



# 2<sup>nd</sup> Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue

13 October 2022

Original: English

CBFD Background paper 6: First Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue Information paper 1

## 1<sup>st</sup> Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue – Post-meeting FAQ

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## Summary:

The first Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue (CBFD1) was convened on Wednesday 13th October 2021, during the 4th Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture (RTMCFA4). There were 38 representatives of Civil Society Organisations (CSOs) and other Non-State Actors (NSAs), and over 100 representatives from national governments, development partners and donor representatives in attendance.

The CBFD1 was focused on administrative matters, putting in place the foundation of the system for future Dialogues. It involved the participants reviewing the Terms of Reference (ToR), which included the purpose of the CBFD, the process for the selection of a Convenor and Vice-Convenor, and the process for the selection of the participants.

During CBFD1, and from the CBFD1 Outcomes Report post-dialogue written feedback, several points were raised by participants requiring clarification. To ensure these are captured and available for future participants, the Convenor has compiled these points and responses into this “Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)” Information Paper.

### **Purpose of FAQ:**

- i. To help guide the next Convenor and Vice-Convenor in their preparations.
- ii. To educate and raise awareness within the CSO and other NSA communities for better understanding and support of the CBFD process, and as a mechanism to provide responses and clarification of CBFD-related issues, queries, and doubts raised.

## First Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue – FAQ

*Prepared by: Kesaia Tabunakawai, Convenor, First CBFD, 3 December 2021 (updated October 2022)*

### *Introduction*

The CBFD process is new and supported by SPC FAME, as mandated by the First Regional Fisheries Ministers Meeting (RFMM1)<sup>1</sup>, and is planned to continue for many years, continue to evolve to make it more productive, engage more broadly and be more rewarding as lessons are learned. It is not expected that all will be done to every one’s expectations for the first few CBFDs. It will take time and adjustment to reach the balance – where CSOs and other NSAs are comfortable with their leadership, total ownership of the process and the outcomes, and SPC FAME with its role as advisor to PICT members and secretariat support to the CBFD process and mechanism, appropriately within its mandate.

### *Origin of the FAQ*

The first ever regional CBF Dialogue was convened on Wednesday 13th October during the 4th Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture (RTMCFA4), with 38 representatives of CSOs

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<sup>1</sup> A 2-page summary on the background to the dissolution of the CFWG and start of the CBFD will be developed by the FAME CBF Advisor in 2022 for awareness and to help guide future Convenors and Vice-Convenors .



participating and over 100 national governments, development partners and donor representatives in attendance.

The Dialogue was focused on administrative matters, putting in place the foundation of the system for future sessions. It involved the participants reviewing the Terms of Reference (ToR) which included the purpose of the dialogue, the process for the selection of a Convenor and Vice Convenor and the process for the selection of the participants.

In the course of the dialogue and the post-dialogue review of the Outcomes Report, a number of points, and variations of those points, were raised by participants at different stages of the discussion and clarified by SPC FAME. Assuming the same queries and points are likely to be raised in future Dialogues, with new participants coming on board, a documentation of the points raised, and responses provided as “FAQ” is adopted as a necessary and efficient way forward.

Two sets of written review comments on the Outcomes Report and TOR were received and considered by the Convenor and contributed to the FAQ document.

As well, twelve (12) participants from the NSA responded to the survey and NSAs they represent operate in 11 Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). The respondents rated the meeting content highly (4.25 out of 5); and most participants stated that they were given the opportunity to provide feedback when they wanted.

78 percent of the respondents agreed that the purpose of each session was clear

82 percent of the respondents mentioned they gained new knowledge from the CBF Dialogue

The views of the participants in the evaluation responses somewhat helped understand how the CBFD process is perceived by the CSA sector participants.

### *Purpose of the FAQ*

1. To help guide future Convenors and Vice Convenors and the Community-Based Fisheries Dialogue Advisory Group (CBFD-AG) in their CBFD preparation.
2. To educate and raise awareness within the coastal fisheries CSO and other NSA communities for wider understanding and support of the CBFD process and mechanism.

### *FAQ*

**Q1: Do the comments provided on the Outcomes Report and their potential inclusion in the final document imply endorsement of the ToRs?**

**A:** The comments provided, at this point, do not endorse the Outcomes Report, the comments will contribute towards reviewing and shaping the TOR that could be supported and endorsed at a future CBFD.

**Q2: Will SPC or the member governments censor or modify community feedback or issues that are captured in the Dialogue Outcomes Report?**

**A:** Matters coming out of the Dialogue, the final version of the CBFD Outcomes Report, will not be touched by SPC FAME, as it goes as part of the RTMCFA report to the Heads of Fisheries (HoF) meeting.

**Q3: Will the CBFD Outcomes Report reach Fisheries Ministers and the Forum Leaders?**



**A:** The Chair of the RTMCFA together with the CBFD Convenor, together report the agreed outcomes and recommendations to the Heads of Fisheries meeting of both the RTMCFA and the CBFD. HoF decides what is submitted to the Ministers at the RFMM. SPC FAME does not control of what goes to either the HoF or what HoF transmits to the Ministers take forward to the Leaders meeting.

**Q4: Will resources and the process be focused on meaningfully engaging the grassroots communities in countries and territories, and in particular support national processes that respect the principles of Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) and other key social safeguards?**

**A:** Currently, the limits of SPC FAME mandate is to let national level CSO/NSAs know that appropriate representatives will be needed to participate in the CBFD, and ask that they identify their preferred representatives. SPC FAME will be assisted by the CBFD Advisory Group and the Convenor.<sup>2</sup> The agreed process will promote involvement of relevant community groups and support national selection processes that respect principles of FPIC.

The issue of community representative's internet costs for Zoom participation through the days and hours of the CBFD should be considered as part of the above process. SPC FAME has been able to provide some support to local (and often government!) representatives to be able to access internet/better internet connections. Once each PICT selects its representatives to the CBFD, then SPC FAME can work with them on the best way for them to be able to connect. For CBFD1 some joined at their fisheries office, others from elsewhere. This will need to be assessed in a case-by-case basis.

**Q5. Is there a commitment to establishing genuinely committed process(es) to ensure that communities whose livelihoods depend on the ocean have a legitimate voice in the development, implementation and evaluation of coastal fisheries policies and action?**

**A:** SPC FAME is responsible to its member governments. SPC member countries and territories have oversight of SPC FAME activities and work priorities. Coastal fisheries, and CBFM, are sovereign issues and SPC FAME does not engage without being invited by the national governments.

SPC FAME CFAP (Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture Programme) has to be conscious how and what it proposes and how it engages in coastal fisheries and especially with Community-based fisheries (CBF). FAME is not free to act how it wishes in member PICTs.

SPC FAME supports a CSO/NSA led process in country/territory, but this is beyond SPC FAME's mandate, especially as the CSO/NSA situations in many countries is not at all clear, and not without some internal disagreements. SPC FAME can, when requested, assist with facilitating, in partnership with member governments and, as appropriate international or regional NGOs. Unfortunately, SPC FAME does not have dedicated funding for in-country processes. For 2022, SPC FAME will use any existing national or sub-regional level processes.

The LMMA Network remains strongly committed to establishing genuinely committed processes which ensure that communities whose livelihoods depend on the ocean have a legitimate voice in the development, implementation and evaluation of coastal fisheries policies and action. LMMA will continue to work on these matters and is open to discussion and collaboration to that end.

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<sup>2</sup> NOTE: The SPC FAME CBF Adviser to be recruited in 2022/23 will work to identify possible options to help facilitate national level processes



**Q6: Would it be possible to clarify that preparatory time to allow for identification, agreeing on issues at national scale and training for participants attending CBFD (i.e. full national process)?**

**A:** SPC FAME will work on producing a schematic of the process after the CBFD2 input has been received.

SPC FAME is aware that a number of national, regional and international NGO's (through their country members) have been undertaking this role for some time at the national level, with community members and partners being prepared for participation at regional and international meetings.

Setting up and resourcing of the national focal point and the mechanism for ensuring national representativeness and best voice for the country/territory at CBFD is an absolute priority step, that SPC and CSO/NSA communities should endeavour to make this happen by securing funding, either jointly or separately, noting the constraints under which SPC FAME can operate within PICTs. Finding a donor to support this will be necessary.<sup>3</sup>

**Q7: Should international organisation funding for participation be restricted to national and regional groups?**

**A:** Refer to answer to Q5. This is a decision for the national process(es). This issue may be partly addressed using regional criterion for the national selection process which the CBFD-AG will have to endorse.

**Q8: What are the preparatory consultations? Is this similar to the preparatory time i.e. the national processes? How will these be funded?**

**A:** This process would be the responsibility of national focal points whose role still needs to be clearly defined. See also the answer to Q5. These are decisions for the national processes.

**Q9: What do you mean by 'domestic considerations' and does this open a door to include government opinion on participants?**

**A:** The reference to 'domestic considerations' was to capture the reality that many PICTs have geographic and cultural variations that make selection challenging (e.g. FSM with 4 states and 8 language/cultural groupings), and how to get representatives in hard to reach communities in places like PNG or Solomon Islands? The national process setup in countries/territories with such variations has to put in place mechanisms to address these 'domestic considerations' in their selection process(es).

In part, this should be assisted through the development of regional criteria of national selection processes by the CBFD-AG.

**Q10: What are the best conduits for information? What we mean needs to be clear and very practical to make the choice less difficult to assess.**

**A:** Recognising the CBFD is a regional dialogue to consider issues common across some or most PICTs, and while being grounded in local issues/concerns, it is not established to deal with single community

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<sup>3</sup> NOTE: The SPC FAME CBF Adviser to be recruited in 2022/23 will work (with national groups) to identify possible options to help facilitate national level processes



issues. The national process dovetails to filter and regionalise community issues/experiences/lessons for CBFD and vice versa translation of outcomes to community and national contexts when necessary.

**Q11: Can the presentation of the CBFD Outcomes be presented at the RFMM by the Convenor? Currently they are only presented at HoF and no CSO/NSA representatives are able to clarify issues and address the RFMM if needed.**

**A:** The Convenor and Vice-Convenor attend the HoF, and both the RTMCFA Chair and CBFD Convenor present to HoF. At this time, neither the RTMCFA Chair or the CBFD Convenor are present at the RFMM to provide clarification on any points raised on the RTMCFA or CBFD outcomes. Not all matters considered at HoF, including both the RTMCFA and CBFD reports, are sent to the RFMM by HoF. Note that the CBFD Outcomes Report would be provided as an information paper to RFMM as part of SPC's coastal fisheries and aquaculture report to RFMM.

If there is a specific or significant issue that needs to be raised at RFMM for a decision, SPC FAME, on CBFD agreement, can look at the opportunity of having the CBFD Convenor present it within the SPC briefing to RFMM. Note that all reports and presentations to RFMM go through the PIC fisheries officials meeting first, and is something SPC FAME have no control over, and frequently get asked to modify presentations/papers being put to the RFMM.

If requested, SPC FAME, in its role as the CBFD secretariat, can work with the next CBFD Convenor to submit a paper to the next HoF and RFMM to seek endorsement from HoF and RFMM to allow future CBFD convenors to present CBFD outcomes to RFMM. This discussion could start at the upcoming CBF Dialogue (CBFD2).

**Q12: Can the CBFD Advisory Group be co-chaired by sub-regional (Micronesia, Melanesia, Polynesia) co-chairs?**

**A:** Rather than having three co-chairs from the subregions, the CSO/NSA representative in the CBFD-AG is selected from the sub-region to ensure that the Convenor, Vice-Convenor, and the CBFD-AG Chair, are from different sub-regions, so all three sub-regions are represented.

**Q13: Participation: Based on the first CBFD, would it be better to write that "participation is open to representatives of SPC member governments, donor and development assistance community to observe the dialogue"?**

**A:** If a regional CSO/NSA process has taken place before then it is fine to have a Dialogue with government, if not, then they should observe at least part of it. This first CBF Dialogue (and perhaps the next couple dialogues) is one where the CSO/NGO community members are feeling their way around the new process and technology and it is hoped building up confidence and ownership of the process and platform. The TOR for participation should be adjusted after the initial few CBFs.

**Q14: Can the CBFD-AG develop criteria for guiding representative selection and nomination process by national focal points?**

**A:** The suggestion is to be included in the CBFD-AG TOR. When and after CBFD-AG is formally instituted, this part of the TOR needs to be amended. There is an interim CBFD-AG for CBFD2.



**Q15: As the National Focal points will make the nominations based on criteria, why would there be a need to assess the nominations after that or do further selection?**

**A:** At this point with no focal point or process in place at the national level, the text in the TOR remains as is. This section of the TOR will be amended in due course when the national focal point and selection process is in place.

**Q18: The stated purpose in the Appendix 1 provisional TOR for CBFD is a long process – going through the various stages and levels such as HoF and then Ministers. Will the process be efficient and timely to eventually see positive results come back to the community level in a timely manner?**

**A:** The CBFD Outcome, once finalised through considering any post-CBFD review comments, should be returned to participants directly.

At the end of HoF, any new information/decisions relevant to the CBFD, will be passed through participants (and in due course the national focal point mechanism) for sharing with community representatives and the communities. Similarly at the end of RFMM.

END OF FAQ