



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

**Report of the Ninth**

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

**Vava'u, TONGA. 5 - 7 April 2011**

**FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands  
Apia, Samoa**

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**NINTH MEETING  
FAO SOUTH WEST PACIFIC MINISTERS FOR AGRICULTURE  
Vava'u, TONGA  
5-7 April 2011**

**REPORT**

1. The Ninth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture was convened in Vava'u, Kingdom of Tonga on 5-7 April 2011. The opening ceremony took place at the Puataukanave Hotel Hall on 5 April, while the meeting proper was held at the Puataukanave Hotel Conference Room on 6-7 April. The meeting was attended by Ministers from Cook Islands, Nauru, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu, and Heads of Delegation from Australia, Fiji, Kiribati, Federated States of Micronesia and New Zealand. Representatives from Hango College, Pacific Cooperation Foundation, Pacific Islands Trade and Invest, Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme attended as observers. The full list of participants is attached (Annex A).

**Agenda Item 1: OFFICIAL OPENING**

2. A ceremony was held on Tuesday 5 April at the Puataukanave Hotel to mark the official opening of the Ninth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture. In his welcoming remarks, Lord Sevele, Governor of Vava'u, said food security is achievable. Whilst rising food prices have an impact on Tonga, he noted the strength and resilience of the subsistence economy.

3. The Director-General of FAO, Dr Jacques Diouf, delivered the keynote address and said FAO was committed to supporting the priorities of member countries. (The full text is attached as Annex B). Dr Diouf noted the serious impacts of rising food prices, due in part to the global financial crisis, recession and market uncertainty. The global population is expected to exceed nine billion in 2050, and food supply needs to increase over the same period by 70 per cent globally, and 100 per cent in developing countries. The share of government budgets for agriculture in developing countries also needs to double from five to ten per cent. FAO will continue to work closely with member countries through a range of initiatives, including the Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme for the Pacific (FSSLP).

4. In response, the Acting Prime Minister of Tonga, Hon. Samiu Vaipulu, commended FAO for highlighting the importance of food security. He said it was important for food to be available and affordable. Tonga was prone to natural disasters and food security was a constant concern. Agricultural practice was influenced by the need to provide a buffer against shocks, such as climate change, sea level rise, cyclones, storm surges and droughts. The Acting Prime Minister said the two day meeting would help to find the best way forward for the region. The meeting was officially declared open.

## **Agenda Item 2: ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA AND WORKING PROCEDURES**

### **Item 2.0 Election of the Chair**

5. The Chair of the Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture, Hon. Gustava Esther Pavihi, Niue's Acting Minister for Agriculture, Forests and Fisheries, called the meeting to order and invited the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries for Samoa, Hon. Lemamea Ropati Mualia, to open the meeting with a prayer. The Chair acknowledged and thanked the Government and people of Tonga for hosting the meeting and for the hospitality shown towards the delegates. The Chair invited the FAO Sub-Regional Representative for the Pacific Islands (SRR), Dr Vili Fuavao, to lead the deliberation on the election of the Chair.

6. The SRR thanked the out-going Chair and the Government of Niue for their role in assisting FAO during their tenure as Chair of the 8<sup>th</sup> SWP Ministers Meeting. He noted the standing practice of electing the Chair from the Host Government. The Minister for Agriculture and Food, Forests and Fisheries of Tonga, Lord Vaea, was elected unanimously as the Chair of the Ninth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture.

### **Item 2.1 Adoption of the Agenda and Working Procedures**

7. The Chair invited the SRR to introduce the theme for the meeting. The SRR noted that for each meeting a theme is chosen to focus the presentations and discussions. The meeting adopted the theme '*Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in the Pacific Islands: Emphasizing the Linkages between the Economic, Social and Environmental Dimensions*'.

8. The Chair referred Ministers to the Provisional Agenda for the meeting and invited the SRR to provide an overview. The SRR said the agenda provided a guide for discussions and the meeting was welcome to raise other issues that were relevant to the development of the agriculture sector. The SRR also outlined the proposed working procedures for the meeting. In line with past practice, the Secretariat would prepare a draft Communiqué capturing the main outcomes and decisions by Ministers. The draft text would be circulated at the earliest opportunity for comments, before it was finalized for signature at the close of the meeting. A full report of the meeting would also be prepared and circulated for comments, before the report was finalized.

9. NZ requested an informal session, for members only, to provide an update on issues including preparations for the 37<sup>th</sup> FAO Conference from 25<sup>th</sup> June – 2<sup>nd</sup> July in Rome, and the election of the new FAO Director General. The SRR said the Secretariat would make the necessary arrangements for the meeting.

10. Samoa asked the Secretariat to clarify the role of Australia and New Zealand in the SWP meeting and whether they were represented by Ministers. The SRR said the FAO

SWP comprised the 16 Pacific Islands Forum members and that the issue of representation was left to member countries.

11. The meeting adopted the Agenda and Working Procedures (Annex C).

### **Agenda Item 3: FAO ACTIVITIES IN THE PACIFIC REGION: 2009-March 2011**

12. At the invitation of the Chair, the SRR referred the meeting to paper SWP/TON/3 which provides an overview of FAO activities in the Pacific region for 2009-March 2011.

13. Samoa asked about the Memorandum of Understanding between FAO, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for cooperation in the Pacific. The partnership framework supports collective efforts on initiatives such as food security and sustainable agriculture. There is also scope for ADB and IFAD to collaborate with FAO on the implementation of a range of initiatives, such as the Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme for the Pacific (FSSLP).

14. The meeting noted the progress towards the implementation of the Country Programming Frameworks, the results-based approach to reporting, the importance of data collection and analysis, and the success of the annual Round Table Meetings (RTM) for Pacific Island Countries on WTO and Regional Trade Agreement and Provisions.

### **Agenda Item 4: THEME**

#### **Item 4.0 Presentation by Guest Speaker**

15. At the invitation of the Chair, the Director of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Mr David Sheppard, addressed the meeting on linking agriculture with climate change and the environment in the Pacific. Key priorities include the loss of biodiversity, waste management, conservation of the Pacific ocean and climate change. A number of steps were outlined to improve the linkages between agriculture, climate change and the environment. These include the need for more funding, better partnerships, sustainable agriculture, joint water programmes, marine and coastal conservation, more effective institutions, better information and recognition of the special needs of Pacific countries. Improved cooperation between the agriculture and environment ministries is also essential to effectively address the impacts of climate change.

#### **Item 4.1 Theme Paper**

16. At the invitation of the Chair, the SRR referred to paper SWP/TON/4.1 and invited FAO Consultant, Dr Stephen Rogers, to address the meeting.

17. In the Pacific Islands region up to 80 per cent of populations depend directly or indirectly on agriculture (including forestry and fisheries) as their major source of

livelihood, and to provide food and social security. The sector is important for poverty reduction since many of the poorest and most vulnerable groups live in rural areas. Its nexus with the natural environment means that future sustainable development in the region will ultimately depend on getting it right for agriculture.

18. A sustainable future will depend upon a considerable shift in attitudes, values, lifestyles and behavior across the globe. The Theme Paper explored agriculture and food security in the Pacific and emphasised the linkages between the three dimensions of sustainable development - economic development, social development and environmental protection. The meeting noted the information in the Theme Paper.

19. Niue welcomed the suggestions for better donor coordination of programme funding for the region. Donor programmes should maintain the focus on country priorities. The Theme Paper reference to the need for better coordination and policy coherence was also highly relevant. On traditional knowledge, Niue has found that elders are sometimes reluctant to pass on their knowledge. It is important to document traditional knowledge as well as to promote buy-in from the community, who need an assurance that traditional knowledge will not be lost but will be passed on to another generation.

20. New Zealand said Pacific Island Countries have a greater awareness and concern of the risks of climate change than in some developed countries, where there is sometimes a sense of denial. Awareness is a good driver for action. New Zealand asked about current actions being taken, such as developing salt tolerant crops, and who was leading some of this work. SPREP said Pacific populations were more aware of climate change impacts and noted the need to continue to work in partnerships and across sectors.

21. The Federated States of Micronesia said, in reply to the query by NZ, that some research is undertaken with partners such as CROP agencies and development partners, including Australia. Local capacity in the agriculture sector is limited. There is some collaboration at regional level among the Micronesian states. FAO referred to initiatives at the national and regional level to develop and distribute more resistant crops. The Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT) in Fiji, run by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, is focused on research to conserve and improve crop and tree varieties.

22. Samoa said the Theme Paper made a very important point regarding the value of traditional agriculture. The push to increase GDP from agriculture usually means commercialisation, but the presentation shows there clearly is a role for traditional farming and the related social and economic benefits. Samoa will take this up with FAO so that the pursuit of higher GDP returns from agriculture also takes account of the value and benefits from traditional farming. Samoa is finalising a five year agriculture sector plan and one of the aims is to double the agriculture sector's contribution to GDP from 10% to 20% over five years.

23. FAO said that in industrialised countries, some member countries were keen to protect rural communities because of the contribution of agriculture to social cohesion

and environment management. These benefits cannot be adequately measured by focusing solely on GDP. Industrial countries are also under stress, following the 2008 global recession, as it is becoming increasingly difficult for their economies to maintain social welfare support at the current levels.

24. The SRR said whilst traditional knowledge can be documented, people are sometimes reluctant to share this with external parties as they are unsure about how the information might be used. The way forward may be to encourage elders to share their information verbally with the youth. The SRR noted that both presenters had emphasised the importance of coordination among partners, sectors and programmes. Some ministries also need to adapt to changing practices and priorities to maintain their effectiveness.

#### **Item 4.1.1 Public Sector Policy in support of Smallholder Based Agricultural Transformation: Why, When and How?**

25. Renewed political attention on agriculture's role in economic development, poverty reduction and enhanced food security has increased further in light of the current episode of global food price volatility. This brings with it greater scrutiny of the role of the public sector in supporting sustainable agriculture, particularly that aimed at increasing the productivity of smallholder producers and their integration into markets. The paper addresses the questions of why, when and how the public sector should provide support. The type of support must evolve as the sector develops, as must the mechanisms through which it is delivered.

26. Tonga said it has undergone political reform and the government needs to deliver on the high public expectations for services. Tonga said their priorities include consumer protection and marketing. The new administration is unable to provide a lot more employment due to the limited options available. One focus is to try to provide markets for the private sector in sectors such as agriculture, tourism and handcrafts. However, people will not make an extra effort if there is no market for their work, and more needs to be done to identify markets for local producers. Whilst the global crisis and other factors make it difficult for Tonga to develop, government can help by building confidence in securing markets.

27. Vanuatu said it is crucial for public sector policy to support smallholders and strong domestic markets will provide more opportunities for farmers. Vanuatu requested further assistance from FAO and other partners to improve food security. Papua New Guinea said a clear policy framework plays a very important part in supporting smallholders. Agriculture is a key sector for food, income and employment and comprises 17 per cent of total exports. The 2010-2013 PNG National Strategic Plan and PNG Vision 2015 provide roadmaps for agriculture development. The goal is to ensure Papua New Guinea becomes a middle income country and a smart and healthy nation. Papua New Guinea seeks to have a world class agriculture sector that is responsive to domestic and export needs. A major objective for agriculture is to help with food security as a key development goal. Papua New Guinea thanked FAO for its support in developing the national agriculture development plan.

28. FAO said Tonga made an important point about the need to build confidence among producers to provide for domestic and other markets. In addition to markets, the producers also need good access to affordable services. The challenge for the public sector is how best to make use of limited resources whereby the private sector is encouraged to assist in the development of the markets and delivery of services. In many cases, well intentioned measures by government have created uncertainty, instead of confidence. New Zealand said government can provide many things, but this paper sets some boundaries and one of the issues is how to achieve the best return for limited government resources. The answer may not come from one person. Some members may wish to take the discussion paper back to capitals and pass it around different ministries for wider discussion, and to seek a consensus on the best interventions for policy. The paper could also be circulated to selected groups in the private sector. New Zealand also said that the recommendations could be more action-oriented.

29. FAO said a meeting will be held later in April in Samoa with private and public sector stakeholders to discuss policy interventions that may be useful in developing the fruit and vegetable sector. Niue noted the dilemma of political life cycles and the limited capacity to deliver on a wide range of services. The paper would be discussed further by Cabinet in Niue. Samoa emphasised the point raised by Tonga that agriculture should not only provide for the people but also be a source of income for them. People will be discouraged if they have an abundance of food and find it difficult to sell some for an income. Samoa asked if FAO, possibly assisted by the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank, could assist by helping to look for markets for excess produce.

30. FAO said FAO headquarters in Rome has a Trade and Markets Division which monitors markets at a global level, but it does not seek to identify market opportunities or individual markets that countries might target. Samoa said FAO is encouraging members to grow more food and better quality food, but people are discouraged because they are unable to sell their surplus. The promotion of food security, organic farming, and other farming methods to improve quality and quantity, will suffer as a consequence. Samoa proposed that this issue be explored by FAO, to encourage members to continue to promote food security. The SRR said FAO is able to conduct case studies into markets for producers. One of the sectors that members are trying to promote is tourism and this can be a valuable domestic market. Tonga said that producing for a tourism market will improve quality and also provide income opportunities, thereby encouraging more production and better food security.

31. Fiji said that the paper suggested governments not intervene directly too much in markets, though this might be necessary in an emergency or to ensure a more level playing field. The future of a nation should not be left too much to the private sector and there is a role for government intervention where required. Fiji has worked closely with SPC on the issue of market access, including for taro exports, and FAO may wish to assist further in this area.

32. FAO said a balanced role for government is important and some government intervention will be necessary through for example, trade and market related policies and



safety-net interventions. The critical point is that the interventions should not create uncertainty in the markets, but aim to increase confidence. The Pacific Cooperation Foundation said it is promoting a True Pacific brand to support a Pacific export mark into NZ and other markets. Six countries are covered in a pilot project. More work is needed on quality assurance and links to buyers. One of the issues is that producers are not confident about investing in quality assurance programmes, due to the high cost.

33. FAO said AusAID had begun a four year project, PHAMA, in 2011 to look at market access, starting with four countries. This covers trade with Australia and New Zealand as well as between island countries.

Ministers endorsed the following recommendations:

1. Enhance the level of understanding of the role that smallholder based agriculture plays in securing sustainable and equitable development in PICs, and of the implications of alternative policy interventions on the capacity of the sector to fulfil these roles.
2. Develop an improved understanding of the ways in which smallholder producers' participation in domestic markets can be facilitated during processes of value chain development.
3. Through sharing case study analysis in appropriate fora, raise awareness amongst policy makers of the potential implications of alternative policy interventions on the pathways that different categories of smallholders will follow.
4. Create fora for improved dialogue between public and private sector value chain stakeholders to ensure that the key constraints to sustainable agricultural development are identified and addressed.
5. Provide opportunities for capacity development, both within regional and national level organizations, in the identification and formulation of appropriate policy interventions.

#### **Item 4.1.2 Improved Food Security through the Commercialization of Agriculture**

34. The paper reported on the development of value chains and business models based on market opportunities and with farmers' organizations and private sector companies as key drivers for inclusive agricultural development. The rationale behind the approach was discussed as well as the key intervention areas and tools.

35. Samoa said the paper highlighted the need to develop markets. Samoa said some Ministers had mandates to aim for particular targets, including more exports and higher GDP. Producers need markets as an incentive to produce more, generate incomes and create employment. Kiribati said Recommendation 4, regarding support material for projects, would be taken up further with FAO. Cook Islands said mechanisation could

help to address the declining population on smaller islands. Cook Islands requested assistance to obtain small cultivator machines as well as assistance with farmer cooperatives to pool their lands and commercialise some crops. The cost of freight from outer islands to the capital for further export was high and mechanisation might help to lower some of the production costs.

36. Niue endorsed the Recommendations especially 1, 2 and 5. If FAO pursued case studies for market development, Niue offered to be one of the case studies. Fiji said it had spent six years trying to secure export access for red papayas. Fiji had a programme to supply hotels though the industry only took a small portion of total supply. Samoa said Recommendation 3 should be amended to add the word 'technology'. The meeting endorsed the Recommendations as amended.

Ministers endorsed the following Recommendations:

1. Strengthen a market-oriented approach to agricultural extension and build institutional capacities in Ministries of Agriculture for agribusiness support services.
2. Include market orientation approach in implementation of the FSSLP.
3. Dissemination of relevant farm management, technology, marketing and agribusiness publications and training material should be improved.
4. Develop support material for projects need to be Pacific, country and situation-specific.
5. Investigate usefulness of farmer business school approach.
6. Increase role of ICTs as extension tools and for providing market information.

#### **Item 4.1.3 Improved Plant Protection and Biosecurity for Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security**

37. This paper focused on how improved Plant Protection and Biosecurity supports healthy, productive and sustainable agriculture. The paper highlighted how preventing the impact of pests, diseases and invasive species with sustainable improved technologies are critical for optimizing crop yields to meet the growing food demands in the Pacific region. Critical gaps in biosecurity, impacts of climate change and the need for strengthening capacity to ensure sustainable agriculture production, were discussed. FAO's technical support in managing key approaches was presented.

38. FSM said the risks it faced included the brown tree snake from Guam, and the need for improved biosecurity as first line of defence. Raising awareness among stakeholders is also important as they could be vehicles for the transmission of biosecurity risks. FAO noted the current US military buildup in Guam required careful management to minimise

the entry and spread of biosecurity risks. The US Government in response is now developing the Micronesia Biosecurity Plan (MBP) to address those risks. Vanuatu also claimed current work to strengthen biosecurity controls to help conserve Vanuatu's biodiversity. Vanuatu requested assistance from FAO and other partners to identify and protect vulnerable genetic resources.

39. New Zealand said it has taken a new approach in recent years to prioritise requests from Pacific countries. NZ has discussed with some members, and agreed to harmonise the prioritisation of requests, to assist countries with their work on market access. NZ said the paper highlights the concerns facing the region. Requests for market access required a lot of work on risk analysis. Over the years, many requests had been granted approval but island producers had then failed to make use of the opportunities. Regular assessment and analysis is carried out into proposed products for export to NZ. However, when access is granted, producers are often unable to supply products due to changed circumstances, and competition from other producers. Frequent trips were also required to audit and certify the quarantine treatment facilities in the islands, which were also under-utilised. NZ noted the work done by SPC with ACIAR on the 'cleaner pathway for exports of taro' project. FAO noted the need for proper prioritization of market access request and to be supported by adequate cost benefit analysis and market feasibility studies.

40. Samoa said one of the problems faced by island countries is the use of agrochemicals, especially for weed control. Traditional methods are labour intensive but effective, and the use of weed killers is poisoning the land. Samoa asked about the SPC framework for regulating the use of chemicals. FAO noted that most export commodities from Samoa use chemicals as a more cost effective and practical means to control weeds given the rocky soil type. FAO and SPC are also implementing a joint programme for effective control, use and distribution of pesticides. Quarantine compliance and costs are also significant costs for producers. Papua New Guinea said food production faced ongoing challenges from pests and diseases. Integrated pest management helped with control of some pests, and more resistant crops and improved varieties were a focus for research. Papua New Guinea requires technical support to sustain programmes in this area. The meeting endorsed the Recommendations.

Ministers endorsed the following Recommendations:

1. Member governments are committed to develop and maintain an enabling environment to encourage effective sustainable crop production and crop protection and strengthened co-ordination among relevant institutions (agriculture, health, environment, natural resources, and trade).

2. Member governments and communities to promote the use of the use of tried and proven sustainable farming practices that focus on the sustainable management of soil fertility, pests and diseases such as integrated pest management, integrated plant nutrient management, conservation agriculture, organic agriculture, integrated crop-livestock systems, agro-forestry systems and integrated weed management as well as pollination management and other ecosystem approaches.

3. Improve or strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks for land use management, effective biosecurity and trade facilitation, and regulate the use and distribution of pesticides.
4. Increase farmers and stakeholders' knowledge of the probable impacts of climate change on agricultural production and food security, and develop adaptative measures to reduce vulnerability of agricultural production systems to the impact of climate change.
5. FAO and other development agencies continue to assist member countries to achieve sustainable agriculture production and protection, and to enhance food security in the region.

#### **Item 4.1.4 Sustainable Diets and Agriculture – Considerations for the Pacific Context**

41. Globalization, industrial agriculture, rural poverty, population pressures and urbanization have changed food production, trade and consumption in ways that profoundly affect ecosystems and human diets. The paper discussed agriculture's broader contributions towards sustainable human and ecological wellbeing. It introduced the concept of sustainable diets and deduced a series of policy considerations along the agricultural value chain aimed at increasing its positive contributions towards development in the Pacific.

42. Fiji noted there are opportunities to promote the use of local foods although the marketing power of multinational companies can make it difficult to compete. There is a need for a concerted marketing strategy in the region. FSM said it had a 'go local, grow local' campaign to support traditional foods, support biodiversity and promote resilience. Vanuatu requested FAO assistance to secure markets for food producers. Samoa considered the health aspects of value chains are also an issue. Imports of meat and poultry in Samoa have increased and some overseas producers are using veterinary drugs in poultry production. The value chain analysis should include a health certification to clarify what drugs/chemicals are being used in the production of popular meats and poultry, especially for imported items. Tonga observed that consumer tastes have changed and the market prefers imports such as cheap snack foods. Tonga added there is a need to convince local people that healthy choices are better for them, but the growing volume of cheap imports makes this difficult.

43. Papua New Guinea said it has taken steps towards a national food control system. Niue highlighted the importance of education and awareness in promoting local food. Niue celebrates National Food Day by promoting locally grown food and school children are also encouraged to use local food in their lunches. Australia also emphasised the importance of education. Australia welcomed the focus on nutrition and recognised that food security exists when people have good quality food to meet their dietary needs. Australia said that trade in food products is not necessarily an impediment to promoting nutritious food, and having open and transparent global markets is also important.

44. In response, FAO informed the meeting that Codex is a useful basis for food safety and quality requirements and is recognized by the World Trade Organization (WTO) as an international reference point. Codex had established a wide range of internationally accepted food safety and quality standards and guidelines, including Maximum Residue Limits (MRLs) for Veterinary Drug Residues in Food. It is through the use of Codex standards as a basis for national food regulations that governments can protect consumers while facilitating fair trade. On the issue of changing diets, it is important to work with young people and educate them about healthy food choices. There is also some scope for import substitution, particularly with a view towards creating employment and income among local producers. In regards to imported processed foods, there are some benefits to be gained by fortifying these with vitamins and minerals, as advocated by the Pacific Food Summit.

Ministers endorsed the following Recommendations:

1. Adopt a greater focus on what happens along the agriculture value/food chain from production to consumption by including health and nutrition concerns in agricultural value chain analyses to achieve nutrition-sensitive, sustainable agricultural development.
2. Institute and strengthen national food control systems that apply a farm to fork approach along the value chain to protect the health of the consumers and facilitate production and trade of safe and nutritious food. This includes food legislation and standards based on Codex, an inspection and certification service appropriately trained and able to effectively enforce legislation consistently nation-wide, assisted by sustainable, reasonably priced laboratory services consistent with accreditation principles, and Information/Education programmes.
3. Strengthen the capacity of small holder farmers and small scale food processors to add value and comply with food safety & quality requirements.
4. Give increased attention to local food production and consumption.
  - 4.1 Supply side measures include:
    - a) Enhance domestic trade by linking small farmers to markets through improved supply chains (e.g. upgrading or establishing market places for local produce trading).
    - b) Increase recognition of local crops and traditional food systems as important contributors towards national “healthy-food” supply systems.
    - c) Promote post-harvest technology and food processing that enhances nutritional value and adds convenience and shelf-life to raw commodities and local foods.
    - d) Document and promote a variety of nutritious traditional local foods to safeguard biodiversity and traditional knowledge.
  - 4.2 Demand side measures include:
    - e) Promote nutritious local food products.

- f) Promote knowledge about the environmental impact of food and the benefits of sustainable food production.
- g) Encourage the consumption of local crops and food in season.

#### **Item 4.1.5 Increasing Resilience: Climate Change Adaptation, Bioenergy and Organic Agriculture**

45. The paper presented new challenges for sustainable food systems in the face of climate, energy and financial crises. It outlined some of the FAO initiatives on climate change adaptation, bioenergy and organic agriculture. These seek to build food and energy resilience in Pacific Island Countries.

46. Fiji requested an update on organic agriculture for the next Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) meeting. With regards to the marketing of commodities, Fiji found that organic value-adding for domestic hotel and tourism markets proved beneficial. On biodiesel, Fiji confirmed it has a clear bioenergy policy as part of a wider renewable energy programme; in fact, there are plans to build a number of coconut biodiesel plants as well as two more hydro-stations on Viti Levu. Solar powered lights are being used in some Fiji urban areas and the generation of energy from waste materials is being explored.

47. Niue asked for clarification about the reported Pacific push for a Blue Economy in the leadup to Rio+20. Tonga asked whether it is too early for the Pacific to set its own strategy when the concepts of the Blue Economy were still under discussion in New York. FAO clarified that the Blue Economy involved fisheries and coral reef conservation. FAO suggested that Blue Economy strategies be defined within the context of national priorities. The SRR said there was a need to have a greater understanding of the Blue Economy, due to the complexity of the issue, before making a commitment and that the discussions be monitored. Fiji said the New York-based ambassadors to the UN will take this Communiqué as a basis for further action. Niue asked the Secretariat to provide more information on the Green Economy and the Blue Economy, especially for those states with no representatives in New York. The SRR agreed to provide an update in due course.

Ministers endorsed the following Recommendations:

1. Harmonize strategies, research and investments and establish policies that enable best-practice climate change adaptation measures, while mainstreaming food security into national climate adaptation initiatives.
2. Support the development of organic agriculture through public support services, such as government extension staff for agroecological (and organic aquaculture) training and quarantine staff for implementing local organic certification schemes. Develop local organic markets, with special emphasis on value-addition of organic commodities for

the local tourism sector. Also, provide an update on progress in the implementation of the Pacific Organic Standards to the next meeting of HOAFS.

3. Encourage coconut-based biofuels for rural power generation and further develop the 'whole-of-nut' model for both renewable energy and income generation, after careful analysis of costs and benefits.

4. Consider legislation and policy adjustments related to food sources (e.g. increasing investments in primary food sources), coordination with key stakeholders and line ministries, and research and development of adaptation measures (e.g. salt tolerant crop varieties).

5. Countries are invited to showcase specific success stories, including inherent vulnerability to global change, and actively participate in the FAO preparatory activities on Greening the Economy with Agriculture (GEA), as well as UN negotiations for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development, by highlighting the role of food and agriculture policies for a Green Economy Roadmap and developing the Blue Economy concept, also through a UNCSD preparatory meeting of SIDS.

#### **Item 4.1.6 Pacific Aquaculture and its Prospects**

48. There is considerable potential for aquaculture to fill the gap in the increasing demand for domestic food production and some export trade in fishery products. The paper reviewed the past and present aquaculture development initiatives (e.g. national development programmes, pilot projects and farming enterprises) in selected Pacific Island Countries. The lessons from them could provide guidelines to the governments and development assistance agencies for the further development of aquaculture in the region.

49. Fiji looked forward to sharing of experiences in this area. FSM said it benefited from the use of the network systems and also requested assistance with data collection and analysis. Australia noted the value of the regional network systems and FAO's expertise in this area. FAO said existing networks, including SPC, were valuable avenues for sharing experiences. Samoa noted the increase in aquaculture production in China and asked if some of the commercial species in Asia could be adapted to the Pacific, especially for smaller island countries. Papua New Guinea said there are 11,000 subsistence fish farms in inland areas of the country and project trials cover a number of species. Aquaculture development is guided by a national aquaculture development policy, including the national food security policy and national development plans. One of the issues for the sector is the high feed cost.

50. FAO noted the ongoing work in some member countries in aquaculture development and said this could be expanded. The SRR said some of the regional networks now report directly to the FAO Conference. It will be useful for the region to

mobilise their networks to also use this avenue, in addition to the reporting through the SWP Ministers meeting.

Ministers endorsed the following recommendations:

1. To strengthen national institutional and human resources capacity in aquaculture development, and to effectively implement national policy and regulatory frameworks in support of private-sector investments in aquaculture.
2. To further strengthen national capacity in data and information collection and analysis in aquaculture to provide a sound evidence-base for policy-making, management and planning.
3. To establish regional/sub-regional network systems to allow stakeholders to share their experiences for further developing aquaculture in the Pacific region, and to promote inter-regional cooperation and collaboration, especially with Asian countries, and
4. To identify successful cases of aquaculture development in the Pacific region and analyze and document the details.

#### **Item 4.1.7 Financing Sustainable Forest Management in the Pacific**

51. Whilst the forestry landscape in the region is experiencing rapid change, both in terms of administration and utilisation, the agencies charged with their effective management have not been able to keep up with the changes. This poses serious challenges to efforts to secure adequate financing for Sustainable Forest Management in the countries of the region.

52. Cook Islands said some species, introduced for erosion control and for wood burning for energy, have become a problem. FSM said that state forestry agencies have taken time to build their capacity and operate on performance-based funding. Vanuatu said its forestry ministry has a new policy to guide the sector and thanked FAO and other partners for their assistance. Niue was developing a forestry management plan and had a logging code of practice. Niue said it wanted to ensure that commercial forestry use is sustainable. Niue requested assistance to identify the potential commercial benefits from its existing forestry resources. Solomon Islands said issues of land ownership make it difficult to implement forestry policies. New policies to manage and protect forestry resources are being implemented in the country.

53. Fiji said an area of concern is the entry of invasive pests which are linked to trade, such as the Asian termite, which has proved very costly. Fiji recently launched forestry initiatives for the Year of the Forest and all conferences held in Fiji are being encouraged to also plant trees as part of the One Million trees campaign. Coconut plantations were being replanted. New Zealand said the thinking on forestry should not just focus on forestry but also on their place within the whole of government. The Recommendation



should be recast towards rejuvenation and reform, rather than disestablishment. NZ said the Asia Pacific Forestry Commission, under FAO, will be hosted by NZ in the 2013-2014 period.

54. FAO said a number of initiatives were underway and some focused on controlling invasive species. The requests for assistance were timely as some could be covered by initiatives such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF). FAO noted the views by members regarding reform and said it would take them on board. The SRR said FAO will revise the Recommendations to reflect the views of members. Existing and new FAO programmes will continue to further develop the forestry sector in Pacific countries. Samoa asked about the spiritual link with forestry. FAO said this is more in line with cultural beliefs in some Pacific societies and the healing process of the forests. Samoa suggested that medicinal, rather than spiritual, links may be more appropriate.

Ministers endorsed the following Recommendations:

1. Member countries undertake reform (if required) and develop more responsive (forestry) institutions that can meet new challenges and needs of SFM.
2. Member countries are requested to increase and improve capacities of forestry agencies to adequately access and use available funding. More importantly is to have the capacity to manage funding resources effectively and in a progressive manner.
3. Member countries are encouraged to identify and adopt new and innovative mechanisms for financing SFM.
4. Member countries are urged to improve fiscal management and effective use of existing local financial resources.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 5: PARTNERSHIP - INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD)**

55. The SRR noted that IFAD has confirmed their commitment to a strong partnership with the region.

#### **AGENDA ITEM 6: HIGH FOOD PRICES**

56. With global demand for food commodities currently increasing at a faster rate than supply, there is likely to be continued upward pressure on global food prices. However, the impact of high global food prices will differ significantly across and within countries. Policy interventions to curb volatility or to mitigate its effects will need to reflect these differences. The paper drew on global experiences and discussed the potential impacts

stemming from recent price increases and provided a categorization of possible policy responses.

57. Australia said it supports investment and has increased its ODA targeted towards agriculture. It recognises the value of safety nets and notes that high prices can also have positive consequences for producers. Australia supports the need to improve data collection and analysis. Australia is also keen to look at the issue of market intervention. Food price volatility has been addressed in a number of fora and FAO has played a constructive role. Australia encourages the SWP to support FAO in relation to this work.

58. Vanuatu said political will is needed to address this issue. Increasing local production is one way of responding to high food prices. Vanuatu requested FAO to continue to support members with this issue, and to help develop markets for Vanuatu as well as to improve data collection and analysis. Papua New Guinea said the price of imported food increased from 2008 following global food price rises. However, the price of traditional staples remained stable and people turned to local food. The stable local prices helped to minimise the impacts of global price rises for imports such as rice and flour. Papua New Guinea thanked FAO for its assistance especially with helping to build capacity to analyse the impacts of food prices. Papua New Guinea has a national policy framework on food prices and it is important for FAO and other agencies to continue their assistance in this area.

59. Niue endorsed the Recommendations, especially those on data collection. Niue welcomed assistance but was also keen to develop its own responses. Fiji said the best safety net for the Pacific is to encourage the use and consumption of locally grown nutritious food. New Zealand said history shows prices were largely stable from the 1970s and asked whether current high food prices might be a one-off or whether, due to factors such as climate change, prices may remain volatile. It is important to have good data collection and analysis to guide planning and policy responses. Samoa noted the value of promoting locally grown nutritious food.

60. FAO said appropriate policy interventions can help to respond to high food prices. Good data collection and analysis is important in understanding and preparing national responses. High transport costs to outer islands and for export are an issue for many Pacific island countries. The importance of traditional staple crops is not really reflected in price indexes as they are often not extensively marketed. There is a need to better understand the supply, and prices, of traditional staples.

Ministers endorsed the following recommendations:

1. Improve the level of knowledge of alternative policy responses. Consider short term measures such as safety nets and build longer term resilience through investment in sustainable productivity growth to ensure that domestic agriculture sectors are better able to mitigate the effects of higher global food prices over the longer term.
2. Develop the level of capacity of national and regional organizations to analyse the

effects of high food prices and the implications of policy responses. Governments should invest more into these systems of data collection and analysis to ensure that policy responses have their intended effect.

3. Governments should lobby, in appropriate fora, for strengthened rules and greater transparency over the use of distortive trade and market interventions.

### **AGENDA ITEM 7: Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme for the Pacific (FSSLP)**

61. The FSSLP has gone through significant changes since the Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture held in Niue in 2009. The paper discussed the background to the FSSLP and provided an update on preparatory work for the start of the programme.

62. Samoa noted the work on its five year agricultural sector plan which is relevant to the presentation. This involved public and private sector stakeholders in agriculture, forestry and fisheries. The main goal is sustainable agriculture development. The key policy objectives include strengthened legal frameworks, capacity building in the public and private sectors, improved data, improved food production, enhanced private sector capacity to add value and to market products, and sustainable management of resources. Cook Islands asked when funding will become available to implement the national food security programmes.

63. Fiji said with regard to the composition of the Regional Programme Steering Committee that only three out of 14 countries were represented at Ministerial level, and the membership included non-sovereign entities, many of them Suva-based. A greater regional representation, particularly representation by sovereign states, is needed, if members are to take greater ownership of the FSSLP. Fiji asked about the funding arrangements and requested an update. On the position of the gender specialist, Fiji noted that many Pacific colleagues are available and that an Expression of Interest be issued regionally to help find a specialist from the region. The issue of youth and women in agriculture, which is also addressed in the HOAFS, will tie in well with the FSSLP. Fiji asked that overheads be minimised, consultants be considered from national members, and that most of the funding be allocated for implementation. The onus is on members to help implement the FSSLP.

64. Niue shared Fiji's views on the management structure and with regard to the gender specialist, and that representation on the steering committee should also seek to have a gender balance. Niue requested that gender be considered when project proposals are assessed. FSM said gender issues are important and asked that this be recognised in the design and delivery of the FSSLP. Australia said the FSSLP responds to some of the key principles for FAO including taking a strategic approach to food security, and building partnerships. The FSSLP draws on the strengths and responsiveness of FAO to national

priorities. Kiribati asked if it could expand on an existing project, involving a coconut sawmill, that links to the objectives of the FSSLP.

65. Samoa noted it had an early departure and thanked the Chair for his stewardship of the meeting, as well as FAO and other partners, and the contributions by members.

66. FAO said that the composition of the RPSC would be reconsidered although regional representation by 3 Ministers and 3 stakeholder groups (private sector, civil society and organic associations) out of a total of 9 RPSC members, is considered very strong. FAO said gender is an important consideration and this will be reflected in the vetting of FSSLP project proposals and in the monitoring and evaluation. The members will be kept informed of progress of the FSSLP as it is implemented. The SRR said FAO has undergone changes since the FSSLP was initially planned, and is more focused on a results-based approach. The criteria for project proposals include viability and sustainability. The SRR said Fiji makes valid points about the need to minimise overhead costs, and FAO will take these on board. The SRR said the framework is based on a process of consultation and the activities will fit within this process. FAO is still open for requests for technical assistance, in addition to the work under the FSSLP. The FSSLP also serves as a framework for donor contributions.

Ministers endorsed the following recommendations:

1. Note the extensive planning that has gone into the design of the FSSLP which now provides a channel for sustainable financing for food security and livelihoods support to the Pacific region;
2. Note that national food security and livelihoods assessment documents and the identification and formulation of national FSSLP projects for submission to the NPSC and RPM is fully in process; and
3. Note that FSSLP project activities have commenced in some countries.

## **AGENDA ITEM 8: OTHER BUSINESS**

67. NZAid outlined the focus for their programmes. These include value chain development, promotion of niche products, biosecurity and food safety, and agricultural science for development.

68. SPREP said it was honoured to make the keynote address and to address the SWP for the first time. SPREP shared common aims with FAO and will seek to deepen its cooperation, especially in the areas of climate change adaptation, climate smart agriculture and management of marine and coastal resources. SPREP will assist with the implementation of the Recommendations from the meeting, where these coincide with its expertise and capacity.

### **AGENDA ITEM 9: VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

69. The meeting accepted the offer by the Government of Samoa to host the Tenth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture in 2013.

### **AGENDA ITEM 10: ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNIQUÉ**

70. The meeting adopted and signed the Communiqué (Annex D).

### **AGENDA ITEM 11: CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

71. Fiji looked forward to hosting the regional meeting in Nadi, Fiji on 14-15 April on high food prices. Fiji invited its Pacific colleagues to an agricultural show in Suva on 19-23 July 2011 which will include local and overseas exhibitors. FSM looked forward to seeing more meetings and projects being held in Micronesia. The Meeting thanked the Chair and the Host Government for their hospitality and excellent meeting arrangements.

72. The SRR thanked Ministers and Heads of Delegation for their valuable contributions and conveyed the best wishes and appreciation of the FAO Director General, who looked forward to meeting SWP Ministers at the 37<sup>th</sup> FAO conference in Rome in June. The SRR thanked members for their continued support for FAO work in the region and looked forward to continuing a strong partnership to address the priorities identified by members. What is important for FAO is the livelihood of the people and a more secure future for them.

73. The SRR thanked everyone for attending the meeting and for their contributions, as well as the hospitality and excellent arrangements provided by the Host Government. He also acknowledged the work by FAO staff.

74. The Chair thanked the members for helping to make the meeting a success. The Chair noted that the FAO Director General had also paid a courtesy call on His Majesty King George V during his visit to Tonga. The Chair delivered the closing prayer and declared the meeting closed.

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

*Ninth Meeting of the FAO South-West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture  
Tonga, 6-8 April 2011*

*Opening address by Mr Jacques Diouf, Director-General of FAO  
6 April 2011*

*Honourable Ministers,  
Dear Friends and Colleagues,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

It is an honour and a great pleasure for me to be back with you again, my dear friends and colleagues, for this Ninth Meeting of the Ministers of Agriculture of the South-West Pacific Countries, which has as theme “Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security in the Pacific Islands: emphasizing the linkages between the social, economic, and environmental dimensions”.

***The state of food insecurity in the world***

Despite a reduction in 2010, the number of people in the world who are suffering from hunger and malnutrition, estimated at 925 million, remains unacceptably high. This reduction was largely due to favourable economic conditions, especially in the developing countries, and a decline in food prices from mid-2008 to mid-2010.

For the Asia-Pacific region, the number of undernourished people fell from 588 million in 1990-1992 to 555 million in 2005-2007, a reduction of 5.6%. FAO's latest figures for 2010 point to 578 million hungry people in region, down 12% from 2009.

Soaring food prices on world markets in 2007 and 2008, which prompted food riots in some thirty countries throughout the world, have seriously affected food insecurity in recent years. The situation could worsen in coming months on account of the rapid rises in agricultural prices that are becoming increasingly linked to the price of oil.

The FAO Food Price Index has trended upwards since June 2010, reaching a record high in January of this year. The index increased further in February to 236 points, an increase of 40% from the June 2010 level and 5% above its peak in June 2008. Adverse weather conditions in a number of major producing and exporting countries triggered an upsurge of prices on international markets. But also, restrictive trade measures, political turmoil in certain countries and high oil prices have compounded the situation.

In addition, 29 countries are currently experiencing acute food shortages that require emergency assistance.

***Food price volatility***

*Honourable Ministers,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The increasing volatility of agricultural commodity prices in the last five years has become today a major concern, as it threatens not only the food security of populations but also social and

political stability in the world. This extreme variability of prices stems from insufficient supply in relation to demand which opens up a new field of action to speculators. Market uncertainties also impact directly on investment decisions and flows. FAO has drawn the attention of its member countries to the dangers of this situation, and is working closely with its partners in seeking rapid solutions to the higher and more volatile prices and the instability of agricultural markets.

FAO published recently the Guide for Policy and Programmatic Actions at Country Level to Address High Food Prices. It is currently organizing a series of regional seminars to help governments with their decision-making to deal with these difficult conditions and to draw lessons from the crisis of 2007-2008. I am pleased to note that your meeting will be addressing all these issues and that the seminar for the Pacific Region on soaring food prices will be held in Fiji next week. I encourage your countries to participate actively in this important workshop.

### *Agriculture and climate change*

Agriculture must also rise to the challenge of climate change, notably higher temperatures, greater variability of rainfall and increased frequency of extreme events, such as droughts and floods. These changes could undermine agricultural production systems and the ecosystems underpinning them.

Climate change and extreme events will have a serious impact on tropical zones and low latitudes, which is where many developing countries are situated. The Pacific Islands are an alarming example of their disastrous impact, especially the rising sea levels that condition people's lives and constitute an obstacle to agricultural development.

Our ability to anticipate and prevent such developments will depend on investments in water control, irrigation, rural roads, storage facilities, cold chains, slaughterhouses and ports, but also in improving plant varieties and animal breeds so that they are better adapted to changing climatic conditions. In addition, farmer training, building robust farmers' organizations, strong agricultural support services and technology transfer will also be essential to help developing countries to meet the challenges.

FAO actively promotes better management of agriculture and natural resources. It encourages the integration and harmonization of mitigation and adaptation activities in the use of natural resources. In the long-term, it is about enhancing agricultural production and farm incomes, food security and rural development.

Natural disasters, especially tsunamis, cyclones, flash-floods and droughts, have hindered development efforts in your region. In this regard, your governments need to adopt urgent measures to mitigate losses from such disasters, adapting a more systematic approach that is rooted in three main elements:

- development of national disaster plans involving all stakeholders – government, civil society, farmers' organizations and the private sector;
- mainstreaming of climate change adaptation measures into national policies, development plans and strategies; and
- the provision to farmers of the best information on crop varieties, animal breeds and soil and water management practices so they can reduce the risks and strengthen the resilience of the agriculture sector.

### ***Investing more in agriculture***

Today, the world counts almost one billion human beings suffering from hunger and malnutrition. What is more, the world's population will exceed nine billion in 2050, with virtually all this increase occurring in the developing countries, where 98% of the hungry live. In order to ensure global food security, we will need to increase food production by 70% in the world and by 100% in the developing countries.

But to be able to achieve that objective, we will need financial resources that are commensurate with the task. Agricultural productivity will need to be increased, especially in the low-income food-deficit countries, through investment in rural infrastructure, agricultural technology and research, farmer training and extension services, but also through the use of modern factors of production.

The share of official development assistance going to agriculture plummeted from 19% in 1980 to 3% in 2006. It now stands at around 5%. It should return to its historical levels that succeeded in averting famine in Asia and Latin America in the 1970s. The developing countries should themselves allocate a larger share of their national budget to agriculture, increasing it from 5% to at least 10%, reflecting the sector's contribution to national gross domestic product (GDP), export earnings, employment and income generation.

### ***Food security in the Pacific***

In recent years, the Pacific Island countries have taken a number of positive steps to reduce by half the proportion of people suffering from hunger and poverty by 2015, one of the Millennium Development Goals. Despite this progress, the agricultural sectors of some Pacific countries are among those facing the greatest difficulties in the Asia region. All the factors that I have just evoked have contributed to the erosion of the subregion's capacity to sustain local food production. And notably one consequence of this has been a growing dependence on food imports and thus greater vulnerability to hikes in food and oil prices.

Since the creation of its Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, FAO has taken every effort to promote food security and agricultural development at both national and regional levels. To that end, it has sought to increase partnerships and foster effective collaboration at all levels in order to promote sustainable development and facilitate the transfer of knowledge and technology.

FAO's programmes and projects in the Pacific are both national and regional in scope. By way of example, we have the Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme in the Pacific Island Countries – an umbrella programme that builds on the successes and lessons of the Regional Programme for Food Security which ended in November 2009. This initiative promotes the rehabilitation and sustainable development of agriculture, fisheries and aquaculture in order to bolster food security. It also draws upon other FAO support actions for the commercialization of smallholder farming systems. FAO has provided assistance for training in international trade negotiation and for promoting better nutrition.

FAO's programmes in the subregion have helped to promote the sound management and sustainable development of fisheries and aquaculture resources, with particular attention paid to small-scale fisheries and aquaculture. FAO continues to assist the countries of the region in improving the national fisheries information systems that underpin their decision-making and implementation of good management practices. It provides support to assist post-harvest fishery practices, development of value-added products and facilitated access to markets.

*Honourable Ministers,  
Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,*

The Pacific Island countries are environmentally fragile and vulnerable to external shocks. To ensure its long-term food security, the region needs to pursue a coordinated multi-sectoral response involving all stakeholders throughout the food chain.

I welcome the outcome of the Pacific Food Summit held exactly one year ago in Vanuatu and, more particularly, the fact that it underlined the key role of a thriving agricultural sector in food security, poverty alleviation and reduction of inequalities.

For its part, FAO is committed to supporting the Pacific Region in its efforts to achieve sustainable agricultural development and ensure the food security of its people. I am totally convinced that, it is only by working together and for the same purpose that we will be able to reach our goal of food security for all.

I thank you for your kind attention and wish you every success in your work.

Annex C – Agenda and Working Procedures

**NINTH MEETING OF THE FAO SOUTH WEST PACIFIC MINISTERS FOR  
AGRICULTURE**  
Vava'u, Tonga  
05 to 07 April 2011

**PROVISIONAL ANNOTATED AGENDA**

**TUESDAY, 5 April**

**1. OFFICIAL OPENING**

**WEDNESDAY, 6 April & THURSDAY, 7 April, 8.30am**

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

2.1 Adoption of the Agenda

The meeting will be invited to comment on the Provisional Agenda and Working Procedures before adoption. This will allow any other issue(s) Ministers and Country Delegates may wish to address.

2.2 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: STRATEGIES AND PROGRESS, 2009 - March 2011**

Focusing on the thematic areas of the Pacific Country Programming Framework (formerly known as National Medium Term Priority Framework), the paper provides an overview of FAO activities in the Pacific region for the period 2009 - March 2011 and reports on progress towards result-based management. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

**4. THEME:**

***“SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE AND FOOD SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS: EMPHASIZING THE LINKAGES BETWEEN THE ECONOMIC, SOCIAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DIMENSIONS”***

#### 4.0 Presentation by Guest Speaker:

This presentation will be made by Mr. David Sheppard, Director, SPREP.

#### 4.1 Theme paper:

In the Pacific Islands region up to 80% of populations depend directly or indirectly on agriculture (including forestry and fisheries) as their major source of livelihood, and to provide food and social security. The sector is important for poverty reduction since many of the poorest and most vulnerable groups live in rural areas. Its nexus with the natural environment means that future sustainable development in the region will ultimately depend on getting it right for agriculture.

The Brundtland Commission Report to the UN General Assembly in 1987 helped lay the foundation of sustainable development. The Report set out an important framework that pinpointed the balance required between our need for economic development and the care with which we must use our natural resources. The 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development further clarified the "interdependent and mutually reinforcing pillars" of sustainable development: economic development, social development, and environmental protection. Progress towards sustainable development therefore requires that the three dimensions of sustainability and their interrelations are taken into account in the development and implementation of policies.

Managing the interdependent goals of economic growth, social development and environmental protection requires institutions that are not independent and fragmented, but rather, institutions that are willing to coordinate and integrate economic, social and environmental objectives at each level of policy development and decision-making. A sustainable future is going to depend upon a considerable shift in attitudes, values, lifestyles and behavior across the globe. The Theme Paper explores agriculture and food security in the Pacific emphasising the linkages between the three dimensions of sustainable development. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

##### 4.1.1 Policy:

#### **Public sector policy in support of smallholder based agricultural transformation: why, when and how?**

Renewed political attention on agriculture's role in economic development, poverty reduction and enhanced food security has increased further in light of the current episode of global food price volatility. This brings with it greater scrutiny of the role of the public sector in supporting sustainable agriculture, particularly that aimed at increasing the productivity of smallholder producers and their integration into markets. This paper addresses the questions of why, when and how the public sector should provide support. The type of support must evolve as the sector develops, as must the mechanisms through which it is delivered. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)



#### 4.1.2 Value Chain:

##### **FAO activities for commercializing agriculture in Small Island Developing States**

Based on work in the Caribbean region, the paper reports on the development of value chains and business models based on market opportunities and with farmers' organizations and private sector companies as key drivers for inclusive agricultural development. The rationale behind the approach will be discussed as well as the key intervention areas and tools. A special reference will be made to the outcome of a recently completed regional Pacific Island workshop on the role of Government Agriculture Extension Services in providing advisory services for more market driven agricultural development approaches. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### 4.1.3 Plant Production, Protection and Biosecurity:

##### **Improved plant protection and biosecurity for sustainable agriculture and food security**

This paper focuses on how improved Plant Protection and Biosecurity supports healthy productive agriculture. The paper highlights how preventing the spread of pests is critical for optimizing crop yields to meet the growing food demands in the Pacific region. Critical gaps in biosecurity, and the needs for strengthening to ensure sustainable agriculture production, are discussed. Key approaches, and FAO's technical support in managing these, are presented. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### 4.1.4 Food and Nutrition:

##### **Sustainable diets and agriculture – considerations for the Pacific context**

Globalization, industrial agriculture, rural poverty, population pressures and urbanization have changed food production, trade and consumption in ways that profoundly affect ecosystems and human diets. This paper attempts to capture agriculture's broader contributions towards sustainable human and ecological wellbeing. It introduces the concept of sustainable diets and deduces a series of policy considerations along the agricultural value chain aimed at increasing its positive contributions towards development in the Pacific. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

#### 4.1.5 Climate Change and Organic Agriculture:

##### **Increasing resilience: Climate Change adaptation, bioenergy and organic Agriculture**

This paper presents new challenges for sustainable food systems in the face of climate, energy and financial crises. It outlines some of the FAO initiatives on climate change

adaptation, bioenergy and organic agriculture. These seek to build food and energy resilience in Pacific Island Countries. *(Paper and PowerPoint presentation)*

#### 4.1.6 Fisheries:

##### **Pacific aquaculture and its prospects**

There is considerable potential for aquaculture to fill the gap in the increasing demand for domestic food production and some export trade in fishery products. This paper reviews the past and present aquaculture development initiatives (e.g. national development programmes, pilot projects and farming enterprises) in selected Pacific Island countries. There are important lessons from them that could provide guidelines to the governments and development assistance agencies for the further development of aquaculture in the Pacific Island countries. *(Paper and PowerPoint presentation)*

#### 4.1.7 Forestry:

##### **Financing sustainable forest management in the Pacific**

Trees and Forests have huge environmental, cultural and economic significance for people in the Pacific. Increasingly, management of forests is not only to address national concerns but to contribute to global benefits in sustaining life systems. The sustainable management of forestry poses real challenges as well as opportunities for Pacific people and their countries. This paper discusses the current status and trends of forestry development in the region and offers options to improve the policy landscape as well as management practices. One focus will be on sustainable financing mechanisms for forestry development and the real opportunities this presents for the region. *(Paper and PowerPoint presentation)*

## **5. PARTNERSHIP - INTERNATIONAL FUND FOR AGRICULTURAL DEVELOPMENT (IFAD)**

This presentation will be made by the Representative of IFAD.

## **6. HIGH FOOD PRICE**

### **How do high global food prices transfer to the Pacific: differential causes, impacts and policy responses**

With global demand for food commodities currently increasing at a faster rate than supply, there is likely to be continued upward pressure on global food prices. However, the impact of high global food prices will differ significantly across and within countries. Policy interventions to curb volatility or to mitigate its effects will need to reflect these differences. This paper, drawing on global experience, discusses the potential impacts stemming from recent price increases and provides a categorization of possible policy responses. *(Paper and PowerPoint presentation)*

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

**A framework for implementing food security and sustainable livelihoods in Pacific Island countries**

The FSSLP has gone through significant changes since the Eighth Meeting of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture held in Niue in 2009. This paper discusses the background to the FSSLP and provides an update on preparatory work for the start of the programme. (*Paper and PowerPoint presentation*)

**8. OTHER BUSINESS**

**9. VENUE FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

**10. ADOPTION OF THE COMMUNIQUÉ**

**11. CLOSING OF THE MEETING**

[SWP/TON/2.2]



**Ninth Meeting  
of the FAO South West Pacific Ministers for Agriculture  
Vava'u, Tonga  
5 – 7 April 2011**

**MEETING PROGRAMME AND WORKING PROCEDURES**

**Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands  
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)  
Apia, Samoa  
2011**

## **INTRODUCTION**

1. This paper provides information on the proposed Programme and Working Procedure for the meeting, for the consideration and decision of Honourable Ministers.

## **MEETING PROGRAMME**

2. As Honourable Ministers have been advised, the Meeting will be from Tuesday 5 – Thursday 7 April 2011. The Official Opening Ceremony, as advised by the Host, the Government of Tonga, is scheduled to be held on the evening of Tuesday thus allowing the meeting proper to commence on Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup>.

3. It is anticipated that Honourable Ministers will be able to successfully conclude their deliberations by or before end of Thursday 7<sup>th</sup>. The following timetable for the meeting proper is therefore suggested for consideration and adoption:

Commencement Time	:	8.30am
Morning Tea Break	:	10.00am – 10.30am
Lunch Break	:	12.30pm – 1.30pm
Afternoon Tea Break	:	3.00pm – 3.30pm
Adjournment	:	5.15pm.

## **WORKING PROCEDURES**

4. To facilitate the smooth and orderly conduct of the meeting, the following working procedures are proposed for the consideration and decision of Honourable Ministers:

### **Election of the Chair**

5. For the purpose of electing a Chair for the Meeting, it has been the practice for the current Chairperson to continue to chair the Meeting until a new Chair is elected. Niue is the current Chair and will therefore preside over the election of the new Chair.

6. Although the Meeting has not formally adopted working procedures in regard to the election of the Chair, it has been the practice that the host government is invited to be the Chair.

### **The Agenda**

7. Member countries have been consulted during the preparation of, and have endorsed the items included in, the Provisional Agenda. However, it is possible that Honourable Ministers may wish to introduce new issues, or alter the order in which items in the agenda will be discussed. Thus, Honourable Ministers will be invited to make any

further input into the Agenda before adoption. Agenda Item 8, Other Business, however provides an opportunity for minor items to be raised without having to be cleared for inclusion prior to the adoption of the Agenda.

### **Adoption of the Communiqué**

8. As in past meetings, the Secretariat will prepare a draft Communiqué highlighting the main outcomes and decisions of the Meeting, and will be circulated at the earliest possible opportunity to allow time for Honourable Ministers to peruse the draft and provide comment and input.

9. In regard to the procedure for the adoption of the Communiqué, Honourable Ministers themselves are usually responsible for its clearance and signing. It is expected that this will be made before the meeting is formally closed.

10. The draft report of the meeting will be circulated for comments by email. On receiving your comments, the Secretariat will finalize it and for circulation.

### **Recommendations:**

10. Honourable Ministers are kindly invited to consider and endorse the above proposed Meeting Programme and Working Procedures, in order to facilitate the smooth and orderly running of the meeting.

Annex D – Communiqué