



# THE CAIRNS COMPACT

## on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific

### What is it?

The Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific (Cairns Compact) is an initiative of the Pacific Islands Forum. It is a development compact which was agreed by Forum Leaders and endorsed by key development partners at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meeting in Cairns, August 2009.

The Cairns Compact sets out collective actions by Forum member countries and development partners designed to strengthen coordination and use of all development resources in the Pacific, in line with international best-practice as expressed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness, the Accra Action Agenda and Pacific Principles on Aid Effectiveness.

The Cairns Compact is based on principles of mutual and shared commitment and accountability of Forum Island Countries (FICs) and development partners to lifting the economic and development performance of the region.

### Why the Cairns Compact?

The Cairns Compact responds to Leaders' concerns that, despite continued high levels of development assistance over many years, the Pacific region overall is not on track to achieve most of the MDGs by 2015. The Compact aims to drive more effective coordination of development resources from FICs and development partners, to improve development outcomes in the Pacific and accelerate progress against the MDGs.

The Cairns Compact aims to improve development planning, budgeting and aid coordination systems and processes to progress national and regional development priorities and aspirations, as reflected in the National Development Plans, the Pacific Plan and the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

### Implementing the Cairns Compact

The achievement of the Cairns Compact objectives is the collective responsibility of all the Forum member countries and development partners with coordinating and secretariat support from the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat.

In the first two years of implementation, the focus is on developing an understanding of the progress of FICs and the region towards achieving MDGs, as well as the challenges and priority actions necessary to improve development effectiveness at the country level. In future years the focus will shift to contributing to action by countries and at the regional level through monitoring outcomes and disseminating good practice.

Evidence gathered is based on FICs' and development partners' self reflection and peer assessments of country and development partner's development planning and aid coordination processes. The Cairns Compact establishes a series of development coordination initiatives that include:

- Tracking progress towards the MDGs and development effectiveness in the region;
- Peer reviews of the effectiveness of FIC national development planning, budgeting and aid coordination processes;
- FIC self-reporting on the effectiveness of national development planning, budgeting and aid coordination processes and systems;
- Improving FIC development data to guide better decision making, and monitoring and evaluation
- Development partner self reporting on the effectiveness of their development coordination efforts against the principles of the Paris Declaration, Accra Agenda for Action and Pacific Principles on Aid Effectiveness
- A high level dialogue with the private sector, to encourage private sector growth and employment generation
- Developing and facilitating the implementation and monitoring of a 'road map' to strengthen FICs' public expenditure management, procurement, accountability and monitoring systems

Pacific Island Forum Leaders will review progress on development coordination at the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' meetings, and through other Forum processes such as the Pacific Plan Action Committee (PPAC) and the Post Forum Dialogue.

The Cairns Compact acknowledges that country leadership, mutual accountability and responsibility are fundamental to successful development outcomes recognising the importance of the private sector, governance and infrastructure to development in the Pacific.

### **How long will the Cairns Compact take to implement?**

The Cairns Compact is a long term endeavour, and one whose success depends on the sustained commitment and participation of FICs, development partners and other stakeholders.

The Cairns Compact gives high level political endorsement to FICs' efforts to drive improvements in national development outcomes. However the benefits of better development coordination – more effective use of development resources, reduced administrative burden for countries, improved information to guide decision-making – will only be fully realised over time.

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