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**Proposed Master degree program
in oceanic fisheries management**

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Proposed Master degree program in oceanic fisheries management

1. This proposal comes from the long standing working relationship between Professor Martin Tsamenyi of the University of Wollongong and Dr John Hampton, of the SPC's Oceanic Fisheries Program. It also responds to a request from Pacific Island Heads of Fisheries in 2009 to provide fuller training options in fisheries management for Pacific Islanders.

2. Martin Tsamenyi is the Director of the Australian National Centre for Ocean Resources and Security (ANCORS), at the University of Wollongong, New South Wales, Australia. The Centre has specialised in research and teaching in Law of the Sea, marine policy and fisheries management. The centre has had many postgraduate students studying by research (PhDs and some Masters). ANCORS has an existing one year taught Masters in Fisheries Policy degree programme which has commenced in 2010. This course does not have any stock assessment units.

3. John Hampton is the Manager of the Oceanic Fisheries Programme (OFP) at the SPC. The OFP for many years has conducted capacity building for Pacific Islanders in the areas of tuna stock assessment interpretation; tuna data management and fishery monitoring; and observer training and observer programme management. The OFP has held successful and popular annual short courses at SPC headquarters in tuna stock assessment interpretation and tuna data for over 5 years.

4. In discussions, Martin and John have investigated a joining of the UoW's law, policy and management and SPC's fishery monitoring, data management and stock assessment into a post graduate qualification pathway in oceanic fisheries management available to Pacific islanders. This pathway can be created by adding stock assessment to the existing UoW Masters Program and providing a pathway for focus on oceanic fisheries management at the masters level.

The vision

5. Our vision is to create a postgraduate degree programme that brings together the capacity building efforts of SPC, and FFA, along with the expertise of UoW in fisheries policy and law. This vision responds to a key recommendation of the 2009 review of the SPC's Marine Resources Division (now Division of Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems) that SPC should facilitate longer-term capacity building opportunities for members, and to a recommendation from the 2009 Heads of Fisheries meeting to seek ways of providing academic accreditation to several of the regular short courses/workshops that SPC conducts.

6. The degree would be intended to provide Pacific Islanders who work, or aspire to work in oceanic/tuna fisheries management in the Pacific, a broad set of skills that would prepare them for dealing with management issues across a wide range of disciplines that are crucial for the management of these fisheries in the Pacific.

Who would the program be for?

7. The students would be either from universities, including those in the region offering undergraduate fisheries training (USP, UPNG, Uni. Vudal), or staff from agencies involved in delivery of assistance to Pacific Island Countries and Territories in the areas of fisheries law, policy, science and management. The program would have the following units.

Masters Degree program with Oceanic Fisheries Management pathway

UoW unit code	Unit Title	Delivery by
Core units (4)		
<u>CMP 902</u>	Law of the Sea	UoW
<u>CMP 915</u> *	Fisheries Management and Policy	UoW
New SPC	Fish Stock Assessment for Managers	SPC
<u>CMP 916</u> *	Fisheries economics and Development	UoW
Additional units		
<u>CMP 914</u>	International Fisheries Law	UoW
<u>CMP 917</u> * shared	Fisheries Monitoring, Control and Surveillance and data monitoring	UoW/SPC
<u>CMP 918</u>	International Fish Trade	UoW
New (TBC)	Environment and Climate Change	UoW/SPC
New	Supervised Research Project	UoW

8. Six of the units are from the existing Master Fisheries Policy already offered by UOW (see CMP unit codes), and two units will involve SPC in the unit delivery. The completion of units of study can count towards either a graduate certificate (4 units), graduate diploma (4 units + project) or the Masters degree (8 units including a project). This enables students to study to as high a level as they desire, given they will often be from the workplace and be juggling social and family issues.

9. It is envisaged that those currently attending the SPC short courses, Pacific fisheries department and regional organisation staff would be course participants. The program will involve SPC staff as lecturers. FFA staff are also able to contribute and could plan for this involvement in work plans. UoW will investigate flexible delivery and use of internet technology to facilitate participation of Pacific Island students where applicable.

Discussion

10. While the need for capacity development in the Pacific Islands oceanic fisheries management sector is often identified, there is a lack of dedicated and suitable taught postgraduate training options for Pacific Islanders. We have discussed the need and proposal with the SPC and FFA and are now seeking feedback from the Pacific Heads of Fisheries on this proposal.

11. The proposal comes with some economies, as the existing UoW Masters in Fisheries Policy would be enlarged to include the current SPC stock assessment short course. The proposed Masters program will be fully available in 2012. This development route does not require new investment to build Masters level fishery education opportunities for what is a relatively limited pool of prospective fisheries management students.

12. A Pacific Island student would have to gain an AUSAID (or similar scholarship body) scholarship for fees, airfares and living expenses for one year in Australia. Can Pacific Island fisheries staff easily access such competitive funds?

13. Discussion with FFA raised issues in releasing staff for a year of leave without pay, suggesting a six month period (Jan-June) studying in Australia, then six months with their national WPCFC delegation in the Pacific as professional experience and then return for the second six month of studies in Australia. There are other such variants for those in the workplace, but all involve additional costs outside of normal scholarship allowances. This would require Fisheries Agencies to seek ways to support their staff development.

Feedback issues

14. The following are some issues we would like feedback on. Obviously there will be questions for us as well.

- 1) We would like to have the “in principle agreement” of the meeting that this joint UoW/SPC initiative is suited to supply Pacific Island Fisheries agencies with suitably trained staff.
- 2) Pacific Island Fisheries Agencies need to assess whether the general AUSAID scholarship scheme is adequate to meet the need i.e. Are there scholarship places available for fishery students given other sectors compete for scholarships at the national level?

- 3) Are fisheries agencies aware of other external funding sources that can be used to support potential students in capacity development? For example, trust funds, sponsorships and project funds earmarked for capacity development. Is there a need to develop specific capacity development projects to promote more relevant professional staff development for the fisheries management area?
- 4) We assume the HoF meeting would like to be the reference point for feedback from the UoW-SPC initiative?