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Summary

Australia has a unique interest in the stability and prosperity of Pacific island countries and territories (PICTs). Australia is the region's main economic partner, a major security partner and the leading aid donor. Australian aid to the Pacific, estimated at \$1.085 billion in 2010-11, is structured around three core elements:

- Bilateral assistance to PICTs under the *Pacific Partnerships for Development*, which emphasise mutual responsibility and accountability in shared efforts to accelerate their progress towards the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs);
- Regional programs that promote regional integration, regional cooperation and regional provision of public goods and services, in line with the *Pacific Plan*; and
- Improved the use and effectiveness of all development resources through better development coordination under the *Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination*.

This document outlines the proposed strategic focus of Australia's Pacific regional aid programs¹.

Most PICTs suffer from geographic isolation, small populations and markets that limit economies of scale, and vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters. Their human and institutional capacity constraints limit the ability of countries to respond to the increasingly complex business of government and meet essential sovereign functions. Regional approaches and collaboration play an important role in supporting Pacific governments meet these complex demands. This includes shared provision of goods and essential services, bargaining power, a Pacific voice in international fora, and supplementing local capacity.

Australia supports the Pacific Plan which provides the critical framework for regionalism in the Pacific. Australia's regional aid programs, valued at approximately \$104 million in 2010-11, will focus on:

- Improving development outcomes in the Pacific by investing in activities that promote, where feasible: regional cooperation; regional provision of public goods and services; and regional integration, in line with the Pacific Plan; and
- Improving the effectiveness of Pacific regional organisations in delivering these activities.

¹ This document provides the basis for further consultation with key regional and domestic stakeholders. A final strategy, and associated performance framework, is planned to be finalised by July 2011.

Critical issues in the Pacific

1.1 Critical development challenges in the Pacific

The Pacific Islands region is vast and one of the most culturally diverse. There are considerable differences between and within states and territories of the region in ethnicity, culture, population size, land area and economic characteristics.

Countries such as Papua New Guinea (PNG) benefit from their natural resources, and the likes of Samoa and Vanuatu have demonstrated the value of economic reforms to their long term growth prospects. However, most Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) face common challenges and exhibit conditions of fragility that contribute to a complex and difficult development environment. These include:

- Isolation (both geographic and knowledge sharing);
- Small, sometimes dispersed populations and markets that limit economies of scale and domestic revenue opportunities;
- Limited natural resources in most cases;
- Rapid population growth in some countries that outstrips job creation/income earning opportunities and social services;
- A shortage of critical infrastructure with poor maintenance; and
- High vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters, and economic shocks such as fluctuating international fuel and food prices.

The geography and small size of PICTs is exacerbated by their human capacity constraints. This inhibits PICTs' ability to manage the modern requirements of business and government and deliver on essential sovereign functions. These include formulating and enforcing effective and appropriate national policies; and providing essential services such as health, education and policing.² Public sector management is weak. Variable economic growth performance across the region has been insufficient to cope with rapid population growth (especially in Melanesia), adding to ethnic and social tensions. The coups in Fiji, the Bougainville crisis, civil disturbances in Tonga and disorder in Solomon Islands have all shown that the post-colonial institutions are often ill-equipped to deal with modern pressures.

The global recession had a negative impact on many PICTs, including through lower commodity prices, reduced remittance flows, downward pressure on tourism and loss of value in offshore trust funds. The recession also exposed existing structural weaknesses in Pacific economies, highlighting the need for

² *Pacific Plan Background Papers* document, September 2005, p.31

continued reform³. Countries which have maintained macroeconomic, especially budgetary, discipline and made a concerted and sustained effort to implement structural reforms have fared much better. Samoa, the Cook Islands, Palau and, more recently, Vanuatu, are examples.

Approximately 2.7 million people in the Pacific (one third of the region's population) live in poverty and do not have sufficient income to satisfy their basic human needs. Around 400,000 children are not enrolled in primary school and 64 out of every 1000 children die before the age of five years.⁴

MDG performance across the region is mixed and generally weakest among the Melanesian countries (especially PNG, Fiji and the Solomon Islands) which account for the bulk of the population of PICTs. Most Micronesian countries (including the Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Marshall Islands and Nauru) struggle to maintain some gains. The Polynesian countries (including Cook Islands, Niue, Samoa and Tonga), which all started from a much higher base level, have been performing relatively well.

Gender inequality, particularly in Melanesia, undermines long term development in the Pacific. While gender equality in school enrolments is generally positive, the picture is not so positive elsewhere. Violence against women is widespread, especially in Melanesia. Women's participation in political leadership is also amongst the lowest in the world, and multiple barriers to economic participation and empowerment of women remain (for example ownership of land).

1.2 Aid and Pacific regionalism

Regionalism in the Pacific has a long history. In the years following World War II, Australia advocated for a Pacific Islands bloc working together for a common purpose and for the common benefit of small nations. The South Pacific Commission (later renamed the Secretariat of the Pacific Community - SPC) was created in 1947⁵. In 1971, the Pacific Islands Forum⁶ was established to advance the interests of the region's emerging independent nations. Since then, a number of Pacific Regional Organisations (PROs) have been established focusing on common challenges including the environment, fishing, shipping, education, science, communications and trade (see [Appendix A](#)).

Regional approaches to development play an important role in supporting Pacific governments to meet increasingly complex demands. The shared provision of services to PICTs (for example in tertiary education, sub-regional shipping services and tourism promotion) are especially important. Regionalism strengthens the Pacific's cohesion and bargaining power on issues critical to PICTs' development (such as fisheries management and fuel purchasing). It provides opportunities for policy dialogue and a Pacific voice in international fora on complex global issues (for example climate change). Regional approaches also help supplement local capacity, including for services that are not fully available nationally (for example statistics, audit services and educational standards-setting and assessment).

³ *Surviving the Global Recession: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*, August 2009, p.13 (joint Australian and New Zealand government publication)

⁴ *Tracking Development and Governance in the Pacific*, August 2009, p.1 (AusAID publication)

⁵ The South Pacific Commission was founded in Australia, under the *Canberra Agreement*, by six developed countries that, at the time, administered territories in the Pacific: Australia; France; Netherlands; New Zealand; United Kingdom; and United States.

⁶ It was originally established as the South Pacific Forum. The name changed in 2000, to better reflect the geographic location of its members in the north and south Pacific.

Regionalism particularly benefits smaller PICTs, by providing services that these countries and territories may not otherwise be able to afford or access. It also benefits donors and other partners by providing a way to deal efficiently with the region as a whole, or serve as a catalyst for necessary change.

Pacific Plan

Endorsed by Pacific Leaders in 2005, the *Pacific Plan for Strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration*⁷ is the fundamental document underpinning Pacific regionalism. The Plan articulates the regional priorities of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum. Its development was based primarily on Pacific Leaders' long term desire for stronger regional economic interconnectedness (particularly in trade) and linking the Pacific with the rest of the world. The Plan stipulates three different kinds of regionalism: *regional cooperation, regional provision of public goods and services, and regional integration*. It does not impose a 'one-size-fits-all' model of regionalism, and allows countries in the region to still pursue their own nationally based policies.

The Pacific Plan is appropriately ambitious in its sweep - aiming to enhance and stimulate economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security for Pacific island countries through regionalism (the four pillars). The Plan also gives the Pacific a clear narrative in international fora, and helps it to better engage with the international community in a more coherent way. It is not meant to be a static document, and targeted regional priorities are assessed and endorsed by Leaders each year at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting.⁸

Australia supports the Plan, in large part through our ongoing financial support to Pacific regional organisations. A copy of the Pacific Plan main report is at [Appendix B](#)⁹.

The Plan is now halfway through its 10-year timeframe. Some important practical gains have been made. For example, the establishment of a cost-effective and reliable sub-regional feeder shipping service between Fiji and the small island states of the Central Pacific will enhance inter-island trade flows and economic integration. PICTs have collaborated on negotiating, within international fisheries fora, stringent conservation, management and surveillance measures to protect - and maximise the value of - its fish stocks, arguably the region's most important economic resource. Improved safety standards are now in place in port facilities.

Progress has also been made in difficult but important areas. These include measures to improve freedom of information, as well as the development of a new Pacific strategy to enhance opportunities and practical support for people living with disability. However, the past five years of its implementation has also highlighted the complexities and political sensitivities of regionalism, with other important areas such as trade and bulk fuel procurement progressing slowly.

⁷ The Pacific Plan was endorsed by Forum leaders at the 2005 Pacific Islands Forum in Port Moresby, PNG in 2005.

⁸ For example, at the 2010 Pacific Islands Forum, Leaders agreed on five areas of major importance to the region that required special attention. These included: delineating maritime boundaries; water and sanitation services; improved literacy and numeracy rates; wider approaches to disaster risk management, including in relation to health trends and population growth; and better power utilities management.

⁹ The full plan can be viewed at:

http://www.forumsec.org.fj/resources/uploads/attachments/documents/Pacific_Plan_Nov_2007_version.pdf

The most important achievement of the Plan to date is establishing a regional governance framework and process that now brings together Leaders, Pacific regional organisations, multilateral institutions and bilateral aid donors. While still some way to go, the framework provides policy cohesion across countries and Pacific regional organisations on the critical issues facing the region, rather than operating independently.

The Plan enables standardisation across the governing councils of the various Pacific regional organisations, reducing fragmentation of policy decisions, vested interests, and the pursuit of ad hoc measures. These regional organisations are now working more collaboratively on areas identified by Leaders as important (fisheries management being a prime example). The recent rationalisation of Pacific regional organisations¹⁰ - most notably the merger of the Pacific Islands Applied Geosciences Commission (SOPAC) and the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA) with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) – is a notable and important achievement that could yield more effective regional services and better outcomes for PICTs.

While the Plan sets out a monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework, this has not been consistently reported against. It needs strengthening and is currently under review.

1.3 Australian aid and Pacific Regional Programs

Australia has a unique interest in the stability and development of PICTs. It is the region's main economic partner, and a major security partner. Australia is also the region's leading aid donor. Australian aid to the Pacific, estimated at \$1.085 billion in 2010-11, is structured around three core elements:

- bilateral assistance to PICTs under the *Pacific Partnerships for Development*, which emphasise mutual responsibility and accountability in shared efforts to accelerate their progress towards the MDGs;
- regional programs that promote regional integration, regional cooperation and regional provision of public goods and services, in line with the *Pacific Plan*; and
- improved use and effectiveness of all development resources through better development coordination under the *Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination*.

Australia's aid is primarily directed through bilateral initiatives, in line with priorities agreed with partner countries under the Pacific Partnerships for Development. However, a considerable proportion of Australia's aid is directed through regional programs, in line with our support to the Pacific Plan. Regional programs are defined here as:

- core and extra-budgetary support to Pacific regional organisations;
- extra-budgetary support to multilateral agencies that undertake regional programs in the Pacific; and
- other initiatives that promote regional integration or cooperation.

¹⁰ This refers to the Pacific Regional Institutional Framework Review, which was requested by Forum Leaders to reform the way that Pacific regional organisations were structured, with the aim of reducing duplication and delivering better quality services to member countries.

Regional programs complement Australia’s bilateral aid efforts. Australia will provide approximately \$104 million (approximately 10% of Australia’s Official Development Assistance (ODA) to the Pacific) in 2010-11 for such programs. Around \$48 million of this investment will be directed to Pacific regional organisations.

Figure 1: Estimated Australian ODA to the Pacific (by type)

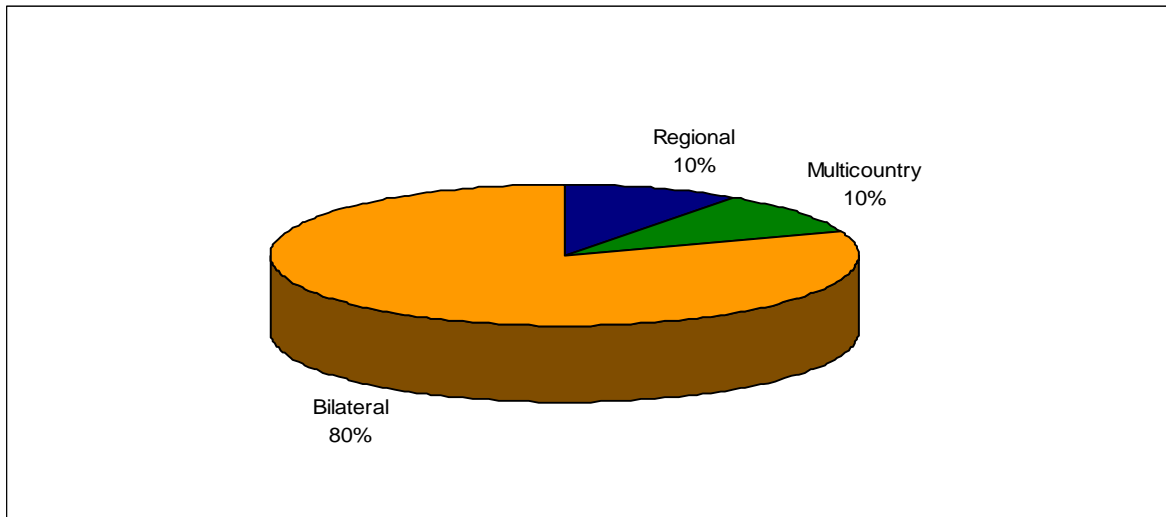
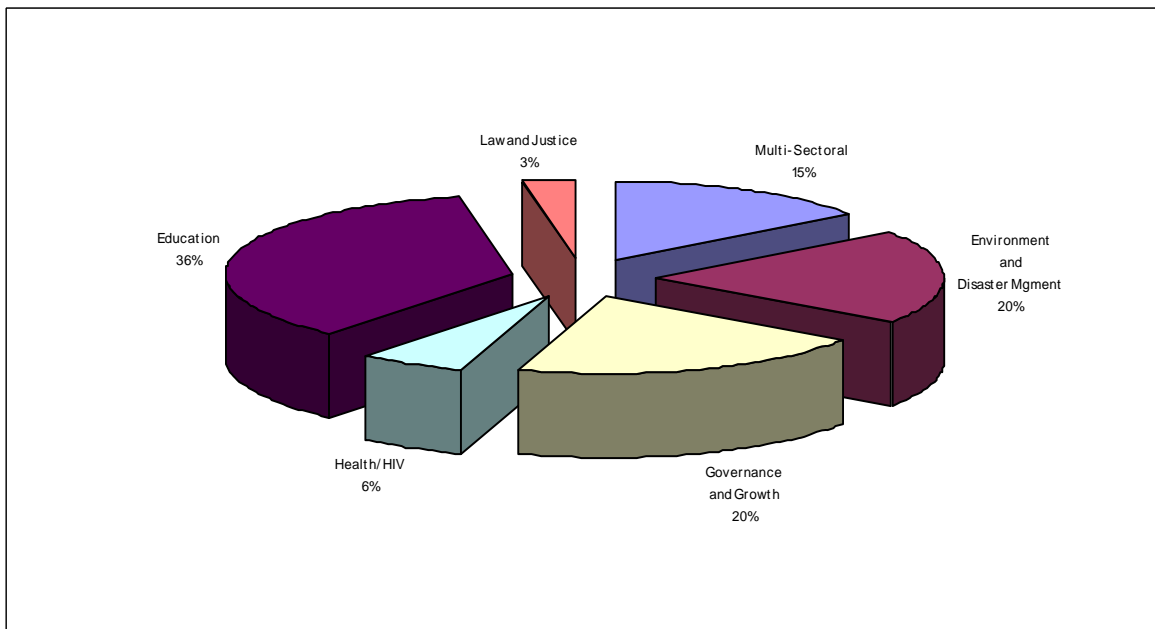


Figure 2: Australian funding to Pacific regional programs (by sector)



Box 1: The *Australia Pacific Technical College* (APTC) is a large scale Australian program, initiated under the auspices of the Pacific Plan. It provides international standard technical training to Pacific Islanders. Its objectives are to: increase the supply of Pacific skilled workers to meet industry needs; improve productivity; and provide greater employment opportunities for Pacific Islanders in local and international labour markets. Courses are delivered in the region, by selected Australian Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges, at Australian Certificate III/IV (trade and post-trade) levels, in: automotive; manufacturing; construction; electrical; tourism; hospitality; health and community services. Campuses have been established in Fiji, PNG, Samoa and Vanuatu. The APTC commenced in July 2007. Over 2,000 graduates have been trained so far, with up to 3,000 by the end of the first phase in June 2011. Australia has committed \$149.5 million to Phase 1. A

The other major Australian regional aid investment is the *Australia Pacific Technical College* (see Box 1).

Some examples of Australian funded regional aid programs to the Pacific are at Appendix C.

Australia and New Zealand traditionally meet a large part of the running and programming costs of most Pacific regional organisations, both through their assessed contributions¹¹ to core budgets and their voluntary extra-budgetary funding for specific programs. For example, Australia and New Zealand currently meet more than 40% of the operating budgets of SPC and the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA).

1.4 Opportunities for donor coordination, harmonisation and alignment

Regional aid programs represent more than 10% of all donor aid flows to the region. These typically involve small activities in each Pacific island country, with high participation costs for member country officials. These programs have often contributed to aid fragmentation and have not been well coordinated at country level¹². Because they are frequently specialised (for example, concentrating on a single issue) additional care is needed to ensure they integrate with national development efforts.

The key risk to the quality and value of regional initiatives is their increased proliferation and fragmentation, through involvement of new donors in key areas and increased funding from existing donors. Climate change is an example, with potentially substantial adaptation funds flowing to the region – from donor and other sources – if international financing commitments reached at Copenhagen are realised¹³. Other risks include the institutional capacities of Pacific regional organisations, the ability of regional programs to gain traction at the national level, and ensuring the Pacific Plan remains the key driver of Pacific regionalism.

¹¹ All member countries of the various Pacific regional organisations pay an annual membership fee, based on different formulas that take account of, among other things, the size of their economies and capacity to pay.

¹² Positive steps have been taken by Pacific regional organisations to better coordinate activities and identify shared priorities. For example, priority areas for implementation are identified by, and agreed to, by Pacific regional organisations through the Pacific Plan Action Committee, and submitted to Leaders at the Pacific Islands Forum for endorsement.

¹³ At the 2010 Pacific Islands Forum, Forum Leaders agreed on a set of principles to guide more effective management and implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation resources. Forum Economic Ministers subsequently commissioned a study to identify options, both national and regional, for improving countries' access to, and management of, climate change resources.

Cairns Compact

The region's key policy response to achieving better progress on aid effectiveness and the MDGs has been the *Cairns Compact*¹⁴. The Compact calls for a new determination and an invigorated commitment to lift the economic and development performance of the region, through driving more effective coordination of all development resources from both countries and development partners. It seeks to strengthen Forum island countries' leadership of their own development agendas, and encourage better donor coordination.

The Compact makes both the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* and the *Accra Agenda for Action relevant to the region*, tailoring global approaches to the unique needs and challenges of the Pacific. While the early analytical work under the Compact has focused on the national level, the problems of fragmentation and poor coordination that it deals with are equally evident in regional programs. The initiatives being undertaken under the Compact can therefore be extended to regional programs in the near term.

Other important aid effectiveness principles, such as mutual accountability and managing for results, should be applied to regional programs. The evidence base for gauging the effectiveness of these programs needs to be strengthened. The main area of weakness is that the Pacific regional organisations - and the Pacific Plan itself - need much more robust performance frameworks. Much of the reporting by Pacific regional organisations continues to focus on output level, with little evidence provided on achieving outcomes at the country or regional level. The welcome corporate reform efforts of some Pacific regional organisations, aimed at strengthening their planning, financial management and broader governance processes, should continue and be supported.

¹⁴ Further details on the Cairns Compact can be found at <http://www.ausaid.gov.au/publications/pdf/CairnsCompact.pdf> and <http://www.forumsec.org.fj/pages.cfm/strategic-partnerships-coordination/pacific-principles-on-aid-effectiveness/cairns-compact-1.html>

2 Strategic priorities for Australia's Pacific regional aid program

2.1 Recommendations for strategic focus of Australia's Pacific regional aid program

The Australian public, the international community, and our Pacific neighbours acknowledge our special responsibilities to the region. These include facilitating sustainable development, promotion of democratic principles, and supporting the resolution of problems and disputes when they arise.

The PICTs have yet to achieve the development aspirations of their peoples. Strong bilateral partnerships are the foundation of Australia's national interests in the prosperity and stability of the region and its aid program to the Pacific. However, many of the Pacific's challenges cannot alone be addressed on a country-by-country basis, and are better managed through effective region-wide (or sub-region) approaches and pooling of resources. Appropriately targeted regional programs are therefore vital and reinforce Australia's bilateral aid efforts.

Australia's regional program will focus on:

- a. improving development outcomes in the Pacific by investing in activities that promote: regional cooperation; regional provision of public goods and services; and regional integration, in line with the Pacific Plan; and
- b. improving the effectiveness of the Pacific regional organisations in delivering regional services and activities.

Aid investments in regional approaches have a mixed record of achievement. Critical tests to ensure that future support to regional activities are effective include whether they:

- provide economies of scale, especially for shared provision of services that cannot be viably provided by the smaller PICTs (for example, compiling statistics, and providing tertiary education through the University of the South Pacific);
- contribute to strengthened regional cohesion and bargaining power, including providing a forum for policy dialogue and a Pacific voice in international fora (for example on trade and climate change);
- provide a means of addressing transboundary challenges (for example, with pandemics) and management of global public goods (for example, marine conservation and meteorological services);

- provide a means of giving suitable, impartial advice or management of governance challenges, including development of regional benchmarking, standards and peer review (for example, on literacy and numeracy, energy efficiency and utilities management); and
- act as a catalyst for necessary change (for example, in the areas of gender equality and human rights).

2.2 Proposed approaches and ways of working

Australia's strategic priorities for improving the impact of regionalism, and the effectiveness of Australia's investments in regional activities, include:

- a. mid-way through the 10 year Pacific Plan, supporting efforts to renew regional commitment to the Plan as the cornerstone of Pacific regionalism.
- b. supporting the development of more robust performance frameworks and reporting for both the Pacific Plan and Pacific regional organisations, to demonstrate:
 - i. improved services for members
 - ii. development outcomes
 - iii. value for money for Australia's investments
 - iv. and allocate Australian funding accordingly;
- c. extending Cairns Compact reporting, analyses and aid effectiveness principles to the operations of the Pacific regional organisations and other donors' regional programs to reduce fragmentation, minimise the administrative burden on PICT governments and help clarify the areas of interest and the activities of each donor.
- d. helping consolidate the institutional rationalisation achieved to date under the Regional Institutional Framework Review and see this translate into improved cost effectiveness of Pacific regional organisations' services to the PICTs. (This includes supporting the continued corporate reform efforts of the PROs); and
- e. ensure Australia's regional programs feature strong whole-of-government coordination and are properly harmonised with relevant bilateral programs.

2.3 Conclusion

The Pacific region, including countries and their donor partners, needs to lift its collective game to achieve the development aspirations of its peoples. Pacific regionalism has a vital role to play given the diverse and fragmented nature of the region. It takes time, leadership and sustained commitment to realise the benefits of regionalism. At the same time, those aid effectiveness principles being urged on the rest of the developing world need to be adhered to by the Pacific regional organisations, their members and donor partners.

Appendix A: Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific

	Established	Main HQ	Mandate
Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS)	1971 (formerly South Pacific Forum)	Suva, Fiji	This is the premier political grouping in the Pacific. Its mission is to ensure the effective implementation of the Leaders' decisions for the benefit of the people in the Pacific. The Secretariat's goals are to stimulate economic growth and enhance political governance and security for the region, through the provision of policy advice; and to strengthen regional cooperation and integration through coordinating, monitoring and evaluating implementation of Leaders' decisions. The primary roles of the Secretariat are: to provide policy advice and guidance in implementing the decisions of the Leader; coordinate and assist in the implementation of Leaders' decisions; provide support to the Leaders' meetings, ministerial meetings, and associated committees and working groups.
Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)	1947 (formerly South Pacific Commission)	Noumea, New Caledonia/Suva, Fiji	This inter-governmental organisation that provides technical and policy advice and assistance to its Pacific Island members. It has six divisions covering: economic development; fisheries, aquaculture and marine ecosystems; land resources; public health; social resources; and applied science and technology.
Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)	1972 (now incorporated into SPC)	Suva, Fiji	The mandate of the Commission is to ensure the earth sciences (geology, geophysics, oceanography and hydrology) are fully used to enable SPC to fulfil its Mission.
South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA)	1980 (now incorporated into SPC)	Suva, Fiji	The Board assists Pacific Island Countries to improve the quality of education through the use of good assessment practices and procedures.
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP)	1980	Apia, Samoa	The Secretariat promotes cooperation in the Pacific islands region and to provide assistance in order to protect and improve the environment and ensure sustainable development.
Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)	1979	Honiara, Solomon Is	To strengthen national capacity and regional solidarity so that its 17 members can manage, control and develop their tuna fisheries.
University of the South Pacific (USP)	1968	Suva, Fiji	The University provides undergraduate and post-graduate educational services to the peoples of the Pacific region.
Pacific Power Association (PPA)	1992	Suva, Fiji	The Association aims to create an environment of 'co-operative partnership' with the private sector, funding institutions and others with interest in the development of the power industry and to enhance the role of the power sector in the PICTs
Pacific Islands Development Program (PIDP) – part of the East-West Centre in Hawaii	1980	Honolulu, Hawaii	The Program assists Pacific islands leaders to advance their collective efforts to achieve and sustain equitable social and economic development.
South Pacific Tourist Organisation (SPTO)	1980s	Suva, Fiji	The organisation facilitates the sustainable development of the tourism sector in the South Pacific; to strengthen capacity within the region; and to sustainably plan, market and manage the development of the tourism sector.
Fiji School of Medicine (FSMed)	1885 (Suva Medical School)	Fiji	A tertiary education institution providing training and education for Health Professionals in the South Pacific – including medicine, dentistry, pharmacy, physiotherapy, radiography, laboratory technology, public health, dietetics and environmental health.

Appendix B

[The Pacific Plan for strengthening Regional Cooperation and Integration](#)

Appendix C

Some examples of Australian-funded regional programs to the Pacific, in support of the Pacific Plan

- *Core and extra-budgetary support to Pacific regional organisations* (for example Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat; Secretariat of the Pacific Community; University of the South Pacific; Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program; and the Forum Fisheries Agency) to implement programs and services agreed to by the members of their respective governing councils.
- *Pacific Region Audit Initiative*: raising the quality of public auditing across the region through: pooling the resources of national audit offices to undertake cooperative financial audits; competency-based training and capacity-building of national audit offices; regional performance audits; and communications and advocacy of public auditing (including support to the Secretariat of the Pacific Association of Supreme Audit Institutions).
- *Pacific Horticultural and Market Access Program*: support to Pacific island countries to meet the regulatory requirements of key trading partners (for example quarantine and food safety standards) and increase their agricultural and horticultural exports.
- *Australia Pacific Technical College*: international standard technical training to Pacific Islanders to: increase the supply of Pacific skilled workers to meet industry needs; improve their productivity; and provide greater employment opportunities in local and international labour markets. Courses are delivered in the region, by selected Australian Technical and Further Education (TAFE) colleges, at Australian Certificate III and IV (trade and post-trade) levels, in the areas of: automotive; manufacturing; construction; electrical; tourism; hospitality; health and community services.
- *PACER Plus Negotiations*: a range of support measures to assist Pacific island countries prepare for negotiations on a Pacific Agreement on Closer Economic Relations (PACER) Plus. These include: trade negotiations training for Pacific trade officials; funding for Pacific island countries to undertake independent trade analyses to inform their negotiating positions; and funding for the establishment of the Office of the Chief Trade Adviser, to assist countries prepare for and undertake negotiations.
- *Pacific Judicial Development Program*: in collaboration with New Zealand, strengthening governance and the rule of law in Pacific island countries through the provision of professional training programs for Pacific magistrates and judicial and court officers.
- *Statistics*: through the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the Pacific Financial Technical Assistance Centre (PFTAC), provide essential statistics services and assistance to Pacific governments to enhance their planning, policy and service delivery functions. These include: conducting censuses and household income and health surveys; and economic statistics (for example balance of payments and national accounts).
- *Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project*: records data on changes in absolute sea levels. This data will inform Pacific island governments' climate change risk assessments, planning and adaptation measures.