- Tackling non-communicable diseases or lifestyle options for improved nutrition and well-being;
- Exploring the convergence of science and traditional knowledge in aqua and agriculture for a sustainable and healthy living in the 21st century, and;
- Enhancing community resilience in managing environment, water and wastes under a changing climate.

These were the main issues addressed through three Think Tanks at a conference that was held in the framework of PACE-Net Plus (the Pacific Europe Network for Science, Technology and Innovation)[1] from the 9th to the 11th of September 2014 in Bremen (Germany).

This conference sought to update and identify **research priorities** for both EU-Pacific cooperation in the fields of **health**, **food and nutrition security**, and **climate change and the environment**, which are three of the major societal challenges of Horizon 2020, the research framework programme of the European Commission (EC). The conference also aimed to identify **innovation niches** in these fields and develop preliminary ideas for **joint initiatives and activities**.

Finally, the conference participants formulated **policy recommendations**, which will feed into the regional and bi-regional EU-Pacific policy dialogue on scientific, technological and innovation cooperation supported by PACE-Net Plus at the key stakeholder and decision-maker levels.

The outcomes of these various think tanks will be presented at the upcoming bi-regional dialogue to be held in Auckland in December 2014. The notes hereafter summarise the final discussion in plenary session – with a list of items to be discussed and in bold, the issues selected by the participants.

1. How to access funding
   a. Generic PACE-Net Plus description or statement about the importance of the Pacific
   b. Role of innovation, especially smaller enterprises
2. ICT platforms
3. **Across cultures**: Transcultural research and issues. Consider transcultural paradigm as an opportunity – must be built when project implemented (values, measuring success, working together with different perspectives). Explore the middle ground and avoid them/us structure. Ensure all projects address cultural safety (*e.g.* cultural safety agreements). Conditions for community-based design of project.
4. **Across disciplines:** transdisciplinary research. Consider transdisciplinary paradigm as an opportunity – must be built when project implemented (values, measuring success, working together with different perspectives). Also about different forms of knowledge.
5. IP rights consideration [also pre-project]
6. Differences include economic, power, capacity – risk of negative impact and undesirable side effects, develop protective mechanisms
7. Not one size fits all, must be context-specific means of evaluating progress
8. **Across scales:** Consider different segments of society so implementation is sustainable. Address how to have impact not just collect data. Multisectoral approaches and conditions for community-based design of project.

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[1] **PACE-Net Plus** is a project funded by the European Commission to further bi-regional science, technology and innovation (ST&I) cooperation and dialogue between the Pacific region and the European Union. The project brings together 16 members, from the Pacific region and the EU, and is coordinated by IRD (Institut de Recherche pour le Développement).

9. Link projects across the Think tanks.
10. Connect TTs before advancing projects, meeting design (process learning for next time).
11. Food security and dimensions of it (safe food, availability, nutritious, policy)
    a. Definition of food security includes food and nutrition security, also an ecological dimension (EC definition)
12. Consider existing resolutions and plans at different levels
13. ST&I in the Pacific region – currently no policy framework (to be developed)
14. **Taking things forward** and keeping accountable within PACE-Net Plus

Procedural: forum for discussing remaining points (they are still important!)

Across cultures: Transcultural research and issues.

- Consider transcultural paradigm as an opportunity – must be built when project implemented (values, measuring success, working together with different perspectives).
- Explore the middle ground and avoid them/us structure.
- Ensure all projects address cultural safety (*e.g.* cultural safety agreements).
- Conditions for community-based design of project.
- Most project design here missed cultural aspect (not just PACE-Net Plus issue); hope that PACE-Net Plus can be a forum for bringing this perspective into future work. Criteria set by government and EU are complex and so good intentions are a bit lost – from communities throughout the world.
- Women's committees around Samoa; a USP scholar studied these civil society groups bringing PHC throughout Samoa but top-down approach of modernization and professionalization (which doesn't work) women's committees lost and now professionals have left. Re-growing committees can be involved in PHC, but also sustainability
- How to get to the money and attention to those who need it most?
- Must present data and results of research to communities for them to understand what's going on *first*. Students who work in these communities must always explain their research and present research results to community first in Vanuatu, then government.
    a. Brazil: risk of raised expectations in community that the researcher cannot fulfil because researchers are not policymakers
- Culture of innovation: where are innovation hubs in the world, and where do the best researchers go?
    a. Australia and New Zealand, but don't necessarily stay
    b. Large expatriate communities (definition of Pacific island community includes migrant diasporas in neighbouring countries – must think of these too)
    c. Auckland has largest Pacific population (think about relationship between PACE-Net Plus and this group also)
    d. Brain drain not biggest issue, must connect with communities – hope that people can be trained in self-reliant actions – optimism
    e. SPC and UN agencies are based in the Pacific – promote these, so people stay
- How to encourage sustainable innovation process in the Pacific region and how does it work, especially in context of listening and respect?
- Innovation: there are different perceptions of what is understood by this term; how do we bring these together? Silicon Valley people may not survive on isolated islands! What is the EU understanding of this term?
    a. Maori communities – strong autonomy, connected, self-determination means better participation in innovation. Must build relationships with communities first.

b. Not necessarily new tech or individual; also multicultural dimensions, not something someone can do, but a collective process and can use existing resources not just bring in new ones (opportunity for PACE-Net Plus)

c. Can be both things; research can contribute in an innovative way depending on what the community need is. Many communities are going through changes (*e.g.* pesticides, composting toilets) which are innovative to them. Work more on understanding needs to figure out science being brought can improve PI lives.

d. For whom, for what? About metrics of success – what are these? Need consensus on multiple levels.

e. Community structures aren't necessarily able to cope with new innovations being introduced – expand community roles

- EU funding for exchange of researchers (*e.g.* Marie Curie) useful – must also focus on going home and taking expertise back to Pacific afterwards
- Need to strengthen civil society

Across disciplines: transdisciplinary research

- Also inextricably linked to cultural considerations (*e.g.* local perspectives, differing understandings of terms like innovation)
  a. Social sciences in communities
  b. Aggregate teams to address different issues, but won't know *a priori* how they will be useful. May have to build into project proposal the understanding that not all project team may be required
  c. Projects have to be phased contractually so there is a selection stage – change way projects are set up
  d. Takes time and money
  e. Time scales of working are different for different disciplines.
- Consider transdisciplinary paradigm as an opportunity – must be built when project design and implemented (values, measuring success, working together with different perspectives). Also about different forms of knowledge.
- Engaging with communities to understand real needs (example from New Zealand – year 1 of 10 was spent understanding community needs). Researchers aren't objective; they are a part of the process. But it takes time to build trust.
  a. Engaging communities is a long-term process (10 years is not too long!)
- Building in accountability and responsiveness to communities can be built in, ST&I projects must ensure ethical considerations and often consider policy innovations, so effective community input is required
  a. Create an advocacy centre for science
- Multisectoral approach is critical; issues discussed are all cross-cutting. Social determinants of health lie outside health sector. Frameworks and strategies exist but not functional as still being addressed in silos. Innovation = creative ideas for better combining sectoral approaches into multisectoral solutions. Can this come from transdisciplinary research?
- PACE-Net platform for good collaboration. Set up a platform for communication within the network.
- Those responsible for project leadership must have an idea and broad perspective that they need others for the success of their project (*e.g.* solar light provision and links to physicists).
- Multicultural, multisectoral, multidisciplinary approaches are good, as communities are fed up with so many approaches coming in at different times. Multi projects mean that communities only have to deal with one team. Hosting research teams is costly to the

communities. Can EU also link up with other external donors? This would be useful from a community perspective.
   a. Also a way to address one negative side-effect of research
- Build on existing plans and structures – use what we have at a community level (to avoid donors competing and overlapping)

Across scales: Consider different segments of society so implementation is sustainable.

- Address how to have impact not just collect data.
- Multisectoral approaches
- Conditions for community-based design of project
- Project design is very important. One size does not fit all – huge diversity across the region that we must be mindful of. Don't cut across into other projects and duplicate. Do a baseline first.
- Impact: "losing" someone to Europe doesn't mean you've lost them completely; be mindful of not taking segmented approaches. Exchange of ideas is important and the Pacific is progressive. Take capacity across boundaries and keep doors open for partnership on exciting projects.
- Avoid creating barriers, *e.g.*
   a. Capacity is not limited.
   b. Capacity building can involve moving people overseas; they will still send things home, so do not assume that they are lost to the Pacific or insist on them staying there
- Frame projects within existing country structures
- Consider multisectoral impacts of projects in design, not just in one field
- Local structures to continue project after funding ends
- Conditions for community based design of project (practical point). Travel is expensive – where will finance come from?
- Consider traditional ruling systems and power structures, such as church as well as political.
- Policymakers know needs of communities; researchers responsible to engage in bi-regional policymaking
   a. *e.g.* Vanuatu

Taking things forward and keeping accountable within PACE-NET

- Bi-regional dialogue in Auckland
   o How to communicate Think Tank messages
- No regional coordinated policy for ST&I – PACE-Net to contribute here
- Convince EU of importance of region (already in minds of EC or wouldn't have PACE-Net+)
- Networking important
   o Regional (*e.g.* Samoa-USP)
   o Build on network built in Bremen
- H2020 funding is accessible
- Seed funding from PACE-Net
   o Launch call by end of 2014, initially within Bremen network but also beyond
   o Financing for 2015
   o Goal: set up small projects to set up bigger ones
   o Information from Think Tanks will be used for designing calls
   o Working on projects and proposals up to participants and partners (can add new ones)
- Lobbying: Try to influence calls from EU for the region
   o Some lobbing already completed

- EDF (European Development Fund)
    - Part of bi-regional dialogue
- Projects which began to be developed
    - Copies of draft plans to PACE-Net
    - Circulate between and within Think Tanks
- Don't wait for the seed funding call to begin to work together.