



Signature of a historic Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP)

Nauru - 05 September, 2018 – Today, the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and The University of the South Pacific (USP) signed a landmark agreement with the European Union to help promote sustainable management and sound ocean governance in the Pacific Region.

The Pacific-European Union Marine Partnership Programme addresses some of the most serious challenges faced by the region. Among these are the increasing depletion of coastal fisheries resources; the threats to marine biodiversity, including negative impacts of climate change and disasters; the uneven contribution of oceanic fisheries to national economic development; the need for improved education and training in the sector; and the need to mainstream a rights-based approach and to promote greater recognition of gender issues within the sector.

This 5-year programme is funded by the European Union (EUR 35 million) with additional targeted support from the government of Sweden (EUR 10 million). The programme provides direct assistance through regional organisations to support regional and national level activities in the Pacific.

The signing of this agreement marks the operational starting point of the implementation of the Programme by FFA, SPC, SPREP and USP. It follows the agreement at the Our Ocean Conference in Malta, signed in October 2017 by the Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the EU Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development.

Mr. Jean-Louis Ville, Head of Unit for East Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific at the European Commission Directorate General for International Cooperation and Development, reaffirmed the role of the European Union as a reliable partner of the Pacific, and said: "Oceans are essential, ensuring food, livelihoods, biodiversity and climate resilience. They are increasingly under threat through unsustainable management practices, accelerated by the negative effects of climate change. So if we do not act today, we compromise all of our tomorrows. Therefore, in our marine partnership with the Pacific, the EU will continue to support every effort to manage the Pacific Ocean more sustainably for local communities and for many generations to come."

Ms. Åsa Hedén, Head of the Swedish Regional Development Cooperation for Asia and the Pacific. Ocean Governance is a high priority in Sweden's global agenda to overcome transboundary challenges. "Marine resources are the backbone of the Pacific island countries economy and key to long-term sustainable development in the region. Sweden is pleased to see that this partnership is now ready to start. We believe it has potential to become unique and innovative with its holistic and multi sectorial approach and thereby contributing to social, economic and environmental development in the region. The programme

will promote direct opportunities and positive changes for the Pacific island people, targeting women, men, youth and vulnerable groups."

SPC Director General, Dr. Colin Tukuitonga highlighted how the program aligns with the notion of a 'Blue Pacific' as identified by Pacific Islands Forum leaders. Dr Tukuitonga noted, "Protecting and strengthening our marine environment is an issue that cuts right to the heart of our region. The health of our oceans has a direct impact on the lives of every person who calls the Pacific their home, and remains an invaluable resource for the entire globe. This Partnership will provide further support to help ensure that, as stewards of the Pacific, our community is able to manage and preserve our ocean resources within a sustainable future".

The PEUMP Program will focus on several key principles. First, the Programme will support Sound Ocean and coastal governance with a focus on biodiversity protection and sustainable use of fisheries and other marine resources. Second, PEUMP will mainstream human rights and gender equality using a rights-based approach to improve the capacity of communities, men, women and youth, to participate in decision making and to encourage governments to fulfil their obligations around fisheries and coastal management. Third, the Programme will mainstream climate change and environmental issues with due consideration to biodiversity. Fourth, PEUMP will aim to strengthen capacity at regional, national, sub-national and local level with a focus on education, training and research. This will help the next generation of Pacific decision makers and marine resource managers to deliver sustainable management across the sector with increased accountability. Additionally, the Programme will seek to promote equitable benefits for all the PACP countries whilst recognising the diversity of resources, needs and opportunities across the 15 PACP countries.

The PEUMP will facilitate sector policy dialogues, involving civil society organisations and non-state actors, including the private sector, at all levels, thus further contributing to ownership and sustainability beyond the lifetime of the programme.

CONTACTS

For media enquiries about the EU in the Pacific region please contact:

Nazeem KASIM, Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific Suva, Fiji
Press and Information Officer, Email: Mohammed-Nazeem.KASIM@eeas.europa.eu;

or

Donna Hoerder, Media Officer, FFA donna.hoerder@ffa.int
Peter W Foster, Director of Communications, SPC peterf@spc.int
Nanette Woonton, Communications and Outreach, SPREP nanettew@sprep.org
Kalpana Prasad, Manager Communications, Communications@usp.ac.fj