

First interactive map of Chinese aid to the Pacific launched

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The question of how much aid China provides to the Pacific has been debated for some years now. A number of authors have produced large estimates in the absence of any official data from the Chinese Government; estimates that are often based on public announcements and press clippings, and therefore lead to 'double counting'.

The Lowy Institute's Philippa Brant, who is also an associate at the Development Policy Centre, produced her own estimates in 2013, based on analysis of budget documents and other official sources. These were discussed in a [paper](#) that she and I prepared last year.

Philippa has been updating these figures over the last six months, and last week published them online in the form of an [interactive map](#) on the Lowy Institute website (results are also summarised in various [documents](#) [pdf] available on the website). The map is the most detailed source of information on Chinese aid to the Pacific ever published. It documents expenditure down to the project level, and is based on analysis of more than 500 documents and sources.

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So, how much aid has China provided to the Pacific?

The research concludes that China has provided \$1.474 billion USD in development assistance since 2006. China provided \$1.057 billion between 2006 and 2013, making it the fifth largest source of development assistance in the Pacific, behind Australia (\$6.831 billion), the United States (\$1.77 billion), Japan (\$1.225 billion), and New Zealand (\$1.096 billion). China is therefore an important partner, but certainly not likely to eclipse Australia as the Pacific's largest partner any time soon, even when considering Australia's recent aid [cuts](#).

However, this is not the case in all countries. Chinese development assistance is relatively concentrated, so it is very significant in some places. China has already [surpassed](#) Australia as a donor in Fiji, according to this research, and is not far behind in Vanuatu and Samoa.

The interactive map can be accessed [here](#). A summary can be found in this [document](#) [pdf].