



Changing roles and challenges of Pacific Women in Natural Resource use and management: an analysis of the Fisheries sector in Fiji

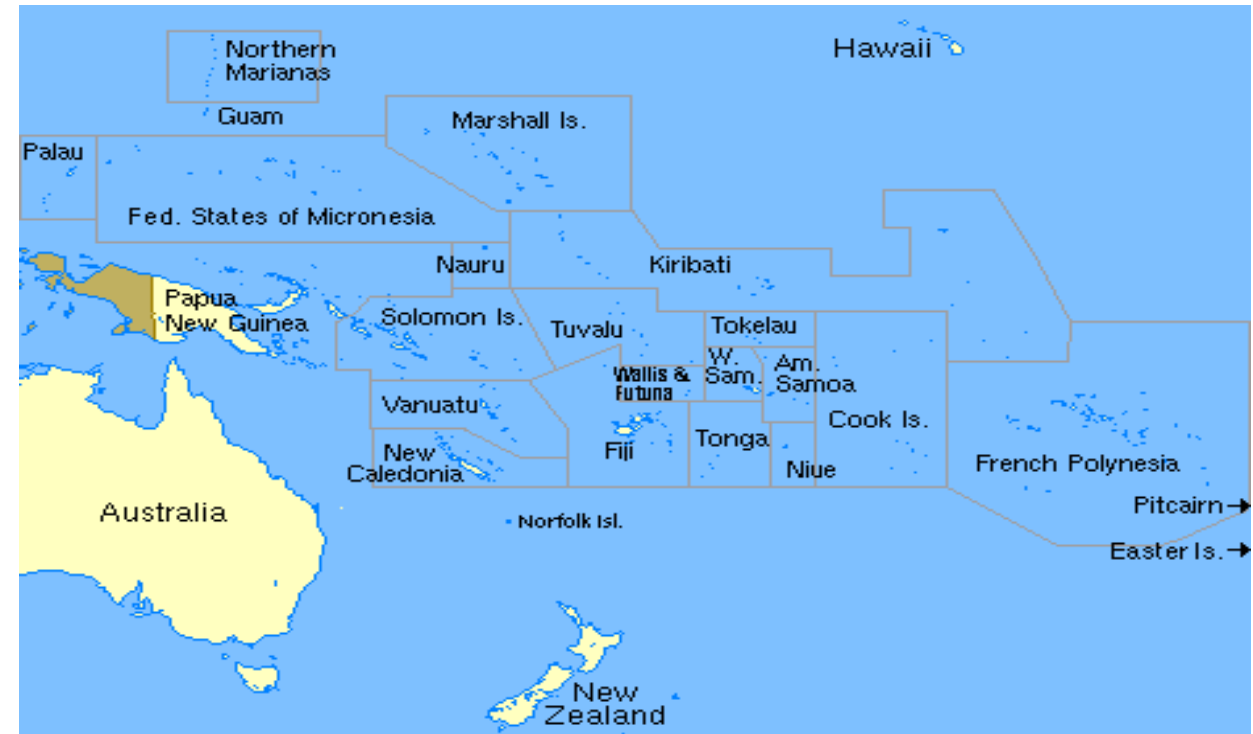
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Ms. Marama Tuivuna
Women in Fisheries Network – Fiji



Introduction

- 22 Pacific Isl. countries & territories (~800,000 km²) Total fisheries & aquaculture production: ~1,330,345 tons + 305,336 pieces
- Subsistence fishery dominates coastal fishery
- Offshore foreign-based vessels dominate offshore fishery (tuna)
- Tuna fishery from foreign-based vessels small islands + Solomon Isl.
- Local-based tuna fishery – Marshall Isl., Fiji
- Aquaculture – New Caledonia
- Non-tuna - Fiji

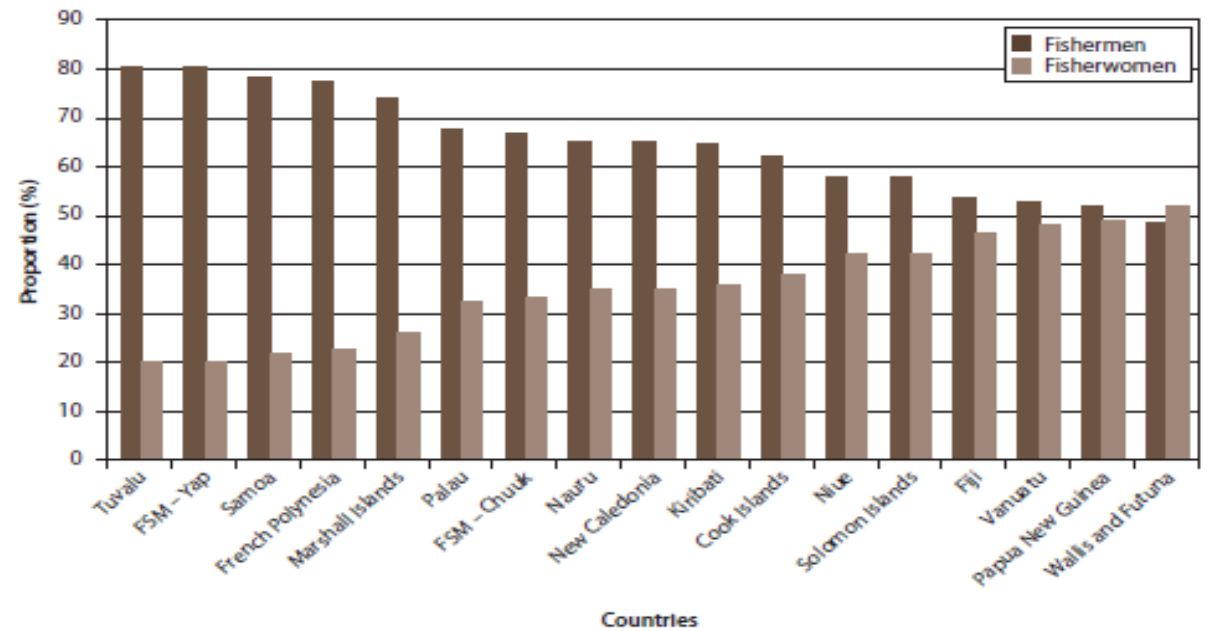


Pattern of decreasing national catches from west to east



Introduction

- Predominance of men in fishing
- Men target finfish
- Women target invertebrates (shellfish, sea cucumber, octopus, crabs, prawns, seaweed)
- Women fish in coastal areas for consumption & domestic markets
- Lack of enumeration & documentation of women's fishing activities



Amos, M. 2014. SPC Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin #25





Introduction

Aim: Reflect on role and contribution of women to fisheries in Fiji. Discuss participation of women in fisheries, changing dynamics and gaps & constraints faced by women





Women in Fisheries Network - Fiji

- Women in Fisheries Network (WiFN-Fiji): non-profit organization with a vision to assist & promote women and men in Fiji & support for the Pacific by: strengthen the involvement & improve the condition of women in the fisheries sector
- Established in early 90's, became defunct in 2004 and revived in 2016
- Governance: 2013 Network Constitution, 2016 Financial and Human Resource Policies
- Organization Structure: Board of Trustees, Executive Board, Secretariat, 88 Members
- WiFN-Fiji 2016 – 2020 Strategic Plan.
 - **Priority Area 1:** Improve livelihoods and food security opportunities for women in fisheries
 - **Priority Area 2:** Recognized as a research hub, clearing-house of information and repository for issues related to women in fisheries
 - **Priority Area 3:** Advocate for improved policy and policy implementation for greater gender equality in all aspects of fisheries
 - **Priority Area 4:** Build a strong network and responsive organisational base that utilizes the diverse knowledge, skills and experiences of its members



Pacific Region Dimensions and the Role of WiFN-Fiji

- Pacific Leaders Vision
- Pacific is 98 % Ocean, 15% world's EEZ and Fish Primary Source of dietary protein
- Framework for the Pacific Oceanscape (FPO)
- SDG 14 and involvement of Pacific Island Countries
- Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development
- WiFN-Fiji is advocating and promoting Women's contribution is recognized
- WiFN-Fiji Voluntary commitment – UN Oceans Conference, 2017
- Network involvement in the Fiji National Fisheries Policy



Policy and Legal Mechanisms

- Fiji National Gender policy launched in February 2014
 - Mission: Gender equity & equality, social justice & sustainable development
 - Strategy: Govt is working on gender mainstreaming into sectors
 - Legal framework – women fishers issues can be addressed
 - Impact on women in fisheries
- The 2015 Green Growth Framework for Fiji
- The Sustainable Development Goals; Goal 1. No Poverty, Goal 2. Zero Hunger, Goal 3. Good Health and Well-Being, Goal 5. Gender Equality, Goal 6. Clean Water and Sanitation, Goal 8. Decent Work and Economic Growth, Goal 10. Reduced Inequalities, Goal 11. Sustainable Cities and Communities, Goal 12. Responsible Consumption and Production, Goal 13. Climate Action, Goal 14. Life below water.
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW)



Women in Fisheries in Fiji

- Women's fishing activities continue to support subsistence & economic livelihoods (Veitayaki 2005; Tuara 2006; Fay-Sauni 2008, Verebalavu 2009)
- Women mostly involved in processing (canneries)
- According to Vereivalu (2009) women involved in coastal fisheries fall into 3 categories:
 1. Full-time:
 - Producers; sellers
 - Producers; buyers; sellers
 - Buyers; sellers
 2. Seasonal
 3. Casual (on need to basis)



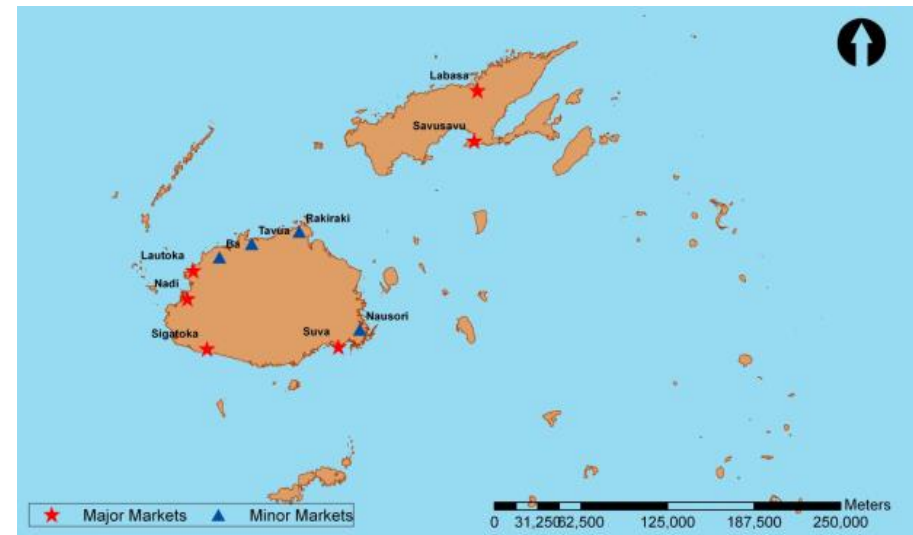


Issues	Approach to Address Issue
<p>Women dominate Subsistence fisheries (local and market sales) Fishing still Men's domain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Empowering women in fisheries through training and capacity building
<p>Lack of Information</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difficult to quantify Women's contribution • No methodology to value Women's contribution to Food Security 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - National Stocktake of the Institutional and Enabling Mechanisms that support Gender in Fisheries in Fiji https://womeninfisheriesfiji.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/WiFN-FJ-National-Stocktake-Report_2018-1.pdf - 2019 – 2020; Develop National Baseline for Women in Fisheries in Fiji
<p>Overexploitation (Gillet 2014, Vunisea 2014) Impact of loss of fishing ground – coastal development or climate change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally unskilled, less promotion (processing canneries) • Lack of education & training and cultural beliefs limits participation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Community-based management - FLMMA (Fiji Locally Managed Marine Area Network) - Advocacy and Capacity Building <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Gender Sensitisation Training - Post Harvesting Training - Financial Management Training
<p>Value Chain</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Need to carry out more work on value chain in the fisheries sector



Changing Dynamics

- Increased focus on selling & distributing seafood at local markets
- Wide range of products (dried, smoked, cooked)
- Women spend more time at local markets away from family – social impacts





Changing Dynamics





Changing dynamics

Key issues:

- Women sell wide range of seafood at local markets – underpricing of resources
- Middle-sellers dictate wholesale prices & drive market demand (sea cucumber, *Trochus*)
- Women use traditional & social networks – harvest & distribution
- Women contribute significantly to household & community finances (Vereivalu, 2009)
- Most have learnt basic financial management on own





Gaps & barriers to women's full participation in fisheries



- Women's fishing activities considered unpaid work; unspecialized compared to men
- Lack of data on women involved in small-scale fisheries as fishing recorded by household – understanding gender roles
- Need to link to policy-level discussion to include women's concerns; women lack understanding of legal mechanisms
- Women's fishing undervalued – compensation



Gaps & barriers to women's full participation in fisheries

- Excluding women from decision-making
unsustainable development activities impact on environment
- Burdened by long hours extended work – fishing, market, housework, childcare
- Socio-economic challenges related to tuna industry
- Lack of access to credit, lack of education & training in business management and post-harvest handling



Protecting the Ocean

- Severe Pollution of Fishing ground
- Integrated Waste Management
- Cooperate Social Responsibility to Protect our Ocean
- Women play an important role and contribute largely to fisheries development & management in Fiji but this is unrecognized, undervalued and unappreciated
- Need for Coherent Economic, Social and Environment Collaboration
- WiFN-Fiji looking to engage & form partnerships to develop our vision and make a difference to lives of women in fisheries sector in Fiji & Pacific

Thank You
Website: womeninfisheriesfiji.org

