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REPORT OF THE EUROPEAN UNION ON ARTICLE 30 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. For the period 2008-2012 (including EDF9/10) some 45 million USD have been allocated for 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. This includes about 26 million USD allocated to fishery under the EDF10 regional program. Consultations on the regional program under EDF11 have started and will intensify in early 2014. During the first consultation in October 2012, continued support to the fishery sector was suggested by the Pacific countries as a priority to be included under sustainable management of natural resources and the environment.

The projects funded by the EU are in their majority implemented by the two regional agencies: FFA and SPC and directly benefit the work of WCPFC. In addition, individual EU Member States also provide assistance to the region, for example the Netherlands have in 2010 contributed nearly 26 000 USD to the WCPFC Western Pacific East Asia Oceanic Fisheries Management Project. The definition of the priorities and the implementation take into account the need of the Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The involvement of SIDS in the process is a key principle of our action. The European Consensus on Development (2005) reflects the EU's willingness to eradicate poverty and build a more stable and equitable world. One of the key principles is that the EU is not imposing solution. To the contrary, developing countries are mainly responsible for their own development - based on national strategies developed in collaboration with non-government bodies, and mobilising domestic resources. EU aid is aligned with these national strategies and procedures.

The Communication 'Towards a renewed EU-Pacific development partnership' published in 2012 also highlights the importance of cooperation on fishery. 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. 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.

The actions are funded by the EU under 3 projects: DEVFISH2, SCICOFISH and ACP FISH 2.

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 initially estimated total cost of 8,200,000 euros.

The project is implemented through two Contribution Agreements. The Contribution Agreement between the EU and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community is planned for execution from the 16 November 2010 to the 2nd of September 2014, with a budget of 2,730,854 euros.

The Contribution Agreement between the EU and the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency is planned for execution from the 20 November 2010 to the 2nd of September 2014, with a budget of 4,973,146 euros. An addendum to the Financing Agreement has been approved by HQ and will increase the budget by 518,000 euros from the Regional 10 EDF envelope and extend the implementation and operational periods by 18 months. The additional funds increase the original total project budget by about 6.3%.

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.

Activities and progress against the objectives in 2012-2013

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.

Concerning the support to Competent Authorities, the main activities were as follows:

- External audits of the established Competent Authorities were completed and reported (Fiji, Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea).
- Assistance in the development of Competent Authorities is on-going in several countries (FSM, Kiribati, Cook Islands, Marshall Islands and Vanuatu).
- Both countries with established Competent Authorities and the ones trying to set up new ones benefit from capacity building and inspector's training.
- A Regional Competent Authorities Standard Fish Inspectors course was developed and delivered in collaboration with SPC.

With regard to the support to Pacific countries to comply with EU IUU regulation, 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, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. An update of the NPOAs for IUU fishing was done in PNG and Timor Leste.
- Strategic support to MCS IUU detection operations and coordination is underway.
- Work underway to improve IUU detection data and information systems and systems integration.

Activities are underway to provide assistance in the preparation of tuna development and management strategy in Cook Islands, Palau, Solomon Islands, Tonga

Technical assistance in policy development was provided to Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga and the Cook Islands.

Technical Assistance is being provided to assist in the facilitation of domestic tuna processing opportunities in Solomon Islands, PNG and Cook Islands.

Support to the work of the of the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association (PITIA)

Assistance in support of small scale fisheries, incl assessment of alternate energy source for small scale fisheries and Fish cooler bags trial for small scale fisheries

Training of observers

In collaboration with SPC, assistance was provided to support the training of fisheries observers, and Fisheries Observer Debriefers placements and training.

Reports and Studies

- Regional Study of Transshipment.
- Regional Study on MCS Training Needs.
- Curriculum outline for regional standard MCS Officers Course.
- Albacore fisheries management study completed for Melanesian Spearhead Group.

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 is planned for execution from the 17th of April 2010 to the 3rd of March 2014, with a budget of 8,655,765 euros. An addendum (1) to top-up the by 578,000 euros and to extend the implementation period has been approved by Headquarters in Nov 2013.

The project's overall objective is the conservation and sustainable use of coastal and oceanic fisheries resources in the PACP 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 up to 2013 (2010-2013)

Training and Capacity Building

- Seven observer trainers and 110 observers de-briefers trained.
- 398 observers from the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu, were trained during 36 observer training courses.
- Observer Training materials were developed, and sampling material was provided for the sub-regional and national observer programmes.
- Capacity development in survey methodologies and biological sampling implemented (more than 154 staff trained along the region).
- Production of 23 information sheets for fisheries management for communities).

- Brochure on community-managed no-take areas in fisheries management produced in association with the locally-managed marine area (LMMA) network.
- Capacity building through four regional and one national tuna data workshops.

Databases

- Work on electronic reporting initiatives which will improve the quality of data has started.
- Improvement on the coverage and quality of fisheries data has been achieved.
- Mini-servers are being set-up in 15 countries for storage of coastal fisheries data in support of the data collection

Reports and Analysis

- Regional stock assessments were completed for bigeye (2010, 2011), yellowfin (2010, 2011), skipjack (2010, 2011) south Pacific albacore tunas (2011, 2012), southwest Pacific striped marlin (2012), southwest Pacific swordfish (2013), oceanic whitetip shark (2012), and silky sharks (2012, 2013) (work supported with WCPFC funding).
- Regional analyses on the impacts of climate change for skipjack tuna have been revised and published in scientific journal “Climatic Change”.
 - A bioeconomic model of the Fiji longline fishery was developed.
 - Economic data from longline fleets in Samoa and Fiji compiled.
 - Recent analyses examining FAD use in the WCPO has been published.

National Advice

- Dissemination of key national fishery information through country-specific web pages.
- Issue Specific National Reports (ISNRs) prepared. ISNRs are reports to advice countries on particular issues, proposing options for tuna management planning, including economic aspects. In 2012, seven ISNRs on FAD closure impacts and seven ISNRs on artisanal / industrial fishing interactions were completed. In 2013 seven ISNRs were completed on purse seine edible bycatch and a further seven countries are having artisanal / industrial fishing interaction work undertaken.
- National and regional reports on vulnerability of tuna to climate variability including climate change have been completed.

Tagging Programme

- The tuna tagging activities in the central Pacific Ocean resulted in over 6,014 bigeye tuna being tagged including the release of over 18 with electronic archival data collection tags. The total number of tagged tuna in the WCPO is now in excess of 366,000 and is the most extensive tuna tagging dataset available for stock assessment. The rate of tag recoveries currently exceeds 16% of releases.

III/ ACP FISH 2

The ACP FISH II Programme is a 4.5-year programme financed by the European Development Fund on behalf of ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of states) countries. The Programme aims to contribute to the sustainable and equitable management of fisheries in ACP regions, thus leading to poverty alleviation and improving food security in ACP States. The specific objective of the Programme is to strengthen fisheries sectoral policy development and implementation.

The expected results of the Programme coincide with the five Programme components:

1. Improved fisheries policies and management plans at regional and national levels
2. Reinforced control and enforcement capabilities
3. Reinforced national and regional research strategies and initiatives
4. Developed business supportive regulatory frameworks and private sector investment
5. Increased knowledge sharing on fisheries management and trade at regional level

The major focus of the ACP FISH II Programme is to improve fisheries management, both at the national and regional levels, by supporting the development, review and update of fisheries policy instruments to ensure that they incorporate internationally recognised principles and standards as reflected in international fisheries instruments. It is a demand-driven programme, responding to the requests made by the beneficiaries.

The programme has now ended its operational phase. For the Pacific a total amount of 2,741,368 euros has been allocated, and a total of 24 projects have been or are under implementation,

Summary of Activities in the Pacific

Legislation

- A comprehensive review of the Republic of Marshall Islands fisheries Legislation was implemented. Fisheries legislation was updated, incorporating latest regional requirements and needs.
- Fiji fisheries legislation awareness. Fiji fisheries legislation awareness materials created and stakeholders' training conducted.

Seafood safety

- Review of Seafood Safety Standards. A Study to identify the present situation and issues and requirements for selected countries in their seafood safety standards was implemented (Palau, Niue, Samoa, Timor Leste and Tonga).

Monitor, Control and Surveillance

- Support to the WCPFC Observer programme in Tuvalu. A senior Tuvalu fisheries observer trained to be an observer de-briefer.
- Development and updating of national MCS strategic plans in line with the regional MCS strategy. The project assisted Pacific ACP States to support the development of, or update, their National Monitoring Control and Surveillance (MCS) strategies with a view to aligning them with the Regional Monitoring Control and Surveillance Strategy (RMCSS) adopted during the 74th meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Committee as part of a suite of new management measures designed protect oceanic fish stocks in the Pacific Ocean. The 14 participating ACP Pacific States have heightened awareness of their obligations under the RMCSS to close the identified gaps in their respective national MCS strategies. Country specific recommendations

for each of the 14 ACP Pacific States were identified. A template for recording and reporting on RMCSS implementation was developed during the regional workshop.

- Technical assistance to develop a standard national MCS operations manual in five ACP countries in the Pacific region (Cook Islands, Fiji, Niue, Tonga and Vanuatu). The MCS officers Operational Manual is now approved and used by some of the 5 countries.
- Workshop to train MCS officers in designing national MCS strategies and implementation plans. A training manual was developed and training for MCS officers on designing MCS strategies and implementation plans undertaken. Training module developed and 15 participants from 8 ACP countries participated in a training workshop.
- A regional Workshop on Port State Measures was organised.

Policy and Management

- Technical Assistance on training for officers in formulating policy instruments. A training module was developed and 16 participants from 8 ACP countries participated in the training workshop.
- Vanuatu, Tonga and Samoa snapper fisheries management plans developed or reviewed and validation workshops implemented.
- Technical Assistance to the Cook Islands to develop its National Fisheries Management Plans for trochus and sea cucumber taking into consideration the recent national, regional and international requirements and international best practices.
- Technical Assistance to support the review of the PNG national beche-de-mer fisheries management plan.
- Profiling of provincial fisheries resources in Papua New Guinea. Profiles drafts developed for selected provinces and training workshop undertaken for stakeholders.
- Regional training workshop on building capacity of ACP member States of the SPC in information sharing and communication for fisheries management.
- Pacific aquaculture policy development. Aquaculture policy development materials developed and training for workshop for Pacific ACP countries conducted.

Data analysis

- Capacity building in data analysis and interpretation in support of stock assessment of inshore fisheries resources (Fiji, FSM, Tonga, Tuvalu, Kiribati and Palau).

Trade

- PNG and Solomon Islands trade issues reviewed, materials developed and trainings conducted.

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In 2011 the European Commission adopted a strategic document proposing principles to guide the actions of the European Union in its external fisheries policy¹. It expresses strong commitment to ensure coherence of the EU's policies in fisheries, development, trade, research and innovation, among others.

The EU strongly supports the process of reviewing the steps taken in recognising the special requirements of Small Island Developing States and Territories. The EU will continue to report regularly on relevant new initiatives.

¹ Commission Communication on the External Dimension of the Common Fisheries Policy (COM(2011) 424 final)