

# **PIMRIS: INFLOW IN A SEA OF BARRIERS**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The South Pacific region has 22 island states of different political status scattered over a vast area of 30 million square kilometres of which 2% is land. Population totals 5.8 million. There is considerable linguistic variety with English being the medium of communication for many of the countries. Education systems have provided increase opportunities for many young men and women but the access to information and knowledge remains poor. The economies are agriculture -- and fisheries -- based with per capita income ranging from US\$259.00 to US\$1,248.00. All the basic barriers to document supply, free information flow and exchange are presented.

This paper first describes the barriers to information flow that exist within the South Pacific region and how these affect local, regional and international users of the Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System (PIMRIS) established in 1989. The barriers are grouped into those that cannot be controlled by information professional -- the climate, politics, culture, economics and currency, air and sea routes, legal systems, financial allocations for information by government, language; those that can be partially controlled by information professionals -- telecommunications, technology, equipment, budgets; and those that are in the control of information professionals -- information exchange, interlibrary loan, bibliographical work, library cooperation.

Later and based on the operations and work of PIMRIS in the past twelve months, the paper explains how PIMRIS has successfully overcome some of these barriers to provide a growing and effective information service to users whether based in the region or abroad. This has and will have a significant effect on the development and management of research in marine resources which will ultimately affect the economic, environmental, social and political welfare of the Pacific Islands and their peoples.

## **INTRODUCTION**

For anyone who knows little about the South Pacific it is certainly not easy to imagine how recorded and written information on fisheries and marine resources flow in this vast region, one covering an area of 30 million square kilometers of which 2% is land the rest is ocean. A region with 22 island states many of which are small, scattered, resource-poor and isolated from the main international air and sea routes. Culturally, socially, politically and linguistically the islands are diverse. Education and economic systems are at different stages of development and generally while education opportunities have grown, access to information and knowledge remains poor. All the basic barriers to interlending, document supply, information and data transfer are present. However, in recent years, mainly in the last two, new developments - personal computers, local, regional and international telecommunication networks, CD-ROMS, electronic transmission of data, online indexing and abstracting services - have reached some of the countries at such a rapid pace that they are changing the mode of operations in various fields everyday. The Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System (PIMRIS) has gained from these developments and has used them to its advantage. It is developing and putting into place an information and document delivery and supply system as it grows. This paper will describe the local, regional and international barriers to information flow that exist and then explain how PIMRIS has overcome some of these to meet user needs.

### **BARRIERS TO INFORMATION FLOW**

For the purpose of this talk and using the grouping as identified by Cornish for the Caribbean I have grouped these barriers into three categories: those that are outside the control of the library and information community, those that can be controlled to some degree and those which are within PIMRIS to control and change.

#### **Barriers that cannot be controlled**

The barriers that cannot be controlled by librarians and information officers include politics, economics and currency, air routes, culture, the climate, legal systems, financial allocations to information by governments and to a lesser extent, language as throughout the region many people speak and write English. Many of the countries obtained their independence in the past twenty years and it is needless to say that there would be ideological differences between them. Despite this, the interdependence of the small countries has made cooperation between them in many areas, including information exchange and document delivery, easier. In 1982, building on the philosophy of sharing that is common in the region, the Pacific Information Centre was established at the University of the South Pacific (USP) Library to fulfil the objective of identifying, collecting, managing, recording and disseminating information on and about the Pacific. Libraries that agreed to

participate in this resource sharing activity based on their ability to share and assist with information type work included Cook Islands Library, Kiribati National Library, Solomon Islands National Library, Tonga Education Department Library, Tuvalu National Library, Nelson Memorial Public Library of Western Samoa, Vanuatu National Library, the University of the South Pacific Library, the South Pacific Commission based in Noumea, New Caledonia, and the American Samoa Library Service.

While the philosophy of sharing within the PIC system has resulted in the production of a number o bibliographies the single most important barrier that exist is the unavailability of sufficient resources - both human and physical - allocated by government that would enable libraries to participate fully in information exchange and sharing. For PIMRIS the matter is slightly different. The cooperating partners of PIMRIS - South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), South Pacific Commission (SPC), Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), and the USP - have been able to participate effectively in resources and information sharing in the marine sciences. The organizations have good core collections, professional staff, communication links, institutional support and funds to undertake user services.

The differing laws within the countries can affect the flow of information within the region as well as the differing regulations that exist within the regional organizations regarding accessibility of consultants' reports, publications and national fisheries statistics. The legislation that govern whether a document can be supplied to a user or not is not clear for any of the countries. PIMRIS has tried to meet requests made for these but it has had difficulties with if the report that is required is not cleared by the country for which the report was made. While I have grouped this difficulty here it is always possible to request for a change in the regulations or have access to the document after making the necessary applications to the authorities.

Culture is a barrier in the sense that the value of information is slow to take off. A large number of people do not see information as a need important to work or development. One cannot change culture as there will always be people who will believe that the old ways are best and will therefore have no need for the new. However, in recent years with the central global, regional and local issues of driftnet fishing, climate change, toxic waste incineration, turtle fishing, marine pollution, fish economics and training there is now a growing need for information in this area. The new and the old ways of knowing and finding information can and should survive side by side.

Further, I have included economics and currency in this group for the reason that when PIMRIS decides to institute a charge for its services which currently is all free, it may have to deal with not so much the problem of different currencies but rather the fact that few people will be able to pay for information.

The other barrier that cannot be changed by librarians is airplane and sea routes. PIMRIS like all other organizations, depend on the schedules of air and sea routes that exist for much of its operations. These affect the flow of information from PIMRIS to a number of countries.

### **Barriers that can be partially controlled**

Within the limitations of operations there are some that can be influenced and changed by librarians and information officers. Communication for instance is important to information flow. While librarians may not have too much influence in the developments of telecommunications and charges locally or for the region, they can explore what technical systems exist and then decide whether it is feasible and affordable to use any improved means of communication. For PIMRIS it was decided from the beginning that document supply and information flow were vital. It was important that the Coordination Unit based at the USP be able to communicate quickly and efficiently with any of the fisheries officers in the region as well as the other PIMRIS cooperating regional organizations. On the local scene PIMRIS ensured that its links with local fisheries units were established and are working. On the regional scene it depended on the regional telecommunication project and the University's satellite station to carry much of its information exchange and information flow. The international scene has been difficult to resolve cheaply because while the technology is in place the costs of linking are excessive.

Similarly, the choice of technology and equipment are things that the librarian can control to some degree. Any information coordinating unit cannot be without a good photocopier, good telephones, connections and computers. To be able to use these machines effectively there needs to be qualified staff to operate the work stations. Librarians can influence the training plans for his/her staff.

All these cost money. Often, in developing countries, libraries and information centres are operating at much reduced budgets which makes it difficult, but necessary, to fight harder for increased budgets if information flow is to be maintained locally, regionally and internationally. A system can only be efficient depending on how much resources are diverted to it.

### **Barriers that are in the control of librarians**

It is recognized that there are some barriers that are created by librarians and information people adding to the difficulty in trying to promote an effective information flow and exchange system in the region. In the South Pacific we are fortunate that amongst the professional librarians and in a number of cases non-professionals, resource sharing and exchange are seen as important and good. Fear of loss, damage, financial commitment and inconvenience to other local users are not seen as great obstacles. It is true that documents can go missing enroute and books stolen but in the past eighteen months of operation PIMRIS has had no

such experience. It has serviced 113 such requests, 14,700 photocopied pages, and 150 reference questions. PIMRIS uses the general USP Library interloan and document delivery system and this works extremely well.

Further, efficient information flow in the region would be helped along if users knew where a required document or needed information could be found. Many libraries in the region are not able to produce national bibliographies. Instead, through the cooperating information network of PIC it has been possible to include in the various PIC publications a list of publications produced by the different countries in the South Pacific. The production of these bibliographies has not been easy as it requires the combined input of all cooperating librarians. PIC, PIMRIS and USP Library are developing computerised databases and through this it would be possible to find out who has what. At the last PIMRIS Steering Committee held 20-24 September 1990 some standard procedures regarding the development of national databases and the development of library collections at fisheries departments were accepted. These will be revised, expanded, and updated as the PIMRIS system grows.

### **USER NEEDS AND PIMRIS**

When PIMRIS was established in 1989 its objective included the provision of information needs of users in the region on living and non-living marine resources. Specific objectives were to establish a regional bibliographic database for fisheries and marine resources; produce various publications; provide current contents awareness service, bibliographical searches, abstracting and document delivery; help establish, organise, develop and put in place a library system for national fisheries departments; provide professional advice, training and information services to any user seeking assistance from PIMRIS. In the past nine months PIMRIS has received many requests for publications, monographs from the USP Library collection, photocopies of reports and journal articles and general information requests. See Attachment 1 for some examples of requests made. It should be noted here that of the requests received in the past twelve months 98% were satisfied and provided by PIMRIS Coordination Unit using its own database supplemented by the USP Library's database, Institute of Marine Resources database and ASFA on CD-ROM. Turn around time from receipt of request to receipt of package by the user varied from one to five days locally, four to ten days within the region and fourteen days outside the region.

Users are fisheries officers and researchers. In recent months many school children have visited PIMRIS for information. In a number of cases information was sent to the school. It is envisaged that as schools include fisheries and marine studies into the curriculum demand from this group for information will grow.

For the products and other services of PIMRIS and its cooperating regional organizations see Attachment 2. This highlights the number of users that request

to be placed on the mailing list for PIMRIS products. As a routine, PIMRIS requests the user to respond to the quality of the service and to give suggestions for improvement. These replies have been forthcoming and are encouraging for a new system such as PIMRIS. Many are happy with the service as it fills a gap that has been in existence for a long time. A number of users provide suggestions. It is evident that there is a great deal of work to do to improve information flow nationally and regionally on specific topics of interest.

### **PRACTICAL PROCESS OF BREAKING BARRIERS TO IMPROVE SERVICES**

PIMRIS operations in the past twelve months highlight the fact that services to users are not adversely affected despite the many barriers that exist. PIMRIS has always tried to make information accessible to users as quickly as possible and in the form they require with little or no additional cost to users. PIMRIS staff have been able to operate within the technical, financial and physical resources available to it to meet these needs. The real struggle for the PIMRIS Coordination Unit and its cooperating regional partners is to try and meet inevitably heightened expectations for service of all kinds ranging from the setting up of a core collection and library, establishing standard and compatible national databases, and training of staff. While these expectations need to be addressed it is important that PIMRIS continues to promote its existence and services, establish standards and develop a strong user group.

#### **Total collection**

The identification and the establishment of one central document supply for fisheries and marine science at the University of the South Pacific Library with the collections of the regional partner institutions providing complementary collections has been a most practical and cost effective achievement in the region in the area of information in a specialised field. PIMRIS's collection is the collection of the USP, IMR, SOPAC, SPC, FFA and PIC put together. This will grow to include other national collections once the databases are set up and functional. The PIMRIS partners recognise from the beginning that the collection of documents from the countries of the region is a vital activity and that at least one copy of all documents produced in the region having relevance to fisheries and marine resources must be deposited with the USP Library. With PIC operating within the Library as well and collecting publications on and about the South Pacific, the Library's chances of having a good coverage of the region are increased.

Coordinating this activity is not difficult as all the partner institutions have agreed formally to participate in PIMRIS and have each signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the funding organisation, the International Centre for Ocean Development (ICOD). Further, being all regional organizations which report annually to the Forum, the supreme body in the region whose members are political leaders

of the independent states in the South Pacific, they share common interests. There is much to gain from cooperating in various activities including database development, training, staff movement, interloans, information services. When the PIMRIS Steering Committee Meeting met last week it was agreed that some standards for national databases using CDS-ISIS be developed by November 1st. We also agreed to some routine in handling and recording information requests received, and a routing system be introduced with PIMRIS coordinating all these.

### **Bibliographical or location tools**

Because PIMRIS is within the PIC/USP Library many of the items collected and deposited in the Library on marine find their way to the many bibliographies that are produced by PIC. Since 1982 PIC has been producing an annual *South Pacific Bibliography*. There is also the *South Pacific Research Register* which comes out every two years and forms an excellent directory of those who are undertaking research in the region. There is also the annual *University of the South Pacific Publications* and the *South Pacific Periodicals Index*. The former is behind in production date but with computerised systems being introduced this will speed up work somewhat. PIC also produces special bibliographies and a number that have been produced such as the *Bibliography on environment issues in the South Pacific* and *Lisitila: Pacific writers* list marine related material. Apart from these PIMRIS puts out a monthly list of new publications added to the collection on fisheries and marine; this in addition to the monthly list of *Recent Additions* put out by PIC. These provide up to date information on literature in this field.

These publications are distributed to many libraries in Fiji, the region and internationally, and individual users number 3,400. About 89% of those on the distribution list receive the publications free. PIC has now developed a fee structure for its publications and in the past two years sales have been poor. People expect to receive these free, particularly libraries in the developed countries.

PIMRIS publications include: contents pages awareness, *Recent publications list*, *PIMRIS newsletter*, *Information packages*: (1) *Driftnet fishing*; (2) *Climate change and sea level rise*. (SPC) -*Information Bulletin: Beche-de-mer and pearl shells*, *List of journal titles*; (SOPAC) - *List of journal titles*, *Bibliography of selected works on sea level rise*, *Maps in the SOPAC collection*; (FFA) - *FFA news digest*, *Serials list*. There are 276 users on the mailing list.

It is certainly through these tools that users know what is available which can enable them to request for needed material. It is planned that once the PIMRIS regional database is up and running (using CDS-ISIS) and the national database is also up records will be shared transporting bibliographical data on diskette. A regional workshop on CDS-ISIS run by Mr. Del Bigio from the 17th - 24th September 1990 has prepared a number of our advanced users in the region to assist with training at the lower level and also to establish simplified databases for the national centres. Currently all the fisheries offices and departments in the region

have the necessary hardware. A number have the CDS-ISIS already installed. It is hoped that by December 1990 at least 6 fisheries departments will have the system up and running. The others should receive CDS-ISIS in the new year.

### **Simplicity**

PIMRIS is always conscious of the fact that whatever system is devised for use by national fisheries departments the system must be simple. This is not only for economy and time but because the region lacks the qualified personnel to operate such detailed tasks. Standards are being devised and these are kept as simple as possible. By doing this the national centres will be able to participate actively in the development of a database which will have to be edited and maintained to the highest degree of integrity by PIMRIS Coordination Unit.

### **Technological advancements**

Telecommunications between the various islands are good and reliable. PIMRIS and its regional partners use telex, telefacsimile and the telephone often. The costs are affordable in some countries but excessive in others. Given the poor transportation schedules, documents and information can be transmitted in a matter of minutes using these new technological tools. This is the only way to go if the information required is urgently needed. PIMRIS sends all document requests, if urgent, by fax. This has certainly provided reliance on the system by old users and the introduction to PIMRIS of new users daily.

PIMRIS also has access to Internet and can communicate with research centres throughout the world at little or no cost at present. It is hoped that access to databases will be possible in the near future. This service is on experiment.

PIMRIS also receives ASFA on CD-ROM and this has been a very useful service indeed.

Requests for books must be to be routed through the normal airmail services but PIMRIS also makes use of the courier for urgent requests. The postal services to the islands within the region can be problematic for some countries while for others the service is reliable. Postage to countries abroad are good reflecting the improved international air routes being introduced in the past six months. It should also be noted here that requests received by PIMRIS have been met by the PIMRIS Coordination Unit. There has been no time that we have had to specifically request for items from abroad regarding a request.

PIMRIS continues to collect, purchase and obtain from various organizations publications on fisheries and marine science. PIMRIS also collects posters, videos, tapes. SOPAC is now commencing a photograph collection.



## **Finance**

Financing any information system is not easy. PIMRIS and its regional partners receive financial assistance from ICOD and this has enabled it to continue with its work. The organizations all support the development of a fisheries and marine resources database and this is a good thing but it must be made a developmental and regional priority. PIMRIS will have to ascertain that support continues. Marine resources are so vital to the life of the island peoples that to mismanage this resource will only bring about the destruction of a very potential and big money earner for the countries of the region.

While the organizations that cooperate in PIMRIS are currently funded by ICOD it is also important to start thinking of the sustainability of the system. It will not be easy to get the organizations to agree to allocate some of its recurrent funds or the earnings from fishing to the system to enable it to continue its work as its influence and productivity in this sector is tangible. But some way must be found to take on some of the funding of PIMRIS. Of course there is the obvious solution of charging for services but at this time the market is mainly regional users and they do not have the resources to pay for service. It is true that for any international information flow, exchange, document delivery and interlending there must be a consideration of costs. How else can the system pay for itself?

For the South Pacific there are other methods that can be considered like the token system for AGRIS libraries. These tokens must be used for all international interlending transactions and the tokens can be used up to ten times after which they expire. There may be other methods that can be used including page for page service between participating libraries. But at the present time PIMRIS is trying to establish a wider user group and a charge for services would not assist in this objective.

## **Professional interest group**

PIMRIS was initiated and recommended by a meeting of regional fisheries officers and information people and librarians in 1987. In the same year at the annual 19th Regional Technical Meeting on Fisheries (RTMF) the proposal was endorsed. Since this time the fisheries officers have maintained keen interest in the development of PIMRIS and have provided useful and constructive input into the operations of the system. It is this cooperation and working relationship that has enabled PIMRIS to keep to its objectives as much as possible and to overcome some of the operation barriers. From 1991 PIMRIS Steering Committee will be held prior to the RTMF. This will allow PIMRIS and its partner organizations to review its work and at the same time receive input from the fisheries officers on needs and other suggestions for service and improvements.

## **ROLE OF IAMSLIC IN IMPROVING SERVICES TO DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

Since it is far away from the main research centres of the world, it would be advantageous if PIMRIS was able to have access to a list of international marine libraries and information centres with their products and services. IAMSLIC is a specialised organisation which can assist its members by:

producing a union list of marine periodicals held by IAMSLIC member libraries,

assisting with the production of specialised bibliographies on topics of international interest such as driftnet fishing, toxic waste disposal and incineration, law of the sea and the EEZs,

compiling and distributing to IAMSLIC libraries on a regular more basis lists of discarded titles on marine science,

assisting with the training of staff by supporting attachments and short term fellowships,

sharing information on marine science through printed catalogs or databases on diskettes,

sharing and assisting with staff identification and expertise service to libraries needing technical assistance,

developing and effecting a system of document supply, paid or free, within the IAMSLIC group.

### **CONCLUSION**

In the past twelve months PIMRIS is just beginning to feel that it is now fulfilling some of its objectives despite the difficulties and barriers that exist. Development has been slow, but for this region this is inevitable. The PIMRIS Coordination Unit has been able to introduce and maintain user services with a staff of one and a half persons in the past nine months. The type of requests received and the satisfaction rates are encouraging. There is no doubt in my mind that if PIMRIS did not have at its disposal fax machines, microcomputers, CD-ROMS and CD-ROM players, access to major databases within the Library and abroad, cooperation of government fisheries officers in the development of this system and the professional participation and input from regional partners, PIMRIS would have difficulty meeting its major objectives of developing a regional marine resources database and providing information throughout the region and beyond. Clearly for any information network to survive in the South Pacific, or any other part of the

world for that matter, much will depend on not only the financial assistance received and technology available but more so on the availability of professional staff and willingness of all those involved in the development of a system to communicate effectively, and share and cooperate in this work. This is the PIMRIS mission.

#### REFERENCES

**Cornish, G.P.** 1989. Interlending in the Caribbean. *International Library Review* 21:249-61.

**PIMRIS Steering Committee.** 1990. Minutes of the Third Meeting.

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**ATTACHMENT 1**  
**INFORMATION REQUESTS RECEIVED BY THE PIMRIS COORDINATION UNIT**

Information requests are received from government officers, researchers, students, as well as school children. 113 requests were received for books, periodical articles, reprints, posters, and videotapes. 98% of the requests were fulfilled by the PIMRIS Coordination Unit.

Breakdown of selected requests:

Climate change and sea level rise (Because numerous of the requests, an information package was put together.)  
Driftnet fishing (Information pack put together)  
Artisinal fishing craft of the Pacific islands.  
Trochus biology and fishing; transportation of the trochus shell in Vanuata  
Fish smoking (Bibliography compiled by Nick Trachet of FAO Regional Fisheries Support Programme available.)  
Marine studies for the secondary school curriculum (Tonga College)  
Traditional sailing canoes (Much work has been done and written by Bob Gillett of the FAO Regional Fisheries Support Programme.)  
Applied atoll research in Kiribati  
Environmental impact assessment  
Fisheries activities in Fiji and other South Pacific countries.  
Tuna fishing industry: interaction between tuna fisheries  
Artisinal fishery  
Fish culture  
Freshwater aquaculture  
Seaweed research  
Food fishes of Fiji, Papua New Guinea  
Deep sea commercial fish species of Vanuatu  
Crown of thorns starfish  
Turtles  
Coastal resource management  
Coral reefs in the South Pacific  
Gastropods in the South Pacific  
Symbiosis of tridacna  
Fish aggregation device enhancement of offshore fisheries  
Mangrove ecology and fish productivity

Reference queries

PIMRIS also receives reference queries on marine and fisheries including information on personnel and for contact for information and publication exchange.

More and more requests on education projects from secondary school teachers and students are received by PIMRIS.

## Recent publications

Three issues were published in the past nine months (March, May, August). Ninety-seven users within the region receive this service. Request resulting from this service: 40% of users respond and request service. Requests are usually for 50% of the title listed. PIMRIS is able to supply all requests.

## Current awareness service

The number of selected periodical titles listed covering fisheries, geology, oceanography, and marine science is 50. The lists are sent to 97 users within the region. Of this number 26 requested service. Eight users requested eight titles, 18 requested two titles. All periodical article requests resulting from this service are satisfied.

Reference queries, and article and nonograph requests are most useful for ongoing and newly planned projects.

## Information requests for schools

30 request have been received from schools on general fisheries and marine science topics for basic science sources in the schools.

## Information packages

Two information packages have been produced in the past nine months; dirtnet fishing (50 pages) and climate change (201 pages). Forty users requested these packages; 10,100 photocopy pages produced all together.

## Databases

### Marine Coverage:

PASIFIKA (USP Library main database):	Books -- 75%
	Periodicals -- 10%
	Reports 15%
MOANA (PIMRIS database using CDS-ISIS):	Books -- 15%
	Periodicals -- 20%
	Reports -- 65%

## **SUMMARY OF SERVICES – PIMRIS Coordination Unit: January - September 1990.**

Total Publication Requests: 113  
Total Photocopied Pages: 14,700  
Total Information Requests: 150  
Current Awareness Services: 50 periodical titles. Lists issued monthly to 26 users.  
Original list sent to 97 users.

**Recent Publication:** Three lists distributed over 9 months.  
**Information Packages:** Driftnet Fishing (50 pages) -- 40 requests.  
**Climate Change & Sea Level Rise (201 pages)--40 requests.**

**Publications:** Quarterly Newsletter  
Fishing Around the Region (Quarterly)  
Recent Publications (Quarterly)  
Information Packages (Quarterly)

**Databases:** PIMRIS's MOANA database with 1,000 records. Updated daily.  
CDS-ISIS software used.  
USP Library's Main Database, PASIFIKA, with close to 400,000 records. Updated daily. URICA system.

## ATTACHMENT 2

### PIMRIS PRODUCTS

#### **Pimris Coordination Unit**

University of the South Pacific, P. O. Box 1168, Suva, Fiji. FAX: (269) 300830.

#### *PIMRIS NEWSLETTER* (Quarterly)

Contents pages awareness service (Regular)

Recent publications lists (Monthly)

Information packages (Quarterly, 1990- )

1. Driftnet fishing (April 1990)
2. Climate change and sea level rise (June 1990)
3. Cigutera (September 1990)
4. Marine pollution (forthcoming)

PIMRIS database with close to 2,00 records. Full bibliographical records on the USP Library's database are available in hardcopy only. 1,000 records on CDS-ISIS are available in hardcopy and on diskette. PIMRIS is working on down loading records on URICA onto CD-ISIS. This is still to be achieved. Downloading records from PROCITE to CDS-ISIS has been achieved. This will enable all of the periodical articles that appear in the *South Pacific Periodicals Index* to be downloaded to the PIMRIS database.

PIMRIS products are sent to 27667 uses. 92 users on the list receive all products.

The Coordination Unit responses to all requests resulting from the contents page awareness service. These requests are not included in the statistics for publication request which number 113, and photocopied pages which number 14,700 in the past nine months.

PIMRIS brochures and PIMRIS reports are available from the PIMRIS Coordination Unit.

#### **Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)**

P. O. Box 629, Honiara, Solomon Islands. Fax: (677) 23995

*FFA News Digest*: Provides summary of current fishery developments in matters relating to legal affairs, economics, market trends, research, new technology and equipment, and FFA activities. Circulation 130.

FFA Serials holdings list.

FFA New additions list

South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency Reports

**South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPCA)**  
Nabua, Suva

List of journal titles

Bibliography of selected works on sea level rise

Bibliography on non-living marine resources (1,300 records)

List of maps in SOPAC (750 records)

**South Pacific Commission (SPC)**

P. O. Box D5, Noumea, New Caledonia. Fax: (687) 263818

List of journal titles.

Of significance is the establishment of Special Interest Groups (SIGs) which will serve as information and communication networks for researchers with common interests. From responses to a questionnaire the most common areas of interest have been identified as beche-de-mer and pearl shells. These two SIGs are now operational and Information Bulletins, one for each group, have been produced. SIG Bulletins are planned to appear once every six months.