



Organizers



Partners



DATE: 7 May 2018, 08:30 – 12:30 am

VENUE: Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji

BACKGROUND

The Regional Forum takes place within the framework of the CTA/IFAD/PIPSO Project 'Promoting Nutritious Food Systems in the Pacific Islands'. About 100 key stakeholders; senior officials and experts from the public and private sector including producer, women and community based organisations from Pacific Island States, Africa, Asia, and Europe will come together to share the results and recommendations from multi-country studies and consultations on: the agriculture/nutrition nexus; agricultural insurance and weather risk management; agricultural and value chain finance and agri-business development; novel ICTs and priority nutrition sensitive value chains.

AIM

This cross-learning event seeks to craft the way forward for collective national and regional action that can lead to the further development and upgrading of Pacific local food crops and fisheries value chains for improved food and nutrition outcomes, livelihoods and income and sustainable natural resource management. The official Opening Ceremony will set the stage for defining drivers of success.

Key Note Speaker



Hon Viam Pillay, Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management and Meteorological Services, Fiji

Official Opening Ceremony Programme

- 08:30 – 09:00** **Registration**
Welcome coffee/tea
- 09:00 – 10:30** **Welcome and Garlanding Official Guests**
- Chairperson:** Simon Cole – Chair, Fiji Crop and Livestock Council, Fiji
- Remarks**
Michael Hailu, Director, ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA), The Netherlands
- Sakiusa Tubuna, Regional Coordinator, International Fund for Agricultural Development, Fiji
- Opening Remarks** – Christoph Wagner, Head of Cooperation, European Union Delegation for the Pacific, Fiji
- Keynote Address** – *Enabling Innovation in Pacific Agri-Value Chains – Drivers of Success* - Hon Viam Pillay, Assistant Minister of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development and Disaster Management and Meteorological Services, Fiji
- 10:30 – 11:00** **Group photo**
Coffee/Tea Break
- Chairperson:** Michael Hailu, Director, CTA, The Netherlands
- 11:00 – 12:00** **Drivers of Success for Value Chain and Agribusiness Development**
- *Farmers as Drivers of Agricultural Insurance: Experience from East Africa* - Stephen Muchiri, Chief Executive Officer, East Africa Farmers' Federation, Kenya
 - *Young Entrepreneurs Shaping the Pacific Region's Sustainable Future* - Litia Kirwin, Founding Director Loving Islands, Forbes Asia 30 under 30 Class of 2018, Fiji
 - *MAgri - Connecting the Unconnected: Increasing Access to Information* – Thapelo Borekilwe, MAgri, Brastorne, Director of Public Relations & Legal, Botswana
- Q&A
- 12:00 – 12:50** **High-level Panel Discussion**
Critical Success Factors -- Financing Agriculture, Value Chain and Agri-Business Development in Pacific Island States
- Susana Laulu, General Manager, Development Bank of Samoa, Samoa
 - John Aruhuri, Executive General Manager Microfinance, Rural Banking and Financial Inclusion, National Bank of Vanuatu, Vanuatu
 - Luapene Lefau, Finance & Administration Manager, South Pacific Business Development, Samoa
- 12:50 – 13:00** **Closing Remarks & Vote of Thanks** - Howard Politini, Chair, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation, Fiji

Context

The Pacific Island States face numerous hurdles in diversifying their agricultural sector and developing viable agri-businesses that can contribute to sustained economic growth. Their small size, large distances to markets and vulnerability to external shocks and climate change are inherent challenges, yet their rich biodiversity and cultural heritage are integral to their resilience and future prosperity. Creative approaches need to be identified and promising initiatives validated through a consultative process involving the public and private sectors and with the active engagement of civil society including small holder farmers, urban and rural community leaders, women and youth. This would not only ensure that the interests of all stakeholders are represented but serve to generate plausible solutions and build coherence for collective action that contribute to long-term sustainable development and benefit all Pacific Islanders.

In 2016, the Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) launched a four-year project on "*Promoting Nutritious Food Systems in the Pacific*", which is being implemented in partnership with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO). The overall project goal is to; "*strengthen the capacity of the Pacific Island governments, farmer and private sector organizations, and sub-regional institutions to develop strategies and programmes, as well as mobilize financing, that can increase poor rural people's access to nutritious and healthy food*". Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu are the focal countries.

Innovation is needed in all spheres of agricultural and related economic activities; from farm to table, as well as the enabling policy and regulatory framework, access to and use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) and insurance, finance and business services. The regional forum, from 7 - 10 May 2018 in Suva, Fiji has been convened to address the key innovations and critical success factors needed to pave the way forward for value chain and agri-enterprise development for improved food and nutrition outcomes, livelihoods, income and sustainable resource management.

Paving the way forward to national and regional action:

The themes and why they are essential in the development and upgrading of Pacific local food crop and fisheries value chains:

Agricultural finance and business development:

Investing in agriculture means supporting local industry (agriculture/fisheries) as well as spin off industries, and lifestyles, and keeping farmers and other value chain (VC) actors in business. Given limited dedicated funding for agriculture and agribusiness because of the perceived inherent risks and the high costs for borrowing as well as the difficulties faced in doing business in the focal countries, are there existing models and approaches in the region that can be considered by Pacific countries? Would a regional approach to designing the enabling policy and regulatory framework for developing agriculture and value chain financing mechanisms strengthen the agribusiness (including farmers) sector and enable agri-entrepreneurs to take advantage of opportunities in domestic and or export niche markets; health and tourism sectors?

Weather risk management:

With no agricultural insurance schemes or any other formal way of transferring weather related risks, the tendency to rely on disaster relief programmes for recovery after the impacts of weather related disasters, hinders the long-term development of the agricultural sector. Fiji is the most advanced in terms of awareness on the concept and benefits of index-based insurance and has initiated the design of such products. Are there opportunities to learn from the process adopted by Fiji and other regions to access the suitability of tailor made index-based products for the Pacific? Would a regional perspective prove essential? What are the priority crops/ fish species that should be included in such a scheme?

Enabling agriculture and nutrition policies and programmes:

The high dependence on imported foods and declining consumption of local nutrient dense foods (crops and fish) are contributing to the double burden of malnutrition; pockets of hunger still exist. National sectoral policies and programmes are disconnected and successful community-based programmes are under-resourced. To effectively address the challenging food and nutrition situation, what are the trade-offs

for increasing access to affordable nutrient dense foods and at the same time assure greater profits for farmers and other value chain actors? How can communities be better integrated in solving the food and nutrition challenges? Can the Pacific region capitalise on the nutritive value and bioactive principles in their rich biodiversity? What are the priority commodities for attracting public and private investments and what incentives are needed and at which leverage points in the value chains? Would a regional perspective prove essential?

ICT use in agriculture:

ICTs are playing an increasingly important role in transforming agricultural systems and in enhancing VC efficiency and competitiveness of agri-enterprises. They are also creating innovative economic opportunities for rural communities, including women and youth. In Fiji, there is high mobile penetration, increasing internet usage and a plethora of ICT applications have been identified; yet farmers and other stakeholders are unaware of the added value of these services. How can the agricultural community especially farmers on remote islands take greater advantage of ICTs to improve production and market efficiencies? Are there existing ICT Pacific applications and platforms or success stories from other regions that can be better optimised?

Why action plans

The national and regional plans are tools for coordinating development actions that favour agricultural innovation. They will plot the route for implementation by determining who does what and when, and ensure that commitments are formalized so that that things get done and the goals and visions are achieved. They address underlying questions e.g. What is the current situation and where do Pacific stakeholders want to go from here?; What is currently being contributed by public-private stakeholders towards improvement – who can do what to achieve set goals?; Who is involved along the value chain and what are the obstacles/opportunities they face – what are therefore the critical success factors? Clear, participatory and inclusive plans of action will include a well-defined scope and definite targets and allocate specific responsibilities as identified and agreed by core actors.

Specific expected outcomes from the Regional Forum include:

- Shared understanding of the constraints and opportunities for upscaling local food crops and fisheries value chains at national and regional level;
- Good practices, innovations and critical success factors with high learning potential and relevance at national and regional level endorsed;
- Agreement and commitment reached among stakeholders on key actions and draft national and regional roadmaps for upgrading priority local value chains.

