



# P R E S S   R E L E A S E

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## **European Union and Palau Strengthen Bilateral Relations**

The Head of the European Union (EU) Delegation for the Pacific, His Excellency Ambassador Julian Wilson paid an official visit to the Republic of Palau from 23 to 27 April.

On the island nation located in the North Pacific, the Ambassador presented his credentials to the Vice-President of the Republic of Palau, His Excellency Raynold Oilouch and had productive discussions with senior government officials on climate change, oceans, investment, trade, regional and bilateral cooperation and explored ideas for the focus of EU-Palau relations post 2020 when the [Cotonou Agreement expires. This comprehensive agreement](#) was signed in 2000 between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Group of States.

Following his official visit, Ambassador Wilson said: *"The EU has been and will remain a reliable partner of Palau. The EU has committed more than €4 million in the current period under its bilateral and regional programmes to support the country's ambition to achieve renewable energy and energy efficiency, adapt to the impacts of climate change and promote inclusive and sustainable development, particularly of Palau's marine resources. We value the strong foundations of our partnership and remain committed to contributing to the wellbeing of the Palauan people."*

Palau is listed as one of the countries where EU wishes to cooperate on tax governance issues. *"In my meetings, both the Vice President and Minister of Finance have assured the EU that Palau has every intention to cooperate fully on international tax matters and that Palau will work intensively with the EU, and indeed the OECD, to find a way forward for the listing to be lifted at the earliest possible moment. I had a productive meeting with the task force set up to address this issue, involving Palau's tax authorities, Financial Institutions' Commission and Investment Board. We agreed a way forward to help resolve this issue as a matter of urgency, covering exchange of information, dialogue and cooperation with the relevant bodies in the EU."* said Ambassador Wilson.

In 2020, Palau will become the first Pacific island nation to host the Our Oceans Conference.- a gathering of leaders and stakeholders around the world focusing on marine protected areas, sustainable fisheries and marine pollution, among other topics. Ambassador Wilson reaffirmed the EU's strong support for the Conference and to EU Palau cooperation for better management and sustainable ocean governance.

Following the credential ceremony, Ambassador Wilson and Head of Cooperation Christoph Wagner attended the Development Partners Meeting organised within the margins of the Forum Economic Ministers Meeting (FEMM).

During his stay in Palau, Ambassador also met with the Vice President and Minister for Youth and Social Affairs, Hon. Kourabi and Minister of Finance and Economic Development, Hon. Dr Teuea Toatu.

(ENDS)

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"The European Union is made up of 28 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".