



PIFS GVA/06-2020

To : Forum Island Countries (FICs)
Date : 03 March 2020
From : Mere FALEMAKA, PIF Permanent Delegation to the United Nations,
World Trade Organization, and Other International Organizations in Geneva
Subject: PIF-Geneva Update 6/2019

Please find attached, for your records, an update on Trade Negotiations and Aid-for-Trade activities undertaken by the Pacific Islands Forum – Geneva Office (PIF-Geneva) in November-December 2019.

2. For further clarifications or follow-up on Trade Negotiations, please contact me on mere.falemaka@pifs-geneva.ch
3. For further clarifications or follow-up on Aid-for-Trade, please contact Mr. Andrea Giacomelli, Trade Policy and Aid-for-Trade Adviser on andrea.giacomelli@pifs-geneva.ch
4. For further clarifications or follow-up on PTI Europe, please contact Ms. Robyn Ekstrom, Trade Promotion Adviser on robyn.ekstrom@pifs-geneva.ch

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World Trade Organization, and Other International Organizations in Geneva**

UPDATE 6/2019 (NOVEMBER-DECEMBER 2019)

1. BACKGROUND

The Pacific Islands Forum Geneva Office (PIF Geneva) comprises two sections: Trade Negotiations and Aid-for-Trade (Aft). The Trade Negotiations section provides policy and technical advice on multilateral trade issues to Forum Islands Countries (FICs) which are members of the World Trade Organization (WTO), and coordinates their participation in multilateral negotiations. The Aft Section assists FICs, individually and collectively, to make a better use of Aft opportunities provided by Geneva and Europe-based organisations.

In addition, PIF Geneva hosts the Europe desk of Pacific Trade Invest (PTI Europe). The desk focuses on the development and promotion of Pacific Island exports across international markets in Europe and the United Kingdom.

2. REPRESENTATION

In November, Ambassador Falemaka presented the Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative at the [WTO TBT Committee](#) and represented the Pacific at an Ambassadors' Retreat on Fisheries Subsidies in Bogis-Bossey to try to advance fisheries subsidies negotiations.

In December, the Office facilitated agreement between PIFS and UNCTAD to hold a [joint event](#) on 30 April 2020 in Geneva, as part of the global [e-Commerce Week 2020](#).

3. TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

The Fisheries Subsidies negotiations dominated the work of WTO Members in November and December as Members tried to fulfil the 2017 Eleventh Ministerial Conference mandate to conclude the negotiations in December 2019. Despite the new proposals tabled, significant differences on approaches, and technical issues remain. The year closed with three Facilitators' reports and texts on IUU fishing, overfished stocks, overcapacity and overfishing, with even less progress in the cross-cutting issues - transparency, special and differential treatment, legal structure, dispute settlement, institutional issues, scope and definitions. Members are now working hard to conclude the Fisheries Subsidies Agreement by the WTO Twelfth Ministerial Conference ([MC12](#)) in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan from 8-11 June 2020. Members agreed to a work program comprising six negotiating clusters between January and May 2020 to try to advance the negotiations.

On the other multilateral negotiations, Agriculture was also active, as Members explored what could be delivered at MC12. Discussions focused mainly on domestic support, market access, cotton, public stockholding and special safeguard mechanism. In November the discussions on development were also revived, with proposals aimed at strengthening and making more effective some Special and Differential (S&D) provisions in current WTO rules to support developing countries' diversification and industrialization efforts.

Apart from the multilateral negotiations, the plurilateral discussions by like-minded countries also increased in momentum on the Joint Statement Initiatives ([JSI](#)) relating to E-commerce, Investment Facilitation, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs), and Domestic Regulation in Services Trade. The latter is by far the most advanced, with a draft text being refined as a potential deliverable for MC12. An increasing number of countries are also JSI on Investment Facilitation.

During this period the PIF Geneva Office issued five Circulars on issues under negotiations as well as reports of key WTO meetings, and delivered two Statements at WTO meetings. It provided a number of short technical briefs via email, and face-to-face technical briefs, particularly on Fisheries Subsidies, to Geneva-based Missions and provided to Pacific Officials who attended the Geneva Week in December.

The Office continued to work closely with the Adman Smith International, a consulting firm engaged by the PIFS and funded by UK's [TAF2](#) program, to provide the required technical reports to Pacific WTO Members on the Fisheries, Agriculture, JSI/new issues, and other areas that are currently being

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discussed in the WTO. The office also coordinated the participation of capital-based officials, particularly Fisheries Officials from Tonga and Fiji, to the Fisheries Clusters meeting from 9-12 December in Geneva.

4. AID-FOR-TRADE

4.1 Projects

3.1.1 Implemented

Progress was recorded with the development an e-Commerce Readiness Assessment for Tonga. A second draft was submitted and reviewed, with finalisation expected in January 2020.

PIF Geneva coordinated assistance by the consultants supporting the Pacific Group through the Trade Advocacy Fund ([TAF](#)). Under output 2 (coordination), a new Geneva Coordinator, Kasek Galgal, from PNG, was recruited to be based full-time in the PIFS Geneva Office, and will remain until September 2020. Under Output 3 (technical advice), fisheries subsidies support continued through two cluster meetings in November and December, which involved increasing bilateral engagement. Written analysis was provided on Argentina's submission on standards of review for WTO panels, the overfishing facilitator's legal text, and the relationship between overcapacity and overfishing proposals. Updates were also provided on investment facilitation for development and e-commerce.

4.1.2 Completed/Secured

None.

4.1.3 Ongoing

In line with the outcomes of [the Regional Quality Infrastructure \(QI\) workshop](#) held in Nadi, Fiji, in September 2019, a Concept Note for Phase II of the Pacific Quality Infrastructure Initiative (PQII), including a medium-term strategy, was finalised and submitted to Forum Islands Countries for consideration. The Concept Note was used to inform work on an Enhanced Integrated Framework ([EIF](#)) Tier 2 project proposal on QI, whose first draft was submitted to the EIF Secretariat in December 2019.

4.2. Apply! Demand-driven Aid-for-Trade facilities accepting applications

(1) [Standards Trade and Development Facility](#) (2) [Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation](#) (3) [Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility](#) (4) **NEW!** [ACP EU Culture – Call for Proposals Supporting the Cultural and Creative Sectors in ACP Countries](#)

4.3 Did you know? Aid-for-Trade leveraged in 2019

In 2018 PIF Geneva Office has supported FICs to secure Aid-for-Trade projects worth USD 845,750 – about AUD 1.3 million. A disaggregation of this amount by donor partner is provided below.

ORGANISATION	AID-FOR-TRADE (USD)
UK Trade Advocacy Fund 2	250,000
German Ministry of Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ)	218,000
Enhanced Integrated Framework	98,000
EU TradeCoM II Program	73,000
World Trade Organisation	72,750
Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation	70,000
World Bank Group	57,000
Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)	7,000
TOTAL	845,750

5. PTI EUROPE

5.1 Projects

5.1.1 Implemented

PTI Europe activities finalised in this period include the follow-up and facilitation of contact conversion and linkages obtained by exhibitors at WorldFood Moscow 2019 and preparation for the Pacific trade booth at FoodExpo Greece in March 2020.

The office disseminated eight (8) market intelligence reports to 192 FIC private and public sector recipients in over 127 FIC organisations, businesses and government agencies.

5.1.2 Completed/Secured

During this period, PTI Europe clients reported AUD 518,807.00 in new sales directly attributable to the work of PTI Europe.

5.1.3 Ongoing

Specific product sourcing, profiling and introductions are ongoing to develop links between Pacific producers and exporters and European clients and technical assistance is being provided to Geneva based Multilateral Organisations for project and in-country mission development in 2020.

5.2 Annual Overview 2019

Data capture via PTI Customer Relation Management Statistical Report, updated 22.01.20, reveals the following achievement for 2019

- News Sales: AUD 1,246,702
- Verified Services Provided: 1190
- Number of export deals: 21
- Services to women owned businesses: 64