

Outcomes Report

Farmer Organisation Consultation on Family Farming

“Identifying and addressing policy constraints impacting smallholder farmers in the Pacific Islands”



Reporting period November 25th, 2016

Date submitted December 2016

prepared by Kyle Stice, Manager, PIFON



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1 Summary

The Farmer Organisation consultation on Family Farming was organised by the Pacific Island Farmers Organisation Network (PIFON) in partnership with the World Rural Forum on 25th November 2016 at the Lagoon Resort, Pacific Harbour, Fiji.

The aim of the consultation was to provide a regional platform for Pacific farmer organisation representatives to share, improve their knowledge, and understand the concept of family farming and its relativity at a regional level. The consultation also aimed to identify priority policy issues affecting smallholder farmers in the region and means for addressing these issues with farmer organisations as a driving force.

The consultation meeting highlighted the global Family Farming movement and the fact that family farming in the Pacific is widely practiced but is not known by this terminology, rather we call it subsistence farming, traditional farming, organic farming, indigenous farming or smallholder farming.

The consultation with farmer organisations highlighted a number of key policy issues affecting smallholder farmers in the Pacific. Among these issues were a few common ones including:

- Land
- Operationalising of policies
- Representation of smallholders in decision making
- Labour issues
- Access to Finance
- Duties / Taxes /Freight
- Foreign Investment
- Integration between different sectors

The meeting heard that there is a great opportunity for farmer organisations to have an influence on policy making however they must be equipped with the appropriate tools to be effective at this. PIFON Manager highlights that means by which FOs engage with policy makers needs to be tailored to the national context and context of the farmer organisations, there is no one size fits all approach.

The meeting was presented with a range of tools that have been used by Pacific farmer organisations to influence policy, these tools include:

- Policy briefs
- Proposals/submissions to governments
- Media releases
- Attendance at forums/consultations (representing farmer organisations)
- Networking (The Pacific Way)

The consultation meeting had a number of key outcomes including:

- Pacific farmer organisations have a greater understanding on the global movement of Family Farming
- Pacific farmer organisations are in agreement that 'smallholder farming' in the Pacific is family farming
- Pacific farmer organisation representatives have identified a number of key policy issues affecting smallholder farmers
- Pacific farmer organisations have a greater understanding of their role in addressing policy constraints affecting smallholders
- Pacific farmer organisations have a greater understanding of the various mechanisms/tools for giving farmers a voice in policy issues in the Pacific
- Pacific farmer organisation representatives have identified a number of capacity gaps for farmer organisations in terms of effectively influencing policy and activities to address these

The meeting also agreed on several key recommendations including:

- Pacific farmer organisations should determine whether 'policy engagement' is or should be a part of their organisations vision
- Pacific farmer organisations should identify some priority policy issues affecting their members and strategies for addressing these
- PIFON and other partners should provide support to national farmer organisations to address identified capacity gaps in terms of effectively influencing policy

The outcomes and recommendations of the workshop will be brought to the attention of the members of PIFON so this may be further shared with those of its other farmer organisation members at the national and local levels to take note and where appropriate take the necessary action to work it into their annual working plans and, to introduce the concept to their members so that more awareness is brought to the issues that PIFON members face.

2 Context for Family Farming in the Pacific Islands

2.1 What is family farming?

The name - Family farming is in line with the 2014 International Year of Family Farming which was commissioned by the United Nations in recognition of the contribution that smallholder farmers make to global food production and the issues that are impacting these farmers.

Family farming is basically where the father, mother and children of a family unit work together to toil their land and provide for themselves for their food security and or alternatively, derive their livelihood from it. It is reliant on family labour, including both women's and men's and where the family and the farm are linked, co-evolve and combine economic, environmental, reproductive, social and cultural functions.

Fact - family farms produce more than 80% of the world's food in terms of value, thus confirming family farming's vital importance for global food security and food sovereignty for present and future generations.



PIFON Program Manager, Lavinia Kaumaitotoya introduces the global concept of Family Farming and the context in the Pacific Islands

Family Farming is also a fantastic ally in efforts to combat climate change and meet the SDGs as follows:

- SDG 5: Achieving gender equality and empowering women
- SDG 6: Availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation
- SDG 7: Access to affordable, secure and sustainable energy
- SDG 11: Make cities inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable
- SDG 12: ensuring sustainable production and consumption
- SDG 13: taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts
- SDG 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources
- SDG 15: Sustainably manage forests, combat desertification, halt and reverse land degradation, halt biodiversity loss

2.2 Family Farming in the Pacific Context – Smallholder production

Family farming in the Pacific is widely practiced but is not known by this terminology, rather we call it subsistence farming, traditional farming, organic farming, indigenous farming or smallholder farming.

The vast majority of Pacific Island people live in rural villages, securing their subsistence and any cash income from traditional land and marine resources. For example, in Papua New Guinea around 4.5 million people (81 per cent of the population) live in rural villages. Only Rwanda, Bhutan, Nepal and Uganda have a greater portion of people living in rural areas (Bourke and Harwood 2009).

The first responsibility of the smallholder in the Pacific is to secure food for the family. Self-sufficiency food production in traditional farming and fishing systems continues to be the basis of food security in the region and provides resilience against external shocks, either economic (price spikes, global recession) or natural (cyclones, floods, droughts, pests and diseases etc.).

The farming systems of Pacific island countries (PICs) have generally provided a high level of food security and have been the ‘hidden strength’ of these otherwise structurally weak economies. McGregor *et. al.* (2009) have highlighted evidence of the importance of traditional smallholder farming systems in safeguarding food security and maintaining economic stability¹.

A key challenge for the region is developing pathways for commercialization of traditional farming systems, which allow increased cash-generating opportunities for rural households and economic growth, without sacrificing family and community cohesion, environmental sustainability and ultimately, food security. Such pathways for commercialization are described in a series of agricultural growth case studies undertaken by FAO for Samoa, Tonga, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (Rogers *et.al.* 2010). These studies identified a number of benefits to small farmers when the commercial crop is part of, or can be easily integrated into traditional farming systems. Most of these case studies involved the participation of FOs as a key component of the process.

For most PICs, agriculture still provides the best opportunities for generating broadly based livelihoods beyond mere subsistence. Particular areas of opportunities (AusAID - Pacific 2020, Background Paper Agriculture) are identified as:

- supplying increasing urban, enclave and tourism markets;

¹ Some examples are:

- A rapid recovery of the Samoan economy, following successive natural (cyclones) and biological (taro leaf blight) disasters with other traditional crops filling the void
- The remarkable turnaround of the Fijian economy, following the devastating 100-year drought of 1997/98
- A tempering of the humanitarian disaster associated with the ethnic conflict in Solomon Islands and the civil war in Bougainville
- The production response of PNG root crop growers to the sharp increase in imported grain prices, following depreciation of the kina in 1994

- increasing tree crop commodity exports;
- exporting to Pacific island and Asian community markets in Pacific Rim markets; and,
- exporting to niche product exports based on fair trade and organic certification

To a large measure, the future economic wellbeing of PICs will depend on the degree to which smallholder farmers are able to take advantage of these opportunities. **FOs are seen to have a key role to play in making this linkage.**

The reality in the Pacific is the majority farm on small scale, it is traditional and subsistence, hence the name is different to that of family farming that is referred to in the global perspective. However, in this particular context, family farming is about enabling the right environment to ensure a dignified life for farming families, indigenous communities, fishers and pastoralists, to better meet consumers' needs more appropriately and more effectively, thereby helping to stem possible future food crises.



Members of PNG WiADF gather for a series of trainings in Lae. All of PNG WiA's over 10,000 members are smallholder farmers.

2.3 The PIFON/WRF Partnership

PIFON has membership in nine countries: Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu, the Solomon Islands, Tonga, Cook Islands, Papua New Guinea, Timor Leste and new inclusion, New Caledonia. Through the IFAD funded Medium Term Cooperation Partnership (MTCP) II, PIFON has implementing farmer organisation partners in six of these countries called National Implementing Agencies.

Through a partnership agreement with World Rural Forum, PIFON has now undertaken to promote family farming to its members in the Pacific and as an organisation supported under the MTCP II and the PAPP projects, it will use this multi-funded platform to leverage the message from its farmer organisations on family farming to be spread across the Pacific.

Under the WRF partnership, PIFON will work in Fiji with its farmer organisations as a pilot and as an initial building block to co-host a Farmers Forum in Fiji and use this forum to discuss and assist to prioritise every day issues that affect smallholder farmers.

3 Policy constraints affecting smallholder farmers in the Pacific

The consultation with farmer organisations highlighted a number of key policy issues affecting smallholder farmers in the Pacific. Among these issues were a few common ones including:

- Land
- Operationalising of policies
- Representation of smallholders in decision making
- Labour issues
- Access to Finance
- Duties / Taxes /Freight
- Foreign Investment
- Integration between different sectors

Participants highlighted the fact many of these issues were common to various Pacific Islands but in different contexts and to varying degrees. Country groups represented at the consultation meeting identified some specific policy constraints in each of the countries including:



CEO for the Growers Federation of Tonga highlights some of the key policy constraints affecting smallholder farmers in Tonga.

i. Solomon Islands:

- Operationalising policies was a constraint, a mismatch to what is happening at grassroots level
- FO's are used as rubber stamps and not taken seriously

ii. Tonga:

- Operationalising policies to members
- Access to Finance very difficult for agriculture
- Organisational FO Strengthening is needed

iii. Fiji:

- Land use: Fiji's Traditional land policies is inhibiting Agricultural investment by landowners and youths, so there is land idle instead of being utilised because landowners cannot acquire back their lands. Many of the lease lands are mortgaged with banks by previous tenants and it gets lost within the banking financial system, only to be handed over to new farmers who aren't the landowners or the youths of the landowners
- Farmers with lease land have a voice, in lieu of those on communal lands who cannot talk due to traditions and culture
- Access to Finance: Agricultural Leases is not recognised by Commercial banks for lending collateral

- Exclusion of FO representation in policy forums eg Current Government policy affecting another's, in Fiji's context Government offers free bus fares, the farmer now doesn't need to work for children's bus fare so he plants less or enough sufficient only to meet his family's financial needs.
- Voice of Youth in Agriculture need to be heard
- Land grabbing policy to be introduced and enforced. (eg France has FO in checkoff system for land acquisition as part of their Government)
- Cost of local production versus cheaper imported GMO food
- Access to markets by some exporters/middlemen who exploit farmers

iv. Vanuatu

- Protection of tribal and customary land for indigenous peoples
- The need for a policy to protect Family Farming
- An initiative to push for duty free farming inputs

v. Papua New Guinea

- FO representation at forums
- Accountability of policy operationalising
- Regional FO forum with Ministers (eg PNG NGO Civil Society Forum)

vi. Regional

- Recognition of Farmer Organisation as partners in agricultural development
- Awareness and operationalising policies
- Capacity of Farmer Organisations to contribute to Forums
- Role of FO's in understanding policy and pushing out policy briefs
- Pacific Freight Subsidy Policy

vii. Summary

Issues	National	Regional	Comments
Land	✓		
Operationalising of policies	✓	✓	Policy Banks
Representation	✓	✓	
Labour	✓		
Access to Finance	✓	✓	
Duties / Taxes /Freight	✓		
Foreign Investment			Social Issues Competition Land grabbing Access Govt Grants
Integration between different sectors	✓		Conflict of policies

4 The role of Farmer Organisations in the Pacific in addressing policy constraints affecting smallholders

4.1 Overview

Farmer Organisations are integrally placed to help smallholder farmers have a voice in policy related issues. The issue in the Pacific becomes, how to make an impact on policy without destroying relationships that will be needed later to continue to be effective in serving/representing your members.

Unlike other parts of the world, farmer organisations, until recently, were a rarity in the Pacific islands. The heavy involvement of governments in agricultural extension, research and commodity marketing stifled the development of effective farmer organisations. This approach is changing with the realisation that government structures have not been effective in providing these services and an increasing acceptance that there are better ways to support farmers in their income generating endeavours. It is now widely accepted that FOs in the Pacific islands will need to play a critical role in empowering rural people to take advantage of economic livelihood opportunities.



PIFON Manager, Kyle Stice highlights the role of farmer organisations in addressing policy constraints affecting small holders.

So, there is a great opportunity for farmer organisations to have an influence on policy making however they must be equipped with the appropriate tools to be effective at this. PIFON Manager highlights the means by which FOs engage with policy makers the needs to be tailored to the national context and context of the farmer organisations, there is no one size fits all approach.

4.2 Mechanisms for giving farmers a voice in policy issues in the Pacific

The meeting was presented with a range of tools that have been used by Pacific farmer organisations to influence policy, these tools include:

- Policy briefs
- Proposals/submissions to governments
- Media releases
- Attendance at forums/consultations (representing farmer organisations)

- Networking (The Pacific Way)

Some specific examples/case studies were then presented and discussed related utilisation of these various tools, these included:

Nature's Way Cooperative

- Submission to govt. on the purchase of new Fiji Airways planes and selection of routes
- Raising awareness on the failure of market access (ongoing)

Tei Tei Taveuni

- The preparation of a proposal to Zero-Rate VAT from agricultural inputs bought and sold by Tei Tei Taveuni (TTT) for Taro farming

Fiji Crop and Livestock Council

- Waiver of duty on importation of agricultural inputs
- Implementation of tax on imported bacon to protect smallholder local pig farmers and allow the pig industry to survive in Fiji



Participants of the consultation meeting discussing the various mechanisms for giving farmers a voice in Policy Issues in the Pacific.

5 Improving capacity of farmer organisations to influence policy in the Pacific

The consultation meeting identified a number of capacity gaps for farmer organisations in terms of effectively influencing policy, these gaps included:

- Knowing what is Policy as opposed to operational activities and strategies
- Identifying how, when and who to influence
- Building key contacts and networks that work in addressing policy
- Tools that can be used for policy work that other FO's have used
- Understanding the Pacific way and learning the art of influencing it the 'Pacific Way'

The forum also identified a series of activities that could be supported through PIFON to improve the capacity of farmer organisations to influence policy, these included:

- Capacity building by SPC PAPP on taking on Policy roles by FO's
- Critical research to back up policy message
- How to prepare and write Policy Brief's
- Strategies for building 'relational' relationships with key contacts
- How and what to gain from attending policy forums
- Learning the art of influencing the 'Pacific Way'

PIFON highlighted that in its new strategic plan, a specific program had been outlined to help FO members more effectively engage in the policy process. This program is entitled 'Policy Engagement and Partnership Development Program'. Under this program a number of key program areas have been developed including:

- Development of key policy briefs and 'issue papers'
- Representation in national and regional forums
- Assistance in the preparation of policy proposals to Government or other agencies
- Joint action of Farmer Organisations and other partners on common priority issues/agenda
- Building capacity for effective advocacy and policy engagement

PIFON will be working through its IFAD/SDC funded MTCP II project to address these areas and is also hoping to extend its partnership with the EU funded SPC PAPP project, and also maximise its membership in the World Rural Forum to gain additional recognition and resources for its members.

6 Outcomes and Recommendations

6.1 Outcomes

i. **Pacific farmer organisations have a greater understanding on the global movement of Family Farming**

As a result of this consultation meeting, Pacific farmer organisations have a greater understanding on the global movement of Family Farming including the definition, key policy initiatives and partners involved globally.

ii. **Pacific farmer organisations are in agreement that ‘smallholder farming’ in the Pacific is family farming**

Family farming in the Pacific is widely practiced but is not known by this terminology, rather it is called subsistence farming, traditional farming, organic farming, indigenous farming or the more commonly used Pacific term ‘smallholder farming’.

To ensure that Pacific Farmer Organisations are speaking the same language and for consistency in this particular context, Farmer Organisation’s agree that in the Pacific and within the PIFON network, it shall continue to be referred to as ‘smallholder farming’ which is one and the same as Family farming.

Pacific Farmer Organisations agree too that it will not need to introduce this new term albeit it may take away the essence of its intention, instead to continue to carry on with the momentum it has gained from this workshop.

iii. **Pacific farmer organisation representatives have identified a number of key policy issues affecting smallholder farmers**

Farmer Organisations understand and know of the plight of its own members, many are similar to other Farmer organisations within the Pacific and the PIFON network but in varying contexts and degrees dependent on per country.

However, key issues remain similar which are not limited to:

- Land tenure,
- Access to Markets and Finance
- Operationalising of policies
- Representation of smallholders in decision making
- Duties / Taxes /Freight
- Foreign Investment

iv. Pacific farmer organisations have a greater understanding of their role in addressing policy constraints affecting smallholders

Farmer Organisations are integrally placed to help smallholder farmers. Unlike other parts of the world, farmer organisations, until recently are a rarity in the Pacific islands, hence the need for Farmer Organisations to make themselves and their services known to its members, stakeholders and the public.

Farmer Organisations are able to reach many more farmers than the normal Government Research and Extension officers, and vice versa, where farmers can be better mobilised, provided services through its farmer organisation.

In this same manner, as Farmer Organisations reach out to more farmers they have a unique way of obtaining feedback from farmers about their problems and issues. Many times, by default as representatives of farmers, they then have a responsibility and a role to advocate for issues that are brought up by its members to decision makers in their countries.

Farmer Organisations understand that they play an important and vital role in advocating for their members their issues and working with partners to resolving it.

v. Pacific farmer organisations have a greater understanding of the various mechanisms/tools for giving farmers a voice in policy issues in the Pacific

Various examples from within the region and the PIFON Network has allowed Farmer Organisations to learn to use various mechanisms/tools that are available to push and place their voice to policy issues at their national levels.

Farmer Organisations now agree that they can use these various mechanisms/tools to assist them as they strive to serve their members and address their grievances.

Farmer Organisations can have or obtain various resources/mechanisms/tools to obtain, provide and record solutions for their issues. The task of turning these solutions into which presentable manner and negotiating or liaising with the right people is to be learnt by utilising these various mechanisms and tools

Using such mechanisms/tools will empower and enable the Farmer Organisations to better prepare for optimum results that affect their and their members wellbeing.

vi. Pacific farmer organisation representatives have identified a number of capacity gaps for farmer organisations in terms of effectively influencing policy and activities to address these

Farmer Organisations need to be strengthened to be able to take on the world and push issues for its members, it means muscling up and coming to the forefront of things, and where by default take the lead to get issues resolved for its members.

To be able to do this, Farmer Organisations agree that specific capacity building for themselves on how to engage, when, to whom and what is critical to taking on this work and maximising its membership within the PIFON network to get educated in this process, the Pacific way (How to make an impact on policy without destroying relationships).

Influencing policy is an art to be mastered, to learn to identify how, who, and when to influence, to then build, maintain and keep key contacts and networks that work in addressing policy, then using the necessary tools, and skills to optimise leverage.

Learning by example from other Farmer Organisations who have had success in advocacy and similarly to its current Learning Exchange of (F2F) farmer to farmer technical learnings, Farmer Organisation members will demonstrate and teach each other how Policy can be achieved.

vii. Pacific farmer organisation representatives to use World Rural Forum platform to duplicate strategies at Country (national) level

Under the PIFON/WRF partnership, the proposal to host a Farmers Forum by Farmer Organisations is recommended where farmers and stakeholders are invited to attend, discuss, endorse and prioritise under this forum issues that affect smallholder farmers at the national level.

It is recommended that with the World Rural Forum (WRF) partnership, a Farmers Forum will be hosted in Fiji in 2017, this Farmers Forum is to be duplicated by PIFON Farmer Organisation members from 2018 thereafter at their national levels.

At the Farmers Forum, it is recommended that National Committees for Farmers Organisations be established nationally to take on the responsibility of ensuring that policy matters that affect smallholder farmers as endorsed from the Farmers Forum are actioned.

6.2 Recommendations

i. Pacific farmer organisations should determine whether ‘policy engagement’ is or should be a part of their organisations vision

Farmer organisations, until recently, were a rarity in the Pacific islands. In many cases, farmer organisations have grown out of projects where research and extension are the key services to their members. To take on advocacy and policy issues is relatively new hence many have not considered this and where they have, it has been by default and progression.

Examples of Farmer Organisations from within the Pacific and the PIFON Network itself demonstrates that a Farmer Organisation is the ideal platform for farmers issues to be rightly voiced, argued, researched and advocated for because Farmer Organisations are farmers who speak for other farmers. According to each Farmer Organisations growth, the time will happen depending on each countries perspective when this role will organically evolve. When it does, Farmer Organisations should make it a part of their existence and with the assistance of its membership to the PIFON network, it can be guided and supported to grow into this phase.

When this occurs, it is time to include it into its vision for its members, a very natural process.

ii. Pacific farmer organisations should identify some priority policy issues affecting their members and strategies for addressing these

Farmer organisations need to know Government policies and take it upon themselves to understand it, they need to look within its membership for retired civil servants, policy advocates to help capacity build its members.

Farmer Organisation representatives to become members of local and national forums that assist in the decision making of that community.

Farmer Organisations must ensure that its members are recognised and represented at the necessary national / regional and international forums to enable the recognition of their organisations and the role that they play in economic development of their countries.

Farmer organisation representatives are encouraged to build relationships with their local Ministry of Agriculture representatives and where possible begin to make arrangements for possible formal arrangements to be signed for cooperation purposes.

iii. PIFON and other partners should provide support to national farmer organisations to address identified capacity gaps in terms of effectively influencing policy

PIFON to work with SPC PAPP and other partners to organise a capacity building workshop for its members on the language of Policy Briefs, understanding of Policies, writing up of case studies to support policy and lobbying accordingly in the right forums on changes advocated for it.

PIFON as a new member of the World Rural Forum, to maximise its membership for its network members by ensuring that its national Farmer Organisations are supported in its resources by WRF to duplicate and mirror the intervention activities of one country to its other member countries that will assist it to strengthen its capacity.

7 Annexes

7.1 Annex 1: Consultation Agenda

Draft Agenda:

8:00 am	Official Welcome (Afamasaga Toleafoa - PIFON Chairman) Presentation: Introduction to Family Farming in the global and regional context (Lavinia Kaumaitotoya – PIFON Program Manager)
9:00 am	Group Activity: Identifying policy constraints affecting smallholder farmers -Group breakout session -Group presentations
10:00 am	<i>Morning Tea</i>
10:30 am	Presentation: The potential role of FOs in addressing policy constraints (Kyle Stice – PIFON Manager)
10:45 am	Panel discussion: Mechanisms for giving farmers a voice in policy issues (Perspectives from around the region)
11:30 am	Group Activity: Improving capacity of farmer organisations to influence policy – what the capacity gaps and plans to address these? -Group breakout session -Group presentation
12.30pm	Summary of recommendations and closing remarks
1:00 pm	<i>Lunch</i>

7.2 Annex 2: Participant Listing


	Name	Country	Organisation	Email
1	Alan Petersen	Fiji	Teitei Taveuni	toivotovu@connect.com.fj
2	Afamasaga Toleafoa	Samoa	Samoa Farmers Association	pacific@ipasifika.net
3	Kyle Stice	Fiji	PIFON	manager@pacificfarmers.com
4	Clement Hadosaia	Solomon Is	Kastom Gaden Association	clementh@kastomgaden.org
5	Serenia Madigibuli	Fiji	Tutu Rural Training Centre	niamadigibuli@gmail.com
6	Sinai Tuitahi	Tonga	Growers Federation of Tonga	ceogrofed@gmail.com
7	Maria Linibi	PNG	PNG Women in Agriculture Development Foundation	maria.linibi@nari.org.pg
8	Peter Kaoh	Vanuatu	Farm Support Association	sapv@vanuatu.com.vu
9	Lottie Vaisekavea	Solomon Is	RDP II	lweisekavea@sirdp.org.sb
10	Tony Wale	Solomon Is	SI ALCAA	teamleaderwale92@gmail.com

11	Aneet Kumar	Fiji	PIFON	finance@pacificfarmers.com
12	Ian Simpson	Fiji	Teitei Taveuni	ims5510@gmail.com
13	Ana Tuivanuavou	Fiji	PIFON	info@pacificfarmers.com
14	Lavinia Kaumaitotoya	Fiji	PIFON	pm@pacificfarmers.com
15	Lusia Gasau	Fiji	Ranadi Plantation	lusia@ranadiplantation.com
16	Cheryl Thomas	Fiji	SPC PAPP	cherylt@spc.int
17	Andrew Weleilakeba	Fiji	AgroNet	equipfiji@gmail.com
18	Kyle Stice	Fiji	PIFON	manager@pacificfarmers.org

7.3 Annex 3: Family Farming Consultation Flyer

Farmer Organisation Consultation on Family Farming

"Identifying and addressing policy constraints impacting small holder farmers"
Friday, November 25th, 2016
9 am – 1 pm | Lagoon Resort, Pacific Harbour, Fiji Islands



DRAFT AGENDA

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12:30 pm	Summary of recommendations and closing remarks
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For more information contact: info@pacificfarmers.com | www.pacificfarmers.com

