



P R E S S R E L E A S E

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For Immediate Release

EU assists water and sanitation system of Tuvalu with EUR 4.4 million

THE European Union (EU) and the Tuvalu Government today signed a financing agreement of EUR 4.4 million to tackle the problem of waste disposal, improve sanitation and provide safe drinking water to the people of Tuvalu.

This major programme will run for six years under the EU's 10th Economic Development Fund (EDF). At the end of the project, Tuvalu should have a sustainable source of water, an efficient and environmentally friendly waste disposal process as well as improved hygiene and sanitation.

'Tuvalu and the EU are partners in development cooperation since 1975. The new programme funded from the 10th EDF builds on previous EU assistance focussing on social sector development of Tuvalu's outer islands. It aims to add to the country's National Strategy for Sustainable Development', said Ambassador Wiepke van der Goot, Head of EU Delegation for the Pacific.

'The close collaboration between the Tuvalu Government and the EU Delegation in the design of our co-operation projects helps ensure that the EU financed interventions will have a positive impact on the living conditions of all citizens of Tuvalu', added Ambassador van der Goot.

Under the part of the programme which addresses the issue of waste disposal, the aim will be to expand and improve on the current practices of disposal on all nine islands that make up Tuvalu. This will involve rehabilitating existing dumpsites, identifying new ones, encouraging composting and recycling, improving current waste disposal services, establishing a system of safe collection and disposal of hazardous waste and educating the community.

Rainwater is Tuvalu's main source of fresh water. The EU funded project will provide rainwater tanks to each and every household in the outer islands, which establishes an efficient system of collection and storage of rainwater.

For sanitation, the programme will rehabilitate defective septic systems to reduce health and environmental impacts, improve pumping systems for septic tanks and establish a treatment facility.

Public awareness campaigns will be an important part of all three projects in order to raise the level of knowledge among the population on water and sanitation matters.

ENDS



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"The European Union is made up of 27 Member States who have decided to gradually link together their know-how, resources and destinies. Together, during a period of enlargement of 50 years, they have built a zone of stability, democracy and sustainable development whilst maintaining cultural diversity, tolerance and individual freedoms. The European Union is committed to sharing its achievements and its values with countries and peoples beyond its borders".

The European Commission is the EU's executive body.

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