



PIFS GVA/1-2020

To : Forum Island Countries (FICs)
Date : 06 January 2020
From : Mere FALEMAKA, PIF Permanent Delegation to the United Nations,
World Trade Organization, and Other International Organizations in Geneva
Subject: PIF-Geneva Update 5/2019

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 September-October 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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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

The Office facilitated the visit of PIFS' Deputy Secretary General, [Ms Cristelle Pratt](#), to Geneva for the purpose of speaking at the [UN Trade Forum on SDG and Climate Change](#), and representing regional interests at high-level meetings with the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD](#)), the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights ([OHCHR](#)), the World Trade Organization ([WTO](#)), and the Swiss Government.

Ambassador Falemaka presented regional perspectives at a panel discussion on Oceans Plastic Pollution organised by the Graduate Institute of Geneva and UN Environment (UNEP) on the 9 October.

During this period, the Office extended extensive support to the consultancy exercise tasked to assess the PIF's international footprint and the opportunities to strengthen this, including in Geneva. Findings of the report were presented at the Forum Officials Committee meeting.

Progress was recorded on the preparation of a Memorandum of Understanding between the PIFS and the UNCTAD to improve delivery of trade-related assistance to the region.

3. TRADE NEGOTIATIONS

The Fisheries Subsidies Negotiations dominated the work of WTO Members in September and October, compared to other areas of WTO negotiations. Although a few new proposals were tabled very little substantive progress was made due to the absence of a Chair. Despite the slow progress Members are still committed to conclude an Agreement on fisheries subsidies by the WTO Twelfth Ministerial Conference (MC12).

On the core [Doha issues](#), such as Agriculture, non-Agriculture Market Access (NAMA) and Services, the only active discussion was in the Agriculture negotiations to identify possible outcomes for MC12, to be held in Nur Sultan, Kazakhstan from 8-11 June 2020.

The proponents of the Joint Statement Initiatives ([JSI](#)) on E-commerce, Investment Facilitation for Development, Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise (MSMEs), and Domestic Regulation in Services Trade continued to intensify discussions. These initiatives are being pursued by like-minded Members in plurilateral process in parallel with the multilateral process. The general aim of the proponents was to advance substantive work on the issues and to attract new WTO Members into joining these initiatives. The Joint Initiative on E-Commerce, and Joint Initiative on Investment Facilitation for Development attracted new Members including a few ACP members. The initiative on Domestic Regulation in Services is the most advanced, with a draft text that forms the basis of the current work and plans to adopt this at MC12.

During this period the PIF Geneva Office issued six Circulars on meetings relating to the issues being negotiated and discussed, and two Statements at the Informal Trade Negotiations Committee and the General Council Meeting. The Office provided a number of short technical briefs through emails and face-to-face technical briefs, particularly on Fisheries Subsidies to the Geneva-based Missions.

UPDATE 5/2019 (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2019)

The PIF Geneva Office continues to work closely with the Adman Smith International, a consulting firm, engaged by the PIFS, to provide necessary technical reports to Pacific WTO Members on the Fisheries, Agriculture, JSI/new issues and other areas that are currently being discussed in the WTO. The office also coordinated the participation of capital-based officials, particularly Fisheries Officials from Papua New Guinea and Tonga to attend the Fisheries Clusters meeting from 7-11 October 2019 in Geneva.

4. AID-FOR-TRADE

4.1 Projects

3.1.1 Implemented

The Office continued managing the project to develop an e-Commerce Readiness Assessment for Tonga. A first draft was submitted in October 2019 – finalisation is expected by December 2019.

PIF Geneva coordinated assistance by the consultants supporting the Pacific Group through the Trade Advocacy Fund ([TAF](#)). Under output 1 (Geneva Week support), a written briefing was provided in October to Geneva Week participants covering fisheries subsidies, WTO reform, agriculture, e-commerce and services. Under output 2 (coordination), the Pacific Group held their fifth quarterly strategy meeting in mid-October. Under output 3 (technical advice), fisheries subsidies support continued through two cluster meetings in September and October, including collaborative technical work with officials visiting from capitals, which has fed in to ACP positions. Technical briefs were also provided on tourism and environmental services, domestic regulation and the LDC services waiver.

The first ever [Pacific Quality Infrastructure \(QI\) workshop](#) was held in Fiji from 2-6 September 2019. The workshop, co-organised by PIF Geneva, delivered on the following objectives: establishment of a network of 'regional champions' and partner agencies supporting the Pacific QI initiative; presentation of capacity-building material; presentation of a survey on the state-of-play of Pacific QI; brainstorming on key regional challenges/solutions related to QI; and approval of a Regional Quality Statement. The workshop tasked the PIFS to develop a QI Concept Note to inform Phase II of the Pacific QI Initiative. Work on the Concept Note commenced in September 2019.

4.1.2 Completed/Secured

The Office leveraged USD 470,000 during this period. This includes:

- a USD 220,000 technical assistance package from the Physikalisch-Technische Bundesanstalt ([PTB](#)) to support implementation of the Pacific QI Initiative
- a USD 250,000 technical assistance package from the Trade Advocacy Fund ([TAF](#)) to support multilateral trade negotiations in Geneva, including on Fishery Subsidies, Development, Agriculture, and to keep abreast of new topics such as e-Commerce. TAF assistance will also include placement of a regional trade expert at the PIF Geneva Office for a 10-month period

4.1.3 Ongoing

Work commenced on an Enhanced Integrated Framework ([EIF](#)) Tier 2 project proposal on Quality Infrastructure (QI), as informed by the conclusions of the Pacific QI Workshop.

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

(1) [Trade Advocacy Fund II](#) (2) [Standards Trade and Development Facility](#) (3) [Global Alliance for Trade Facilitation](#) (4) [Trade Facilitation Agreement Facility](#)

5. PTI EUROPE

5.1 Projects

5.1.1 Implemented

UPDATE 5/2019 (SEPTEMBER-OCTOBER 2019)

PTI Europe activities finalised in this period include the management and successful delivery of the inaugural PTI Europe Pacific Islands Trade mini-pavilion booth at [WorldFood Moscow 2019](#) (September 24 to 27) at Crocus Exhibition Centre. Exhibitors represented on the stand included seven FIC export companies and food and beverage brands.

Participation at the event connected Pacific SME exporters with key food and drink buyers, including retail representatives from leading supermarket chains, wholesalers, HoReCa sector members, and food manufacturers, yielding over 300 verified business leads from Russia, Central and Eastern European countries, North Africa and the Middle East as well as China and India.

The office disseminated eight (8) market intelligence reports to 176 FIC private and public sector recipients.

5.1.2 Completed/Secured

During this period, PTI Europe clients reported AUD 56,000 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.