

**REPORT**  
**FAO NATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS TRAINING**  
**FAO Office, Apia, Samoa**  
**5 - 9 October, 2009**

**Opening**

Dr Vili A Fuavao, the FAO Subregional Representative for the Pacific (SRR) welcomed the NC to the meeting and noted that FAO is undergoing reform. One aspect of the reform calls for more decentralization to the field in terms of decision making. He noted that the training provides an opportunity to brief the NC and identify their new roles in the new FAO.

*The six month report form, agenda and participant list are attached in annexes 1, 2 and 3*

**Agenda: The role of NCs, assessment of performance, reporting**

Facilitated by the SRR, the session discussed the reform and the new roles NC will play. The SRR emphasized the need for the NC to fulfil its terms of reference which include fulfilling their reporting responsibilities which has been very disappointing to date. The NCs are considered eyes and ears of FAO in the countries and they are required to inform FAO on regular basis on relevant development in the countries..

**Highlighted issues that were discussed in details included;**

The SRR stressed the need to improve communication between FAO and NCs. This is a two way process that should be strengthened on both sides. At the country level, NCs should provide FAO with up to date information including news clips on FAO related matters.. NCs were also encouraged to establish a network and communicate among themselves. NCs were each requested to provide biodata for the SAP Website.

The SRR clarified that the role of NCs are to facilitate and coordinate all programs and activities of FAO in the countries. The NPCs are responsible for the implementation of specific approved project/activity at country level.

The SRR noted that the NCs have been provided with computers and printers to facilitate their works.. The NPCs are responsible for project related equipments which would be transferred to countries at the completion of projects except for project vehicles which will be under the custody of the NCs during the interim until the next project is approved and become operational.

The SRR explained that the progress and activity reports are required as in the TORs. The adherence to this has been probelematic and disappointing. A six month progress report is also required and to be submitted by the NCs to the SRR on the last day of November and June every year. This was again endorsed and agreed to by the meeting. This six month progress report will be submitted on a template agreed at the meeting. This was also circulated at the meeting.. This six month report is in addition to the activity report required to

be completed as basis for possible extension of NC appointment.. The activity report is required on an yearly basis and will allow the SRR to assess the performance of the NC.

During the discussions the NCs recommended to the SRR to consider increase of their allowances given the pivotal role and increase responsibilities entrusted to them with the new FAO reform. The SRR agreed to look into it providing and depending on the follow up actions by the NC..

Each NC made a brief presentation on the Agriculture sectors in the country..

### **Agenda: Relevant Administration /Finance procedures**

The Administrative Officer provided guidance to the NCs on administration and finance procedures of FAO in dealing with payments, provision of quotations, fund disbursements. NCs were informed that they can set up petty cash accounts and can request up to US\$200 for operation cost to be deposited into these accounts. Disbursement of funds can be undertaken by NCs and the NPCs to ensure that activities are implemented on time following the normal FAO procedures.

### **Agenda: SAP Website**

Participants were briefed on the current status of the new SAP website development <http://www.faopacific.ws> . The sitemap, layout, pages and various section of the new SAP website were introduced. They were asked for their views on how to improve the website. It was agreed that photo, contacts and brief biodata of the national correspondents will be posted in the website.

The SAP website will enable member countries and users worldwide to be updated on FAO activities in the region and has direct link FAO Home Page <http://www.fao.org>. It was explained to the meeting the ongoing revision of the SAP website making it more users friendly The national correspondent were encouraged to provide short articles and news clips for the website. It was agreed that the NC mandatory six monthly reports will also be posted on the SAP website.

### **Agenda: Operation**

The Operation Officer briefed the meeting on the role and responsibilities of the Operation unit in SAP which is focused on monitoring and ensuring that all projects are implemented on time in accordance with FAO procedures. They were advised on the procedures regarding procurement, cash advances, recruitment, requests and reporting on project activities. Understanding and knowing the procedures is vital to the timely and successful implementation of projects which is very important to FAO but mostly for the countries benefit. The National Project Coordinators (NPC) in each country are responsible for the implementation of various projects in collaboration with the Ministry of Agriculture. However some National Correspondents (NC) are also the NPCs and some are not. For those who are not NPCs and not directly involved with the implementation of projects, they should be aware and know about FAO involvement in their country so they can support and assist as

part of their NC roles. In some countries, depending on their needs, National Project Implementation Assistants (NPIA) were also recruited. The position is funded by the projects and their role are to assist the NPC. The TORs for both positions were made known to the NCs as to avoid confusion and misunderstanding..

. It was emphasized that cash advances are only processed for specific purposes such as general operating expenses, internal training and internal travel. Most important is that cash advance can only be processed if previous advance has been fully reconciled to the cent. For procurement they have to follow the rule in submission of three quotes., its ONLY when there are only two or single supplier that a justification note is be submitted. All procurements are to be done locally with the exception of goods that are not available locally. . All project activities must be operationally cleared. Proper clarification and justification is a requirement and must be done properly (refrain from one sentence justification)

### **Agenda: TCP, TCP Facility, Trust Funds, Telefood**

The SRR outline FAO programmes and resources available. Outlines below were results of discussion.

#### TCP

- Maximum timeline of 2 years
- Maximum funding allocation is \$500,000 per project proposal
- *Important note for NC's*: what is needed for TCP is a letter of request and justification endorsed by the Focal Point (Ministry of Foreign Affairs). SAP could assist with the formulation of the TCP Proposal

#### TCP Facility

- Like the normal TCP, it has finite timeline, maximum of 2 years
- The TCP facility caters for gaps and could request for technical advice which could also include capacity building (workshops).
- Each country has a ceiling of up to per biennium \$200,000
- An example of TCP Facility is a request from Palau on Slaughterhouse Assessment. TCPf needs official requests from the government with the needs well articulated
- Approval of TCP Facility has been delegated to FAO Field Office
- It was noted that TCP Facility for the region are not fully utilized and the *NC were encouraged to facilitate requests to utilize the resources*
- To access it needs: a letter of request and justification together with TORs endorsed by the Focal Point (Ministry of Foreign Affairs) . SAP would assist with the formulation of the request

#### Trust Funds

- These are funds raised by FAO from donors for food security program and projects. Examples of that was the RPFS funded by the Italian Government and FSSLP from IFAD and Italy (potentially)
- Other trust fund donors includes EU, NZ, Australia, Japan, etc

## Telefood

- Funds are directed to support community projects with maximum funding allocation of \$10,000 per project
- The funding source is from fund raising activities during the annual world food day celebrations
- Project approval has been delegated to SAP with effect from September 2009
- It is noted that none of the 14 Pacific Forum Island countries has ever utilized its allocation of \$50,000 a year and the NC's were encouraged to facilitate in utilization of the resources.
- NC's involvement and responsibility are to check and verify Telefood project proposals were highlighted and agreed that all Telefood Proposals has to come through the NC's prior to submission to FAO and that Telefood proposals that goes direct to FAO will be returned to NC's for verification and checking before re-submission to FAO.
- On Telefood format and writing proposals, SRR encouraged NC to just use the old and approved proposals of related projects as template and make the appropriate changes.
- Telefood is not for "bailing out" or for completing unfinished project by other donors, however, if co-funding is proposed, clear understanding on what are the components to be funded by FAO and the donor(s) needs to be specified very clearly at the very beginning.

## **Agenda: ISFP**

The FAO –Initiative on Food Soaring Prices (ISFP)e objective is to increase food production and food availability, in wake of soaring food prices. As a response FAO adopted a unified response to the global food price crisis in July 2008. A sum of US \$ 2.5 million was allocated to the 14 Pacific Countries to boost agricultural and livestock production. The approach and measures adopted by project is to contribute to longer-term food security by addressing underlying drivers of the crisis.

He further stressed that project is coming to end very soon and requested the NC to follow up so that activities can be completed the soonest possible and submit the progress report on implementation of the project in their respective countries. Acknowledging that delays has occurred in very beginning, this was due to lack of appropriate information. For example, clearance of seeds, chemicals and equipments it took longer due lack of appropriate information from the countries and suppliers. He requested that NCs to facilitate the submission of the progress reports and list of beneficiaries.

He also informed the NC that an impact assessment has been planned for ISFP early next year. Assessment will include lessons learned from implementing such projects for future reference. He also encouraged the NC to document on the visible impact of the project such as availability and prices on markets.

### **Agenda: Telefood**

The Programme Assistant informed the meeting on the new process for approving Telefood projects. With the ongoing reform and decentralisation to the field of decision making, SAP since September 2009, is now responsible for technical clearance and the approval of Telefood projects. The authority to approve Telefood projects is now the responsibility of the SRR. The meeting was also briefed on the new guidelines for Telefood projects. The NC is the focal points for Telefood in the countries. Submissions of Telefood proposals from SAP member countries to the SAP office will be done through the NCs. The NCs will ensure the protocol is followed at the country level in submitting the proposals to SAP and will act as coordinators for approved projects.

### **Agenda: NMTPF, FSSLP, MDT Presentations**

The aim of the MDT is to facilitate the implementation of SAP activities.. MDT ensures that FAO assistance contributes to the priority outcome area identified in the NMTPF. The NMTPF is a medium term framework which identifies the priority strategic areas in which FAO will focus assistance to support national government's development priorities. It is a planning and management tool which is now an obligatory component of FAO programming under the FAO reform. It is an input into UN common country programming process. He also said that NMTPF is an ongoing, iterative process, with the preparation and implementation phases overlap. Feedback from implementation will sharpen the focus over time. However, the specific activities and interventions to be supported will have to meet the qualifying criteria of the specific funding source. He stressed that proposal for project or activities from member countries should show clear linkages to the prioritized development outcomes in the NMTPF for FAO to provide support and technical assistance.

### **Food & Nutrition**

FAO Food and Nutrition Officer explained that there were two focus areas in the NMTPF relevant to his work. The thematic area "Food safety, quality and nutrition" and the thematic area "Agribusiness & Marketing and Trade". In the first area, a key outcome is successfully meeting established food quality, SPS and safety standards, in particular having appropriate food quality and safety standards and legislation in place; strengthening capacity to implement these standards and legislation; and having effective food control & inspection service operating. This work also covers Codex related issues. Nine PICs are currently members of Codex. Non members (Niue, Marshall Islands, Palau, Nauru and Tuvalu) may join Codex by sending a formal request from ministerial level to the Director General of FAO, with a copy to the Director General of WHO. All member countries have a designated contact point who deals with matters relating to Codex and facilitates the flow of information. Financial support to attend codex meetings is available to Codex member countries through the Codex Trust Fund. These requests for trust fund support must come only from Codex contact points, keeping in mind the deadline for next year's applications is usually at the end of October each year. Furthermore, the focus area also aims at improved nutritional and dietary practices. Given the increasing reliance on highly processed imported foods, a strategy is the promotion of local, traditional foods through awareness creation and education on their

nutritional value and the importance of eating a good quality diet. In the area of Agribusiness, outcomes include enhanced capacity in food processing and value adding of agriculture and fisheries products and increased competitiveness of agricultural products on domestic and international markets and improved marketing systems and market access for livestock, traditional food crops and high value specialty commodities.

#### Food Summits

In line with current efforts at global and regional level, a Pacific Food Summit is planned for April 2010, which will draw together all stakeholders with an interest in food from high level officials in government sectors to industry and primary producers to strengthen access to sufficient, safe and suitable food in the Pacific. It will build on a series of national food summits and give participants opportunity to review and finalize a framework for action on food security in the Pacific for implementation over the next five years and to review and finalize a Pacific Declaration on Food Security for endorsement by Pacific Leaders at their meeting in Vanuatu in 2010. The Pacific Food Summit will give government sectors (particularly agriculture/fisheries, health and trade), private sector and civil society with an interest in food an opportunity to review and finalize a framework for action on food security in the Pacific for implementation over the next five years. It will also provide an opportunity to review and finalize a Pacific Declaration on Food Security for endorsement by Pacific Leaders at their meeting in Vanuatu in 2010. In terms of national food summits, NC's were asked to encourage participation by and input from the Agriculture sector strongly at the Food Summits so that there is good balance with health & trade issues, as in most cases, health sector is leading the organisation of National Food Summits.

#### Forestry activities and Funding Initiatives

The Forestry Officer explained forestry activities that are currently been implemented in the Pacific Region. These included:

GEF-PAS (Global Environment Facility – Pacific Alliance for Sustainability) Forestry Conservation and Protected Area Management Project. The GEF-PAS Forestry Project focuses on Forest conservation and Protected Area Management in Samoa Vanuatu, Fiji and Niue.

Policy and Legislation. FAO has just completed a draft forestry legislation for Niue. Currently working on forest policy and new forestry legislation for Tonga. Climate change, given its importance, is mainstreamed into the new Tonga national forest policy, particularly the role of forests in mitigating and minimizing the impacts of climate change.

Forest Resource Assessment 2010. These are global forest assessments which are done every 5 years looking at status of forests and changes in vegetation cover. National correspondents have been appointed in each country to coordinate collection and compilation of data and information. Country reports are expected to be completed in 2010. These reports are jointly compiled with FAO and will be made available on-line. FRA reports can assist formulation

of forest policies by providing useful data and information and guide the forestry planning process for individual countries.

National Forest Program Facility. The Facility could provide technical assistance of up to \$360,000 for each country or participating organization. Currently, Vanuatu and Palau have managed to secure a signed agreement with the Facility to support various activities in support of their national forest programme. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community has also a signed regional agreement with the Facility to support regional initiatives.

MAR-SFM (Monitoring, Assessment & Reporting of Sustainable Forest Management). This is a regional project for the Asia-Pacific region. Resources are available but so far very few requests have received from member countries in the Pacific. A major focus of the project is capacity building and building networks in-country.

FLEGT (Forest Law Enforcement, Governance & Trade). This is a new project funded by EU for ACP member countries. FAO now acts as the project secretariat and coordinates its implementation with governments, civil societies and other development partners. It focuses on combating illegal logging, poor forest management and governance practices, and illegal trade of forest products. The Project is now calling for proposals with deadline for submission at the end of October 2009. All ACP member countries can apply to access funds, either for pilot projects or technical assistance.

Forestry activities and initiatives in the region are funded and implemented through the regular programme of work and FAO project trust funds. Member countries are encouraged to link up and collaborate with several of the forestry activities and initiatives as they can strengthen national forestry programmes.

### Fisheries

The Fisheries Officer was not able to participate in the training as he was involved with the field assessment of the damage to the fisheries sector during the Tsunami that struck Samoa a week earlier. However, the Fisheries officer provided a power point presentation of photos of the affected area and damages to the fishery sector mainly fishing boats.

### **Agenda: Closing/Conclusion**

The SRR expressed appreciation for the NC contribution to the success of the training. He alluded that if follow up actions progress well then future training of this kind is likely. He alluded to the decisions of the NC which included the following.

- The six monthly report of the NC are due on the last day of June and November annually with the one for 2009 due on the last day of November 2009. The report is to follow the agreed format which has been made available to the NC. The six monthly reports will be posted on the sapa website.
- NC to provide photos, biodata and contacts for the sapa website
- Telefood projects are to be channeled through NC
- NC to contribute by submitting short articles for the sap website. They would also require to forward articles on local media on FAO.
- NC to be responsible for the safety and security of vehicles and other properties/equipments of FAO purchased under TCP until official transfers to the Government and/or to be used for new project.

### **Agenda: Field Trip**

At the completion of the training a field trip was organized for NCs to visit the areas affected by the recent Tsunami.

Annex 1

**FAO NATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS REPORTING QUESTIONNAIRES FOR SIX MONTHS PERIOD - DUE ON THE LAST DAY OF JUNE AND NOVEMBER OF EVERY YEAR**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

Reporting period:

Name of National Correspondent:

Name of the Country:

Name of the Organization/Ministry:

*List the major activities undertaken for FAO under the following headings:*

1. Publicity and awareness (in terms of information dissemination related to FAO initiatives and programs)
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2. FAO Staff missions and official visits attending FAO meetings
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3. Government delegations or local staff attending FAO meeting
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4. Technical Assistance (TCP Trust fund Projects & Telefood)

5. Emergency and Emerging Issues

6. Advocacy and Partnerships (in terms of civil society awareness and partnerships)

7. Other external assistance provided to agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development (including report on areas of collaboration if any;

8. Major orientations of sector/sub-sector policies and programmes in agriculture, forestry, fisheries and rural development;

9. Possible areas of assistance (in terms of technical and finance) for future projects:

10. General comments if any:

**FAO NATIONAL CORRESPONDENTS TRAINING**  
**FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, Apia, Samoa**

**5-9 October 2009**

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**PROVISIONAL AGENDA**

**Monday, 5 October 2009**

- |                |  |
|----------------|--|
| 9.00-10.30am   | Opening  |
|                | Introduction of the National Correspondents &<br>SAP staff   |
| 9.30 -10.00am  | Morning Tea  |
| 10.00 -12.30pm | Roles of NCs - reporting, assessment of performance, article for the<br>SAPwebsite – Vili A Fuavao                       |
|                | NC short presentations   |
| 12.30-1.30pm   | Lunch  |
| 1.30-3.00pm    | Continue the NC presentations  |
| 3.00 – 3.30pm  | Afternoon Tea  |
| 3.30-5.00pm    | Relevant administration/finance procedures (what required from NC to<br>facilitate payments, etc, etc) - Vincenzo Valeri |

**Tuesday, 06 October 2009**

- |               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 9.00-10.30am  | Communication including Sapwebsite– John Riddle/Holland |
| 10.30-11.00am | Morning Tea   |
| 11.00am       | Communication continue                                  |
| 12.30-1.30pm  | Lunch   |
| 1.30pm        | Operation – Maryanne Suisala                            |
| 3.00 – 3.00pm | Afternoon Tea   |
| 3.30-5.00pm   | Continue Operation – Maryanne Suisala                   |

### **Wednesday, 07 October 2009**

- 9.00-10.30am Regular program, TCP, TCP facility, trust fund – Vili A Fuavao/Maryanne Suisala/MDT
- 10.30 - 1100am Morning Tea
- 11.00-12.30pm Continue regular program, TCPF, TCP, trust fund  
ISFP projects implementation – Ravine/Tevita/Maryanne
- 12.30-1.30pm Lunch
- 1.30 – 3.00pm Telefood/WFD – Tevita Keresoma/Paul Tomane
- 3.00-3.30pm Afternoon Tea
- 3.30 -5.00pm Continue Telefood/WFD

### **Thursday, 08 October 2009**

- 9.00-10.30am Policy, NMTPF, FSSLP & individual MDT presentations (also include the activities planned for 2010) – Ravine and MDT
- 10.30 – 11.00am Morning Tea
- 10.30 – 12.30pm continue the session
- 12.30-1.30pm Lunch
- 1.30-3.00pmpm FAO Activities planned for 2009/10
- 3.00-3.30pm Afternoon tea
- 3.30-5.00pm - continue the session

### **Friday, 09 October 2009**

- 9.00-10.00am - Rap up session and closing
- 10.00-10.30am - Morning tea

Individual appointments of NC with SAP staff on specific matters.

Field Trip (tbc)

### Annex 3 Participants

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