



U.S. EMBASSY MAJURO

For Immediate Release

September 6, 2013

FACT SHEET

U.S. Engagement in the Pacific

The Pacific Islands remain steadfast friends and neighbors of the United States and positive relations with the Pacific region are an enduring U.S. foreign policy priority. The United States has been a positive force for development throughout the region for over a century. The United States shares the same values and aspirations with its Pacific neighbors and our ties to the Pacific Island countries are deep and long-standing. Secretary of the Interior Sally Jewell's attendance at the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) Post Forum Dialogue—the first ever by a U.S. Secretary of the Interior and Secretary Jewell's first international visit—demonstrates the United States' commitment to partnering with the Pacific Island countries. Secretary Jewell and her delegation, representing the Departments of State, Interior, Homeland Security, Energy, Agriculture, Health and Human Services, and U.S. Pacific Command are meeting with Island leaders to address shared challenges including climate change, renewable energy, environmental stewardship, gender inequality, health, economic development, education, and peace and security.

The United States is pleased to announce more than \$30 million in U.S. assistance in the Pacific region. This assistance will support the Pacific Islands in improving climate adaptation efforts, increasing disaster preparedness, enhancing marine conservation and sustainable development, ensuring better health outcomes, addressing gender inequality and building better education opportunities for the Pacific, along with many other issues of concern. All U.S. assistance announced at the PIF is subject to the availability of funds.

Climate Change: Climate change is a defining challenge of our time, and the United States welcomes the theme of this year's Pacific Island Forum, "Marshalling a Pacific Response to the Climate Challenge." We recognize that the Pacific Islands are especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. As President Obama has stressed, combating climate change is a top priority for the United States and we are working to tackle climate change head-on both at home and internationally. This year we are pleased to announce that USAID has launched a new procurement of \$20-24 million, subject to the availability of funds, for the **Pacific American Climate (PAC) Fund** project to provide and monitor grants for climate change adaptation measures to qualifying sub-grantees. The PAC Fund activity will reduce long-term vulnerabilities associated with climate change, achieve sustainable climate-resilient community-level development, and provide USAID a platform to fund adaptation measures in the Pacific. We will also provide \$4.5 million over 5 years for **Disaster Preparedness for Effective Response (PREPARE)**, to strengthen disaster preparedness and expedite delivery of appropriate

emergency and reconstruction assistance in the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) and the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI).

The Regional Environmental Office (REO) of U.S. Embassy Suva provides small grants each year for local projects. **Community Climate Services Case Studies** will focus on the successful application of climate services for communities, and the development of case studies focusing across the Pacific. The **Smokeless Stoves** program will promote cleaner, more efficient cook stoves and fuel through the KIO Club, a Marshallese women's organization dedicated to providing targeted assistance to socially and economically disadvantaged groups. Other climate change adaptation initiatives include **climate advisors** for Palau and the RMI, a **Gender Sourcebook on Climate Change Adaptation** for the Pacific region, and a **Climate Finance Case Study** for the RMI.

Renewable Energy: Advancing renewable energy is important to tackling climate change and ensuring access to affordable energy. The United States welcomed the recent Pacific Energy Summit held in Auckland and is supporting the transition to renewable energy through several projects in the Region. The State Department recently hosted a **Direct Line call on Small Island Renewable Energy** to educate U.S. renewable energy businesses on the potential for export to Pacific Island countries. The **U.S.-Asia Pacific Comprehensive Energy Partnership (US ACEP)** is a Presidential initiative designed to drive trade and investment in private and public-private sector energy-related projects and facilitate progress on renewable and cleaner energy backed by up to \$6 billion in concessionary financing from Ex-Im and OPIC. USAID's **Vocational Training and Education for Clean Energy (VOCTEC)** aims to improve sustainability of Pacific renewable energy infrastructure and investments by increasing awareness, knowledge and capacity of local stakeholders, primarily in decentralized clean energy technologies. The National Renewable Energy Laboratory (NREL) **Energy Transformation in the Pacific** project is conducting assessments, recommendations and proposed technical assistance for the Northern Pacific countries transition to renewable sources of energy

Environmental Stewardship: The Pacific Islands is one of the world's richest geographic regions, with a high degree of ecosystem and species diversity characterized by small land masses and vast ocean space. The United States has collaborated with Pacific countries to protect the region's unique natural resources. In Majuro on June 6, Kiribati President Anote Tong and Ambassador Frankie Reed will sign the **U.S. - Kiribati Maritime Boundary Treaty**, defining geographic coordinates for the three maritime boundaries between the two countries. The **Micronesia Biosecurity Plan (MBP)** is a two-phased, \$3.8 million Department of Defense funded, multi-disciplinary effort of federal and regional scientists and experts. The purpose of the MBP is to evaluate terrestrial, marine and freshwater invasive species risks to the RMI, Palau, FSM, Guam, the CNMI and Hawaii and develop a regionally-vetted Biosecurity Plan that will guide implementation efforts across the Region.

The Regional Environmental Office Suva also provided grants for Marine Protected Area (MPA) projects. The **Coral Reef & MPA Conservation in Pohnpei** aims to reduce pressure on, and improve conservation of, coral reefs and MPA's in Pohnpei through education, training and sustainable aquaculture income generation. **Ebiil Society MPAs will** establish another Ermang MPA and initiate fisher-managed MPA's in five other states through the Ebiil Society, a

registered non-profit organization founded by local fishers to sustainably manage fisheries. Enhanced engagement regarding the Phoenix Islands Protected Area (PIPA, Kiribati) and the Pacific Remote Island Marine National Monument (PRIMNM) is the core of the **US-Kiribati Engagement on MPAs**.

Pacific Women's Empowerment Initiative: Last year the Department of State launched the **Rarotonga Partnership for the Advancement of Pacific Island Women** in collaboration with Australia, New Zealand and other public and private partners. The Rarotonga Partnership expands leadership training, academic scholarships, and other educational opportunities through programs that embrace and address gender issues.

This year we are proud to announce new projects in Papua New Guinea. The **Bougainville WPS Incentive Fund** is supported by \$1.5 million from the Women, Peace, and Security (WPS) Incentive Fund to provide technical assistance to the PNG government to strengthen prospects for peace and security through the empowerment and protection of women and girls on Bougainville, PNG. We will also provide \$300,000 for the development, sustainability and advocacy skills of the nascent PNG Women's Chamber of Commerce—**Empowering PNG Women Entrepreneurs** activities aim to accomplish APEC's cross-cutting goals of empowering women entrepreneurs; strengthening women's voices in public policymaking, and strengthening women small business owners' access to international networks and markets. The **Women in Small Business** program will offer training workshops to PNG women starting or formalizing small businesses, targeting especially domestic violence, in partnership with the U.S. Embassy Port Moresby, local NGOs and ExxonMobil.

The United States recently hosted the **Pacific Women Climate Leaders Voluntary Visitors Program**, through which ten Pacific women climate and environment leaders traveled to the United States to network and learn about innovative climate change efforts, energy access, and advancing sustainable development. A pilot **domestic violence awareness campaign model in the Federated States of Micronesia** will raise awareness and empower women against domestic violence and support a bill in Kosrae State's State Legislature.

Health: The global mortality rate from Non-Communicable Diseases (NCDs) is 63%, but 75% of Pacific Islanders die from NCDs, while traditional threats such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and injuries also take a high toll. In addition to the existing package of grant funding from the US Government to the Pacific Islands targeted at health, the USG is expanding its partnership to include four new initiatives. We will award a \$100,000 **grant to the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) to improve public health data** to increase the Pacific Islands' capacity to track health trends and respond to emerging outbreaks through improved public health data collection, tracking, analysis, and dissemination to build effective public health surveillance networks. The United States looks forward to partnering with other donors in the region on this effort.

In November, we will host an **International Visitors Leadership Project on Improving Health and Nutrition** for eight Pacific women nutritionists and educators. In Samoa, Embassy Apia will establish a grant with local NGO to address **NCDs in Samoa**, building on existing efforts to promote healthy lifestyles, increase outreach, and facilitate women's empowerment to

make healthy decisions for their families and themselves. In a joint effort with New Zealand, the **mHealth Mobile Technologies Tobacco Control Initiative** will use mobile phone technology to support tobacco cessation, incorporating surveys on motivation and interest in quitting and text messaging for ongoing support in American Samoa and Samoa. The **Combating Non-Communicable Disease through Regional Trade, Fresh Produce and Good Nutrition** project will connect the Federated States of Micronesia's (FSM's) large consumer markets with regional agricultural producers, and technical advisor with expertise in trade and transportation issues, and will provide analysis sourcing fresh, healthy and affordable produce to the RMI. Through the Compacts of Free Association with the RMI and the FSM, the United States will continue to provide direct economic assistance towards the health sector until 2023.

Economic Growth and Prosperity: The U.S. State Department is working to broaden economic dialogue with Pacific Island Nations. During this year's PIF, senior economic officials will meet with Pacific Island delegates to discuss the formal launch of an economic dialogue in late 2013 or early 2014. The signing of interim arrangements to **extend the South Pacific Tuna Treaty** earlier this year has delivered an additional \$40 million to Pacific nations partnering with the United States on effective and sustainable management of the region's critical ocean resources.

In July, the United States joined with New Zealand to host a best practice exchange forum **Supporting Economic Empowerment and Development in the Caribbean and Pacific (SEED CAP)** in Jamaica bringing together island representatives and experts to discuss collaboration on best practices in food security, agriculture and women's economic empowerment. The **Samoa Trade Fair for all Businesses** targets 100 small businesses to showcase products and/or services and promote trade contacts for Samoa and American Samoa to contribute to economic development and promote dialogue and trade with small businesses.

Education: The United States is proud to remain a key partner with Pacific Island nations on improving educational outcomes and developing education resources through education and outreach. In addition, the United States engages with the people of the Pacific to address their concerns and build lasting relationships.

U.S. Mission New Zealand and Samoa will hold the **Future Leaders of the Pacific Conference** in 2014 in Hawaii at the East West Center, the follow-on to the highly successful conference in American Samoa in February 2013 facilities. FPL14 will draw emerging 25 youth leaders from PIF member countries and U.S. territories for a four-day conference focusing on relevant regional issues such as climate change adaptation, regional security, entrepreneurship, human rights, and others.

In the South Pacific, Embassy Suva's REO and Regional Public Diplomacy Office (RPDO) and university partners, will organize a **Fiji Workshop on International Science Education (Fiji WISE)** on tropical marine conservation biology, to strengthen ties between the University of the South Pacific (USP) and U.S. educational institutions and teach skills for future government workers and conservation practitioners. An **Digital Environmental Journalism Workshop** will bring together journalism students and practicing journalists from around the region to

encourage and promote freedom of expression, and provide new ideas on how participate in the online conversation.. For the first time ever, a **Fiji-Samoa sports exchange** will bring students/athletes from Samoa participate in the Fiji National Disability Games. **For Youth by Youth: A Magazine that Leaps into Action** will fund a youth-oriented NGO to start Papua New Guinea's first youth magazine for youth to voice their concerns, opinions, and to spark community activism ideas.

In the Freely Associated States, the **Preservation of Traditional Knowledge and Carving and Weaving Skills** project will instruct 40 boys and girls in traditional canoe carving and weaving to assist new community settlements in Yap, FSM in adapting to the change of lifestyle while keeping their cultural values intact. **Building Capacity to Protect Palau's Natural Heritage** will expand community awareness about Palau's natural heritage and increase capacity for terrestrial Protected Area Network (PAN) sites. The **Keep Chuuk Wrestling** program will train cadet, junior and senior wrestlers in the new FILA rules and conduct wrestling workshops for male and female athletes and coaches in Chuuk, FSM. The U.S. Embassy in Kolonia, the National Olympic Committee and local sports organizations will sponsor a **Fun Run & 'Sports Passport'** to encourage healthy and more active lifestyles by highlighting American sports and healthy eating. Through the Compacts of Free Association with the RMI and the FSM, the United States will continue to provide direct economic assistance towards the education sector until 2023.

Peace and Security: Last year then-Secretary Clinton announced additional funds for Unexploded Ordnance (UXO) Removal in the Pacific. We provided \$1 million for UXO clearance activities in 2013, including a project here in the RMI that safely removed nearly 200 pieces of UXO in just one month. The United States looks forward to further expanding activities to combat the threat posed in the Pacific by these legacies of war.

The U.S. Coast Guard and the Federated States of Micronesia recently completed the inaugural **Oceania Maritime Security Initiative (OMSI) patrol**. The OMSI expands the opportunities for partner nations to work side-by-side with U.S. Coast Guard on both Coast Guard cutters and U.S. Navy vessels transiting the Pacific in support of more effective law enforcement and fisheries monitoring. As part of this effort, the U.S. has negotiated and signed revisions to some older shiprider agreements with partners in the Pacific and is working to revise remaining agreements.

Compact Assistance: The Compact of Free Association with the Freely Associated States of Palau, the Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the Republic grew out of the United States' post-WWII UN Trustee relationship. Under this special relationship, the United States is responsible for defense, and has extensive rights to operate in FAS territories and deny access by other militaries. FAS citizens may live and work in the United States without a visa and they serve in the U.S. Armed Forces, including in Afghanistan and Iraq. FAS governments consistently vote with the United States on key issues at the United Nations and in other multilateral fora. The FAS receive combined U.S. assistance of over \$200 million annually, both direct grants and annual deposits into national trust funds. Compact grants administered and monitored by the Department of the Interior focus on six priority sectors, with an emphasis on education, health and public infrastructure.

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