



RECOMMENDATIONS TO AGRICULTURE MINISTERS

Presentation to the Pacific Agriculture Ministers Meeting, 20th October 2017, Iririki Hotel, Port Vila Vanuatu

Agriculture and Tourism are two critical industries for most Pacific economies, and strengthening linkages between the two will provide new income generation and growth opportunities for value chain actors serving the broader tourism market. Linkages between agriculture and tourism increase opportunities for domestic agriculture earnings, help to develop new lucrative markets and drive product development and diversification – thus promoting sustainable economic growth. Additionally, they enable unique visitor attractions and distinctive tourism destination brands to be generated through the creative use and marketing of local products and production techniques.

High quality food is critical for hotels, lodges and resorts, and sourcing a bigger proportion of it from local producers and processors can generate substantial gains and promote greater investment in local production. The challenges of shifting food sourcing to local suppliers need to be addressed in a way that meets commercial expectations, customer and consumer preferences, and ensures compliance with food and safety requirements.

Equally critical are the policy frameworks which promote linkages between the agriculture, tourism and trade sectors. The trade policy environment should be more favourable to the private sector and investors, while supporting local entrepreneurs and SMEs through appropriate measures that address import substitution, notably in the form of tariff and non-tariff barriers.

Since 2014, CTA, PIPSO and key partners in the Pacific region have been highlighting the potential of tourism markets for local farmers and agricultural value chain actors.

A special focus was put on strengthening agritourism at the [1st Pacific Week of Agriculture](#) organised by Vanuatu this week. In this context, PIPSO, SPTO, CTA, IFAD and other partners collaborated to share lessons and take stock of progress made by selected countries on agritourism policy development. They also lent support for a Chef's training session to promote food tourism in the Pacific region, encourage Pacific cuisine branding, and enhance chef's skills in sourcing locally.

Arising from the lessons shared at the 1st Pacific Week of Agriculture, and the progress made to date, a call is made to Pacific Ministers of Agriculture to support the following developments highlighted by various Pacific countries;

1. Enhance harmonisation of agriculture, trade and tourism policies at all levels and advance development of agritourism policies.
2. Support coastal fisheries communities. Fisheries and seafood are key segments, both in fresh and processed form, for the tourism industry, and employ many women. Development and capacity building should be provided to these sectors.
3. Develop a regional strategy for branding the region, highlighting the richness and variety of culture, nature and food experiences, in response to competition and advancements in the global tourism market.
4. Upscale chefs' trainings to address local sourcing and promotion of Pacific cuisine at the regional level, help reduce the food import bill, and generate local employment.
5. Develop new markets, such as Spa and Wellness, and promote stronger linkages with existing niche offerings such as Sports and Adventure, which will support the local food industry (coconut, fetau, essentials oils) and form part of national diversification strategies.
6. Strengthen the capacities of value chain actors in accessing technology, capital and business support services as a priority at national and regional level.
7. Expand capacity development programmes for agriculture and tourism sectors on branding, product labelling and marketing, to address specific tourism industry segments (resorts, airlines, cruises) across the region, learning from successes at national level.
8. Promote sound PPPs and investments into technology (processing facilities, transport and infrastructure development) with a regional dimension, complemented by regional trade facilitation measures.
9. Accelerate trainings on food safety standards and certification for farmers and processors, including training of food safety inspectors whose numbers are currently very limited. There will be a comparative advantage in doing this regionally. Regional expansion of business fairs targeting the tourism market is also central to enhancing opportunities for the private sector.
10. Food tourism is a major opportunity to advance agriculture, tourism and trade sectors in the Pacific towards the following common objectives: (i) increased numbers of new and regular visitors and economic development of the region; (ii) increased income and revenues for value chain actors, especially smallholders and rural communities; (iii) promotion of quality local fresh and processed products from agriculture and fisheries resources; (iv) branding of the region as a food destination.