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NATIONAL FISHERIES AUTHORITY

"Effectively Managing our Fisheries and Marine Resources
For Sustainable and Equitable Benefits"

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

MEDIA STATEMENT

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Landmark Fisheries Training Project Moves into Implementation Phase

The Managing Director of the National Fisheries Authority (NFA), Mr. Justin Ilakini, has announced a major milestone in strengthening fisheries education through the redevelopment of the National Fisheries College (NFC) waterfront training facilities.

The initiative reflects the strong and longstanding bilateral partnership between Papua New Guinea and the Government of Japan, and aligns with the PNG Government's policy direction to build a broad-based fisheries sector that is not solely dependent on the tuna industry. By strengthening domestic training capacity and expanding technical expertise, the Project supports national objectives to increase direct participation of Papua New Guineans across the fisheries value chain and enhance direct revenue generation for the State.

The redevelopment also advances one of NFA's key priorities for 2026 to reset and refocus the National Fisheries College as a higher-level fisheries learning institution capable of supporting national workforce development and regional training demand. The transformation of NFC is intended to position the College as a centre of excellence that underpins sustainable growth, industry diversification, and national capacity building in the fisheries sector.

Conceived three and a half years ago, the Project for the Improvement of Facilities and Training Equipment of NFC is now entering its delivery phase. The Project will equip the College with modern training facilities and equipment for advanced fisheries education, expand practical training opportunities with a focus on bottom fishing and longline fishing operations, and strengthen PNG's capacity to support diversified fisheries development.

Japan's first Overseas Development Assistance project at NFC was implemented in 1974 through the construction of the Students Auditorium. Building on this longstanding cooperation, Japan has again provided grant support for the redevelopment of the NFC waterfront training facilities, including a dedicated Training Vessel. The Exchange of Notes and Grant Agreement were executed on 20 June 2025, with Japan's grant valued at 3,255,000,000 yen (K90,370,844). Together with the Government of Papua New Guinea's contribution, the total project value stands at K120,000,000 (K120 Million).

The redevelopment comprises the procurement and construction of a modern Training Vessel and the construction of new shore-based waterfront training facilities. The Training Vessel procurement process is ongoing, with contractor announcement expected soon. Construction and delivery of the vessel are projected over three years, with delivery anticipated in 2029, and arrangements for the vessel are expected to be finalised during the balance of this year.

Whilst the training vessel component of the project is ongoing, NFA is pleased to confirm that the shorefront development component has progressed successfully, with a contractor identified to proceed to the implementation phase at a value of K92 million.

The contract for the shorebase training facilities was signed on Thursday, 19th February 2026, at the Papua New Guinea Embassy in Tokyo, Japan, between NFA and Dai Nippon Construction, and was witnessed by the Secretary of the Department of National Planning and Monitoring (DNPM), Mr. Koney Samuel. The DNPM is supporting NFA to ensure all State obligation requirements are met so the Project can proceed smoothly into implementation. Construction is anticipated to be completed in the first quarter of 2028.

A groundbreaking ceremony is anticipated later in the year, subject to the availability of key dignitaries.

Speaking at the signing ceremony, Mr. Ilakini stated that, “this Project represents a transformational investment in the future of fisheries education and workforce development in Papua New Guinea. Through modern facilities, expanded practical training, and strengthened international partnership, the National Fisheries College will be positioned to serve as a leading regional centre of excellence in fisheries training.”

Mr. Justin Ilakini
Managing Director