

Aligning genetic resources, production and post-harvest systems to market opportunities for Pacific island and Australian cocoa



Key details

Location

Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

Duration

Start Apr 2017

End Mar 2023

Budget

AUD 2,377,344

Commissioned organisation

[Queensland Department of Agriculture and Fisheries](#)

Partners

Alternative Communities Trade in Vanuatu; Fiji Ministry of Agriculture; Samoan Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries (MAF); Solomon Islands Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock; The Pacific Community - SPC; University of Adelaide; Vanuatu Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity

Project Leader

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ACIAR Research Program Manager

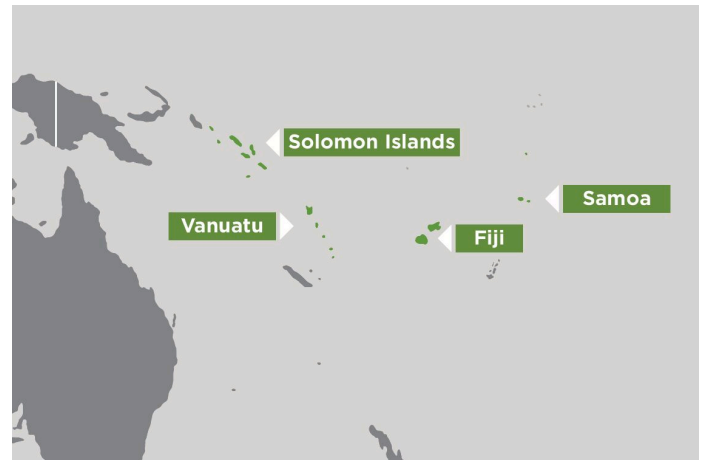
Dr Sandra McDougall

Program

[Horticulture](#)

Project code

HORT/2014/078



Overview

This project is strengthening cocoa value chains in the South Pacific islands (Fiji, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) and Australia.

Cocoa exports provide livelihoods for more than 50,000 households in Papua New Guinea (PNG), Solomon Islands and Vanuatu (between a fifth and a third of the populations). Significant domestic or potential export industries also exist in Samoa and Fiji, and an estimated 310,000 people are directly involved in cocoa production in the South Pacific countries.

Scoping studies have shown that Pacific Island cocoa is well-placed to compete successfully in high-value, low-volume markets, based on fine flavour, unusual genetic resources and novel 'single origin'

branding. The adoption of a 'whole of chain' approach to the cocoa export industry will lead to increased agronomic productivity, and development and uptake of best practice in fermentation and drying to optimise cocoa quality.

Support of niche chocolate manufacturers, linking them with producers and producer groups committed to the production of quality cocoa beans, will enhance market outcomes.

Expected outcomes

- Improved cocoa production in the South Pacific through a shift away from seed propagation and towards clonal production of plants.
- Greater understanding of current roles of women and youth in cocoa production, processing, quality control, marketing and certification activities.
- Greater understanding among South Pacific cocoa producers of the importance of quality control, fermentation, drying and marketing, through training in chocolate making.
- Increased household earnings for those involved in cocoa production due to improved quality of cocoa produced and greater access to high-value, low-volume markets.



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