



**MINISTRY OF FINANCE AND ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT**  
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

**MEDIA RELEASE**  
**NZ CONTRIBUTES \$20 MILLION 21 APRIL 2021**

The Cook Islands government is pleased to announce the receipt of the New Zealand government's generous contribution of \$20 million towards our COVID-19 Economic Response Plan (ERP), as promised by New Zealand Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern late last month.

This grant funding will not only help support the ongoing implementation of our ERP, it will also be used to complete any necessary strengthening of our health and border systems that may be required. "The New Zealand government would like to acknowledge the huge amount of work the Cook Islands has done to keep COVID-19 successfully at bay," said New Zealand's High Commissioner to the Cook Islands, Tui Dewes. "However, we also recognise that their successful defence against COVID-19 has come at a high cost to the national economy. "It is hoped that this contribution will go some way towards alleviating the Cook Islands' current financial situation while also strengthening the country's COVID-19 response. "The New Zealand government has also committed to ongoing discussions about options for possible further financial support at some point in the near future."

In response, Finance Secretary Garth Henderson said there were various ways the New Zealand government could continue to support the Cook Islands economically. "We would welcome any further financial support that the New Zealand government is able to provide as we look ahead to rebuilding our economy – whether that be through further grant contributions, access to loan funding or other avenues of financial aid. "That said, we are of course very grateful for the current \$20 million contribution and it will be a huge help in maintaining the ongoing implementation of our Economic Response Plan."

The New Zealand government's \$20 million contribution was made available under the New Zealand Aid Programme's COVID-19 Pacific Resilience Fund, set up to respond to the wide-ranging health, economic and social impacts of the global COVID-19 pandemic throughout the Pacific. This comes after New Zealand recently reprioritised its development assistance budget so that the \$20 million in additional support for the Cook Islands could be provided this financial year.

Summary reports on how the \$20 million in funds is being utilised will be provided by the Cook Islands to New Zealand's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade on a quarterly basis, in accordance with our two governments' joint commitment to good governance, accountability and transparency.

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21 April 2021