



Melanesian Spearhead Group roadmap for inshore fisheries management and sustainable development | 2015-2024





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Photo: Malo Hosken

Declaration on

MSG roadmap for inshore fisheries management and sustainable development | 2015-2024

WE, the Heads of Governments of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (hereinafter referred to as "MSG"), namely Republic of Fiji, Independent State of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and the Republic of Vanuatu, on the occasion of the 20th MSG Summit in Honiara, Solomon Islands:

Recognizing the importance of inshore fisheries with respect food security and economies for coastal communities in MSG countries;

Taking note of the decision of MSG Leaders in March 2012 to develop a Roadmap for the protection of inshore fisheries;

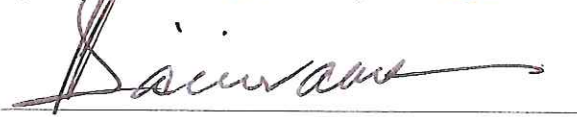
Conscious of the need for a concerted and coordinated sub-regional effort in addressing inshore fisheries resources sustainability through community based approaches; and

Recalling our shared responsibilities to implement the Inshore Fisheries Resources in Roadmap for Inshore Fisheries Management and Sustainable Development 2015-2024 to ensure efficient management of these resources:

Hereby declare to:

1. Adopt the MSG Roadmap for Inshore Fisheries Management and Sustainable Development which each MSG Member Country shall abide by and shall ensure its timely implementation;
2. Task the MSG Fisheries Technical Advisory Committee (FTAC), assisted by the MSG Secretariat, Regional Agencies, and Development Partners of MSG to implement this Roadmap and to report to Leaders regularly, through the Foreign Minister Meeting, on the progress of its implementation; and
3. Implement the objectives and core components of the MSG Roadmap for Inshore Fisheries Management and Sustainable Development by 2024.

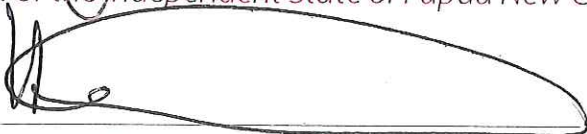
In witness whereof the undersigned, being duly authorized by the respective Parties have signed this Agreement this.....26.....day ofJune.....2015.



For the Republic of Fiji



For the Independent State of Papua New Guinea



For the Solomon Islands



For the Republic of Vanuatu

Roadmap for Inshore Fisheries Management and Sustainable Development

2015-2024

Melanesia: Our home, our fish, our wealth and our future

Background

The leaders of the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) countries gathered at the Leaders' summit in March 2012 agreed to develop a roadmap for the protection of inshore fisheries. This document represents that management framework and regional roadmap (the Roadmap) for sustainable inshore fisheries which has been developed by the MSG Secretariat in cooperation with representatives of the Fisheries Departments of the MSG countries and with the technical assistance of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC).

This roadmap was initially developed by the Inshore Fisheries Working Group (IFWG) in Port Vila in October 2013 which was facilitated by the SPC and informed by a comprehensive "Strategic Review of Inshore Fisheries Policies and Strategies in Melanesia", commissioned and managed by SPC. This strategy enhances the inshore fisheries management elements of the "Memorandum of Understanding on Technical Cooperation in Inshore Fishery and Aquaculture Development".

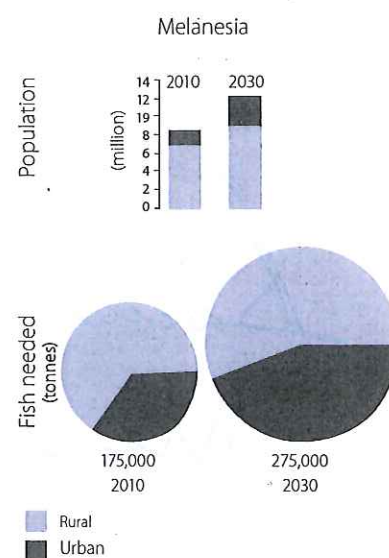
The Regional Roadmap provides overarching guidance for MSG members and the actions they have agreed to take to address the management of inshore fisheries in Melanesia.

Context

A looming crisis: Inshore fisheries upon which the majority of coastal populations depend are generally fully exploited, or in some cases, over-exploited. Increases in population and demand will drive many of them to collapse unless ways can be found to manage them sustainably.

Millions of people at risk: The majority of the population of Melanesia is dependent on inshore fisheries for their subsistence and local economic needs. This high reliance on inshore fisheries is exacerbated by the limited alternative opportunities and increasing external pressures which have already driven the most valuable fisheries, such as *bêche-de-mer* (BDM), into spiralling decline. Climate change will increase vulnerability and management strategies are urgently needed to increase resilience and adaptive capacity.

Potentially large economic benefits: While management and political attention has traditionally been monopolized by the high-value tuna fisheries, in fact the largely subsistence inshore fisheries contribute between 30-95% of the overall value of all fisheries to the national GDP of Melanesian countries.¹ In addition, it is estimated that sustainable management of the artisanal inshore BDM fishery would amount to a doubling of the value of production



Projected population growth in rural and urban areas of Melanesia to 2030, and the fish needed for future food security (SPC/Bell 2007)²

¹ Vanuatu: 95.52%, Solomon Islands: 38.33%, Fiji: 82.35%, PNG: 27.67% and New Caledonia: 70.00% (see Review).

² Bell J.D., Kronen M., Vunisea A., Nash W.J., Keeble G., Demmke A., Pontifex S. and Andréfouët S. 2009. Planning the use of fish for food security in the Pacific. *Marine Policy* 33:64–76.

to over US\$35M – each and every year. Most of this would be returned as valuable cash income to coastal communities. The costs of improved inshore fisheries management in general would be offset by benefits to the national economies.

The need for a strategic approach to securing fisheries and livelihoods: Considerable efforts have been made to sustain or increase seafood production by fisheries departments, including the use of aquaculture, inshore fish aggregating devices (IFAD) and a variety of other interventions. Despite these efforts there remains considerable concern about the health of inshore fisheries. Community Based Resource Management (CBRM) is widely agreed to be a fundamental approach, but its implementation and support still requires refining if it is to be fully effective. However, the experiences, both positive and negative, provide the basis for a strategic selection of approaches that should lay the basis for successfully co-managed inshore fisheries. This should be built on a strong partnership between coastal communities and the various levels of government. Importantly, while alternative livelihoods will be useful in creating opportunities, pursuit of these should not detract from the real and immediate benefits that can arise from improved management.

Political will and leadership will continue to be required: The initiative and support demonstrated by the Leaders in requesting the development of a Roadmap will need to be sustained to ensure its implementation, and to be increased if inshore fisheries are to realize their full potential in contributing to the sustainable development and livelihoods of the people of Melanesia.

Managing communities rather than fish: An understanding of communities and their social and economic circumstances is key to effective community-based management. If individuals in communities are not engaged, or are not supportive of inshore management initiatives, it is highly unlikely they will be effective. Communities are, understandably, more interested in development opportunities; the challenge will be to balance development with effective management; the latter tending to be seen as telling fishers 'what they cannot do'. In reality, effective management allows fishers to continue to harvest benefits from their marine resources for the long term.

The size of the challenge: MSG members have extensive coastlines and widespread, isolated communities and islands. Inshore management approaches have not always reflected this reality, by focusing efforts on small areas, using intensive approaches that are neither sustainable nor easily adapted to achieving national coverage.

Many users of the marine environment: The anthropogenic effects of development, such as mining and logging, are creating pollution and are having increased impacts, either directly or through run-off from rivers. Coastal development for tourism and other commercial activities is devastating valuable mangroves and coral reefs. Increasing urbanisation and poor drainage and pollution control in larger coastal cities and towns are creating further pressures. These impacts, combined with destructive fishing methods, are adversely impacting on stocks and marine habitats. Without a healthy, sustaining marine ecosystem, and a balanced use of the marine environment, inshore fisheries cannot exist.

Definition of Community Based Resource Management (CBRM) in this Roadmap:

"Encouraging, motivating and empowering communities to sustainably manage their own coastal resources"

Guiding Principles

The following principles will guide the overall implementation of the roadmap.

- I. Achieving the sustainability of resources to provide long-term economic, social, ecological and food security benefits.
- II. The empowerment of coastal communities, with appropriate support from national and local government as well as regional agencies and other non-government stakeholders³, to implement Community Based Resource Management (CBRM) for the benefit of our nations.
- III. A bottom-up approach, requiring government support to communities to be provided at, or as close as possible to, community level, using provincial/local government and other mechanisms and collaborations.
- IV. Realistic, achievable, step-wise and measurable approaches that focus initially on the better use of existing human and financial resources for long-term food security and sustainable livelihoods for coastal communities.
- V. The pursuit of the real and immediate benefits that will arise from improved management to secure the long-term sustainability of resources should not be distracted by development pressures.
- VI. A Melanesian partnership approach, which builds on and shares the diversity of experiences, while recognizing the differences between MSG members, socio-cultural settings, species and stock status.
- VII. Climate change will adversely impact inshore fisheries and their supporting ecosystems, therefore investing in improving management systems, especially with an emphasis on Ecosystem Approaches to Fisheries Management, will increase resilience and adaptation ability complementary to the "MSG Leaders' Declaration on Environment and Climate Change".
- VIII. The roadmap should be an instrument that facilitates delivery of existing national inshore fisheries objectives, with minimal additional administrative burden.

Vision:

Sustainable inshore fisheries, well managed using community-based approaches that provide long-term economic, social, ecological and food security benefits to our communities

³ Including NGOs, the private sector and churches.

Objectives

1. Implement effective policies, legislation, management frameworks and financing mechanisms that ensure suitable capacity building for all stakeholders to sustainably develop and manage coastal resources, as well as effective collaboration amongst all stakeholders.
2. Conduct education, awareness raising and the provision of information on the importance and management of inshore fisheries to all stakeholders.
3. Manage, maintain and restore fisheries stocks (e.g. BDM) to secure long-term economic and social benefits to coastal communities from the sustainable use of inshore resources.

Timeline and Priority Actions

The Roadmap is to be implemented over a 10-year period, from 2014 to 2023. The timelines in the Roadmap provide a general indication of goals and milestones to be met, however it is noted that some priority and relatively easily actionable objectives can be achieved in the short term to:

- ▶ make best use of existing human and financial resources;
- ▶ build profile and promote 'success stories' in inshore fisheries management; and
- ▶ attract additional support from donors and Government for longer-term, more resource-intensive activities.

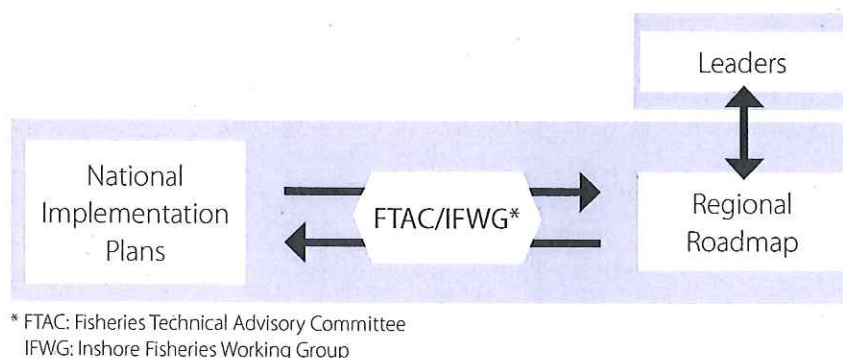
These objectives are highlighted in the table below.

Implementation at the national level

The Regional Roadmap provides overarching guidance for MSG members and the actions they have agreed to take to address the management of inshore fisheries in Melanesia. Individual members have committed to national implementation plans that will give effect to the Regional Roadmap at the national level, noting that a number of the regional actions are underway or are planned under existing national arrangements. Considerable progress was made with national implementation plans by members, and these drafts may be found at <http://www.msgsec.info/>.

Monitoring and evaluation

If this plan is to be effective it is vital to monitor progress, and identify and address emerging shortfalls, in a timely manner. The process, illustrated below, seeks to clearly assign roles and define the process for achieving this.



Role of MSG Secretariat

The MSG secretariat will support members in meeting reporting requirements, which will be provided to the MSG Fisheries Technical Advisory Committee annual meetings, and will ensure that Leaders are updated at the biennial leaders meetings. The secretariat will also coordinate and harmonize approaches to regional agencies, donors and development partners regarding assistance to members for implementation of the Roadmap at the national level, as agreed by members from time to time.

Role of National Administrations

The Regional Roadmap is complemented by national implementation plans developed by MSG members. Each member will:

- ▶ self-assess progress.
- ▶ provide reports through National Fisheries Departments, including for activities which are carried out by partners or other ministries;
- ▶ endeavour to obtain independent assessment through an existing or specifically formed national committee or network which includes civil society and community participation;
- ▶ address shortfalls in performance.

Frequency and format of reporting and review

- ▶ Reporting by National Fisheries Departments will be annual.
- ▶ Report to Leaders meeting every two years (via FTAC).
- ▶ The Roadmap will be reviewed every three years

Performance measurement

- ▶ Specific performance indicators will be incorporated, as appropriate, in national implementation plans and reported by National Fisheries Departments in their annual reports.

MSG Roadmap for sustainable inshore fisheries 2015-2024

Related Actions	Outcomes	Outputs	Short-term (1-2 years)	Mid-term (3-5 years)	Long-term (6-10 years)
Objective 1: Implement effective policies, legislation, management frameworks and financing mechanisms that ensure suitable capacity building for all stakeholders to sustainably develop and manage coastal resources, as well as effective collaboration amongst all stakeholders					
1.1 Institute effective policies, legislation and management frameworks that empower communities to manage their marine resources					
Delegation of power to sub-national authorities and communities F ⁴ National inshore strategy S, V	Sub-national authorities having a more effective role in fisheries management Inshore fisheries management tasks, roles and responsibilities clearly documented and agreed by all stakeholders and services delivered	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Agreed and defined legislative and institutional framework at subnational as well as national level Communities empowered and supported to manage their resources Strategy agreed and implemented 	<div></div> <div></div>	<div></div> <div></div> <div></div>	<div></div> <div>→</div> <div>→</div>
1.2 Implement capacity building activities to ensure the sustainable development and management of inshore marine resources					
Develop capacity at sub-national government level	Provincial and other sub-national officers take increasing responsibility for implementing and monitoring improved inshore fisheries management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> On-the-job and other extension-based training based on inshore fisheries management strategy (use existing arrangements if strategy not agreed) On-going mentoring and support 	<div></div> <div></div>	<div>→</div> <div>→</div>	<div>→</div> <div>→</div>
Build capacity of community leaders and authorised officers or equivalent. N	Community better able to manage inshore fisheries resources and impose sanctions as appropriate	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Local or in-community training of authorised officers and leaders based on inshore fisheries management strategy (use existing arrangements if strategy not agreed). Provided by sub-national officers On-going mentoring and support 	<div></div> <div></div>	<div>→</div> <div>→</div>	<div>→</div> <div>→</div>
National	Improved service delivery by national fisheries administrations to provinces, local government etc.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore a new regional training framework appropriate to the Melanesian context, based on exchange of information and staff, lessons learned, and national strategies Improved capacity to plan and deliver fisheries management services 		<div></div> <div></div>	<div></div> <div>→</div>

⁴ **F** denotes country priority actionable objectives (F = Fiji, N = New Caledonia, P = Papua New Guinea, S = Solomon Islands, V = Vanuatu).

Related Actions	Outcomes	Outputs	Short-term (1-2 years)	Mid-term (3-5 years)	Long-term (6-10 years)
1.3 Implement an adequate resource mobilisation program resources to support the sustainable development and management of inshore marine resources					
Increase efficiency of fisheries management service	Better fisheries management outcomes from improved service delivery, using existing staff and resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Balance budget for field work/operations with staff budget⁵ (ensure adequate budget for operations) Program service delivery to achieve appropriate (large-scale) geographic coverage Identify priority/high impact services, most likely to achieve improved local management Align and re-prioritize FD staff TORs and duties with key inshore management activities 	████████	→	→
				████████	→
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				████████	
Increase revenue to support management	Management activities funded to a level where they are effective	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Place levies/licence fees on appropriate commercial species/fisheries Negotiate with national treasury and leaders appropriate funding of management 	████████	→	→
				████████	→
Provision of adequate scientific information to inform fisheries management	Decisions based on cost-effective scientific information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information needs analysis and research strategy for key inshore fisheries Prioritise and conduct cost effective research on key species 		████████	
				████████	████████
1.4 Establish appropriate mechanisms for effective collaboration with all relevant stakeholders					
Develop partnership strategies with key agencies (NGOs, Regional, networks industry and other stakeholders)	Inshore fisheries management activities and associated support from NGOs and other stakeholders are coordinated and in accordance with national strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify existing networks and partnerships at national and regional level and target those with common interests and appropriate capacity Establish formal and informal undertakings from partners to work together to support implementation of national strategies Monitor and evaluate performance of agreed undertakings 	████████	→	
			████████	→	
			████████	→	→
Improve coordination and lesson sharing between MSG members	Avoidance of duplication and repetition of errors and problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish MSG inshore fisheries network Link MSG trade and industry group with Inshore fisheries working group Compliance solutions, including for BDM 	████████		
			████████	→	→
			████████	→	→

5 Priority tasks and job descriptions were agreed in line with those suggested in the Review and available as supplementary materials at <http://www.msgsec.info/>.

Related Actions	Outcomes	Outputs	Short-term (1-2 years)	Mid-term (3-5 years)	Long-term (6-10 years)
Objective 3: Manage, maintain and restore fisheries stocks (e.g. BDM) to secure long term economic and social benefits to coastal communities from the sustainable use of inshore resources					
3.1 Implement effective mechanisms for the management, maintenance and restoration of sea cucumber stocks to maximise long-term economic value and ecological sustainability					
Develop improved management systems for BDM ⁶ P, S, F, V	BDM stocks rebuilt, catches stabilised, and long-term economic value	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review BDM management systems, including consideration of species and area based total allowable catches and ensure measures to aid stock recovery in each country Ensure BDM management systems are integrated with, and provide momentum to, the development of comprehensive inshore fisheries management systems Improve data collection and sharing by and between Fisheries Departments and Customs Departments improved coordination and sharing of harvesting, operators and market information between MSG members to increase prices and facilitate control Investigate establishment of producers' cooperatives and other innovative management practices⁷ Look at harmonisation of prices, licence conditions etc and the maintenance of a regional database including detailed information on all exporters 			
3.2 Supplementary and Alternative Income Generation activities investigated and implemented in suitable areas					
Development of complementary sustainable livelihoods initiatives	Reduction of pressure on inshore wild fisheries resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate, using cost/benefit analysis, appropriate alternative sustainable livelihood activities that complement management Ensure that alternative activities are strategically integrated with management Improve processing and product quality for key commercial species 			

⁶ See also the MSG members "Memorandum of Understanding on Technical Cooperation in Coastal Fishery and Aquaculture Development".

⁷ See recommendations in: Carleton C, Hambrey J, Govan H, Medley P. 2013. Effective management of sea cucumber fisheries and the bêche-de-mer trade in Melanesia: bringing the industry under rational control. A report prepared by Nautilus Consultants on behalf of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. Noumea, New Caledonia, Secretariat of the Pacific Community. 55 p. + Annexes + Appendices.