



AUSTRALIAN HIGH COMMISSION PORT MORESBY

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MEDIA RELEASE

New program to boost PNG agricultural exports

Australia and Papua New Guinea today launched a new program to increase Papua New Guinea's agricultural exports.

The Pacific Horticultural and Agricultural Market Access (PHAMA) Program will provide practical assistance to the public and private sectors to increase the export of horticultural and agricultural produce to regional and international markets.

Increasing domestic agricultural production and agricultural exports will benefit Papua New Guineans living in rural areas. Over 85 per cent of people live in rural areas yet only around three per cent of cultivated land is used for export cash cropping.

Australian High Commission Minister Counsellor Rod Hilton said Australia will provide AU\$5 million through its aid program to bring PHAMA to PNG.

"Through our development partnership with PNG, Australia is increasing assistance for private sector-led economic growth in PNG to create jobs and reduce poverty," Mr Hilton said.

Speaking at the launch, Secretary for Agriculture and Livestock, Dr Vele Ila'ava said: "We are very hopeful that PHAMA will help us address some of the technical market access issues that continue to confront PNG. I look forward to the Program developing a strong relationship with my Ministry and other technical organisations."

Activities under PHAMA could include:

- assisting commodity sectors to develop plans related to development needs and export
- assisting with ongoing improvements to cocoa and coffee quality standards
- commencing work on artifacts and handicrafts quarantine compliance awareness
- providing assistance to further develop spice and chocolate products for export.

PHAMA has been successfully running since 2011 in Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, and Vanuatu with funding from Australia and New Zealand.

In PNG, PHAMA will be implemented by AECOM and key partners will include the National Agriculture Quarantine and Inspection Authority, the Fresh Produce Development Agency, the National Fisheries Authority, exporters and commodity boards.

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