

PACIFIC COMMUNITY
THIRTY-FIRST MEETING OF THE
COMMITTEE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF GOVERNMENTS AND ADMINISTRATIONS
(Nauru, 14-16 November 2001)

REGIONAL SECTORAL POLICIES AND INTERAGENCY WORKING GROUPS

(Paper presented by the Secretariat)

INTRODUCTION

1. This paper is to update Pacific Community members on the status of several inter-regional agency sectoral policy support processes in which the Secretariat is involved, including those coordinated by the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP).
2. SPC recognises that some members of its governing council are unfamiliar with the work undertaken by the CROP working groups, and that there is perhaps some unease that some of this work escapes the necessary oversight of member governments and administrations, or that it may even thereby start to diverge from the consensus interests of member governments and administrations. The purpose of this paper is to make the work of inter-agency working groups more immediately transparent to the SPC governing council, and also to make it clear that SPC's involvement in these working groups is firmly driven by member country and territory views, processes and interests.
3. CROP is a loose arrangement for promoting networking and collaboration between Pacific Island intergovernmental organisations. It is coordinated by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and its core membership consists of PIFS, SPC, the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) of the East-West Center, the South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the South Pacific Tourism Organisation (SPTO), the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the University of the South Pacific (USP).
4. As well as meeting annually as heads of organisations, CROP also promotes sectoral networking through a series of Working Groups. These working groups collaborate for various purposes: chiefly to keep members updated on each others activities and thus avoid "reinventing the wheel", but also to provide a mechanism for jointly developing draft regional presentations, or position summaries, on broad issues where member countries have requested support through one or more CROP agencies. This mechanism is particularly useful in marshalling multi-agency regional technical advice and support for regional delegations working on international processes.

5. Whilst certain international processes are sectoral and do not need the full range of CROP agency input (such as the recently-concluded Multilateral High Level Consultations on Central and Western Pacific Highly Migratory Fish Stocks – MHLIC), others are extremely broad-ranging, such as the regional preparation for the 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development.
6. Progress in some of these areas is briefly described here.

PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL OCEAN POLICY

7. In 1999 the Pacific Islands Forum endorsed a list of recommendations emerging from a Forum Secretariat workshop on further implementing the provisions of the international law of the sea in the region. Although most of these recommendations could only be implemented by national governments, one – that a regional ocean policy be produced – was appropriately addressed at the regional level.
8. This task was delegated by PIFS to the Marine Sector Working Group of CROP, which currently consists of representatives from FFA, SOPAC, USP Marine Studies Programme, SPC Marine Resources Division, PIFS Development and Economic Policy Division and the SPREP Biodiversity and Natural Resource Conservation Programme.
9. During the course of a series of routine and special meetings of the working group¹, a first draft of a possible Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy was developed, and presented for discussion and comment to member country fisheries and marine resources administrations at the 2nd SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting in July 2001, and then to the central administrations of Forum countries through a Forum Secretariat Circular 174/01 on 8th August. Further feedback is awaited before proceeding.
10. The next step in fulfilling the 1999 Forum directive is to redraft the document in light of comments, and a further opportunity for discussion is planned to occur at the Forum Officials Committee in December, before the policy is finalised and subject to potential endorsement at an appropriate meeting of high-level member country representatives in 2002.
11. The discussions leading up to the drafting of the policy have already been of great use during the recent "multi-stakeholder" meeting in Apia (see later), in helping to suggest some components of the Pacific Islands regional submission to the World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) to be held in Johannesburg in September 2002. The finalised policy is planned to be part of the submission portfolio.

¹ See http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Asides/Other_orgs/SPOCCMSG/msg.htm

12. However, a major long-term aim of the policy is to provide a consistent framework to guide the strategic plans of individual CROP agencies when addressing ocean-related issues, to help avoid working inadvertently at cross-purposes and more reliably identify gaps in support to member countries, as well as providing a guideline for potential external actors in approaching ocean issues in the region. Some of the elements of the policy may also provide the framework for strategic action planning at the regional interagency level, through the CROP working group itself.

References: Working Paper 6 of the 2nd HOF, describing the policy process, is available at <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Reports/RTMF28/E-HOF2-WP6.pdf> and the latest working draft of the policy itself is at <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Reports/RTMF28/E-HOF2-IP6.pdf>

PACIFIC REGIONAL ENERGY POLICY

13. At the 13th CROP meeting (22-23rd May, Apia) the chief executives of Pacific regional intergovernmental organisations tasked the CROP Energy Working Group with the production of a Pacific Regional Energy Policy. The need for this arose out of the preparations by member countries for a submission to the 9th UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD9), when some of the advantages of taking a common approach to certain aspects of regional energy issues became apparent.
14. Members of the CROP Energy Working Group, which currently includes representatives from PIFS, SOPAC, SPC, SPREP and USP (with the Pacific Power Association as an observer) consulted to produce a first draft of a possible policy and this was recently circulated to member country energy sectoral, and official, contacts by each agency for initial comments. SPC and SOPAC are currently working to jointly fund a regional meeting of member country Energy specialists, early in 2002, to refine, finalise, and potentially adopt the policy.
15. This meeting would also provide an opportunity for member countries and territories to identify aspects of the policy that could be immediately developed into strategic action plans and projects.

Reference: SPC Circular 05/2001 of 21st September, which described the draft energy policy, is also available at <http://www.spc.int/cgi-bin/lyris.pl?visit=information-circulars>

REGIONAL INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGIES (ICT) POLICY

16. The 2001 (13th) CROP meeting of regional organisation heads decided that the CROP Information Technology Working Group and the IT-PACNET group, being respectively concerned with policy and technical aspects of computers and digital networking, should merge and meet under the title of the CROP Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Working Group.

17. Working through email, SPC, SOPAC and PIFS prepared the first draft of a regional ICT policy and the proposed methodology to assist member countries in the development of a policy that addressed their national ICT needs. That policy was then discussed by CROP representatives at the first meeting of the CROP Information and Communication Technology (ICT) Working Group held at SPC on 26 August 2001. The member countries substantially refined, redrafted, and endorsed the draft regional ICT policy at a workshop on Pacific Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) Needs Assessment and Strategy Planning held in Noumea from 27-31 August 2001. This Workshop, to which all SPC member countries and territories were invited, was organised jointly by SPC, SOPAC and PIFS with funding support from Australia, France, New Zealand and the UNESCO Pacific Office in Samoa.
18. The Workshop of member countries and territories asked the CROP ICT working group to co-ordinate further regional action to have this policy recognised by stakeholders in the development of their national ICT policies. It also asked the CROP ICT working group to further develop the ICT strategic plan that was drafted at the workshop, taking into consideration the information papers presented in the workshop, and keeping all workshop participants informed.

Reference: The regional ICT policy is available at <http://www.spc.int/it/ictnoumea/PICT 1 - Annex I - DRAFT PACIFIC ISLANDS REGIONAL ICT Policy EN.htm> and the draft regional ICT strategy arising from this policy is at <http://www.spc.int/it/ictnoumea/PICT 1 – Annex II Final Draft Strategy - EN.htm>

CROP HEALTH AND POPULATION WORKING GROUP

19. SPC takes part in the CROP Health and Population Working Group. This working group is not currently working on a particular sectoral policy, but is for the purpose of fostering mutual understanding of work programmes, and cooperation between different intergovernmental agencies working in the Health and Population sectors; of investigating member country priorities in these sectors and advocating them to donors; and of facilitating the provision of consistent advice and information to member governments by the different agencies.
20. The next meeting of the Group will take place just before CRGA and cannot thus be reported on at this stage. Water and Sanitation is a major item on the agenda.

WORLD SUMMIT ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

21. The CROP "Rio+10" Working Group was set up by the 12th CROP (Nadi) meeting in 2000 with two purposes:

- to marshal regional support for member country delegations, and the formulation of submissions, to the September 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development (WSSD) in Johannesburg. This summit will be the 10th session of the UN Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD10) and will carry out a review of progress in the achievement of the aims of Agenda 21 since the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit in 1992 (hence the title "Rio+10"), as well as making plans for the future;
 - to develop an overall "CROP Regional Strategy", building on the concept of the draft regional strategy that was prepared by the Forum Secretariat for the European Union Pacific ACP Regional Indicative Programming (PRIP) processes under the 8th EDF, for eventual consideration and possible endorsement by member countries and territories of CROP agencies. The Rio+10 working group was considered to be the most appropriate regional vehicle for drafting this overall strategy because the WSSD is similarly multisectoral and focussed on sustainable development.
22. The Rio+10 Working Group got off to a late start in March 2001 and has since concentrated exclusively on the first of its tasks. The Working Group was asked by the 13th CROP meeting to defer consideration of the CROP regional strategy until the WSSD was complete, since the framework for much of the strategy would be likely to emerge naturally from the final regional submission to the Summit.
23. SPREP and PIFS have jointly chaired the work of the group, with SPREP implementing many of the activities through its role as regional focal point for several donors on this issue, with Australia and New Zealand being particularly generous in providing both human and financial resources. Member countries met recently in a "Multi-stakeholders" meeting, in Apia, and reviewed and amplified the regional submission drafts produced by the working group, and this process will continue until the final submission to the Summit.
24. The summary output of this meeting of member countries was welcomed by the SPREP Governing Council in September, and the chair of the stakeholder meeting, Kiribati, asked that the attention of CRGA also be drawn to the regional submission framework document, attached here as Annex A.
25. The 2002 Summit itself is preceded by several Preparatory Committees, and thus Pacific regional input must be prepared well in advance if it is to influence the global agenda being prepared for the Summit. As well as assisting member countries to formulate common principles for regional submissions, the Working Group will also work with SPREP and PIFS in assisting member countries to develop national positions and submissions and will endeavour, within budgetary provisions, to directly provide information support to member country delegations at the Summit itself.

Reference: Annex A. Documents pertaining to the draft Regional Submission to WSSD are also available on the SPC website at http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Asides/Other_orgs/CROP_WSSD/index.htm and a working paper from a previous SPC meeting, explaining the process in a little more detail is available at <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Reports/RTMF28/E-HOF2-WP7.pdf>

REGIONAL FORESTRY STRATEGIC PLAN

26. The Regional Forestry Strategic Plan was prepared and developed for the SPC Forestry Programme in consultation with the Pacific Island Heads of Forestry, based on the framework that was determined and endorsed at their meeting in May 2000 in Nadi. The CROP Land-based Resources Working Group intends to further develop this document for endorsement by member countries as a Regional Forest Strategy which can guide not just the work of SPC but all agencies involved in aspects of forest conservation and management, sustainable utilisation of forest products or agro-forestry.

Reference: The Regional Forestry Strategic Plan has a temporary home on the web at http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Asides/Other_orgs/CROP_FOREST/forest_plan.pdf

OTHER CROP WORKING GROUPS IN WHICH SPC IS INVOLVED

27. The other CROP sectoral working groups (Human Resources WG, Land-based Resources WG, Private Sector, Trade and Tourism WG, Development Approaches to Peace, Stability and Security WG) had not met in 2001 at the time of writing this paper.
28. The 13th CROP meeting split the Private Sector, Tourism and Trade Working Group into two, at the request of SPTO, thus forming a separate Tourism WG, and Private Sector and Trade WG. It also established a new working group on Human Resource Development. CROP then tasked the re-constituted Private Sector and Trade WG and the new Human Resources WG with programming the two focal sectors (Regional Economic Integration and Human Resource Development) of the Pacific Regional Indicative Programme of the European 8th Economic Development Fund (EDF) under the Cotonou ACP-EU Partnership Agreement. The 13th CROP also established another new CROP working group, on "Development Approaches to Peace, Stability and Security", which has not yet met.

OTHER INTER-ORGANISATIONAL ACTIVITIES

29. CROP is not the only inter-agency coordinative or networking mechanism in which SPC is involved. Others, which involve personal meetings, and not just communication at a distance include:

- Sectoral colloquia between SPC and other CROP agencies; such as the annual colloquium between FFA and the SPC Fisheries Programmes for the purpose of programming collaborative work (including joint input to national tuna fishery management planning and support for member countries at international fisheries negotiations, as well as joint observer and database programming). These meetings usually occur during the occasion of an existing meeting, such as FFC or MHLIC, and are reported to the Forum Fisheries Committee or SPC Heads of Fisheries depending on timing. *Reference:* http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Asides/Other_orgs/FFA/FFA.htm
- Whole-agency colloquia; such as the occasional colloquium between SPC and SPREP under the Memorandum of Understanding between the two organisations. The first such colloquium also involved SOPAC and made great progress in coming to mutual agreement on the respective roles of these organisations in several joint work-areas. *Reference:* http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Asides/Other_orgs/Colloquia/sprep-sopac.htm
- Bilateral agency collaboration. The collaboration between the SPC Oceanic Fisheries Programme and the Forum Fisheries Agency in support of member country delegations at MHLIC has already been noted. As another example, the SPC Cultural Affairs Programme has been collaborating with the Forum Secretariat on Intellectual Property issues relating to the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture. A *sui generis* model law has been developed and a joint Regionally Focussed Action Plan drafted for submission to the World Intellectual Property Organisation, and an Implementation Action Plan suggesting funding opportunities to donors over the next three years.
- The United Nations family of organisations has several fora which promote collaboration between international and sub-regional (in UN parlance) organisations. SPC occasionally takes part in, for example, the "Meeting of FAO and non-FAO Regional Fishery Bodies or Arrangements" held alongside the FAO biennial Committee on Fisheries.
- Consultative meetings between other regional (particularly Asia-Pacific) organisations to which SPC is invited; such as the 6th Consultative Meeting among Executive Heads of Subregional Organisations, hosted by the Forum Secretariat in Vanuatu in October 2001.
- Multi-agency project management meetings; such as the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Program (C-SPODP) Project Management Committee (PMC). Although SPC is not a beneficiary partner with other CROP agencies in C-SPODP, it is invited as an observer to the PMC and occasionally sends sectoral representation.

30. Most of these consultations are held in the margins of other meetings and do not involve significant (or in most cases, any) extra expense. Like any government department faced with balancing the costs of staff time taken away from direct work against the benefits of greater communication, SPC occasionally has to critically review the frequency of the meetings in which it is involved, particularly those overseas meetings to which no additional resources are devoted.

CONCLUSION

31. This paper has presented a very brief summary, and pointers to more information, about some of the inter-agency sectoral consultative activities that SPC is involved in, particularly those which are aimed at assisting member countries collectively with the development of regional sectoral policy frameworks and strategic plans. The list is not exhaustive, but can be amplified by a more detailed out-of-session paper (and published on the SPC web site) if CRGA requires.
32. CRGA is invited particularly to note the WSSD Regional Submission produced by the multi-stakeholder Consultation in Preparation for the World Summit for Sustainable Development, chaired by Kiribati, and held in Apia, 5-7 September 2001. The main framework document is contained in Annex A to this paper, and a complete report of the meeting is available at http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Asides/Other_orgs/CROP_WSSD/index.htm

9 October 2001

**PACIFIC SUBMISSION TO THE WORLD SUMMIT ON
SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT (FOR PROGRESSIVE ELABORATION)**

**Developed by the Pacific Region Multi-stakeholder Consultation in Preparation for the World
Summit for Sustainable Development in Apia, 5-7 September 2001**

VISION

Achieving measurable sustainable development in the Pacific region towards improving the quality life for all.

MISSION

Reinvigoration of the implementation of Agenda 21 to achieve priority outcomes, including from the WSSD that reflect and respond to the people, oceans and island dimensions of sustainable development in the Pacific region.

OBJECTIVES

- (a) To ensure the sustainable development priorities of the Pacific region are fully acknowledged and integrated in the World Summit on Sustainable Development process.
- (b) To secure and strengthen political support from the international community for programmes and initiatives that are essential to sustainable development of this region's people, their environment and natural resources.
- (c) To promote new and existing partnerships beneficial to sustainable development of the region.
- (d) To secure and mobilise resources to build capacity for sustainable development.

GENERAL STATEMENT

We, the Countries of the Pacific region, share a common unique identity, and have a responsibility for the stewardship of our islands and resources.

Our Ocean has supported generations of Pacific communities – as a medium for transport and as a source of food, tradition and culture. Our present, and future, well-being is dependent upon it.

Our ecosystems contain high biological diversity that has sustained the lives of Pacific communities, since first settlement. They contain the most extensive coral reefs in the world, unique landforms, globally important fisheries, significant mineral resources and high numbers of endemic species. They may also contain many undiscovered resources of potential use to humankind.

To safeguard Pacific communities and maintain the health of our ecosystems, in perpetuity, it is imperative that we apply the precautionary approach as outlined in the Rio Declaration, Principle 15.

Overcoming the well recognised vulnerability of island to the effects of global climate change, natural disasters, environmental damage and global economic shocks will be an essential element of sustainable development in our region.

INITIATIVES

Oceans

We are seeking:

- A renewed international commitment to sustainable management of oceans.
- More effective, prioritised and targeted cooperation and coordination among regional and international organisations with responsibilities for marine and oceans protection and management, and relevant national agencies.
- Develop and implement regional and national oceans policies so as to enhance the sustainable management of the Pacific Ocean and its resources.
- Promote total ecosystem marine resources management through capacity building and pollution control measures through further development of policy and program options to assist countries to sustainably manage their own marine and oceans jurisdictions.
- Improved access to survey and monitoring technologies and the resulting products in order to ensure responsible and sustainable use of ocean resources and the completion of maritime boundaries delimitation.
- The implementation of United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea and related conventions in an integrated manner, and support for the development of related national policies and legislation.

Natural Resources

To advance sustainable natural resource development and management we are seeking:

- To further develop and implement legislation and policies at domestic, regional and international levels that promote sustainable management of natural assets, including enforcement, data collection, and ongoing assessment, evaluation and economic valuation.
- Recognition of ownership and protection of indigenous practices and knowledge.
- Access to appropriate technology, data management systems and research and educational capabilities.
- A global initiative on freshwater to improve the quantity and quality of freshwater supply to all communities through better water resource catchment, watershed management, and improved and affordable technologies for desalination.
- To sign, ratify and comply with existing natural resource conventions, such as those relating to biodiversity and land degradation.

Climate Change and Variability and Sea Level Rise

- Encourage all Parties to ratify the UNFCCC Kyoto Protocol so that it comes into force, preferably in 2002. Its implementation is a significant first step towards achieving real and measurable reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.
- Increase international and domestic action in addressing adaptation to climate change, climate variability, sea level rise and other climate change impacts.
- Call for further commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the future.
- Develop and promote adaptation strategies.
- Mobilise resources for adaptation.
- Consider all the implications of all adaptation needs, options and requirements.

Islands Vulnerability

In the pursuit of sustainable development for island communities we seek the following:

- Promotion of mutually supportive social, cultural, trade, investment, economic and environmental policies and goals in Pacific countries and the broader global community.
- Effective measures to address the vulnerability of island communities and their ability to adapt to the consequences of climate change, sea level rise and human-induced and natural hazards.
- Further research and development on the environmental vulnerability index and its implications by the tenth anniversary of the Barbados Programme of Action.

Energy

We seek to promote sustainable energy development through:

- Promotion of the development and use of renewable energy sources by removing distortions in energy markets.
- Mainstreaming and commercialising the use of alternative renewable energy, which are more sustainable sources of energy, to reduce their cost.
- Encouraging energy efficiency.

The People

The people remain at the heart of sustainable development in the region. Recognising social equity for all, including gender, we seek the following initiatives that are essential for their well-being:

Health

- Prevention, control and eradication of threats to health such as dengue, malaria and non-communicable diseases in an environmentally safe way by 2020.
- Effective reduction, prevention and control of waste and pollution and their significant health related impacts.

Governance

- To advance good governance in the pursuit of sustainable development we seek the following initiatives:
- Promote good domestic governance through appropriate levels of transparency and accountability and strengthening policies that are proactive and responsive.
- Improve partnerships at all levels especially with the private sector and civil society.

Capacity Building

Develop and implement a capacity building framework that is responsive to Pacific countries an integrated and participatory approach, that nurtures the wellbeing of individual, families, communities and society and encourages and empowers people to take ownership of processes that affect them. This framework would include the following critical elements:

- Raise public awareness
- Strengthening technical capacity
- Full participatory approach involving all stakeholders
- Strengthening of existing institutions where weaknesses have been identified
- Evaluate and mobilise human resources
- HRD Initiatives to alleviation of poverty and promote gender equity;
- Implement the *Forum Basic Education Action Plan*;
- Upgrade and extend infrastructural services such as transport and communication networks to facilitate sustainable development.

We seek the convening of a ten-year review conference on the Global Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States adopted in Barbados in 1994.

FINANCIAL RESOURCES

Financial resources are imperative for the sustainable development of the region and in that connection we fully support the International Conference on Financing for Development as a key stepping stone to mobilise resources for sustainable development.
