

## IRRI and NARI inks agreement to revitalize Papua New Guinea's rice industry

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The International Rice Research Institute (IRRI) will provide essential support to ensure the future of Papua New Guinea's (PNG) rice industry.

"For too long, the potential for a thriving rice industry in PNG has been a topic of discussion without fruition since 1975. This time, it must be different; it must become a reality," said Agriculture Minister John Boito during the signing of a new Memorandum of Understanding between IRRI and PNG's National Agriculture Research Institute (NARI).

The agreement, signed by Dr. Ajay Kohli, Interim Director General of IRRI, and Dr. Nelson Simbiken, Director General of NARI, sets the stage for a collaborative effort to bolster rice research and development in the country.

IRRI will provide scientific and technical assistance to NARI for the promotion and dissemination of high-yielding, climate-smart, and healthier rice varieties and systems, work that will include the latest production and post-harvest techniques, seed production, irrigation and infrastructure, plus economic assessments and exchange placements. The development of joint projects tailored to the PNG rice sector, addressing its specific challenges and opportunities, will follow.

The collaboration aligns with the PNG government's agricultural policy objectives and priorities as outlined in the NARI Strategic Results Framework 2022-2031, which underpins the country's agricultural research activities.

"This agreement acknowledges and emphasizes the major role of rice in PNG's agriculture sector, and the opportunities that exist for its development. With the overwhelming support from the government through NARI, we look forward to supporting the development of a rice self-sufficient PNG," said Dr. Kohli.