

POETCom: reflecting back and looking forward

The Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) recently published its first annual report for 2012 entitled *Putting down roots*.

The report reflects on POETCom's activities and achievements over its first year of being housed in the Land Resources Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community in Suva.

In introducing the annual report, the chair of the Pacific High Level Organic Group, Prime Minister of Samoa, Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, commented, 'They [POETCom] have indeed deepened their roots through the implementation of their governance system, the significant steps taken towards establishing a certification system for our region's farmers, and expanding the understanding in our region of the role that organic agriculture can play in development, livelihoods and environmental protection.'

He thanked SPC and the various donors who have supported POETCom thus far.

Director of SPC's Land Resources Division, Inoke Ratukalou, acknowledged the POETCom Advisory Board for: 'setting a standard for their governance and transparency in reporting back on their efforts to their various stakeholders'.

The report provides information on POETCom members, the current status of the organisation, and milestones achieved, such as the acceptance of the Pacific Organic Standard into the International Federation of Organic Agriculture Movements (IFOAM) Family of Standards, the establishment of the first POETCom General Assembly, the development of the Pacific Organic Guarantee System, and various advocacy activities. It also includes an overview of projects that will commence next year.

POETCom is also launching its new strategic plan for the period 2013–2017. The plan – *Growing our future* – was developed after a review of the first regional organic action plan and in light of the strengths, weaknesses, aspirations, and needs (SWAN) analysis conducted by the POETCom Advisory Board.

POETCom maintains that its vision for organics and ethical trade is a key contributor to sustaining our cultures and communities, and improving farmer livelihoods, people's health and the environment in the Pacific.

The strategic plan focuses on four areas of impact:

- mindset – for organic agriculture to be mainstreamed and widely recognised and adopted as a solution to many of the Pacific region's challenges;
- production and environment – for organic production to meet market demands and ensure food and nutritional security for Pacific peoples;
- value chains – for domestic and export organic value chains to be developed and strengthened, providing expanded livelihood opportunities for Pacific producers; and
- sustainability – for POETCom to secure the partnerships and the human, financial and institutional resources it requires to achieve its mission and goals.

The [annual report](#) and the strategic plan can be found on the Land Resources Division website

Reports:

http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=371&Itemid=51
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Strategic Plan:

http://www.spc.int/lrd/index.php?option=com_docman&task=cat_view&gid=365&Itemid=51
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