



## **Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Cooperation - Statement to the MSG Leader's**

21 June 2013  
SPC conference Centre  
Noumea New Caledonia

Your Excellencies, Honourable Leaders, Ministers, Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great honour to be invited to this august assembly and I thank you for welcoming CTA so warmly.

On behalf of Michael Hailu, Director of CTA, of all CTA staff and myself who has the privilege to share this event with you in New Caledonia, I would like to congratulate you on the 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Melanesian Spearhead Group. We also hope that we will have the honour to welcome you at CTA 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary next year.

CTA - The Technical Centre for Agriculture and Rural Development Cooperation - is a joint ACP-EU organisation part of the Cotonou Agreement which focuses on improving the access and use of information in the area of agriculture and rural development. Our current programmes are aimed at supporting regional policy processes, value chains development, the

use of ICTs and knowledge and learning processes across the whole range of issues involved in agriculture and rural development, including fisheries.

CTA is increasingly active in the Pacific region. We started end of 2012, a collaboration with MSG on the area of Green Growth and we will be launching later today the MSG e-platform aimed at strengthening the exchanges and dialogue across members on the issues involved in the green economy. We look forward to deepen our work with the Melanesian Spearhead Group and its member states on the areas where you feel we can contribute on policies, value chains and ICTs. We also hope that we can support MSG members to make use of the many services that we provide in information sharing and capacity building.

CTA has worked with a number of MSG members in projects supporting the use both of new technologies - we are currently developing training in Vanuatu on web and social media use; and new knowledge approaches - last year in the Solomon islands we supported a participatory planning meeting using 3D GIS, where policy discussion can happen around a 3 D map of the island or region.

Ambassadors from MSG member countries in Brussels have played a very active role in support of the Pacific region and the MSG.

The Policy Development Briefings held both in Brussels and in the region are key instruments to identify collaborative opportunities as we did with MSG at the occasion of the Pacific regional briefing on climate change held in Vanuatu last October with support of Ambassador Roy Joy. Through those policy dialogues, the specific needs of the small island countries have been given more prominence by our EU partners and within the ACP group.

We look forward working with MSG and your countries in various ways to contribute to the UN SIDS conference to be held early September 2014 in Samoa.

We also look forward involving MSG Secretariat and Member States in the coming 20 million EU-funded programme aimed at exchanging experiences and best practices on key policy areas in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

My involvement as Senior Expert on Knowledge Management is to the development of knowledge approaches by which policy debates can be facilitated and practical successes shared, upscaled and replicated. In that context I thank Mr Peter Forau and his team for the opportunity to work together.

I wish the MSG full success particularly in the development of the Green Growth Framework and in the use of the e-platform to continue discussions.

CTA management and staff remain at your service for any matter you feel we can add value to your excellent work.

I thank you for your attention