

SPC Media Release

European Union contributes towards rehabilitation work in Tonga

Tuesday 8 April 2014, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) Suva –



The agricultural sector in Tonga was severely affected by Cyclone Ian.

The European Union (EU) is channeling 50,000 Tongan Pa'anga to the Government of Tonga. This is to contribute to the relief efforts in the parts of the country devastated by Cyclone Ian.

The Ha'apai Islands in Tonga are among the most severely hit, with housing, infrastructure and crops suffering serious damage.

'The European Union would like to convey its deepest sympathy and solidarity to the people of Tonga affected by this natural disaster. We hope the assistance we are providing will alleviate some of the hardship caused by the cyclone,' said Ambassador Andrew Jacobs, head of the EU Delegation for the Pacific.

This assistance is released through the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, in the framework of its Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (IACT) project, a European Union-funded programme under way in the Pacific region.

IACT Project Team Leader Samu Turagacati said that the funds provided by the European Union through the IACT project show the concern for the people of Tonga.

The funds will be used primarily for buying vegetable seeds, agriculture chemicals and fertilisers, but also for training farmers. This is to help in the national rehabilitation programme for the agricultural sector in the Ha'apai Islands.

'We want to ensure a speedy recovery of the agriculture sector in Tonga. We hope the assistance will help in contributing towards food security and bringing about a faster return to normal food production levels for the people of the Ha'apai Islands,' he added.

Earlier in the year, Cyclone Ian caused severe damage to the northern parts of Tonga, claiming one life and leaving thousands homeless.

For more information, contact: Ashley R. Gopal, Media & Communications Assistant - IACT, Land Resources Division, SPC, Suva, Fiji (Tel.: +679 337 9492; email: ashleyg@spc.int); or you may contact the LRD helpdesk: lrhelpdesk@spc.int or visit the SPC website: www.spc.int
