

**9th REGIONAL MEETING OF
PACIFIC HEADS OF AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY SERVICES (PHOAFS)
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Paper reference	Session 4: Agenda item 6
Title	Update: One Health progress and forward plan
Action	For Information
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Background

1. One Health is an integrated and collaborative approach that recognizes the interconnectedness of human health, animal health, and environmental health in Pacific Island countries & territories (PICTs). It emphasizes the shared responsibility of safeguarding the well-being of humans, animals, and ecosystems by promoting interdisciplinary cooperation, sustainable practices, and disease prevention to ensure the health and prosperity of communities and their animals in the island environment context.
2. The One Health concept is not a new idea to the Pacific as the practice of working in multi-sectors is a common occurrence for PICTs during natural disasters or national emergencies. During major tropical cyclones, tsunamis, etc. the different government sectors, private entities and partners are driven to work together by national leadership in an organized manner under a national disaster mandate to monitor and respond to humanitarian efforts before -, during- or post disaster.
3. It is similar at the regional level, from 2006 to 2011, the Pacific Island countries & territories (PICTs) and partners (New Zealand, Australia) established the Pacific Regional Influenza Pandemic Preparedness Project (PRIPP) which in retrospect is a One Health initiative to respond to an emerging threat at that time. The PRIPP was aimed at building the capacity of PICTs to detect and effectively respond to emerging diseases particularly pandemic influenza and the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI). The project was jointly managed and delivered by SPC's Public Health Division and the Animal Health & Production thematic teams of the Land Resource Division of SPC. The PRIPP ceased in 2011 but a positive outcome of its One Health approach are the PICTs readiness and resilience to the impact of Pandemic H1N1 in 2009. For example, the PICTs had at hand country pre-pandemic plans and the workforce had undertaken capacity-building and simulation exercises prior to the 2009 Pandemic event¹.

¹ [Influenza surveillance in the Pacific Island countries and territories during the 2009 pandemic: an observational study - PMC \(nih.gov\)](#)

4. During the PRIPP project, PHOVAPS was the eminent coordinating body for the veterinary or animal health services provided by the Project. The 2021 PHOVAPS Charter prescribed a One Health Scientific & technical Working group in its section 6.2.7 to support multi-stakeholder approach to addressing animal health, zoonosis, food safety, and antimicrobial resistance guidelines in PICTs.
5. More recently, the concept of One Health was introduced during the 2023 Pacific Agriculture Week to the Heads and Ministers of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries meeting at a side-event. At this panel discussion some senior officials notably declared having minimal or basic knowledge about One Health and its application in the Pacific. Therefore, a general audience consensus was to advocate for the benefits and importance of initiating a One Health approach and the need to create greater awareness across sectors and communities in the Pacific.
6. The concept of One Health is also strongly advocated by regional partners as an approach to strengthen country multi-sector collaboration and transdisciplinary support to address some of the key priorities across these sectors such as zoonotic diseases, antimicrobial resistance, food security, etc. The recent COVID19 pandemic, frequent disease outbreaks, etc is compelling evidence to strengthen global and regional health security by enabling greater preparedness to identify and respond to threats to the livelihood & well-being of the people, animals, and environment in the Pacific.

Purpose

7. This paper aims to provide an update on the current progress of One Health and future plans.

Progress Update : One health and forward plan

8. The SPC (Pacific Community) and its partners is committed to promoting the One Health approach in the Pacific with the establishment of a One Health coordinator position in 2023. The position coordinates the One Health initiatives across the Land Resource Division (LRD) and the Public Health Division (PHD) and similarly work across the corresponding regional meetings of PHOVAPS and PPHSN and related partner agencies.

USAID – SPC Global Health Security One Health project to support One Health activities for the next 5 years (2024-2028)

9. Furthermore, the current development of a USAID – SPC Global Health Security One Health project to support One Health activities for the next 5 years (2024-2028) that will certainly benefit the PICTS directly and through PHOVAPs and PPHSN, especially through the POSW group (Pacific One Health Scientific & Technical Working) Group. The SPC – USAID Global Health Security project is focused initially on Strengthening Global Health Security in 11 Pacific Island countries. The project is aimed at targeting support to strengthen multisectoral collaboration, coordination, and communication within countries to address country priority issues identified from health, animal & environment sector, in conjunction with partner agencies initiatives in the region. An inception plan meeting with the Pacific Island Countries is planned for the latter half of the year, in conjunction with the Quadripartite Joint Plan of Action workshop.

Pacific Quadripartite -Pacific Community

10. The Agencies of the Quadripartite which consists of WHO, FAO, WOAHA and UNEP are committed to support One Health activities in the Pacific Island countries & territories. The One Health High Level Expert Panel (OHLEP) is an advisory group for the Quadripartite organization that provides guidance and recommendations on One Health issues to these agencies and countries. The Quadripartite is planning to assist the PICTs in a Joint of Plan of Action workshop for One Health implementation in August 2024. Therefore, seeking support of HOAFs to this workshop to release the Ministry of Agriculture & Forestry One Health representative to participate to this workshop. The candidate will be invited together with country representatives from the Human Health and Environment Health sector to enable the completion of a One Health workplan for the country, to be supported by the Quadripartite and its partners.

Link to PHOVAPS network.

11. Lastly and more importantly, in direct reference to the PHOVAPS information paper in Session 4, Agenda item 12, the PHOVAPS Governance document outlines the PHOVAPS members endorsement of (b) selection of PHOVAPS technical working groups to be activated. One of the Scientific & Technical working groups from the Charter to be activated is the Pacific One Health Scientific & Technical Working Group, also abbreviated as POSW (pronounced as 'PAWs') group. A draft term of reference of the POSW group was also provided to PHOVAPS meeting for endorsement. A group of PICTs represented at the PHOVAPS meeting were selected as POSWs members, as the other members of the POSW group would be selected from the Pacific Public Health Surveillance Network (PPHSN) and other regional sector groups in the region. The POSW group's purpose is to provide oversight and support through coordination, collaboration and communication between One Health partners and countries. The full POSW group will meet within the fringes of the PHOVAPS and PPHSN meetings to opportunistically work on related issues and to conduct the project-steering mechanism for the USAID – SPC Global Health Security Project.
12. The USAID - SPC Global Health Security project is co-developed and is a partnership between the Land Resource Division and the Public Health Division guaranteeing co-ownership of resources and for most parts of the project co-facilitation of activities in Pacific Island countries in the spirit of One Health. This arrangement has unique implications for the PHOVAPS-POSW members composition, responsibility, and function. The link and reporting to the PHOVAPS council remains like other TWGs (Scientific and Technical Working Groups) under PHOVAPS.

Recommendations:

13. The PHOAFS are invited to **note** the One Health progress and future plan.