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European Union ensures PNG Laboratory Accreditations meet International Standards

With the successful completion of a one-week long training for its lead assessors, Papua New Guinea Laboratory Accreditation Scheme has reached a milestone to regain recognition by the international community on laboratory accreditation (ILAC). PNG Laboratory Accreditation Scheme (PNGLAS) is a structure that delivers accreditation certificates to testing laboratories nationally. This function is crucial to ascertain that test or measuring equipment calibration results undertaken are reliable and can be compared to those produced by other labs abroad. Without this recognition, goods produced in PNG that are certified by our laboratories cannot compete equally with others.

PNGLAS is hosted by the National Institute of Standards and Industrial Technology (NISIT), which has recently received support from the European Union-funded, Trade Related Assistance Program (phase II) being implemented by the Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry (DTCI).



Some of the participants with their Certificates, with Expert Alain Peyré far left, Acting Director NISIT, Victor Gabi, far right and Officer In Charge of PNGLAS, Annah Bale, second from right

The support mission, delivered by short-term expert Mr Alain Peyré, aimed at strengthening NISIT's capacity to handle issues constituting Technical Barriers to Trade, which relate to testing, certification or inspection of products traded between countries. The inputs of Mr Peyré in the support mission have made it possible for eight laboratory assessors to update their skills and knowledge, a condition for PNGLAS certificates to be recognised in the Asia Pacific region and abroad.

As the Officer In Charge of PNGLAS, Annah Bale, states: *"with competent assessors, PNGLAS can provide assurances to the Asia Pacific Laboratories Accreditation Cooperation, APLAC, that our assessment of a lab management system is thorough, and that our labs are competent to provide reliable results"*.

This requirement is crucial in trade or export transactions, but also when it comes to ensuring the safety of consumers, for example, when labs would test the resistance of building materials or determine the level of contaminants in food or waters. The support of the EU therefore, helps building national capacities that benefits equally external trade and the safety of our people.

For more information on the TRA 2 project you can visit: www.pngeutra2.org.pg.

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The European Union (EU) is represented by the Delegation of the EU to Papua New Guinea. HE Ioannis Giogkarakis-Argyropoulos is the Ambassador of the EU Delegation in Port Moresby. The European Union has 28 Member States including France and the UK, both also represented in PNG. Visit the EU Delegation website: http://eeas.europa.eu/delegations/papua_new_guinea/index_en.htm