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SOUTH PACIFIC FORUM SECRETARIAT •
1997/98 ANNUAL REPORT



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foreword

I am pleased to introduce my first Annual Report for the period covering 1997/1998 for the South Pacific Forum Secretariat.

This has been a particularly significant year for the organisation as it adopted a new structure and streamlined its operations. The transition was a fairly smooth exercise, thanks to the support and cooperation of our member countries as well as staff of the Secretariat. I would like to pay special thanks to my predecessor Hon Ieremia Tabai for his instrumental role and leadership in this important phase for the Secretariat.

In February 1998 when I joined the organisation, my first task was to explore ways of improving the Secretariat's response to the needs of our members and enhance the delivery of services and programmes. A series of visits to member countries in recent months has allowed discussion of a wide range of issues affecting the Secretariat and the region at large. These meetings have helped us better understand the needs of our members and made the various departments and ministries within member countries more aware of what is on offer from the Secretariat.

The period under review has seen good progress in the implementation of our Work Programme and by the end of 1997, 86 per cent of the funds available for 1997 had been utilised. All our major policy meetings and training programmes and workshops were implemented on time and within budget.

There were four high level meetings under Forum auspices in the reporting year. In addition to the Forum Leaders Summit in Rarotonga in September 1997, Forum Economic Ministers met in Cairns in July 1997 to develop economic reform strategies and policies. Forum Aviation Ministers met in May 1998 to work through a range of aviation policy issues and Pacific ACP Ministers met in April 1998 to further consolidate negotiating positions for the upcoming Lome negotiations with the European Union in September.

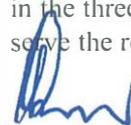
Such meetings demonstrate the key policy advisory role that the Secretariat is mandated to carry out on behalf of member countries as well as related support work in areas such as research, policy development, servicing of major meetings, the regional coordination of a variety of programmes and the international advocacy of Forum positions.

The Secretariat continues to work closely with its sister agencies in the South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee which brings together eight main regional agencies - the Pacific Community, Pacific Islands Development Programme, South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission, South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency, South Pacific Forum Secretariat, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Tourism Council of the South Pacific and the University of the South Pacific. SPOCC, which is permanently chaired by the Secretariat, coordinates a variety of regional efforts to maximise their impact and to avoid unnecessary duplication. It continues to be an excellent example of regional coordination and cooperation between inter-governmental agencies.

The Secretariat is moving towards a three year budget cycle which will help with forward planning for the organisation. It will also provide more transparency to our members and the donor community about our activities and the allocation of resources. I take this opportunity to record our appreciation for the generous support from our many donors and I look forward to their continued assistance in the years ahead. Your support reflects the confidence that you have in the work of the organisation as it seeks to address the needs of its member countries within the context of a rapidly changing world economy.

Over the years, the Secretariat has built a tradition of commitment and the delivery of a quality service. The staff of the Secretariat are highly motivated and I commend their dedication and commitment. My major aim and that of the Secretariat as a whole is to strengthen this tradition as we move into the next millennium. With the many challenges posed by the ever increasing worldwide changes in the political and economic spheres as well as in technology, I am convinced that the role of the Secretariat in the provision of quality policy advice, programme coordination and advocacy on issues of importance to our members has never been more important.

I wish to further reiterate my unqualified commitment to maintain this tradition of excellence in the three years that you have given me to serve the region through the Secretariat.



Noel W Levi, CBE
Secretary General

Forum
Officials
Committee

1997
FOC Budget
Session

Secretariat
headquarters,
Suva



structure of the south pacific forum secretariat

The South Pacific Forum Secretariat is headed by Secretary General Mr Noel Levi, CBE, assisted by the Deputy Secretary General Mr Tony Slatyer.

The Secretary General is responsible to the Forum Officials Committee (comprising senior officials from Forum Member States) for the management of the Secretariat.

The Executive provides high level representation at regional and international meetings and provides policy advice to South Pacific Forum Leaders and to Member Governments.



Forum Secretariat Executive and Divisional Directors (L-R)

Iosefa Maiava, Director, Development & Economic Policy Division

Makurita Baaro, Director, Political & International Affairs Division

Tony Slatyer, Deputy Secretary General

Noel Levi, CBE, Secretary General

Jaindra Kumar, Director, Trade & Investment Division

Alex Nicolson, Director, Corporate Services Division

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corporate objectives

The Secretariat's Corporate Plan, which has been in effect for most of the reporting period, provides as follows:

"The primary responsibility of the Executive and Divisions of the Secretariat is to work towards achieving the following Corporate Objectives, which reflect

Forum and corporate role. Each of the Divisions also has a more focussed Divisional Objective which reflects the core aim of that Division's programme activities. The Corporate Objectives of the Forum Secretariat are to:

implement the directives of the Forum, to disseminate its views and to represent its concerns effectively;

provide the Forum and its associated bodies with secretariat and support services;

provide quality policy advice and analysis to the Forum and its members, coordinating where necessary with the other agencies involved;

implement regional policies and programs that support the priorities of Forum countries and enhance their capacity to contribute to the welfare of their members, giving special attention to the smaller and more disadvantaged states;

promote sustainable regional development of the region in the interests of its people;

encourage regional cooperation and partnerships;

foster a commitment to excellence in the service of Forum members among Secretariat staff, including by developing staff resources;

manage the resources of the Forum efficiently and effectively so as to provide the best possible service to Forum members."

In 1997-98, these objectives have been fulfilled by a wide range of activities.

The Secretariat works actively with member countries to adopt and promote Forum positions, by arranging technical assistance to members (for example, in their implementation of the Forum Economic Action Plan) and assisting members to define and advocate their common views in the international community.



*Cook Islands Prime Minister and Forum Chair
Sir Geoffrey Henry*

The Secretariat has provided member countries with the highest possible quality of support services at Forum meetings. In the reporting year these included: the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM); the Forum Leaders Summit; nine post-Forum Dialogue meetings; the Forum Aviation Policy Ministerial Meeting; a Pacific African Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Ministerial Council meeting and officials level meetings associated with these, including two meetings of the Forum Officials Committee (FOC) and its Remuneration Sub-Committee.

The Secretariat's performance benchmarks include having best quality policy documentation for these meetings issued to members at least six weeks prior to the meeting, and to produce meeting outcome documents as early as possible during the meetings themselves.

The Secretariat has provided policy advice to members on the full range of issues referred to it by the Forum, by means of official circulars and meeting documentation, and supported by direct in-country consultations with all members during the reporting year. Much of this analysis and advice has been prepared in collaboration with other regional and international organisations.

The Secretariat has developed its Budget and Work Programme so as to support the region's development objectives, and implements it taking fully into account the difficult situation of smaller members, with their limited policy resources and economic and environmental vulnerabilities.

Special attention to smaller members was given in 1997-98 by means of more in-country work by Secretariat staff, and by servicing the Smaller Island States (SIS) Economic Leaders' Summit.

The Work Programme itself has been redesigned to improve transparency, to acknowledge donors explicitly and to set performance indicators for individual projects. In 1999 the Secretariat proposes to develop a triennial budget in line with best practice standards elsewhere.

Regional cooperation has been pursued at many levels. The Forum Leaders Summit and Economic Ministers Meeting process provides annual opportunities for political leaders and senior Ministers to develop common positions and approaches.

To assist cooperation among regional organisations serving the region, the Secretary General chairs the South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee (SPOCC), which works to improve alignment of programmes in the interests of members. The FOC has also established a Remuneration Sub-Committee with the aim of harmonising remuneration and conditions of service among the SPOCC agencies.

All Secretariat staff are recruited on the basis of their willingness and capacity to dedicate themselves to serving the region. New performance contracting arrangements are being developed to supplement the current staff appraisal scheme.

With Secretariat support and assistance, member countries have worked very effectively together to produce a range of key policies to be applied through the region, including on fiscal, governance and trade reforms (Forum Economic Action Plan), security cooperation (Aitutaki

Declaration), climate change (Forum Leaders Retreat Statement on Climate Change), negotiation positions with the European Union (EU) (Pacific ACP Ministerial Council outcomes) and aviation policy (Forum Aviation Policy Action Plan).

This is a considerable body of ground-breaking policy work aimed at enhancing sustainable development in all Forum member countries.

The Secretariat produced the outputs described in this report with 79 staff recruited from throughout the region and/or provided by donors (38 support staff and 41 professional staff), fixed assets valued at F\$11.5m and total expenditures of around F\$12.2m in the 1997/98 reporting year.



Official visitors to the Secretariat included the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, Chief Emeka Anyaoku



Ministerial delegates at the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting in Cairns, Australia

development and economic policy programme

Secretariat objectives include providing and arranging sound policy advice and technical assistance on development and economic issues.

Policy Advice and Technical Assistance in Economic Management

Analysis of economic trends, economic reform programs and development planning capacity in the region was stepped up in 1997/98 with a marked increase in the flow and complexity of policy advice to members and other clients. This information was provided to members through official channels (ie circulars and regional policy meetings) as well as the Trends & Development Divisional Quarterly and Occasional Working Papers.

Technical assistance for member countries in economic management and planning were provided through short term consultancies, fellowships and country and regional workshops including the biennial Development Planners Meeting held in Noumea in March 1998. Members agreed in December 1997 to re-focus some of the Secretariat's special purpose funds on the core business of the Secretariat, especially economic management and development planning.

The Division successfully coordinated the preparations for the 1997 (June) FEMM in Cairns, Australia. Preparations were also completed for the 1998 FEMM held in July in Nadi, Fiji.

The FEMM has become the primary regional forum for discussing economic issues and for agreeing the regional economic reform agenda. The in-house analytical work that goes into supporting the FEMM and other key policy meetings has increased dramatically over the past year reflecting the increased capacity and focus within the Division.

Promotion of Sustainable Development through the Coordination of Regional Policy Development in key sectors

The South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee (SPOCC) has become the primary regional mechanism for ensuring effective coordination of the work of the region's several inter-government organisations. Two meetings of SPOCC Executive Heads were held during the year and a number of Working Groups were established to coordinate regional sector policy

initiatives and programme activities.

While much of the progress in coordinating sector policy issues has taken place in the context of the SPOCC Working Groups (eg. in agriculture, marine sector, information economy, health and gender), significant achievements have also been made in other sectors.

The Secretariat organised and serviced a major Forum Aviation Policy Ministerial Meeting in April 1997, and major policy analytical work has been undertaken in support of FEMM in information technology, telecommunications, energy, tree-crop sector, and tuna industries as well as on the social impact of economic reforms.

The volume and sophistication of information and advice in these sectors to member countries



DEPD Director Josefa Maiava discussing a Canadian aid project which is being implemented with help from the Forum Secretariat

and SPOCC organisations has increased substantially over the last year.

Facilitation of Development Cooperation through Policy Dialogue and Effective Coordination of Donor Programmes

The Secretariat has played a major role in the region's preparations for the negotiation of a successor agreement to the Lome Convention. Two Ministerial Meetings in 1997/98 have discussed and agreed on the region's position for the negotiations. Preparations continue for the negotiations starting in September 1998.

Preparations were completed for the biennial Pacific Island Countries/Partners meeting to be held in Nadi, Fiji in July immediately after the FEMM. The meeting is a major forum for policy dialogue on aid effectiveness in the context of economic reform.



Representatives of SPOCC agencies (L-R): Tamarii Tutangata, Director, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); Levani Tuinabua, Chief Executive, Tourism Council of the South Pacific; Levi, CBE, Secretary General, South Pacific Forum Secretariat (SPFS); Alf Simpson, Director, South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC); Victorio Uherbelau, Director, Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA); Dr Bob Dun, Director General, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC); Sitiveni Halapua, Director, Pacific Islands Development Programme (PIDP); Prof Rajesh Chandra, Deputy Vice Chancellor, representing Esekia Solofa, Vice Chancellor, University of the South Pacific (USP)

Programme coordination and delivery continues to be an important Secretariat function. In addition to the on-going role of Secretary General as Regional Authorising Officer for the EU's regional programme, the Secretariat has developed the framework agreement for the new EU Pacific Regional Indicative Programme (Ecu35 million for 1998-2003) and coordinates the management of the Canada-South Pacific Oceans Development Programme (C\$14 million for 1998-2005).

The Secretariat also continues to manage the following special purpose funds including:

- (1) Fellowship Funds for short term practical attachments;
- (2) Short Term Advisory Services (STAS) Fund for short-term consultancies;
- (3) Small Island States Development Fund for small projects and for attending Forum Secretariat meetings;
- (4) Smaller Island States Training Fund;
- (5) Regional Natural Disaster Relief Fund for small and urgent relief grants, and

(6) the Kanak Fellowship Fund.

These funds, which provide direct assistance to the member countries and the Kanak population of New Caledonia, have a combined value of about \$3 million a year.

The submission of regional project proposals by other SPOCC agencies to some of the donors is also coordinated by the Secretariat. In 1997 more than \$1 million was provided by the Republic of Korea and Taiwan through the Secretariat to fund projects by regional organisations.



FLNKS President Rock Wamytan with Secretary General Noel Levi, CBE

political and international affairs programme

Secretariat objectives include the promotion of the Forum's interests in international fora and providing policy advice and assistance to members on international relations, law enforcement cooperation and political, legal and security issues.

Assist and Advise on International Relations Issues

The Secretariat has continued its efforts to raise the international profile of the Pacific and to highlight regional positions on a range of issues within the international community. This has been conducted in a number of ways - through the United Nations apparatus, through the strengthening of inter-regional contacts and through the Post-Forum Dialogue process.

Major activities involving the United Nations included preparations for the Commission on Sustainable Development (CSD) meetings with particular emphasis on preparations for the 1999

UN General Assembly Special Sessions on Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Climate change and vulnerability of small islands states are two of the major issues which have been pursued through the UN system.

The Secretariat has also put effort into strengthening relations with other regional organisations which have similar interests and concerns. The first SIDS Inter-Governmental Organisations Secretariats meeting was held earlier this year in Suva. The meeting saw high level representatives from the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group, Caribbean Community, Indian Ocean Commission, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), University of the South Pacific (USP), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) attend three days of fruitful discussions at the Forum Secretariat.

The Post-Forum Dialogue remains the key mech-



1997 South Pacific Forum Leaders and Heads of Delegations

(Back Row L-R): HE President Teburoro Tito, Kiribati; Rt Hon Prime Minister Bikenibeu Paeniu, Tuvalu; Hon Prime Minister John Howard, Australia; HE President Imata Kabua, Republic of Marshall Islands; Hon Prime Minister Sitiveni Rabuka, Fiji; Hon Prime Minister Baron Vaea, Tonga; Hon Deputy Prime Minister Barak Sope, Vanuatu; HE President Kinza Clodumar, Nauru; HE President Jacob Nena, Federated States of Micronesia; Hon Inatio Akaruru, CBE, Deputy Prime Minister, Cook Islands; Hon Jeremia Tabai, Secretary General, Forum Secretariat.

(Front Row L-R): Hon Prime Minister Jim Bolger, New Zealand; Hon Prime Minister Tofilau Eti Alesana, Samoa; Hon Premier Frank Lui, Niue; Hon Prime Minister Sir Geoffrey Minister Bill Skate, Papua New Guinea; Hon Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu, Solomon Islands; HE President Kuniwo Nakamura, Palau

anism for promoting regional concerns with interested extra regional states. This unique process includes Canada, People's Republic of China, European Union, France, Japan, Republic of Korea, Malaysia, the United Kingdom and the United States of America. The successful dialogue meetings in the Cook Islands last year again demonstrated the value of this process in providing a venue for high level discussion of developmental and international issues of importance to the region.

The Secretariat also hosted several distinguished guests. These included the Secretary General of the Commonwealth Secretariat, Chief Emeka Anyaoku, and the Commissioner of the European Union for Foreign Relations, Professor Jaoa De Dus Penheiro, as well as high level visitors from the United Nations and Dialogue Partners.

Legal and Drafting Assistance

The Secretariat continues to provide limited in-house legal advice. Legal drafting assistance has been provided to assist members to implement the commitments they made under the 1992 Honiara Declaration on Law Enforcement Cooperation. The programme has also been used to assist members' legal officers acquire drafting skills.

In fulfilling its mandate in the legal area, the Secretariat works closely with key regional and international organisations such as the Pacific Islands Law Officers Meeting (PILOM), the Commonwealth Secretariat and the United Nations International Drug Control Programme (UNDCP). The Secretariat also serves as depository for several regional agreements.

Facilitation of the Objectives of the Honiara and Aitutaki Declarations

The adoption of the Aitutaki Declaration by Leaders at their meeting in Rarotonga in 1997 substantially broadened the framework of the security environment in the region beyond the law enforcement dimensions that were the region's major concern in the 1990's. To meet this extended mandate, the Forum Regional Security Committee met in two sessions in June 1998. The first session was dedicated to discussions of law enforcement issues while the latter session addressed broader security policy issues.

The first phase of the implementation work for the 1992 Honiara Declaration on Law Enforcement Cooperation was completed in



Participants at the Small Island Developing States IGO meeting at the Forum Secretariat

December 1997. Of the two major projects - legislative drafting assistance to members and drug enforcement training - the latter programme was completed on time and within budget.

The project was reviewed in March 1998 with the Evaluation Team reporting it was satisfied that the overall objective of the programme had been achieved. The outcomes and recommendations of the review will be considered in mid-1998 at a Tripartite Review meeting to be convened with representatives of the United Nations Drug Control Programme, South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference/Customs Heads of Administration Regional Meeting and the Forum Secretariat.

Under the Secretariat's Law Enforcement Assistance Scheme law enforcement officials of member countries were sponsored to attend a number of international meetings and training sessions. These included the 40th Session of the UN Commission on Narcotic Drugs in Vienna, Austria; Asia Pacific Group Meeting on Money Laundering in Bangkok, Thailand; Police Training attachments in Wellington, New Zealand; Immigration Training attachments in Fiji and Federal Bureau of Investigation Training for police in the United States.

The Secretariat continues to strengthen its working relations and dialogue with specialist regional agencies such as the Customs Heads of Administrations Regional Meeting (CHARM), Pacific Island Law Officers Meeting (PILOM), South Pacific Chiefs of Police Conference (SPCPC) and the Regional Heads of Prisons Meeting (RHPM). The Secretariat was also represented at the second annual meeting of the Pacific Immigration Directors' Conference (PIDC).

The Secretariat cooperates closely on a regular basis with international agencies such as the Commonwealth Secretariat, United Nations Drug Control Programme, national law enforcement agencies such as the Australian Federal Police, Australian Customs Service, New Zealand Police and the New Zealand Customs Service, United States Federal Bureau of Investigation and the United States Customs Service.

Support for the Interests of Forum Countries

The annual Forum and associated meetings continue to be the major event on the regional calendar and the Secretariat undertook substantial preparations and consultations with host countries (Cook Islands 1997, Federated States of Micronesia 1998) on arrangements for the meetings.

The Secretariat has continued to monitor regional issues and developments of interest and concern to its members. One of the main activities this year has been the coordination of country visits by the incoming Secretary General to member countries. The purpose of these visits was to meet with Forum Leaders and share perspectives on key regional issues, including the role of the Secretariat and the Secretary General, as well as to encourage consultation on key regional issues. The visits reflect the Secretariat's objective of reaching out to its members as often as possible to discuss major developments within the Secretariat and the region.

Developments in New Caledonia are of continuing interest to the Forum. The Secretariat has maintained a close watch on these developments during the reporting period. In early May, the Forum Chairman and Prime Minister of the Cook Islands, accompanied by the Secretary General, visited New Caledonia at the invitation of the French Government to witness the opening of the Jean Marie Tjibaou Cultural Centre and the signing of the Noumea Accords by the Front De Liberation Nationale Kanak Socialist (FLNKS), the Ressement pour la Caledonie dans la Republique (RPCR) and France. The Noumea Accords provide for a process of gradual transfer of governing authority from France to New Caledonia over a period of 15 - 20 years after which the question of independence will be reconsidered.

The Secretariat has continued to promote and publicise the views of the South Pacific Forum on major issues affecting the member countries and the region, as well as highlighting the Secretariat's programmes and activities.

Information is distributed through print and broadcast media, the Secretariat's Internet website (<http://www.forumsec.org.fj>) and a variety of promotional material. Electronic mail is used increasingly for disseminating information and documentation. The Division also helps host Governments to coordinate media arrangements for the annual South Pacific Forum and other important regional meetings.



Secretary General Noel Levi, CBE, with Professor Jaoa De Dus Penheiro, European Union Commissioner for Foreign Relations with African, Caribbean and Pacific States

trade and investment programme

Secretariat objectives include assisting members to improve their trade and investment performance by providing and arranging sound policy advice and technical assistance.

The trade and investment programme concentrates on trade policy issues and the provision of technical and financial assistance to facilitate exports from, and investment into, Forum Island Countries (FICs). The Division is also responsible for the operations of the South Pacific Trade Commissions (SPTCs) in Sydney and Auckland and the Pacific Islands Centre (PIC) in Tokyo.

Policy Advice and Technical and Financial Assistance in Trade and Investment issues

The major areas of policy work were on investment, tariffs and multilateral trade issues. The 1997 FEMM Action Plan provided the basis for developing policy initiatives for the 1998 FEMM including options for achieving free trade in FICs; measures for enhancing business competitiveness; practical impediments to investment constraints to tourism investment; petroleum pricing issues and the role of financial institutions.

The Secretariat has undertaken a feasibility study on representation at the World Trade Organisation (WTO) headquarters in Geneva and a review of the Built-in Agenda. Vanuatu was provided specific assistance with its accession to the WTO. The Solomon Islands was assisted with the preparation of technical papers for its WTO initiated trade policy review. Workshops and seminars on the WTO were conducted in the Federated States of Micronesia and the Republic of Marshall Islands.

Activities under Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) were followed closely through participation at various APEC meetings. A Minister from Solomon Islands and the Deputy Prime Minister of Samoa represented the South Pacific Forum at APEC ministerial meetings on trade and telecommunications. Secretariat staff attended several other meetings reporting to members on relevant outcomes.

Assistance was provided to Fiji and Vanuatu to facilitate discussion on bilateral trade, and Papua New Guinea was assisted with development of its Pacific Export Promotion Programme. The Secretariat assisted other regional agencies to maximise private sector involvement in the



Product Promotions, PIC, Tokyo

development of projects. It also initiated a project to facilitate finfish and marine aquarium exports from FICs to the North American marketplace. Studies in the development of black pearl and bulk importation of pharmaceutical products have been initiated. A study is under way to identify and assess opportunities for developing and marketing the region's products as environmentally friendly.

Workshops were conducted in: the Federated States of Micronesia, Solomon Islands and Tonga to assist them to plan, procure and manage imported goods so as to reduce unit costs and diversify supply sources. Assistance was also provided to many members in a training programme on Supplier Sourcing and Appraisal of Performance.

The major activity under the petroleum advisory service has been assisting selected FICs in their price negotiations with the oil companies. Other technical advisory services have been provided on request.

Information Dissemination

A business cost survey was completed for all FICs covering areas such as wages, public utilities, transport, communications, land and factories, and bank and government charges. This information will be regularly updated by trade contact points and Investment Promotion Agencies. The survey will assist policy makers in making informed decisions and improve competitiveness in the business environment.

The development of a regional database of foreign trade statistical information for all FICs was initiated. A consolidated trade directory for the

FICs and the French territories is expected to be completed in electronic formats by the end of 1998 and in print by the first quarter of 1999.

The bi-monthly Trade Forum newsletter continues to be an effective medium through which trade and investment programme activity reaches FICs and their private sectors. It also includes information on major issues of interest from the PIC, Tokyo and the SPTCs in Sydney and Auckland. The SPTC Sydney also publishes a newsletter specifically for circulation in Australia.

A 1998 update of the publication 'Foreign Investment Climate in Forum Island Countries' was published and issued through various channels, including the Forum Secretariat's Internet website on www.forumsec.org.fj. Information on FIC investment regimes has been published in APEC's Investment Guide and is also available on the APEC home page. This was made possible through the Division's participation in APEC Investment Expert Group Meetings.

Increasing Knowledge and Skills of Forum Island Governments and the Private Sectors in Product Identification and Export Market Development

Assistance to the private sector was provided through the Industries Development and Training Programme (IDTP), Marketing Support Fund (MSF) and Import Support Fund (ISF).

A trade and investment mission to Taiwan was organised in December 1997 for businessmen and officials from 13 FICs. The mission introduced participants to the Taiwanese business environment and facilitated contacts and development of business relationships.



Pacific Island business people on trade mission.

A workshop on Investment Facilitation and Promotion for larger island countries was held in Apia, Samoa to provide larger Forum Island Countries with transparent policies and strategies to attract foreign investment.

A Food Processing workshop was conducted in the Federated States of Micronesia to assist food processors to improve the quality and range of their products. The Secretariat also organised a National Workshop on Food Processing in Palau. A Tourism workshop in Vanuatu assisted entrepreneurs from five Forum Island Countries to enhance their marketing skills.



Food processing workshop

Continuing efforts to integrate the French territories into FIC trade and investment led to the Division staging a Trade Exhibition in Tahiti, in October 1997 and one in New Caledonia in June 1998. The trade fairs were a success and participating companies were able to secure orders and build up future contacts. Facilitating the participation of eleven FICs at the World EXPO in Lisbon, Portugal was a major task. The EXPO opened on 22 May and will close in September 1998.

Specific In Country Support in Export Development, Investment, Tourism and Trade through the Trade Offices

The SPTCs in Sydney and Auckland and the PIC in Tokyo assist exporters, importers and investors from FICs to develop their business potential in Australia, New Zealand and Japan. A joint review with Australia and New Zealand of the activities of the trade offices in Sydney and Auckland found that they carried out their work programmes efficiently and cost effectively. Recommendations to further enhance their effectiveness will be implemented during 1998. The following is a brief account of the accomplishments of the trade offices in 1997/98.

south pacific trade commission, auckland

Enquiries from the Pacific Islands and New Zealand grew steadily. Information provided covered areas such as market access queries, general market information and market research activities such as surveys and product trials. Other information requests dealt with sourcing of effective supplies, machinery and packaging.

Market information on New Zealand was disseminated by means of regular trade statistics, fortnightly produce price lists, commodity prices, radio broadcasts and a series of market reports on a range of forest, marine, horticultural and processed products.

Financial assistance was provided through the Commission's MSF for both multilateral and specific projects as well as various funding schemes available from the New Zealand Government and the Forum Secretariat. The MSF provides assistance for marketing and work experience visits to NZ by a number of private sector and government personnel. Other services included the design and printing of labels and brochures, scientific consultancies on food technology and processing, laboratory testing of

products and consumer taste trials.

The Commission continued to encourage NZ-Pacific Joint Ventures and assisted businessmen from the region to take part in trade and investment promotions in the Pacific. It also assisted with the Horticultural Workshop held in Vanuatu in May 1998.



south pacific trade commission, sydney

As well as its core business of handling enquiries on trade and investment opportunities in the region, the Commission organised participation by firms from FICs at various trade exhibitions covering books, fine food, textiles, song writing and in-store promotions.

Business development activities included arranging courses on furniture making, private sector exports, seafood handling, packaging and labelling, market reports and surveys and an industry extension programme. The Commission also initiated the preparation of a number of import folders which sets out all the necessary requirements for importing into Australia.

Under investment strategies, advice and assistance was provided to identify potential partners for joint venture projects. The Commission's Home Page on the Internet summarises foreign investment policies for the Pacific Islands, information about the South Pacific Forum, the work of Commission and the Trade and Investment Division, basic data on the countries, foreign investment policies, and a Notice Board with monthly updates. The SPTC cooperates closely

with agencies with an interest in investment such as the Foreign Investment Advisory Service and the South Pacific Project Facility (SPPF).

The Credit Check on Australian firms is an important service used over the years by Pacific Island Governments and provides them with information on individual Australian companies credibility and 'standing' in the business community.



pacific islands centre, tokyo



Forum Leaders and Heads of Delegation visit the Pacific Islands Centre in Tokyo

1997 was the Pacific Island Centre's first full year of operation, celebrating its anniversary in October 1997. For the anniversary, Forum Leaders, Ministers and Senior FIC officials visited the Centre and were hosted at a seminar/luncheon organised by the Pacific Islands Centre and representatives from the Japanese private sector.

A presentation was made on the development of Unique Bio Industries, a programme which is being assisted by the Government of Japan. As part of the Unique Bio Commodities Development project, the Pacific Islands Centre organised an Exportable Bio-Commodities Development Mission to Tonga, Samoa and Vanuatu in March 1998 for research on unique and useful plants such as natural orchids.

The Centre continued publicity work on products, investment opportunities and tourism resources in the FICs; providing services and advice on trade, investment and tourism; collecting and analysing data; conducting research and studies; and facilitating technical cooperation in key areas.

A publicity campaign continues through Japanese language publications, interviews in the media and contributions to major monthly magazines. The Centre is translating into Japanese the 'Foreign Investment Climate for Foreign Island Countries' publication in 1998. With the assis-

tance and cooperation of the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO), the Centre is organising a Trade Exhibition and an Investment Seminar for the FICs in November 1998.

Facilities at the Centre's information hall include publications on the South Pacific and a 40-inch monitor on which videos contributed by the Tourism Council of the South Pacific (TCSP) are shown to attract tourists. Since PIC faces the building's lobby, these video broadcasts are well received and attract several hundred viewers per day.



corporate services

Corporate Services' objective is to provide comprehensive, cost-effective human resources, financial, information and other support services to the Forum Secretariat and to maintain the Forum buildings and other assets to the agreed standard.

Best Practice Standards

Corporate services have been progressively reviewed to ensure they meet best practice standards. In 1997/98 this has included tendering for environmental services, insurance and architectural services, developing a Business Plan for the development of the Ryoichi Jinnai Conference Centre and revised delegations to devolve decision making for operational decisions.

Comprehensive Management Control

Management control and accountability have been enhanced with the introduction of a programme based Work Programme which includes performance indicators, identifies donors and groups projects with individual programme strategies. The format of monthly accounts has also been adjusted to reduce duplication and improve accessibility. The Secretariat received an unqualified audit report for 1997. A formal Corporate Plan for the Secretariat was endorsed by the Forum Officials Committee in September 1997 and forms the basis of this Annual Report.

Feedback

The Division is keen to maintain communication with all its clients. Key improvements in this

area were the establishment of the Secretariat website at www://forumsec.org.fj and the creation of an Information Technology Committee within the South Pacific Organisations Coordinating Committee. The range of pamphlets on the Secretariat and its services to Member Countries has also been expanded.

Commitment

Training has become an increasing priority to improve the quality and efficiency of services provided, with a range of professional and customer oriented courses conducted. The three year review of Secretariat terms and conditions was also completed and an adjustment approved by the FOC. The Division has also taken responsibility for servicing the FOC Remuneration Sub-Committee.

Maximising Returns

Completion of the Secretariat asset register in 1998 indicated that the region has an investment of over F\$12 million in the Secretariat's fixed assets. Maintaining and improving the value of these assets remains a high priority. Reviews of the Secretariat's investment, maintenance and banking arrangements, in addition to rendering for support services achieved significant cost reductions and improvements in service. While improvements in service are harder to quantify, cost reductions and improved profitability are expected to earn several hundred thousand dollars in 1997/98.



Forum Secretariat team wins the Aloha Trophy for the Best Team Spirit, 1997 Business House Outrigger

forum secretariat staff (june 1998)

Executive Division

Noel Levi	Secretary General	Papua New Guinea
Tony Slatyer	Deputy Secretary General	Australia
Iona Mitchell	Secretary to SG	Fiji
Losana Korovulavula	Personal Assistant to DSG	Fiji

Development and Economic Policy Division

Iosefa Maiava	Director	Samoa
Gayle Nelson	Gender Issues Adviser	Canada *
John Townsend	Economic Infrastructure Adviser	Australia
John Low	Resources Adviser	Australia
Fiu Williamc-Igara	Regional Coordination Adviser	Papua New Guinea
Stan Vandersyp	Economic Adviser	New Zealand
Amelia Kinahoi Siamomua	Development Cooperation Adviser	Tonga
Peni Sikivou	Economic Policy Officer	Fiji
Jone Navakamocea	Development Planning Officer	Fiji
Kenneth MacKay	Field Program Coordinator	Canada *
Malcolm Ponton	Senior Technical Assistant	United Kingdom *
George Beck	Technical Assistant	Solomon Islands *
Margaret Wong	Divisional Assistant (Secretarial)	Fiji
Melania Tunidau	Divisional Assistant (Administration)	Fiji
Taivei Kwan	Divisional Assistant (EC)	Fiji *

Political and International Affairs Division

Makurita Baaro	Director	Kiribati
Andie Fong Toy	International Legal Adviser	New Zealand
Monique Fienberg	International Issues Adviser	Australia
Ulafala Aiavao	Media Adviser	Samoa
Bernard Bata'anisia	Political Issues Officer	Solomon Islands
Pius Saun	Law Enforcement Liaison Officer	Papua New Guinea
Moira Reiher	Divisional Assistant (Secretarial)	Fiji
Unaisi Veikoso	Divisional Assistant/Publications	Fiji

Trade & Investment Division

Jaindra Kumar	Director	Fiji
Roman Grynberg	Multilateral Trade Policy Adviser	Australia *
Michael Mullins	Small & Medium Enterprise Adviser	Canada *
Alan Bartmanovich	Petroleum Adviser	Australia
Edgar Cocker	Project Officer (Marketing)	Tonga
Rima Ravusiro	Project Officer (Trade Development)	Papua New Guinea
Lalit Kumar	Project Officer (Industry & Investment)	Australia
Maatia Toafa	Project Officer (Import Management)	Tuvalu
Glynis Miller	Trade Commission Liaison Officer	Fiji
Adi Tikomaimaleya	Divisional Assistant (Secretarial)	Fiji
Lillian Mitchell	Divisional Assistant (Administration)	Fiji

South Pacific Trade Commission, Auckland, New Zealand

Parmesh Chand	Trade Commissioner	Fiji
Angela Blair	Marketing Officer	New Zealand
Catherine George	Marketing Officer	New Zealand
James McGuckin	Marketing Officer	New Zealand
Anne Murphy	Secretary	New Zealand

South Pacific Trade Commission, Sydney, Australia

Aievu Tauvasa	Trade Commissioner Designate	Papua New Guinea
Nada Widdowson	Administration & Projects Manager	Australia
Marlene Cadden	Secretary/Executive Assistant	Australia
Matthew Lee	Marketing Officer	Australia
Dilip Mahanty	Marketing Officer	Australia

* These staff are contracted directly by donors. Their salaries are not included in the Secretariat budget.

