

Having trouble seeing this email? [view it online](#) or [unsubscribe](#)



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

FAO Subregional Newsletter: May 2017, Edition #34

[Subscribe](#)

PACIFIC NEWS

[FAO Pacific Website](#)

From Eriko Hibi



Fisheries and aquaculture play a significant role in eliminating hunger, promoting health and reducing poverty and additional efforts must be put to safeguard coastal areas and to manage planet's oceans sustainably. In this edition, we highlight the ongoing management of community based fisheries in Samoa. In New York, the Ocean Conference is convening to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development.

In keeping with the theme of protecting ocean resources, FAO Director General, Jose Graziano da Silva explains the FAO brokered international treaty, Port State Measures Agreement in an Oped titled, "The way to put an end to illegal fishing".

In this edition we also cover food and nutrition challenges in Samoa and the Pacific Islands and the launch of an educational kit on biodiversity which is aimed at school children in Fiji. Finally we introduce the release of two FAO videos on Forest Protected Area Management projects in Niue and Vanuatu respectively.

We hope that this newsletter will keep you informed of the work we do in partnership with others in the region.

Eriko Hibi

FAO Subregional Coordinator for the Pacific Islands

The way to put an end to illegal fishing

By Jose Graziano da Silva

We are about to celebrate the first anniversary of the entry into force of the FAO Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA), the world's first binding international treaty aimed at combating Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated Fishing (IUU Fishing).



This illegal modality accounts for around one-sixth of all fish caught in the oceans, and constitutes a great public danger as it undermines global efforts to make sure that fish – the world's most produced, consumed and traded animal protein – are a sustainable resource for global nutrition and food security, as well as for millions of jobs.

The PSMA, which currently has 46 parties including the European Union, marks a sea change both in its legal form and in its practical potential. Under its protocol, foreign fishing vessels must show all required operating licenses, their activity logs, and submit to inspections of their catch. Port authorities are obliged to deny services to vessels in violation of the rules and to report them to other countries, making it harder for illegal operators to offload and sell the fish they catch elsewhere.

FAO, which brokered the treaty, is also delivering other tools to put an end to IUU fishing. It has a new initiative to improve flag-state compliance, a new set of voluntary guidelines on Catch Documentation Schemes – a passport of sorts without which fish can lose access to markets – and is in the process on creating a transparent and comprehensive Global Record of Fishing Vessels. All of these instruments complement the PSMA.

It is noteworthy that the new treaty was in fact enhanced and expanded, not watered down, in its journey from draft text to binding law. That clearly shows how seriously the international community supported a powerful, viable and enduring instrument to end IUU fishing.

I call upon all nations that have not yet joined the PSMA to become part of it.

As important as it is to make its remit universal, what is more important is making the new rules stick. Implementing the PSMA will require a host of actions, including streamlined cross-border real-time communications systems, national legislative reviews, and skilled inspectors capable of identifying actual fish both by species and likely age, as well as ascertaining whether the gear used to catch them is allowed.

The new rules' ultimate strength will be determined by the weakest link, so all countries have a stake in making sure that no member lacks the technical capacity to deliver on treaty obligations.

The PSMA explicitly acknowledges that developing countries and small island states may need assistance in carrying out the monitoring, control, surveillance and compliance tasks the treaty requires, and all parties have pledged to provide that assistance.

I am confident that many countries will join the United States of America, Norway and Sweden, which have already confirmed their contribution to this global capacity-building program. Allow me to note that FAO is already committing substantial resources of its own to this effort.

Ocean governance is evolving quickly, and FAO has played a central role in steering capture fisheries towards sustainable management. With the PSMA, the international community has produced a powerful, viable and enduring instrument to serve as a basis for effectively combating illegal fishing.

[← Back to Pacific News](#)

Long road leads fisheries consultant back to Samoa

FAO reviews community based fisheries in villages

Fisheries consultant Mike King revisits Samoa to review a project he headed in 1995 to improve fisheries management in villages.

Samoa's community-based fisheries management programme was introduced in 1995.

The programme was implemented to address declining marine resources which raised concerns and the need for a new approach to coastal fisheries management. It built on the strengths of the communities working through the village councils as the primary leaders of change.

Australian fisheries consultant Mike King arrived in Samoa in 1995 to head a three-year AusAid project with multiple aims, including that of improving fisheries management in villages. "The community based fisheries management of villages proved to be a challenging task," said Mike.

Villagers felt powerless at the time to manage their own resources and it took time to transfer management of community villages from government level to the villagers themselves. "In cooperation with the Government we trained extension officers who listened to villagers who, of course, know their fisheries resources very well," Mike explained. "Groups were formed within villages that identified areas of concern and together, with village chief approval and extension officer support, were able to come up with solutions."

The concept was well accepted and has been fully integrated into fisheries management in Samoa.

The success of the programme spread throughout the Pacific "The project became quite famous throughout the Pacific and visitors from Indonesia and Tanzania visited Samoa to see if they could adopt similar programmes in their countries", Mike said.

Magele Etuati Ropeti, ACEO of Fisheries Division of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries has had a long association with Mr King. "I knew of Mike's work as a student but I met him for the first time in 1995



© FAO / Kevin Hadfield

when he arrived in Samoa as project coordinator,” he explained. “One of my first tasks was to recruit and train a team of extension officers who later became fisheries officers. I was Mike’s counterpart at that time”.

Mike was recently in Samoa to review progress on the community based fisheries programme. The review was funded by FAO - the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations which will continue to work with Samoa on implementing recommendations from the review.

“To the credit of the work by the Fisheries Division, the number of villages has successfully expanded to other communities in Samoa with 120 coastal villages now undertaking community-based management of their marine areas” said Mike.

Under their management plans, many villages have set up regulations for their marine areas including establishing fish reserves to protect marine life and habitats.

[← Back to Pacific News](#)

Putting the pressure on critical food and nutrition challenges in Samoa and other Pacific Islands

Why are people in Samoa and other Pacific Island countries eating more fats, sugars and salty food than ever before?

This and other questions related to the alarming growth of obesity and Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) is just one of the many challenges facing governments in Samoa and other Pacific Islands such as Fiji and Tonga.



© FAO / Kevin Hoefield

Other critical challenges facing Pacific Island countries including technical assistance strategies to mitigate the impacts of climate change on small island economies, food and nutrition security were the focus of meetings of the FAO multidisciplinary team based in Samoa led by the FAO Sub-regional Coordinator, Eriko Hibi and other FAO officers based in the region.

The discussions centred on how FAO is working to implement the Global Plan of Action (GAP) on food security and nutrition. Mr. Tim Martyn, FAO's policy officer based in Fiji, said that Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as Samoa are moving towards addressing food and nutrition challenges but that a greater window of opportunity lay with common action among UN agencies such as FAO, WHO and UNICEF working in concert with actors in the agriculture, health and education sectors.

The GAP development was agreed during the SIDS Conference in 2014 held in Apia. Heads of State and Government and high-level representatives of SIDS around the world proposed that FAO develop the GAP as a direct response to food and nutrition challenges and has become an integral element (paragraph 61)

of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (S.A.M.O.A) Pathway Outcome document adopted at the September 2014 Conference. The GAP sets as its aims ending hunger, achieving food security, improving nutrition and promoting sustainable agriculture while supporting SIDS in advancing the 2030 sustainable development agenda.

“Samoa is just one of a number of many SIDS facing a man-made crisis that threatens the health of families and the wealth of its 34 member nations. NCDs or non-communicable diseases are the number one killer in the world with over 38 million deaths a year while ‘hidden hunger’ or micronutrient deficiency hit hardest at young children and pregnant women” said Fiasili Lam, the FAO policy officer based in Apia.

Tim Martyn reported that in the Pacific alone, on average, NCDs account for 70 percent of all deaths and account for three times the cost of natural disasters to island State economies. The tragedy is that most of these deaths are preventable.” “Diet is a major cause of NCDs and ‘hidden hunger’. We literally are what we eat he said.

Samoa has been identified as facing a health epidemic of rising disability, suffering, and early deaths, caused by escalating rates of NCDs. NCDs, principally cardiovascular diseases, diabetes, cancer and chronic respiratory diseases, are the leading causes of death and disability in Samoa, and responsible for between 75 and 80 percent of deaths.

The overall prevalence of obesity in Samoa has been estimated at 63.1%, with 89.1% of the population considered overweight. In addition, the adult (25-64 years of age) diabetes rate rose from 22.3% in 2002, to 45.8% in 2013.

In the Pacific Islands the statistics are startling. Fifty percent of the male population of Tonga are estimated to be obese, the highest prevalence out of 188 countries worldwide. Over 45 percent of American Samoa’s population have diabetes and the Pacific overall has the world’s highest rate of diabetes.

“To prevent serious diseases, countries need access to safe nutritious food, but this is often not readily available, or affordable, for many. People are making choices to buy the food they can afford – and too often what is affordable is what is making them sick. It’s not just a matter of improved education or healthcare – we need serious investment in programmes to improve the access of at- risk households to nutritious foods, and to lower the cost of eating healthily. Because what we’re facing is nothing short of a disaster”, emphasized Eriko Hibi, FAO’s Subregional Coordinator.

Ms Hibi noted that FAO’s new five-year plan for its work in the Pacific (the Country Programming Framework 2018 – 2022), building on earlier work in areas such as food security, enhanced nutrition and attention to micro-nutrient deficiencies, safe food and promoting sustainable agriculture, fisheries and forestry, was close to finalization awaiting the final signature by governments in the coming months.

[← Back to Pacific News](#)

Fiji Biodiversity Education Kit for primary school students launched

The Education Resource Kit on Biodiversity Conservation has been officially launched in Fiji. The kit is an education resource to support the primary school curriculum for elementary science for years three to six corresponding to ages eight to eleven.

This toolkit was initiated and funded by FAO's "Forest and Protected Area Management" project in Fiji and is a product of a cooperation between the Ministry for Education, the Department of Forest and Environment with the technical assistance from Landcare Research New Zealand and national experts from Fiji.



The current trend of environmental degradation will lead to biodiversity depletion which will be an irreplaceable loss to the youth of Fiji. Youth involvement is critical in environment protection and development decision making and in the implementation of programs for biodiversity conservation. However, the lack of awareness of the significance of biodiversity is the biggest barrier for conservation.

The new teaching kit in forest biodiversity for Fiji's primary schools has been developed with the aim to increase the knowledge and appreciation of Fiji's biological diversity and ecological processes. Although the content has been specifically tailored to a particular age group its use has no age limit.

"This is one of the core results of creating awareness for biodiversity conservation among the people of Fiji", said Rudolf Hahn, Lead Technical Officer for FAO's Forest Protection and Management Project. Mr Hahn said.

The FAO with funding from the Global Environment Facility assists Fiji with the implementation of the Convention of Biodiversity by strengthening biodiversity conservation and reducing forest and land degradation through the project "Forest and Protected Area Management". The project strives as well at enhancing the sustainable livelihoods of local communities and contributes to the achievement of the UN Sustainable Development Goals 2030.

[← Back to Pacific News](#)

Video: Sustainable establishment and management of Mahogany woodlots on Niue Island

Over the years, rapid and unregulated clearance of forestland for farming, mainly subsistence farming has impacted greatly on the area and quality of forests. The Government of Niue through the Ministry of Agriculture, planned to convert currently abandoned ex-forestry plantations back to natural and productive forests under the concept of ‘demonstration forests’ where production and conservation efforts are balanced and the resources are continually managed.



This audiovisual manual has been produced to assist the government, forest department, and landowners of Niue and other Pacific Island countries with the establishment and management of mahogany plantations and woodlots. The sustainable timber production will contribute to the income of landowning communities, while reducing utilization pressure on natural forests and ecosystems in protected areas.

The video has been produced by Landcare Research New Zealand in collaboration with FAO and the Government of Niue, and is a key outcome of FAO's Global Environment Facility (GEF)-funded Forest Protected Area Management project and FAO's country programming framework for Niue.

Click [here to view](#) the video

[← Back to Pacific News](#)

Video: Conserving and Managing our Forests: Bay Homo Community Conservation Area, South Pentecost, Vanuatu

Forests in the South Pacific have a crucial role in the survival of the island peoples. They can be compared to a supermarket located on the doorstep of a house, stocked with construction material, energy, food and medicines. They provide shelter, clean drinking water and have important cultural significance in the daily life of the indigenous peoples. Conserving and managing these forests sustainably is at the heart of the island populations' traditions and livelihoods.



This documentary focuses on South of Pentecost, an island famous for the “Nagol ceremony”, a thrilling land dive that is considered to be a precursor to bungee jumping. The ritual is performed by men who jump off 20 to 30 meter-high wooden towers.

The Government of Vanuatu, with the assistance of FAO and the Global Environment Facility, through the

project “Forest and Protected Area Management” support the landowning communities with establishing and managing a protected area, the “Bay Homo Community Conservation Area”.

Click [here to view](#) the video

[← Back to Pacific News](#)



THE
**OCEAN
CONFERENCE**
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, 5-9 JUNE 2017

The high-level [United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development](#) will convene at United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017, coinciding with World Oceans Day, to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14. The Governments of Fiji and Sweden have the co-hosting responsibilities of the Conference. The Conference aims to be the game changer that will reverse the decline in the health of our ocean for people, planet and prosperity. It will be solutions-focused with engagement from all.



You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#)
Location: UN Compound, Lauofo Meti's Building, Matautu-Uta, Apia SAMOA
Office telephone (+685) 221226
Email Address: FAO-SAP@fao.org
© FAO 2017

I7229EN/1/06.17