



Pacific  
Community  
Communauté  
du Pacifique

SPC Headquarters  
BP D5  
98848 Noumea Cedex  
New Caledonia  
Telephone: +687 26 20 00  
Fax: +687 26 38 18

Siège de la CPS  
BP D5  
98848 Nouméa Cedex  
Nouvelle-Calédonie  
Téléphone : +687 26 20 00  
Télécopieur : +687 26 38 18

## International merchandise trade statistics workshop on compilation, analysis, dissemination, indicators and uses

### Concept Note

International trade is important to the Pacific region. In many Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) the value of international trade exceeds the value of national gross domestic product. Imports provide Pacific people with access to food and other products which they cannot produce for themselves, this is especially true for the low-lying coral atolls. Exports provide opportunities for employment and act as drivers of economic growth.

The compilation, analysis, dissemination and use of accurate, detailed and timely trade data in economic management is vitally important. A 6-day workshop on international merchandise trade statistics (IMTS) with a focus on compilation, analysis, dissemination, indicators and uses is planned December 2022.

The last workshop on these topics was held in November 2012 and since then a lot of changes have occurred in the merchandise trade space. Most notably perhaps, there has been a move towards digital transformation and the digital economy accelerated by the impacts and consequences of the COVID pandemic. Emerging trade trends are being seen in the context of food systems and IMTS statistics being produced using new technologies need to be measured; relevant trade-related policies need to be formulated for the benefit of Pacific people. Details on the workshop are as follow:

**A. Participants:** Trade statisticians, Customs Officials, Partners, Central Banks and Planners.

**B. Proposed date:** 5 – 10 December.

**C. Venue:** Nadi, Fiji.

**D. Language of the workshop:** English.

**E. Funding:** SPC, UN, Stats NZ, PACER Plus

**F. Purpose:**

- Since the November 2012 workshop there are now around 15 new trade statisticians. PICTs have requested that their staff be trained in the methodology to compile IMTS.
- New developments taken place at SPC which compilers, data sources and users need to be introduced to:
  - Pacific Data Hub Indicator Database (PDH.stat) in place for the dissemination of data including IMTS.
  - SPC has released the trade compilation guide that PICTs can make use of when compiling IMTS.
  - The setting up of the Pacific Customs Commodity Trade (PACComtrade) Database is WIP.
- Uses of the data, of which indicators and analysis are important components, need to be discussed.

**G. What the workshop will cover**

- Sources of trade data e.g. UNCTAD's role in assisting Customs with ASYCUDA.
- Classification framework: Pacific Harmonised System (PACHS System).
- Methodology to compile IMTS: Pacific Compilation Guide 2021 released end 2021.
- Dissemination of trade statistics e.g. IMTS statistical tables and recommendations for modernising processes, Trade Dashboard demonstration and the Pacific Commodity Trade database.
- Analysis, indicators and uses e.g. SDGs including food security, NCD risk factors (alcohol and tobacco consumption indicators), Trade to GDP ratio, goods accounts in BOP, and expenditure account in GDP, use of trade in policy e.g. tax revenue implications due to PTAs, infrastructure planning, transport policies, import leakage in tourism and construction of trade indices.