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**REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION ON ARTICLE 30 OF THE CONVENTION
AND RESOLUTION 2008-01 OF WCPFC**

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Report of the European Union on Article 30 of the Convention and Resolution 2008-01 of WCPFC

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The main EU source of support to the Pacific region is the European Development Fund (EDF). Under the EDF10 some 18 million EUR have been allocated for regional fisheries projects in the Pacific to pursue the double objective of promoting sustainable management and ensuring maximum economic benefits for the region from these resources.

Under the Regional Indicative Programme (RIP) of the 11th EDF, 35 million EUR are foreseen to deliver on Specific Objective 2.1: Improved economic, social and environmental benefits from sustainable management of oceanic and coastal natural resources with due regard for the conservation of native biodiversity and climate change adaptation requirements under PRIORITY AREA 2: Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment and the Management of Waste of the RIP 2014-2020. The programme is currently in its identification stage and Commission Decision is expected to be taken towards the end of 2016.

The Communication 'Towards a renewed EU-Pacific development partnership' published in 2012 highlighted the importance of cooperation on fisheries. With a strong focus on adaptation to Climate Change, the Communication puts the focus on the need to step up political cooperation and pursue a coherent agenda in terms of development assistance, sustainable exploitation of national resources and trade.

Regional projects funded by the EU are implemented by two regional agencies: Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and directly benefit the work of WCPFC. The definition of the priorities and the implementation take into account the needs of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The EU is willing to pursue and step up its dialogue and cooperation with the countries of the region and the regional agencies, FFA and SPC.

Current actions are funded by 2 regional projects: DEVFISH2 and SCICOFISH

I/ DEVFISH2

The Financing Agreement between the European Union and the ACP States of the Pacific Region represented by the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Regional Authorising Officer, for the «Development of Sustainable Tuna Fisheries in the Pacific ACP countries Phase II» (DEVFISH2 Project) has an estimated total cost of EUR 8,718,000.

The project is implemented through two Contribution Agreements. The Contribution Agreement between the EU and the SPC is planned for execution from the 16 November 2010 to the 2 of March 2016, with a budget of EUR 2,730,854. The Contribution Agreement between the EU and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency is planned for execution from the 20 November 2010 to the 2 of March 2016, with a budget of EUR 5,491,146.

The overall objective of the programme is to increase the contribution from the sustainable use of highly migratory marine resources, particularly tuna, to the alleviation of poverty in P-ACP states, including Timor Leste.

The project purpose is to reduce constraints to domestic tuna industry development. These arise from economic and environment vulnerabilities, including lack of capacity to manage and support

the tuna industry; and IUU fishing activities which divert economic benefits and threaten efforts to sustainably manage the resource.

Support has been provided to develop the domestic tuna capacity in a number of countries with the focus to improve market access conditions through the establishment or effective operation of Competent Authorities and compliance with EU IUU regulation.

Activities and progress against the objectives in 2013-2014

➤ Concerning the *support to sanitary Competent Authorities* the main activities were as follows:

- Ongoing support and back up for the established Competent Authorities of Fiji, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea (PNG).
- Assistance in the development of EU compliant Competent Authorities is on-going in several countries (Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Kiribati, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu).
- Both, the countries with established Competent Authorities and the ones trying to set up new ones benefitted from capacity building and inspector's training. For instance, a Regional Competent Authorities Standard Fish Inspectors course was developed and delivered. Participants from PNG, the Solomon Islands, Fiji and Kiribati, representing both the government and the industry, attended the three-week course. A two week regional training workshop on thermal processing of canned fish and regulatory/internal audit was developed and delivered. Participants from PNG, the Solomon Islands and Fiji, representing government and industry attended the course.

➤ Regarding the *support to the industry*, the following activities have been implemented:

- Technical assistance and support for Fiji Tuna Boat Owners Association (FTBOA) Marine Stewardship Council (MSC) annual audit and for the Fiji Offshore Fisheries Association (FOFA) MCS eco-labelling pre-assessment study.
- Support for electronic monitoring and observer trial in longliners belonging to the National Fisheries Development (NFD) fishing company of Solomon Islands and SATLINK.
- IUU catch certificate training for government and industry has been developed and delivered.
- Ongoing assistance to the work of the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA) and national associations.
- Ongoing industrial training internship assistance given to tertiary level food science students at canneries.
- Artisanal tuna sector livelihood and sustenance support were delivered; Nearshore Fish Aggregating Device (FADs) to enable increased production were provided to Timor Leste (Atauro Island), and Tonga (Eua island). Nearshore FAD support input was contributed to a climate change resilience and adaptive project in Samoa. (2015) Nearshore FAD support was provided to Vanuatu to support fisheries development recovery and food security strategy following cyclone PAM disaster as for Chuuk (FSM) following typhoon Maysak.
- Technical training support was provided to artisanal /small scale fishers in practical safety at sea and sustainable fishing methods on small crafts in Kiribati. Emergency grab bags distributed through above trainings both at national and regional level to

promote safety at sea for artisanal fishers in small crafts (2015) Tuvalu, Regional fisheries officers training in Vanuatu Maritime College. Same was provide to PNG Kavieng National Fisheries College to aid their safety of lives at sea (SOLAS) training program.

- With regard to the *support to Pacific countries to control IUU fishing activities*, the main activities were as follows:
 - Preparation of a National Plan of Action (NPOA) for IUU fishing and associated Standard Operational Procedures (SOPs) were formulated for Fiji, FSM, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, PNG, Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Nauru and Vanuatu.
 - Strategic support to MCS IUU detection operations and coordination is underway through the development of enhanced information management systems and the use of e-reporting for fisheries observers .
 - Work underway to improve IUU detection data and information systems and systems integration.
 - A Regional MCS Foundation Officer Course competency standards was completed and curriculum and course resource development processes are in advanced stages for delivery of the first course in October 2014.
 - Assistance and support for the rollout of national information management system development programs and the development of the FFA Regional Information Management Facility (RIMF).

II/ SCICOFISH

The SciCOFish project, « Scientific support, for the management of coastal and oceanic fisheries in the Pacific Islands region », implemented through a Contribution Agreement between the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and European Union was planned for execution from the 17th of April 2010 to the 3rd of March 2014, with a budget of €8,655,765.

An addendum to the Contribution Agreement has been approved; this will extend the implementation phase of the project to 27 August 2015 and the budget to €9,453,765.

Its overall objective is the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and oceanic fisheries resources in the P-ACP region.

The project purpose is to provide a reliable and improved scientific basis for management and decision making in oceanic and coastal fisheries. The project will provide the P-ACP countries with the means to develop efficient management measures, the skills to monitor their effectiveness, and some important tools to combat IUU fishing.

Main achievements

- *Training and Capacity Building*
 - 67 'observers' from the Cook Islands, Fiji, RMI, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu were trained in 6 observer training courses, of which 62 were certified.
 - Five debriefer workshops were held in PNG and Fiji; 87 trainees from Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga and Vanuatu received introductory training. Following on-the-job training of debriefer trainees, seven

trainees from FSM, PNG, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu were recommended for certification.

- There are now eleven certified observer trainers, from FSM (1), Kiribati (1), Nauru (1), PNG (5) and Solomon Islands (3). During 2014, two trainee trainers from FSM and Fiji did attachment training during four courses. Eleven trainers and trainee trainers from FSM, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, PNG and Solomon Islands attended the Regional Observer Trainers Workshop in Noumea in November.
- A species ID guide for use by observers on purse seiners and a purse-seine observer training video were completed.

➤ *Fisheries databases*

- Enhanced TUFMAN (Tuna Fisheries Database Management System) software installed in 14 P-ACP countries (PNG have their own custom-developed system).
- The new web-based online TUFMAN (logbook data) Reporting tool with secure login is now fully operational and was used by P-ACP countries to prepare data summaries for their WCPFC Part 1 Reports during 2014.
- The new web-based online TUBs (observer data) Reporting tool with secure login is now fully operational and was used by P-ACP countries to prepare data summaries responding to their flag-state reporting obligations and their WCPFC Part 1 Reports during 2014.

➤ *Reports and Analysis*

- A good number of documents were published, enhancing EU's visibility in the region: 1 video documentary "Mermaids of Timor Leste", 5 national reports on invertebrates, 1 invertebrate survey methodology manual, 2 brochures promoting men and women jobs in fisheries, 1 policy brief on the relation of industrial and artisanal tuna fisheries, 1 set of invertebrate identification cards and 6 new information sheets, 2 leaflets and 3 posters added to the information kit for fishing communities.

➤ *Regional Advice*

- Regional stock assessments completed for sharks skipjack, yellowfin and bigeye tuna in 2014, and South Pacific albacore in 2015.
- Potential economic-based target reference points for South Pacific albacore tuna were estimated through bioeconomic modelling.
- Further development of two potential bioeconomic models for the southern longline fishery – applied to define several potential economic target reference points for the South Pacific albacore stock.
- A regional bioeconomic model covering the four main tuna species and all significant fisheries was developed, and preliminary results reported to the WCPFC Scientific Committee. The model indicates that higher levels of economic rent would be possible at reduced effort levels, assuming that higher catch rates result from the maintenance of reduced effort.

➤ *National Advice*

- Country specific advice on the likely impacts that FAD closures have had on foreign purse seine fleets fishing inside PNA country waters, and PNA-flagged vessels fishing throughout the region, was provided to PNA countries.
- Eight ISNRs on the economic impacts of FAD closures on foreign and domestic purse seine fleets; and five ISNRs on oceanographic and climate impacts on longline catch rates of albacore, bigeye, and yellowfin tuna – including economic considerations.
- Coastal Fisheries Management measures taken on board by Samoa, Cook Islands and Pohnpei, FSM due to project intervention
- Niue National coastal fisheries management and development Plan (2014 – 2018) developed with stakeholder participation
- Export databases installed in FSM, Tonga, Niue, PNG, Solomon Islands and Nauru.
- Installed 7 micro-servers with software in FSM (2), Tonga, Niue, PNG, Solomon Islands and Nauru.
- Assessments and management advice on invertebrate fisheries provided for Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and Fiji with review of PNG management plan for sea cucumbers.
- Assistance to PNG has been provided to review their current management arrangements for the sea cucumber fishery.
- A “Roadmap for inshore fisheries management and sustainable development” to cover the period 2014 to 2023 was developed through a sub-regional workshop for the Melanesian Spearhead Group (Fiji, PNG, Solomon Islands, , Vanuatu and New Caledonia), with each country also producing a national implementation plan.
- A Joint Corporate Strategy (JCS) developed for Kiribati
- Assistance to Fiji, in collaboration with FFA to develop a National Plan of Action for sharks; assessment of Fiji finfish data undertaken
- Assistance provided to Samoa with management of coastal resources in general.

➤ *Tagging Programme*

- The total number of tagged tuna in the WCPO is now in excess of 401,000 and is the most extensive tuna tagging dataset available for stock assessment. The rate of tag recoveries currently exceeds 18% of releases.