

# Towards a new partnership between the European Union and the African, Caribbean and Pacific countries after 2020

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## Common global interests in a multi-polar world

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### 1. To which degree has the partnership been effective in tackling global challenges?

There is a mixed picture: whilst the EU-ACP CPA provided (under Pacific leadership) the crucial foundation for the 'high ambition coalition' at Paris COP21 in the context of climate change, the extent to which Pacific progress and marked lack of progress on most MDGs evidences CPA effectiveness is unclear. Global challenges are ultimately confronted by and responded to at regional and national governance agencies level, but the real work of progress in development can only be achieved by local communities. In the Pacific, regional and national agencies have been more successful at the interfaces with international frameworks than they have been at the internal interfaces with constituencies and communities. To the extent that the CPA provides direct linkages to regional and national governance agencies, and a limited number of key focal sector areas, and also variously supports CSO initiatives, the EU-PACP cooperation provides Europe with entry points and leverage - but it can rely too heavily upon both Brussels-based consultants and regional and national bodies, and can thus remain at arms length from any form of participatory partnership with Pacific communities through which global challenges can be met. Future directions for the CPA should strongly identify and work through a distinctive EU 'niche' - not so much issues or areas, as a branded participatory method and approach that focuses on and responds to the parameters and qualities of relations as seen from ACP perspectives.

2. What would be needed to strengthen results in this respect and on which global challenges could the partnership add most value in the future, in the context of the new SDGs framework and in relevant international fora?

A targeted and coherent approach to EU obligations on thematic areas (such as those created by the Gender Action Program starting in 2016) should be combined with the RAO facilitated identification of EDF focal sector themes. Greater consultation, within Europe and within the Pacific, could be designed into the post-2020 EDF programming process, and an element of response mode built in. As above, this should be led by considerations of an EU 'niche' so that development cooperation and policy coherence are maximised, and so that the EU carefully considers the specific development and political outcomes it wishes to invest in. In the Pacific, climate change, natural resource management and gender inequality are three areas that the ECOPAS project has worked on and for which we see particular gains for the EU and PACP. The growing importance of PACPs in the UN system - e.g. SIDS 2014, COP21 - bolster its value to the EU as a primary international forum to engage it's Pacific partners. It should be recognised that PACP votes at the UN are, however, highly complex and competitive and embedded in geopolitical currents over which the EU as such has limited purchase. The Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and Pacific national governments are the EU's primary dialogue partners - whilst the new Framework for Pacific Regionalism together with the higher and growing international profile of the SIDS grouping suggest greater political cooperation on a regional level, national self-interest will remain the primary motivation, especially for the larger economies such as Papua New Guinea. With the recent reformulations of the conventional development compact between humanitarian assistance and political leverage (e.g. AUSAID absorbed into DFAT, Treaty of Lisbon creation of EEAS and EuropeAid), serious and careful thought should be given to reviewing what the EU gets out of the CPA, and to how the EU measures value for money in any post-2020 context.

## Human rights, democracy and rule of law, as well as good governance

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3. Have the mechanisms provided for in the Cotonou Partnership Agreement (CPA) (i.e. political dialogue, financial support, appropriate measures, suspension of the agreement) achieved meaningful improvements on human rights, democracy, rule of law and good governance, including the fight against corruption? Should the future partnership do more in this regard, and in what way?

Firstly, it is important to recognise the value that PICs place on the EU's role in promoting these issues - Europe's voice here has an impact and usefulness in the region beyond what might be directly evident for a number of Minister and NAO level government officers attest to the influence Europe's support for these values has - both internally in the progress of the civil service, and externally in PICs ability to leverage third party donors. That said, and as indicated above, the EU should review the terms for its development and political compacts - both those with PIFS and PICS, and also those with EU citizens - to clarify and realign what the EU (and its MS through bilateral relations) aim to achieve in terms of its development and political objectives, and the evidence base it uses for assessing accomplishments and value for money. In the new development cooperation paradigms at work in the Pacific, the decoupling of humanitarian assistance and political leverage that the EU and CPA are founded on are now running counter to Pacific experiences with third country donors. Whilst this might well be a foundation for defining an EU 'niche' it also means that the absence of directly coupled ties might leave the EU in an isolated position: the separation of altruism and self-interest is right and highly admirable, but risks extending the redundant donor-recipient relation, and equally means that, in the new regional paradigm the EU appears fuzzy in what it expects and demands of its PACP partners.

4. Has the involvement of local authorities and non-state actors (i.e. civil society organisations, the media), national parliaments, courts and national human rights institutions in the partnership been adequate and useful to promote human rights, democracy and rule of law as well as good governance? Could they contribute more and in what way?

The EU has been carefully following and reflecting upon recent Pacific regional initiatives such as the PIF review of the Pacific Plan, and the emergence of the PIDF. Important clues and leads are clearly evident here as to how the Pacific sees an important and increasing role for a mixed cooperation between the public, private and civil society sectors. These amount to the Pacific region's vision of development partnership – and the EU simply must take its lead from the Pacific here. As much as PIF and PIC governments are essential to progress here, the reach and vision and form of statehood and governance in the Pacific mean that they recognise their own limitations and recognise the role for other sectors to work together. It would be unproductive for the EU to focus too heavily or exclusively on PIF and PIC governance agencies, and it would be productive for the EU to reflect upon how it can most effectively engage in a mixed environment in the Pacific. This review of cooperation between Pacific agencies and sectors should also extend to reviewing the EU's cooperation with its international partners and other third party donors, all of whom the EU is in competition with in various ways. Such a review might also convene and consider the interplay between MS bilateral support and EU system support. A joined up review here could be undertaken through the commission of a study or through an existing H2020 call.

## Peace and security, fight against terrorism and organised crime

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5. Are the provisions on peace and security in the CPA appropriate and useful and has the balance between regional and ACP involvement been effective?

Lower priority and reliance in the Pacific.

6. Should the future partnership provide for more effective joint action on conflict prevention, including early warning and mediation, peace-building and state-building activities, as well as on tackling transnational security challenges? Should this be done in the EU-ACP context?

Where relevant and practical and realistic. Access to training and expertise would be valued in the Pacific.

## Sustainable and inclusive economic growth, investment and trade

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## 7. How effective has the partnership been in promoting sustainable and inclusive economic development?

CPA has played a significant part in framing the direction and shape of the development pursued by the Pacific region. As above, the EU and future CPA need to recognise and be geared to the emerging regional development cooperation paradigm - and to do so more flexibly on an A, C and P basis rather than a one-size fits all. A common and constant complaint from PICs is the amount of red-tape associated with EU funding instruments of various kinds and the investment in expertise required by PICs - often the best trained and most competent planners and administrators are tied up in such paperwork rather than in the skilled task of designing and implementing better and more appropriate programs.

## 8. Taking into account the new SGDs framework, should the future partnership do more in this respect, and what?

It will be increasingly and especially important to take full account of PIC national strategies and plans in the post-2020 context as more PICs build on their own initiatives and policies - these are growing and by no means insignificant and will likely become the policy directives that the EU will be asked to support and cooperate with directly. As with the MDGs, the specific measures and targets are crucial, for many were simply not attainable or measurable in the MDG period. Realistic and appropriate measures matched to the local conception of the issues and to the national ability to meaningfully measure and use the data are important. The EU should be looking to ways to draw upon the SSH evidence base amongst European researchers, and to further means to foster cooperation with SSH experts in the Pacific - and also be looking to support PICs in making best use of the leverage afforded by the global goals for nation states to frame their own measurements. The EU has a particularly important role to play here as sympathetic advisor able to foreground Pacific people's own concerns and concepts, and as a good citizen in sharing its expertise on formulating and using these new measures - and has a responsibility to embed these in close alignment with development cooperation designs. There is an important opportunity here, and the timing of reframing the global goals and the CPA should not be lost.

9. How effective has the partnership been in supporting macroeconomic and financial stability? In which areas would there be added value in ACP-EU cooperation on macroeconomic and financial stability?

The EU holds a significant place and influence in the global economy, in terms of trade, finance and international levers of power. Alongside its MS, perhaps more consideration could be paid to wider CPA member states. The EU would also benefit from an enhanced understanding of the Pacific region and the influence of third party countries, and develop a more nuanced understanding of the role and financial levers exercised by China, say. An enhanced understanding of the characteristics, dynamics and hybrid nature of Pacific economies is crucial if the EU is to be an effective and valued partner. Lastly, SD outcomes in the Pacific region are significantly leveraged from beyond the region - many EU-based companies operate in the Pacific, and much European finance supports trade activities indirectly - these each provide opportunities and levers for the EU to hold company activities to home based legal obligations and thus transfer and diffuse best practice, human rights, economic gains etc beyond the European arena. The EU holds an unique and particularly important role here.

10. How effective has the partnership been in improving domestic revenue mobilisation, in promoting fair and efficient tax systems and in combatting illicit financial flows? Would there be added value and more efficiency in stronger ACP-EU cooperation on these matters?

Unsure.

11. Has the partnership been able to contribute substantially to mobilising the private sector and attracting foreign direct investment?

Indeed, both at an EU level and as a bridgehead for EU MSs on a bilateral relation level.

12. How could the potential of the EU and ACP private sector be better harnessed? What should be the main focus of EU and ACP private sector cooperation in a post-Cotonou framework, and what might be the role of ODA in this?

Partnerships provide a basis for extending EU good governance practice in certain areas, e.g. EU finance heavily involved in resource extraction and could be leveraged to enhance industrial practices in the Pacific.

13. In this setting, what opportunities do you see for the new, digital economy?

Digital has enormous reach and currency in the Pacific and should be fully understood.

**14. To what extent has the partnership been able to contribute to increase agricultural development and trade?**

An 'interim' EPA exists with PNG which was negotiated early and on favourable terms. PNG has invited other PICs (e.g. Fiji) to join in but on existing terms. EC has put further EPA negotiations on hold for several years. A strong critique of EPA and wider trade deals underpins development narratives in the Pacific - e.g. PIDF etc - and this period of postponement should include a fuller understanding of these concerns and issues which are not restricted to PIDF etc but are shared by conventional partners such as PIF and PACP etc. Pacific's distance from EU markets mean that Europe has an opportunity to play a non-consumer role and extend its SSH expertise and concerns for GMOs.

**15. What has been the contribution of the partnership trade preferences to the integration of ACP countries in the world economy and to its development goals?**

A support no doubt, but PACPs have been realistic in attempting to foreground home-grown concerns for citizens over external concerns and measures. This is not uncomplicated but needs to be understood so as to support PACPs in their efforts for their people.

**16. Is there still a need for specific provisions on trade cooperation in the post-Cotonou framework, also taking into account the ACP countries which have not signed an EPA? If so, what could/should they cover?**

PACPs want more than just trade - free movement, technology transfer, access to higher education.

## Human and social development

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**17. Has the partnership delivered on its human development objective in an effective and efficient way, in particular on poverty eradication, and also concerning gender equality and empowerment of women? How could it be improved?**

Future CPA needs to acknowledge importance of Pacific ways of life, and on all issues work with and through local concepts, practices and values to support the internal identification of levers for change. Holding PICs to European ideas and measures is a disservice and directly impacts real progress on poverty and gender inequality. This participatory approach to supporting CPA partner's transitions - to commit to working in partner's cultural registers - has precedence in recent EC work on gender inequality in the Pacific, and affords a transferable and EU 'niche' method.

18. Taking into account the new SDGs framework, what are the main challenges related to human development that the future partnership should focus on?

A full appraisal of PICs own identification of goals and measures and processes is required to answer the question - e.g. PICs responding to CEDAW have sought to protect the family rather than the wife or woman, and illustrates the importance of fuller engagement and enhanced understanding of PICs own efforts and characterisation of issues and solutions.

## Migration and mobility

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19. Has the partnership been a useful vehicle for discussing migration issues and has it positively contributed? Has Article 13 CPA been fully applied?

Migration from the Pacific is not a high profile issue, even though in other regions large remittance returning communities now reside and work temporarily overseas. EU could engage and embrace this practice. Increasingly, into and out from the Pacific to third party countries is addressed on a reciprocal basis - e.g. PNG withdrew visa on arrival for Australians simply because it was not available in return. Whilst Shengen area agreements have recently been signed with Samoa etc, a real problem exists in that it is currently impossible for PNG citizens to obtain a Shengen visa in-country because the bio-identity requirements can only be dealt with in Sydney. This is causing EU MSs to miss out on the involvement of PNG experts and cooperation.

20. Should a future partnership do more in this regard, and on which particular aspects should it focus (legal migration and mobility, addressing root causes of migration, return and readmission, tackling human trafficking and smuggling, international protection)?

As above. The EU should also encourage and extend its own and MS support for higher education scholarships - HE sector is strong and prestigious and respected as neutral by Pacific, and it's an obvious source of long term connection and influence. Support for university partnerships between EU and Pacific, to address critical gap in HE lecturer training through funding for MA and PhD programs is important - equally, schemes to promote European training to be delivered in the Pacific region. Conventional practice is for a small handful of students to be recruited to the expertise held off-shore in Australia etc, and yet precedents exist for higher education partnerships.

## A stronger political relationship

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21. How effective has the political dialogue been and at which level is it the most effective: national, regional and through the joint EU-ACP institutions? Should the scope of political dialogue be widened or narrowed?

EU engagements at regional and national level are effective due to representation of 28 MSs and partly due to positive historical legacies. But the EU as such is not as well known in the Pacific as some other countries and not as well as it might be. Political dialogue could be much enhanced through fuller engagement with PACP and PIFS in Brussels, not only in the regions. More leverage and influence should be sought through existing structures, but PACP participation and evidence for effectiveness needs to more fully understood. For example, the EU serves an important role in Pacific by affording PICs with a model of rule of law etc that PICs use as leverage with third countries - which have a straightforward no direct approach to financial assistance and political self-interest. EU support might be valued and trusted, but not always clear what the EU gets in return aside from being a good global citizen. Of course, ACP role at COP21 shows the possible returns on the CPA partnership, and this could be expanded. A long-standing and much repeated concerns exists around a puzzlement that PACPs do not proactively engage with EEAS and DEVCO and DGs in anything like the same way that A and C counterparts seem to do. Getting a firm grasp on why this might be is crucial for future CPA for Pacific, and something readily attainable by modest SSH efforts. The effectiveness of JPA structures should be reviewed - are they dominated by African issues? Why do PACPs barely attend and hardly speak? Where are PACP concerns addressed and expressed if not in JPA?

22. Would a stronger involvement of EU Member States, associating their bilateral policies and instruments to the political dialogue at national level, enhance the dialogue's effectiveness and efficiency?

Yes. Certain MS have strong historical ties and continuing connections and presence in Pacific. Efforts are coordinated but there are gains from economies of scale to be had when perceptions of EU and MS interest and conjoined are shaped, each representing and advancing the efforts and interests of the other. EU support for a Pacific House would greatly enhance EU-PACP dialogues of all kinds, and is achievable by conjoining Geneva and Brussels offices - this establishment should be explored on what bases and additional gains might justify increased EU investment and shared investment?

23. Has the fact that the agreement is legally binding been instrumental to its implementation as compared to other regional partnerships based on political declarations?

Perhaps, but likely the financial rather than legal provides the binding.

## Coherence of geographical scope

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24. Could a future framework be usefully opened up to other countries than the current members of the ACP Group of States? Which countries would that be?

Perhaps not in the wider Pacific region.

25. What kind of framework should govern EU and ACP relations? How could an ACP-EU successor framework relate to the more recent EU regional partnerships with Africa, Caribbean and Pacific States? Could a future ACP-EU framework include distinct partnerships with regional partners?

The ACP wishes to stick together for global clout and leverage. However, the cost of a monopoly CPA means that moves towards a more progressive partnership is attained and geared to the slowest and most conservative regions - e.g. Pacific wishes to greatly enhance the partnership relation but is holding back for Africa. A mixed basis allowing flexibility and heterogeneity would be welcomed by PACPs.

26. Is there scope for building in more structured relationships with Asia, Latin America, the Middle East and North Africa?

Don't know.

## Cooperation tailored more towards groups of countries with similar development level

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27. Is the current system of allocation of development resources, based on need and capacities as well as performance, sufficient for channelling funds towards those countries where the highest impact can be obtained? Should allocation of resources continue to prioritise countries most in need, including fragile states?

As ACP regional reviews attest, ACP grouping is widely acknowledged to be only partly on basis of shared development characteristics – grouping also emerged from colonial and historical connections. Whilst global development goals now increasingly shared, both progress and characteristics make this redundant and secondary to a country by country grasp of situations to avoid even regional broad brushes. Each region is highly culturally and historically and economically diverse. For PACPs, there is a legitimate concern to maintain funding basis that recognises smaller populations but greater distances and reliance on subsistence. CPA relevance and influence in the Pacific would be significantly eroded if it lost sight of the current funding basis. More and more, PACPs tell that the CPA opartnership with the EU must not only be about money – it perpetuates the donor-recipient model and shuts down other possibilities which are of more value than just funds. PACPs are not short of suitors and funding from third party countries – the geopolitical currency is a willingness to engage in Pacific relations and respects Pacific ways. This more than anything should be given central focus in future CPA with PACPs.

28. What kind of cooperation could help to cover the specific needs of more developed ACP countries with a view to attaining more equitable and sustainable growth?

More use of direct budget support would make it easier for PACPs to access funds readily and would release vital human resources and capacity. EUDs can become tied up in own red-tape in administering own funds – and so greater capacity would be created by directly supporting PIC budgets and concerns. Rather than focusing on defining issues and problems etc, future CPA should shift role of EU to support and advise and influence – rather than restrict to narrow focus on designing programmes externally. PACPs recognise that EU has much to offer aside from funding assistance, and increasingly the EU should seek to grow this role.

## Strengthen the relationship with key actors

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**29. Has the current model of stakeholder engagement been conducive to attaining the objectives of the partnership in an efficient way? Which actors could play a more significant role in the implementation of the partnership? How could this be addressed?**

Emerging models of partnership in Pacific see a combination of public, private and CSO. EU has great experience and track record of these and other forms such as cooperatives etc, and should bring these to the table. Caution is needed however to ensure that Pacific stakeholders are not simply voicing and practicing European derived ideas - the most successful and high profile CSOs in the region are those able to fluently engage the conventional paradigm - but this also risks putting them at a remove from Pacific concepts and relations. EU needs to recognise this and seek the participation and engagement of stakeholders closer and closer to local communities and to commit to the critical necessity to engage in reciprocal relations and strongly participatory methods whereby the EU's role is to support not to guide. Such an EU 'niche' method has shown to be highly effective in making PICs wish to work with EU support.

**30. What could be done to promote effective and efficient involvement of both international and domestic private sector, civil society, social partners and local authorities in the partnership?**

A highly diverse context, regionally, nationally and locally will need an equivalent approach - but working with what local people are creating and working themselves is key. Then EU would need to be very ambitious if it were to match the creativity of community efforts and repossess emerging in the Pacific.

**31. Should the partnership be open to new actors as referred above?**

Indeed. And new means of political leverage should also be sought by supporting novel evidence bases with which to engage PIC governments, partly from also understanding the different expectations and role of the 'state' in the Pacific.

**32. In this regard, should the possibility of opening up the partnership to 'associated members' or 'observers' be considered?**

Perhaps, but in all ACP regions, the EU operates as a geographically distant partner - and is exposed to the concerns and greater influence of third parties closer to the region. Developing a stronger voice should be pursued by advantages in the form of partnership relations and the methods used for engaging development issues and local communities. Distance need not be a barrier to closer social relations and participatory methods - EU could lead best practice here and assist PICS to leverage other countries.

33. How could a new framework promote triangular and South-South cooperation, including the increased involvement of ACP States as development actors in support of other ACP countries?

Useful if deemed so by ACP countries, but caution should be exercised if only serving artificial purpose and visibility. Where genuine expertise and experience exists, this should be supported. ACP already recognises where expertise exists for certain sectors - e.g. PACPs aware of long mining experience in Africa etc - and this should be the guide. Do ACP countries see the CPA as an appropriate vehicle?

## Streamline the institutional set-up and functioning of the partnership

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34. Has the joint institutional set-up (with the ACP-EU Council of Ministers, the ACP-EU Committee of Ambassadors, and the Joint Parliamentary Assembly) been effective in debating and promoting common views and interests and in providing political guidance and momentum to the EU-ACP partnership and the implementation of the CPA?

Certainly serves an important and symbolic role, and serves important role of conjoining democratic remit of regions and citizens. Provides insight and oversight and connects EU citizens to ACP. However, ACP grouping is barely known in UK - has almost zero profile and presence in popular public realm. Much more could be done to promote this and the role that EU funding serves. In-depth knowledge of the Pacific is too slight in most EU system units and amongst MEPs, even those on JPA and DEVE. Support for a 'Friends of the Pacific' grouping at the EP would be an important step and body and means of CPA dialogue and influence. Addressing the marked deficit in visible and vocal PACP participation in JPA, for example, is crucial - some important and enlightening and far reaching lessons lurk in this puzzle. For JPA to be more relevant to Pacific it needs to be demonstrably more balanced between A, C and P. The notion of common issues needs to be given an honest and close look.

**35. What is the added value of the joint ACP-EU institutions as compared to more recent regional and regional economic community frameworks for dialogue and cooperation?**

Whilst PICs might share and partially and informally engage with PIDF, for example, the official line is that PIF is the leading and shaping regional voice, and the EU and PACP share a common interest in maintaining the architectural status quo. But there is good and proper interest and appreciation for the role of PIDF, and the EU should find ways to more fully engage emerging regional groupings such as PIDF and SIDS etc. Importantly, in view of the PIFS review of the Pacific Plan, and the reformulations of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, a dedicated and sustained effort at clear thought should be given to the role of PIFS as the RAO for EDF funding - given that the PP review and FPR highlight the previous overreach of PIFS as a development organisation (role of devising a common regional framework for development) and its redefinition limiting ambitions to political regionalism. It would appear that PIFS is redefining, if not relinquishing, a role in shaping regional development and shaping development projects - and yet still holds this position as RAO for EDF funding programming. No doubt, the CROP agencies such as SPC and SREP can play an enhanced role here, but careful consideration ought to be given to how the EU responds to the shifted regional architecture of governance and the redefined role for PIFS in the context of emerging bodies such as PIDF which might perhaps evolve a contributing and supportive role - and one that might bring the EU closer to new spheres of political influence closer to the grassroots. The EU should review the value for money and effectiveness of PIFS role here, not least that PIFS has acknowledged that its role is secondary to PIC national concerns etc. Furthermore, the EU might seek membership or at least fuller participation in PIF as a means of getting more for its support and demonstrating value for money to EU citizens. Considerations towards a future CPA provides an ideal opportunity to review these structural issues in the round.

**36. What institutional arrangements would most effectively help address common challenges and promote joint interests?**

As above, the framing of the assumption here - that the 'common' and 'shared' are the basis of intra-ACP allegiances - should be reconsidered. Certainly, there are shared and common interest between EU and ACPs, and these should be encouraged in a cooperative basis of progressive partnership.

**37. Should a higher degree of self-financing of this functioning (ACP-EU Joint institutions and ACP secretariat) by the ACP States be required?**

Perhaps, but future investments on all sides could be incentivised by creatively responding to the shifting paradigm of development partnership and cooperation - PACPs would only have a case for further investment if there were opportunities for not only 'more' but 'better'. If something such good as a Pacific House had a role in enhancing development and political dialogue and bringing assistance in closer alignment with Pacific ways, then it might justify the investments on both sides. However, anecdotally, one PIC Minister said that if the EU wanted a game-changer it might look to the example of China that supports PICs in an uncluttered way - which is taken to be a form of supportive friendship with no strings attached. Perhaps this provides pause for thought in the justification of such expensive machinery and institutional architecture when compared the progressive good that might be achieved by the redeployment of resources - a useful thought experiment in reviewing the current assumptions and paradigms?

## Better adapted and more flexible development cooperation tools and methods

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**38. Is there added value in having a dedicated financing instrument in support of the ACP-EU partnership? If so, what are the reasons and how would it differ from other external financing instruments funded by the general budget of the Union? Is this instrument flexible enough, especially to address crisis situations? Can this instrument be deployed differently?**

EDF is well known, understood and accepted, even if seen as inefficient means of distributing resources and too often ineffective in producing programmes and projects that are recognisably home-grown by Pacific communities. More flexibility and responsiveness - and perhaps a less limited focus on a handful of focal sectors - might be useful, but the associated red-tape is also why PICs welcome EU assistance in restricted areas so as to pool funds and streamline access as far as possible. The five-six year programming cycle might be too long a commitment to issues in a fast changing Pacific. Lesser funds used smartly can have greater benefits, but the bureaucracy would be seen as the limiting factor here on both sides.

**39. What is the added value of the EDF's co-management system involving national authorities in the programming and management of aid programmes, as compared to other EU cooperation instruments in non-ACP countries?**

The real role and balance between PIC NAOs and Brussels-based consultants in the 'design' of programmes is really the key question. Streamlining the management is also a common theme here.

40. Does the current set-up of the programming process and implementation of activities lead to real ownership by the beneficiaries? What could be improved? How can the EU and Member States maximise the impact of joint programming?

With the key decisions made at a regional programming workshop that defines only a small handful of focal sectors and which is coordinated by the RAO and PIC Ministerial level currently provides little room for other and wider inputs. Opportunities for consultation and inputs exist after this point and are therefore diminished in role to contribute meaningfully. Many PIC NAOs and Ministers privately hold the view that EDF projects ultimately reflect EU concerns and assumptions - and if valid pose a key and cross-cutting challenge and threat to the effectiveness and credibility of EDF funds. Perhaps efficiencies and greater effectiveness - developmentally and politically - are available by visibly increasing the profile of wider consultation in the Pacific (what would happen if the EU publicised it's coming EDF funding and invited suggestions of how it could be best used?). A clear and meaningful role for non-state actors might be usefully explored. Certainly, the PIDEF would have a potentially productive story to tell and propositions to hand.

41. Does the variety of existing tools adequately support the EU and ACP common principles and interests and are there gaps that should be addressed? How do you assess the effectiveness and efficiency of various implementation modalities?

Mixed picture; tools, instruments and funding mechanisms are different and implementation contexts are highly diverse. The integration between non-CPA, thematic and regional obligations is highly complex and requires levels of knowledge and capacity that would require greater investment. EU officers and units in Brussels and the Delegations are over-stretched and under-resourced, and the question posed is highly dependent on these factors and the running theme of bureaucratic constraints. But the various ACP reviews provide useful and important insights as to how the EU is seen, and clear inferences concern effectiveness and efficiency in their own words.

42. Should a higher degree of self-financing from the ACP States be required for activities to ensure ownership? Would this apply to all countries? On which principles should this be based?

Complex question needing a country by country response in the Pacific, not least to variety of GDP and capacity issues. This question touches also on direct budgetary support - perhaps this might be the basis for shared investment and co-funding.

43. How can the expertise of the EU and its Member States be better mobilised, particularly in the middle-income countries?

Various ways; greater EU and MS cooperation and coordination. Revising the paradigm for development partnership that looks beyond one-way and monetary transactions would bring into view all manner of wider and meaningful cooperation and respond to PACP wishes to access European expertise and resources of all kinds. EU needs to appreciate the need to enhance its knowledge and expertise on the Pacific, not least the SSH dimensions which are increasingly acknowledged as key resources and key areas from both EU and PACP perspectives.

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