



24 October 2017

The MSG Secretariat's Acting Director General, Mr Peter Eafeare and the South Pacific Tourism Organisation's (SPTO) Chief Executive Officer, Mr Christopher Cocker, signed today at the MSG Secretariat in Port Vila, Vanuatu a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) that aims to strengthen cooperation between the MSG and SPTO through providing a framework for collaboration and strengthening direct communication between the two organizations.

In signing the MOU, Acting Director General of MSG Secretariat, Mr. Eafeare stated that “this MOU now creates and sets the platform for a new milestone for MSG in engaging with the SPTO. Tourism is an important sector as it involves all our people in the MSG region, sometimes we talk away with industries like logging and we forget the very environment that God created us is a very source to generate income for sustaining our living.” He commended the work that the SPTO has been doing over the years in promoting Tourism Development in the MSG region.

Acting Director General of the MSG Secretariat highlighted that “this MoU is a first of its kind that MSG has entered into with the SPTO and it is important in the fact that it creates and sets the platform for practical engagement between the two organisations in a more meaningful way.”

The MOU will be guided by principles of cooperation such as genuine partnership where collaboration is based on a genuine spirit of equitable partnership that seeks to enhance and complement each Party’s efforts while building on individual natural strengths and areas of core expertise, mutual recognition and respect, joint team approach and information sharing.

To help enhance cooperation, the two organizations have agreed today to the following areas of collaboration as desirable and feasible:

- i. Collaboration and partnership in tourism planning;

- ii. Collaboration on tourism policy making; environmental and commercial sustainability. An MSG research partnership between key stakeholders: cooperative research Centre for sustainable tourism

- iii. Information and data sharing

- iv. Collaboration on event planning and organization

v. Collaborate in shared product development and marketing as well as networking

vi. Collaborate with airlines on product development and packaging

vii. Capacity building and training

In his concluding remarks, Mr. Eafeare stated that he believes that this MoU will not remain what it is on paper but to transform or be translated into something tangible which will lead to enhancement of the livelihoods of our people.”

Mr. Cocker mentioned that the MoU will further enhance the strengthening of the two organisations’ relationship. He emphasised the fact that the key to realising the benefits of the MoU is not the signing but the implementation of activities that are contained in the document. He reiterated that tourism is an important sector to the Pacific region including Melanesia as it involves the greatest asset that the Pacific has. His organisation looks forward to working closely with the MSG Secretariat in implementing the activities contained in the MoU to promote tourism development in the MSG region.