

Joint Action Plan for Strengthening Pacific Bonds and for Mutual Prosperity

This Joint Action Plan clarifies concrete actions in PALM9's five priority areas to be taken by Japan and the PIF Members (the PALM Partners) over the next three years to strengthen Pacific bonds (*KIZUNA*) and to realise PALM Leaders' visions for the region. Utilising Japan's strengths, including its technology and know-how, Japan will cooperate with the PIF Members in line with the development priorities of the Pacific Islands region and of each Forum Island Country (FIC) through "All Japan Efforts" under the Pacific Bond (*KIZUNA*) Policy. The following actions are designed to contribute to the strengthening of the PALM partnership between Japan and the PIF Members and to the realisation of the visions of the PIF's *Framework for Pacific Regionalism* and Japan's Free and Open-Indo Pacific.

1. COVID-19 Response and Recovery

In addition to addressing short-term health needs, such as assistance in vaccination, the PALM Partners will work together to address existing health vulnerabilities in the FICs, including capacity building for health systems and support for reducing non-communicable diseases (NCDs). Furthermore, given the economic challenges the FICs face, the PALM Partners will explore effective cooperation to support economic recovery, while safeguarding and accelerating progress toward achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and the goals of the Paris Agreement.

- Noting that vaccination is critical in mitigating health concerns of the Pacific people and facilitating their economic recovery, Japan will cooperate to promote early access to safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines in the Pacific region in a mutually complementary manner with Australia, New Zealand, the United States and other partners. Specifically, Japan will provide technical training, necessary medical equipment, and support for effective delivery, management and vaccination through the Asia Development Bank (ADB), the WHO Western Pacific Regional Office (WPRO), the COVID-19 Vaccines Global Access (COVAX) Facility and other international organizations. In this context, in addition to Japan's financial contribution to the COVAX Facility, Japan intends to provide a total of approximately 3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccines to FICs by around the end of the year including through the COVAX Facility after the middle of July 2021.
- Japan will help develop medical facilities, provide quality medical equipment and

build capacity for health and medical workers. In so doing, the Government of Japan will collaborate with relevant NGOs where appropriate. The Japan Self-Defense Forces (JSDF) will also provide capacity building training for Fiji in the field of military medicine in coordination with Australia.

- The JSDF will continue to explore opportunities to cooperate in effectively responding to infectious diseases, including the COVID-19, to strengthen the medical capabilities of FICs' military as frontline respondents.
- Japan will contribute to the discussions at the Pacific Health Ministers Meeting as its associate member.
- As NCDs are a critical risk factor for COVID-19, Japan will cooperate to address NCDs in the Pacific Islands region through JICA's technical cooperation projects. The PALM Partners will tackle malnutrition issues and make efforts to reduce diet-related NCDs through opportunities such as the Tokyo Nutrition for Growth Summit in December 2021.
- Japan will support safe re-opening of the borders such as providing necessary equipment/facilities.
- Once the COVID-19 situation improves, Japan will cooperate to swiftly restore tourism to FICs through tourism promotion activities such as those of the Pacific Islands Centre (PIC) in Tokyo, Japan Outbound Tourism Council (JOTC) and Japan Association of Travel Agents (JATA).

2. Sustainable Oceans based on the Rule of Law

To promote a free, open and sustainable maritime order based on the rule of law and the sustainable development, management, use and conservation of the ocean and its resources, the PALM Partners will cooperate in addressing, *inter alia*, strengthening maritime safety and security, conserving the marine environment, and achieving sustainable development and management of marine resources.

(Maritime Safety and Security)

- Japan will support the development of maritime training institutes to nurture seafarers, provide capacity building for maritime law enforcement with dispatches of experts including the Japan Coast Guard Mobile Cooperation Team and with training in Japan to build capacity for developing marine charts, and provide maritime security equipment. In so doing, Japan will pursue cooperation with Australia, the United States and other partners where appropriate.

(Marine Environment)

- Japan will enhance the capacity of waste and marine plastic management through technical cooperation projects and the provision of equipment to achieve *the Osaka Blue Ocean Vision*, which aims to reduce additional pollution by maritime plastic litter to zero worldwide by 2050. Furthermore, Japan will support the export of Japan's waste management and recycling technology and know-how to the FICs such as through the Regional 3R and Circular Economy Forums.

- Japan will support the FICs through transferring new technologies for marine environmental monitoring and through promoting exchanges between young generations to support sustainable marine utilisation, noting the UN Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development.

- The PALM Partners will work together toward global efforts to develop international legally binding instrument under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) on the conservation and sustainable use of marine biological diversity of areas beyond national jurisdiction which does not undermine relevant existing legal instruments and frameworks as well as relevant global, regional and sectoral bodies.

- The PALM Partners will work together toward the successful delivery of the Post 2020 Global Biodiversity Framework.

(Marine Resources)

- Japan will support the FICs to maximise their economic benefits through sustainable management, conservation and utilisation of marine resources. The PALM Partners will deepen cooperation on monitoring, control and vessel surveillance to eradicate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing in the Pacific. Japan will support the FICs with the development of the fisheries industry in the Pacific including the rehabilitation of fisheries facilities and support for developing locally produced fisheries products through the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation of Japan (OFCF).

- The PALM Partners will continue their enduring cooperative relationship that aims to develop fisheries, including through mutually beneficial fishing arrangements between Japan and the FICs, building on their longstanding record of collaboration in the field of fisheries.

- The PALM Partners will continue cooperation in the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) to ensure sustainable use of highly migratory species through science-based management, taking into account relevant environmental and economic factors. In so doing, the PALM partners will work together to balance the interests of participants in the fishery and take into account the need to ensure that

conservation and management measures do not result in transferring a disproportionate burden of conservation action onto Small Island Developing States and Territories in line with WCPFC Convention.

- Affirming their continued commitment to promoting the reform of the World Trade Organization (WTO), the PALM Partners will work together toward the conclusion of the fisheries subsidies negotiations before the Twelfth WTO Ministerial Conference later this year.

3. Climate Change and Disaster Resilience

In order to effectively address climate change issues with a heightened sense of urgency, the PALM Partners will strengthen their leadership role in international negotiations and actions to mitigate the impact of climate change, promote technology and innovation to further reduce greenhouse gases, and cooperate to take effective adaptation measures.

(Mitigation)

- The PALM Partners together will take the lead in fostering global momentum to address climate change to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement.

- Japan will lead global climate actions by setting and achieving the ambitious target for Japan's nationally determined contributions (NDCs), continuing its contribution to climate finance, and encouraging other major emitting countries to further contribute to climate actions and finance.

- Japan will continue to make efforts to improve the access to the Green Climate Fund as one of its biggest donors.

- Japan will help acquire a stable and low-carbon supply of power by providing technical cooperation, building renewable energy facilities, and developing energy efficient power grids, among other activities.

- Japan will support sustainable forest management to maintain forest resources and reduce greenhouse gases through technical cooperation projects.

- Japan will organize workshops to provide information on the Joint Crediting Mechanism (JCM) so that the PALM Partners can further explore the possibility of JCM utilization to introduce advanced decarbonizing technology.

- Japan will pursue the possibility of a green hydrogen project in the Pacific Islands region in collaboration with Australia.

- Through efforts including those by the Quad, Japan will work with Australia, India, the United States and other countries to strengthen implementation of the Paris Agreement, enhance global climate actions, and advance low-emission technology solutions.

(Adaptation)

- Japan will continue to provide training on climate change issues through the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) in Samoa in cooperation with New Zealand.
- Japan will continue to support the development of disaster-resilient infrastructure including flood control infrastructure, bridges and emergency communication systems.
- Japan will provide assorted equipment for disaster risk reduction including communication equipment, power generators, heavy machinery and rescue boats.
- Japan will provide training programmes on women's leadership in disaster risk reduction in the Pacific to build resilience in cooperation with the United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR).
- Japan will provide training to help develop plans for climate finance access and increase resiliency in socio-economic infrastructure through the Asia-Pacific Climate Change Adaptation Information Platform (AP-PLAT).
- Japan will provide technical training for metrological agencies to build capacity for sustainable weather services and disaster response systems.
- Japan will provide observation data from the Japanese meteorological satellite *Himawari* through on-demand observation services called *HimawariRequest*.
- The JSDF will invite military personnel to humanitarian assistance/disaster relief (HA/DR) exercises to help build HA/DR capacity.
- The JSDF will provide capacity building assistance to the engineer unit of the Papua New Guinean military to strengthen HA/DR capabilities of the Papua New Guinea.
- Japan will invite the FICs to the 4th Asia-Pacific Water Summit to discuss disaster risks caused by climate change, share Japan's experiences and technologies, and strengthen cooperation with the FICs and other partner countries.
- Japan will host seminars to promote Japan's disaster risk reduction technology and know-how to the FICs through the Japan International Public-Private Association for Disaster Risk Reduction (JIPAD).
- The PIF members will provide Japan with information on the *Pacific Resilience Partnership* and the *Pacific Resilience Facility* so that Japan can deepen their understanding of PIF's efforts to strengthen regional resiliency.
- PIF members will establish the *Pacific Resilience Facility* to support FICs to build community resilience to climate change and disaster.

4. Strengthening the Foundation for Sustainable and Resilient Economic Development

To strengthen the foundation for sustainable and resilient economic development, the PALM Partners will cooperate in developing quality infrastructure, promoting trade and investment, growing local industries and strengthening fiscal resilience, among other areas.

(Quality infrastructure)

- Japan will support the development of quality infrastructure such as ports, airports, vessels, roads and Information and Communications Technology (ICT) to strengthen connectivity in the Pacific region.
- Japan will work on capacity building to effectively manage, maintain and utilise quality infrastructure through the dispatch of experts and other technical cooperation projects, including port and vessel management and a wide array of ICT capacity building programmes through the Asia-Pacific Telecommunity (APT).
- Japan will explore a possibility of cooperation in the area of financial infrastructure.

(Fiscal Resiliency)

- Japan will provide capacity building for customs administration for revenue collection and trade facilitation through joint projects between the World Customs Organization (WCO) and JICA.
- Japan will dispatch experts to support human resource development in public financial management, including budget planning, budget execution and debt management.

(Growing Local Industries/Promoting Trade and Investment)

- Japan will cooperate to further develop local industries, including the agriculture and forestry, fisheries sectors, to strengthen economic resiliency.
- Japan will further promote dialogue, identify and address challenges to trade, investment, tourism and business between Japan and the FICs, with participation by relevant stakeholders, including the PIC in Tokyo, Japanese Embassies in the FICs, FIC Embassies in Japan, relevant FIC government agencies, and private companies.
- The PALM partners will promote further trade and investment between Japan and the FICs through various business promotion activities of the PIC in Tokyo, Japan External Trade Organization (JETRO), and through public-private joint business missions to the FICs.
- Recognising the important role that the Pacific Islands Centre (PIC) has played in

promoting trade, investment, and tourism between Japan and the FICs, the PALM Partners will discuss ways to further enhance its functions and to ensure coordination with existing regional mechanisms.

(Peace and Security as the Foundation of Economic Development)

- Given that peace and stability are the foundation of resilient and sustainable economic growth, Japan will provide capacity building in the field of public security, anti-drug measures, and criminal justice, including through JICA's training in Japan, international training/seminars of the United Nations Asia and Far East Institute for the Prevention of Crime and the Treatment of Offenders, and the Asia-Pacific Operational Drug Enforcement Conference.

5. People-to-People Exchanges and Human Resource Development

The PALM Partners will promote exchanges on a variety of levels and in various fields, from youth to government officials and future leaders of the PALM Partnership, to strengthen bonds between Japan and the FICs. Japan will strengthen human resource development through technical cooperation, including the dispatch of experts and implementation of training courses and scholarship programs.

(Youth and Academic Exchange)

- The PALM Partners will further promote youth exchanges between Japan and the FICs such as through continued implementation of Japan-East Asia Network of Exchange for Students and Youths (JENESYS), the Children Exchange Programme with Micronesian Islands, and an expanded Sakura Science Programme.

- The PALM Partners will explore possibilities of promoting academic exchanges between Japan and Pacific Island countries, including encouraging higher-learning institutions to establish Pacific Island Studies or Japanese Studies programs.

(Educating Future Leaders of the PALM Partnership)

-To nurture future generations of leaders, Japan will strengthen the SDGs Global Leaders Program (formerly known as the Pacific-LEADs) by increasing the number of participants and by including an undergraduate institute for the training in addition to graduate programmes.

(Mutual High-Level Visits and Invitation Programs)

- The PALM Partners will actively pursue high-level mutual visits between Japan and the

FICs once the COVID-19 situation improves and international travel comes back to normal.

- Japan will offer invitation programmes to Japan for young government officials in the FICs.
- Japan will ensure FICs' participation in the EXPO 2025 Osaka, Kansai, Japan.

(Local Exchanges/Sport Exchanges)

- The PALM Partners will continue to promote local and sports exchanges through the Tokyo Olympics and Paralympics' Host Town Exchanges between the FICs and Japan's local Host Towns beyond 2021 as a legacy of the Olympic and Paralympic Games Tokyo 2020.
- The PALM Partners encourage sports exchanges between Japan and the FICs including through Japan Oversea Cooperation Volunteers (JOCVs).
- The PALM&G Network will actively participate in exchanges utilising each member prefecture's strengths and unique characteristics to contribute to the further strengthening of Pacific bonds.

(Defence and Coast Guard Exchanges)

- Japan will actively seek to make port calls in the Pacific by JSDF aircraft and vessels as well as by the Japan Coast Guard's training vessels to promote defense and coast guard exchanges.
- Japan will host the first-ever defense ministerial meeting with the FICs—Japan Pacific Islands Defense Dialogue (JPIDD)—to promote exchanges between defense personnel and confidence-building between defense authorities.
- Japan will extend invitations to the Coast Guard Global Summit and its related meetings to promote exchanges between coast guard personnel.
- Japan will continue to provide capacity building to the Defence Force Military Band of Papua New Guinea to strengthen bonds between the JSDF and the Papua New Guinean Defence Force.

(Cultural and Language Exchanges)

- The PALM Partners will actively pursue cultural and language exchanges.
- Japan will offer a variety of Japanese television programmes (dramas, anime, documentaries and movies) to TV stations in the FICs through the Japan Foundation with a view to promoting understanding of Japan among the peoples of the FICs.
- Japan will promote Japanese language education in the Pacific, including through

workshops and courses at the University of South Pacific, among others.

(JOCV and JICA Training Programs)

- Japan will dispatch JOCVs to work in a variety of fields to contribute to the development of the Pacific Islands region, working side-by-side with their FIC counterparts.
- Japan will invite a number of FIC government officials to practical training courses in a variety of fields through JICA's Knowledge Co-Creation Programmes in line with the needs of each FIC.
- Japan will provide, through JICA, opportunities for development study about Japanese experience both in Japan and in the Pacific Islands region.

(Education)

- Japan will dispatch experts on elementary education to enhance the proficiency of science and math teachers and to help develop effective elementary education policy in Papua New Guinea.
- Japan will support digitalization of education by providing tablets to schools and dispatching experts on education to enhance students' academic ability in science and math through digitalization in Palau.

(Labour Mobility)

- The PALM Partners will continue to explore potential labour opportunities in Japan under existing schemes.

(Foundation for Future-Oriented Relations)

- The PALM Partners will continue cooperation to address issues related to their shared past including repatriation of the remains of war dead from World War II, clearance of unexploded ordnance, addressing oil leakage in sunken ships, and maintenance of government-built monuments for the war dead as appropriate to maintain friendly bonds and to build future-oriented relations.

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