

Evaluating the impacts of improving postharvest processing of sea cucumbers in the western Pacific region



Key details

Location

Fiji, Kiribati, Tonga

Duration

Start Jun 2013

End Nov 2017

Budget

AUD 1,244,605

Commissioned organisation

Southern Cross University

Partners

James Cook University; Ministry of Agriculture and Food; Forests and Fisheries; Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources Development; Partners in Community Development Fiji; Secretariat of the Pacific Community; University of Wollongong

Project Leader

Steve Purcell - Southern Cross University

Program

Fisheries

Project code

FIS/2010/096

exports from Pacific island countries; the second most valuable marine export from the region after tuna. Wild harvests provide income to around 300,000 small-scale fishers in the western Pacific, but returns to fishers are less than optimal, largely due to poor knowledge of proper post-harvest handling and processing methods.

The research assessed which processing methods are adoptable and produce better products and higher market prices. It also investigated which community types gained most from information and training. Impact testing determined whether the support resulted in fishers spending more time value-adding to their wild captures and less time fishing, keeping the industry sustainable.

The main outputs were training workshops for fisheries officers and village fishers in postharvest processing, and a manual and training DVD on processing methods (in the local languages). A quantitative analysis of economic and livelihood impacts also helps inform future investments.



Overview

This project aimed to improve the income of fishers in Kiribati, Tonga and Fiji through improving the quality of post-harvest processing.

Sea cucumbers are worth \$20-50 million/year in