

Country Assistance Policy for the Independent State of Samoa

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1. Relevance of Assistance

Samoa, along with other Pacific island countries, faces development challenges, such as limited scale of domestic market and remoteness from international markets.

Samoa's economic development has focused on agriculture, forestry, fisheries and tourism, and has been growing smoothly, while it has received development assistance from various countries chiefly Australia and New Zealand. Samoa's economy has been disrupted at several occasions, namely reduced remittances and a downturn in manufacturing attributed to the global financial crisis in 2008, impacts caused by the 2009 Samoa Earthquake and Tsunami and a large cyclone in 2012. However, recent increase of investments in telecommunication and construction sectors as well as recovery in tourism sector buoy Samoa's economy. While Samoa has set environment protection as a targeted area in its development policies, its social and economic development requires to coexist with conservation efforts as such problems as destruction and deterioration of forests from overexploitation, a decrease in indigenous species due to a loss of biodiversity and increased waste disposal have become serious.

On December 2016, Samoa shaped the Strategy for the Development of Samoa (SDS) 2016/17-2019/20, the country's principal development policy, aiming to promote sustainable development and to be inclusive of all Samoan nationals through taking measures in economic, social, infrastructural and environmental areas.

Samoa has consistently maintained good bilateral relations with Japan which are illustrated by its support for Japan in international arenas and Japanese candidates in the election of international organizations. Therefore, it is critical that Japan remains committed to providing continued assistance to Samoa through the frameworks including those under the Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM) to encourage self-reliant and sustainable development of Samoa and to strengthen the bilateral relationship.

2. Basic Policy (Long-term Goal): To achieve self-reliant and sustainable economic growth and to improve living standards of people with environmental consciousness.

Based on SDS and the policies of Japan's development assistance policies announced at PALM, Japan assists Samoa for strengthening its platform for sustainable economic growth including infrastructure, strengthening its fiscal soundness and improving its basic social services as well as adhering environmental conservation and climate change.

3. Priority Areas

- (1) Environment and Climate Change

Assistance for disaster prevention and countermeasures to climate change and capacity building in these sectors are priority areas in order to reduce the impact of natural disasters such as cyclones. In order to mitigate degradation in nature and living environment, efforts should be made for solid waste management which will facilitate measures for marine plastic waste and conservation of ecosystem.

- (2) Overcoming vulnerability

In order to achieve sustainable economic growth, assistance will be provided for improving economic infrastructure such as traffic, transportation and electric power supply facilities which serves as a foundation for economic activities and social life, strengthening connectivity, and developing human resources for operating and maintaining such facilities, and in key industries such as manufacturing, agriculture, forestry, fisheries that are important for self-reliant and sustainable development of Samoa. In order to improve health standards, assistance including capacities building for preventing infectious diseases such as filariasis and non-communicable diseases, and guiding health and hygiene are also priority areas. In education sector, assistance for improving quality of education raising the level of basic learning ability by JICA Overseas Cooperation Volunteers as well as constructing school facilities and improving school environment through Grant Assistance for Grass-roots Human Security projects will be implemented. In addition, considering the importance of ocean for island countries in socio-economical and cultural manners, taking Sustainable Development Goals 14 "Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development" into account, assistance for contributing free, open and

sustainable ocean including capacity enhancement for maritime safety will be provided.

4. Points to be considered

Communicating and exchanging views with major donors such as Australia and New Zealand along with other development partners will be conducted in order to preclude duplication in development assistance and to promote effective, efficient and synergistic assistance. Utilizing the Green Climate Fund or other funds related to climate change will be considered.

Attached: Rolling Plan for the Independent State of Samoa