



Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries

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Strengthening national capacity and regional solidarity for sustainable tuna fisheries

FFA MEDIA RELEASE

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Pacific news hub delivers tuna tales of sustainability

FFA HQ, Honiara, SOLOMON ISLANDS 16th August 2017--Pacific journalists are now reporting about how their nations are working together to manage their shared Oceanic resource- tuna- at a handy news hub, www.tunapacific.org.

The site provides news, commentary and content about the actions being taken by Pacific Small island Developing States (P-SIDS) to protect and sustain the Pacific tuna fisheries.

The initiative supported by the second Oceanic Fisheries Management Project (OFMP2), includes contributions from Pacific journalists, editors, and fishery communicators.

The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) is the implementing agency for OFMP2 and its Chief Technical Adviser Hugh Walton says the news hub especially draws on the skills of the FFA's media fellows who have been trained and supported to report on tuna issues.

“Our aim for the Tuna Pacific news hub is to raise awareness and profile for the P-SIDS who are working hard to change fishing patterns and on-the-water behaviour of fishers,” he says.

“Achieving such change will result in the conservation and sustainable use of the Western and Central Pacific Oceanic fisheries.”

The news hub highlights P-SIDS' activities to conserve and sustain the tuna stocks within their national waters as well as those of Pacific agencies working across the region such as FFA, the Pacific Community (SPC), and the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, (PNA). The Pacific nations and territories in these groups are a major bloc in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC), also known as the Pacific Tuna Commission.

Target stocks of tuna are Albacore, Bigeye, Skipjack and Yellowfin. With all these stocks under threat from illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing activity and environmental changes, the Commission is facing increasing pressure to maintain sustainable stocks of all tuna species.

Skipjack stocks are relatively healthy, but there is increasing concern for Albacore and Yellowfin management, and Bigeye tuna stocks are overfished and down to just 16% of their original population.

This is a major concern for all WCPFC members, fishers and conservationists. Tuna Fisheries Management also takes into account other species incidentally caught (bycatch) through tuna fishing activities such as seabirds, sharks, turtles, and dolphins.

“There is a lot of management, compliance, policy and research work happening across the region at any given time, all related to ensuring the future of our tuna fisheries,” says Walton. “Our network of Pacific writers will help to bring that work to their communities through the Tuna Pacific news hub where people can read the latest news about activities to stop illegal fishing, reduce bycatch, and better monitor and report on fishing activities.”

Anyone can subscribe to the Tuna Pacific news hub to receive updates of new stories by writing their email address in the box at the bottom of the home page: <http://www.tunapacific.org/>.

The Global Environment Fund (GEF) initiated the OFMP2 project, which is being implemented by FFA and managed by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The OFMP2:

- Supports Pacific SIDS as the major bloc at the WCPFC to adopt regional conservation and management measures
- Supports innovative approaches being developed by Pacific SIDS at a sub-regional level, as they collaborate in fisheries of common interest
- Assists SIDS to apply measures nationally in their own waters and to their fleets. -- ENDS

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ABOUT FFA:

The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) strengthens national capacity and regional solidarity so its 17 members can manage, control and develop their tuna fisheries now and in the future. Based in Honiara, Solomon Islands, FFA's 17 Pacific Island members are Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Since 1979, FFA has facilitated regional cooperation so that all Pacific countries benefit from the

sustainable use of tuna – a multi-billion dollar resource important for many people's livelihoods in the Pacific.