuati Mangele Ropeti.

EU-funded DevFish2 project support was in response to recommendations of a post-tsunami needs assessment carried out between FSM's DRD and SPC's FAME shortly after the category 5 super typhoon struck FSM in April 2015. The rehabilitation plan identified the securing of food sources from the fisheries sector as one of the first actions to be taken. Following consultations with Chuuk State, non-governmental organisation partners, and local communities, a strategy for immediate action was put into place to direct fishing effort away from the heavily distressed inshore and reef habitats, as these areas needed time to recover.

"Fisheries contribute to food safety and play a vital role in rural economies. One primary objective of the community-based ecosystem approach to fisheries management is to balance the pressure on the fish stocks and the aquatic habitat that is under distress caused by the effects of the typhoon. This requires innovative solutions and alternatives in the dynamics of fisheries management so



*Sorting out and assembling two of the 20 FADs delivered to Chuuk.*

the balance is reached between marine habitats under pressure and peoples' requirements for fish for food and nutrition security," said Valentin Martin, Deputy Assistant Secretary, Marine Resources Unit, DRD.

Chuuk State government estimates that while FADs will provide immediate benefits to the community fishers who were affected by the climatic disaster, a greater secondary impact can be expected for the rest of the island population through landings of fish at local markets.

FADs will be rigged and deployed at locations outside of the lagoon, and will help to attract pelagic fish that Chuuk fishermen can more easily access.

### For more information:

**Jonathan Manieva**

*Fisheries Development Officer (DevFish2), SPC*

[\*jonathanm@spc.int\*](mailto:jonathanm@spc.int)