

## ASSISTING PACIFIC COUNTRIES TO IMPLEMENT THE WHO FCTC

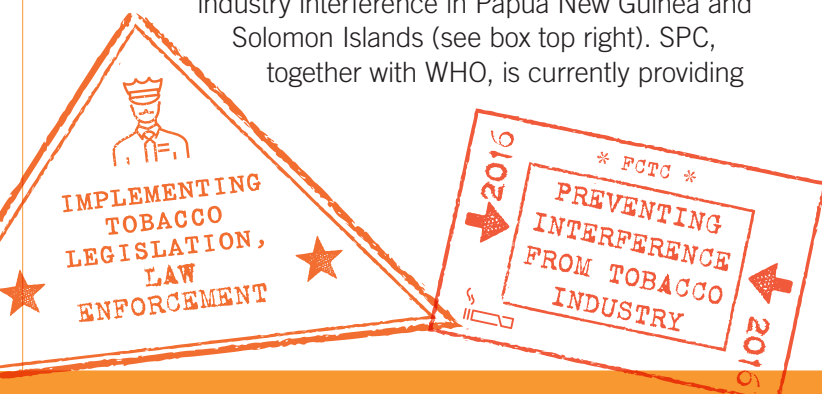
### About SPC

The Pacific Community (SPC) is an international development organization owned and governed by its 26 country and territory members. As the principal scientific and technical organization in the Pacific region, proudly supporting development since 1947, SPC works across more than 25 areas including fisheries science, public health surveillance, geoscience, and conservation of plant genetic resources for food and agriculture. Its 600 staff are located across Pacific Islands countries and territories (PICTs) including New Caledonia (Headquarters), Fiji (Suva Regional Office), Federated States of Micronesia (Micronesia Regional Office), Vanuatu (Melanesian Regional Office) and Solomon Islands (Country Office).

### In what ways is SPC involved in activity to implement the WHO FCTC at country level?

SPC has a comprehensive non-communicable disease (NCD) program, which works to assist PICTs with implementing their WHO FCTC obligations and tackling other NCD-related issues. In recent years, under the Pacific regional 2-1-22 NCD program's large country grant scheme (2-1-22 reflects two organizations, SPC and WHO, working as one to serve 22 PICTs), SPC provided financial and technical support to all PICTs to implement the WHO FCTC as part of their national NCD plans.

Through the 2-1-22 program's small grant scheme, SPC provided technical and financial support for: implementing and enforcing tobacco legislation in Tuvalu; holding a tobacco policy summit in the Federated States of Micronesia; and running an enforcement workshop on the Cook Islands' Tobacco Control Act. In 2013, with funding from the Bloomberg Tobacco Grants Initiative, SPC worked on a project examining tobacco industry interference in Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands (see box top right). SPC, together with WHO, is currently providing



### PREVENTING INTERFERENCE FROM THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY

In 2014, a study funded by Bloomberg Philanthropies found that tobacco companies were actively lobbying governments in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Solomon Islands to avoid further smoking-related restrictions, such as the development of smoke-free public places, larger health warnings and higher tax on cigarette sales. The companies were also providing free tickets to sporting events and other hospitality to ministers and officials. SPC has helped PNG and Solomon Islands to review their tobacco legislation and strengthen their laws in accordance with the WHO FCTC. For example, SPC provided assistance to Solomon Islands to develop a cabinet briefing document, outlining the need to amend the Tobacco Act.

technical assistance to the territory of Wallis and Futuna for: a smoking-cessation program; an education, communication and public-awareness program; and tobacco legislation (see box below).

SPC is not part of, or involved with, the UN Country Team program; however the Secretariat recently joined the Pacific Regional UN thematic group on NCDs' quarterly meeting in Fiji, to improve coordination and facilitate future collaboration with development partners.

### RAISING AWARENESS OF THE PERILS OF SMOKING



On 2016 World No Tobacco Day, Wallis and Futuna launched the 'Tackling our Addiction' campaign, with support from SPC. The territory's aim was to inform smokers about the dangers of the habit and provide assistance to help them quit. They distributed posters in French, Futunien and Wallisien, while the island's pharmacy stocked up on nicotine substitutes. In autumn, volunteer doctors attended a training session to learn how to conduct 'smoking-cessation' interviews with islanders wishing to kick the habit. A survey carried out in 2010 revealed that some 42.6 per cent of Wallis and Futuna's inhabitants are smokers.

## How is SPC involved with implementing the WHO FCTC at regional and global levels?

In collaboration with other partner agencies, in 2014 SPC developed the *Pacific NCD Roadmap Report*, laying out a multi-sectoral approach for tackling NCDs across the region. The report recommended that countries strengthen tobacco control, including by raising the excise duty on tobacco products to at least 70 per cent of their retail price. The report serves as the basis for developing country-specific strategies.

SPC organized, led and participated in several high-level Pacific regional meetings, including the Pacific NCD Summit (2016); the Joint Forum Economic and Pacific Health Ministers Meeting (2014); biennial Pacific Health Ministers Meetings; and the annual Pacific Heads of Health Meetings. These gatherings addressed how to strengthen PICTs' actions on tobacco control to achieve the Tobacco Free Pacific 2025 goal and obligations under the WHO FCTC.

Additionally, SPC participated in regional training workshops, including the Pacific workshop on Law, NCD, Trade and Sustainable Development (2016); the Pacific workshop on implementing the WHO FCTC and Regional Action Plan for the Tobacco Free Initiative in

the Western Pacific (2015); and the Western Pacific Regional meeting on implementing the WHO FCTC (2013). These addressed Parties' obligations to the WHO FCTC.

## Does SPC make the resources it publishes freely available?

Yes. Anyone can download SPC publications, including the *NCD Roadmap Report* and other tobacco-related resources, from:

[www.spc.int/en/featured-publications.html](http://www.spc.int/en/featured-publications.html)  
(under Divisional Publications, Health).



## ENCOURAGE GREATER ENFORCEMENT

SPC's view on challenges and responses to implementing the WHO FCTC

"In the past there has been a need for support with legislative drafting for tobacco control, although this is partly being addressed by more training being made available to the Pacific in this field. However there is still an on-going need to encourage governments to enforce the law, fund enforcement officers and hold enforcement workshops. Financial support for Pacific nations wishing to participate in WHO FCTC meetings is highly valued, and on-going training in all aspects of tobacco control is very beneficial."

## How can Parties approach SPC for support?

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