

AAUN AUSTRALIA AFRICA.

UNIVERSITIES NETWORK LTD

To: Members of AAUN Ltd Board, Knowledge Partners, PRDF Leaders.

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From: Prof John Hearn, Co-Chair AAUN; A/Prof Grace Liu, General Manager AAUN

AAUN Strategic Plan 2022-25: Future Directions and Action Plan.

[website: www.aaun.edu.au]

Dear Colleagues and Friends of AAUN,

The calendar year 2022 will see significant emergence from Covid lockdowns and restrictions. Meanwhile since 2019, AAUN has progressed in partnerships, programs and preparations. We have learned improved communications and teamwork, continued strong on-line workshops and fora, and developed priority opportunities for established and emerging researchers - women and men. Mobility will return soon!

STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT. We have held a firm course with our AAUN Strategic Plan, extending it to 2022-25. We have tested our capacities to broaden our education, research, innovation, and economic engagement, in serving better our universities, governments, business, NGOs and international agencies.

There is opportunity for a **reset and relaunch of AAUN** to include broader south-south collaboration and development, based on our impact assessment 2013-20 and supported strongly by our African partners.

STRENGTHS. AAUN was launched with DFAT in July 2012. Current membership is 13 African and 10 Australian Universities. Sponsors and knowledge partners include DFAT and ACIAR, the NRF of South Africa, OECD, WHO, Commonwealth Universities, with external program grants. There are 60 Research programs and expert teams, based on equal governance, objectives, and impact. This model can be extended.

OPPORTUNITIES (POLICY). The geopolitical developments of 2020-21, including the QUAD, AUKUS, CP-TPP Post-Brexit Britain and Commonwealth, **all enhance Indo-Pacific priorities.** These open new options for higher education and research, science, technology, innovation, and a “new development diplomacy” between **Australia, Africa, New Zealand, and the Indo Pacific.** The opportunities can catalyse selected south-south partnerships, without diluting AAUN commitments to the SDGs, Africa AU2063 goals, and Indo Pacific priorities of Australia and the Island Nations. **Many AAUN Universities have Indo-Pacific expertise.**

ACTION PLAN. AAUN 2012-2022 has delivered its successful model of multi-university partnerships, with annual competitive, catalytic funds invested in areas of global challenge: environment, health, food and nutrition, education, economic development. **An extended AAUN Platform can be adopted for 2022-25.**

1. Membership 1. Our target is 15 members each in Australia and Africa. **We will invite 5 Indo-Pacific, along with our current member U-Mauritius:** (Fiji, University of the South Pacific, Auckland, Canterbury).

2. Membership 2. The Board approved in 2020 (Covid-delayed) invitations to 5 northern hemisphere universities, for north-south links (Cornell, Kings, Wageningen, Mid-East - Dubai, Indian-IORA linked).

3. Research Fields. Review selected additional fields: bio and marine economy, IT-Aps, entrepreneurship.

4. Business Partnerships. AAUN will **offer PRDF partnerships, with business planning/project development.**

5. Resource Development. AAUN Ltd (2020) is an NFP company. All funds go direct to research and support.

6. New Groups. AAUN will establish two new 5 member groups: **AAUN Indo Pacific Group**, and **AAUN Global Group.** Depending on progress, the Board will consider any adjustment to the AAUN Brand.

Please let us have your views, with a summary of your Indo Pacific interests and capacities, by 01.02.22.

Thank you – Mingyi.liu@unsw.edu.au; J.Hearn@unsw.edu.au

