



Tuna 'disaster'

KOROR, (Radio Australia) —The Australian who heads fishery management in the Western and Central Pacific warns an international agreement is urgently needed to avert disaster for the tuna industry. Professor Glenn Hurry said bluefin and bigeye tuna should not be harvested, as stocks were dangerously depleted.



Lets unleash it

To unleash the power of young people, we need to work together, the United Nations, ... — to create the future we want

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Death penalty

TARAWA (RNZI) — The Kiribati Parliament has passed the first reading of the amendment to the penal code to adopt the death penalty. President Anote Tong says his country will have the opportunity to comment on the amendment during the consultation.



Power of the young



Cook Islands UNFPA-supported youth delegate Dean Tagata facilitating a sexual and reproductive health and rights workshop for young people at the SIDS Youth Tent in Apia (Samoa).

Picture: UNFPA PACIFIC/ARIELA ZIBIAH

By ARIELA ZIBIAH

THE 3rd International Conference on Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) in Samoa ends today with final statements by heads of member states and United Nations agency representatives, affirming their commitment to the outcome document titled *Samoa Pathway*.

The 32-page document encapsulates the aspirations of SIDS, in relation to the issues they are grappling with and committing to a collective responsibility of ensuring implementation for the progress of SIDS people and nations as a whole.

Almost 300 multi-stakeholder partnerships, a quarter of which are new initiatives, were represented at this meeting including 166 governments, 85 UN entities or inter-governmental organisations, and nearly 1200 civil society organisations. These newly-established partnerships have the potential to mobilise at least \$US625 million (\$F1.17b), while financial commitments from existing partnerships for the period beyond 2014 amount to \$US1.28 billion (\$F2.4b).

The *Samoa Pathway* also represents the work yet to be completed before world leaders gather to reaffirm their commitment to the International Conference of Population and Development (ICPD) Program of Action (PoA) in New York this month, and in preparation for the post-2015 global development agenda discussion in September 2015.

The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) began its support for SIDS deliberations about two years ago; a global review by United Nations member states of the implementation of the ICPD PoA informed SIDS of progress made in the past 20 years and areas which may benefit from a little more focus,

thus identifying best ways to move forward.

In relation to the mandate areas of the UNFPA, the *Samoa Pathway* has provisions which relate specifically to sexual and reproductive health and rights and reproductive rights, improved health systems and commodity security, maternal health and child mortality, and provisions relating to HIV. There are however other areas which, though not specific to UNFPA mandates, does have implications on our work with member states in the next 20 years.

The impact of climate change and related topics has been unsurprisingly predominant in the deliberations at this third SIDS conference. On this topic, the UNFPA asks that if the core of adaptation to climate change is a resilient, secure and empowered people then shouldn't or doesn't it make sense that good reproductive health is a prerequisite?

This is why the UNFPA believes and continues to advocate for universal access to reproductive health and rights, it is fundamental to sustainable development. Addressing our family, community, country and or regions' reproductive health and rights issues prevents early marriage and early pregnancy, it ensures educational attainment, and it helps all people, particularly women and girls, achieve climate-resilient livelihoods and the flexibility to prepare for and act in advance of climate impacts.

A couple who decide to have children but who can choose the number and the timing of child-bearing with the help of modern contraceptives, according to their resources would be more equipped for example to provide good education and health for their children, who then have a better start in life. This is

also why social and gender equity is critical - people should be able to make choices, especially adolescent girls and women.

At the SIDS Village this week, the UNFPA hosted one of the 120 side events, a panel discussion on the merits of investing in young people. Panelists which included Tonga parliamentarian Sunia Fili, Minister for Foreign Affairs Guyana Carolyn Rodrigues-Birkett and two youth advocates. The opening remarks were made by the director and representative of the UNFPA Sub-Regional Office in the Caribbean, Sheila Roseau.

"We believe in the power of the people," Ms Roseau said. "We at UNFPA believe in the power of the people to find sustainable solutions, to move from crisis to recovery, to support each other and uphold human rights, and the power of the people to be entrepreneurs and agents of change, to drive green and inclusive economic growth and benefits that are widely shared across society."

Ms Roseau said the full realisation of the potential in individuals, particularly when considering young people and their role in sustainable solutions for socio-economic issues developing island states were grappling with, increased investment was required.

"We know that social investments in human capital must be matched with appropriate economic policies and investment to create jobs for young people. To unleash the power of young people, we need to work together, the United Nations, governments, the private sector and civil society — to create the future we want."

■ Ariela Zibiah is the communications officer at UNFPA. The views expressed are not of this newspaper.

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