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The Kiwa Initiative launches new projects and receives additional contributions from its donors to strenghten climate resilience in the Pacific Region

Suva, Fiji (16 May, 2023) – **In the margins of the Kiwa Initiative Steering Committee meeting, the Kiwa Initiative awarded grants to two additional regional projects and announced the selection of four local projects in Pacific Island Countries, to enhance climate change adaptation thanks to Nature-based Solutions (NbS). The Initiative's budget has now reached more than EUR 75 million (FJD 180 million), owing to increased donor contributions from France and Canada. Aotearoa New Zealand is this year's chair of the Kiwa Initiative. Its support reflects that biodiversity, oceans and nature is a priority area for its climate action. Aotearoa New Zealand looks forward to the next Kiwa Initiative calls for proposals, and the large and small projects that will be generated as a result.**

The Kiwa Initiative Steering Committee gathered in Fiji, Suva on May 16th, 2023. ©KiwaInitiative

Thanks to the financial support of the donors, the Initiative has gained new traction.

The Kiwa Initiative – Nature-based Solutions (NbS) for climate resilience aims at strengthening the climate change resilience of Pacific Islands ecosystems, communities and economies through NbS, by protecting, sustainably managing and restoring biodiversity. The Initiative, launched in 2020 with EUR 31 million (FJD 74,5 million), is funded by the European Union (EU), Agence française de développement (AFD), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Australian Government Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). The Kiwa Initiative has established partnerships with the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN ORO).

THIS INITIATIVE IS FUNDED BY:
EUROPEAN UNION · AFD · Canada · Australian Aid · NEW ZEALAND FOREIGN AFFAIRS & TRADE Aid Programme

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH:
Pacific Community · Communauté du Pacifique · SPREP · IUCN

The Kiwa Initiative's funding has been increased from EUR 57 million[1] *(FJD 137 million)* to more than EUR 75 million *(FJD 180 million)*, thanks to the additional contributions of France (EUR 14 million) and from Canada. This will allow to launch new Calls for projects.

"The €14M additional French contribution to the Kiwa Initiative through its Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Overseas Territories, on top of its previous funding of €26M, illustrates the commitment of France towards climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation. This top-up is in line with our Indopacific strategy in Oceania where we encourage the regional cooperation with French territories via the Agence française de développement.", declared H.E. François-Xavier Léger, Ambassador of France to Fiji.

"Aligned with Canada's global commitment to address the climate challenge, Canada is pleased to renew and top up its assistance to the Pacific Island Countries as they work towards mitigating the impacts of climate change while also helping to increase the region's resilience. Canada joins hands with our Kiwa partners to meet the Pacific Islands' need for continued financial assistance for nature-based solutions. The additional funding will further strengthen the Kiwa Initiative's capacity to address climate change and biodiversity challenges at a greater scale through nature-based solutions for climate change adaptation." - Joanne Lemay, High Commissioner, High Commission of Canada in New Zealand

Selection of local projects in four Pacific Island Countries and a new call for local projects to be launched in 2023

The IUCN Oceania Regional Office (IUCN-ORO) manages the funds dedicated to very small to medium-sized grants for local projects that benefit communities. **IUCN-ORO will provide grants to four (4) new projects that assist local people in conservation and climate change adaptation efforts**. **A new call for local project proposals will be launched in 2023.**

Those 4 new projects join the nine (9) existing grantees, which include:

- Ministry of Waterways – Fiji,
- Community Centred Conservation – Fiji,
- National Trust of Fiji - Fiji,
- Ebiil Society – Palau,
- Samoa Conservation Society - Samoa,
- Birdlife International - Solomon Islands,
- Tonga National Youth Congress - Tonga,
- Blue Ventures Conservation - Timor Leste,
- Lamacca Climate Change Association – Vanuatu.

"*The local projects funded by the Kiwa Initiative are demonstrating that Nature-based Solutions across the Pacific, including the overseas French territories, are helping communities and governments to adapt to climate change impacts and understand the how leveraging nature can be simple, cost effective and bring equitable benefits to everyone*.", declared Mr. Kenneth Kassem, IUCN-ORO Strategic Partnerships Officer.

[1] In July 2022, the European Union announced an additional contribution of EUR 6 million, France EUR 8 million, New Zealand NZD 2 million and Australia AUD 2 million.

INSPIRE and MICOAST, the new Kiwa regional projects

The Kiwa Initiative is also pleased to announce the launch of two new regional projects.

- **The INSPIRE (INvasive SPecIes management for Resilient Ecosystems and societiEs) project, led by BirdLife International, will be implemented in Fiji (Melanesia), Palau (Micronesia), Samoa and French Polynesia (Polynesia), with the overall objective of enhancing and mainstreaming invasive species management for climate change adaptation in priority biodiversity sites.**

In all project sites, the main activities will be the identification and monitoring of invasive alien species (IAS), watershed invasive weed management and habitat restoration, identification and development of alternative income sources and capacity building workshops.

Activities will be held in:
- The Omoa catchment in Fatu Hiva, Marquesas, French Polynesia. The project will benefit the Omoa community and will cascade to 5 other Marquesas Islands and communities.
- The Navukailagi catchment in Gau island, Fiji. The project will benefit the Gau Island and Navukailagi District targeting 3 villages and 1 informal settlement, cascading to 15 other communities on the island.
- The Gasegase catchment in Upolu island, Samoa. The project will be implemented in 5 gasegase communities being Afiamalu, Malololelei, Papaseea, Moamoa and Alafua.
- The Rock Islands Southern Lagoon and the Kayangel atoll, Palau. The project will benefit the Kayangel community and Koro, representing 70% of the Palau's population.

"On behalf of BirdLife International and our BirdLife Family, we are very proud to be part of the Kiwa Initiative in our journey to a climate resilient Pacific. We are excited to be launching our INSPIRE Project (INvasives SPecIes management for Resilient Ecosystems and communities), where we will work alongside our partners, local communities and governments across the Pacific to address the cumulative negative impacts of invasive species on ecosystem resilience and biodiversity. We thank the Kiwa Initiative for this incredible opportunity for action, capacity building and key learnings." - Margaret West, Pacific Regional Director of BirdLife International

- **The MICOAST (MICronesian Community-based Fisheries Management and NbS for COASTal resilience) project, led by OneReef, will be implemented in the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI), Federated States of Micronesia, Nauru and Republic of Palau (ROP).**

The objective of the project is to strengthen the implementation of Community-Based Fisheries Management (CBFM) and related activities as soundly designed and implemented NbS to enhance climate adaptation and resilience, improve food security and maintain ecosystem services and biodiversity across the Micronesia region.

A broad coalition of stakeholders (coastal fishing communities,traditional and/or national authorities, private sector, NGOs etc.) will be mobilized to achieve the components of the project.

The following sites have been selected in the 4 countries:
- Republic of Marshall Islands: Mili Atoll, Maloelap Atoll, Ujae Atoll, Lae Atoll.

- Federated States of Micronesia: Pohnpei State (U, Madolenihmw and Kitti Municipalities); Yap State(Nimpal, Weloy Municipality); Kosrae (whole-of-island).
- Nauru: All districts (whole-of-island).
- Republic of Palau: Hatohobei State (Tobi Island and Helen Reef), Sonsorol State, Ngarchelong State(Ebiil Channel and surrounding waters), Koror State (urban Koror, nearshore waters, select MPAs).

"As Pacific communities rise to meet the challenge of climate adaptation, resource limitations slow progress while urgency grows. The Kiwa Initiative is transformative because it meets an urgent need to put the right resources directly into the hands of the many communities working on the ground", declared Mr. *Christopher L. LaFranchi CEO and Founder of OneReef.*

The Kiwa POLFN project has shortlisted its learning farms

The Kiwa Pacific Organic Learning Farms Network (POLFN) was the first regional project launched by the Kiwa Initiative, led by SPC's Land Resources Division and POETCom. The project aims to meet the climate resilience, capacity building needs of farmers, and the rehabilitation of natural biodiversity by establishing hands-on, mentored learning centres on fully operable, commercially viable organic farms in Fiji, Nauru, Solomon Islands and Tonga.

Through the POLFN network, current and future farmers will have access to local learning centres that demonstrate the benefits of Nature-based Solutions through Organic / Agroecological practices including agroforestry, food forests, vermiculture, permaculture, intercropping, nutrient cycling and chemical free pest and disease management. Farmers, students and community members will have access to trainings, workshops, seminars and education programs on organic farming practices, and, most importantly, they will also have the opportunity to participate hands-on with experienced organic experts in the field.

Two farms each in **Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tonga,** have just been shortlisted.

"The Pacific Organic Learning Farms Network is not just about promoting agroecology and organic farming practices, but also about fostering community development and resilience. By supporting local farmers and connecting them to markets, the Organic Learning Farms project will help to create viable, circular food systems that can withstand the challenges of today and tomorrow.", said Mr. Jim Pierce, Coordinator of POETCom.

Besides POLFN, two others projects have already been launched :

- **Kiwa PEBACC+ project, led by SPREP in Fiji, New Caledonia, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Wallis and Futuna**. The objective of this project is to develop, support and institutionalize an Ecosystem-based Approach (EbA) to climate change adaptation.
- **Kiwa WISH+ project, led by WCS in Fiji, Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands.** One of the main objectives of the project is to facilitate investment in Nature-based Solutions for safely managed drinking water, sanitation, and wastewater in high-risk watersheds.

The Kiwa Initiative supports Nature-based Solutions for climate change adaptation in the Pacific since 2020, at local and regional levels.

The Kiwa Initiative, managed by the Agence française de développement (AFD), builds both local and national capacities, promotes approaches that are sensitive to social vulnerability and gender inequality and fosters dialogue amongst donors, regional organisations and countries and territories to improve Official Development Assistance coordination.

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About the Kiwa Initiative - The Kiwa Initiative - Nature-based Solutions (NBS) for Climate Resilience aims to build the resilience of Pacific Island ecosystems, communities and economies to climate change through NBS by protecting, sustainably managing and restoring biodiversity. It is based on simplified access to funding for climate change adaptation and biodiversity conservation actions for local and national governments, civil society and regional organisations in Pacific Island States and Territories. The Initiative is funded by the European Union, Agence française de développement (AFD), Global Affairs Canada (GAC), Australia's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT). It has established partnerships with the Pacific Community (SPC), the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Oceania Regional Office of the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN). For more information: www.kiwainitiative.org

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