

EU Renews €20m Marine Partnership to Strengthen Pacific Ocean Governance and Fisheries

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The European Union has renewed its partnership with the Pacific Community, the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency and the University of the South Pacific under the second phase of the Pacific-EU Marine Partnership programme. With a budget of €20 million, implementation will run through to 2030 across Pacific Island countries and Timor-Leste.

Building on phase one, the programme adopts a coordinated, multi-partner delivery model focused on ocean governance, sustainable fisheries management and resilient coastal economies. From a programme management perspective, PEUMP II represents a regional portfolio approach, aligning technical assistance, policy reform, education and capacity building under a shared results framework.

Strengthening governance and economic returns

Core workstreams include strengthening ocean governance frameworks, improving management of oceanic and coastal fisheries, enhancing value chains and market access, and tackling Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated fishing. These interventions are designed not only to protect marine ecosystems but to increase sustainable economic returns for Pacific nations.

The programme has been co-designed to align with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent, ensuring that investments reinforce nationally defined priorities rather than operate in isolation. This alignment reduces duplication, improves accountability and supports long-term institutional ownership.

Coordinated regional delivery

SPC, FFA and USP will jointly deliver the programme, working alongside the Office of the Pacific Ocean Commissioner, national governments and civil society. Such a structure requires clear governance arrangements, defined roles and strong inter-agency coordination to manage complexity across multiple jurisdictions and thematic areas.

The Forum Fisheries Agency will focus on strengthening tuna fisheries governance and compliance systems, while SPC will support technical and scientific capability. USP will lead on education, research and capacity development across its regional campus network, embedding skills development into the programme's long-term sustainability strategy.

Capacity, climate resilience and inclusion

PEUMP II places emphasis on climate resilience, biodiversity protection and equitable benefit sharing. It also integrates gender considerations and a rights-based approach, recognising that effective ocean governance depends on inclusive participation and local ownership.

For project leaders operating in the Pacific, the programme illustrates how large-scale regional initiatives can combine policy reform, institutional strengthening and technical investment within a single structured framework. Success will depend on sustained coordination, measurable outcomes and the ability to adapt to evolving environmental and economic pressures.

By extending the partnership to 2030, the EU and Pacific institutions signal a long-term commitment to healthier oceans, stronger fisheries governance and more resilient coastal communities, with delivery anchored in regional collaboration and shared accountability.