

## **European Commission approves € 30 million for Strengthening Pacific Economic Integration through Trade**

**Today, the European Commission approved aid assistance totalling €30 million in favour of Pacific-ACP (PACP) countries. The objective of the assistance is to strengthen the capacity of the PACPs to draw benefits from the global economy through trade and integration. This programme, called SPEITT, is financed under the 10<sup>th</sup> European Development Fund and forms part of the Pacific Regional Programme.**

*"Pacific - ACP countries have limited capacity to participate in the global economy", noted Ambassador Wiepke van der Goot, Head of the European Union Delegation to the Pacific. "The countries have scarce skilled human resources to negotiate trade agreements and their national custom legislation and working tools are in need of updates and upgrades. There is also the need to better integrate the trade policy into the national development plans. Furthermore, the PACPs have great opportunities in agricultural exports. To push this window of opportunity wide open requires building up guaranty capacity, sustained quality, regular quantity, and of course competitiveness of the sector. The programme approved today will help increase PACP capacity in trade through improved technical capabilities, better customs management and systems and enhanced productive export capacity in key economic sectors such as agriculture, forestry and tourism."*

The Strengthening Pacific Economic Integration through Trade (SPEITT), with a contribution from the EU of EUR 30 million, aims at

- improved technical capabilities facilitating trade negotiations at the regional and multilateral levels,
- greater integration of trade policy into national development frameworks,
- better customs management and systems
- enhanced productive export capacity in key economic sectors such as agriculture, forestry and tourism.

Four regional agencies, namely the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), the Oceania Customs Organisation (OCO) and the South Pacific Travel Organisation (SPTO) will implement the different components of the programme.

### **Background**

The EU has earmarked €95 million in favour of the Pacific region under the 10th EDF Regional Indicative Programme (RIP). It is broken down as follows: Regional economic integration - €45 million (including the programme adopted today), Sustainable Management of Natural Resources and the Environment - €40 million, Non state actors, technical cooperation, etc. - €10 million.

### **EU-Pacific relations and cooperation:**

[MEMO/10/360](#) and [MEMO/10/685](#)

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