



Training

CePaCT provides training to countries generally in the form of attachments – these are usually of one week duration. These attachments enable staff from those countries in which tissue culture facilities already exist or are being developed, to update their knowledge on, or to learn about tissue culture technology. For those countries with no tissue culture facilities, staff can be trained in the handling and acclimatization of tissue culture plants.

Technical Support

The CePaCT will be a source of information for the region on the conservation and utilization of crop and tree genetic resources using tissue culture technology. In addition CePaCT, with its connections to international agriculture centres throughout the world, is well placed to source new cultivars, and help countries keep abreast of new biotechnology developments as they occur. The CePaCT will be developing expertise in seed storage as it increases its activities on tree genetic resources, and this information will also be available to countries.



For further information contact:
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Centre for Pacific Crops & Trees (CePaCT)



"Working to assist agricultural development in the region through the sustainable conservation and effective use of plant genetic resources."

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Conservation of Genetic Resources

The CePaCT uses in vitro technology to conserve collections of some of the region's important staple crops, and such as taro, yam and sweet potato. The CePaCT has the largest collection (758 accessions) of taro (*Colocasia esculenta var. esculenta*) comprising of germplasm from the Pacific and S.E Asia. Collections of cassava, banana and vanilla are also maintained by the Centre.



The SPC Centre for Pacific Crops and Trees (CePaCT)

The SPC Regional Germplasm Centre (RGC) was established in 1998 with funding from the Australian Government and the European Union. In line with the integrated mode of operation within the Land Resources Division, and at the same time acknowledging the very significant contribution that trees make to sustainable livelihoods in the Pacific the RGC has increased its mandate to include in its programme of activities – tree genetic resources, and hence the change of name to CePaCT. With the inclusion of tree genetic resources, seed storage and regeneration activities will gradually be incorporated into the CePaCT programme.

The CePaCT aims to assist Pacific Island Countries to sustainably conserve and utilize their genetic resources, and at the same time, to facilitate access to improved germplasm through crop improvement activities and germplasm exchange. Through effective conservation and utilization, dynamic sustainable agricultural systems can be achieved, that will reduce poverty, increase food security, and assist in the protection of the environment.



Distribution of Genetic Resources

All germplasm distributed from the CePaCT will be pathogen-tested, so that it can be safely and widely distributed. Any transfers will be accomplished by appropriate access agreements. Through the activities of the Centre, farmers will be able to compare traditional varieties with those from regional breeding programmes. Farmers will gain access to germplasm that is resistant to major diseases, removing their vulnerability to the spread of pathogens. In addition, crop varieties of interest will be introduced from international and national research centres in other parts of the world, and made available to the Pacific Community .

Research Activities

Research is on-going in the CePaCT and reflects both the needs of the region and also individual countries. Effective cryopreservation and somatic embryogenic protocols for taro and a tissue culture protocol for *Piper methysticum* have been developed. Research currently focuses on establishing tissue culture protocols for breadfruit, black pepper and sandalwood..

