

Future Networking and Cooperation Summary of Discussion¹

Roger R. Bay²

Abstract: At the end of the workshop, I led a lightly structured and informal discussion concerning methods of continuing and improving communications and cooperation among workshop participants. The group specifically addressed three areas: maintaining informal one-on-one direct contacts, improving the use of the ADAP computer system for mail, and the desirability of starting an informal newsletter about agroforestry activities in the Pacific. In addition, the group briefly discussed opportunities for cooperative studies.

Informal, Direct Contacts

Most participants felt that the workshop provided the opportunity for individuals from many islands with agroforestry interests to become better acquainted with current activities and individual interests. Now, it is the responsibility of the individuals to continue these contacts, not only between islands but also within island agencies and college staff. With ADAP, many of the same people are involved with other task forces and workshops, which can afford opportunities to continue dialog about forestry matters.

Computer Mail

ADAP colleges currently are linked with a computer system used to transmit messages and short papers between colleges. Within the ADAP area, Palau may soon be linked to the College of Micronesia and their ADAP computer, thus expanding the network. Participants agreed that it is particularly important to make greater use of this system of E-mail since it is available in each college office. Eventually, this should also facilitate the exchange of data as more joint and cooperative studies are started. College staff need to recognize the opportunity to interact with agency staff and explore the possibility using E-mail for communication with agencies.

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² Consultant, College of Tropical Agriculture and Human Resources, University of Hawaii, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822.

Newsletter

The advantages and disadvantages of starting an ADAP agroforestry newsletter were discussed for some time. Most participants were supportive of the effort and felt that the newsletter would serve an excellent network device. Bill Raynor, College of Micronesia, volunteered to spearhead the effort from Pohnpei. Craig Whitesell and Tom Cole offered the help of their Pacific Southwest Research Station office of the Forest Service for support. The group agreed to accept these offers of help and to support the effort with appropriate contacts at the various islands. ADAP agroforestry task force members should be the principal contacts in their respective areas. The island forestry and agriculture agencies, particularly those located on islands or states away from college locations, should also be able to provide information. Dr. Mareko Tofmga, from the University of the South Pacific, Western Samoa, volunteered as a key contact to the USP system. Participants were urged to continue their support by providing written information about their respective island activities in agroforestry as the newsletter develops. The first edition is expected in a few months.

Future Cooperative Programs

The earlier discussion on agroforestry needs and priorities noted that one of the high priority programs recommended by the ADAP task force on agroforestry consisted of a regional project to document indigenous agroforestry systems in the American Pacific. Many participants supported the general concept of documenting the existing systems before the expertise and experience of local farmers is lost. However, it was also emphasized that the cooperation of local college and agency people was highly important to such an effort. Also, state legislative bodies and the governors office should be asked about the need on a local basis. Any kind of a regional project must be sensitive to local traditions and social customs involving private and village lands and activities. The support of the individual island entities would be needed for any such regional effort to be fully successful.