



SUB-REGIONAL WORKSHOP ANNOUNCEMENT

TO: Representatives of Governments and Administrations in Melanesia (Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia). **No.:** 24/25

Copy: SPC Fisheries Contacts in Melanesia (Pacific ACP Countries)

FILE: PRO 7/54/4/2/13

DATE: 27/02/2024

SUBJECT: VIRTUAL MELANESIAN WORKSHOP ON DEVELOPMENT OF A PACIFIC REGIONAL AQUACULTURE STRATEGY AND THE MID-TERM REVIEW OF THE REGIONAL FRAMEWORK ON AQUATIC BIOSECURITY – 24TH TO 28TH JUNE 2024

PURPOSE OF NOTICE

1. This is an invitation for representatives from national fisheries and biosecurity agencies in the Melanesia region to attend the virtual sub-regional workshop on the Pacific Regional Aquaculture Strategy (PRAS), and the mid-term review of the Pacific Regional Framework on Aquatic Biosecurity (PRFAB). Additional information on the PRAS and PRFAB is supplied within Annex 1 at the end of this letter.
2. This invitation is also extended to community and private sector stakeholders involved in aquaculture or aquatic biosecurity located throughout Melanesia, who are also invited to nominate representatives to attend the virtual workshop.
3. To request that:
 - Pacific Community (SPC) member country and territory agencies in Melanesia responsible for aquaculture and aquatic biosecurity nominate a person to act as a National Focal Point for the virtual workshop. Olsen Pacific Consulting (the Consultants) have been appointed by SPC-FAME to facilitate the workshop. The National Focal Point will be required to assist the Consultants in identifying primary stakeholders and preparing for the sub-regional workshop.
 - SPC member governments and administrations in Melanesia nominate two (2) official representatives that have relevant experience in aquaculture to attend the virtual Melanesian PRAS workshop.

- SPC member governments and administrations in Melanesia nominate one (1) additional official representative with relevant experience in aquatic biosecurity to attend the PRFAB session scheduled to occur on the second day (25th June 2024) of the virtual workshop.
 - SPC member governments and administrations in Melanesia, via the National Focal Point, identify two (2) additional stakeholder representatives from the community or the private sector to attend the virtual sub-regional workshop.
4. To advise that:
- As the workshop will be conducted virtually, SPC-FAME welcomes members to have additional participants in the room, however, in terms of official communications, SPC and the Consultants will be liaising directly with the nominated representatives.
 - All nominations need to be received by **Wednesday 19th of June 2024**.

WORKSHOP STRUCTURE AND ARRANGEMENTS

- The virtual workshop is scheduled to occur from the 24th through to the 28th of June 2024. Each day will consist of a 3-hour session from 9:00 to 12:00 (Noumea, NC, [UTC+11:00](#)).
- The workshop will be conducted through the Zoom online platform and conducted in English. A link will be sent to nominated representatives prior to 24 June 2024.
- The virtual workshop will use a progressive itinerary format that will move through each of the key discussion points (refer to Annex 1) at a pace set by the representatives. Although time has been booked for sessions across five(5) days, this has been done to ensure that sufficient time is available for discussion. If these discussions finish before the end of day five, the unused time can be cancelled.
- The time allocated for **biosecurity discussion** is scheduled to occur at the start of day two to ensure that appropriate biosecurity representatives can be present. The PRAS includes biosecurity components, so these discussions will feed into the PRAS as well as the PRFAB.
- Where key stakeholders cannot attend the virtual workshop, they may provide comment by completing a stakeholder survey. The survey link can be obtained by contacting SPC-FAME using the email provided below.
- The results of the sub-regional workshops will be consolidated into a Draft Pacific Regional Aquaculture Strategy and distributed to all PICTs for comment. A summary of meeting results will also be circulated out-of-session to Heads of Fisheries representatives for comment.
- A regional meeting of nominated representatives from the sub-regional workshops will then be convened during August 2024 where the draft PRAS will be discussed and finalised.

TRAVEL AND VENUE SUPPORT

Support for domestic travel and meeting venues is available for **official representatives** from SPC member countries and territories in accordance with conditions outlined within SPC Policy Guidelines. This support will be coordinated through the relevant National Focal Point. For further information on travel and meeting venue support please contact SPC-FAME.

INSURANCE

SPC does not insure participants whilst travelling to or from the workshop venue, or whilst attending the virtual workshop, and cannot be responsible for any expenses arising out of loss, sickness, injury, other disability or loss of life. It is the participants' own responsibility to ensure that their attendance is covered by insurance.

MEETING CONTACTS

- Official nominations to: Director, Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystems Division (email: FAME_Meetings@spc.int)
- Agenda items and other enquiries: Director, Fisheries, Aquaculture and Marine Ecosystem Division (email: FAME_Meetings@spc.int)

Yours sincerely,



Dr. Paula Vivili

Deputy Director-General, Science and Capability

Attachment:

Annex 1 – Background Information

ANNEX 1**BACKGROUND INFORMATION****1. The Pacific Regional Aquaculture Strategy (PRAS)**

A sustainable aquaculture sector has potential to contribute to employment, food security, environmental protection, and the economy; however, growth of this sector in the Pacific region has occurred more slowly than predicted. It is for this reason that SPC-FAME commissioned a [Regional Aquaculture Assessment](#) to inform and advise on sustainable aquaculture development.

A key recommendation of the assessment was that an aquaculture strategy should be developed, and this should be a strategy “for the Pacific region” that considers issues wider than SPC’s own technical and policy mandates in aquaculture.

Representatives attending the 13th Heads of Fisheries Meeting supported the development of a new regional aquaculture strategy ([Heads of Fisheries 13 Decision 13c](#)). It was agreed that a PRAS would assist capacity building by aiming to harmonise aquaculture development and investment plans across the region, enhancing cooperation between SPC member countries and territories for key services, and facilitating access to export markets.

The PRAS requires a consultation process that is inclusive and fully endorsed by members. SPC Heads of Fisheries has endorsed a process that involves a series of virtual workshops coordinated by an external consultant. The scale and process of this exercise will be similar to that undertaken for the Scaling Up CBFM Framework for Action developed during 2021.

2. The Mid-term review of the [Pacific Regional Framework on Aquatic Biosecurity](#) (PRFAB)

Aquatic biosecurity is a key requirement for achieving long term sustainability of aquaculture, wild fisheries, and the aquatic environment. To achieve sustainable development, it is essential that farmed aquatic species remain free of disease so that the region can build on its pathogen-free status and marketability. Therefore, aquatic biosecurity practices must keep pace with aquaculture development.

Aquatic biosecurity will form a key component of the PRAS consultation process, but the workshops also provide opportunity for consultation on RFAB mid-term review. PICT aquatic biosecurity representatives will be invited to attend aquatic biosecurity sessions scheduled within the PRAS virtual workshop meetings.

3. Sub-regional and Regional Workshops

Suggested dates for a series of three sub-regional workshops and one regional workshop were presented to SPC member delegates attending the 6th Regional Technical Meeting on Coastal Fisheries and Aquaculture in November 2023. This was followed by circulation of a Sub-Regional Workshop Announcement sent to all SPC member countries and territories on the 2nd of February 2024.

The three sub-regional consultation workshops are designed to address each of the key objectives raised by the Regional Aquaculture Assessment that are listed on Page 5.

- Objective 1:** To raise the profile of aquaculture and promote how it can be used to assist economic and social development agendas of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).
- Objective 2:** To identify how aquaculture production of edible and non-edible aquatic products can improve income and food security in the commercial, community and small holder subsectors.
- Objective 3:** To identify gaps in capacity and improve knowledge and skills throughout the aquaculture sector.
- Objective 4:** To ensure that biosecurity measures keep pace with aquaculture development.
- Objective 5:** To assess the resilience of aquaculture to climate change and other natural disasters in the region.
- Objective 6:** To assess and improve domestic, regional, and global market access and supply chains.
- Objective 7:** To assess and enhance quality of post-harvest product.
- Objective 8:** Where agreed by SPC member countries and territories, establish regional cooperative institutional frameworks.
- Objective 9:** To include cross cutting issues such as health, environment, and gender in aquaculture development discussions.
- Objective 10:** Identify where gaps occur in policy, legislation, and planning, and assess how these may be addressed.

The Melanesia Sub-Regional Workshop provides participants with the opportunity to contribute their national perspectives and experiences toward formulation of a sub-regional position on the ten listed priority Objectives and to discuss pathways for implementation.

Additional Objectives to those listed may also be presented for consideration if consensus is reached by meeting participants.

The meeting outcomes will be taken forward by selected participants to a subsequent regional workshop. This regional meeting will assess commonalities between sub-regional perspectives and merge them into a Pacific Regional Aquaculture Strategy that is a strategy “for the aquaculture sector” of the Pacific.