

# Ministry of Fisheries

## February Newsletter



### CEO's OFFICE

Tropical Cyclone Gita made landfall in Tonga on 12 February, causing severe damage to the main island of Tongatapu. The cyclone damaged or destroyed almost 2,000 homes, caused the evacuation of over 4,500 people and left more than 80% of homes in Tonga without power. The Ministry of Fisheries undertook surveys focusing Fishermen to identify and capture the damages of Cyclone Gita on Fishermen activities towards the National Emergency Management Office's aid development plans.

Dr Tu'ikolongahau represented the Ministry at the Tevaka Moana, Meeting of the Governing General. The meeting focused on national projects for each member through the remaining funds allocated by New Zealand for the operation of the Tevaka Moana.

### CORPORATE SERVICE DIVISION (CSD)

The Ministry's Planning retreat report was endorsed by the Hon. Minister Semisi Fakahau. The report included the Ministry's areas discussed within the Planning week on next steps on the Corporate Plan (CP), draft Annual Management Plan (AMP), Risk Toolkit, Asset, Procurement, Pacific Islands Regional Oceanscape Program (PROP) and Public Service Commission (PSC) on recruitment process and updated policies.

Deputy CEO Mr Vilimo represented the Ministry at the Pacific Islands Maritime Boundaries Development working session. Representatives of 12 Pacific Island countries with maritime experts from Australia and the Pacific Community (SPC) to negotiate maritime boundary agreements and refining their claims to areas of continental shelf.

### FISHERIES MANAGEMENT DEVELOPMENT DIVISION (FMDD)

Marketing officer Mr Fotuika Vailea conducted a cruise ship survey focusing on sales of pearls from local artisans at Vava'u to excursionist from cruise ship. This survey was coordinated and requested by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR).

### FISHERIES SCIENCE DIVISION (FSD)

Deputy CEO-FSD Dr. Siola'a Malimali and Technical Officer Grade II Mr. Tonga Tu'iano completed the monitoring of seaweed in Vava'u. The monitoring included training for staffs on seaweed drying and process, making of seaweed drying rack, making long line for seaweed, drying of seaweed harvest and replanting of more seaweed line.

Officer In Charge Mrs. Sosefina Vili and Senior Fisheries Assistant Mr. Tu'atalatau Tonga'onevai facilitated the Coastal Community Management Committee meetings at Ha'afeva, Kotu, 'O'ua, Matuku, Felemea, 'Uiha, Lofanga, Mo'unga'one, Kouvai and Faleloa. This is a follow up on of activities of existing and newly SMA in their management plan, including SMA data collection and confirmation with newly communities to join SMA program.

FSD Head of Sections Mr. Latu 'Aisea, Hulita Fa'anunu and Officer in charge at Vava'u Mrs. Mele Ngahe facilitated meetings and conducted socio economic surveys of new SMA communities in Vava'u under the WAITTS SMA project. The survey aimed to capture information on communities investment in fisheries.

Research Assistant Officer Mr. Sione Ma'ilau with staffs from Vava'u; Silika Ngahe, 'Ioane Finau, 'Akosita Leakona and 'Aisea Vailea conducted the Fish Aggregate Device (FAD) training to fisherman at Vava'u. FADs are widely used in the Pacific Island countries and territories as a means

to improve fisheries production in scenic and most recently at inshore fisheries.

Offshore Head of Section Mr. Martin Finau undertook training with National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research Limited (NIWA) towards improving governance, management and economic and biological sustainability of the demersal line fishery in training. The NIWA has been working closely with the Ministry since 2014.

### FISHERIES COMPLIANCE DIVISION (FCD)

Legal officer Ms. Salote Koloamatangi and staffs undertook training on Fisheries authorized officers in Ha'apai. The training aims to strengthen the functions and responsibilities of authorised officers and coastal communities with SMAs pursuant of the Fisheries Management Act and SMA regulations.

Licensing and Certification Officer Mr Tevita 'Ahoafi completed and was awarded his MCS Certificate IV Fisheries Enforcement and Compliance (CFEC) course Face to Face. This opportunity is funded by Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) through the University of the South Pacific.

Ms Kalolaine Manuopangai represented the Ministry at the 18th Regional Observer Coordinator's workshop. The forum provided an opportunity for Pacific Island Regional Fisheries Observer (PIRFO) managers and coordinators to meet and discuss technical improvements, improved cooperation and to provide technical recommendations to improve regional harmonisation.

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