



Australian Government

**Australian Centre for
International Agricultural Research**

ACIAR Pacific Crops Program

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AUSTRALIAN CENTRE FOR INTERNATIONAL AGRICULTURAL RESEARCH



ACIAR's program in the Pacific

- Works in Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu
- Through regional and international organizations where appropriate
- Establish partnerships linking Australian and partner country expertise in problem-solving research
- Implementation at 'pilot' level
- Hand over wider 'development' to governments and other agencies

*Coco-wood Project Planning Workshop
SPC, Suva; 30 July 2012*





ACIAR's program in the Pacific

R&D and capacity building to address three areas (based on priorities of SPC-LRD)

1. improved food and nutritional security;
2. integrated and sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry resources management and development; and
3. improved biosecurity and increased trade in agriculture and forestry products

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ACIAR's Pacific Crops program

- In addition to Fisheries and Forestry projects, ACIAR currently has some 20 projects and small research activities in the area of horticulture and agriculture
- Summarised in table circulated to participants
- More details on www.aciar.gov.au
 - see Annual Operating Plan

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Classical model of ACIAR projects

- Identify a ‘researchable issue’ (often demanding biophysical research – e.g. in crop protection or production agronomy)
- Priority of Australia and national partner country/organization
- Australian expertise available
- Focused, uni-disciplinary project
- “solve the problem and move on”

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New initiatives – broader approaches

- **Longer-term, ‘programmatic’ approach**
 - **PC/2010/090**
Strengthening integrated crop management research in the Pacific Islands in support of sustainable intensification of high-value crop production
 - **With SPC, UQ, AVRDC, Fiji-MPI, SI-MAL, Samoa-MAF et al.**
 - **Closely linked with FAO TCPs**
 - **Improved diagnostics, Plant Clinics, diagnostic research and IPM**

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New initiatives – broader approaches

- Adding the market focus and ‘business’ dimension...
- Often involving private sector players and private-public partnerships





New initiatives – broader approaches

- **For instance, adding the ‘business’ dimension to vegetable R&D**
 - **PARDI PRA/2011/003**
Developing an integrated participatory guarantee system for high-value vegetable crops.
 - **PARDI PRA 2012.01**
Evaluating protected cultivation and irrigation technologies for improving climate resilience of vegetable production systems





PC/2008/003 Strengthening the Fiji papaya industry through applied research and information dissemination

- **Private-public partnership**
NWC & KokoSiga (Fj) Ltd, SPC, Fiji-MPI, Qld-DEEDI
- **Tackle problems wherever they occur along the supply chain**
 - Genetic resources – diversify? Seed system?
 - Lumps in fruit – plant nutrition?
 - Organic production – methods and costs?
 - Post-harvest handling – how to improve?
 - Links to markets – sea freight instead of air freight?

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New initiatives – broader approaches

- Value chain analysis
- A major feature of our Pacific Agribusiness Research-for-development Initiative (PARDI)
- Fitting together the pieces
- With SPC, FACT/IACT, EU-AAACP, AusAID-PHAMA, AusAID-MDF et al.

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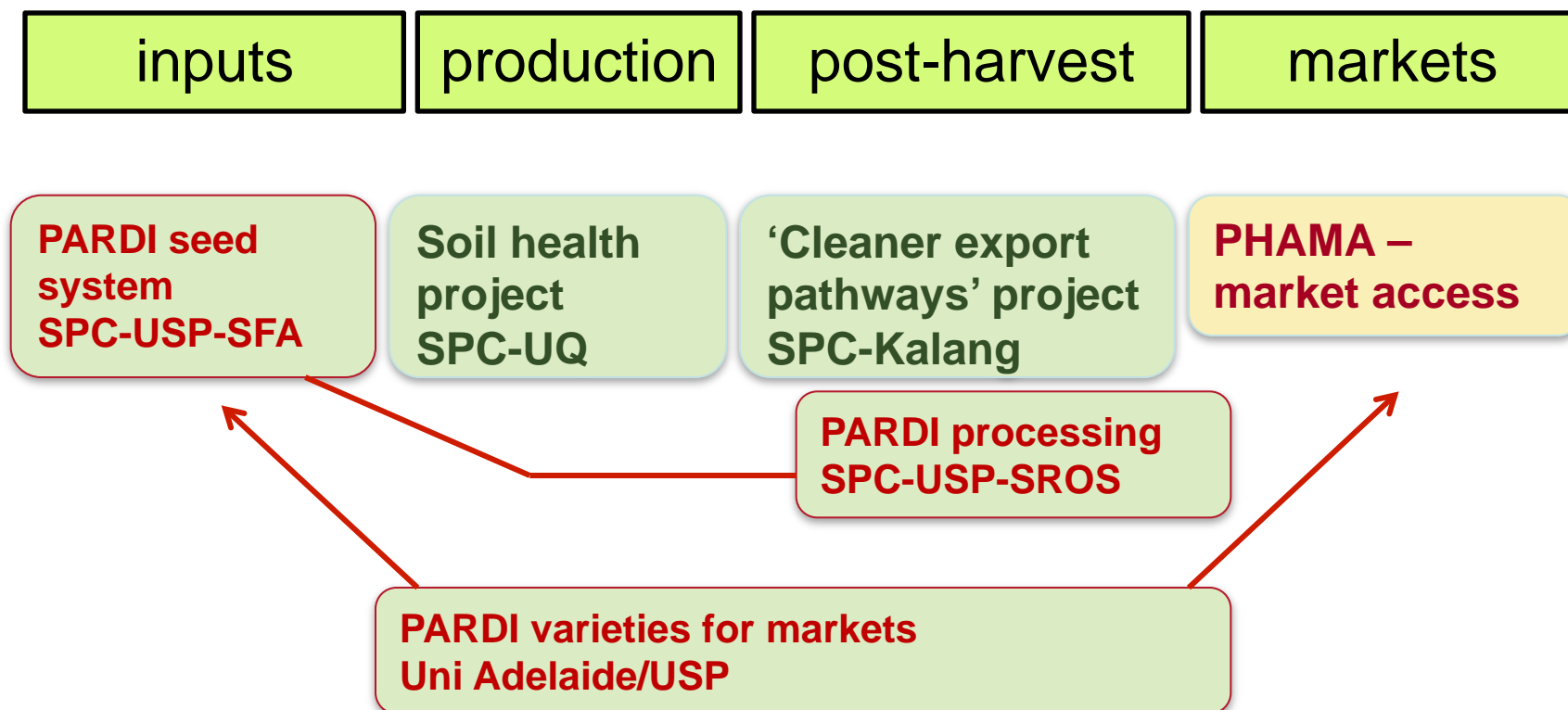
ACIAR's Crop Protection R&D New initiatives – broader approaches

- **Example of taro R&D**
 - **PC/2009/003 – with SPC Plant Health**
Improving soil health in support of sustainable development in the Pacific
 - **PC/2007/118 – with SPC BATS**
Developing cleaner export pathways for Pacific agricultural commodities
 - **PARDI PRA/2011/004 – SPC CePaCT & MAFF**
Developing a clean seed system for market-ready taro cultivars in Samoa

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Taro supply chain – research support





ACIAR Cocoa research

- **PC/2008/046**
Rehabilitating Cocoa for Improved Livelihoods in the South Pacific
- Pest and disease management in the context of farmer livelihood strategies and market incentives
- **PARDI PRA 2011.01**
Facilitating Improved livelihoods for Pacific Cocoa Producer Networks Through Premium Market Access
- Private-public partnerships; linking smallholders to high-value markets

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Significance of cocowood project

- Coconut research has previously been important to ACIAR but has received reduced emphasis in recent years
- A new look is justified from a smallholder livelihoods perspective
- Paradox: coconuts and copra still the main source of livelihood for many... but represent a 'poverty trap' for some.
- Coco-wood may hold key to diversification

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Significance of cocowood project

- **By-products can support sustainability of field production (soil amendments)**
 - PC/2009/003 Improving soil health in support of sustainable development in the Pacific
 - Coco-peat to restore carbon content and biological activity of soils (e.g. under taro)
 - Bio-char for nutrient retention

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Significance of cocowood project

- ... and provide growing medium for high-value horticulture
 - PARDI PRA/2010/005 Developing commercial breadfruit production systems for the Pacific islands
 - PARDI PRA/2011/004 Developing a clean seed system for market-ready taro cultivars in Samoa
 - Planting material from tissue culture
 - HORT/2008/011 Strategies for using floriculture to improve livelihoods in indigenous Australian and Pacific island communities

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Thank you!

We look forward to working with you!

