MAJOR MILESTONES ACHIEVED AT 2ND REGIONAL CONSULTATION ON PIDF AGREEMENT

1st Donation Received to PIDF Regional Development Fund

The Pacific Islands Development Forum on Friday 10th July 2015 successfully completed its Second Regional Workshop on the PIDF Agreement which also witnessed the achievement of major milestones in the development of the Agreement. The Workshop was held at the Novotel in Lami from Wednesday 8th and Thursday 9th July 2015.

At the Second PIDF Summit in 2014 the PIDF Governing Council called for the creation of an agreement to institutionalise the PIDF. The PIDF Agreement will operationalise the vision of creating a United and Distinctive PSIDS Voice on Sustainable Development.

A regional workshop was convened from 6th-7th May 2015 to gain feedback from representatives of Government, the private sector and civil society in the Pacific Island Countries that have attended the PIDF Annual Summits on the key elements of the Draft PIDF Agreement.

The purpose of the Second Regional Workshop was to gain feedback on the precise language of the agreement to shape it into a document that will be acceptable to all. Over 60 delegates from the Pacific including development partners in the region and CROP agencies attended.

The Workshop was opened by Mr Mason Smith, Regional Programme Coordinator Oceania Region (Australia, NZ & The Pacific), The International Union for Conservation of Nature, Suva. In his address Mr Smith highlighted the importance of an Agreement that ensures that Pacific priorities are reflected in regional decision making. He also commended the PIDF on the innovation it was bringing to regional decision making:

“I agree with the sentiments expressed at the last regional workshop that the PIDF Agreement should be a living document that ensures that the Pacific set’s its own priorities instead of following an agenda set by other stakeholders that may not fully reflect Pacific principles and issues.”
“Indeed this PIDF Agreement is historical in that you are setting up the Pacific’s newest and only fully multi-stakeholder regional organization that is Pacific owned and operated.”

“It’s also historical in the sense that the preparation of the PIDF Agreement included wide community consultation which is a first in the Pacific in terms of organizational design. Nowhere else has the intended beneficiaries ever been consulted in the design of a regional organization.”

“I must also add here that in my view, the PIDF structure is both innovative and bold in that it will bring to our decision space the voice of our communities. This has never been done before and is historical to say the least. I’m also of the opinion that the PIDF structure is also compassionate in that it puts the interests of communities first. These are indeed historical facts that we can all be proud of.”

The Workshop was closed by Mr Keutekarlia Mataroa, Acting Chairperson, Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO) and Vice Chairperson, Cook Islands Civil Society Organisation. In his address Mr Mataroa reminded Delegates of the moving prayer of dedication offered at the beginning of the Workshop by Archbishop the Most Revd. Dr Winston Halapua, Anglican Church in Polynesia:

“It will also be a remiss of me if I didn’t echo the sentiments, emotional and inspiring words of endearment and Video presentation of the Mana o te Moana Prayer and Video by His Worship, the Archbishop.”

“It is very clear in my mind that, PIDF is addressing the collaborate efforts of bringing Governments, Civil Societies and the Private Sector together, at the same table, as is with the Mana O Te Moana, and that is working together to achieve common goals.”

“I thank you your worship for reminding us that we must live as a united people to receive abundant blessings.”

In his address Mr Mataroa also announced the signing of an MOU between PIDF and PIANGO and PIANGO’s financial contribution of $30,000.00 to the PIDF which included cost of seconding staff to the PIDF Secretariat and the first donation by a PIDF partner to a Regional Development Fund to be established under the PIDF Charter.

“In closing, I note that the focus of this consultation process is to have an Establishment Agreement signed and adopted by our Leaders in September, In my view we have achieved this with minor adjustments. This is a new baby, and we let it grow by “breast feeding” it to adulthood.”

“At this juncture, please allow me to deviate from my closing remarks to honour this meeting with; The Signing of an MoU between PIANGO and PIDF; Pledge of $30,000.00, to be treated

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1 View the video of the prayer at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IMl3hfe7IXc
as follows; $10,000.00 – to go towards the Trust Fund; $20,000.00 – secondment of a PIANGO staff to PIDF”

Mr Smith and Mr Mataroa’s Address are attached. Mr Mataroa’s video interview can also be viewed at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MTEU9SdoxQ. View also a video interview with Ms Emele Duituturaga, Executive Director PIANGO at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dqlgrXtdqTM.

Speaking after the Workshop the PIDF Consultant on the PIDF Agreement Dr Michael O'Keefe expressed satisfaction at the outcome of the workshop which was the result of an unprecedented process involving various Pacific stakeholders. He highlighted the consensus that has emerged from the workshop which reflected the consultation that has taken place. You can view the video of the interview with Dr Michael O'Keefe at https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0IlnZzqLc.

[Photos attached]

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