

FADs for family: Capitalising on Pacific Islands motivators to promote codes of conduct around FADs

As part of an ongoing fish aggregating device (FAD) strategic development plan in Nauru, a community toolkit has been developed to address issues such as FAD misuse, vandalism and maintenance.

The FAD programme in Nauru

Like many other Pacific Island nations, Nauru has taken advantage of FADs to support local food security, fishing safety and efficiency, and provide an alternative to reef fishing. While artisanal FADs are proving to be an effective tool for Nauru's fisheries, a few issues have been identified during stakeholder meetings as restricting the success of the programme.

- **General awareness:** There is a need to raise awareness of the general Nauruan community not only about what FADs are, but also about their benefits and how they work.
- **Intentional tampering:** There have been reports of intentional vandalism, often in the form of fishers cutting marker flags to ensure others will be unable to find FADs.

- **Unintentional damage:** There are cases where FADs are also being damaged unintentionally, for example when uninformed fishers tie their boats to FADs to save fuel.
- **Fisher conflict:** While conflict among FAD fishers in Nauru appears to be rare, there are some issues among younger fishers not fishing appropriately around FADs.

In collaboration with the Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA) and the Pacific Community (SPC), the company Story 1st, Technology 2nd (SIT2) was engaged to help develop an awareness campaign to address this need, under the governance of the Effective Coastal Fisheries Management Project¹ and the Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme.²

WHAT ARE ARTISANAL FADs?

ARTISANAL FISH AGGREGATING DEVICES (FADs) ARE ANCHORED RAFTS IN THE OCEAN THAT ATTRACT FISH TO A PLACE THAT CAN BE EASILY FOUND BY FISHERS.

ARTISANAL FADS MAKE IT EASIER FOR LOCAL FISHERS TO CATCH PELAGIC FISH

ARTISANAL FADS WITHIN SPECIFIC FISHING ZONES PROVIDE BETTER SAFETY AT SEA FOR LOCAL FISHERS

ARTISANAL FADS MEAN MORE FOOD FOR THE FAMILY AND COMMUNITY

ARTISANAL FADS ALLOW LOCAL FISHERS TO SAVE FUEL BY GOING DIRECTLY TO WHERE THE FISH GATHER

FADs CAN GET OVERCROWDED
With only a few FADs currently in Nauru, we need to work together to protect and share them.

FADs CAN BE LOST OR DESTROYED WITHOUT PROPER CARE
Report any damaged or lost FADs to the Nauru Fisheries and Marine Resources Authority (NFMRA).

FADs MAY BE VANDALISED BY PEOPLE WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND THEIR BENEFITS
If you see someone damaging a FAD, explain to them their purpose and the benefits FADs have to the Nauruan community.

FADs for FAMILY
BY USING AND PROTECTING ARTISANAL FADs, YOU SUPPORT YOUR FAMILY AND THE NAURUAN COMMUNITY.

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² The PEUMP programme is funded by the European Union and the Government of Sweden.



First trolling, then jigging.
These are the two best ways to fish around a FAD.

Image from the “FADs for family” video: a father teaches his son how to fish around FADs.

Interests and motivators in Nauru

As a first step, a research phase was conducted with the goal of working with target audiences to establish an information strategy and identify effective and efficient ways to build an awareness campaign about artisanal FADs in Nauru. A total of three remote focus groups were conducted with target audience groups: fishers, coastal communities and women’s/youth associations.

While the use and value of FADs is a concept that may be unfamiliar to most Nauruans, the idea of family is one that is recognised across Nauru – in Nauru, family is everything. Thus, when we present the idea of FAD use to Nauruans we want to share our story in a way that demonstrates something greater than the individual.

- ◆ FADs ensure loved ones get home safe.
- ◆ FADs give fishers the means to provide for their families.
- ◆ FADs have long-lasting benefits to the community.
- ◆ FADs protect local culture and enable learning across future generations of fishers.

In this way, the fishers of Nauru can appreciate that a FAD is not just a piece of technology designed to catch more fish, but rather, it is a means to preserve culture, well-being and community.

As such, there appears to be an opportunity to craft an effective awareness campaign with simple messaging and shifting the focus to tell a compelling story of their benefits, which can then be supported by more detailed information as required. This approach has the benefit of appealing to audiences on a more personal level, drawing on the foundational values of family and community security.

Key delivery mechanisms

- ◆ Social media. In 2011, over 90% of households in Nauru had access to a mobile phone. This was confirmed by focus group participants who commented that everyone in Nauru had a smartphone. Focus group participants consistently recommended social media – particularly Facebook – as an appropriate platform for raising awareness, regardless of the target audience age.
- ◆ Community outreach sessions. Community consultation sessions were identified as a key platform for raising awareness. Participants suggested that finding ways to integrate these sessions into existing activities – such as school and football practices/games – would ensure better reach and engagement.
- ◆ Interactive engagement. The campaign should be strengthened by including interactive activities that promote local ownership and encourage individual and collective engagement.

A step-by-step campaign

Using the tagline “FADs for family”, the English and Nauruan version of the awareness toolkit is now available. It includes a video raising fishers’ voices, a poster and illustrations for social media highlighting the benefits of FADs as well as a detailed brochure with a code of conduct for fishers fishing around FADs. The campaign video will be distributed later this year on TV and across social media. It will be followed by community visits, trainings with fishers, and a competition on social media and with local schools to further integrate FADs into the social and community context of Nauru.



Access to the toolkit

This toolkit is available to be adapted for other countries of the region upon request. It is available from SPC’s Digital Library: https://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/FAME/Collection/Toolkit_NAU_FADs



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The Code of conduct relays five important messages to ensure that fishers know exactly what is required of them when fishing around FADs. It is part of a brochure produced in English and Nauruan.