

SPC and UN Strengthen Cooperation

Written by Zarin Khan

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Senior leaders from United Nations (UN) agencies and the Pacific Community (SPC) gathered in Suva, Fiji last week to discuss opportunities for deepening cooperation and strengthening coordination of their respective work aimed at helping countries of the Pacific to achieve the global Sustainable Development Goals. The meeting served to identify synergies between SPC's priority areas and UN's priority areas under the new United Nations Pacific Strategy (UNPS). These areas of synergies include Climate Change, Disaster Resilience and Environmental Protection; Gender Equality; Sustainable and Inclusive Economic Empowerment; Equitable Basic Services (covering Health, Education and Social Protection); Governance and Community Engagement; and Human Rights. Data for development, as a cross-cutting topic, is additionally of high priority and interest for both SPC and the UN.

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During the half-day meeting, senior leaders discussed a wide range of development actions currently underway across the region and highlighted potential areas for increased collaboration. There was strong agreement that over the need for a coordinated and integrated approach that harnesses the expertise and comparative advantage of both UN and SPC for greater impact and cost-effectiveness.

SPC's Deputy Director-General, Dr. Audrey Aumua, stressed the importance of collaboration and information exchange between SPC and the UN, saying: "We are working, first and foremost, to support the development priorities of Pacific nations and territories. Within this room are the skills and experience to help bring transformational and positive change. By working in a complimentary way, we can jointly accelerate that change."

SPC and the UN agencies are committed to institutionalizing this strategic dialogue on an annual basis as well as following up to establish practical arrangements for regular information-sharing and elaboration of joint UN-SPC initiatives.

Recognizing the long-standing history of successful cooperation on a variety of activities, UN and SPC agreed that a more regular structured exchange as well as joint visibility efforts of the partnership would serve both organizations in projecting integration and coherence vis-à-vis countries, donors, and other development partners.

UN Resident Coordinator, Ms. Osnat Lubrani noted that this high-level consultation furthers an already genuine and durable partnership between the UN and SPC. She added: "This strategic review of the UN-SPC partnership is particularly timely as the UN prepares for launch of its new Pacific Strategy in 2018, ensuring that cooperation with SPC is strongly built in at the outset of its implementation".

For more information, please visit: www.spc.int and contact haticea@spc.int

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