

# **NATIONAL REPORT**

*NATIONAL LEVEL ANNUAL REPORT  
TO THE  
OCEANIC FISHERIES MANAGEMENT PROJECT  
REGIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE (OFM RSC)*

**Reporting Period, 1 July 2007 – 30 June 2008**

**Country:** Niue

**Project Title:** Oceanic Fisheries Management: Implementation of the Strategic Action Programme of the Pacific SIDs (Pacific SAP II)

**Period Covered:** 1 July 2007 – 30 June 2008

## **Summary of Overall Project Progress**

The project has been beneficial to Niue in numerous ways especially in institutional strengthening of Niue fisheries by way of office equipment to aid in lacking resources which enables staff to give a much better performance.

Niue fisheries have benefited in capacity building initiatives and programs by OFP using GEF funds, stock assessment workshops has given Niue more meaningful participation in scientific meetings and enables Niue participant to carry forth stock assessment using its national data.

The allowance for the inclusion of legal staff that aides in formulation of legislation that incorporates new management measures and agreements from organizations that Niue is party to. Legal input has also given rise to policy and legislative review of national laws that enables a platform to further develop Niue's aspirations in responsibly develop its fisheries.

MCS which is the most important component in monitoring and policing the management measures agreed on therefore achieving the objectives set out that ensures the sustainability of harvested marine resources is further encouraged by Niue via its participation in regional workshops and exercises some was funded by the GEF program.

Formulation of national fish stock status report has given Niue the advantage to make informed management decisions on how to pursue responsible fishing within its national waters, and gives a platform for ecosystem based approach to draw from.

Niue the smallest FFA member has benefitted and would continue to benefit from the project as it further evolves.

## **Specific Outputs/Results Achieved(as per work plan):**

### **National level activities**

#### **Component 1: Scientific Assessment and Monitoring Enhancements**

##### **Sub-component 1.1: Fishery Monitoring, Coordination and Enhancement**

SPC OFP initially before the commercial fishing vessels began operating carried out an in country training of fisheries staff in port sampling entries and requirements. The set up also of a port sampling program had Niue in its initial stages of the fisheries covering 100% port sampling of all its vessels, however this was scaled down (50%) due to the workload and number of staff.

Log sheets being part of the licensing terms and conditions where all vessels fishing in Niue should complete and hand over to Fisheries upon the completion of each trip.

These logsheets are therefore checked monthly and then forwarded to SPC on a quarterly basis, this also holds true for portsampling data that is collected.

The MCS officer is tasked with this component of the fishery, with the assistance of other staff members.

Niue's National observer program is in the process of development and has requested assistance from FFA in the development of the program. Niue a party to WCPFC is also concerned with the activities of its domestic fleet and credibility that reports give would further be enhanced with the presence of observers.

Niue Fisheries also uses VMS data to verify positions of sets made by fishing vessels and this is checked with logbook entries by commercial fishing vessels.

Niue has had assistance from SPC in the past to install TUFMAN program and train Fisheries officers how to operate to use it, however to date, the program is not successfully installed and is yet to be used.

### **Sub-Component 1.2 : Stock Assessment**

Training has been undertaken by Niue's Officer in stock assessment, resulting in Niue with the aid of OFP finalizing its fishing reports (Part 1). The stock assessment covers interpretation of scientific reports to the scientific committee and to any assessments that scientists have on any highly migratory species. The training also gives rise to the understanding of models used to calculate parameters in stock assessment and giving answers that produces sound management decisions, such as stock status reports, catch rate, CPUE, etc..

Niue as mentioned earlier has a TUFMAN program but has not been able to run it, and is awaiting assistance from OFP in providing training to be able to quickly produce scientific calculations based on queries in relation to stocks and catches.

### **Sub-component 1.3 : Ecosystems Analysis**

The preparation and completion of the national tuna and fish stock status report that was completed by OFP and Niue's fisheries staff that was attached to OFP for two weeks has given the estimates of stock status of not only tuna but also migratory fish that is important to Niue around Niue's EEZ.

The report also focuses on the distribution of the stock via catch log data off FADs.

The report splits the catch by area and time periods in relation also to the effects of natural phenomenon's that influence the behavior of fish to catch rates.

Logbooks also includes bycatch by not only the commercial fleet but the artisanal local vessels, this is also incorporated into the report, where the report will form basis for an eco system management approach to be carried out in 2009 by FFA.

## **Component 2 : Law, Policy and Institutional Reform, Realignment and Strengthening**

### **Sub-component 2.1: Legal Reforms**

In respect of Output 2.1.1 – Since September 2008, the Fisheries Division (FD) together with the Crown Law Office (CLO) has agreed on a work plan for activities on regional and national legal issues. Activities relating to regional legal issues involve close coordination between the Fisheries Division and Crown Law Office on regional meeting attendances. This gives opportunity for CLO to increase awareness and exposure to fisheries legal issues. At the same time, CLO will be able to build the necessary experience as a pre-requisite to drafting a new fisheries law.

In respect of Output 2.1.2, new draft laws and regulations is pending. We requested a model law from FFA and have been informed that this project is current and a final draft may be available by February – March 2009. In light of this, we await the model law. In the meantime, consideration is given to review of the current "License Terms and Conditions 2007" with a view to drafting a "Fishing License Regulations".

In respect of Output 2.1.3, Niue implemented the Convention through the Territorial Sea and Exclusive Economic Zone Amendment Act 2006. Current review of our fisheries law will in the same manner implement the Convention.

In respect of Output 2.1.4, a representative from the Crown Law Office received training by attendance at the FFA Legal Workshop in April 2008.

### **Sub-component 2.2: Policy Reform**

#### **Output 2.2.1 National oceanic fisheries management**

Niue's Tuna management plan is still in its skeletal format and needs to be further progressed in terms of inclusion of all stakeholders involved, a set up of a decision making body that decides issues concerning Niue, taking into account the views and concerns of all parties.

At present Niue fisheries strategic plans are initiated by fisheries and goes into cabinet for approval under the corporate plan.

This does not completely covers the interest of other stakeholders, therefore further exploration into this approach would be beneficial for the whole of Niue.

Reporting will be done not only to the government but to the larger audience in disseminating information that would benefit stakeholders.

### **Sub-Component 2.3 : Strategies, plans and proposals for the reform, realignment and strengthening of national oceanic fisheries management administrations**

Under sub-component 2.3 of the OFMP summary of Activities, there is a limited amount of funds available to assist the smaller fisheries administrations with equipment and facilities. Niue is the smallest state participating in the project and for that fact Niue needs to strengthen its institutional capacity in oceanic fisheries management.

Subject to the visit of Project co-ordinator Barbara Hanchard in April of this year, discussions with fisheries personnel have identified equipment and office improvements that could be funded by the project. Since then, Niue fisheries have proceeded with all legalities and protocols for the funds to be transferred to Niue to be utilized accordingly. Niue received on the 9<sup>th</sup> September 2008, a total of NZ\$18,252.90 from the fund provided and is currently being used by fisheries.

### **Sub-component 2.4 : Compliance Strengthening**

Niue has recently utilized the NTSA subsidiary agreement via an MOU with Cook Islands to patrol its EEZ. This has given rise to strengthening relationships in order to combat IUU activities with bordering countries and is monitoring the progress of this arrange and learn from this experience to further consider other arrangements with other neighbouring countries.

Niue in mid 2008 participated in a MCS subregional exercise (Operation Tuimoana) this also included Niue Police where intergovernment relationships was enhanced in our efforts to combat IUU.

The use of VMS data was highly prominent and VMS data sharing was encouraged and enhanced during the exercise, this subregional approach was a success in pooling all countries limited resources to monitor vast sea areas, where as a single state would find it difficult to achieve.

Further encouragement is the use of the IUU Vessel list by WCPFC, which gives SIDs an opportunity to detect and report vessels that carry out IUU in our waters.

## **Component 3 : Coordination, Participation and Information Services**

OFP SPC visited Niue and included all stakeholders to a seminar introducing the stock status report on highly migratory species on Niue and species of national interest. The seminar covers all aspects of environmental conditions that affect stocks in terms of abundance and behavior that in turns influence catch. The seminar highlights the linkages and interdependence of stocks to environmental influence or other fish species.

Another visit by FFA secretariat held another seminar for stakeholders in order to clarify the work of FFA and WCPFC where Niue is a party to. The seminar highlights the current and past projects on the

Island and the what Niue requirements are with WCPFC, for reporting or to incorporate in at the national level.

Niue Fisheries also is responsible for dissemination of information to the Niue public, and submitting scientific and compliance reports to WCPFC and to SPC and FFA.

## **6. Challenges/Issues Encountered**

-Niue a party to WCPFC did not envision the enormity of reporting requirements and meeting management measure requirements has very limited staff to be able to really engage in depth the issues that is brought forward at commission meetings and workshops.

-Niue is only able to send one officer to these meetings as per special requirements for SIDs and it should be in a position to send a trainee as well as a senior officer to aid in these meetings accompanied with legal advisor for drafting purposes as most meetings are policy oriented.

- In further strengthening of reporting requirements Niue seeks to establish a national observer program.

-Niue's interests of gaining economic benefits from the sea has transport and marketing issues to the outside markets, this isolation has seen fuel prices and costs rise.

- Niue lacks major capital such as a launch to deploy FADs and carry out research projects.

- Staffing to enable work to be carried out in the national level and meeting regional and international obligations.

## **7. Solutions Applied (to address issues and challenges)**

- UNFSA funding that has enabled extra participant to the meetings

- Request to FFA and SPC for an Observer expert to set up the observer national program

- Further participation of another staff in stock assessment workshops to combat turnovers or staff leave.

-deploy much lighter and easier FADs inshore

- Employ more staff via project oriented schemes

## **9. Recommendations for Future Action**

That the above constraints and possible solutions should be noted and addressed.

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