

SUSTAINABILITY, AID, AND REMITTANCE-DEPENDENT PACIFIC ISLAND ECONOMIES pdf

1: China says will keep providing aid to Pacific for sustainable development | Reuters

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Pacific Island Economies - Can they make a go of it? Turning a buck is no easy task for Pacific Island nations. Huge distances, a lack of business culture and a collection of coups, crime and corruption have conspired against economic miracles. But there are some amazing success stories. Turning a buck is no easy task for Pacific Island nations - whether they be a relative giant like Papua New Guinea, with 4 million people and rich forests and mineral resources, or a micro-state like Tuvalu, with 9 low lying atolls and just 10, people. Huge distances, poor and expensive transport and lack of a business culture all conspire against economic miracles. All the Island nations other than Nauru, are dependent on foreign aid and import more than they export. But that has not prevented some amazing success stories and some surprising innovations. Thinking laterally In the past six years, Samoa has revolutionized its economy, consistently posting growth that many a developed nation would be proud of. It now boasts a cadre of successful indigenous business people working in finance, tourism or other service industries or exporting products such as fish, coconut cream and even chocolate. Their land area is small, they are vulnerable to drought and have few resources other than sand, coconuts and fish. Tuvalu has used lateral thinking to make a living. They invested their funds just a month before the stock market crash and, like other investors, saw their new found wealth slashed to ribbons. Since then, however, shrewd investment policies have seen the fund make a comeback. Crucial economic issues While many Pacific island nations run tax havens, and some offer flags of convenience to shipping companies, success with these sorts of initiatives are the exception rather than the rule. Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands, in particular, have seen logging that has amounted to nothing short of the rape and pillage of their national heritage and has, all too often, come hand in hand with corruption. Local officials and landowners have discovered, too late, that clear felling leaves them not only without their forests but without even the subsistence living on which they have relied for thousands of years. Fiji, Vanuatu and Samoa, the only other countries with significant forests, have managed to put their logging industries onto a more sustainable footing. For Papua New Guinea, mining is an economic lifeline and has also seen the development of some very successful locally-controlled and landowner companies but it, too, is not without examples of catastrophic environmental damage, as can be seen at the now infamous Ok Tedi mine. While environmental standards at newer mines are much better, environmental risk is ever present. In the future, the Pacific will face more pressure on its environment - pressure that will be great enough to threaten its economic progress. Already coastal fisheries are seriously depleted, lagoons polluted and coral reefs suffering bleaching brought on by heat stress. With human populations growing and global warming predicted to gather pace, environmental disasters are likely to become more frequent. The poverty challenge The other challenge, for the region is to tackle poverty. At the moment, the Pacific does not suffer the catastrophic poverty seen in other parts of the developing world. That is because it is still possible, even for city dwellers, to grow their own vegetables, raise animals, such as chickens, or catch fish - allowing at least some level of subsistence affluence. Nevertheless, there are many people, including a large variety of low paid, full-time workers, whose income is below the poverty line. Their children will find it very difficult to get the education they need to be a part of the information age. In the next twenty years, the number of people living in towns and cities is expected to grow dramatically and problems with urban crime, ethnic violence and squatter settlements could get much worse if jobs are not found for city dwellers. Many economists see the way forward in resource industries such as fishing and mining. Mining, including in new areas such as mining manganese, copper and silver nodules from the ocean floor, has the potential to create jobs at all levels from labouring through to management and professional roles in marine science and international law. Tourism is another industry that could provide a wide range of jobs and in which there are some successful role models. Fiji, in particular, has

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seen steady and sustained growth in its tourism industry, growth that unfortunately, has been threatened by the political instability there, since the May 19 coup.

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2: Sustainability, aid, and material welfare in small south pacific island economies,

Sustainability, aid, and remittance-dependent Pacific Island economies: lessons from Africa? / Richard P.C. Brown Research School of Pacific Studies, ANU Canberra, Australia Australian/Harvard Citation.

In a recent paper published by Asia and the Pacific Policy Studies available in early view, free of charge, here , we use OECD data to examine developments in the delivery of foreign aid to the region since the year This post focuses on the amount of aid provided to the region, including its allocation, how it has changed over time, and its source. Since the turn of the century, there has been considerable change in the amount of aid delivered internationally. A renewed focus on poverty, evident in the Millennium Declaration and ensuing Millennium Development Goals , resulted in commitments to increase foreign aid to developing countries that were agreed by OECD leaders as part of the Monterrey Consensus. How did foreign aid to the Pacific fare in this period? ODA to Pacific island countries increased in the last decade by approximately one-third after a long period of relative stability, despite significant year-to-year variations Figure 1. Aid to the Pacific including Timor-Leste Source: All figures are in USD. Although significant, the increase in ODA to Pacific nations is modest when compared to the increase in ODA to sub-Saharan Africa, or indeed, to developing countries as a whole. Figure 2 illustrates the relative increase in ODA enjoyed by different regions since While aid to Pacific nations has remained relatively stable in real terms since , increasing moderately in the last decade, it has increased more than six-fold in sub-Saharan Africa over the same period, and almost three-fold in other developing countries. ODA has remained stable, and more recently fallen, in Far East Asia owing to the strong economic growth enjoyed in that region. The divergence between regions is especially notable after , or in the period of the scale-up. Whereas ODA to the Pacific increased by one-third since , across all developing countries it doubled, and in sub-Saharan Africa the increase was higher still, with ODA in percent what it was in Changes in the allocation of foreign aid across Pacific island countries have not been linked to per capita income, or arguably by association, poverty reduction efforts. Countries with comparatively high per capita incomes such as Cook Islands, Niue, and Tonga have seen large increases in aid over the period of and , 93, and percent respectively , whereas aid to the two Pacific island countries where poverty is concentrated, Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste, grew 19 percent and fell 36 percent, respectively. The largest increase between over this period, interestingly, has been in ODA directed to regional initiatives and organisations. This now represents the third largest component of ODA to the Pacific. When aid per capita is considered, its unequal distribution between Pacific island countries is even more evident. Aid per capita is particularly low in Papua New Guinea and Timor-Leste the two poorest countries in our sample , and has decreased in real terms since in both countries. ODA per capita across Pacific island countries Source: Where does this aid come from? While much depends on how aid is measured, it is clear that Australia is the largest provider of development assistance in the region “ though there is significant variation between Pacific island countries, with those in the North Pacific more reliant on Compact Funding from the United States see Figure 4. Aid to the Pacific is also very concentrated. In no other region in the world does a single donor provide such a large share of total ODA as Australia the United States in the Middle East comes close. The situation has not changed in light of the recent cuts to the Australian aid budget, with aid to Pacific island countries largely protected from reductions although aid from Australia has declined in real terms. Top 10 Pacific donors Source: OECD data Chinese aid is often highlighted as significant in the region frequently as cause for alarm, though we take a different view. Exaggeration of its importance is compounded by the fact that data for Chinese development assistance is poor, and not included in OECD figures or in Figure 4. These estimates are compared to OECD data for other donors in Figure 5 over the period multi-year data are more reliable given challenges associated with calculating yearly expenditure of Chinese ODA-funded projects. Data provided to authors courtesy of the Lowy Institute. Chinese aid is likely overstated as it includes both concessional loans that would in turn be discounted in future years as they are repaid, and also includes

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projects approved in and early This indicates that, while certainly significant, China remains a long way from becoming the most important donor to the region despite common statements to this effect. Having said that, China is an especially important donor in a handful of countries. It has provided over 50 percent of total ODA to Fiji between and making it the largest donor , and close to 30 percent of ODA in Cook Islands, Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu, where it has become the second main source of development funding. Much of this approximately 80 percent takes the form of concessional loans. So, what can we conclude? Firstly, foreign aid to the region is not going away, nor is it becoming less important. Since the turn of the century, foreign aid as a percentage of gross national income has increased in almost half of all Pacific island economies – significantly so, in the case of Tuvalu, Kiribati and Solomon Islands. It has declined significantly in the case of the resource-rich economies of PNG and Timor-Leste see our paper for data. Secondly, aid to the region has increased over the period – in line with the international scale-up in foreign aid – but not to the extent it has in other regions, or in developing countries as a whole. A third point to note is that foreign aid is distributed very unequally in the Pacific, with per capita aid to the poorest countries often quite limited. This is troubling from a poverty alleviation perspective. Lastly, our analysis shows that while China has become an important donor, it is far from the dominant player in the region – despite alarmist reporting to that effect. The paper upon which this post is based can be accessed free of charge here.

3: Charting the Pacific - Places

The paper discusses the concept of "sustainability" and puts forward the argument that conventional notions of what constitutes economic development cannot be applied mechanistically to the very small island economies of the Pacific.

4: Foreign aid to the Pacific: an overview - Devpolicy Blog from the Development Policy Centre

The aid New Zealand gives to Pacific nations is spent on a wide range of programmes aimed at improving education, health, economic development, good governance and climate change preparedness programmes.

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Developed in the mid s to explain economic processes in New Zealand's sphere of influence in the Pacific islands, the mirab model has proved applicable across a wide range of island economies.

7: Sustainability | Special Issue : Sustainable Islands – A Pacific Perspective

Pacific island countries, it is essential to understand the remittance flows – their vulnerability, sources, and volume – and how best to harness them for development purposes.

8: The MIRAB Model of Small Island Economies in the Pacific and their Security Issues: Revised Version

"A Model of Aid Impact in Some South Pacific Microstates," World Development, Elsevier, vol. 29(2), pages , February. Geoffrey BERTRAM, " Is Independence Good Or Bad For Development In Small Island Economies?"

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