

CULTURAL AFFAIRS PROGRAMME

Draft Strategic Plan

2006–2009

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1. Introduction to the Cultural Affairs Programme and its strategic plan

The purpose of this Strategic Plan is to provide a clear direction for the Cultural Affairs Programme (CAP) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) over the four-year period, 2006–2009. As well as being a planning and management tool for the programme, this plan is a communication tool for stakeholders and the general public. The objectives, outputs, activities and indicators provide a basis for monitoring performance, promote transparency and accountability, and give SPC member governments, partners and donors a clear understanding of the CAP's contribution to healthier Pacific Island communities.

The CAP is a programme of SPC's Social Resources Division and contributes to the division's mission to *maximise the development potential of Pacific Island people in health, culture and information and enhance the empowerment of women and young people*. The programme seeks to preserve and promote Pacific Island heritage for future generations, and works principally in the areas of legal protection, institutional strengthening, artistic and cultural exchanges and awareness raising.

SPC's governing bodies, the Conference of the Pacific Community and the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA), provide the mandate for the CAP and set its key directions. The plan incorporates the regional cultural priorities identified by the Council of Pacific Arts and takes account of the findings of the 2005 independent review of the Programme.

"Our cultures link us with other Pacific peoples, and with our sea, land and ancestors. They stimulate national unity and self-confidence and provide a constantly renewed source of wealth. Our cultures and languages are a major part of who we are. Yet, with each passing year, they are eroded by growing migration, urbanisation and material aspirations, as well as in the increasing dominance of mass communication and global popular culture.

This represents an obvious loss - not only to our sense of Pacific identity but also economically. We should not forget that traditional industries create wealth and employment while maintaining and strengthening community relations, particularly in rural areas. Trade in cultural goods has grown immensely over the past two decades but often its present and potential monetary value is unrecognised.

We believe strengthening Pacific cultures and languages in the face of external pressures should be a central concern for Forum Leaders. As we suggest in our proposals on governance, the pursuit of increased democratic representation and more open political processes can be managed in ways that are entirely consistent with the reinforcement of cultural beliefs and values. Further it is possible to combine modern economic ideas with traditional and cultural practices to create stronger national economies.

These words from the Eminent Persons Group commissioned to review the Pacific Islands Forum and its Secretariat¹ in 2004 indicate that culture, identity and way of life remain at the forefront of concerns for Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs).

2. Pacific context and challenges

The culture of Pacific Island societies is a source of creativity and innovation, and gives Pacific Island people a strong sense of identity and self-sufficiency in the face of changes resulting from increasing migration, urbanisation, commercial and media exploitation, and growing material aspirations. Although a dynamic cultural identity is the key to a successful future for Pacific Islanders, little priority is given to cultural issues by national governments and administrations. At the regional level, SPC's Cultural Affairs Programme and the Pacific Regional Office of UNESCO² are the only agencies dedicated to the protection and promotion of culture.

Pacific Islanders' intellectual property, in particular their traditional knowledge and expressions of culture (TK&EC), remain vulnerable to appropriation and commercialisation for profit by outside interests. For example, handicrafts and souvenirs are being replicated outside the region and imported for sale as genuine items to tourists to the detriment of national handicraft industries. Music and images are recorded for publication without the permission of traditional owners. Medicines and plants have been patented with few benefits being returned to communities. No international or regional regime has legally protected these forms of culture. The international system of intellectual property recognises individual ownership, is time-bound, and interprets the concept of 'invention' strictly so it does not adequately protect traditional knowledge, which has collective ownership, is held in perpetuity from generation to generation, is incremental and informal, and changes over time.

Although culture is not considered primarily an economic activity, the cultural sector often contributes substantially to national economies through employment, exports and the tourism industry. However, it is difficult to quantify its economic impact due to the innovative, collaborative and dynamic nature of cultural activities. There are often vague boundaries between different cultural and non-cultural activities and insufficient research tools to quantify the sector.

Trade and industry issues are important for TK&EC. Trade in cultural goods has grown immensely over the last two decades and in a free-trade environment it is becoming increasingly important to safeguard Pacific TK&EC. Regional and international trade policies generally lack any consideration of cultural production and distribution issues.

¹ The Eminent Persons Group consisted of Sir Julius Chan (Papua New Guinea) (Chair), Bob Cotton (Australia), Dr Langi Kavaliku (Tonga), Teburoro Tito (Kiribati), and Maiava Iulai Toma (Samoa).

² The Pacific Regional Office of UNESCO is based in Apia, Samoa, and has one officer working on cultural issues. UNESCO and SPC collaborate in areas of shared expertise and common interest.

Pacific Island heritage institutions are characterised by a scarcity of financial and skilled human resources and political support. Institutions responsible for safeguarding Pacific culture are often designed after old-style museums, that is, as places for conserving and displaying cultural materials. Cultural institutions must increase their relevance to enhance community participation, for example, by involving young people, because they offer opportunities for adapting traditions to new realities. There is also a need for Pacific Island cultural institutions to incorporate contemporary expressions of culture and new media technology.

With the increasing pressure brought by migration, urbanisation and globalisation, the need to incorporate culture in policy making has become more urgent. However, at the national level, most PICTs do not have a coherent and multi-sectoral cultural policy.

The principal platform for cultural exchange in the region is the Festival of Pacific Arts. Although the Festival encourages the promotion of heritage and assertion of identity, there is a need to find a balance between sharing skills and trading among Festival participants. At present, there is no mechanism for determining the direct and indirect economic impacts of the Festival or for evaluating Festival participation, expectations and impediments.

3. SPC's response

The “Pacific Plan”, the SPC Corporate Review and Cultural Affairs Programme Review all suggested major undertakings for the sector and the Programme, presenting the challenge of integrating these suggestions into one strategic approach.

Preserving cultural heritage through the legal protection of TK&EC remains a priority for the Programme. A “toolkit” will assist PICTs in amending and enacting the Model Law. Although developed at the regional level, the Model Law for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture is applicable in a national context and, as such, is only enforceable at the national level. Where TK&EC are shared over more than one jurisdiction, the CAP will assist in developing mechanisms for resolving disputes between jurisdictions.

To increase awareness of the economic importance of Pacific Island cultures, the Programme will progress the framework for the valuation of culture to provide quantitative evidence of employment, and economic contribution between urban and rural areas and across nations. At the same time cultural indicators that satisfy quality of life criteria will be developed.

Promoting cultural heritage through the Festival of Pacific Arts remains at the heart of the Programme. Legal agreements to control the use of Festival images and establish a source of revenue will be established. With increasing pressure from participants wanting to sell goods and profit from the Festival, the Programme needs to find a balance between the two activities. SPC will assist in developing a framework for evaluating the direct and indirect economic impacts of the Festival, as well as analysing issues relating to participation, expectations, impediments and lessons learned.

The Programme will increase its use of the media to advocate for the sector and promote its activities in the region. Recognising that Pacific Island cultures have constantly evolved through contact with other cultures and that the cultural environment is changing with the globalisation of information, the Programme will provide Pacific Islanders with opportunities to express their culture using new communication media that are consistent with their values and are a potential source of inspiration.

4. Priorities

The priorities of CAP for the 2006–2009 period are as follows:

- Further development of legal protection for Pacific Island TK&EC. National, regional and international bodies responsible for the protection of traditional knowledge and expressions of culture also recognise this issue as a top priority. The Programme will devote around 60% of its resources to this task over the next three years.
- The 10th Festival of Pacific Arts will be held in American Samoa from 20 July to 2 August, 2008. The Festival will remain a priority for the Programme as the host country has a number of technical and logistical challenges to address.

5. Goal and objectives

The goal of the Programme, which it shares with the Pacific Women's Bureau, Pacific Youth Bureau and Community Education and Training Centre, is *Empowered Pacific Island women and young people and strong cultural identities*.

The CAP will contribute to achieving this goal by focusing on the two following objectives during the 2006–2009 period:

- Preservation of cultural heritage
- Promotion of cultural heritage

6. Outputs and key performance indicators

Objective 1: Cultural heritage preserved

Output 1.1: Traditional knowledge and expressions of culture legally protected

The successful achievement of this output depends on enactment of the Model Law for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture. The CAP and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat will jointly implement supporting activities detailed in the Regional Implementation Action Plan and will draw on specialised technical assistance from other agencies such as the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) and UNESCO. The Programme will also advocate for regionally favourable outcomes in the international debates on the protection of traditional knowledge that are taking place in WIPO and UNESCO.

To achieve this output, the Programme will promote legislative reform, capacity building, education and public awareness programmes, and a harmonised regional system of enforcement and management.

Key performance indicator

- The Model Law for Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture enacted by at least four more PICTs

Output 1.2: Cultural heritage strategies developed

Achieving this output will require the involvement of both regional and national institutions. The Council of Pacific Arts, the only regional body dedicated to the protection and promotion of Pacific Island cultural heritage, and PIMA, the focal point for museums and other institutions in the region, together with other cultural heritage agencies, donors and development partners, must set compatible priorities to enable culture to play a more dynamic, relevant role in their communities.

To help achieve this output, the Programme will provide secretarial and other services to the Council of Pacific Arts, and will assist regional institutions and governments to develop cultural policies.

Key performance indicators

- Continued support for the Council of Pacific Arts
- Assistance provided to develop regional cultural policies and strategies

Objective 2: Cultural heritage promoted

Output 2.1: Artistic and cultural exchanges supported

A major part of CAP's activities for the next three years will be to provide assistance to the Organising Committee of the 10th Festival of Pacific Arts. The Programme will work to ensure that the administrative and financial arrangements for the next Festival in 2008 are well managed and provide a solid basis for future Festivals.

Key performance indicator:

- A well-organised and managed Festival of Pacific Arts in American Samoa in 2008.

Output 2.2: Increased awareness of Pacific Island cultures among decision-makers, young people and the wider community

As decision-makers, including national governments, donors and planners accord a higher priority to culture, governments and planners will need to be more proactive in initiating cultural events, encouraging cultural industries and artists, and protecting TK&EC. Writers and film producers need to be encouraged to produce books and films depicting Pacific culture for wider public consumption.

The Programme will provide stakeholders with concise information about the sector to assist the integration of culture into national development plans and support the publication of books and production of films relating to Pacific culture.

Key performance indicator

- Stakeholders integrate information on cultural statistics into national development plans
- Literature and films relating to Pacific Island culture produced with Programme support

Output 2.3: Encouraging and supporting new forms of cultural expression

The CAP will endeavour to support creativity through the arts by mobilising resources to give Pacific Island artists access to different artistic media within and outside the region. As a first step, the feasibility of a foundation, possibly supported by public and private funds, will be explored.

Key performance indicator:

- Feasibility study on the establishment of a foundation for the promotion of Pacific Arts completed.

7. Reporting, monitoring and evaluation

Annual progress reports and workplans are provided to the SPC Executive and donors, with a six-monthly update where applicable. This is in addition to specific project reports. The Council of Pacific Arts and participants in various technical meetings have the opportunity to comment on the Programme's work. The Programme is monitored annually by Conference or CRGA.

Independent reviewers evaluate the programme regularly as part of SPC's schedule of programme reviews. The most recent review of the CAP was in 2005.

8. Partnerships and resources

The Programme collaborates with other regional and international organisations such as the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, UNESCO and WIPO. Activities conducted with UNESCO are carried out under a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) signed between SPC and UNESCO in 1999. Relations with partners such as other CROP agencies and cultural organisations identified by the Programme's 2005 review are being developed. Because of the cross-sectoral nature of culture, the Programme collaborates closely with SPC's Pacific Women's Bureau and Pacific Youth Bureau. In certain areas, it also collaborates with SPC's Statistics and Demography Programme, as well as the Land Resources and Marine Resources Divisions.

The Cultural Affairs Programme is funded through SPC's core budget and programme and project funding provided by partners such as the European Commission, France, New Zealand, Taiwan/Republic of China and UNESCO. The programme is headed by an Adviser. The positions of Project Assistant and Technical Support Officer are shared with the Pacific Women's Bureau and Pacific Youth Bureau.

9. Matrix summary

Objectives and Outputs	Key Performance Indicators (KPI)
Objective 1: <i>Cultural heritage protected</i>	
Output 1.1: Traditional knowledge and expressions of culture legally protected	The Model Law for Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture enacted by at least four more PICTs
Output 1.2: Cultural heritage strategies developed	Continued support for the Council of Pacific Arts Assistance provided to develop regional cultural policies and strategies
Objective 2: <i>Cultural heritage promoted</i>	
Output 2.1: Artistic and cultural exchanges supported	A well-organised and managed Festival of Pacific Arts in American Samoa in 2008
Output 2.2: Increased awareness of Pacific Island cultures	Stakeholders integrate information on cultural statistics into national development plans Pacific Island cultural literature and films produced with Programme support
Output 2.3: New forms of cultural expression	Feasibility study on the establishment of a foundation for the promotion of Pacific Arts completed