

PRESS RELEASE

SMA MANUAL IN-HOUSE TRAINING

[Sopu, Tongatapu, January 30 – February 2, 2023] – The Ministry of Fisheries held a 4 days training at the Ministry of Fisheries office commencing on January 30 – February 2, 2023. This training focused on Fisheries staff with key roles related to Special Management Area (SMA) activities. The training was a combined training conducted by the Fisheries Science Division and the Fisheries Compliance Division. In attendance were staff from the Fisheries Community Section and Compliance Division - Tongatapu and Fisheries staff from Vava’u, Ha’apai and ‘Eua.



The main purpose of this training was to train staff on the newly approved Special Management Area Manual. The SMA Manual is a summary and guideline for SMA Communities to follow. The Manual provides specific instructions for communities when establishing a SMA, and the policies and regulations used to protect their SMAs. This in-house training also provided a chance for Fisheries staff to build their capacities in this area and also create a working procedure to communicate this SMA Manual into the SMA communities for implementation.



The training would prove beneficial for both the Ministry's staff and SMA communities, as the SMA Manual provides an exact roadmap for both to follow with regards to the establishment of an SMA, its rules and regulations and how to deal with non-compliance to SMA laws. The training also discussed the best way to impart the SMA Manual training into the SMA communities, their neighboring groups and those with interest from the general public.

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