



**AGRIBUSINESS FORUM:
LINKING THE AGRIFOOD SECTOR TO THE TOURISM-RELATED MARKETS**

**Organised by CTA, PIPSO and SPC
Hotel Sofitel Denarau Island, Fiji, 1-3 July 2015**

This Forum is linked to the [Brussels Briefings](#) organized by CTA, the European Commission, the ACP Group and Concord on key issues related to ARD in ACP countries. It will also bring some experiences from the Caribbean through the [Intra ACP Agricultural Policy Programme](#).

Opening remarks

**Chris Addison, Senior Expert in Knowledge Management
Regional Coordinator for the Pacific region, CTA**

Honourable Inia Seruiratu, Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development & National Disaster Management,

Dear Ambassador Roy Mickey Joy, Chairman of the ACP Committee of Ambassadors and Ambassador of Vanuatu to the EU

Dear co-organisers:

Mr Inoke Ratukalou, Director of the Land Resources Division, SPC

Mr Renato Mele, Head of Operations, Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific

Mr Klaus Stunzner, Chairman of PIPSO,

On behalf of CTA and all of you, let me thank through the Honourable Minister the Government of Fiji for hosting this Agribusiness Forum as part of the Pacific Agritourism Week. We are delighted to be in this beautiful and hospitable part of the world.

While highly diversified, Pacific Island Countries (PICs) share common challenges that impede their efforts to achieve balanced economic growth and sustainable food

security. Major constraints comprise small size, geographic dispersion, vulnerability to natural hazards and vulnerability to external economic conditions. The Pacific Region is facing many region-wide challenges, including the impact of climate change, a pressing need to generate livelihoods and populations that are more and more consuming imported, highly refined foods, accompanied by decreased local food production and consumption.

We believe that the two productive sectors agriculture and tourism should help create economic opportunities; build resilience in rural communities; and improve sustainable development in both sectors. We have started this work successfully a 5 years ago with IICA and other partners in the Caribbean. The Pacific islands receive near to 2 million tourists¹ a year with a growth rate of 5 to 6%. and the region saw the opening of new hotels and hotel facilities, and expansion of port facilities and airport infrastructure, to name a few developments.

In spite of the fact that agriculture remains for most countries in the region the main source of livelihood for the majority of the population, its contribution to economic value added has generally declined over the last decade², whereas the tourism sector has seen significant growth. It has become the “life blood” for several of the small island fragile economies which import 60 to 80% of their food.

It is important to ensure that interactions between tourism and agriculture result in synergies which are mutually reinforcing and not in competition for key productive resources.

We need to strengthen the linkages between tourism and agriculture in terms of demand, supply, production, as well as marketing of food and beverages, cosmetics, flowers and ornamentals, essential oils etc,. To do so various actions should be supported by all of us: (i) support and invest in agriculture and locally produced food as way to reduce the import bill and improve nutrition, especially in quality food such as organic; (ii) strengthen the farmers organisations and local producers efforts to find competitive and profitable markets in the tourism industry and meet the demand for volume, quality, regularity of supply and safety requirements; (iii) sensitise

¹ Numbers per quarter up to 2014. <http://spto.org/resources/rtrc>

² According to FAO statistics, the agriculture sector's contribution to GDP in PICTs fell from 16.3 per cent to 11.1 per cent in 2013.

tourism operators of the type and the quantity of locally grown produce and the value of sourcing locally and when fresh products in demand are not available all the year around, there are proven ways to mix local and imported product through work with intermediaries as the tourism market can be very demanding on purchase requirements; (iv) sensitise the chefs of resorts and hotels to use local product and very importantly to promote local and traditional cuisine amongst tourists which means also to adapt it to international standards; (v) national policy frameworks for agriculture and tourism need to recognize the need for positive linkages and appropriate institutions need to be in place to foster them.

Furthermore, the exposure of tourists to specific local products could also help export market penetration; when going back home tourists help build a domestic demand. Examples for market penetration include beef from Vanuatu; macademia nuts from Hawaii, red papaya from Fiji, black pearls from Cook Islands.

The varied and rich programme we have over the coming three days will focus on sharing experiences and successes in strengthening links between agriculture, fisheries and tourism industries but also to generate ideas for regional projects on sustainable sourcing by the tourism industry from local value chain actors and identify support needed to strengthen relations between chain actors and tourism industry in the Pacific. In that context we do hope to contribute to the EU and ACP private sector strategy to the agrifood sector in the region and I thank again Ambassador Joy and Mr Mele for their time and support.

I am very glad to participate in this 1st Pacific Agribusiness Forum, which is an annual initiative launched at the UN SIDS Conference held in Samoa in September 2014 by CTA and the Pacific Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO). We are very happy to organise the first 2015 edition with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) within the Agritourism Week.

The CTA supports the Forum through various of its programmes, the very popular Briefings we organize for 8 years every two months in Brussels with the EU and the ACP Group, as well as the Intra-ACP Policy Agricultural programme which has facilitated the participation of our colleagues from the Caribbean and the Indian Ocean to share their experiences. The Caribbean region which receives more than 25 million visitors a year without counting the cruises has certainly a lot to share with their Pacific counterparts as Seychelles do in a very select type of tourism.

Our next actions in support of SMEs and private sector in the region with all the partners who want to join us are :

- Bringing together key information and data on Agribusiness and Tourism sector and actors (online and through market studies and profiling)
- Supporting a platform Chefs for Development where best successes will be promoted
- Launching some pilots with financial institutions
- Promoting exchange of best practices across ACP SIDS (we will have the second Agribusiness Forum in the Caribbean next autumn).

So thank you again to the co-organisers and to all of you for being here.

I wish you all very rich debates and a very good time in Fiji.