



AWARENESS WORKSHOP ON MSG-PITAP STUDIES OF 2016

10 - 14 October 2016

MSG Secretariat, Port Vila, Vanuatu.

DRAFT

STATEMENT BY MSG SECRETARIAT DIRECTOR GENERAL AMBASSADOR AMENA YAUVOLI

Participants from member countries' representing Forestry, Shipping /Ports, Industry/Trade Promotion/Marketing, Immigration and Labour;

MSG Resource Persons;

Secretariat Staff;

Media;

Ladies and Gentlemen;

It is with utmost honour and privilege that I welcome you all to MSG Headquarter here in Port Vila, Vanuatu, yet another of our tropical MSG homes. I hope you all travelled well and have rested comfortably enough to embrace the business of today and the rest of the Awareness Workshop on MSG-PITAP Studies of 2016. This workshop will assist you participants, representing respective member countries on the dissemination of the key findings and recommendations of the MSG-PITAP studies for follow-up work and implementation from next year onwards.

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all, as we are able to gather today, at this workshop for the last landmark activity for PITAP as the project winds up on 31 October 2016. In designing the Programme for the week, MSG Secretariat have lined up a series Agenda items to reflect the discussions around the key findings

and recommendations of the studies carried out this year on Forestry, Shipping, Market Intelligence, Implementation of the MSG Labour Mobility and Website for MSG Job Search and Investment Opportunities.

Studies	Consultant	Date
1. MSG Forestry Study	Dr. Johannes Bauer	Monday 10 th October
2. MSG Market Intelligence Study	Mrs. Sally-Ann Hughes	Tuesday 11 th October
3. MSG Shipping Study	Captain Naveen Singhal	Wednesday 12 th October
4. MSG Labour Mobility Study by ACP-EU Migration	Led by Mr. David Stewart and Mr, George Baddelely Bogiri of Pacific ACP Migration Action – International Organisation for Migration (IOM)	Thursday 13 th October
5. MSG Labour Mobility & Investment Opportunities website	Mr. Cainton Milroy	Friday 14 th October

We're privileged to have with us for the course of the respective agenda items, the presence of all these resource people with the exception of Captain Naveen Singhal for the Shipping Study and Mr. David Stewart for the Baseline Assessment study. The studies they led will be presented on their behalf by the Secretariat and their representative here in Vanuatu, respectively.

The Trade Ministers Meeting held here in Port Vila on 25 May 2016 mandated MSG Secretariat to undertake the listed studies from the calendar month of June 2016 for completion before the end of the PITAP implementation period, being October 2016.

Today, Monday, 10th October, will be an interesting session with the Consultant – Dr Johannes Bauer making a presentation on the MSG Forestry Study. Reading through the draft study, we learn of how the forestry sector in Melanesian has been in decline in some Melanesian countries whilst it has been greatly

underfunded in the last two decades. It will be interesting for this workshop to note what the study will recommend in light of the imbalances. We are all also concerned that climate change actions around forests have become a disjointed foreign intervention by many different stakeholders. It is our sincere hope that this study will increase our awareness and comparative understanding of the forests and forestry sector of MSG countries in the context of national and international actions of climate change and environment at large.

Tomorrow, Tuesday 11th October, Agenda 2 of the workshop will provide us with an opportunity to listen to Mrs. Sally Anne Hughes's findings and recommendations on the Market Intelligence Study on Selected MSG Export Products. We look forward to a deeper understanding of the results of a Market Intelligence Study on five selected MSG Export Products when exported to five selected international markets. It is our hope that the study will help us all in understanding and disseminating market access requirements for the selected markets and products, in order to effectively enhance market access and facilitate improved MSG exports. The Secretariat will also be complimenting on that agenda with a brief presentation on experiences and lessons learnt through technical missions which our Trade Research Analyst, Ms. Tendai Chigwada undertook selected regional organisations in August this year.

In Wednesday 12 October's session, we will listen to Secretariat's presentation of the findings and recommendations of MSG Shipping Study on behalf of the consultant Captain Naveen Singhal who could not join the workshop due to prior engagements. In this session, we will find out how MSG Member countries, being island nations, need good and economical shipping service for their development and for the movement of export and import cargo. MSG countries' location in the South Pacific which is fairly out of main global sea route coverage area makes it all the more important for MSG members to have their own shipping service. According to the draft study report, current shipping services in MSG countries are operated by private shipping lines. It is said that the freight rates which they charge and the routes which they serve are predominantly governed by financial gains and not necessarily the interest of shippers and consignees of MSG countries. Through the study, it will be interesting to learn of the viable options available for MSG member countries in the transportation sector.

Thursday, 13 October's session will take us into an interesting subject matter on a Baseline Assessment Study (Phase 1) on the implementation of the MSG Labour Mobility, funded by the International Organisation for Migration. This is desktop baseline assessment will be presented by Mr. George Bogiri, Regional Programme Officer for Pacific ACP-EU Migration Action. You may be aware that in 2012 MSG member States

signed an MOU to facilitate the temporary movement of skilled MSG nationals within the MSG countries for the purposes of taking up employment, through an MSG Skilled Migration Scheme (SMS). All parties to the MOU are required to undertake necessary modifications to their domestic laws and regulations to provide for the smooth and progressive implementation of the SMS in each country. I would like to congratulate Fiji who is currently the only party that has significantly modified their relevant legislation. The failure of three of the signatories to the MOU to do likewise has hindered the successful implementation of the SMS. SMS has been incorporated in the Melanesian Free Trade Agreement (MFTA). The key features of the SMS have remained although the agreement will raise the level from that of an MOU. The MSG secretariat has requested assistance from IOM to work with the Governments of Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu to amend their domestic legislations on immigration and labour (and other related legislation and policy) and to facilitate improved labour mobility within MSG member States. It will be interesting to hear from the Baseline Assessment on the viable proposals to improve Labour Mobility in MSG Countries.

To mark the end of an action packed week, we will continue with the issue of Labour Mobility into the final day of the five day series of workshops on Friday 14 October this time on MSG Labour Mobility & Investment Opportunities website to be presented by Cainton Milroy. The website is an exciting piece of modernity which should match MSG job seekers to MSG job opportunities as well as matching potential investments to investment opportunities in MSG.

The development of the series of MSG PITAP Studies and the convening of the important awareness workshops would not have been possible had it not been for the funding support by the European Union through the Pacific Integration Technical Assistance Project. We therefore appreciate this great assistance by the EU and are proud to say that the funds have been put to good use by the MSG. At this juncture I wish to also convey our utmost gratitude to the Pacific ACP-EU Migration Action International Organization for Migration (IOM) and through its Vanuatu based focal point for the technical and funding assistance towards assessing the implementation of the MSG Labour Mobility to-date. Thank you Mr. Bogiri for that relationship you have built with the Secretariat in ensuring this study was carried out and will continued on to phase two, early next year.

Finally Workshop participants, we therefore expect that as the findings and the recommendations of the studies are disseminated widely, huge economic benefits arising from this assistance will begin to accrue to the MSG sub-region and the greater Pacific region going forward.

Once again, I welcome you all to Port Vila and I wish the series of workshops successful deliberations.

Thank you

Merci beaucoup

Tank yu tumas

Tank yu tru

Vinaka vakalevu

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