PACIFIC AGRICULTURAL AND FORESTRY POLICY NETWORK WORKSHOP
Raffles Gateway Hotel, Nadi, Fiji Islands
28–31 August 2006

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP
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FOREWORD

The Land Resources Division (LRD) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), in collaboration with the Pacific German Regional Forestry Programme (PGRFP) and the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), organised a workshop to establish a regional agricultural and forestry policy network in the Pacific.

The four-day workshop was held at the Raffles Gateway Hotel in Nadi, Fiji Islands from 28 to 31 August 2006. The workshop was attended by representatives of national governments of Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs); regional civil society organisations, including non-governmental organisations (NGOs); farmers’ associations, women’s and youth groups; church groups; regional intergovernmental organisations; and international development agencies: Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID), NZAID, Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), European Union (EU), Asian Development Bank (ADB), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).
CHAPTER 1: BACKGROUND TO THE WORKSHOP

1.1 Events Leading up to the Workshop

A landmark event in CTA cooperation with regional policy networks was the workshop Agricultural Policy Networking: The Way Forward, held in Entebbe, Uganda, from 6 to 10 November 2000. The workshop was attended by representatives of all ACP regions, including the Pacific region. The workshop recommended, among other matters, that CTA should provide support for the establishment and development of regional policy networks in the Caribbean and Pacific, where those networks did not exist at that time. For that purpose CTA developed the following five-step approach:

1. implement a diagnosis/feasibility study;
2. organise a regional stakeholders’ workshop to validate the findings and recommendations of the study;
3. launch the network officially under the support of a regional apex policy-making body;
4. develop cooperation arrangements between CTA and the network; and
5. develop cooperation arrangements with the third-party organisations to supplement the resources made available by CTA and the network members.

In keeping with the above approach, the Caribbean Agriculture Policy Network (CaRAPN) was launched in 2003. Since then, CTA and CaRAPN have been closely cooperating on the design and implementation of projects in the area of information and communication management for policy purposes. In the Pacific, a stakeholders’ workshop was held in Tonga in 2004. Its outcome was to neither recommend nor reject explicitly the creation of a network. Important reasons for this inconclusive outcome were undoubtedly the under-representation of regional organisations at the workshop and the feeling of a number of participants that they could not commit their organisation to the establishment of the workshop, even informally.

Building from the Tongan experience, a meeting was held in Wageningen, the Netherlands from 6 to 9 February 2006 to plan the creation of a regional agricultural policy network. The meeting was attended by CTA and senior officers of the following key Pacific organisations: SPC, SPREP, Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPNI) and Papua New Guinea’s National Agricultural Research Institute (NARI). The PIFS representative was unable to attend but sent her excuses. The Pacific participants at the meeting had already been exchanging policy-related information among themselves, so were testimony to the existing potential for agricultural networking in the region. These participants, as well as representatives of PIFS, SOPAC and CTA, are members of the Core Group charged with establishing the network.

Among other outcomes, the February meeting produced a road map for the launch of the network. The main steps of the road map are as follows:

1. a regional stakeholders’ meeting in Fiji Islands, 28–31 August 2006, validates the network;
2. the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry endorse it at their meeting in Fiji Islands in September 2006;
3. SPC Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations of the Pacific Community officially launches the network in New Caledonia in November 2006; and
4. the network and CTA sign a Memorandum of Understanding by January 2007.

1.2 Workshop Rationale and Scope

1.2.1 Problem

Pacific regional agricultural policies do not benefit from relevant information on the diversity, complexity and dynamics of current and emerging policy issues.

1.2.2 Beneficiaries

Those who will benefit from a regional agricultural policy network in the Pacific include:

- regional intergovernmental organisations;
- national governments of PICTs;
- regional civil society organisations, including NGOs, farmers’ associations, women’s and youth groups; and
- church groups.

1.2.3 Overall objective

The overall objective of the workshop was to contribute to the formulation and implementation of sound agricultural and rural development policies in the Pacific.

1.2.4 Purpose

The purpose of the workshop was to make recommendations on the establishment and development of a regional agricultural policy network in the Pacific.

Welcome Address by the Deputy Director General, Mr Falani Aukuso
1.2.5 Expected results

By the end of the workshop, it was expected that:
1. participants would reach a common understanding of major current and emerging regional policy issues and processes;
2. participants would build consensus on the rationale, purposes, intervention areas and functions of a regional agricultural policy network in the Pacific;
3. main stakeholder groups would express interest in and commit to the establishment of a regional agricultural policy network; and
4. participants would give directions for the launch, development and management of the network.

1.2.6 Participants

Workshop participants were representatives of the groups who will benefit from a network (see section 2.2.2 above) and the following bilateral and international development agencies: AusAID, NZAID, EU, ACIAR, ADB, UNDP and FAO. A full list of participants is attached as Annex B.

1.2.7 Methodology

Workshop debates progressed from a broad context (regional policy issues and processes) to more focused contexts within which a regional agricultural policy network could possibly be launched. The debates took place in plenary sessions and in working group sessions.

The plenary sessions centred on the policy framework and issues related to stakeholders’ perspectives. These sessions were used to: receive and discuss papers and working group reports; reach agreement on the main conclusions of the workshop; receive expressions of interest and commitment; and make recommendations for the future. The paper presenters were provided with specific guidelines for the preparation and presentation of their papers in paper and PowerPoint formats.

The working group sessions used the inputs provided during the plenary sessions and expertise/experience of participants to focus on network vision, objectives, organisation and management issues. Special attention was paid to information needs and requirements. Three working groups addressed the following topics:

- Working Group 1: Objectives and functions of the network;
- Working Group 2: Network arrangements; and
- Working Group 3: An effective and sustainable network.

Specific guidelines were prepared for each working group and distributed before the sessions. Each working group was composed of participants representing the various categories of workshop participants. Efforts were made to achieve the best balance possible among countries, subregions (Melanesia, Polynesia and Micronesia) and gender in each working group. The facilitator and rapporteur of each working group were identified and briefed before the sessions started.

A workshop facilitator and a workshop rapporteur were hired by SPC on the basis of detailed terms of reference and contract. Draft terms of reference and the contract were sent to CTA for comments before they were signed.
CHAPTER 2: THE WAY FORWARD

Chair: Mr ’Aleki Sisifa, Director, LRD, SPC

2.1 Discussion

The LRD Policy Advisor, Mr Inoke Ratukalou, highlighted the road map to follow in the establishment of the network. The main steps of the road map are as follows:

1. the current regional stakeholders’ meeting designs and validates the network;
2. the Heads of Agriculture and Forestry endorse it at their meeting in Fiji Islands in September 2006;
3. the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations of the Pacific Community (CRGA) officially launches the network in November 2006; and
4. the network signs a Memorandum of Understanding with CTA by January 2007.

The meeting unanimously endorsed the network. Everyone was pleased with the efforts and outcomes of the meeting.

2.2 Recommendations

2.2.1 Objective

The objective of the network is to facilitate communication, information dissemination, capacity building and awareness in order to support the identification, formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of agricultural and forestry policies.

2.2.2 Focus

The focus of the network is to:
• improve access to information and strengthen communication among actors and stakeholders;
• advocate and encourage dialogue among actors and stakeholders on sustainable agricultural and forestry policy issues; and
• identify and respond to capacity-building needs and information needs.

2.2.3 Functions

The main functions of the network are to:
• identify, access, disseminate and share information on regional and/or national issues related to agricultural and forestry policy;
• mobilise and facilitate access to technical expertise and resources of development partners;
• facilitate active participation of civil society and the private sector in national and regional policy processes; and
• establish and maintain linkages to other networks and existing databases and, as necessary, develop information databases.

2.2.4 Membership

Network members will include government agencies, national leaders, women’s and youth groups, the agribusiness community, the private sector, educational institutions, country-based organisations, church groups, NGOs, regional organisations, farmers’ organisations, research organisations, other networks, international organisations, lending institutions and media. Membership will be voluntary and flexible.

2.2.5 Guiding principles

1. Empower communities, including women and youth, to participate fully in the agricultural and forestry sectors to increase their income-generating capacity.
2. Facilitate national policy processes, rather than getting directly involved in them.
3. Maintain consistency with principles of sustainable development and good governance.
4. Respond to requests in a timely manner.
5. Encourage cooperation, partnership, participation and consensus building.
7. Remain relevant to the needs and aspirations of Pacific communities.
8. Be open and flexible, and remain focused.

2.2.6 Networking arrangements

Although the network is to be established at regional level, it will facilitate the development and strengthening of linkages to the international and national levels as clearly indicated in figure 1.

Figure 1: Communication Structure
The network will be coordinated by SPC with the assistance of the Core Group. The Core Group will consist of PIFS, SOPAC, USP, FSPI, SPREP, FAO, NARI, CTA and a member from each of the Pacific Island subregions.

The Figure 4 illustrates the linkages among regional and national nodes.

FIGURE 4: Linkages showing the relationship between the regional and national modes

The networking arrangement will follow the ‘rim effect’ network shown on the right. Member PICTs may wish to facilitate networking at provincial/district and village/grassroots levels. Appropriate communication and information delivery systems will be applied at all levels.

2.2.7 Intended membership

Intended national members include:
- government officers – Agriculture, Forestry, Foreign Affairs
- CROP national representatives
- Parliament / Cabinet
- pressure groups / lobby groups
- private sector – industry (can drive the network)

Intended regional members include:
- SPC
- CROP-SLM Working Group
- relevant CROP organisations
- international organisations – FAO, UNDP
- regional research organisations
- GTZ – support

2.2.8 Resources needed to drive the network

1. The human resources needed are:
   - one full-time staff member at the regional level, while SPC will provide office space and in the interim provide part-time human resources; and
   - none at the national level – the network will start with existing systems.

2. Expertise will be shared by:
   - tapping into national, regional and international expertise; and
   - SPC sourcing short-term expertise as needed.

3. Technology will be shared through:
   - use of a website at regional level; and
   - use of the public communications system at national level.

4. Networking will be regionally operated with enough flexibility for any organisation or nation to seek international support. There will be lateral linkages to related sectors.

5. Financial resources have not yet been costed but the initial groundwork will involve:
   - trying to access non-financial resources;
   - determining the scale of networking; and
   - seeking a cost-effective approach.

2.2.9 Supporting structures and systems

1. Support for members will come from:
   - SPC – hosting website (network);
   - civil society – giving information, getting information, using information;
   - ministries/departments – facilitating the exchange of information at national and regional levels; and
   - development partners – providing technical expertise, funding, information databases.

2. Support at the national level will be provided through:
   - sharing existing policies at regional level and between PICTs;
   - analysing policy needs;
   - designing, developing and implementing policies; and
   - giving critical analysis back to the regional network.

3. Support at the local level will be provided through:
   - implementing national policy; and
   - giving feedback to national and regional levels.

4. External support will consist of:
   - technical expertise;
   - information; and
   - funding.
ANNEX 1: OFFICIAL OPENING

An opening prayer of devotion was offered at the opening of the workshop, led by one of the participants, Mr Eroni Sauvakacolo, Resident Magistrate and Chairman of the Lutu Cooperative, Nausori, Fiji Islands. The traditional garlanding of the chief guests followed the prayer.

1.1 Welcome Address

Mr Falani Aukuso, Deputy Director-General of SPC, in his welcome address, set a warm atmosphere for the meeting by chanting the traditional welcome of the Tui-Tokelau, thanking the gods and the elements for the safe delivery of all guests to shore.

The Deputy Director-General requested that the meeting participants allow him to negotiate his canoe through dialogue. He then welcomed the Honourable Ratu Josefa Dimuri, Fiji Minister of State for Agriculture, Alternative Livelihoods Project and Outer Islands Development, along with participants from regional countries and territories, representatives of regional and international organisations and all other participants.

In conclusion, the Deputy Director-General reminded everyone that there have been many workshops before that said the right words but ended up being empty on action. He emphasised that the current workshop should reach out for the people, especially those in the rural areas. Policies developed in meetings of this kind should be meaningful and relevant in addressing the needs of rural communities in remote villages and in outer islands.

1.2 Opening Remarks

Mr José Fonseca, Senior Programme Coordinator on behalf of CTA, thanked the Honourable Minister of State for Agriculture and the Government of Fiji for hosting the workshop. He also expressed his thanks to SPC for the invitation to the workshop and to participants for attending. He conveyed well wishes from CTA to the meeting.

Mr Fonseca stated that CTA's mandate is to provide support to agriculture, with an emphasis on African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) countries. Similar networks to the one expected to form during this meeting have been established elsewhere. He pointed out that people give of themselves at workshops like this, putting their ideas together, but they also expect to get something back at the end. Mr Fonseca emphasised inclusiveness of all relevant sectors in the development of agricultural and forestry policy. The state, private sector and non-state actors should all contribute to providing information and knowledge to develop policies for the sector. He concluded that if people and leaders believe in the concept of a network, they should learn to harmonise and integrate to make it work.

1.3 Keynote Address and Official Opening

The Honourable Ratu Josefa Dimuri, Fiji Minister of State for Agriculture, Alternative Livelihoods Project and Outer Islands Development, in opening the workshop, highlighted that the Pacific region lacks the infrastructure required to support the development of agriculture and forestry policy. He pointed out the growing need to establish such an infrastructure or network as the premier body for formulating and implementing sound policies in these areas. In the face of increasing competition and the vulnerability of their small economies to global market forces, PICTs are already increasingly exchanging information on policy-related issues, demonstrating the potential for such a network.

Linking various stakeholder groups in agricultural and forestry regional policy processes is vital for the development of sound regional agricultural and forestry policies. The Honourable Ratu Josefa Dimuri applauded the past and current efforts of the working groups of the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) in leading the coordination of regional policy development. Working groups that have been instrumental in both distant and more recent years have been: the Sustainable Development Working Group, comprising all CROP agencies and NGOs; and the Marine Resources Working Group, comprising the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), SPC, Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and University of the South Pacific (USP).

The Minister also noted the efforts under way to revive the disbanded Land Resources Working Group, comprising SPC, USP, SPREP and SOPAC, with the participation of the FAO South Pacific Subregional Office (SPSO).

The Pacific Plan includes the implementation of the SPC Land Resources Division's Integrated Strategic Plan 2004–2008 as one of the principal means of working towards achieving sustainable management of natural resources in the region. This strategic plan provides for regional collaboration in:

- developing national sustainable forest and agricultural policies, legislation and plans;
- developing and promoting sustainable forestry and agriculture management and production practices and conservation; and
- developing and promoting plant and animal biodiversity and genetic resources.

The development of a national forest policy for Fiji Islands is also oriented towards sustainable development and dealing with issues such as governance, fiscal instruments, participation of civil society and industry, capacity building, research, and obligations under international conventions. The policy is being developed through a highly participatory approach, involving all relevant stakeholders at national, divisional and provincial levels, and from sectors other than forestry.

In conclusion, the Honourable Ratu Josefa Dimuri stated that intensified regional cooperation is the best solution for dealing with the four key challenges to the region in response to globalisation: economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security.

He then declared the workshop officially opened.
1.3.2 Presentation papers

1. Keynote address
   - Honourable Ratu Josefa Dimuri, Fiji Minister of State for Agriculture, Alternative Livelihoods Project and Outer Islands Development

2. Plenary Session 1: Regional Agricultural Policy Issues and Processes
   - Major regional agricultural and forestry current and emerging policy issues, by Mr 'Aleki Sisifa, Director

Keynote Address and Official Opening, the Fiji Minister of State for Agriculture, Alternative Livelihoods Project and Outer Islands Development, Honourable Ratu Josefa Dimuri

Raffles Gateway Hotel
Monday 28 August 2006

The Secretary General, Secretariat of the Pacific Community,
The Director of the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Research Co-operation,
Members of the Workshop directing staff,
Participants,
Distinguished guests,
Ladies and gentlemen:

Ni sa bula vinaka, a very good morning and welcome to Fiji.
I am indeed honored to have been invited to join you and also to provide the opening remarks at this week-long regional workshop.

The very first expression of indigenous regional co-operation in 1950 was through the South Pacific Conference and its secretariat, the Commission. However, its mandate was limited to the discussion of programs, not on political matters of interest to the islanders, as the colonial powers set the agenda.

The South Pacific Forum, the forerunner to the present Forum, emerged in reaction to the limitations imposed by the Commission, as only autonomous Pacific states were permitted to become members. However, its efforts then, or now, could not have been maintained without the membership of New Zealand and Australia.

Moreover, even the idea of the South Pacific is only as old as the Second World War, as the term was to be invented to describe the region by the Western Allies. All this in turn adds support for the case that a sense of identity owned by Pacific islanders has reached its zenith in the past at the sub regional level, as one of the defining characteristics of Pacific regional co-operation has been its limited informal nature, as islanders have only been able to engage in region-wide cooperation, such as in the fisheries management and shipping as two examples, when specific efforts have coincided with national interests.

Whichever model or approach to defining Pacific regionalism is adopted, whether from outside or inside the region, each one contains a particular vision of community. Region-building, like nation-building is an exercise in constructing a community.

A regional community may have a variety of members, including states and sub regions as well as from non-governmental organizations and the private sector. The key point is that the members of a community share common interests or values, but the vision of what that community should look like may be debatable.

The Pacific region lacks the infrastructure required to support the development of agriculture and forestry policy issues. There is a growing need to establish such an infrastructure or network as the premier body for formulating and implementing sound policies in these areas. In the face of increasing competition and the vulnerability of their small economies to global market forces, Pacific Island countries are already increasingly exchanging more and more information on policy-related issues, demonstrating the potential for such a network.

Linking various stakeholder groups in agricultural and forestry regional policy processes - is vital for the development of sound regional agricultural and forestry policies. I applaud the past and current efforts of the CROP working groups (WG) in taking the lead in the co-ordination of regional policy development. The Sustainable Development Working Group comprising all CROP agencies and NGOs and the Marine Resources Working Group comprising PIFS, SPC, FFA, SPREP, SOPAC and USP, have been instrumental in the past and recent years.

I also note that efforts are currently being made to revive the disbanded Land Resources Working Group, comprising SPC, USP, SPREP, SOPAC and with participation of the FAO Sub-regional Office for the Pacific. I look forward with high anticipation of its return to full operational status. The Pacific Plan includes the implementation of the SPC Land Resources Division’s Integrated Strategic Plan 2004-2008 as one of the principal means for working towards achieving sustainable management of natural resources in the region. This strategic plan provides for regional collaboration in the:
- development of national sustainable forest and agricultural policies, legislations and plans;
- the development and promotion of sustainable forestry and agriculture management and production practices and conservation; the development and promotion of plant and animal biodiversity and genetic resources.

The SPC Land Resources Strategic Plan also provides for collaboration between SPC, its strategic partners and the PICTs directed at:
- strengthening national capacity to comply with international and regional standards related to trade;
strengthening national capacity to undertake economic and financial analyses of opportunities for increased domestic and export trade; developing and promoting sustainable and efficient post-harvest technologies; improving plant and animal health status in PICTs.

In Fiji, Agriculture is the single largest sector in the economy, contributing some 43% of Fiji’s foreign exchange earnings, employing half the population and accounting for approximately 13% of GDP.

More than half of Fiji’s land area is covered by forest, and sustainable forest management is of key importance for the rural community, and for the development of eco-tourism. The government believes that development of hardwood plantations, and the indigenous logging industry can bring benefits to depressed rural communities. As well as Caribbean pine, Fiji has substantial mahogany plantations, possibly the most valuable in the world, which are now ready to be harvested.

Fiji on 2nd September 2005, became the first Pacific Island to launch a land use policy to guide sustainable development of its land resources. The policy addresses critical issues such as the expansion of commercial cropping on to marginal lands, lack of land conservation measures for fragile soils, burning of grasslands and rapidly increasing deforestation, all fuelled by a growing population and commercialization.

Developing the policy was a joint effort by Fiji’s Ministry of Agriculture and the SPC/GTZ Pacific-German Regional Forestry Project (PGRFP). The policy addresses critical issues such as the expansion of commercial cropping on to marginal lands, lack of land conservation measures for fragile soils, burning of grasslands and rapidly increasing deforestation, all fuelled by a growing population and commercialization.

The development of a National Forest Policy for Fiji is also oriented towards sustainable development (SD) and dealing with issues such as governance, fiscal instruments, participation of civil society and industry, capacity building, research, and obligations under international conventions. The policy is being developed in a highly participatory approach, involving all relevant stakeholders at national, divisional and provincial levels, and from sectors other than forestry.

CTA, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation, based in Netherlands, is providing support for the establishment and development of regional policy networks in the Caribbean and the Pacific and is now taking the lead in establishing an agricultural and forestry policy network for the Pacific.

It is collaborating with the SPC’s Land Resources Division and the Pacific German Regional Forestry Programme and is actively supporting SPC in hosting this week’s forum, where for the next few days, you as representatives of national and regional agencies, the donor community, and institutions will be contributing toward the establishment of a Pacific agricultural and forestry policy network.

As Regional Co-operation and Integration was placed squarely on the agenda of Pacific Island Countries and territories in the past, it will again be required of all of you participating in this workshop. It is highly anticipated that the outcomes of this week’s discussions will bring out regional solutions that will hold the collective interests of the successful sustainable management and development of the Agriculture and Forestry Sectors in our Region.

To conclude I would just like to state that intensified regional co-operation is the best solution for dealing with the four key challenges to the region: Economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security, in response to globalization.

On that note I wish you all a successful and fruitful week, and I have much pleasure in declaring this regional workshop open.

Thank you and vinaka vakalevu.
In conclusion, Mr Sisifa emphasised the importance of:
• policy, which underpins sustainable natural resource management;
• thinking globally, planning and acting regionally and locally;
• consolidation and prioritisation;
• strongly linking national and regional strategies;
• capacity, information, communication and extension; and
• planning but being prepared to react.

Questions and discussion

Tonga Trust representative: Will there be serious policy dialogue in the proposed network?
It would be good if SPC had a survey to find out who helps NGOs and the involvement of stakeholders on policy issues.

Fiji, Lutu Growers representative: What is it like in other PICTs that export copra?

Speaker’s response
• If non-state actors are unable to bring about linkages, then there is need for improvements – i.e., it is not for regional bodies to encompass all NGOs at national level.
• Marketing and exporting vary between PICTs. SPC will try to increase involvement in the area of marketing in future.

2.1.2 Formation of regional agricultural and forestry policies in the Pacific: determinants, stages and decision-making, by Mr Frank Wickham, Human Resource Development/Training Officer, SPREP

Mr Wickham defined regional policy determinants as factors that give rise to regional policies. They include the common perception of a need or a problem as well as the need for collective action at the regional level. In his presentation he aimed to answer the following questions:
• To what extent is work at the national level guided by regional policies?
• To what extent are regional policies guided by national circumstances?
• How are our regional policies coping with change?

He further grouped policy determinants into: economic factors; environmental factors; social factors; security factors; and other important factors including paradigms, donor policies, politics, international and regional conventions, technology and governance.

Mr Wickham concluded the presentation with the following remarks:
• There are many determinants of policy.
• Policies have implications for resources and capacity.
• Policies have established stages and decision-making processes.
• How can our proposed network assist PICTs and the region deal with the range of regional policy determinants?

Questions and discussion

Cook Islands representative: How will the network help education, youth and the environment?
PNG representative: Will this policy network replace national policy?
Solomon Islands representative: How will this network work in relation to forces that work in opposite directions – e.g. forest conservation versus logging companies?
Palau representative: Will SPC or donors be able to help develop policies at national level?

Speaker’s response
• Some policy should be developed to strengthen the involvement of youth in, for example, agriculture and education.
• The regional policy network should only be supplementary and complementary to national policies.
• The Solomon Islands question was left for the working groups.
• SPC should be able to assist in developing some policies at national level.

2.1.3 The Pacific Plan and its linkages to the Pacific regional agriculture and forestry policy network, by Dr Padma Lal, Sustainable Development Adviser, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Dr Lal divided her presentation into five parts:
I Pacific Plan – new regionalism and partnerships
II Achieving national development goals – national context
III Achieving national development – lessons learnt from past regional partnerships/networks
IV Pacific Plan partnerships and network
V Way forward – some thoughts

Dr Lal raised for consideration the need to:
• clearly identify objectives of the network;
• define the partnership, which might involve:
  – a loose arrangement, or
  – a formal arrangement for sharing information, or
  – joint programming and joint implementation;
• determine the overall target of the network partnership and the role of respective partners;
• clarify what level of engagement is desired;
• define the grades of commitments involved/needed;
• determine the type of relationship among the network partners; and
• decide whether to look at two levels of network/partnership – regional and national.

Questions and discussion

Vanuatu representative: Networking that works has common interests, such as in agriculture and forestry. What product are we developing this network for?

Speaker’s response
What is the objective and who is the target group for this network? What is it going to do and who is going to do what in this network? These are some of the questions this workshop will be looking to answer.

2.1.4 The Pacific 2020 – processes and outcomes in relation to the agriculture and forestry sectors in the region, by Dr Stephen Howes, Principal Economist, AusAID

Dr Stephen Howes presented some data on the challenges and opportunities for growth. Data covered: joblessness in male youth in eight PICTs; economic growth among seven PICTs in 1981 and 2004 compared with that in Mauritius; and the number of telephone subscribers in some PICTs compared with the number in some developing countries in Asia and the Caribbean.

Questions and discussion

Jamaica representative: The use of telephone by farmers led to a significant increase in farm productivity, as farmers phone in to order supplies instead of actually going to the store.

PNG representative: There is a concern about donors dictating the direction of development.

PHS representative: In response to the PNG concern, PICTs should be in the driver’s seat. They should develop their own national development plan and then allow donors to come and fit into it. This approach has been successful in Fiji Islands and Tonga.

2.2 Plenary Session 2: Stakeholders’ Perspectives on Regional Agricultural Policies

Chair: Mr David Hunter, Acting Head of School, USP Alafua Campus

2.2.1 Stakeholders’ involvement in regional agricultural and forestry policies: a public sector perspective, by Mr Sakiusa Tubuna, Chief Economist, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji Islands

Mr Tubuna covered the following areas, using local examples to highlight issues:
• the importance of agriculture to the region;
• development of policies at national level – the case of Fiji Islands;
• status of networking within government;
• emerging policy issues in Fiji biofuel;
• promotion of off-farm livelihoods and enterprise
• agriculture and tourism linkages;
• land tenure security;
• adaptation to climate change through disaster risk management;
• biosecurity for agriculture and food production;
• what the public sector expects from the proposed network; and
• issues for consideration

Mr Tubuna concluded by stating that the establishment of an agricultural policy network will strengthen the capability of the government and private sector in PICTs to analyse options for agricultural and sustainable development policy design, implementation and monitoring, and to evaluate policy proposals in an integrated manner.

2.2.2 Stakeholders’ involvement in regional agricultural and forestry policies: a private sector perspective, by Mr Teremoana Ngu, NGO/Youth Magistrate and Chairman of the Lutu Cooperative, Nausori, Fiji Islands

• The Lutu Cooperative has been exporting taro to New Zealand for 16 years and prior to that, bananas for six years. Are there similar village setups that export produce in other PICTs?
• This has been a successful programme, allowing people of Lutu to earn an income.
• If policies are developed but not taken to grass-root levels, then there will be problems.
• Development policies, projects, etc. must come down to village level, and the sooner we get these down, the faster the Pacific will develop.
• Lutu Village has its own rules:
  – Everyone in the village works in the fields and according to a strict schedule from Monday to Thursday every week.
  – All visits to the village from religious, government and outside organisations can only be on Fridays.
  – No kava drinking from Monday to Thursday.

2.2.3 Stakeholders’ involvement in regional agricultural and forestry policies: a civil society perspective, by Mr Teremoana Ngu, NGO/Youth Leader, Cook Islands National Youth Council, and Mrs Papiloa Bloomfield Foliaki, Acting Executive Director, Tonga Community Development Trust

Mr Teremoana Ngu made the following points:
• There is a Cook Islands saying, ‘If you put your hand in the soil you will get money, but if you put it in the air you get nothing.’
• If youth are given something to do, they will stay out of trouble.
• Young people need to be remembered when discussing issues or formulating policies that may affect them.

Mrs Papiloa Broomfield Foliaki highlighted the following topics:
• Civil society is hungry for partnership, information and recognition.
• In the development of plans and policies, a platform for dialogue should be formed so that small people themselves can bring up their needs – rather than the big people making assumptions about what the small people need.
• Who will drive the proposed network, who will monitor and evaluate it, and who is to benefit from it? The network should not be staff driven; instead it should involve civil society and target groups, who will help to drive it.

2.2.4 Stakeholders’ involvement in regional agricultural and forestry policies: an agricultural research perspective, by Dr Raghunath Ghodake, Director-General, NARI, PNG

Dr Ghodake emphasised that agricultural research, science and technology are integral to planning and development in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors of PICTs. Many research findings have greatly enhanced decision-making in policy and development.

Clearly, science-based agricultural research has untapped potential given the opportunities for research, the constraints of the region and the needs and aspirations of its people. More than improving livelihoods, such research could help to bring real prosperity to the people of the region. However, achieving this outcome will require the implementation of coordinated policies and programmes that are networked in the Pacific agriculture sector. Twenty-six of these networking arrangements have been implemented in conducting agricultural research and development projects in the region. Many new and emerging research and development issues need to be addressed through relevant research programmes that are networking at the regional and subregional levels.

Dr Ghodake concluded that the establishment of a formal agricultural policy network in the Pacific region will make an immense contribution to current and planned networking in regard to agricultural research. At the same time, systematic agricultural research will and should provide the necessary impetus and basis for policy formulation in the region.

Questions and discussion

Palau representative: How will the network affect the smallholder subsistence farmer?

PIFS representative: A network on policy could help form a cohesive view for the region.

Speaker’s response

An agricultural policy network will help to formulate a regional view. A network could collect views from individual PICTs on issues that could be of regional importance.

2.2.5 Stakeholders’ involvement in regional agricultural and forestry policies: an international organisation perspective, by Dr Vili Fuavao, Regional Representative for the Pacific, FAO

Dr Vili Fuavao emphasised the importance of policy in agriculture and forestry development. Although its functions and definitions differ, it can be said that policy: identifies what one hopes to achieve; gives strategic direction; defines courses of action; sets rules or guidelines; and can influence the behaviour of stakeholders and the pace of development.

The FAO representative highlighted key functions of a policy network as to identify stakeholders define the role of
stakeholders, the process for policy development and the use of policy in agriculture and forestry development. He identified the role of international organisations in policy development as: capacity building; facilitation through dissemination of information and providing technical advice; impact assessment through analysis of possible impacts of new policies; and review and evaluation of policies affecting the agriculture and forestry sectors.

Dr Fuavao concluded that policy statements should pinpoint the bottleneck and concentrate on that issue; a policy network should be simple, dynamic and relevant. He then challenged the meeting with two questions:

- What constitutes an effective policy network?
- Is a stand-alone policy network sufficient or should it be a combination of, for example, a policy and governance network?

2.2.6 Changes in the Faculty of Islands and Oceans and its linkages to the Pacific regional agricultural and forestry policy network, by Mr David Hunter, Acting Head of School, School of Agriculture and Food Technology, USP, Alafua Campus, Samoa

The Faculty of Islands and Oceans was established at USP with the mandate of ensuring the Pacific region maintains a pool of graduates, postgraduates and promising professionals who will assist in maximising the economic opportunities that its environment offers. The faculty has an applied focus on regional sustainable development.

Mr Hunter presented some of the major changes to the Alafua Campus that have resulted from the establishment of the Faculty. The School of Agriculture has been renamed as the School of Agriculture and Food Technology (SOAFT) and the Institute of Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture has been integrated into it. USP has also made a partnership agreement with Cornell University.

The Acting Head of SOAFT expressed his support for the establishment of an agricultural and forestry policies network. He believed it should put major emphasis on: food security; agricultural expansion; improving income-generating activities and export opportunities; diversification of production and agro-processing; and improving research, training and extension approaches.

The Acting Head of SOAFT suggested that perhaps USP could assist with the establishment of the proposed network, using the university’s communication infrastructure, USPNet. SOAFT welcomes the opportunity to play a key role in the network in support of the development of sound and implementable policies for the betterment of the livelihoods of Pacific communities.

2.3 Plenary Session 3: Case Studies on Policy Formulation and Change

Chair: Mrs Losaline Ma’asi, Deputy Director of Agriculture, Tonga

2.3.1 The formulation of the Fiji national rural land use policy, by Mr Osea Bolawaqatabu, Principal Research Officer, Land Use, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji Islands

The Fiji Cabinet finally endorsed the rural land use policy (RLUP) for Fiji Islands in June 2005, seven years after work on the document started, Mr Bolawaqatabu reported. He covered the following topics:

- historical background;
- land use issues and impacts;
- the reasons for a rural land use policy;
- the rural land use planning process;
- the rural land use policy;
- where to from here; and
- conclusions.

The main factors that led to the development of RLUP were:

- the increased pressure on production to push further into marginal and steep land;
- high soil loss to erosion, which was up to six times more than the acceptable rate in the tropics;
- lack of sustainable land management practices;
- inappropriate use of critical and fragile land such as watershed and coastal areas; and
- urban development encroaching on fertile agricultural land.

The Principal Research Officer concluded that RLUP reflects a commitment to finding a sustainable mechanism of development. This kind of development will create the necessary preconditions to achieve environmentally sound, socially desirable and economically appropriate forms of land use. He reiterated that the RLUP document is evidence of the mutually beneficial relationship among all sectors involved in the sustainable development of Fiji’s natural resources.
Mr Lagataki stated the vision for the Fiji forest policy: forestry development is to be founded on sustainable utilisation of resources and environmental protection. There must be real concerted effort towards sustainable forest management. He highlighted some national obligations towards achieving the vision and some expected milestones for 2010 and for 2020.

Fiji’s current forest policy and legislation are based on the Forest Decree (1992). The Forest Decree largely replaced the Forest Act of 1953 – updating, simplifying and clarifying it. The Forest Policy Review at the time of the meeting is entailing extensive consultation with all stakeholders. New areas within the proposed forest policy include sustainable forest management, involvement of resource owners, non-timber forest products, and resource development and value adding.

Mr Lagataki discussed the role of the different forest stakeholders, including national government, forestry department, other government institutions, landowners, forest industry, NGOs and aid organisations. Other development issues covered in the forestry policy are infrastructure and commodity development, and capacity building.

Questions and discussion

Director, LRD: The last two presentations are interesting as both are examples of actual policy work in action. The issue of integration is evident in recent developments with the Agricultural Landlord and Tenant Act (ALTA) and Native Land Trust Act (NLTA), which are heading in a direction where the two will become one – either ALTA or NLTA or a combination. Is there another policy that draws on rural land use policy but, when it comes to implementation, one would actually be looking at both policies? There might be a tendency to go one way on the forestry and another way on the land. In the future, will there be room for simplification and to put these two into one?

Chairman, Lutu Cooperative: What have we done really for our grassroots level in our villages? In Fiji no one is around to advise them on forestry and agriculture. They are really looking to us to try to find ways to help with exporting. What has been done to help at village level in other PICTs? In Fiji, exporting is mostly carried out by big companies, except for the Lutu Cooperative, a village-level operation that has been successfully exporting taro for 16 years. How will the proposed network give the much-needed help to the grassroots level?

Team Leader, SPC/GTZ Forestry Project: Land use policy is the umbrella policy for all, e.g. forestry policy and agriculture policy. Regulations are needed to give teeth to any policy. In Fiji, there is work on a Forestry Act, which will be followed by further development of the regulatory framework, then a master plan for the forestry sector.

PNG representative: To what extent do these policies improve the welfare of the rural sector? What percentage of donor contribution to policy has a direct impact on rural sector populations?

Speaker’s response

There has been lots of assistance from government and donors to landowners. It has been given both as direct monetary contributions (e.g. $600,000 to landowners in the pine plantation area, and $400,000 to others) and through consultation on forestry policy.

2.3.3 Regional agricultural and forestry policy networks: a perspective, by Mr José Filipe Fonseca, Senior Programme Officer, CTA

The islands of the Pacific have some common interests and problems despite the huge body of ocean between them. Networking is one of the many responses to the problems. There are networks that work and those that do not work. The proposed agricultural and forestry policy network is a response to the complexity, diversity and dynamics of policy processes. A regional policy network has multiple stakeholders; is comprised of people, institutions and countries; operates with structured informality; and is based on social capital. It should contribute to: access to relevant and timely information and knowledge; the generation and dissemination of relevant information; identification, design, implementation and evaluation of policies; and informed, evidence-based actions and decisions. It should also assist in the reduction of communication barriers, in capacity development in policy-related areas and in information and communication management.

Mr José Filipe Fonseca highlighted that policy information is useful where it is relevant, of good quality, accurate, objective, credible, timely, rooted and practical. Policy information comes from: policy research and analysis; agricultural, economic, social and political sciences; local communities and indigenous knowledge; organisations, communities, interest groups and networks; and practice and practice-based wisdom. Other sources include storytelling, self-reflection, social capital and voices of ordinary citizens.

Questions and discussion

Cook Islands youth representative: We help other people in all Pacific Islands by sharing information and resources for assistance; we get more people involved by networking. We need to make it interesting for young people to be engaged in this process.
2.4 Plenary Session 4: Regional Policy Networking

Chair: Dr Raghunath Ghodake, Director-General, National Agricultural Research Institute, PNG

2.4.1 Rationale, opportunities and challenges of ACP regional agriculture policy networks: the Caribbean experience, by Dr Keith Amiel, President, Caribbean AgriBusiness Association, Jamaica

Dr Amiel started with some historical background on the Caribbean Common Market (CARICOM), which was formed in 1973 to foster cooperation in economic and socio-political development in the Caribbean. Throughout the following 30 years, Caribbean agriculture went through some bad times. Foreign exchange from the traditional commodities fell and, in some cases, domestic food production also decreased, accompanied by a significant rise in the food import bill, rural stagnation and more poverty. The continued crisis in the agricultural sector, together with some geopolitical and socio-economic problems, further destabilised the national economy of most countries, with the effects felt both in general and in rural communities in particular.

The combined effects of these events were a renewed attention to the need to strengthen the environment for improving regional agriculture policies and the realisation that a fundamentally new approach was needed to achieve true agriculture development, supported by appropriate policies. So in 2003, a meeting of a wide cross-section of stakeholders in the agriculture and rural sectors reached a consensus over the desirability of a functional policy network. In this way, the Caribbean Regional Agricultural Policy Network (CaRAPN) was formed. Since its launch, its main effort has been to reposition agriculture in the countries of the region.

In conclusion, Dr Amiel reiterated that CaRAPN was conceptualised at a time when the Caribbean was ready for it, in terms of the institutional arrangements and the realities of people. This paradigm permitted the concept to fall on receptive ears and minds. In its relatively short life, CaRAPN has undertaken significant studies and has contributed to enhancing the policy dialogue in the region. Further, it has worked with other institutions to place agriculture on the ‘front burner’ of the highest decision-makers.

Questions and discussion

Chairman, Latu Cooperative: In your experience in the Caribbean, is there a trickle-down of financial assistance to the grassroots level?

Solomon Islands representative: Has CaRAPN received financial support from outside?

Chairman: Are there problems in the network in getting groups running?

Speaker’s response

Yes, farmers are organised into groups to produce certain products. Exporters, for example, of spices and pepper to Australia are businesspeople. The exporter provides money to produce pepper or onions, etc. and also gives other support. As an exporter you have a deadline to meet and volume to meet; you cannot leave it to chance that someone will show up with a bucket of pepper and ask, ‘Can you buy this?’

Yes, there is some outside funding. Outside funding is provided for the first three to four years, after which time the network is expected to be financially secure.

Yes, there are problems. There should be people and leaders at village level to operate the network.
2.5 Workshop Program

Monday, 28 August 2006

8.00 – 8.30 am  Registration
8.30 – 9.00 am  Opening Prayer
9.00 – 9.30 am  Keynote address and official opening, by Honourable Ratu Josefa Dimuri, Minister of State for Agriculture and Alternative Livelihood.
9.30 – 10.00 am  Group photo
10.00 – 10.30 am  Morning tea
10.30- 10.45 am  Workshop Objectives and Programme by Mr Inoke Ratukalou, Land Use and Resources Policy Adviser, LRD, SPC

Plenary Session 1: Regional Agricultural Policy Issues and Processes
Chair: Mr Paul Fairbain, SOPAC.

10.45 - 11.15 am  Major regional agricultural and forestry current and emerging policy issues, by Mr Aleki Sisifa, Director, Land Resources Division, SPC.
11.15 – 11.45 am  The Formation of Regional Agricultural and Forestry Policies in the Pacific: Determinants, Stages and Decision Making by Mr Frank Wickham, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program.
11.45 – 12.15pm  The Pacific 2020 - processes and outcomes in relation to the agriculture and forestry sectors in the region – Dr Stephen Houw, Principal Author (Pacific 2020) & Principal Economist, AusAID
12.15 – 12.45am  The Pacific Plan and its linkages to the Pacific Regional Agriculture and Forestry Policy Network, by Dr Padma Lal, Sustainable Development Adviser, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.
1:00- 2.00 pm  Lunch

Plenary Session 2: Stakeholders Perspectives on Regional Agricultural Policies
Chair: Mr David Hunter, Acting Head of School, USP Alafua Campus

2.00 – 2.30 pm  Stakeholders involvement in Regional Agricultural and Forestry Policies: A Public Sector Perspective, by Mr Sakiusa Tubuna, Chief Economist, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji
2.30 – 2.45 pm  Stakeholders involvement in Regional Agricultural and Forestry Policies: A Private Sector Perspective, by Mr Eroni Sauvakacolo, Lutu Cooperative, Fiji

Tuesday, 29 August 2006

Plenary Session 3: Case Studies on Policy Formulation and Change
Chair: Ms Losaline Maasi, Deputy Director for Agriculture, Tonga.

8.30 – 9.00pm  The Formulation of the Fiji National Rural Land Use Policy, Mr Osea Bolawaqatabu, Principal Research Officer, Land Use, Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji.
9.00 – 9.30  The Reviewing of the National Fiji Forest Policy by Mr Samuelu Lagataki, Acting Deputy Conservator of Forests, Fiji

Plenary Session 4: Regional Policy Networking
Chair: Dr Raghunath Gbodake, Director General, National Agricultural Research Institute, Papua New Guinea

9.30 – 10.30  Regional Agricultural and Forestry Policy Networks: A Perspective, by Mr José Filipe Fonseca, Senior Programme Officer, Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation.
10.30 – 11.00 am  Morning tea
11.00 - 11.30am  Rationale, Opportunities and Challengers of ACP Regional Agricultural Policy Networks. The Caribbean Experience, by Dr Keith Amiel, President of Caribbean Agri-Business Association, Jamaica.

2.45 - 3.15pm  Stakeholders involvement in Regional Agricultural and Forestry Policies: A Civil Society Perspective, by Mr Teremoana Nguri, Cook Islands National Youth Council & Mrs Papiloa Bloomfield Folauki, Tonga Community Development Trust
3.15 – 3.30 pm  Afternoon tea
3.30 - 4.00 pm  Stakeholders Involvement in Regional Agricultural and Forestry Policies: an agricultural research perspective, by Dr Raghunath Gbodake, NARI
4.00 – 4.30 pm  Stakeholders Involvement in Regional Agricultural and Forestry Policies: an International Organisation Perspective- Dr Vili Fuavau, FAO
4.30 – 5.00 pm  Changes in the Islands and Oceans Institute and its Linkages to the Pacific Regional Agriculture Policy Network, Mr David Hunter, Acting Head of School, USP Alafua Campus, University of the South Pacific

End of Day 1
6:30 – 8.30 pm  Welcome cocktail
Session 5: Working group preparation
11.30 - 11.45am  Introduction to group work, by Ms Christine Fung Workshop Facilitator.
Presentation, Questions and Answers
11.45 – 1.00 pm  Concurrent working group sessions
Working Group 1: Objectives and Functions of the Network
Working Group 2: Networking Arrangements
Working Group 3: An Effective and Sustainable Network
1.00 – 2.00 pm  Lunch
2.00 – 4.00 pm Working group sessions (cont’d)
4.00 – 4.15pm Afternoon tea
4.15 – 5.30pm Working group sessions (cont’d)
6.30 – 8.00pm Evening side-event & Dinner

Presentations
Potential role of the HOAFS forum in policy networking in the region – Mr ‘Aleki Sisifa
FAO Networking in the Region - Dr Vili Fuavao
SOPAC Networking in the Region - Paul Fairbairn
Video Documentary on regional awareness on sustainable forest management & related policy issues
Existing regional networking arrangements for forest policy issues – Mr Sainusi Bulai, Forest and Trees Adviser, LRD, SPC

Wednesday, 30 August 2006

Field Excursion
(Includes refreshments and lunch in the field)
8.30 – 6.00pm  Refer to field trip programme on the back page.
Evening  Free

Thursday, 31 August 2006

Session 6: Working Group Reports
Chair: Mr Frank Wickham, SPREP
8.30 – 9.15am  Group 1 Presentation
Questions and Answers
9.15 – 10.00am Group 2 Presentation
Questions and Answers
10.00 – 10.15am Morning tea
10.15 – 11.00am Group 3 Presentation
Questions and Answers
11.00 – 11.30am  Discussions on working group reports, facilitated by Ms Christine Fung

Plenary session 6: The Way Forward
Chair: Mr ‘Aleki Sisifa, Director, LRD
11.30am - 12.30pm  Presentation and discussions, facilitated by Ms Christine Fung
12.30 - 2.30pm  Lunch
2.30 – 3.30pm  Workshop conclusions and recommendations
3.30 – 4.00pm  Evaluation
4.00 – 4.45 pm  Closing ceremony

Closing Remarks:
• Participant Representative
• CTA - Mr José Filipe Fonteia
• SPC – Mr Aleki Sisifa

Closing Prayer
3.1 Introduction to Group Work: Ms Christine Fung, Workshop Facilitator

The workshop facilitator, Ms Christine Fung, briefed the meeting on the mechanisms of the working groups session. Participants were divided into three working groups. As well as being allocated a facilitator, each working group was allocated a topic for discussion as follows:
- Working Group 1: Objectives and functions of the network;
- Working Group 2: Networking arrangements – structure, communication requirements and focal points; and
- Working Group 3: An effective and sustainable network.

3.2. Plenary Session 6: Working Group Reports
Chair: Mr Frank Wickham, SPREP

3.2.1 Group 1: Objectives and Functions of the Network

Objectives
To facilitate the formulation, implementation and monitoring of sound agricultural, forestry and rural development policies.

Focus
- To improve access to and strengthen communication among stakeholders.
- To advocate for and encourage dialogue among state and non-state actors on sustainable agriculture and forestry issues.
- To identify and respond to capacity-building needs and information needs.

Functions
- Provide advice.
- Identify and disseminate information needs.
- Identify and respond to common issues and help with country-specific needs.
- Mobilise and facilitate access to technical expertise and donor resources.
- Clarify roles of government, donors and other actors in policy-making when establishing network.
- Collect, develop and maintain an information database.
- Help to set up an enabling environment in which rural communities actively participate in the national policy-making process.
- Establish and maintain linkages to other networks and existing databases.

Membership
Membership should be voluntary and flexible. It should include government agencies, national leaders, women's and youth groups, agribusiness community, private sector, educational institutions, country-based organisations, church groups, NGOs, regional organisations, farmer organisations, research organisations, international organisations, lending institutions and other networks.

Guiding principles
1. Empower women and youth to participate fully in the agricultural and forestry sectors to increase their income-generating capacity.
2. Facilitate rather than direct involvement in national policies.
3. Follow principles of sustainable management of resources.
4. Respond to requests in a timely manner.
5. Be outcome oriented.
7. Improve on outcomes: productivity, tangible results, improved marketing.

Questions and comments

Palau representative: Did Group 1 discuss the facilitator for the network?
Chairman: Group 1 is proposing the network’s objectives, functions and membership. Another group is looking at who will be coordinating the network.

Palau representative: I appreciate putting the women and youth in the network; also it’s very nice that one of the guiding principles is to empower the women and youth. But how are we going to empower – by doing what? I suggest including empowerment as a basic need of the network.
Chairman: The group firmly believes in the issue. That’s why we have to have support, like political support from politicians. At the end of the day we hope that empowerment will trickle down to all stakeholders.

Vanuatu representative: Is it the role of the network to facilitate the formulation and the implementation of policy, or just to disseminate information regarding policy formulation and implementation? Is the network to disseminate information rather than be involved in the formulation aspect of policy?
Chairman: I think we need to clarify a little bit what we mean by ‘facilitate’. Is it just information sharing or is it beyond information sharing?

PIFS representative: Getting involved in the formulation of policy could be beyond the scope of the members of the network. But the network’s main objective could be to facilitate the exchange of information and capacity development at all levels. So maybe there is a need to clarify the main role of the network, because participating in it will be a part-time job for most people.

USP representative: I question the use of ‘facilitate’. Also, the objective is not really an objective, it is more like an overall goal of the network; the focus is really the objective.

Wallis and Futuna representative: Expanding knowledge is very important. So the first function of the network should be to develop, collect and maintain an information database.
Fiji representative: It is important to have a lot of information and knowledge. But we must make sure that all of the knowledge and information we exchange doesn't just end up on the shelves or in our computer email system. It must have some kind of impact on implementation with the grassroots people.

Chairman: We try to facilitate. We are also trying to help to achieve some outcome – to facilitate information, dissemination, capacity building for the formulation, implementation and monitoring of sound agriculture, forestry and rural development to support the formulation.

Vanuatu representative: I agree. However, if the function is to disseminate information but you don’t provide the information I need, at least you should be able to direct me towards where to get it.

Wallis and Futuna representative: There is a need to be careful with the wording of objectives because we might be asking too much of ourselves. Later on when we are evaluated, we might be seen as not achieving some of these objectives, so we need to be careful from the outset.

Tonga representative: One of the functions was to identify the technical expertise, so we not only access the information but could also be involved in facilitating the formulation of the policies.

Chairman: Perhaps that can be captured under capacity building so the identification of expertise to go in and help the country would fall within the objective of capacity building.

Director, LRD: There is no need to separate the development of the database from the acknowledgement of the existing database in the list of functions. We acknowledge that there are a lot of databases available so we are actually facilitating their development; maybe it’s a wrong impression that we are creating a separate one. Where there are information gaps, perhaps that is when databases could be created.

Chairman: This perspective could be built into the point about databases in the function. That would mean the network can maintain links to existing databases, and where information gaps exist, it can create a new information database.

CTA representative: I agree on the composition of the membership for a policy network, and the stakeholders are very clear. However, the member groups are very different, thus have very different needs. The network should, in year one, have a directory of members and stakeholders.

Tonga Trust representative: There is no doubt now about the need for this network, but please do not make it too complicated. I like the idea of starting with information – whatever information this meeting will agree on – because people in the community are hungry for information.

SOPAC representative: You highlighted the differences and the different needs that are going to exist between your sectors. That’s an important factor. But there may be some value in trying to address commonality and also individually address the sectors. You need to focus on what you want to do.

3.2.2 Group 2: Network Arrangements

Assumptions

The group:
- agreed that the network should be established;
- identified the need for the structure to be at least visualised in order to identify the critical nodes and relevant communication methods; and
- acknowledged the importance of using existing networks.

Key parameters

The following key parameters were identified as critical:
- Network components may need to be established, developed or, in some cases, remodelled at national, provincial/district and local/village/grassroots levels.
- At the regional level there will be a need to integrate and acknowledge established linkages and networks.
- Further key linkage flow inputs – policy, education and networking – will be based on the links among international, regional, national, provincial/district and local/village/grassroots levels.
- Policies made at the national level will need to be conveyed to the provincial/district level, through education, etc.
- There will be a responsibility to convey the implementation of the policies undertaken at the provincial/district level to the local/village/grassroots level, through education (and translation where necessary).
- Activities at the local/village/grassroots level will involve networking, implementation and communicating back through to relevant interested parties.

The flowchart as shown in Figure 2 demonstrates the individual nodes and communication linkages identified. Note that for the delivery of an ‘efficient level of service’, the network needs to be open and flexible.

![Figure 2: Communication Structure](image-url)
Existing networks/structures

It is important to utilise existing networks, which will require:
- identifying existing networks; and
- evaluating existing networks and their appropriateness.

Communication needs to be appropriate at different levels of the network:
- Local/village/grassroots level
  - Meetings, workshops, awareness
  - Field days, agricultural shows, World Food Day
  - Radio, TV
  - Telephone, mobile phone
  - Newspaper, leaflets
  - Storytelling
- Provincial/district level
  - (as above, plus)
  - Efficient extension services
  - Letters, email, facsimile
- National level
  - (as above, more formally, plus)
  - Bilateral meetings
- Regional level
  - (as relevant above, plus)
  - CROP Sustainable Land Management (SLM) Working Group
  - Meetings of Heads of Agriculture and Forestry
  - Websites
  - Communiqué
  - Projects

Questions and comments

**Solomon Islands representative:** I suggest that research and development institutions like USP, NARI, etc. should come into the network.

**Director, LRD:** There will be a long list of members but some will be more active than others. There will be some leaders and some drivers of the network – these particular members were previously referred to as actors rather than just general stakeholders.

**Caribbean representative:** Passing information through too many levels could be dangerous because information changes as it passes from level to level. The idea of the network is that information will be free rather than controlled by a political objective.

**Chairman:** At some time in any communication arrangement, the focal point can be a bottleneck in the flow of information. The Group 2 flowchart is good because people can now use it to link to a range of other information sources – producing ‘structured informality’.

**Kiribati representative:** The channel of communication is often a problem as information can end up with the wrong contact point. For example, if information goes to Foreign Affairs, it can sit there for a long time. Information should instead go fast to end-users.

**Policy Advisor, LRD:** In a situation such as the one the Kiribati representative has identified, communication should be with the stakeholder directly and copied to Foreign Affairs.

**Palau representative:** Having a focal point like the SPC women’s office in Palau is a good system. You will know someone is there to receive your communication, and if you don’t get a response on time, then you know who to contact.

**Tonga Trust representative:** Each country should be allowed to come up with their focal point. It should not just be government focal points – civil society organisation offices are in some of the island nations.

**Solomon Islands representative:** We all understand our geographical isolation problem. At the end of the day we want the network to reach down to grassroots. What type of network do we have in mind? Is it an email network? If we have a working network, it should empower people and not just collect dust, like we have talked about from day one.

**CTA representative:** There should be incentives for youth to participate. They should be seen not just as problems but as resources, as they will make an essential contribution to the network.

**PIFS representative:** We should check out other existing networks; we should improve and build on those that are working. If the network is not functioning well, we need to be able to identify how it can be strengthened.

**SOPAC representative:** It is much easier if communication is just at one level, as then all should have equal and easy access to the network. Wherever it is based – say, at SPC – it should reach right down to the community level.
Delegates raised issues such as funding and staffing, facilities (including computers), keeping the network simple, how to consolidate existing networks and communication systems, and focusing on first establishing the network at the national and regional levels.

### 3.2.3 Supporting Structure and Systems

#### Member’s role

- **Possible Members**
  - Ministers/Department of Agroculture and Forestry (member PICTs), with flexibility of nominations
  - Donors, collaborators, international and regional organisations
  - Civil society - producers, traders, processors, private sector, NGOs, media

- **Two Network layers**
  - 1. Regional
  - 2. National

- **Facilitator**
  - SPC

#### Resources needed to drive the network

- **Human Resources**
  - Regional: one full-time staff member
  - National: existing systems

- **Sharing Expertise**
  - Tap into regional expertise
  - SPC to source short-term expertise as needed

- **Sharing Technology**
  - Regional: use of website
  - National: use of public communications system

- **Networking Regionally and Internationally**
  - Regional operated with enough flexibility for any organisation or PICT to seek international support

- **Financial Resources**
  - Group decided not to cost - try to access non-financial resources initially

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*Figure 3: An Effective Systems Network*
Support for members will come from:
• SPC – hosting the website (network);
• civil society – giving information, getting information, using information;
• ministries/departments – facilitating the exchange of information at national and regional levels; and
• donors – providing technical expertise, funding and information databases.

Support at the national level will be provided through:
• sharing existing policies at regional level and between PICTs;
• analysing policy needs;
• designing, developing and implementing policies; and
• giving critical analysis back to the regional network.

Local support will be provided through:
• implementing national policy; and
• giving feedback to national and regional levels.

External support will consist of:
• technical expertise;
• a database of information; and
• funding.

Questions and comments

Chairman: Like previous presenters, this group has suggested that SPC coordinate the network. In this way we would start within our means without the need for too many additional resources.

NARI representative: Group 3 made their presentation based on assumptions, as there were lots of unknowns while the topic was discussed.

RMI representative: For the network to be successful, it is necessary to apply the KISS principle – keep it short and sexy. This network might also be married to other successful existing networks.

Solomon Islands representative: Perhaps, once the network is established, there could be a review later in the year to fill any gaps that emerge.

Caribbean representative: We cannot get away from looking at financing. It is important to set up facilities such as Internet cafés and computers. Information should not be linked within government departments as this may make it harder for private sector and village level to access it.

Tonga Trust representative: We need to identify network drivers before looking at funding. It’s a long time yet before most PICTs are ready for computer technology at the village level.

Sanma representative: The network will link well with the Market Information System (MIS).

Chairman: SPC will later propose that the network have MIS, as one of its recommendations for the network.

Pacific Conference of Churches representative: To be effective, the network must be built on a positive note and have a vision to work towards.

PIFS representative: I suggest a two-faceted approach – i.e. a regional network to supply information and a national network to identify the best type of network for each PICT.

NARI representative: There are to be two networks, regional and national.

Palau representative: A network at the international level is available if needed, but for now we are just looking at regional and national levels.

USP representative: As a full-time person is needed, resources need to include seeding funding.

NARI representative: This forum must assign a full-time person to look after the network fully rather than half-heartedly.

Director, LRD: SPC, with its current capacity plus a few additional resources, can handle the network. SPC is ready to start this network small and simple, then build on it.

Tonga Trust representative: This meeting should give its support to SPC to start the network. I suggest adding the local level to the national and regional levels, so that the network operates at three levels.

ADB representative: We need to take stock of existing communication systems and networks and consider how to consolidate those before we talk about funding.

Sanma representative: Will PICT members be paying the subscription rather than individuals?

Tonga representative: The local level needs to be strengthened. That is, we should establish linkages and identify gaps first before linking into the regional (SPC-based) organisation.

PNG representative: This network is important. How will it improve our local areas? How will it help?

Federated States of Micronesia representative: What will the network do to solve local issues and issues concerning national agriculture and forestry? Finding these kinds of resolutions may not be easy in FSM due to systems of national and state governments in relation to policy.
ANNEX 4: FIELD EXCURSION

The field-trip programme consisted of visits to the following sites:

- Malolo, Nadi – examples of unsuitable/unplanned land development;
- Sigatoka Valley – agricultural exporters in the ‘salad bowl’ of Fiji Islands;
- Nayawa Village – community socio-economic development, village clans working with the tourism industry; and
- Nabou Pine Station – operations of the pine industry in Fiji Islands.
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ANNEX 6: ACRONYMS

ACP  African, Caribbean and Pacific countries
AusAID  Australian Agency for International Development
ACIAR  Australian Centre for International Agriculture Research
ADB  Asian Development Bank
CTA  Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation
CaRAPN  Caribbean Agriculture Policy Network
CRGA  Committee of Representatives of Government Administrations of the Pacific Community
CROP  Council of Regional Organisation in the Pacific
DSAP  Development of Sustainable Agriculture in the Pacific
EU  European Union
FAO  Food and Agriculture Organisation
FFA  Forum Fisheries Agency
FSPI  Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International
GTZ  Deutsche Gesellschaft fuer Technische Zusammenarbeit GmbH
       (German Technical Cooperation Agency)
LRD  Land Resources Division
NARI  PNG National Agricultural Research Institute
NZAID  New Zealand Agency for International Development
PGRFP  SPC / GTZ Pacific German Regional Forestry Project
PICTs  Pacific Island Countries and Territories
PIFS  Pacific Island Forum Secretariat
SLM  Sustainable Land Management
SOAFT  School of Agriculture and Food Technology
SOPAC  Secretariat for the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission
SPC  Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPSO  FAO South Pacific Subregional Office
SPREP  Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
UNDP  United Nations Development Programme
ANNEX 7: WORKSHOP CLOSING AND EVALUATION

7.1 Evaluation Summary

Number of responses: 11 (out of 22)
Stakeholders: Government, non-governmental, private sector, regional institutes
Countries: Cook Islands, Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu

7.2 Overall Assessment

The majority felt that the workshop was an overall success and the establishment of the network was very pertinent to the needs of the Pacific Island countries.

Some comments are as follows:
· I would like to thank the coordinators and the funding agencies of this workshop and hope that this is not the end but will continue for a long time
· Very pleased with the commitment of the staff of SPC, CTA, and GTZ and especially the secretariat for the efforts they put in making this workshop successful
· Mr Aleki, this region needs this sort of system to assist in directing the shaky and confused states like the Solomon Islands back on track. This approach is the only way forward for our vulnerable states
· Learning and sharing with donor agencies and partners I thought assured me that we are all working for the same causes which is to support and assist people in our own perspective countries as well as globally, to promote sustainable human development in all areas of live.

7.3 Planning And Management

Overall, the meeting was found to be “good” to “very good” with the organisation said to be “excellent” and “well carried out”. A participant stated, “The direction of the workshop was well understood and accepted. It makes it more fun, interesting, and clear to implement”.

For the meeting proceedings, there were calls for more active contributions from the participants during plenary sessions and better facilitation towards this. Most felt that there was not enough time for the in-depth plenary discussions of presentations (including the group work presentations).

7.3.1 Participants

· Highly commended was the participation of a wide spectrum of stakeholders coming from different levels (policy makers, senior and junior officers from the government, NGO’s, village leaders, youths, church representative etc). A comment stated, “The broad representations from a good number of countries at the workshop indicated commitment to ensure all island states in the region are aware and understand the proposed network”.
· There was a stronger presence of CROP and other regional agencies, compared to the Tonga 2004 meeting, and this contributed towards the success of the workshop proceedings and outcomes.
· There were a few added recommendations for future participants:
  - Invite the Ministers/cabinet members who are in the policy decision-making body to get their endorsement on budget and also with other plan of actions for implementation
  - More private sector / stakeholder entities need to be involved. A higher percentage of grant funding will go directly to this group ad not to governments. Government policies must be goal aligned (and indeed driven) with the private sector interests in mind for sustainability

7.3.2 Organisation

· The organisation of the workshop was rated “very good” and the workshop coordinator was complimented on his excellent work.
· Concerning accommodation, there were complaints from the early arrivals that upon checking in at Raffles Hotel, they had to wait 3 – 4 hours in the lobby whilst their rooms were prepared.
7.3.3 Plenary sessions

- The feedback revealed that the plenary sessions could have been better directed and facilitated to promote active discussions. There was not enough participant involvement with only the same few people contributing.

- Also raised was the need for more discussion time. Comments on these include:
  - Detailed discussions on certain issues need to be encouraged though I understand the time allocated for this sometimes does not allow us
  - Perhaps the meeting could use an additional day, if country perspectives were presented and if more discussions were allowed. I think the workshop would benefit a lot from more deliberations.

7.3.4 Presentations

- The presentations from all the different agencies and countries were found to be “very informative”, “relevant”, and “useful for the purpose of the workshop”. A participant commented that “the observers’ expertise in sharing their experiences via presentations and discussions i.e. SPC, SPREP, FAO, AusAID etc.” was very valuable and insightful. Before these presentations, participants were largely unaware of the types of networks in the region.

- Most felt that the Pacific countries could learn valuable lessons from the experience of networks existing in the region and internationally. The exchange of information amongst regional countries (such as the Policy on Rural Land Use in Fiji) was also a useful session.

- The presentation on the Caribbean network was seen by many to provide useful information and lessons for the establishment and running of the Pacific network. A participant stated, “the Caribbean experience is so comprehensive and made it easy for our region to relate to…it is to some extent valuable to us and could be our way forward”.

- Many felt more time was needed to hear and discuss the experiences from other organisations and countries - “not all countries in the region are on the same stage of development and I find it interesting listening to other countries experiences”. A few said that they would have liked more time to “pick the brains of the Jamaican” concerning the Caribbean network.

7.3.5 Field Tour

The field trip was said to be well organised with useful information shared regarding the Fiji experience. A recommendation put forward stated, “If in the near future a similar workshop is held, two days will be ideal - to visit local markets, village people, and etc”.

7.4 Purpose & Expected Results

7.4.1 Overall Comments on the Network

- There was full agreement on the need and importance of such a network in the Pacific and the need to get this network off the ground as soon as possible. Comments on this:
  - There was general consensus on the need to improve communication within the region and a willingness to work towards this
  - The concept of networking works quite well amongst any group with common cause and interests. Our group proved that, and thanks to you all (the organizing group) for a job well done.

- It was recognised that this regional effort could influence and contribute to policy processes and promote the involvement of a wide sector of stakeholders, including women and youths. The inclusion of Forestry was seen as important, as it closely links with agriculture policies. Some comments are as follows:
  - This is a tool that we could use to align our policies and even convince our political masters on the benefits this network will bring…I am conveying my country’s commitment to support this proposal (Solomon Islands)
  - The network would facilitate in linking major groups like farmers/entrepreneurs to policy information

- There was concern that there had been “no prior consultation at national level to inform governments and stakeholders”.

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7.5 Issues not addressed & relevant topics to be added

- There was general agreement that the workshop had covered most of the issues needed for the establishment of the network.
- There was a comment that some important issues pertaining to the functioning of the network were not defined. These issues are:
  - A leader implementer was not specifically identified
  - Persons/officers in individual territories who would act as nodes were not identified
  - Mechanisms for local persons and groups to exchange information were not worked out
  - There could be a problem of computer literacy at the local level. Training component needs to be included
  - The type of website to be developed and links to international databases was not identified
- Some participants suggested a review of the network be carried out later and there was a recommendation for a yearly monitoring and evaluation of the network through a follow up workshop for the first 3 years.
- An issue that was raised for future discussion was the network’s contribution towards assisting individual countries in implementing regional and national plans such as the Pacific Plan, the National Development Plans, the obligations under EU/ACP, and other regional and international commitments. Similarly to be determined, the countries’ contribution towards this network (what, how much, how long etc.).
- There was a comment on the more specific issue of sustainable production. This stated, “The essential elements that must work together for planning sustainable production must have an input. Many were present but the checklist should include:
  - Financial institutions
  - Research and development entities
  - Farmers / Growers / Producers
  - Processors
  - Branders (intellectual property rights) and advertising experts
  - Marketers and distributors
  - End users of products (local and international)

In fact, another participant highlighted this issue of production saying, “The other stages like packaging, and marketing stages are our goal” (as shown in the Caribbean network presentation).”

7.6 Closing

Everybody who was present at the closing ceremony was given the opportunity to make a final remark. Participants and others thanked SPC, CTA, GTZ, FAO and other organisations for their efforts in making the workshop a success. All expressed full support and pledged their commitment to playing their part to advance the Pacific Agricultural and Forestry Policy Network.

The Director of LRD, Mr ‘Aleki Sisifa, thanked everyone for attending and contributing to the formation of the network. He stated that although SPC had been doing work in the area of networking before, it had not been in any organised manner and he personally thought this network would be a major step forward for SPC. He was pleased to have developed and strengthened linkages with PICTs and with other regional and international organisations. He conveyed appreciation and gratitude to PIFS, SPREP, SOPAC, USP and FAO for their participation. He also thanked representatives from other institutions such as ADB-SPSO, NARI, WWF and PCC.

The Director of LRD congratulated all participants as the foundation group of the network. He pledged that LRD will do its part to ensure that the network will work for all and reminded the group that the network will only succeed if everyone contributes and maintains a positive attitude.

The Director of LRD closed the meeting with a prayer.