



Papua New Guinea

Joined the Commonwealth 1975 - visited by the Queen in 1982



Papua New Guinea is in the South Pacific

Pop: (2013) 7,321,000 Capital: Port Moresby Area: 462,840 sq km

Papua New Guinea makes up the eastern half of the island of Guinea plus around 600 offshore islands. Its rugged mountainous central ridge has wide valleys and foothills to the north and south leading to coastal plains. Active volcanoes occur along the north coast and through the south-eastern islands. The tropical monsoon climate is hot and wet year round.

The vegetation is rich and diverse including the largest variety of orchids in the world. 63% of the land is still forested. Much of it is still unexplored, possibly containing undiscovered species of flora and fauna. One recent discovery includes the giant woolly rat - the size of a large cat. There are many unusual insects such as the world's largest butterfly and the brilliant green scarab beetle. Dugongs live in the coastal waters.

Papua New Guinea is rich in minerals such as oil and gas but agricultural products, forestry and fishing are also sources of revenue. As the main population centres are separated by ocean or inhospitable terrain, economic development is difficult. Adventure tourism is now taking off.



Mount Bagana - an active volcano, Bougainville Island, Papua New Guinea

