

Secretariat of the Pacific Community

**5<sup>th</sup> SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting**  
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**Working Paper 1**

Original: English

**Marine Resources Division  
Director's Report**

Marine Resources Division  
Secretariat of the Pacific Community  
Noumea, New Caledonia

[www.spc.int/mrd](http://www.spc.int/mrd)



## Introduction

1. This paper is an introduction to the work of the SPC Fisheries Programmes, for those who are not familiar with it, together with an introduction to some “issues arising” either within the Pacific Islands fisheries sector, or within the regional organisational system, since the last HoF meeting. It is part of the narrative report of the SPC executive responsible for SPC fisheries work to the major stakeholders in this Division of the organisation – member government fisheries service managers.

2. For those accustomed to attending Forum Fisheries Committee meetings, it should be noted that one major difference between this and the FFA Director's report is the reduced emphasis on administrative issues. This is because member country oversight of SPC is divided amongst sectoral meetings and CRGA<sup>1</sup>:- the pivotal committee that decides the overall administrative policy of the joint SPC work-programmes and the balance between them. The Forum Fisheries Committee normally plays both these roles in relation to the FFA Secretariat, overseeing organisational management as well as regional fisheries policy.

3. The SPC Director of Marine Resources has to report to member countries and territories at CRGA on administrative and financial issues, and HoF participants should refer to the Marine Resources Divisional report, and the SPC work programme and budgets documents, presented at the last CRGA meeting (CRGA 35 in Koror, 14-17 November 2005) for additional information<sup>2</sup>.

## SPC Marine Resources Division Structure and Functions

4. The SPC Marine Resources Division does not have a homogenous brief, unlike FFA's remit to assist its members with the management and development of tuna fisheries, but is split into two separate programmes<sup>3</sup>, one to work with the region and with member countries and territories in providing scientific advice to assist in the management of major tuna fisheries, and one to provide advice and assistance to member countries and territories on the development, management and conservation of coastal and near-shore domestic fisheries, and aquaculture. However, FFA and the SPC Fisheries Programmes all work together towards the overall vision of the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy<sup>4</sup> of “*A healthy Ocean that sustains the livelihoods and aspirations of Pacific Island communities*”.

5. There should be enough information available at this meeting, particularly through the Programme Strategic Plans, Programme reports and workplans, and the previous programme review documents (see [www.spc.int/mrd/org/org.html](http://www.spc.int/mrd/org/org.html)), for new HoF participants to obtain an overview of what are the fundamental aims and functionalities of SPC's fisheries programmes without going into detail here, but to provide a brief description

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<sup>1</sup> Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (usually held in November)

<sup>2</sup> Links to some of these documents are also provided on the HoF5 website at [www.spc.int/coastfish/reports/hof5](http://www.spc.int/coastfish/reports/hof5)

<sup>3</sup> The SPC Marine Resources Division also technically includes the SPC Regional Maritime Programme, but this is separately managed and administered out of SPC Suva and does not report to the Director of Marine Resources

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.spc.int/piocean/forum/New/welcome.htm>

- The Oceanic Fisheries Programme provides advice to tuna fisheries managers on the status and prospects of tuna fishery stocks and their ecosystems. It works in close consultation with FFA on regional issues as well as directly with member countries on national oceanic fishery assessments. The OFP has three closely-interrelated sections:
  - Stock Assessment & Modelling;
  - Statistics & Monitoring;
  - Biology & Ecology.The OFP provides a fundamental scientific service to the various processes, national, regional and international, that govern fisheries for highly migratory species in the Pacific Islands region;
- The Coastal Fisheries Programme provides supporting advice and expertise to Pacific Island fisheries services on a wide range of domestic fishery issues (not including tuna fisheries management and science) where solutions can be effectively promoted through regional collaboration. Although it is called the “Coastal” “Fisheries” Programme because it initially concentrated entirely on reef fisheries, its development work over the past decade, along with member country’s own development priorities, has been increasingly focussed on small-to-medium-scale domestic Pacific Island tuna fishery development, and more recently on aquaculture. CFP sections cover a wide range of subsectors and operate in a more decentralised manner than OFP sections, but they have certain notable interdependencies. They are:
  - Fisheries Development;
  - Reef Fisheries Observatory (covers stock assessment, statistics/monitoring and biology/ecology in a similar sense to the OFP work on oceanic pelagics, but is so far at an early stage of development);
  - Aquaculture;
  - Coastal Fisheries Management (specialising in community and co-management);
  - Human Resource Development (training material and skills development in member country fisheries departments & private sector fisheries);
- Another component of the Marine Resources Division concerning fisheries is the Fisheries Information Unit, which provides assistance to national fisheries departments in organising and disseminating information, promotes regional information networking, and assists both the CFP and OFP with the development of their publications where SPC’s general support services are insufficient). We have previously maintained the Information unit under the corporate heading of the Coastal Fisheries Programme for administrative convenience, but it addresses both Oceanic and Coastal Fisheries information objectives.

6. We are at the beginning of a new strategic plan period for the two fisheries programmes after the previous plans expired in December. New programme plans were drafted in 2005, under the umbrella of the existing SPC Corporate Plan, and the SPC Governing Council approved these drafts for implementation on the understanding that they are “living documents” and that there would be an opportunity for further scrutiny, and possible fine-tuning, by Heads of Fisheries early in 2006. These plans were circulated to member countries and territories before CRGA and have been on the SPC website since November, but have been posted to the HoF5 website and will be circulated at the HoF5 meeting.

7. The Strategic Plan for the Oceanic Fisheries Programme is evolutionary, rather than revolutionary, and given the amount of dialogue that has occurred in the region over the past year concerning the role of scientific services within the regional tuna fisheries governance infrastructure, we did not envisage the need for much more work on the plan at this stage. The OFP plan is of course also subject to review, and correction, as circumstance or necessity arises, and SPC Heads of Fisheries will play the primary role in this process.

8. The Strategic Plan for the Coastal Fisheries Programme is slightly more revolutionary, and has taken account of three major drivers:

- The commitment<sup>5</sup> by SPC member countries to implement the ecosystem approach to fisheries by 2010, as expressed through the outputs of the World Summit on Sustainable Development and reaffirmed at the Mauritius meeting on sustainable development of small island states;
- Comments by HoF, and CFP reviews, that the different sections of the programme need to work together, where synergy is possible, in a more coordinated fashion;
- The recommendation by the SPC corporate review of 2005 that SPC take a more holistic approach to its engagement with member countries, moving away from ad-hoc request-driven services towards the implementation of structured, longer-term support tailored to the strengths and needs of each country, under a broad plan of work largely agreed in advance with each country. Developing the corporate mechanism for doing this is one of the objectives of the new Director-General, but this will inevitably require some type of multi-section, and multi-programme, task-force approach;

9. The overall objective of the new CFP programme plan is to assist member countries and territories in their commitment to implement the ecosystem approach to coastal fisheries (including aquaculture) by 2010. This commitment also sets the timeframe for the new plan, but more importantly will promote a more holistic way of working and require the input of all sections when assessing and addressing the relative needs and strengths of each individual SPC member country and territory in coastal fisheries and aquaculture.

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<sup>5</sup> (non-binding)

10. The ecosystem approach itself is a broad concept, and encompasses all of the existing work of national and regional fisheries services, so nothing is taken away from the existing work-programme, but it adds linkages, it emphasises the importance of certain processes, and generally requires all the factors affecting a fisheries production system to be taken into account, not just fishing.

11. We propose to spend a little more time discussing the CFP strategic plan than the OFP plan at this meeting. This is no reflection on the relative importance of the two programmes, but of the greater opportunity generally afforded for discussing tuna issues regionally, and the greater changes proposed to the CFP mode of operation.

### **Achievements of the Marine Resources Division Fisheries Programmes in 2005**

12. As explained in Working Paper 1 at HoF4<sup>6</sup>, it is difficult for an organisation like SPC, whose primary purpose is to *assist* others in achieving their aims, to separate out the organisation's contribution to the achievements that it has assisted. It is also difficult to quantify achievements in fields where baseline information is scarce; where monitoring is expensive compared to the value of the activity; and where perceptions are variable, such as artisanal fisheries development or management.

13. Unlike previous years, I will not attempt here to summarise, or pick out a few significant items from, the achievements of the SPC Fisheries Programmes. This is already adequately summarised in the programme reports against the 3-year strategic plans which ended in December 2005, and I'm sure that individual programmes and sections will draw things to your attention when individual presentations are made. In general, the achievements of the SPC Fisheries Programmes are solidly cumulative rather than newsworthy, and although we are required to catch the eyes and imaginations of those who fund our budgets, we would prefer to do it by routinely fulfilling our objectives and reporting on the occasional dramatic result, rather than routinely claiming all the credit for shared achievements or manufacturing public concern.

14. SPC member representatives are welcome to ask questions about, or comment upon, any of the work described by these reports during the course of this meeting, or indeed at any other time.

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<sup>6</sup> <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/Reports/HOF4/E-WP1-HOF4.pdf>

## Issues Arising

### *Status and trends of fisheries*

15. It has become traditional for me, at this point, to include a summary of the latest major issues to arise from OFP stock assessments, and a promise that next year we will produce a regional summary of what is known about coastal fisheries status and trends. However, this year HoF follows hard on the heels of both the SPC CRGA and the first substantive meeting of the Western and Central Pacific Tuna Commission, at which overviews and issues of oceanic fishery stock status were presented. I won't repeat them here, but John Hampton will draw certain issues to your attention during the OFP presentation on Tuesday. Participants at HoF will have also heard presentations on the status of reef fisheries at the PROCFISH Advisory Committee meeting, and there will be presentations on the live reef fish trade and other coastal fishery status issues later in the week. The Reef Fisheries Observatory will be producing the national reports arising from its scientific survey work on reef fishes and fishers from now onwards – a draft of the Vanuatu report is just being prepared for discussion with the Vanuatu government before finalisation – and once all the fieldwork is completed will produce an overview of reef fisheries in the entire region.

16. At this stage I would just draw the attention of the meeting to the report on the status of **spearfisheries** in the region that was commissioned from Bob Gillett late last year, and which contains some interesting information as well as some recommendations. I commissioned this preliminary study because I was worried that spearfisheries, particularly small-scale commercial night spearfisheries, are a problem that is “flying under the radar” of some national and regional fishery management processes, as we concentrate on such matters as tuna fisheries, turtles and live reef fish – fisheries with major implications for foreign affairs, environmental politics or international trade. Commercial spearfisheries target some notably vulnerable fish species and populations, and in many countries are entirely unregulated, whilst producing surprisingly high volumes of fish (although possibly not for long). I'd be interested to hear, during the round-table session on Monday afternoon, from countries and territories experiences with the management of spearfisheries.

17. I'd also like to draw attention to the intention of FAO to hold a further workshop for the Pacific Islands region this year, to address the question of how to compile better information on the status and trends of Pacific Island fisheries. FAO will talk later on this.

18. Two fisheries status issues where SPC needs to be able to assist national and regional processes, but where we currently lack capacity to do significant monitoring or stock assessment (and hence reporting), are **deep reef slope and seamount fisheries** (largely deepwater or eteline snapper fisheries, between 50-350m depth), and **stocks that might be targeted by deepwater trawl fisheries**. The two issues have a point of convergence in the fact that deepwater snapper are sometimes targeted by trawl fisheries – indeed this is the principal worry about licencing “trial trawling” operation in Pacific Island EEZs. When prospecting in tropical waters for ocean-floor species like orange roughy fails, a quick profit is sometimes attempted by trawling for deepwater snapper in shallower waters, to the detriment of local hook and line fishers. One of the additional reasons for this region pursuing the development of a regional framework for the management of trawl and seamount fisheries is, I feel, the support that might be given to developing monitoring and assessment capacity, particularly at the national level. The GEF project is of course also looking at seamounts, but this is essentially a pelagic fishery project.

### *Meeting frequency*

19. Fisheries department heads generally meet each other several times per year. When I first got involved in Pacific Island fisheries, in the early 1980s, there was already complaint about the frequency of regional fisheries meetings, even though there was only one SPC Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries and one Forum Fisheries Committee meeting per year. This complaint has continued through the years, even though Foreign Affairs departments are now also involved in fisheries management and sharing the load. Several years ago SPC took this complaint to heart, and has more than halved the overall frequency of its regional meetings as a result. I must admit that I have not actually reduced the frequency of heads of fisheries meetings to a third, although the SPC core funding for these meetings has been reduced to a third (or more), but this is a result of requests from the HoF meeting itself to meet more often than once every three years.

20. Meetings that some, or most of you attended in 2005 include:

- UN Informal Consultation on Oceans and Law of the Sea (UNICPOLOS – annual, in June) (not many of you go to this at the moment, but I would venture that it is essential to have some Pacific Island fisheries specialist representation when fisheries are on the agenda, to assist in the preparation of the national statements that are made);
- Forum Fisheries Committee (usually May);
- SOPAC and SPC Maritime meetings (for those administrations with additional responsibility in non-living oceanic and shipping areas), and some of you also attend the SPREP meeting;
- FAO Committee on Fisheries (COFI – biennial, in March), and any FAO subcommittees on Aquaculture;
- US Treaty consultation (February or March);
- Western Pacific Regional Fisheries Management Council & Plan Team meetings (USA and territories);
- Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission meeting (WCPFC – usually December);



- WCPFC Science Committee (usually August);
- WCPFC Technical and Compliance Committee (usually Nov/Dec);

21. This doesn't include meetings of subregional fisheries arrangements, such as the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, and meetings of fisheries management organisations in other regions that some of you may be required to attend because you have flag vessels fishing in those regions, or workshops convened by SPC and FFA on subsectoral issues (which sometimes require the presence of heads of fisheries). To this list we might also add any meetings towards a South Pacific RFMO for the management of non-highly migratory fishery species this year and of course any special meetings such as the occasional "Sharing the Fish" Conference, and the quadrennial World Fisheries Congress. There are also specialist scientific meetings and an increasing number of workshops arranged by environmental organisations and non-government sector organisations now becoming involved in fisheries management.

22. What should be the frequency and timing of SPC Heads of Fisheries Meetings in such a crowded environment? As far as the Secretariat is concerned, we are happy to avoid the considerable work of preparing for this meeting. We also have CRGA to "keep us honest", in terms of organisational governance, but we are however conscious that the SPC Heads of Fisheries meeting is currently the only comprehensive regional fisheries forum in which **all** Pacific Island fisheries service managers can talk on equal terms whether they represent territories or independent countries, and about **all** of the fisheries and ecosystems under their jurisdiction.

23. The meeting may wish to discuss its own future, and the secretariat will do its best to implement any decisions that are made.

### ***The Pacific Plan***

24. The Pacific Plan is a high-level regional integration exercise arising out of the review of the Pacific Islands Forum by an Eminent Person's Group led by Sir Julius Chan, and intended to implement the Vision of Pacific Island Heads of Government as follows:

*Leaders believe the Pacific can, should and will be a region of peace, harmony, security and economic prosperity, so that all its people can lead free and worthwhile lives. We treasure the diversity of the Pacific and seek a future in which its cultures and traditions are valued, honoured and developed. We seek a Pacific region that is respected for the quality of its governance, the sustainable management of its resources, the full observance of democratic values, and its defence and promotion of human rights.*

25. Although it was intended to be “not a “Forum Plan” as such, but an active partnership involving the Pacific in its widest sense, including the whole family of Pacific regional organisations”, apart from SPC and FFA preparing a joint background paper for the initial scoping process<sup>7</sup>, the preparation of the Pacific Plan has not been much influenced by regional sectoral special interests, and none of the suggestions that the SPC Marine Resources Division put forward as priorities for early implementation have been included. Indeed, the first drafts of the Pacific Plan’s summary of regional cooperation priorities hardly mentioned the word fisheries, nor agriculture, nor any of the primary production sectors, and we assumed that to mention them would have introduced too great a level of detail<sup>8</sup>.

26. Our main suggestion was that the Pacific Plan should incorporate the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy as a ready-made subcomponent, and thus fisheries, maritime and other ocean-related sectors would be automatically included. However, although the Plan makes no mention of the Regional Ocean Policy, HoF may wish to note that the word “fisheries” made a more substantive appearance in the recent draft of an “Implementation Matrix” for the Plan<sup>9</sup>, with two major initiatives described, and responsibilities ascribed as follows:

### **Pacific Plan Indicative Implementation and Reporting Resource Requirements/Lead Agency**

Initiatives for the First Three Years (2006-2008)	Milestones	Implement	Agree in Principle	Further Analysis Required	Resource Requirements (partners/donors with current commitments bolded)	Lead Regional Agencies*
1.5 Maximise sustainable returns from fisheries by developing an ecosystem based fisheries management planning framework; encouraging effective fisheries development, including value-adding activities; and collaborating to ensure legislation and access frameworks are harmonised.*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Management planning framework developed by mid-2006.</li> <li>• Proposals developed and submitted to the 2006 Forum for fisheries development, including value-adding, activities.</li> <li>• Fisheries legislation and access frameworks benchmarked during 2006 and a programme developed to resolve inconsistencies.</li> </ul>		✓		Ongoing activity with new focus requiring re-allocation of resources <b>EU/ADB/</b> <b>France/NZ/</b> <b>Aust/US</b>	SPC, FFA, PIFS, USP, NSAs
5.2 Develop and implement national and regional conservation and management measures for the sustainable utilisation of fisheries resources.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Progress reports in 2006 and 2007.</li> </ul>		✓		Ongoing activity with new focus requiring re-allocation of resources EU/ADB/France/GEF/ Aust/NZ	FFA, SPC, PIFS, USP, other CROP orgs, NSAs

<sup>7</sup> See <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/reports/hof4/PDF/E-BP6-HOF4.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> ignoring, for the moment, that the draft Plan did include such major cross-sectoral priorities as a regional sports network

<sup>9</sup> [www.spc.int/coastfish/reports/hof5/pacplanimp.pdf](http://www.spc.int/coastfish/reports/hof5/pacplanimp.pdf)

27. These have only recently (March) been brought to our attention, so I am unable to brief the meeting on what the implications are, but it suggests, at the least, that we will need to sit down with the Forum Fisheries Agency to sort out who should do what, and incorporate this into our Memorandum of Understanding, as well as consulting with other agencies. Thankfully, the fisheries areas for priority implementation in the Pacific Plan already mesh well with some of the directions already set in the strategic plans of the SPC Fisheries Programmes, so the issue is not likely to be extremely complicated. It is not clear at this stage whether these Pacific Plan fisheries priorities are just a re-encapsulation of existing initiatives, whether they will lead to additional support, and whether they are just intended to support the work of regional organisations, or of member countries as well.

28. Perhaps the main issue to be settled, apart from the building of linkages between fisheries management processes and Pacific Plan processes, and the place of the Regional Ocean Policy process, remains the role of non-Forum SPC members. The Pacific Plan, despite consultation with territories, still appears to be very much a Forum initiative, and the coordination office is based at the Forum. A tidy resolution would be if the Pacific Plan were to acquire major new resources to implement these fisheries initiatives within Forum member countries, leaving existing SPC resources to address the Pacific Plan initiatives within non-Forum member Pacific Islands, but the reality is unlikely to be so neat.

#### ***Decisions of SPC Governing Councils relating to fisheries***

29. Beyond generally reviewing corporate plans, programme budgets and workplans, CRGA does not often make specific pronouncements about fisheries. It plays a sectoral balancing role, deciding where SPC's own resources are best directed, and does not usually intervene in within-sector issues, preferring to take the advice of sectoral meetings like Heads of Fisheries. However CRGA has become increasingly interested in oceanic and international fisheries issues over the past decade, as national departments responsible for foreign affairs have become increasingly involved in issues of regional tuna fishery management, and in 2005 made the following decisions:-

#### ***CRGA***

- a. noted the Marine Resources Division and Forum Fisheries Agency presentations;*
- b. thanked the various presenters for their excellent presentations and for the ensuing informative and lively discussion;*
- c. adopted the three strategic plans for the Regional Maritime Programme, Ocean Fisheries Programme, and Coastal Fisheries Programme;*
- d. welcomed Papua New Guinea's assistance for the proposed tuna tagging programme; and*
- e. encouraged other development partners to join Papua New Guinea in funding the tuna tagging programme.*

***Conference agreed:***

a) *with respect to deep sea bottom trawling and high seas seamounts, that SPC should work with FFA (Forum Fisheries Agency) and other partners to develop an appropriate management framework regime for consideration by members;*

b) *with respect to tuna fisheries:*

(i) *on the urgency of conducting a tuna tagging study to help verify current status of tuna stocks, and welcomed New Zealand Government's offer to support the tagging programme, in conjunction with support provided by Papua New Guinea; and*

(ii) *that SPC and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) take up the concerns of members regarding possible juvenile tuna fishing in the far west of the Western Central Pacific Ocean, through the post-Forum dialogue process;*

30. Conference decision (a) is the subject of a 2-day pre-HoF workshop convened for the purpose of obtaining the guidance of member country and territory fisheries specialists on how to implement this decision, and HoF may wish to consider the recommended options emerging from this workshop during the final session on Friday, or at any other time during the meeting. On Conference decision (b) we would defer to member countries, to the Forum Fisheries Agency, and to the Forum Secretariat during the post-Forum Dialogue process, but will be on hand to provide any scientific information support that may be required.

***Other issues***

31. There are a number of questions on which you may wish to provide some guidance, or thoughts to the Secretariat during the course of the meeting, concerning the long-term direction of the SPC Fisheries Programmes. These include:-

32. The potential significance to the Fisheries Programmes of the SPC "third campus" which has been set up in Pohnpei. Currently SPC fisheries staff are mainly based in Noumea, but it is likely that any new SPC fisheries projects, if subregional elements are possible, will need to have decentralised components. Decentralisation is a concept that the SPC Chief Executive remains committed to, but it is difficult to implement in practice. On the one hand it may create resentment in country A, B and C if staff are placed in country D, unless there is a clear and accepted logical and historical precedent for doing so. And it is difficult to maintain coordination amongst a diverse group when staff are physically located far apart. On the other hand it is easier for programmes to maintain contact with, to get information from, and deliver products effectively to, the different parts of the region if staff are maintained in different places. Ideally I would like to see one SPC fisheries link-person based in each SPC island member country and territory, but we don't have the kind of resources to make that possible for SPC as a whole, let alone SPC fisheries programmes. However, subregional link-people may be possible.

33. The medium-term future of SPC's work in fisheries. If countries and territories are indeed successful in implementing the ecosystem approach to fisheries by 2010 then a lot of the linkages important for maintaining the productivity of marine ecosystems will be in place. It is also possible that most of the expansion phase of fisheries development will have occurred and that domestic fisheries will be in a phase of consolidation (in places where they are not already). I think it inevitable that aquaculture will continue to expand, as economic drivers – particularly the cost of wild-caught fish – create favourable conditions. One question is: should SPC be diverting more of its resources into helping countries establish responsible aquaculture enterprise right now, or should it wait for the sector itself to become mature? I also think it certain that SPC's role as a regional scientific service and information provider will continue for some time. It was one of SPC's founding functions in 1947, and it may continue to make sense for small island states maintain shared specialist scientific capacity at the national level, even if there were no justification for regional consideration of highly migratory and straddling stock fisheries.

34. The long-term future of human use and maintenance of Pacific Island marine spaces themselves. In fisheries we tend to have a fairly narrow view about what is important, but the oceans are used for a lot more than catching fish. Most of these uses are not incompatible, but the interactions between different users will become greater, not less, as populations expand and development intensifies. Luckily, in this region, we are in a position to see what is happening in the developed world, and we have an opportunity to adapt before these interactions turn into social problems in the Pacific Islands. Fisheries departments themselves may lose influence if they do not adapt to encompass new influences, or fail to keep a finger on the pulse of society. Possibly SPC can help countries in predicting these social changes, in addition to its current role in helping countries predict the status of fish populations, but taking action depends upon local politics, and the relative strengths of different special interest groups, and it is not the sort of role that any regional programme would welcome (not if its success is to be measured in terms of the take-up of its advice). However, we would be happy to continue to expand our provision of "information useful to decision-makers" and leave it up to those decision-makers whether or not to act upon that information.

### **Linkages**

35. The fisheries programmes of the SPC Marine Resources Division maintain a diverse set of institutional linkages in addition to their primary linkages to member country and territory fisheries administrations.

36. Rather than detail these here I would refer readers to previous reports and just draw attention to some recent issues:.

- We had our regular meeting with the FFA secretariat in November, and the FFA/SPC Memorandum of Understanding has been revised as a result. However, we may need to review our understanding yet again in light of the recent draft of the Pacific Plan Implementation Matrix;

- By the time this paper is presented we will have had a meeting with NGOs and agencies now working on issues of concern to coastal fisheries, particularly in the area of community-based management, with a view to ensuring that our respective activities are complementary and do not lead to confusion within either coastal communities or national governments;
- We are increasing our level of practical collaboration with the University of the South Pacific, in ways that you will hear about throughout the meeting. Of particular note is the decision by USP to take a primary role in the delivery of fisheries training, meaning that SPC will now concentrate just on the practical module of the regional Fisheries Officer Training Course;
- Our collaboration with the new Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission is now formalised via a Service Agreement, and this will be explained by John Hampton on Tuesday.

### **Conclusion**

37. This Director's Report is provided as a general update on SPC-relevant fisheries and institutional issues, for the benefit of participants at the 5<sup>th</sup> SPC Heads of Fisheries Meeting. Further details are provided in other presentations or are otherwise available.

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