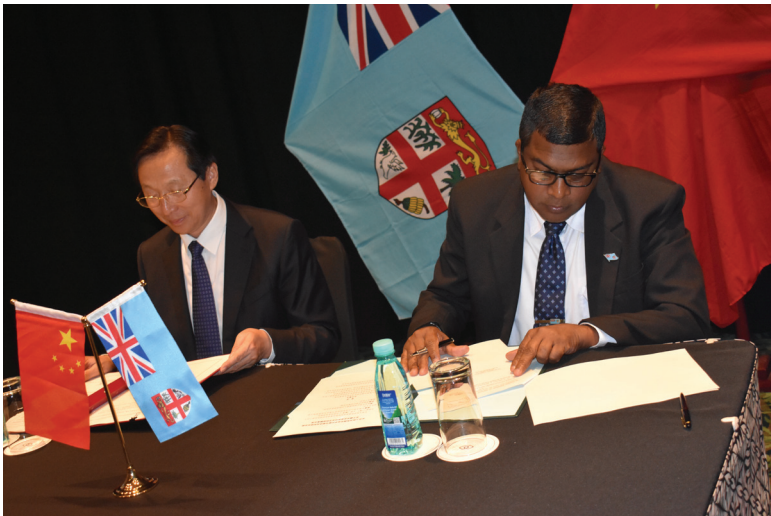


Fiji and China Sign MoU on Agricultural Cooperation



His Excellency Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Han Changfu (left) and the Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy signing the MoU.

Agricultural cooperation between the Republic of Fiji and the People's Republic of China will now be strengthened following the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the two countries.

The MoU on Strengthening Agricultural Cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China and the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Fiji was signed by His Excellency Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Han Changfu and Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy in Nadi on 29th March 2019.

Hon. Reddy shared Fiji and China's successful history of cooperation in the agriculture sector and highlighted the

MoU would enhance connection to the Chinese market.

"Fiji has now decided to let market demand drive production, but before that, we need to develop the infrastructure; support industries so that we can modernize agriculture and get the supply side ready to respond to demand signals," said Hon. Dr Reddy.

"Here we need your support to assist us build this foundation for the production and supply side. While we are lagging behind in the introduction of machinery and infrastructure support, we are also challenged by forces of natural disasters and the outbreak of pests and diseases for both the crop and livestock sectors.

Hon. Reddy said these issues needed to be addressed before market signals were sent to derive production and supply.

"It's then, that opening up of your

market for us and assisting us in reaching it will really boost our agriculture sector growth and development," he said.

The joint agreement is earmarked to strengthen agricultural cooperation between the two countries and enhance agricultural cooperation between Fiji and China on the basis of equality and mutual benefit.

The MOU allows for enhanced exchanges in research information and agricultural policies and active promotion of the cooperation and exchanges between research institutes and personnel from both countries, encouraging exchange visits of sci-tech personnel and joint researchers.

Areas of bilateral cooperation in agricultural trade and investment cooperation and other agricultural cooperation between the two Governments will also be promoted as part of the MoU.

Nadi Declaration on Agricultural Development Adopted by China and Pacific Island States



Pacific Island Agriculture Ministers with His Excellency Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs, Han Changfu during the meeting

The inaugural Roundtable China - Pacific Islands Agriculture Ministers meeting co-hosted by Fiji and China has been hailed a success following the adoption of the 'Nadi Declaration of China and Pacific Island States on Agricultural Development' in Nadi last week. Agriculture Ministers from eight Pacific Island countries namely Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Cook Islands, the

Federated States of Micronesia, Niue, the Independent State of Samoa, the Kingdom of Tonga, and the Republic of Vanuatu and the People's Republic of China adopted the Declaration to boost agriculture development in the Pacific.

The Declaration was signed after successful deliberations between China and Pacific Island States Agriculture

Minister's on Agriculture Cooperation, aligning with the theme "Seizing the opportunity of jointly contributing to the Belt and Road Initiative, advancing the practical agricultural cooperation between China and Pacific Island States"

Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy

said Fiji and Pacific island countries anticipated support from China to boost production and supply, and to open up their markets to assist Pacific suppliers access lucrative Chinese markets after the adoption of the Declaration.

With the Nadi Declaration focusing on Development and Cooperation as the main agenda, China and Pacific Agriculture

leaders have mutually agreed to conduct cooperation in personnel exchange and capacity building in agriculture, and facilitate people-to-people exchange at various levels to strengthen cooperation in agricultural technology. The Declaration also focused on the encouragement and support of agricultural research institutes in enhancing exchanges, building joint laboratories, jointly applying for funds from international organizations and the Chinese Government, and carrying out collaborative research, with a view to serving the agricultural development of China and Pacific island states.

Pacific Agricultural Ministers also agreed to strengthen South-South Cooperation (SSC) with the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) where Agricultural experts and technicians would be selected and dispatched to Pacific island states for technology demonstration and training with financial support from the SSC Trust Fund contributed by the Chinese Government.

From 2020 to 2022, the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs of the People's Republic of China (MARA) will offer agricultural technology training to 120 people from the Pacific island states through two training courses each year. The first training course for agricultural officials is to be launched in late April 2019.

The Second Agriculture Ministers Meeting of China and Pacific Island States will be held in the People's Republic of China in 2022.

Minister Reddy Meets with Chinese Counterpart H.E Han Changfu



Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy meets with His Excellency Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs Mr. Han Changfu and the Chinese delegation

Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy held a bilateral meeting with his Chinese counterpart, His Excellency Minister for Agriculture and Rural Affairs Mr. Han Changfu on the margins of the inaugural China-Pacific Islands Agriculture Ministers Meeting in Nadi on 29 March.

Minister Reddy expressed his gratitude to the Government of China for the continued support towards agricultural development in Fiji, highlighting that it was the impetus for further growth.

Hon. Reddy highlighted the Fijian Government's intention of developing the country's primary industries sectors such as agriculture and fisheries through development strategies and acknowledged China's cooperation in developing critical

sectors of the Fijian economy.

Discussions also centered on areas of mutual cooperation and interest to further strengthen partnership on agricultural development such as mechanization of the local agriculture sector, continued technical support on livestock commodities through livestock breeding and technical advice on the rice industry.

Minister Reddy shared development initiatives which were currently being implemented and plans that would be further strengthened through China's support.

H.E Han Changfu acknowledged China and Fiji's diplomatic ties and long-standing relations and affirmed China's aim to continuously provide support for an enabling environment for agricultural development cooperation.

The Agriculture Ministers also discussed the importance of Fiji to take full advantage of the South-South Cooperation, which could be used as an avenue for further development assistance for the benefit of Fiji's agriculture sector.

An invitation to attend the 4th Agriculture Joint Committee Meeting in China next year was extended to Fiji's Agriculture Minister by H.E Han Changfu.

A Memorandum of Understanding on overarching agriculture development cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture, Fiji and the People's Republic of China Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Affairs was signed by H.E Han Changfu and Hon. Reddy following the bilateral meeting.