



**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION  
OF THE UNITED NATIONS**

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Report of the Eighth

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**MEETING OF FAO SOUTH WEST PACIFIC  
MINISTERS FOR AGRICULTURE**

**Alofi, NIUE, 20 – 22 May 2009**

FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands  
Apia, SAMOA

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**EIGHTH MEETING  
OF THE FAO SOUTH WEST PACIFIC MINISTERS FOR AGRICULTURE**

Alofi NIUE  
20-22 May 2009

**REPORT**

1. The Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture was convened at the Millennium Hall in Alofi, Niue, from 20 to 22 May 2009. The meeting was attended by Ministers from Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Tonga and Tuvalu. Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu and Samoa sent delegations to represent the countries. Representatives from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the University of the South Pacific (USP), the Pacific Islands Trade and Investment Commission (PITIC) and the World Health Organization (WHO) attended as observers. The full list of participants is attached as (Annex A).

**Agenda Item: 1: OFFICIAL OPENING**

2. A formal ceremony was held at 2.30pm, Wednesday 20 May at the Matavai Resort to mark the official opening of the Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture.

3. The Director-General of FAO, Dr Jacques Diouf delivered the keynote address. He noted that the Meeting will elaborate key issues such as strengthening food security and rural incomes through improved sustainable agriculture; enhancing competitiveness of the agriculture sector through agribusiness and marketing, effective management and conservation of fisheries and aquaculture and concerted and coordinated efforts in the management of tree and forest resources. He also highlighted FAO's commitment to supporting its member countries by providing information on emerging issues namely, Climate Change, and high and volatile food and fuel prices. He further noted the National Medium Term Framework for PICs for 2009-2012 aimed at enhancing national coordination, with Governments in the driving seat, supporting national development plans/strategies, enabling more productive partnerships with development partners and Non-Governmental Organizations in the region, and acting as an instrument for the One UN delivery process. (Full text of the address is in Annex B)

4. The Acting Premier of Niue, Honorable O'Love Jacobsen extended a special welcome to the Director-General of FAO, Ministers and country Representatives. She stated that the Government and the people of Niue were honoured and pleased to host the Eighth Meeting, the first to be held in Niue. She shared the sentiments of the Director-General that work programmes need to be adapted to the diversity of the Pacific.

## **Agenda Item: 2.0: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES**

### **Item 2.1: Election of the Chair**

5. The Chair of the Seventh Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture, Honorable Mattlan Zackhras, Marshall Islands' Minister of Resource and Development called the meeting to order and invited the Minister of Kiribati to open the meeting with a prayer. The Chair acknowledged and thanked the Government and the people of Niue for hosting the meeting and for the hospitality shown towards the delegates. He encouraged the meeting to openly share and discuss issues so that the work of both countries and FAO is productive. The Chair then invited the FAO Subregional Representative for the Pacific, Dr Vili A. Fuavao to lead the deliberation on the adoption of the meeting agenda and the working procedures.

6. The Subregional Representative thanked the out-going Chair and the Government of Marshall Islands for their role in assisting SAP during their tenure ship as Chair of the 7<sup>th</sup> SWP Ministers Meeting. He elaborated and noted the standing practices of SWPM Meetings in electing a new Chair traditionally from the host country. The Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Niue, Honorable Pokotoa Sipeli was therefore elected unanimously as the Chair for the Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture.

7. The Chair, Honorable Pokotoa Sipeli thanked the delegates for the confidence expressed in electing him to facilitate the deliberations of the meeting. He welcomed the Ministers, country representatives, delegates, participants and FAO staff. He further expressed appreciation for the efforts made by all to travel to Niue for the meeting.

### **Item 2.2: Adoption of the Theme**

8. The Chair invited the Subregional Representative to introduce the theme for the meeting. The Subregional Representative noted that for each SWPM a theme is chosen to ensure focused presentations and deliberations. The theme for the meeting emphasized the important of agriculture for income generation, employment, food security and alleviation of poverty in the rural areas.

9. The meeting endorsed *Earning a Living from Agriculture* as the theme for the Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture. This theme emphasized the importance of agriculture in the sub-region in terms of food security, employment, and income generation. These issues are being brought out in the Pacific Multi- Country National Medium Term Planning Framework (NMTPF) to be discussed in the meeting. He further emphasized the need to put in place robust policies and plans and working closely with networks of development partners to support these objectives through agriculture sector development.

### **Item 2.3: Adoption of the Agenda**

10. The Chair referred ministers to the provisional agenda for the meeting and invited the Subregional Representative to provide a brief overview of it. The

Subregional Representative introduced the items and noted the usual practice of the agenda providing just a guide for the deliberation and accepted that there were built in flexibility to allow meeting to raise other relevant issues in terms of the development of the agriculture sector. The draft agenda, furthermore, included two guest speakers for the meeting. Dr David Hallam is invited to address the impacts of soaring food prices in the Pacific; and a representative of WHO would be making a presentation on the H1N1 flu at a special function open to the public on the evening of 21 May.

#### **Item 2.4: Proposed Programme and Arrangements**

11. Following an invitation from the Chair, the Subregional Representative outlined the proposed timetable and working procedures for the meeting. In line with usual practice, the Secretariat will prepare a draft Communiqué capturing the main outcomes and decisions of the meeting. The draft text would be circulated at the earliest opportunity to allow time for delegates to review and provide comments before it was finalized for signature at the closure of the meeting. He added that a full report of the meeting will also be prepared and circulated for comments before it is finalized for printing and distribution.

12. The meeting adopted the meeting Proposed Programme and Arrangements (Attached Annex D)

#### **Agenda Item: 3.0: FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE PACIFIC REGION 2007 - 4/2009**

13. At the invitation of the Chair, the Subregional Representative referred the meeting to paper SWPM/NIU 3.0 which provides an overview of the activities of FAO in the Pacific for the period of 2007 – 4/2009.

14. He noted the importance of the biennial meeting of Ministers of Agriculture for ensuring that FAO's technical assistance remains focused and in line with the priorities of the region and member countries. He specifically alluded to the successes and evolution of the focus of the annual FAO Round Tables Meeting on WTO, convened by FAO with financial and technical assistance provided by New Zealand, IFAD and with in kind contribution and partnership from relevant CROP agencies.

15. The Meeting commended and congratulated the Subregional Representative for the paper and SAP for the technical assistance provided. The meeting noted the FAO reform with emphasis on Results Based Management (RBM) and acknowledged with appreciation SAP efforts in putting in place an adequate and appropriate monitoring and evaluation system for the delivery of assistance in the Pacific. The need to extend the RBM process and appropriate M&E processes to small projects under the TeleFood programme were also noted.

16. The Meeting commented the annual FAO Round Table on WTO, and requested that it should continue as it has proven beneficial for the development of the PICs.

## **Agenda Item: 4.0: PARTNERSHIPS BETWEEN MEMBER STATES AND FAO**

### **Item: 4.1 National Medium Term Priority Framework**

17. In response to an invitation from the Chair, the Subregional Representative drew the attention of the meeting to document SWPM/NIU/4.1 and invited FAO Consultant Dr Stephen Rogers to address the meeting. The paper provided an overview of the National Medium Term Priority Framework (NMTPF), a planning and management tool to ensure that FAO assistance is well coordinated, focused and supportive of key objectives and outcomes in National Development Strategies. Whilst the NMTPF primarily provides a strategic framework to focus FAO assistance to countries in the region, it should also enable productive partnerships and joint programmes with other Organizations active in the region, particularly UN agencies and CROP agencies. It is also an important input into the One UN process and should help to further the aid effectiveness agenda set out in the Paris Declaration and the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles.

18. The NMTPF has been developed through a wide consultative process and defines the medium-term priorities for FAO's technical cooperation in 13 Pacific island countries for the period 2009-2012. Results-Based monitoring will be applied to steer the NMTPF implementation and reporting on activities. A feature of this process is that observation does not focus solely on completed activities, but on the changes resulting from activities, outputs, outcomes and impact of the intervention. Each of the 13 country chapters identifies areas for FAO assistance which should contribute to achieving priority outcomes. However, proposed activities and project interventions need to meet qualifying criteria of the specific funding source (e.g. TCP, Trust Fund, ISFP, FSSLP or GEF, etc.) and show clear linkages to national prioritized development outcomes agreed in the NMTPF.

19. In the case of PNG, the National Agriculture Development Plan 2006-10 developed with assistance from FAO is used in lieu of a National Medium Term Priority Framework, which is to be finalized in the latter half of this year.

20. The Ministers for Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Representatives of Australia, New Zealand, Samoa, Vanuatu, and PNG were pleased to note that FAO is moving into a results based framework where outcomes and results will govern programme delivery. Although the NMTPF still contains a listing of many project interventions rather than a holistic programme approach, it was stressed as a positive step taken by FAO to move forward with strategic approaches and focusing on linkages within the region with national programmes. The meeting also noted with satisfaction that some preliminary outcome indicators were listed and recognized that outcome indicators need further elaboration.

21. The Minister of the Resource and Development of the Marshall Islands and Representative of Vanuatu expressed appreciation for the inclusion of Climate Change into the framework as this affects food security.

22. The Representative of New Zealand raised the issue of support for rice production, and noted that there are concerns expressed about viability of rice production in the region, particularly with regard to returns on effort (labour). He emphasized that a strong watch needs to be kept on the economics of rice production, and called for an assessment of this issue. He proposed for consideration that SPC/FAO/USP further investigate rice development issues in the Pacific.

23. The Fiji Minister of Agriculture noted his country's commitment to reviving rice production as an alternative to other crops such as sugar cane. The rice programme started in 2007 and at present the country is producing about 10 percent of its needs. He further expressed gratitude to FAO and the Government of Indonesia for supporting this initiative.

24. The Representative of New Zealand enquired about follow up and assessment of the Telefood programme. He noted that Telefood has high transaction and administrative costs, and asked FAO to ensure sustainable project outcomes. The Minister of Nauru also supported this statement and hoped that a review of the TeleFood programme would be forthcoming.

25. The Representative of Australia valued the inclusion of fisheries and appreciated that the NMTPF was aligned with the Forum Fisheries Organization objectives as well as the SPC Marine programme. However, Australia requested additional information on the scope and nature of partnerships employed by FAO in the fisheries sector.

26. The Representative of Niue reiterated that fisheries and agriculture need equal prominence, and felt that there is room to further strengthen links with the Forum Fisheries Agency, Oceanic Fisheries programme and the Marine Resources division of SPC. FFA is currently developing integrated medium and long term plans and results based programmes highlighting that fisheries are a large resource for food security in the region.

27. The Meeting noted the inclusion of support for planning and statistics in the NMTPF due to the present perceived lack of sufficient baseline data for effective planning.

28. The Subregional Representative and the FAO Consultant replied to the queries and indicated that subsequent technical presentations will address most of the concerns. The Subregional Representative also stated that – while the Organization has started implementing agreed reform measures - SAP has embraced the applications of the RBM and M&E into its operations. In this connection, further strengthening of the FAO office and its capacities is envisaged. He furthermore stated that FAO and its development partners are in a learning process on how to implement this novel approach.

29. The Subregional Representative indicated that FAO has expertise on rice development which could be called upon for further advice and assistance.

30. The FAO Consultant added that the main aim of a sector plan (architecture for a sector programme) is to align all resources from Government, development partners and NGO's under a clear policy to achieve key (agreed) objectives. Agriculture is a complex sector as there are many different key stakeholders at various levels and with the private sector as the main driver.

31. In summary, the Meeting endorsed the Pacific Multi-Country NMTPF. It further supported the adoption of the Results-Based Management approach. It emphasized the importance of close collaboration with key development partners in this process. The Meeting expressed appreciation for FAO's efforts for ensuring that this NMTPF encompassed national issues in alignment with the national priorities.

## **Agenda Item 4.2: IMPLEMENTATION OF THE NMTPF**

32. In response to an invitation from the Chair, the Subregional Representative drew the attention of the meeting to the discussion papers SWPM/NIU/4.2.1 – SWPM/NIU 4.2.7 that addressed the implementation of the NMTPF. The papers will be presented by members of the SAP Multidisciplinary team.

### **Item 4.2.1. Strengthening Agricultural Policy Development in the Pacific Region**

33. In his short introduction, Mr Daneswar Poonyth, FAO Policy Officer noted a common concern echoed by countries during the formulation of the NMTPF that existing information and data do not adequately meet the needs of policy-making and planning. The increasing demand for information and data is a challenge to countries in the region. Data collection, compilation, maintenance and analysis are costly and countries do not generally have the required resources for those activities.

34. He further noted that there is wealth of information and data from agriculture census, Household Income and Expenditure Surveys, existing case studies, diagnostic studies, scoping exercises, but these are not systematically analyzed to feed into evidence-based policy decisions. In some cases, improving access to relevant information should therefore increase the capacity for appropriate policy formulation in the Pacific region. More importantly, there was a need to strengthen PICs' capacity to collect, verify, analyze, disseminate and exchange information and data.

35. The Representative of Samoa reiterated the importance of information and data and there is a need for inventory of existing sources of information and data. The Representatives of Vanuatu and Cook Islands endorsed the paper and acknowledged FAO's assistance to conduct agricultural census and the formulation of agriculture policy. The Representative of New Zealand stated that the lack of adequate data is a critical issue however the major constraining factor in PICs is the lack of skilled capacity to collect, verify, analyze and formulate appropriate policy. The Policy Officer noted that FAO would support the respective countries to strengthen data collection and capacity for policy analysis and formulation.

36. The Meeting:

- (i) Recognized the importance of current and accurate data for agricultural policy formation and quality planning and decision making.
- (ii) Recognized the need to invest in sound information management systems including data collection and analysis.
- (iii) Requested FAO and other relevant partners to assist with strengthening national capacity in data collection, management and dissemination systems.

#### **Item 4.2.2. Agriculture for Growth: Learning from Experience in the Pacific**

37. The presentation of the *Agriculture for Growth Study* was made by FAO Consultant Dr Stephen Rogers. The study outlined the concept of improving our understanding of agricultural commercialisation in the Pacific. Official policies of many national governments in the Pacific accord a central role to the intensification and commercialization of smallholder agriculture as a means of stimulating the rural economy and alleviating poverty. Axiomatic to this stance is the belief that smallholder agriculture is uniquely positioned to deliver broad-based growth in rural areas (where the vast majority of the poor still live). However, certain critical conditions need to be in place if efforts to promote agricultural commercialization are to benefit a large proportion of smallholder agricultural producers.

The study will focus on the following key questions:

- What pathways to which types of commercialization are open to smallholder producers?
- What market and institutional innovations in supply chains might help smallholder producers?
- What are the dynamics associated with different pathways of commercialization and what critical conditions are necessary to allow smallholder farmers to take advantage of new opportunities?
- How have “successful” enterprises dealt with structural and institutional challenges?
- What measures encourage value chain participation by smallholder farmers?
- What is the potential for scaling up and multiplying successful pathways within the country and across the region?

The main aim of the study is to gain a deeper and more quantitative understanding of smallholder commercialisation and its strengths and weaknesses in contributing to broad-based economic growth. The study should strengthen our understanding of the context in which policy choices have to be made, and may help find innovative ways to link public funding with private sector resources. It should provide specific advice to governments on the most appropriate interventions they could make to support successful commercialisation of smallholder farming.

38. The Representative of PNG noted that there are many technical prescriptive policies on shelves, but implementation of these is not happening – this is one the biggest challenge. This kind of context-based study could enhance the focus on relevant policies and thus lead to improved implementation.

39. The Representative of New Zealand noted that this is a positive forward looking approach on lessons learned from successes in the region.

40. The Meeting unanimously supported the concept for the study and suggested working with a reference group targeting policy makers in each country. It also recommended to add to the data analysis the roles of research and development and where impacts were being felt, e.g. on women, vulnerable groups and the benefits received by them from agricultural commercialisation.

#### **Item: 4.2.3: Improving Sustainable Agriculture Productivity and Enhancing Competitiveness**

41. In his short introduction of the discussion paper Mr Matairangi Porea, FAO Plant Protection Officer noted that the paper covered agricultural growth and identified issues for increasing agricultural productivity in the PICs. It highlighted the need for increased production, a more dynamic trade sector and adequate incentives to progress to higher value crops and products, to raise profitability and improve incomes of farmers in the Pacific region. The paper also pointed to some challenges in achieving agriculture production and productivity towards the implementation of the NMTPF.

42. The Minister of the Cook Islands raised the issue of creating a demand for potential products prior to supplying and selling on the market. He requested that FAO looked into the appropriate technological to extend the shelf life of products.

43. The Representative of Vanuatu endorsed the issue about the Vi (Polynesian plum) and Bele, and requested FAO to support Vanuatu in developing capacity in crop processing and improving products for consumers.

44. The Representative of New Zealand emphasized the importance of being vigilant with quarantine of agricultural products for the New Zealand market. He gave examples on papaya and other Fruit Fly affected products and elaborated further on the use of HTFA quarantine treatment plants. He recommended that these treatment plants need to be reviewed annually with regards to effectiveness to ensure the elimination of fruit fly eggs in the fruit.

45. The Meeting:

- (i) Acknowledged the importance of the three main thematic areas,
- (ii) Agreed to strength, intensify and diversify agricultural production systems for enhanced food security, and increased agricultural productivity,
- (iii) Requested FAO to enhance trade capability and capacity to enable farmers and exporters to improve competitiveness, diversify into new enterprises, increase value addition and meet domestic and export market requirements, and
- (iv) Requested FAO to enhance the capacity of the member countries for sound biosecurity and land and natural resource management for

sustainable agricultural production systems and economic benefit streams, and offering opportunities for increasing productivity in the future.

**Item: 4.2.4: Enhancing Competitiveness through Agribusiness and Marketing**

46. . This paper was introduced by Dirk Schulz, FAO Food and Nutrition Officer. The paper highlighted the limited capacity of PICs in food processing and value adding of agriculture and fisheries products and how this is causing a lack of competitiveness both on domestic and international markets. It outlined proposed responses to address identified issues within the framework of the NMTPF.

47. The Representative of New Zealand raised some issues on the challenges faced in this area, such as consistency of supplies of produce from PICs. In contrast, Asian producers can provide large volumes of food with high quality to the New Zealand market. There are also issues regarding fruit fly treatment facilities. This needs a thorough annual check to assess effectiveness for eliminating fruit fly eggs in the fruit. There has been a request from PICs to look into alternative treatment facilities that would help improve quality of food coming into New Zealand.

48. The Representative of New Zealand expressed appreciation for FAO assistance in supporting five countries in collecting data and information for import risk assessments (for Vi and Bele). This has been submitted to New Zealand authorities in support of application for access to New Zealand markets. It has helped reduce processing period from three years for approval to just one year. He added that there were other avenues being considered such as for cooked food. Consultations will soon start with Tonga and Samoa about the cooked breadfruit pathway. This would set a precedent for other cooked food into New Zealand in the near future.

49. The Representative of Niue noted that people grow food for subsistence purposes for food security and then look at sending off the excess to the market. Various challenges exist in both the agriculture and fishery sector where it is difficult to export to international markets due to financial constraints and because infrastructure is poor. There was a need to introduce new varieties or products to diversify and ensure that countries (PICs) do not flood the market or compete against each other. He also stated that more market information and trends (forecasting) in terms of global export markets be made available as a basis for further risk assessment. He requested FAO assistance for capacity building in this area. He also requested that reports pertaining to the 3 year risk assessment process in New Zealand be made available for information.

50. The Food and Nutrition Officer explained that limited capacity of PICs in food processing and value adding of agriculture and fisheries products was causing a lack of competitiveness both on domestic and international markets. This is further exacerbated by lack of domestic market infrastructures and post harvest facilities as well as issues related market access.

51. He proposed that assistance be geared towards enhancing capacity in food processing and value adding to agricultural and fishery products, including the

development of business skills. Furthermore, market /value chain analysis and development would help to improve marketing systems and market access for livestock, traditional food crops and high value specialty commodities. In addition to capacity building and institutional strengthening for better integration of smallholders into commercial market, there is a need for improved quality of existing export commodities to avoid high costs from inspection, pest identification, and treatment.

52. The Food and Nutrition Officer highlighted the importance of the coconut sector for PICs and proposed that a strengthened and diversified coconut industry sector could be achieved through a stronger focus on whole nut processing and value added products, flanked by extensive replanting programmes as well as attention to pest control. Finally, he pointed out that an efficient marketing system and infrastructure is essential to ensuring a functioning value chain, requiring improved market and post-harvest facilities.

53. The Meeting supported and endorsed the following recommendations:

- (i) Food processing and value adding of agriculture and fisheries products offers both opportunities and challenges to Pacific businesses enterprises, enabling them to add value, improve convenience to consumers and the shelf life of agricultural products, making them more competitive in the market. However, existing opportunities often remain underutilized due to a lack of organization within the sector and low levels of technical and business skills and capacities. Critical in this context is also knowledge about the value chain necessary to succeed in today's market and regulatory environment and assistance will focus on building capacity in these areas.
- (ii) Where appropriate, to also support market infrastructure and postharvest facilities including researching development, education and training institutions.

#### **Item: 4.2.5 Safe and Nutritious Food for a Wealthy and Healthy Pacific**

54. At the invitation of the Chair, the Subregional Representative highlighted the agenda item and referred to paper SWPM/NIU/4.2.5. The presentation set the stage by providing concrete examples of issues impacting on Pacific food trade, both from an export as well as import perspective, and pointed out that most issues were related to inadequate capacity to meet food safety and quality standards along the food chain. He invited the FAO Food and Nutrition Officer, Mr Dirk Schulz to introduce the discussion paper.

55. The Food and Nutrition Officer stated that in order to achieve the NMTPF outcome "successfully meeting established food quality and safety standards" four outputs would need to be achieved. These are (i) appropriate national food legislation, food quality/safety standards, and regulations developed and established; (ii) capacity to implement food quality and safety standards regulations strengthened; (iii) effective food control, inspection and certification service operating, ensuring

compliance with food legislation; and (iv) laboratory support services strengthened, addressing issues such as food analytical capacity and accreditation.

56. In regards to nutrition, the Meeting was informed that, while the overall supply of food energy for Pacific Island Countries has been increasing and is within or above requirements, food insecurity and nutritional and related diseases continue to persist in a variety of forms (including NCDs, vitamin and mineral deficiencies, stunting), placing the region under a double burden of malnutrition. He suggested strategies could include linking agriculture production to nutritional issues; promoting appropriate sustainable local production and processing of healthy foods, using Food Standards to improve dietary intakes and considering nutritional issues in agricultural policy and extension. Efforts should be made to promote local, traditional foods through awareness creation and education on their nutritional value and the importance of eating a good quality diet.

57. The Representative of Samoa highlighted that there was new technology to identify food security standards in the Asian region and wanted to know how this could be developed for the Pacific.

58. The Representative of New Zealand raised two key issues for consideration, the first pertaining to Non Communicable Diseases not being prevalent in the paper and, secondly, how important it is to link departments and ministries on this issue. He highlighted that the New Zealand Food Safety Authority have stated that it is important for CODEX to strengthen food control systems for both export and domestic markets. He advised the meeting that the NZFSA is willing to support FAO and PICs if required in this area.

59. The Representative of New Zealand also raised the key concern of ensuring that the onus or responsibility of delivery of programmes should be defined and clarified further. He said that New Zealand encourages FAO to engage with other regional actors/stakeholders where possible to provide support, e.g. the World Health Organization and Non Government organizations.

60. The Meeting supported the recommendations of the paper:

- (i) Nutritious food of adequate safety and quality is essential to achieving food security and a productive society, as well as being a key enabling requirement for domestic and export oriented agricultural development and income generation in the Pacific.
- (ii) Noting the identified constraints, continued assistance is required to strengthen the essential components of national food control systems, including legislation and standards as well as capacity to monitor and enforce through effective inspection and certification. In this context it is recommended to base interventions on the Codex Alimentarius which is the international reference point for harmonizing national food regulatory frameworks, thereby safeguarding consumer health and facilitating trade in food as Codex standards are considered WTO compliant. Attention is also drawn towards the importance of food safety and quality in the agribusiness sector, particularly food processing enterprises.

- (iii) Given the rapid change in diets and increased reliance on imported, highly processed foods which in part is of poor nutritional value, an important strategy for the agriculture sector is to develop sustainable agro-food based solutions to nutritional problems, creating and maintaining a diversified supply of locally produced foods and promoting their consumption as part of a balanced diet.

#### **Item: 4.2.6 Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture for Food Security and Sustainable Development**

61. Following an invitation from the Chair, the Subregional Representative referred the Meeting to paper SWPM/NIU/4.2.6 and gave a brief overview before inviting Mr. Masanami Izumi, FAO Fishery Officer to introduce the paper which has two key areas, namely small-scale fisheries and aquaculture.

62. The Fishery Officer stated that the fisheries and aquaculture sector continued to play an important role in economic development and urged countries to focus on small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, particularly their management. It was further emphasized that countries commit themselves to improve fisheries information systems at the national level. This will ensure a firm basis for policy making, decision making and management.

63. It was concluded that continued efforts are needed to prioritize further strengthening of national capacities in order to ensure sustainable development and sound management of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, responding to climate change and bio-security issues. In addition, countries were urged and reminded that greater post-harvest benefits need to be sought including improved post-harvest fisheries practices, production of value-added fishery products and increased access to markets and trade. It was stressed that there is an urgent need for undertaking an overview of aquaculture development at the national and regional level.

64. The Representative of Niue recognized the importance of fisheries for food security in Pacific Island countries. In relation to food security, he appreciated the role of FAO in ensuring that there is compliance as well as a Code of Conduct for Responsible Fisheries. He also noted that it is essential to address national plans of action for IUU, sharks and other species, and aquaculture activities under the new Tuna Commission.

65. The Meeting agreed and supported the recommendations;

- (i) In the light of recent increased impacts of fishing in the region, there is an enormous challenge and greater than before need for effective management and conservation of fisheries and aquaculture resources for food security and economic benefits. It is urged that countries attribute more attention to small-scale fisheries and further strengthen the management of fisheries.
- (ii) There are major challenges facing the improvement of information and data on the status and trends of fisheries, particularly small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, for use as a sound basis for policy-making, management

- and sector planning. It is urged that countries commit themselves to further improve fisheries information systems at the national level.
- (iii) National level constraints aside, to ensure sustainable development and sound management of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture that is environmentally harmonious, and responds to climate change and bio-security issues, it is concluded that further strengthening of national capacities be prioritized.
  - (iv) For improved sustainable livelihoods in fishing communities, it is urged that greater post-harvest benefits need to be sought. These should include improved post-harvest fisheries practices, production of value-added fishery products and increased access to markets and trade.
  - (v) Development of aquaculture in the region has been slow. To benefit from past experience and overcome various impediments in its development, a regional overview of the development of aquaculture is to be undertaken. The lessons learned should be documented and experiences shared. Countries may need to modify their national aquaculture development strategies in response to the findings of the overview. Illegal unusual

#### **Item: 4.2.7 Sustainable Forest Management and Conservation Challenges and Opportunities**

66. Following an invitation from the Chair, Mr Aru Mathias, FAO Forestry Officer directed the attention of the meeting to document SWPM/NIU/4.2.7. The forestry paper presentation session was divided into two parts with the first part presented by Mr Mathias and the second part by another FAO Forestry Officer Mr Adrian Whiteman. The paper reported on tree and forestry issues faced in the region namely in large island countries, medium and high island countries and in small atoll island countries. Specifically the paper informed the Meeting on FAO's planned expansion on conservation activities, highlighted the emerging issues, discussed the need for conservation, suggested ways in making forestry pay, and update the Meeting with FAO's recent involvement with the regionally GEF-funded Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (GEF-PAS) forestry conservation and protected area management project.

67. Mr Mathias noted the on-going issues faced in the region affecting sustainable management of tree and forest resources such as ineffective policies and poor legal framework, lack of data and information, inadequate financing of forestry in national budgets and need for closer collaboration and networking in the area of conservation and protected areas management. A point stressed was that forestry can pay and contribute economically if right incentives are provided and suitable markets for products and services are created as well as equitable sharing of costs of sustainable forest management by relevant stakeholders. He also highlighted the importance of incorporating emerging issues such as climate change, bio-energy and fire into policies and action plans.

68. Mr Whiteman gave a brief on the Global Environment Facility. The Facility is a funding mechanism for an international convention covering climate change, biodiversity, land degradation, chemical and pollutants and pays for projects with global environmental benefits. Mr Whiteman informed the Meeting that FAO is

now an implementing agency for the Facility and, with GEF-PAS support, now works with four countries; Fiji, Vanuatu, Samoa and Niue. The work involves formulation of a regional project to enhance conservation work and expand protected area networks in the countries concerned. Project preparation work started in December 2008 and will conclude in June 2009. The project proper when developed and approved will run for 4 years.

69. The Minister of Tuvalu emphasized that their equivalent of a forest is coconut trees and how this has progressed into a replanting scheme for the island. He stated that the Government of Tuvalu is appreciative of the project for mangrove production funded by GEF. He reiterated the real effects and concerns of climate change on tiny atolls like Tuvalu and Kiribati and that there will always be a heavy reliance on funding and support from bigger countries.

70. The Representative of Samoa highlighted the key partnership between Ministry of Agriculture and the Ministry of Environment on forestry initiatives as production sustainability for forests seems to be key for Samoa.

71. The Minister of Nauru noted that Nauru, with its history of phosphate mining, is at an 80 percent forestation level currently. However, they are still looking to mine what is left.

72. The Minister of Fiji posed a question for GEF and wondered if there is any research being undertaken on salt resistant tree crops.

73. The Representative of Tonga stressed the creation of markets for forestry products. She indicated that most trees are in agro-forestry farms, and Tonga would like to promote and show case agro-forestry farms and products for tourism.

74. The Representative of New Zealand wanted to follow up on a Questionnaire for Fire Risk and Fire Management of forests and inquired who, SPC or FAO, prepared the document. He was seeking clarification on what responses have been received to date.

75. The Representative of Vanuatu noted that over-exploitation was an issue. Data and information are vital to better understanding the issue. He indicated that a National Forestry policy is being considered and requested FAO assistance to include climate change issues into its work programme.

76. The Representative of Niue acknowledged FAO assistance with its forestry legislation and requested support and assistance on climate change issues – especially climate change and carbon trading – and the viability of various mechanisms for PIC's. He also inquired about the time frame for the preservation of forests and how Niue could derive benefits.

77. In response the Forestry Officers supported key issues brought out by the respective countries seeking FAO assistance in various fields such as salt resistant forestry species, indigenous trees and the Fire Risk questionnaires, and indicated that FAO will follow up on these matters where possible.

78. The Subregional Representative noted that FAO has received requests for technical assistance on coconuts. He alluded to the relevant industries in Fiji, Samoa, Kiribati and Tonga.

79. The Forestry Officers advised that at present there was only one project that qualifies for the clean development mechanism in the Pacific. In addition, as there is little formal documentation on reduced emissions in the Pacific, it is felt premature to pursue this course of action. Indeed, there were few opportunities in carbon trading markets – such as the Air Pacific initiative – but PIC's should look at smaller manageable schemes first before considering going internationally.

80. The Meeting noted the information about GEF. The Meeting specifically endorsed:

- (i) A number of countries have developed their forest policy, some have just completed reviews of their policy, and some have drafted new policies. Countries are requested to note the changing environment in the forests and the forestry sector and are urged to incorporate the emerging issues into their policies and plans of action
- (ii) Given the high rate of deforestation and forest degradation, threat to loss of valuable biodiversity, the need to address impacts of climate change, sustainable use and conservation of tree and forest resources becomes more critical. It is strongly recommended that countries identify fragile, high risk and unique forest ecosystems for conservation and protection;
- (iii) Trees and forests have different functions and values. To maximize benefits and to fully exploit the different forests and non-forest values, countries are urged to explore and create different markets for products and services;
- (iv) Policy, planning and decision making processes can not be effective if forest data and information contains gaps in the different data-sets and are out-dated. It is strongly recommended that countries review their data and information in the country (forestry and non-forestry), update, organize and package it in a functioning order for easy use and application. Countries are also requested to work closely with FRA2010 Secretariat to update their data and country reports;
- (v) Given the important functions and values of trees and forests in providing protection to water sources, coastlines and agriculture lands, particularly in medium and small atoll islands, countries are urged to develop tree systems to protect these resources and high risk environments.

### **Agenda Item: 5.0: PARTNERSHIP – INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD)**

81. At the invitation of the Chair, the Subregional Representative referred the Meeting to paper SWPM/NIU/5.0 and introduced the IFAD Director of the Asia-Pacific Division, Dr Thomas Elhaut, and the Subregional Representative for IFAD, Mr. Siale Bain-Vete. The IFAD introduced the paper *A Greener Agriculture in a*

*Blue Ocean - a Pacific Partnership for Young Farmers*. The presentation highlighted particular development challenges facing Pacific island countries and suggest future areas for sustainable development interventions engaging Pacific youth. It also provided an outline of IFAD's Subregional objectives, specific areas of support and scope for strengthening partnerships amongst development partners in the future.

82. The Minister of Kiribati stated that his country is a key beneficiary of the IFAD programme and that it has been instrumental in supporting rural communities with alleviating poverty despite increased hardship due to declining copra prices and other crisis circumstances. He requested IFAD and FAO to follow up on the project for Coconut Saw Milling, and indicated the need for a review or assessment of senile coconut species.

83. The Minister of Marshall Islands informed that his country had joined IFAD in February 2009 and was looking forward to support for the coconut and other agricultural sub-sectors most appropriate for the Marshall Islands.

84. The Representative of Vanuatu advised of the country's interest and intent to join IFAD and wanted to formally raise at the Meeting for information.

85. The Representative of Samoa raised the issue of the options that are available to support local communities. He highlighted that water for agriculture is a crucial issue that needs to be considered especially the use of waste water or alternative irrigation pipes.

86. The Representative of Tonga expressed appreciation to IFAD for supporting the MORDI Project which benefitted agricultural development in the country.

87. The Minister of Fiji indicated that the northern division of Fiji has great potential for development as a large and young rural community exists there showing great promise; subject to assistance by funding sources for improve capacities and developing technical skills in order to further improve productivity.

88. The Representative of New Zealand noted the successes of the MORDI Project. He congratulated IFAD for its supports for the preparation of the pacific regional organic standards and the establishment of the Atoll Centre for Excellence.

89. The Representative of Niue stated that young farmers need support and investment to ensure building of capacity and planning. Niue has established a national youth council and youth parliament that could drive this process. The aging farming population of Niue is in dire need of succession therefore it is vital to attract young people into farming.

90. The Director of IFAD encouraged new and intending members to consult colleagues as to ensure that IFAD membership is advantageous. Sustainability is one of the the key issue for IFAD assistance and it has been fortunate to work with key partners. The Tonga MORDI Project is truly a success story.

91. The Director of IFAD also stated and made reference to IFAD assistance for the establishment of the Atoll Centre of Excellence which still needs further support.

92. The Subregional Representative encouraged the Meeting to seek IFAD assistance wherever possible. He proposed that that the biennial meetings for Agriculture Ministers should have an IFAD standing presentation so to inform PICs on their works in the Pacific. He welcomed very much IFAD support as a key partner of FAO.

### **Agenda Item: 6.0: PACIFIC FOOD SUMMIT**

93. At the invitation of the Chair, the Subregional Representative drew the attention of the Meeting to paper SWPM/NIU/6.0. He noted the proposed World Summit on Food Security to be held in Rome in November 2009. He invited Mr Dirk Schulz, FAO Food and Nutrition Officer to introduce the paper.

94. In introducing the proposed Pacific Food Summit, the Food and Nutrition Officer recalled that availability and access to sufficient, safe and suitable food in the Pacific is affected by volatile food and fuel prices, unstable economic conditions and climate change. Furthermore, a change in diets (and lifestyles) related to increased reliance on imported and highly processed foods led to non communicable diseases, vitamin and mineral deficiencies. He explained that Pacific Leaders, at their 39<sup>th</sup> Meeting in 2008, had acknowledged the high importance of food security as an emerging issue, calling on all countries, where possible, to increase the production and supply of healthy food and committing their governments to immediate action to address food security issues nationally and where possible regionally through a range of measures across key sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, trade and transport.

95. He explained the intended process of preparatory meetings and national summits leading up to the proposed multi-sectoral Pacific food summit, which would be convened in conjunction with the 2010 Pacific Leaders meeting in Vanuatu. He pointed out that the summit aimed to adopt a Pacific Declaration on Food Security and Action Plan endorsed at the highest level of government. Furthermore, he also elaborated on the Director-General of FAO proposal for a world summit on food security to be convened in Rome from 14 to 16 November 2009.

96. The Meeting:

- (i) Noted the multi-sectoral initiative for a food secure Pacific and endorse the proposed Pacific Food Summit to be held in 2010;
- (ii) Requested FAO to discuss with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat on incorporating the issue of Food Security as a standing agenda item at other relevant meetings including the forum trade, economics and finance ministerial meetings and
- (iii) Noted and supported a proposal from the Director-General of FAO for the convening of a World Summit on Food Security in November 2009

97. The Representative of New Zealand valued the proposed Pacific Declaration as an outcome of consultations by Pacific ministers on food security as well as supporting the concept of the integration of nutrition and food safety issues. He also

stated that there needs to be clear responsibility and leadership regarding the lead agency – whether it is FAO or PIFS – and the expected outcomes of the Pacific Food Summit. In the process, effort needs to be employed to include relevant line ministries also. He also emphasized that the process will require a dedicated budget.

98. There was concern that the timeframe of the proposed World Summit for Food Security in Rome to be held in November 2009 is in conflict with various other high level meetings requiring attendance by heads of state and government as well as with FAO's own biennial Conference which will review and approve the Organization's Programme of Work and Budget for 2010-2011. New Zealand further feels that the October 2009 *Feeding the World 2050* conference does not leave sufficient time to process outcomes of that meeting in leading up to the summit. However, New Zealand supports the conference in principle and suggested that a slight postponement into 2010 could be considered as an alternative timing. He also informed that these issues were allayed to the Director-General by the Prime Minister of New Zealand in a letter earlier this year.

99. The Representative of Vanuatu expressed his support for this FAO initiative as well as the Pacific Food Summit.

100. The Representative of Samoa sought clarification on whether a common Pacific Regulatory approach was the same as a harmonized approach.

101. The Minister of the Marshall Islands requested if there is still an opportunity to include the country for hosting a National Food Summit as part of a national initiative to develop policies. He also recognized the issues raised by New Zealand but indicated that the Marshall Islands had already relayed their willingness to participate at the Summit.

102. Representative of Australia stated support in principle for the Summit and called for enhanced coordination and adoption of multi sectoral approaches. Like New Zealand, Australia is mindful of the timelines as the Rome Summit would be held immediately before the Forum Leaders meeting. Australia is willing to work with FAO to organize the World Summit on Food Security should the wider membership be supportive of it being held in 2009, and as long as it doesn't conflict with other conferences and meetings. She hopes that consideration of climate change, completing the Doha Round as well as meeting the obligations to the MDG's remain on target.

103. The Representative of Tonga expressed support for the Pacific Food summit. She also confirmed their support for the World Summit on Food Security.

104. The Subregional Representative stated that the Pacific Food Summit to be held in Vanuatu would be supported by FAO, SPC, IFAD, UNICEF, WHO, and PIFS.

105. An organizing committee had been established to coordinate the preparation for the Summit.

106. The Meeting endorsed the following recommendations:

- (i) In order to achieve food security in the Pacific, a coordinated and multi-sectoral response involving relevant stakeholders (agriculture, health and trade) along the food chain is required. It proposed to convene a Pacific Food Summit in conjunction with the 2010 Forum Leaders Meeting to allow Heads of Government/State to agree on a Pacific Declaration on Food Security and associated Action Plan that will address the current food crisis, giving consideration to the supply of food, equitable access to food, the safety and quality of the food provided and its role in disease.
- (ii) That FAO discusses with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat on incorporating the issue of Food Security as an agenda item at other relevant meetings including the forum trade, economics and finance ministerial meetings.
- (iii) The meeting took note of the multi-sectoral initiative for a food secure Pacific as described in this paper and endorsed and supported the proposed Pacific Food Summit to be held in 2010.
- (iv) The meeting supported a proposal from the Director-General of the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) for convening a World Summit on Food Security in November 2009, noting that the objectives of the Summit would be to establish policies to eradicate hunger, to develop a more coherent and efficient system of governance with regard to World Food Security, to provide specific support for farmers in both developed and developing countries, to mobilize resources, and to adopt an early warning mechanism to avert future world food crises.

### **Agenda Item: 7.0: SUPPORT TO THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR FOOD SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES: OUTCOMES AND RESULTS**

107. At the invitation of the Chair, the Subregional Representative referred the Meeting to paper SWPM/NIU/7.0. The paper highlighted the results of the implementation of the RPFs project and included achievements under both the horizontal as well as vertical components of the programme. He then invited Bismarck Crawley, Regional Project Coordinator, to introduce the discussion paper

108. The Regional Project Coordinator provided a brief background of the programme and its eventual outcomes. The programme period was from May 2004 to May 2009 with a total budget of over USD \$9 million. .

109. The Representative of Samoa requested consideration for further extension of the programme to allow further development on lessons learned.

110. The Representative of Vanuatu expressed gratitude to the project for building rural butcheries.

111. The Representative of Tonga noted the success of the livestock development supported by the program especially the sheep project. She stated that honey development project in the Vavaú group has been very successful.

112. The Minister of Tuvalu supported and praised the successes of the project.

113. The Minister of Marshall Islands registered appreciation for the work this programme has done over the years.

114. The Representatives of Niue acknowledged the successes of the RPFS and requested that the FSSLP addresses the limited capacity in the country for the implementation of such a program.

115. The Minister of the Cook Islands expressed his gratitude for FAO support and assistance with the fruit tree development and, in particular, reported successes achieved with a new variety of pineapple that has low acidity.

116. The Representative of PNG recommended that the rice issue be explored further especially for local consumption. He also stated that the outcomes of the projects in PNG were pleasing to note.

117. The Minister of Fiji noted with appreciation the rice project sites in Draketi and other areas in Vanua Levu and requested for a copy of the Independent Review of the project to identify weaknesses and strengths and build on these in the future.

118. The Representative of New Zealand again reiterated the issue of sustainability for projects. He wanted the Meeting to consider the responsibility for future projects as well as to include into the modalities flexibility for extension and growth.

119. The Representative of Vanuatu confirmed that his Government is committed and has taken responsibility to ensure sustainability of the projects and urged other countries to do the same.

120. The Regional Project Coordinator stated that it was encouraging to learn that the outcomes, achievements and lessons learnt serve as a baseline for upcoming projects to be built and expanded on. He reiterated that the 26 national projects were diverse in nature which was a challenge. They were identified priorities of the countries. The regional component focused on building country capacity for trade facilitation and agriculture policy development. He reminded countries of the importance of sustaining activities of the projects after completion. .

121. 122. The Meeting overall supported and endorsed and noted the outcomes and results and thanked the Regional Project Management Unit and FAO for the great work done during the past 5 years. The meeting agreed that the RPFS has been a great success.

## **Agenda Item 8.0: FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME FOR THE PACIFIC (FSSLP)**

124. At the invitation of the Chair, the Subregional Representative drew the attention of the Meeting to paper SWPM/NIU/8.0. This paper was on the FSSLP which was formulated based on consultations with member countries, successes of the RPFS, MORDI, DSAP and other related programmes and projects. It has gone through significant revisions and re-focussing since the Seventh Meeting of the FAO SWP Minister of Agriculture in 2007

125. The Subregional Representative noted that the RPFS is a pilot programme based on programme approach linking direct national interventions to regional approach to some common issues. He further noted that member countries stressed the need for wider consultations with member countries when formulating the FSSLP. The Subregional Representative alluded that although the FSSLP has not yet been formalized and that the modalities of the programme are still being finalized to meet donor requirements, there are many activities already underway, such as the *Initiative on Soaring Food Prices* which has projects under implementation in the Pacific.

129. The Representative of Niue sought the involvement of Non Government Organization and the private sector as the expectation on their part of delivering the programme is relatively high. He also requested FAO consider each country's diversity in this respect.

130. The Minister of Marshall Islands acknowledged FAO was working closely with Non Government Organizations and shared their experience in collaborating closely with women based organizations.

131. The Meeting acknowledged and further endorsed their support of the FSSLP and that FAO should continue to work on this initiative and to ensure effective implementation.

## **Agenda Item 9.0: HIGH FOOD PRICES AND THE FOOD CRISIS – EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

134. At the invitation of the Chair, the Subregional Representative introduced Dr David Hallam of FAO as the invited speaker on the impacts of high food prices on the Pacific, an issue of great concern to the region. He invited Dr Hallam to make his presentation and was followed with discussion

135. The Minister of Fiji stated that his Ministry has to compete for budget allocations along with other ministries. He inquired at what point bio-fuel would be economically viable as opposed to fossil fuels in view of the ongoing fuel crisis.

136. Dr Hallam responded that there is no definite answer but felt that whether bio fuel becomes competitive or not, depends on supplies and feed stock: no matter the price level, without government support bio fuel production is not economically viable, apart from ethanol production in Brazil. This present assessment might change with technology changes and is dependent on relative prices of oil and feed stocks in setting a floor price on agriculture prices with government subsidies.

137. The Representative of New Zealand asked if it was possible to disaggregate information to the regional level, in order to better assess data and capacity for the Pacific region and to provide an indication on deficiencies in data and information.

138. Dr Hallam agreed to the desirability of ready access to relevant data to measure the impact of price variability in the Pacific. This process is currently ongoing in 5 African countries. He also stated that discussion on high food prices are conducted at a global level as there are many complications, in particular for local market prices. Resources were made available to FAO from IFAD and recent efforts have resulted in a new Internet portal containing domestic prices for selected agricultural commodities.

139. The Minister of the Marshall Island requested for a copy of the report on Bio-fuel. He also stressed the significance of a bio fuel project implemented by private sector companies and facilitated through the national copra community as a means of supplementing people in the outer islands.

140. The Meeting was grateful for the presentation and looked forward to future developments in this area. They also thanked FAO for providing an avenue to hear the current update in this important area that is directly linked to PIC's.

## **Agenda Item 10: OTHER BUSINESS**

141. At the invitation of the Chair the Subregional Representative offered the opportunity for other agencies represented at the meeting to address the meeting.

The Subregional Representative also informed the Meeting that there were two information papers that have been distributed. The first was a paper on the scoping exercise on bio-energy and food security. The other was a draft Asia-Pacific Regional Priority Framework.

143. The Representative of the University of the South Pacific, Professor Biman Prasad, congratulated FAO on the theme of the meeting as it is becoming more prevalent now especially amongst youth to ensure that agriculture can be seen as a means to have a good livelihood. He was also heartened with the efforts of IFAD in progressing toward youth development. He was pleased to announce and share with the Meeting that the School for Agriculture in Alafua is undergoing a restructuring as it is now under the School of Economics division within the University. He stated that the University has decided to re-establish the research and extension training division because it is important to connect and link up with countries and other partners and there is a need to increase technological capacity in this area. It must be recognized that programmes need to be reviewed, with a new degree programme in

agriculture economics and marketing – training people in the region to address key issues (improving performance of agriculture sector in the region.) There is also a move to look at strengthening relationships of the Alafua Campus with other international institutions to upgrade qualifications of students in those institutions and provide support where appropriate.

144. The Representative of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Mr Aleki Sisifa spoke on the approval of the LRD strategic plan 2009-2012 highlighting 3 key objectives: improved food and sustainability, land management, improved agriculture and forestry products. The organization has also developed Joint Country Strategies with respective countries which are linked directly to national priorities and plans. SPC's main development partners are EU, AUSAID, NZAID, Germany (GTZ), Government of France, FAO (RPFS, FSSLP), IFAD and ACIAR (Crop Manager). He was happy to report that there are now new facilities and up to date equipment will be opened in Suva where resources are being relocated from Nabua to Narere as there is more room for research activities. SPC is involved in land management and conflict minimization as they are currently working with the Australian Government as a means to improve consultation, information dissemination and better interventions that may be needed in future with regard to customary land tenure systems. He added that SPC appreciates FAO support and enjoy the transparency in terms of exchange of information and sharing of responsibilities.

145. The Representative of the Pacific Island Trade and Investment Corporation, Mr Chris Cocker was happy that his organization could participate and was heartened to note that discussions included the encouraging of exports from the Pacific to New Zealand. He hoped that his organization could provide support through its partnership with FAO and SPC. He shared that PITIC in line with the modernization of agriculture, has an online website where updates can be viewed on fresh produce pricing so countries can understand the requirements of the New Zealand market. . The main objective of PITIC is to encourage the Private Sector to utilize their services.

## **Agenda Item 11: ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNIQUÉ**

Attached as Annex E

## **Agenda Item 12: VENUE OF NEXT MEETING**

146. The Representative of Samoa noted that Tonga has already made a proposal to host the next meeting and seconded that proposal. The Meeting endorsed the proposal for the 9<sup>th</sup> SWP Meeting of Ministers of Agriculture to be held in Tonga in 2011.

150. In his closing remarks, the Subregional Representative expressed appreciation to the Chair and the Niue Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries for hosting the meeting. He also acknowledged Tonga generous offered to host the next meeting. He conveyed his appreciation to the Ministers and Representatives for their support and guidance. He extended a word of thanks to IFAD and the other partners for their

contribution to the meeting. He noted with appreciation IFAD becoming and closing partner of FAO in the Pacific. He thanked colleagues from Rome and the staff of SAP for their contribution to the success of the meeting.

147. The Chair, Honorable Pokotoa Sipeli expressed his gratitude to the FAO Subregional Representative and the Meeting and highlighted that the theme was very appropriate for what everyone is trying to achieve in the region. He was certain that ministers realized the extent of the challenges that lay ahead. He also acknowledged all those involved in organizing the meeting and ensuring that all participants were well looked after. He thanked the Meeting for entrusting Niue to host this important meeting.

148. The Communiqué' of the Eighth Meeting of the FAO SWP Ministers of Agriculture was endorsed and signed.

149. The Minister of Tuvalu closed the meeting with a prayer.

Annex A – Participants List

Annex B – Statement of the Director General of FAO, Dr Jacques Diouf

Annex C - Proposed Programme and Arrangements

Annex D – Communiqué

(Annex A)

## AUSTRALIA

**Ms Anna Willock**  
Manager International Fisheries  
Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

## COOK ISLANDS

**Honourable Robert Wigmore**  
Acting Minister of Agriculture, Resources and Environment

## FIJI

**Honourable Joketani Cokanasiga**  
Minister for Agriculture and Primary Industries

## KIRIBATI

**Honourable Nakara Tetabo**  
Minister for Environment, Lands and Agriculture Development

**Mrs Tarsu Mursock**  
Secretary  
Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agriculture Development

**Ms Kinaai Kairo**  
Director of Agriculture  
Ministry of Environment, Lands & Agriculture

## MARSHALL ISLANDS

**Honourable Mattlan Zackhras**  
Minister of Resources Development

**Mr Thomas Kijiner, Jr**  
Secretary  
Ministry of Resources and Development

## NAURU

**Honourable Sprent Dabwido**  
Minister of Transport

## NEW ZEALAND

**Mr Neil Fraser**

Manager  
International Liaison  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

**Dr. Viliami T. Fakava**

Senior Advisor, Pacific Market Access  
Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry

## NIUE

**Honourable Pokotoa Sipeli**

Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries

**Mr Justin Kamupala**

Acting Secretary to Government

**Mr Brendon Pasisi**

Director  
Department of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries

**Mrs Gaylene Tasmania**

Deputy Director  
Department of Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries

**Mr Sauni Tonatable**

Director of Environment

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA

**Mr Anton Kauge Benjamin**

Secretary  
Department of Agriculture and Livestock

**Mr Brown Konabe**

Director  
Food Security Branch & FAO NC in PNG  
Department of Agriculture and Livestock

## SAMOA

**Mr Asuao Kirifi Pouono**

Chief Executive Officer  
Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries

## TONGA

**HSH Prince Tu'ipelehake**

Minister for Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Fisheries

Dr Sione Vailala Matoto

Director of Fisheries

Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Fisheries

**Mrs Leody C. Vainikolo**

Deputy Director of Agriculture

Ministry of Agriculture, Food, Forestry and Fisheries

## TUVALU

**Honourable Sir Tomu Malaefono**

Acting Minister of Natural Resources and Lands

**Mr Itaia Lausaveve**

Director of Agriculture

## VANUATU

**Mr Jeffery Wilfred**

Director General

Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries and Livestock

**Mr Ruben Markward**

Director of Agriculture

**Livo Mele**

Director of Forestry

## OBSERVERS

### UNIVERSITY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC (USP)

**Prof. Biman Prasad**

Representing Vice-Chancellor of the USP

## WHO

**Dr Pratap Jayavanth**

WHO Country Liaison Officer for Tonga

**SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY (SPC)**

**Mr Alekisanita Sisifa**

Director  
Land Resources Division, Suva, Fiji

**INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT  
(IFAD)**

**Dr Thomas Elhaut**

Director  
Asia and the Pacific Division

**Mr Siale Bain Vete**

Subregional Coordinator, Pacific Island Countries

**PACIFIC ISLANDS TRADE & INVESTMENT COMMISSION, (PITIC)**

**Mr Chris Cocker**

Trade Commissioner

**FOOD AND AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)**

**Dr Vili A Fuavao**

Sub-Regional Representative for the Pacific Islands  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Dr David Hallam**

Deputy Director  
Trade and Markets Division  
FAO Headquarters

**Mr Dirk Schulz**

Food and Nutrition Officer  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Mr Masanami Izumi**

Fishery Officer  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Mr Daneswar Poonyth**

Policy Officer  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Mr Matairangi Purea**

Plant Protection Officer

FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands  
**Mr Aru Mathias**  
Forestry Officer  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Dr Stephen Rogers**  
FAO Consultant  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Mr Diderik de Vleeschauwer**  
Regional Information Officer  
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific

**Mr Bismarck Crawley**  
Regional Project Coordinator (RPFS)  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Ms Maria Tuoro**  
Policy Analyst  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

**Ms Fetika Faafua**  
Senior Secretary  
FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands

(Annex B)

## **8th Meeting of the FAO South-West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture**

Aloft -Niue, 20-22 May 2009

### **Opening address by Dr Jacques Diouf, FAO Director-General**

**21 May 2009**

The theme of the meeting is *Earning a Living from Agriculture*, and discussions will concentrate on a few key areas specific to the Pacific such as strengthening food security and rural incomes through improved sustainable agriculture; enhancing competitiveness of the agriculture sector through agribusiness and marketing; effective management and conservation of fisheries and aquaculture; and concerted and coordinated efforts in the management of tree and forest resources.

### **Food Security in the Pacific**

The results of the implementation (May 2004 to May 2009) of the Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS) in the Pacific, as well as the proposed successor arrangements for the Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme for the Pacific (FSSLP) being proposed and developed in close partnership with key partners like IFAD, SPC, SPREP, USP, NGOs. The aim of FAO-Government partnerships in the Pacific region during the period 2009-2013 through the FSSLP, is to "improve food security and income earning opportunities" in the 14 Pacific Island Forum Countries.

Need for a new international system for agriculture and for increased investments in agriculture and rural development. There is an urgent need to bring all countries together to agree on main policies and strategies to address the root causes of hunger, e.g. the proposed World Food Summit November 2009 in Rome.

Countries in the Subregion are deliberating a regional initiative to convene a Pacific Food Summit in conjunction with the 2010 Forum Leaders Meeting to allow Heads of State and Government to agree on a Pacific Declaration on Food Security. FAO stands ready to provide the needed support and technical expertise in the preparation of the Pacific Declaration of Food Security.

While poor nutrition and dietary practices are seriously affecting the health and well-being of increasing numbers of Pacific Islanders, the countries in standards and regulations.

Pacific Island countries are environmentally fragile and particularly vulnerable to external shocks such as natural disasters, sudden increases in food and fuel prices and price volatility. The Subregion thus needs a coordinated and multi-sectoral response, involving relevant stakeholders along the food chain, if food security is to be achieved and sustained in the Pacific.

**Climate Change:** The Pacific Island Countries are among the most environmentally vulnerable nations in the world. There is a heightened awareness of the consequences for the region of climate related events. Climate change mitigation and adaptation, and disaster preparedness and prevention are becoming a key focal area for increased development assistance.

**High and Volatile Food and Fuel Prices:** The reliability of the global food market to supply food has been called into question by the recent rapid rise in food commodity prices, which has resulted in a phenomenon of global inflation. Noting their concerns at rapid recent increases in food and fuel prices, Pacific Leaders in the Communique of the Thirty-ninth Pacific Islands Forum held in Niue in August 2008 emphasized the need at national level to assess the implications and to respond appropriately. They acknowledged the high importance of food security as an emerging issue which poses challenges for the future well-being of people across the region. They committed their governments to immediate action to address food security issues nationally, and where possible regionally, through a range of measures across key sectors such as agriculture, fisheries, trade and transport.

FAO through its Regular Programme budget has committed USD 2.5 million in the latter part of 2008 to the Initiative on Soaring Food Prices (ISFP) activities in the region. [During the meeting, a representation will be made by a senior FAD staff member on experiences and lessons learned from the recent wave of high food prices and the food crisis].

Additionally, FAO has recently provided assistance in preparing National Medium-Term Priority Frameworks (NMTPFs) for Pacific Island countries covering the period 2009-2012, aimed at enhanced national coordination, with governments in the driving seat, and supporting national development plans/strategies. These will also enable more productive partnerships and joint programmes with donors and other development organizations active in the region, such as UN and CROP agencies, and act as an instrument for the One UN process.

### **Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS)**

FAO has provided to the Pacific Region, through a Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS), funds in excess of USD 7 million from the Government of Italy over the period May 2004 to May 2009.

The RPFS had two main components: enhancing food production and income generation at the country-level through some 26 projects, as well as building national and regional capacity in trade facilitation and strengthening agricultural policies on food safety and regulation.

Technical assistance was provided through South-South Cooperation (SSC) wherein 8 experts and 56 technicians from the People's Republic of China and the Philippines were assigned to the Pacific Region over a two-year period with funding of USD 2.8 million from FAO's Regular Programme Budget.

The Pilot Phase including SSC was independently evaluated in July/August 2008 which found the programme overall to be very relevant. The SSC programme, notwithstanding some initial constraints in its implementation, proved to be an innovative, efficient and cost effective tool to boost the income generating activities at the country-level.

With a view to expanding the RPFS in the Pacific, a Concept Paper entitled "Investing in Agriculture for Sustainable Growth and Development" was prepared by the Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands (SAPA) in May 2005. It was endorsed by the South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture at the Sixth Biennial meeting in Rarotonga, Cook Islands, in 2005.

A first draft of the expanded RPFS was presented and endorsed in principle at the last (Seventh) Meeting of South West Pacific Ministers held in Majuro, Marshall Islands in May 2007. This was subsequently developed as the FSSLP, with support of the FAO Investment Centre, and in close collaboration with IFAD. There was full consultation with Pacific Island countries and international stakeholders throughout. A Project Design Document has now been prepared, and a Programme Implementation Plan is being finalized. The initial programme budget will be around USD 41.8 million over six years (2009-2015) for which a fund will be established. It is anticipated that the Programme will provide a harmonized framework for FAO, IFAD and other stakeholders to support development initiatives in food security and sustainable livelihoods in the region. A fund approach will be adopted in the implementation of the FSSLP, which permits flexibility, donor coordination and mobilizing of additional resources for the programme over time.

In the context of the Paris Declaration of 2005 on aid effectiveness, FAO in 2008 assisted the Pacific region in a mapping exercise to capture current and planned activities of key development partners and regional agencies in the broader agriculture sector. The overall objective of the study was to enhance harmonization and complementarity of development resources based on respective comparative advantages.

(Annex C)

**EIGHTH MEETING OF THE FAO  
SOUTH WEST PACIFIC MINISTERS FOR AGRICULTURE**

Alofi, Niue  
20 to 22 May, 2009

**PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA**

**THEME: EARNING A LIVING FROM AGRICULTURE**

**WEDNESDAY, 20 May**

**1. OFFICIAL OPENING**

**THURSDAY, 21 May & FRIDAY, 22 May, 8.30am**

**2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES**

**2.1 Adoption of the Theme – “Earning a Living from Agriculture”**

The FAO Sub-Regional Representative for the Pacific will make a brief remark before the meeting is invited to comment on the theme and consider it for adoption.

**2.2 Adoption of the Agenda**

The meeting will be invited to consider and comment on the Provisional Agenda and Programme for the Meeting before adoption. This will allow any other issue(s) Ministers and Countries Delegates may wish to be addressed by the Meeting.

**2.3 Proposed Programme and Arrangements**

A short brief will be provided on the provisional Programme and Working Arrangements for the Meeting, before delegates are invited to consider it for adoption.

**3. FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE PACIFIC REGION 2007 - 4/2009**

This paper will provide an overview of the FAO activities during 2008 – 2009, which will include some of the major achievements, constraints and challenges encountered during this period. It will also make introductory comments in relation to the theme by highlighting in broad terms some of the strengths and comparative advantages of FAO and the FAO reforms and how

they will improve service delivery and assistance to member countries in the region. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### 4. PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MEMBER STATES AND FAO

##### **4.1 Multi-Country National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF)**

FAO has introduced the National Medium Term Priority Framework (NMTPF) as a planning and management tool to ensure that FAO assistance to the countries of the Pacific region is well coordinated, focused on important issues, and is supporting key objectives and outcomes in National Development Strategies. Whilst the NMTPF document primarily provides a strategic framework to focus FAO assistance to countries in the region, it should also enable productive partnerships and joint programmes with other organizations active in the region, particularly the UN agencies and the CROP agencies. It is thus, also an important input into the One UN process and should help to further the aid effectiveness agenda set out in the Paris Declaration and the Pacific Aid Effectiveness Principles. The NMTPF has been developed through a consultative process and defines the medium-term priorities for FAO's technical cooperation in 13 Pacific island countries for the period 2009-2012. In the case of PNG, the National Agriculture Development Plan 2006-10 developed with assistance from FAO is used in lieu of their National Medium Term Priority Framework, which is to be finalized in latter half of this year. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

##### **4.2 Implementation of the NMTPF: Discussion Paper and PowerPoint Presentations**

###### **4.2.1 Strengthening Agricultural Policy Development in the Pacific Region**

Irrespective of their size or stage of development, PICs have common issues; "lack of clear sector plans that provide coherent policy and financing frameworks for promoting the agricultural sector development and food security". The key reasons being: weak data collection and data management and weak capacity for policy analysis and formulation. Accurate, reliable, timely and complete information is needed to guide the formulation, implementation, monitoring and assessment of agriculture policy. Obtaining both qualitative and quantitative information is vital in ensuring that agricultural policy measures are well targeted, efficient and cost effective. This paper focus on the strengthening of the data collection and data management system for informed policy development.

(*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

###### **4.2.2. Agriculture for Growth –Learning from Experience in the Pacific**

The official policies of many national governments in the Pacific accord a central role to the intensification and commercialisation of smallholder agriculture as a means of stimulating the rural economy and alleviating poverty. Axiomatic to this stance is the belief that smallholder agriculture is uniquely positioned to deliver broad-based growth in rural areas (where the vast majority of the poor still live). However, the certain conditions that need to be in place to promote agricultural

commercialisation to benefit smallholder producers need to be better identified. There are a number of emerging success stories and some examples of initiatives already taken which could provide valuable lessons and help refine policy options for the Pacific Island countries. This paper outlines a concept for a study to gather evidence of emerging success stories. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### ***4.2.3. Improving Sustainable Agriculture Productivity and Enhancing Competitiveness***

Increase in agricultural productivity is critical for food security and income generating. The paper highlights the challenges faced by PICS for a sustainable agricultural growth. It also looks at issues affecting poor production potential (desertification and Atoll), expensive and irregular supply of imported livestock feeds, and weak genetic lines of breeding stock, limited water supply for agricultural use, weak extension services and lack of appropriate production technology transfer to farmers. Beside the enabling policy and sector planning to enhance agricultural production and productivity, market access, organic and fair trade, apiculture, quarantine and emergency response is fundamental for the development of livelihood system. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### ***4.2.4 Enhancing Competitiveness through Agribusiness and Marketing***

The limited capacity of PICs in food processing and value adding of agriculture and fisheries products is causing a lack of competitiveness both on domestic and international markets. This is further exacerbated by lack of domestic market infrastructures and post harvest facilities as well as issues related to market access. This paper will outline the proposed response to address identified issues within the framework of the NMTPF. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### ***4.2.5 Safe and Nutritious Food for a Wealthy and Healthy Pacific***

This paper identifies the food safety and quality challenges for PICs, which include a lack of, or outdated food safety legislation, standards and regulations as well as insufficient capacity to implement, monitor and enforce these standards. This limits trade opportunities and market access for agriculture and fisheries products. Additionally, poor nutrition and dietary practices are seriously affecting the health and wellbeing of an increasing number of Pacific Islanders. The paper will outline the proposed response to address identified issues within the framework of the NMTPF. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### ***4.2.6 Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture for Food Security and Sustainable Development***

There are major challenges for effective management and conservation of fisheries and aquaculture resources in the light of recent increased impacts of fishing in the Pacific region. This paper addresses a challenge in strengthening the sound management of small-scale fisheries and in the sustainable development of commercial aquaculture to further improve the living standard of the people in the Pacific. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### **4.2.7 Sustainable Forest Management and Conservation: Challenge and Opportunities**

Increased loss of valuable biodiversity, as well as permanent loss of tree and forest lands due to unsustainable resource management, calls for concerted and coordinated effort in the management of tree and forest resources in the region. The paper will discuss current issues faced in the region, emerging issues, the need for conservation, suitable responses and actions and possibilities to make forest management more economically viable. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### **5. PARTNERSHIP - INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD) - A Greener Agriculture in a Blue Ocean - a Pacific Partnership for Young Farmers.**

This presentation will highlight particular development challenges facing Pacific island countries and suggest future areas for sustainable development interventions engaging Pacific youth. It will also provide an outline of IFAD's Subregional objectives, specific areas of support and scope for strengthening partnerships amongst development partners in the future. This presentation will be made by Mr. Thomas Elhaut, Director of IFAD's Asia Pacific Division. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### **6. PACIFIC FOOD SUMMIT**

Pacific Island Countries are vulnerable to external shocks such as volatile food and fuel prices, unstable economic conditions and climate change, which are affecting availability and access to sufficient, safe and suitable food. These challenges require a coordinated and multi-sectoral response, involving relevant stakeholders (Agriculture, Health and Trade) along the food chain, if food security is to be achieved in the Pacific. The paper describes a regional initiative to convene a Pacific Food Summit in conjunction with the 2010 Forum Leaders Meeting, to allow Heads of Government to agree on a Pacific Declaration on Food Security, giving consideration to the supply, equitable access, the safety and quality of the food provided and its role in disease. Also addressed is the upcoming World Food Summit. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### **7. SUPPORT TO THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR FOOD SECURITY (RPFS) IN THE PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES: OUTCOMES AND RESULTS**

The paper highlights the results of the implementation of the RPFS project and including the achievements under the horizontal as well as vertical components of the programme; lessons learned will also be highlighted. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### **8. FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME FOR THE PACIFIC (FSSLP)**

FSSLP, formulated based on RPFS, MORDI, DSAP and other relevant and related programmes and projects has gone through significant revisions and re-focus since the Seventh Meeting of the FAO SWP Minister of Agriculture in 2007. (*PowerPoint presentation*)

**9. HIGH FOOD PRICES AND THE FOOD CRISIS - EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

This presentation will be made by a prominent guest speaker on the issue of high food prices and food crisis which is an issue of great concern to Pacific Island Countries. The guest speaker is Dr David Hallam of FAO.  
*(PowerPoint presentation)*

**10. OTHER BUSINESS**

**11. ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNIQUÉ**

**12. VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

**13. CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

(Annex D)

**EIGHTH MEETING  
OF THE FAO SOUTH WEST PACIFIC MINISTERS FOR AGRICULTURE**  
Alofi, Niue, 20 to 22 May 2009

**COMMUNIQUE**

1. The Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture was convened in Alofi, Niue from 20 to 22 May 2009. The opening ceremony took place at the Matavai Resort on 20 May in the afternoon, while the Meeting proper was held at the Millennium Hall on 21 and 22 May 2009. In attendance were Ministers from the Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Tonga and Tuvalu. Australia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Samoa and Vanuatu sent delegations to represent the countries. The Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) and the FAO Subregional Representative for the Pacific Islands also attended. Representatives from the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), Pacific Islands Trade and Investment Commission (PITIC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the University of the South Pacific (USP) attended as observers. On the invitation of FAO, a representative of the World Health Organization (WHO) gave a presentation on the A/H1N1 influenza.

2. The FAO Director-General, Dr Jacques Diouf, delivered the keynote address. The Meeting was opened by the Acting Premier of Niue, Hon. O'love Jacobsen.

3. The outgoing chair, Hon. Mattlan Zackhras from the Republic of the Marshall Islands, made a short statement following which the Hon. Pokotoa Sipeli, Minister for Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries of Niue, was unanimously elected as Chairperson of the Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture.

**THE THEME**

4. The Meeting adopted *Earning a living from agriculture* as the theme for their Eighth Meeting. The theme reflects on the importance of agriculture for income generation, employment and food security.

## **FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE PACIFIC, 2007 - 4/2009: AN OVERVIEW**

5. The Meeting welcomed information provided on activities and acknowledged the value and relevance of the main highlights of FAO assistance and support to the region. The performance of the multi-disciplinary team in the Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands (SAP) was positively recognized. In this regard the Meeting noted that FAO is developing partnerships with international and regional organizations.

## **PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN MEMBER STATES AND FAO**

### **Multi-Country National Medium-Term Priority Framework (NMTPF)**

6. Reviewing the multi-country National Medium-Term Priority Framework, the Meeting supported in general the enhanced strategic approach adopted by FAO as an important tool to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the assistance in the region. It recognized that programme outcomes and results should guide programme formulation and implementation. The Meeting agreed to endorse the NMTPF document as framework for FAO assistance to the region for the period 2009-2012.

7. The Meeting noted the proposal for the Pacific region to be the pilot region for the implementation of the outcomes of the FAO High Level Conference held in Rome in June 2008, in particular the twin issues of climate change and food security.

### **Implementation of the NMTPF**

#### **Strengthening Agricultural Policy Development in the Pacific Region**

8. The Meeting recognized that in order to earn a living from agriculture, it is imperative to strengthen the policy, legislative and regulatory frameworks. The Meeting requested FAO and other relevant partners to assist with strengthening national capacity for informed policy formulation.

#### **Agriculture for Growth -Learning from Experience in the Pacific**

9. The Meeting endorsed the proposed *Agriculture for Growth* study as a valuable means to gain a better understanding of the conditions necessary for successful commercial agriculture. The Meeting advised that partnership in the study, particularly from government ministry staff in the study teams, would enhance ownership and improve the likelihood of the adaptation of lessons learned.

#### **Improving Sustainable Agriculture Productivity and Enhancing Competitiveness**

10. The Meeting requested FAO and regional partners to assist the Pacific Island

Countries in strengthening productivity of farming systems and, in particular, promote efforts for the conservation and protection of agricultural land. The Meeting urged the countries to further improve extension and research services, technology transfer for livestock and plants, and capacity building in biosecurity.

11. The Meeting requested continued FAO support for further development of organic agriculture in Pacific Island Countries and stressed that the commercialization of farming should be pursued.

### **Enhancing Competitiveness through Agribusiness and Marketing**

12. The Meeting requested FAO and other development partners to provide assistance to enhance countries' capacity in food processing and value adding for agricultural and fisheries products, including the development of technical and business skills along the value chain. In this connection, the Meeting stressed the importance of improving marketing systems and market access for livestock, traditional food crops and high value specialty commodities.

13. The Meeting called for assistance to improve the quality of existing export commodities from Pacific Island Countries, to strengthen and diversify the coconut industry, and to improve market and post-harvest facilities.

### **Safe and Nutritious Food for a Wealthy and Healthy Pacific**

14. The Meeting requested FAO to continue assistance to strengthen the essential components of national food control systems, including Codex based legislation and standards, as well as the capacity to monitor and enforce through effective inspection and certification supported by access to appropriate analytical services.

15. Given the rapid change in diets and increased reliance on imported, highly processed foods which in part are of poor nutritional value, the Meeting requested FAO to assist the agricultural sector to develop sustainable agro-food based solutions to nutritional problems and promote the consumption of local food as part of a healthy diet.

### **Small-scale Fisheries and Aquaculture for Food Security and Sustainable Development**

16. The Meeting stressed the importance of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture in food security in the Pacific Island Countries. The Meeting noted that more attention needs to be paid to small-scale fisheries and further strengthening of fisheries management.

17. The Meeting urged countries to further improve fisheries information systems,

particularly in small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, as well as strengthen national capacities in the sustainable development and sound management of small-scale fisheries and aquaculture, responding in particular to climate change and biosecurity Issues.

18. In addition, the Meeting called on countries to further improve post-harvest fisheries practices, value-added fishery products and increase access to markets and trade. The Meeting requested FAO to undertake a regional overview of the development of aquaculture. The lessons learned should be documented and experiences shared.

**Sustainable Forest Management and Conservation: Challenge and Opportunities**

19. The Meeting recognized the importance of conservation and protection of fragile, high risk and unique forest ecosystems and agreed to:

- (i) identify and develop markets for different forest products and services; and
- (ii) improve and update their data and information and work closely with FAO's FRA 2010 Secretariat to report on the status of their tree and forest resources.

20. Countries noted FAO's new status as an implementing agency for the Global Environment Fund (GEF) and agreed to give appropriate consideration to linking future GEF funded projects with developments in the agriculture, forestry and fisheries sectors.

21. The Meeting noted the changing environment in the forestry sector and requested countries to incorporate the emerging issues into their policies and plans of action.

## **PARTNERSHIP – INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD)**

### **A Greener Agriculture in a Blue Ocean - Pacific Partnership for Young Farmers**

22. The Meeting expressed appreciation for IFAD's support to the Pacific and noted IFAD's assistance to rural communities especially on the outer islands and ongoing efforts to contribute to rural poverty reduction.

23. The Meeting acknowledged the work of the MORDI programme in the outer island communities in Fiji, Tonga and Kiribati, focusing on vulnerable groups of youth and women. Furthermore it recognized the assistance provided for the establishment of a Regional Atoll Agriculture Centre for Excellence in Kiribati and the ongoing support in the promotion and development of organic agriculture.

## **PACIFIC FOOD SUMMIT**

24. The Meeting noted the multi-sectoral initiative for a food secure Pacific and provided endorsement and support for the proposed Pacific Food Summit to be held in 2010. Furthermore, they requested FAO to discuss with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat on incorporating the issue of Food Security as an agenda item at other relevant Meetings including the forum trade, economics and finance ministerial Meetings.

25. The Meeting noted and supported a proposal from the FAO Director-General

for the convening of a World Summit on Food Security to be held in Rome from 14<sup>th</sup> - 16<sup>th</sup> November 2009 in conjunction with the FAO Conference.

26. The Meeting further noted other related international initiatives, and requested FAD to consider-in its preparation; issues such as the progress on the 1996 World Food Summit and the MDGs, support the conclusion of the Doha round, and incorporate climate change issues.

### **SUPPORT TO THE REGIONAL PROGRAMME FOR FOOD SECURITY (RPFS) IN THE PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES: OUTCOMES AND RESULTS**

27. The Meeting endorsed with appreciation the outcomes and results in the implementation of the regional project GTFS/RAS/198/ITA *Support to the Regional Programme for Food Security (RPFS) in the Pacific*. They acknowledged with gratitude the generous assistance provided by the Government of Italy and FAO for the coordination and management of the programme, including the South-South Cooperation which provided technicians and experts from the People's Republic of China and the Philippines.

28. The Meeting recognized the important role of government to sustain the activities supported under the project and agreed to encourage relevant ministries and agencies responsible for agriculture, trade, health and nutrition to ensure that the inter-sectoral and multi-disciplinary nature of food security issues continue to be effectively addressed after the termination of the programme.

### **FOOD SECURITY AND SUSTAINABLE LIVELIHOODS PROGRAMME FOR THE PACIFIC (FSSLP)**

29. The Meeting noted the progress in the preparation of the Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme (FSSLP).

### **HIGH FOOD PRICES AND THE FOOD CRISIS - EXPERIENCES AND LESSONS LEARNED**

30. The Meeting expressed its appreciation for the presentation on high food prices and noted the continuing problems posed by food price variability, which require consistent and coherent policy responses tailored to their country-specific circumstances.

31. In this regard the Meeting welcomed the proposal for country case-studies in the region and the Meeting requested FAO to support this work. They welcomed the efforts being made to compile detailed national databases on local market prices and expressed their willingness to collaborate with FAO on this initiative.

### **OTHER BUSINESS**

32. The Meeting expressed their appreciation to the Director-General of FAO for being able to attend the formal opening of the Meeting and for the valuable information provided on the state of food and agriculture in the world, and future

work of FAO.

33. The Meeting and FAO expressed gratitude and appreciation to the Government and the People of Niue for hosting the Eighth Ministerial Meeting and for the hospitality extended to their delegations during their time in Niue.

34. The Meeting also expressed its appreciation to SPC, USP, PITIC, IFAD and WHO for their participations and contributions.

### **VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

35. Ministers accepted the offer by the Kingdom of Tonga to host the next biennial Meeting in 2011.

### **Signed in Alofi, Niue on 22 May 2009**

Honourable Robert Wigmore (Cook Islands) .....

Honourable Joketani Cokanasiga (Fiji) .....

Honourable Nakara Tetabo (Kiribati) .....

Honourable Mattlan Zackhras (Marshall Islands) .....

Honourable Sprent Dabwido (Nauru) .....

Honourable Pokotoa Sipeli (Niue) .....

HRH Prince Tu'ipelehake (Tonga) .....

Hon. Sir tomu Malae'fono Sione (Tuvalu) .....

Ms Anna Willock (Australia) .....

Mr Neil Fraser (New Zealand) .....

Mr Anton Kauge Benjamin (Papua New Guinea) .....

Mr Asuao Kirifi Pouono (Samoa) .....

Mr Jeffery Wilfred (Vanuatu) .....

(Signed in Alofi, Niue on 22 May 2009)