

**Eleventh Meeting of
FAO Southwest Pacific Ministers for Agriculture**

Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea

11–14 May 2015

Theme: Climate Smart Agriculture

**Review of Development Partner Support to
Agriculture in the Pacific Islands**



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

Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands
Food and Agriculture Organization of the
United Nations (FAO)
Apia, Samoa 2015

Executive Summary

This report reviews and synthesizes the major regional agriculture sector strategies of the main technical and donor agencies active in the agriculture sector in the Pacific, including the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Land Resources Division (LRD), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations, Australia (DFAT), New Zealand (MFAT), the European Union (EU), Asian Development Bank (ADB), World Bank (WB) and the International Fund for Agriculture (IFAD) to the 14 Pacific Island Countries.¹ It identifies development priorities and thematic focus areas and summarizes the major interventions of these partners. It identifies where there are areas of overlap and geographic concentration. Because of the breadth of the study (both geographically and across thematic areas) it cannot be considered as exhaustive. The report makes no attempt to evaluate the quality, effectiveness or impact of the reported interventions. The objective of the review, rather, is to identify opportunities for increasing the efficiency of the delivery of technical assistance by main technical and donor agencies active in the agriculture sector in the Pacific, through improved co-ordination by agencies.

Improving the efficiency in the delivery of agriculture sector technical assistance to PICs

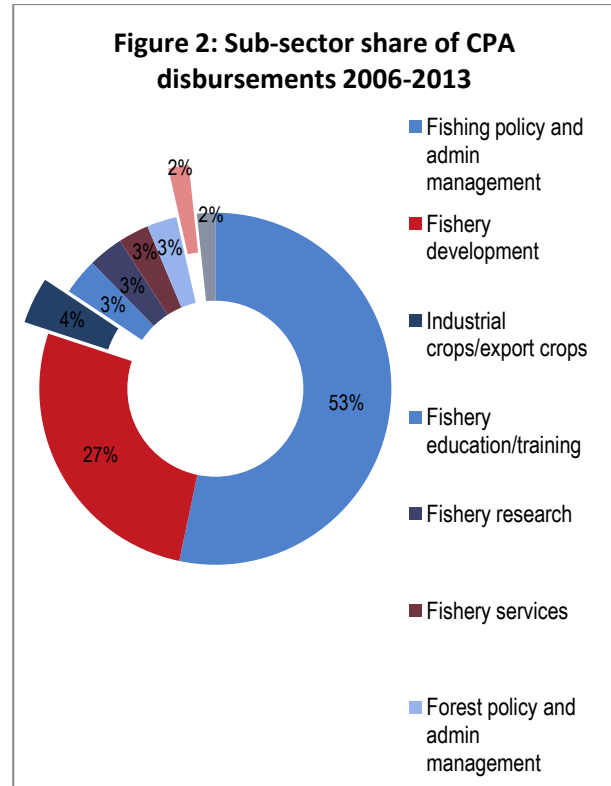
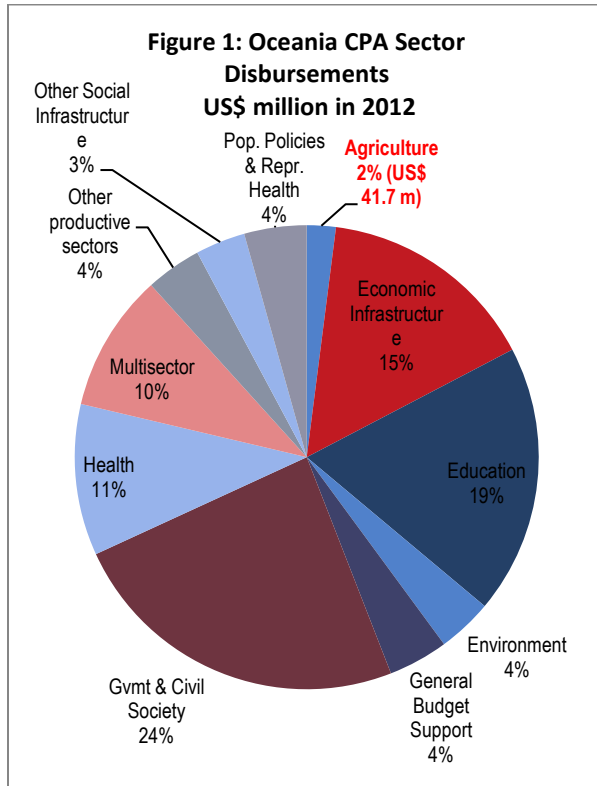
1. Development assistance to the Pacific region has grown steadily over the last ten years, peaking in 2010/11 and registering a small decline thereafter (Figure 1). Country Programmable Aid (CPA) in 2012 stood at US\$2,111 million, equivalent to US\$237 per capita. This makes the region the highest recipient of development aid globally being some six times more than the African region (US\$39 per capita), and almost 10 times more than the global average for aid to all developing countries combined (US\$24 per capita)². Indeed, four PICs are ranked within the top six most heavily aid-dependent countries in the world. Most PICs will remain dependent on aid for many years to come³.
2. The bigger donor's bilateral focus in the agriculture sector is concentrated in a few countries (PNG, SI, Vanuatu and Samoa). In the Smaller Island States which are not recipients of big donor projects and have very limited budget support for agriculture it is difficult to adopt a very strategic approach with small intermittent inputs. Overall, the proportion going to the agriculture sector⁴ is relatively small representing less than 2 per cent of total CPA in 2012 (Figure 1). Agriculture assistance covers agriculture, forestry and fisheries, but a further disaggregation of this data reveals that the fisheries sector currently receives by far the largest share of CPA' with assistance to agriculture (export crops and agricultural research) receiving just 6% of the total (Figure 2).

¹ Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu

² OECD DAC Database

³ Pacific Plan Review (2013) Report to Pacific Leaders. Suva, Fiji: Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

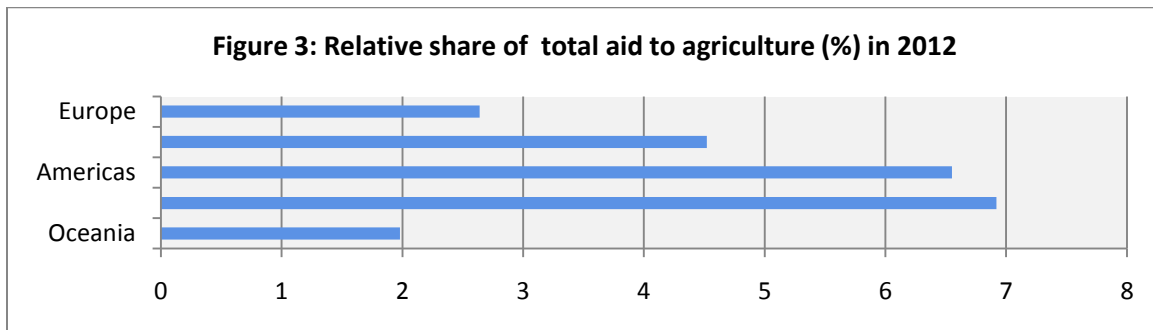
⁴ Agriculture sector includes agriculture, forestry and fisheries



Source: OECD DAC Data Base <http://webnet.oecd.org/>

Source: FAO ADAM Data Base <http://www.fao.org/tc/adam/data/index.html#BROWSE>

Relative to other regions in the world, the agriculture sector in the Pacific receives the smallest share of the development assistance provided to all sectors (Figure 3).



Source: OECD DAC Data Base <http://webnet.oecd.org/>

Strategic focus of key Development Partners (DPs) active in the agriculture sector in the Pacific region

Australia

3. Australia is the biggest development partner to the Pacific region. Australia's aid program has a central focus on economic development and a strong emphasis on aid for trade and private sector partnerships. The Australian aid policy recognizes that productive, efficient and market-oriented agriculture provides a strong foundation for economic development - creating employment and income, and empowering women and lifting people out of poverty. Realizing economic opportunities in the agriculture and food sectors, tackling hunger and malnutrition and ensuring long term global food security are therefore identified as critical priorities for the aid program. Australia's (DFAT) bilateral aid going to agriculture in the Pacific has a sharp geographic focus mainly in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and the Solomon Islands. But the Australian Centre for International Research (ACIAR) program covers a wider group of countries. regional and bilateral initiatives. Australia supports agricultural research for the PICs principally through the activities of the ACIAR which implements bi-lateral and multi-country research programs. In ACIARs 2014/15 budget the Pacific Region received A\$10.91 million with A\$5.96 million directed to PNG and A\$4.95 million allocated to six PICs (Kiribati, Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu).

4. Another key Australian supported intervention in the Pacific region is providing assistance to help island countries identify and prioritize potential export products and meet the market access and quarantine requirements of key trading partners through the Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Program (PHAMA). The project (with funding of over A\$30 million) was initiated in February 2010 and is currently scheduled to finish in June 2017.⁵ Other market oriented initiatives in the region are funded under the Market Development Facility (MDF) which started in 2011 and completes in 2017. The budget of A\$10.2 million covers activities in Fiji, Timor Leste and Pakistan. The program works through partnerships with the private and public sector to identify and develop new products and services or new ways of doing business, which provide increased income and employment opportunities for poorer populations. Australia, in partnership with ADB and New Zealand, also provides support to the Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI)⁶ and significant support to rural infrastructure through the Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility (PRIF)⁷, both these areas being of crucial importance to agriculture development.

⁵ [Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Program website](#)

⁶ [Private Sector Development Initiative \(PSDI\) website](#)

⁷ [Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility website](#)

New Zealand

5. The Pacific Region remains the priority geographical focus for New Zealand's aid program implemented by its Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The biggest share of their annual aid budget is directed towards facilitating increased economic growth. MFAT's aid policy identifies that support for the key economic sectors (agriculture, fisheries, tourism and trade) and services to those sectors (business environment, transport services and renewable energy) is central to facilitating increased economic development in the Pacific. Recognizing the dearth of business skills in the region and the lack of finance for small and medium enterprises (SMEs), emphasis is directed to strengthening business skills (technical training and mentoring), increasing investment and improving the availability of financing. Agriculture and forestry are targeted to receive 6.5 per cent of the nation's aid allocation, with an indicative target for 2012/13 – 2014/15 of NZ\$96.8 million. Yet while agriculture is a specific focus for New Zealand regional support in the Pacific, bi-lateral assistance is currently provided in only two countries: PNG and Samoa.⁸

6. Going forward New Zealand has signalled that support will be provided for large, longer-term, comprehensive initiatives "which evidence proves are more likely to lead to effective results". To ensure more predictability and facilitate a programmatic approach New Zealand has in December 2014 signed a ten-year core funding pact with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). The Land Resources Division (LRD) agriculture programs receive support from NZ core funding. New Zealand also has a strong partnership approach with Australia and supports the regional PHAMA project and the PSDI.

European Union (EU)

7. EU development assistance to the Pacific is strategically aligned to the Pacific Plan and its successor the "Framework for Pacific Regionalism" (FPR). European Development Funds (EDF) are allocated at regional and national level in five-year tranches. Fifteen National Indicative Programs (NIPs), one for each Pacific ACP country⁹ outline priority focal areas, indicative fund allocations and instruments for programming EDF assistance at the country level, whilst the Regional Indicative Program (RIP) serves this purpose for the Pacific region. EDF 10 is currently being implemented and will continue to support activities until 2018, the process of agreeing indicative programs for EDF 11 is well underway and identification of activities (projects) should commence shortly.

8. The 10th EDF RIP (2008 -2013) had allocated €95 million to two priority focal areas: (i) Economic Integration € 45 million (47 per cent of the RIP); and (ii) Sustainable Development €40 million (42 per cent) and to a so-called "non-focal area" €10 million (10 per cent) was set aside to cover the participation of non-state actors, a technical cooperation facility and other capacity-building measures. Agriculture and fisheries were identified as important areas under both priority areas.

⁸ New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade Aid Program (2012) New Zealand Aid Program Sector Priorities 2012-2015

⁹ Includes the 14 Forum Island Countries plus Timor Leste.

9. Under EDF 11 (2014-18), €65 million has been allocated to Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and Environment, which includes a strong emphasis on primary sector interventions to improve resilience to climate change. Regional Economic Integration, with an emphasis on the provision of 'Aid For Trade' receives the largest share of funding under this round.

At the national level rural development (including agriculture) features as a priority focal sector in the NIPS of three countries (PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu). For the 11th EDF Vanuatu's indicative allocation of €31 million has been targeted to rural development as the single focal sector.

10. Two significant on-going interventions implemented by LRD are the Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (IACT) project and the Pacific Agriculture Policy Program (PAPP). The main goal of the IACT project (2011-2015) is to strengthen the export capacity of Pacific countries in the primary industries of agriculture, forestry and aquaculture, assisting commercial ventures and producer groups to become export-oriented. The project budget is €8.55 million.¹⁰ The PAPP with €8.6 million funding runs from 2013 -2017. The target groups are the Ministries of Agriculture and Forestry of Pacific ACP governments to assist them to develop effective national evidence-based agriculture sector policies and interventions to ensure competitiveness of smallholder farmers' participation in agriculture based development.

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

11. ADB is preparing an updated Pacific Approach (2015–2019) to replace the current one, which expired at the end of 2014. The document will continue to be both an approach to regional assistance and a hybrid multi-country strategy.¹¹

Key areas where ADB has been providing support for reform are:

- Business regulatory environment (development of business laws)
- Rationalization and privatization of State Owned Enterprise (SOE)
- Establishing legal and policy frameworks for public-private partnership
- Developing personal property security frameworks (to increase access to finance)
- Use of technology to increase access to finance

12. A strong emphasis is also placed on physical infrastructure development. Transport sector projects aim to increase accessibility to remote areas, better connecting farmers to domestic and international markets. ADB's focus on improving transport and connectivity and strengthening the enabling business environment is very relevant for agriculture development because the greatest portion of current private sector activity in the Pacific region is generated by small-scale entrepreneurs in agriculture, fishing and tourism sectors.

13. At the national level, under the framework of the "Country Operations Business Plan – Samoa, 2015-2017" ADB is supporting a US\$5 million investment in agribusiness support. The project will

¹⁰ SPC LRD Website <http://www.spc.int/lrd/iact-project-scope>

¹¹ ADB (2014)ADB Pacific Approach 2010-2014, Implementation Review, November 2014, Manila

promote commercializing and exporting agricultural produce and processed products along agro-value chains to stimulate agriculture's role in economic growth and poverty reduction in Samoa. It will provide business support services and improved access to financing for agribusinesses.¹²

14. In an effort to improve development partner coordination ADB has played an important role in strengthening partnerships for delivery of regional support to private sector development and infrastructure development. In particular ADB has led a partnership with Australia and New Zealand to support the Private Sector Development Initiative (PSDI) and in collaboration with other DPs¹³ the Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility (PRIF) and the Pacific Infrastructure Advisory Centre.

World Bank (WB)

15. The World Bank Group has been scaling up its assistance in the Pacific¹⁴ and is moving to individual country strategies, to better acknowledge country-specific challenges and priorities. The growth of World Bank commitments made to the Pacific since 2010 are in excess of US\$250m.

16. The World Bank currently supports rural development/agriculture sector projects in three PICs: PNG, Samoa and the Solomon Islands. The Rural Development Program in the Solomon Islands, soon to be supplanted by RDP II is supported also by IFAD, Australia and the EU. The Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project (PPAP) in PNG is supported jointly by IFAD.

17. RDP II is the second phase of a multi-donor (Australia, EU, WB and IFAD) co-financed rural development program. RDP II's components aim to improve: (i) access to basic services in rural areas; and (ii) farming practices leading to increased production and productivity. RDP II aims to improve farming practices through the provision of US\$15 million to support agribusiness partnerships between private sector agribusinesses and smallholder farmers, through a competitive grant scheme. This fund will largely support increase productivity and income improvements in key cash crops (e.g. cocoa and coconut).

18. The PPAP supports stronger linkages between agribusinesses (processors and exporters) and smallholder coffee and cocoa farmers, through the adoption of improved production and processing practices, and improving the market co-ordination capacities of the country's cocoa and coffee industries. Additional financing of US\$30 million was provided by the World Bank to this project in 2014 in order to extend the intervention until 2019, with complementary contributions provided by the European Union (US\$6.4 million), the Government of PNG (US\$4.5 million) and the private sector (US\$10 million). Complementing this program was the extension of the Roads Maintenance and Rehabilitation Project (RMRP II), which started in 2011, with an additional US\$126.5 million.

¹² ADB (2014) Report and Recommendations of the President of the Board of Directors – Proposed Grant Independent State of Samoa: Samoa Agribusiness Support Project, ADB May 2014, Manila

¹³ ADB with Australia, EU; EIB; NZ; WB; IFC

¹⁴ The World Bank's 10 member countries in the Pacific are: FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Palau, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu

19. The Samoa Agriculture Competitiveness Enhancement Project (SACEP) runs from 2012 until 2017, and provides US\$13.84 million towards: i) improved livestock production and marketing; ii) improved fruit and vegetable production and marketing; and iii) institutional strengthening. The SACEP program provides matching grants to eligible small-farmers in order to financing increased investment in improved livestock handling and housing, as well as in fruit and vegetable production and processing technologies. The program also provides ongoing technical assistance to farmers to access improved genetic varieties, feed, land preparation, irrigation, certification and marketing. It also provides funds to enhance the institutional, technical and management capacity of the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries.

International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD)

20. The development of agriculture and rural sectors in the remoter and marginalized atolls, outer islands and upland areas has become a key feature of IFAD's strategic interventions in Pacific Islands Countries. The bulk of IFAD's current program in the Pacific is focused on larger country specific interventions, but some support is also provided regionally in partnership with SPC LRD. Currently IFAD supports investments in rural development/agriculture in PNG, Solomon Islands, Fiji and Tonga.

21. IFAD considers partnerships of critical importance to achieving its development objectives and works closely with World Bank to co-finance (with a US\$ 14 million country loan) the Productive Partnerships in Agriculture Project (PPAP) in PNG and the Rural Development Program (RDP II) in Solomon Islands (with a US\$ 4 million grant).

22. IFAD will provide US\$6 million to the Fiji Agricultural Partnerships Project (FAPP) that will be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture from 2016, in collaboration with a number of private commercial banks based in Fiji, a national NGO and a selection of service providers working in the agricultural sector. This project is a follow up to the US\$500,000 Partnership in High Value Agriculture which was funded by IFAD and is currently assisting smallholder farmers in Nadarivatu to supply off season vegetables to the local market. FAPP focuses on assisting the Ministry to develop the public sector capacity to promote private sector growth. It includes a financing scheme with grants to small-scale and medium sized enterprises in the agricultural sector such as input suppliers, traders, processors and transporters – who are working with small-scale farmers. It provides direct support to small-scale farmers in the highlands of Viti Levu.

23. In Tonga an IFAD grant of US\$4 million funds the NGO implemented Tonga Rural Innovation Project (TRIP). The five year project (2012-2017) supports rural communities to plan and manage their sustainable development priorities, facilitates support for economic infrastructure, and provides business development support including supplemental equity grants to facilitate financing for agriculture and rural businesses.¹⁵

¹⁵ IFAD (2012) Tonga Rural Innovation Project, Project Design Report Volume 1, Asia and Pacific Division, January 2012

24. At the regional level IFAD is supporting the Pacific Islands Farmer Organization (PIFON) with the objective of strengthen partner farmer organizations in the region and benefiting their members especially through cross country sharing of experience, training and technology. IFAD also continues to provide support to development of organic agriculture in the region through the Pacific Organic and Ethical Trade Community (POETCom) based with SPC, with a grant of US\$ 500,000 to support organic farmers in Kiribati and Fiji.

The Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO)

25. FAO's engagement in the Pacific (sub) region is guided by its country programming frameworks (CPF) which are prepared in consultation with national governments and stakeholders. The Pacific Multi-Country CPF 2013-2017 covers FAO support interventions in 13 PICs¹⁶ and one territory, Tokelau with an indicative budget of US\$44.2 million. The FAO program in PNG is covered by a separate CPF which will be reviewed and updated in 2015. The overarching goal of the CPF 2013-2017 is improved food security and income earning opportunities.

26. Overall the framework identifies four priority areas to which FAO assistance will contribute to across the region. These are: (1) Evidence-based Policy and Strategic Planning; (2) Food and Nutrition Security Resilient to the Impacts of Disasters and Climate Change; (3) Value/Supply Chain Efficiency and Market Access; (4) Environmental Management and Resilience.

A detailed overview of FAO's expenditure by PIC and by priority area is provided in the regional CPF implementation plan document, and therefore will not be repeated here.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)

27. The SPC's agriculture and forestry program support to the 22 member countries is managed by the Land Resources Division and guided by the LRD Strategic Plan 2013-2017. LRD's goal is to assist the Pacific Community to improve food, nutritional and income security and sustainable management and development of land, agriculture and forestry resources. Nine medium-term development outcomes are identified in the Plan to which LRD support will contribute:

1. Capacity to make evidence-based policy decisions on food security, sustainable resource management and economic growth strengthened
2. Awareness and understanding on climate change and other key agriculture and forestry issues enhanced
3. Increased availability and better access to traditional and improved crop, tree and animal diversity
4. Increased production and consumption of local nutritious foods
5. Increased capacity for sustainable land (SLM), and sustainable forest management (SFM)
6. National and regional capacity to mitigate and adapt to climate change and to respond to disasters for land, agriculture and forest resources developed and strengthened

¹⁶ 13 Pacific Island Forum Countries excluding PNG

7. Increased capacity of PICTs to meet trade regulations and increase export and domestic trade.
8. Viable agribusinesses that have development impact strengthened
9. Enhanced smallholder (particularly women and youth) participation in local, domestic and international markets

28. LRD's indicative annual budget for implementing the plan is around US\$9 million.¹⁷ SPC is also implementing or a partner in the delivery of a number of regional projects including: the EU funded Pacific Agriculture Policy Program (PAPP), Increasing Agriculture Commodity Trade (IACT), Improvement of Key Services to agriculture (IKSA), which were detailed earlier; and the EU funded Global Climate Change Alliance Pacific Small Islands States (GCCA: PSIS); the regional component of the Australia and New Zealand funded Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access Program (PHAMA), which was outlined earlier; the Australian funded International climate change adaptation initiative (ICCAI); a number of ACIAR projects including, Strengthening integrated crop management research in the Pacific Islands in support of sustainable intensification of high-value crop production (ICM), and the Pacific Agribusiness Development Initiative (PARDI); the IFAD funded Development and pilot implementation of integrated Pacific Island Organic Ethical Trade Initiatives; and the Germany/GIZ funded Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Islands Region (CCCPIR).

Co-ordination for increased efficiency and effectiveness of service delivery

Eleven priority areas of intervention where development partners focus their assistance are identified:

Priority Areas for Interventions		
<i>Evidence-Based Policy</i>	Data collection and evidence-based policy Policy and regulatory frameworks Strategic planning	ADB; EU; FAO; SPC LRD
<i>Production & Productivity</i>	Raising agricultural productivity Increasing agriculture production	Aus (ACIAR); WB; IFAD; FAO; SPC LRD; China; Taiwan
<i>Link Farmers to Markets</i>	Market engagement Market linkages Market access	Aus (ACIAR); NZ; EU; WB; IFAD; FAO; SPC LRD
<i>Agribusiness Value Chains</i>	Agribusiness development Access to financial services and finance Commercial viability Value adding Value/supply chain efficiency/strengthening	Aus (ACIAR); NZ; EU; ADB; WB; IFAD; FAO; SPC LRD

¹⁷ SPC (2013) Land Resources Division Strategic Plan 2013-2017 page 5

<i>Trade & Standards</i>	Biosecurity and trade SPS Improved product quality	Aus; NZ; EU; IFAD;FAO; SPC LRD
<i>Research</i>	Applied research Agricultural research	Aus (ACIAR); SPC; USP
<i>Extension/Training</i>	Extension/training	ACIAR; NZ; IFAD; FAO; SPC; USP; US Land Grant; China; Taiwan
<i>Natural Resource Management</i>	Sustainable land and forest management Natural resource management	EU; GEF; FAO; SPC; SPREP; UNDP; UNEP; USFS; Germany/GIZ
<i>Climate Change</i>	Adapting to climate change Access to biodiversity/genetic resources Mitigating CC - REDD	Aus (ACIAR); EU; ADB; WB; FAO; SPC; UNDP; SPREP; Germany/GIZ, USAID, Japan
<i>Business Environment</i>	Access to finance Business legal framework Competition policy Business services/ mentoring	ADB; Aus; NZ; WB; IFAD
<i>Infrastructure</i> -transport -utilities	Roads and Bridges Wharfs Shipping Water and Sanitation Energy ITC Buildings (Including Market Infrastructure)	ADB; Aus; EU; NZ; WB; Japan; US; China; Taiwan

29. A review of the funding commitments made by donor and technical agencies across the 11 priority areas, reveals that there is a strong focus in four areas where there are strong synergies: **production and productivity; linking farmers to markets; agribusiness value chains; trade and standards;** and well as in one overarching one: **climate change.**

30. The areas of natural resource management and climate change have attracted a great deal of development partner assistance and the interventions represented in Chart 1 are by no means exhaustive. The Global Environment Facility (GEF) provides significant financing support in the areas of biodiversity, climate change, and land degradation with WB, UNDP, FAO, and UNEP representing the main implementing agencies and SPREP and SPC being important executing agencies for regional projects/programs. EU, USAID, Australia and Germany have also been important donors in the climate change arena. The UN-REDD Program (a joint Program between FAO, UNDP and UNEP) has been active in the development of a regional REDD+ Readiness Support Strategy for the Pacific complementing

existing initiatives of SPC and GIZ working towards a 'Regional Pacific Support Structure for National Forest Monitoring Systems for REDD+'.¹⁸ With so many players and climate inter-related activities coordination is vital. The PIFs, SPREP and SPC have important roles to play in this regard. The Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change (PIFACC) 2006 -2015 has served to help focus interventions and the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCRT), a bi-annual climate change coordination mechanism for the Pacific, was established to coordinate and facilitate climate change dialogue and networking in the region.

31. There are an increasing number of interventions focused on agribusiness development, strengthening value chains and linking small farmers to markets. Whilst this increased level of interest in commercializing and increasing the value and competitiveness of PIC agriculture is understandable, the fragmented and somewhat ad hoc nature of the project-based support interventions which appear and disappear (e.g. the EU funded All ACP Agricultural Commodities Program, implemented by FAO, ITC and SPC), presents a significant challenge in coordination, high transaction costs for both PIC governments and DPs, and a high level of uncertainty in the future level of support individual countries might receive. There would therefore be advantage in looking towards a more coordinated longer-term and predictable support facility for these important thematic areas. Other identified focus areas, including market access and promotion for international (export) trade, could well also be integrated under one broader thematic support area for increased commercialization, value and competitiveness of PIC agriculture.

32. There are several examples identified in this review of co-financing arrangements where donors have harmonized their support to implement larger and more programmatic interventions. For example, multi-donor coordination for support to private sector development (access to finance, competition policy, and business law reform) is led by ADB through the PSDI. Australia (DFAT) and NZ (MFAT) have provided long-term and an increasing level of support to this initiative, which was originally launched in 2006 and extended in 2013 into a third phase running to 2019. While some business environment reforms have occurred through stand-alone technical assistance programs, the majority of them have occurred through PSDI.¹⁹ The PSDI experience has demonstrated that reforming the business environment takes many years and requires sustained political support and therefore long-term predictable support from the region's development partners.

33. Similarly, under the RDP and RDPII in Solomon Islands, a large number of actors (WB, IFAD, EU and DFAT) have come together to co-finance an initiative focused on improving rural economic development through the adoption of more efficient production technologies, and linking farmers to markets.

34. With a large number of multilateral and bilateral donors to the agriculture sector operating under dynamic policy agendas and in widely different country contexts, the coordination of

¹⁸ FAO (2013) Pacific Multi-Country CPF Document 2013-2017

¹⁹ ADB (2013) Private Sector Development Initiative, Progress Report 2013, Mandaluyong City, Philippines: Asian Development Bank, 2013

interventions and information sharing mechanisms among national and regional agencies supporting and implementing programs and projects in the agriculture sector presents a significant and continuous challenge. Clearly national governments should lead coordination of development partner support at country level and link it to the policy frameworks in place; and a number of donor agencies are leading the way in achieving greater co-ordination by co-financing bilateral and regional initiatives. Greater leadership at a regional level may assist donors and technical agencies to prioritise their funding allocation to agriculture, and co-ordinate service delivery with other agencies active in the sector.

35. At the regional level, the two principal technical agencies providing support to agriculture, SPC and FAO, both organize a biennial regional meeting of the heads of national government agencies responsible for agriculture and forestry and the Ministers responsible for the sector – the SPC HOAFs and MOAFs meetings and the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture Meeting. The preparation of the “Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific” in 2010 led by SPC, FAO and WHO and the formation of the Food Security Working Group (a multi-agency working group, consisting of SPC, FAO, WHO, UNICEF and GHI) has presented an additional mechanism to enhance coordination at both sector and multi-sector levels, but it is not clear at this time how effective this approach might be, given the grouping has failed to maintain an effective Secretariat or arrange a meeting of its membership since late 2011.

36. Improved co-ordination of the delivery of technical assistance to the agriculture sector in the Pacific could be achieved by bringing together all actors in the sector to a biannual ‘Pacific Week of Agriculture.’ This would provide one forum for regional agenda setting and prioritization of agriculture sector interventions in the Pacific. The outcome statements of this forum would provide added guidance to donors and technical agencies over the short, medium and long-term.

Conclusions

37. Despite this positive trend and indications of donor willingness to consolidate their support through partnerships and co-financing, aid to the agriculture sector still remains fragmented. Thus building coherence and harmonization across development interventions should remain a priority. There is therefore, a need to strengthen the institutional mechanisms that allow for better integration and coordination of national and regional efforts and the assignment of responsibility. These options, such as a Pacific Week of Agriculture, will be discussed in more detail by Ministers.