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The main EU source of support to the Pacific region is the European Development Fund and for the period 2008-2012 some 42 million USD are 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. 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 projects funded by the EU are along 4 axes:

1. domestic industry development in the Pacific

- 1.1. The first cycle of DEVFISH €4m concluded successfully in 2009. A second cycle, DEVFISHII of 11 million USD started in 2010. It builds on the achievements of the first project with an overall objective to contribute to the establishment of a policy and economic environment conducive to the further development of Pacific islands owned fishing and processing operations and to an increased contribution of foreign fleets to the economic development of those countries. On regional level it provides assistance with analysis, consultation and training on shared and common aspects of tuna development. On national level it helps strengthening the cooperation between government and private sector, understanding and complying with seafood safety requirements, and provides training to competent authorities, fishery companies as well as small scale processors supplying local markets.

In 2010-2011 DEVFISHII supported under Component 1 "Tuna Industry Development" the formation of the Cook Islands Fishermen Association, national tuna industry association in Solomon Islands and the secretariat of the Pacific Islands Tuna Industry Association. Extensive consultations have taken place with the established and certified Competent Authorities in PNG and SI and with countries who have indicated interest to establish Competent Authorities in FSM, Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Cook Islands, Vanuatu and Tonga where training needs have been

identified. Technical Assistance was provided to Cook Islands for HACCP planning and training for the newly established seafood value adding commercial processing operation. Under Component 2 "IUU Fishing Deterrence", the project supported the upgrade of the Regional Fisheries Surveillance Centre to enable delivery of an improved "picture" of VMS vessel locations (set up in google earth) to members, the development of version 1 of an in country database for collecting critical MCS data (tested in Kiribati and FSM), and in country assistance to allow the scheduled reporting and cross referencing of vessel license lists in Nauru. Cook Islands has requested support on the development of a national MCS strategy.

- 1.2. A new online tool to facilitate management of export of fish and other marine products has been developed in 2011 by SPC under SciCOFISH (see more details on this project below). The tool aids interactions between fisheries authorities in SPC member countries and territories and private export companies, as well as storing and managing data on exports.
- 1.3. The EU as part of its WTO commitments provides SPS trade related technical assistance to Pacific countries, for example PNG. The EU contributes for funding the participation of representatives of Pacific island countries in work of the three international standard setting bodies in the fields of animal health, plant health and food safety and quality. Technical assistance is also provided under the Better Training for Safer Food Programme (BTSF) of the EU.
- 1.4. The EU has bilateral Fisheries Partnership Agreements with three island states in the Pacific, which contain explicit commitment that 'the Parties shall endeavour to create conditions favourable to the promotion of relations between their enterprises in the technical, economic and commercial spheres, by encouraging the establishment of an environment favourable to the development of business and investments.' Those Agreements contain an important funding component for the fisheries sector of the partner countries.

2. improved conservation and management of highly migratory fish stocks through collection, reporting, verification, exchange and analysis of fisheries data and related information

- 2.1. The SCIFISH project concluded in 2011 (USD 5.5 million). It has provided observer training to meet the demand for increased purse seine fishery observer coverage. The main activity under enhanced stock assessments is implementation of the Pacific Tuna Tagging Programme. Overall results of the programme exceed expectations with 275,000 tuna conventionally tagged up-to-date making it the most extensive tuna tagging dataset available. The establishment of sampling programmes and designs for studies of albacore reproductive biology and age & growth is one of the main achievements.

The project is succeeded by SciCOFISH (to a total amount of USD12.5 million, over four years). SciCOFISH will provide a reliable and improved scientific basis for management and decision making in oceanic and coastal fisheries. For 2010-2011 the programme has delivered results. Under component 1 P-ACP governments, FFA and WCPFC have been provided with scientific data, modelling and advice to underpin management decision making: 1) four regional tuna assessments (skipjack, yellowfin, bigeye and South Pacific albacore) were conducted and presented to the WCPFC Scientific Committee in

August 2011. All assessments were used in the formulation of the Committee's scientific advice to WCPFC8; 2) furthermore, the training activity has already partially reached the objectives set for 2014 with 139 observers trained, 8 observer trainers; 3) Observer coverage of purse seiners in 2010 is believed to have been close to 100%; however, delays in data transmission and limited resources for data processing have meant that the coverage of processed data available at SPC is in the region of 50% as of December 2011. This is considerably higher than coverage rates (around 10%) prior to 2010, and is expected to increase as further observer reports are submitted; 4) under the ecosystem modeling of management and climate change activities, skipjack, albacore and bigeye models variations using SEAPODYM have been completed while the yellowfin model is partially completed.

Under component 2, P-ACP governments, private sector and communities are equipped to monitor coastal fisheries to provide scientific advice in support of sustainable management of these resources P-ACP governments, private sector and communities are being provided with technical methods and training to monitor coastal fisheries, scientific advice to inform management decisions, and development of in-country capacity to evaluate their effectiveness: 1) a regional database for exports has been developed for trialling; 2) assessment of finfish monitoring, survey data and management advice provision have been undertaken for 3 countries (ahead of the 2011 objective of 2 countries); 3) assessment of invertebrate survey and monitoring data were provided to 5 countries (ahead of 2011 objective of 3 countries).

2.2. Among the completed projects, let us also mention the COFISH project which provided funding for Niue, Nauru, Palau, FSM, Marshall Islands and Cook Islands to develop database GIS for the comparative assessment of the reef fish resources, as well as for capacity building for technical fisheries assessment indicators for monitoring the status of reefs, handbooks and national reports for each country.

3. stock assessment and scientific research

3.1. SciCOFISH, implemented by SPC-OFP, will provide much of the scientific basis for future decisions on management of tuna and related stocks in the WCPFC Convention Area.

4. monitoring, control, surveillance, compliance and enforcement, including training and capacity-building at the local level, development and funding of national and regional observer programmes and access to technology and equipment

4.1. Under the SCIFISH and SciCOFISH projects the EU contributes to the enhancement of the ROP of WCPFC: with several workshops for training of observers and training in port sampling. During 2011, workshops have been held inter alia in Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and PNG.

4.2. SCIFISH also funded the purchase and installation of new network servers in Palau, Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu to support the observer programmes.

4.3. SciCOFISH 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 on the high seas.

- 4.4. SciCOFISH has also provided carried out case studies on women in fisheries with completed gender analysis for the fisheries science and management sector in three countries; Solomon Islands, Marshall Islands, and Tonga, with concrete proposals on how to make a career in fisheries more accessible to women
- 4.5. The EU also funded the strengthening of existing technologies and trial of new technologies for improvement of detection of IUU fishing.
- 4.4. The DEVFISH II Project improves capacity at the national and regional level to monitor and combat IUU fishing. Activities include real-time exchange and joint operations with the navies of the US, NZ, AUS and FR. It also includes integrating fishery data with the FFA's EOPS system for at-sea surveillance.

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. Furthermore, work is ongoing in the European Commission to adopt, by the end of 2012 a comprehensive revision of the framework for the EU's development policy in the Pacific. The intention is to step up political cooperation and pursue a coherent agenda in terms of development assistance, sustainable exploitation of national resources and trade. There would also be a strong focus on adaptation to climate change.

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