



Planting Prosperity, nurturing a nation: NBPOL Celebrates 50 Years of Partnership with Papua New Guinea

As Papua New Guinea proudly marks its 50th year of independence, Kula Group celebrates alongside the nation, reflecting on five decades of shared growth, progress, and partnership.

The story of Kula Group is deeply intertwined with the history of Papua New Guinea's oil palm industry, beginning with three landmark projects that brought modern agriculture and rural development to some of the nation's most remote provinces.

A Legacy Built on Growth

In 1975, the Popondetta Oil Palm Project was launched in Popondetta, Oro Province, under the stewardship of the Commonwealth Development Corporation (CDC) and funding by the World Bank. The first planting followed in 1976, and by 1980 the first mill was commissioned, creating employment, infrastructure, and new opportunities for the surrounding communities.



Gili Gili Plantation coconut factory, outdoor scene of women opening coconuts in 1921.

The **Poliamba Oil Palm** project began in New Ireland Province in 1989, also under the ownership of CDC-Pacific Rim and CTP. Situated in one of the country's most isolated provinces, the development brought vital roads, bridges, and services to areas previously lacking basic infrastructure.

Meanwhile, in Milne Bay Province, the **Milne Bay Oil Palm Estates (MBE)** project commenced in 1983. Owned by CDC-Pacific Rim and CTP, the project introduced commercial oil palm cultivation to the region, generating economic activity and improving access to healthcare, education, and employment.

These three pioneering ventures laid the foundation for what would later become one of the most significant agricultural groups in Papua New Guinea.



King Charles harvesting Oil Palm at Higaturu in the late 80s.

From Independent Ventures to One Unified Group

A defining moment came on **1 January 2002**, when **Pacific Rim Plantations Limited**; the former name of CTP (PNG) Limited and now known as Kula Palm Oil Limited; formally amalgamated with **Milne Bay Estates Limited**. This merger brought HOP and MBE under a single corporate structure for the first time, strengthening operations, consolidating resources, and aligning strategies for growth.

The transformation continued in 2010 when **New Britain Palm Oil Limited (NBPOL)** acquired 100% of CTP (PNG) Limited, integrating the operations under the unified brand of **Kula Palm Oil Limited**. The name "Kula" was chosen in recognition of the traditional Kula exchange of Milne Bay Province; a symbol of interconnectedness, trust, and mutual respect, values that remain central to the Group's philosophy today.

Celebrating 50 Years Together

As Papua New Guinea marks 50 years of independence, Kula Group stands proud of its legacy; a history built on partnerships with communities, government, and industry, and a future committed to sustainable growth and shared prosperity.

**Kula Group Growing Together for
Half a Century**

**New Britain
Palm Oil**