

Information Paper 2

Original: English

Coastal fisheries report card - 2019 update

The Third Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries is supported
by the Australian Government and implemented by SPC



Coastal fisheries report card -2019 update

Purpose of paper

1. SPC will report on changes in the process used in 2019 and acknowledge support of members in providing data for the 2019 regional Coastal Fisheries Report Card
2. Members and partners will be asked to agree on ways forward for future regional CFRC and national-level reporting options.

Background

3. SPC FAME is responsible for producing the Coastal Fisheries Report Card (CFRC), and jointly producing the Tuna Fisheries Report Card with FFA where SPC provides information for Goal 1 Sustainability. All Report Cards are available [online](#).
4. The 2019 Report Cards were the fifth Report Cards under the Regional Roadmap. The 2019 Coastal Fisheries Report Card was third time the Report Card has been used for harmonised regional reporting to report on both the Regional Roadmap and A New Song strategies. The regional set of indicators used for the CFRC was endorsed by the HOF10 and FFC102 with refinements made since in consultation with members and partners (see [HOF10 IP5](#); [RTMCF2 IP2](#); [HOF11 IP9](#))
5. The Coastal Fisheries Report Card has been received well by member countries and territories at the FFC Officials and Ministerial level, as well as the PIF Leaders where it is presented each year. The Report Card has also received positive international recognition as one of the few, perhaps only, annual regional level reporting on coastal fisheries management

SPC 11th Heads of Fisheries (HOF11) decisions

6. In relation to the Coastal Fisheries Report card, HOF11:
 - Agreed that in-country focal points should be established to facilitate data collection for the annual Coastal Fisheries Report Card. Countries are requested are to clarify who these focal points are and inform SPC. Focal points would include the person who endorses the data going out and the person who will compile data to send. HoF11 participants will also be copied in 2019 to follow through with their relevant Ministries.
 - Suggested national level report cards would serve national level needs, with these having indicators that align to country specific needs and goals, rather than reporting everything. These national report cards would be the responsibility of the country and forwarded to input to the regional report card.
 - Suggested SPC audit what systems are in place at the national level relating to Report Card data, including approval processes within countries to provide data from countries.

2019 CFRC improvements and data considerations

7. Following HOF11 decisions, the process for developing the CFRC in 2019 is summarised below:

- National Focal Point – HoF agreed to that members nominate a national focal point for providing input for the regional CFRC. SPC sent a follow-up request for members on this issue; several members provided a formal response.
 - Questionnaire – as in previous years a questionnaire was circulated to all members asking for specific data (e.g. on coastal fisheries budgets and staffing); the level of response was better in 2019 to both previous years (responses provided by 13 PICTs).
 - In-country visits – Unlike previous years additional resources meant that in-country visits were undertaken to three PICTs to collate information for the 2019 CFRC. This contributed to greater data coverage noted above.
 - Household income and expenditure (HIES) data – no new HIES data has come available since last year, but some information from older HIE surveys that had not been considered previously was incorporated into the data analysis.
8. The process above highlights that the CFRC is refreshed with new data each year, but where new data is not available, older data is used. For example, data from the annual questionnaires is mostly from 2019 (13 responses) but also from 2018 for two PICTs who did not respond this year. As such the CFRC represents a continually updated record of most recent data, rather than a snapshot of each year in isolation.
9. Much of the change in data from year to year relates to additional data being available (e.g. from countries that had not previously participated, rather than actual change. For this reason, and due to other uncertainties in the data, the figures must be interpreted with caution. This highlights the importance of gaining good consistent data coverage, and maintaining a time series from which real trends may be identified. In this regard SPC acknowledges the ongoing support of members in providing data for the CFRC

Usefulness of the Report Card

10. As in previous years, the 2019 CFRC was available to Pacific Island Forum Leaders for their meeting in August 2019. The CFRC has been well received and is useful in several ways:
- It raises awareness of coastal fisheries at the highest regional level.
 - It provides a means to report against agreed regional policies and strategies.
 - It provides a year by year record against certain key indicators.
11. As noted, HOF11 also suggested national level report cards would serve national level needs, with these national report cards being the responsibility of the country and forwarded to input to the regional report card.
12. During the preparation of the 2019 CFRC, SPC also commissioned a small number of more in-depth interviews in three countries on the issue of regional and national reporting on coastal fisheries. A range of issues were raised in these interviews, including:
- Data sources, access and quality – issues were raised about authority to access/ownership of data, data quality, data storage, database design and maintenance, different sources and patchiness of catch data etc.

- Role of regional CFRC – considered useful at regional level but less so at national level; time-consuming to provide data for the regional CFRC.
 - National-level reporting – a national level report card was considered to be more useful than the regional CFRC for national level management purposes.
13. The country interviews reinforced the message from HoF 11 about members' interest in generating a national level Report Card as a companion to the regional CFRC. In response, SPC has been considering how this may work, and the potential SPC role. During the country interviews countries were asked how a national card might be prepared; a range of options were put forward:
- prepared nationally with some technical/specialist input from SPC as necessary
 - prepared through an 'independent evaluation of coastal fisheries'
 - SPC support for publication (design, printing etc)
 - Country provides information to SPC - SPC provides a template and prepares the card.

SPC proposal

14. The regional CFRC has been published for several years; it has been well received by fisheries officials, ministers, partners and Pacific Islands Leaders and has become accepted as a regular part of annual reporting on coastal fisheries. The CFRC has the potential to become more useful as data quality improves and a time series is developed. At the same time there is a growing interest from members in national level reporting and the preparation of national report cards.
15. As noted at HOF11 of national report cards would be the responsibility of the country. In terms of operationalising this SPC proposes members to take the lead on preparing national-level reports cards as agreed at HOF11, with SPC providing support through the following:
- **Regional CFRC:** SPC proposes to continue preparing the annual regional CFRC, and seek information annually from members on a core set of indicators.
 - **Focal points:** As per the HOF11 decision, members continue to identify in-country focal points to facilitate data collection for the annual Coastal Fisheries Report Card, with the nominated focal points having the authority to share CFRC data with SPC.
 - **Templates for national-level report cards:** SPC strongly supports the concept of having a core set of indicators, and common procedures (e.g. for preparing/interpreting data) as appropriate. SPC proposes to work with national focal points to further develop the current annual questionnaire into the form of a base template for national report cards. This would have the dual purpose of providing key data, in a common form, for the regional CFRC, as well as the base for a national report card prepared annually. National agencies could add information to the base format to meet country specific needs and goals.
 - **Technical support for national CFRC:** Members highlight any specific areas of additional support that may be required from SPC to prepare national-level CFRC. This would operate as a usual request for technical assistance from SPC and provision of this will be contingent on resources available depending on demand and the nature of the request.