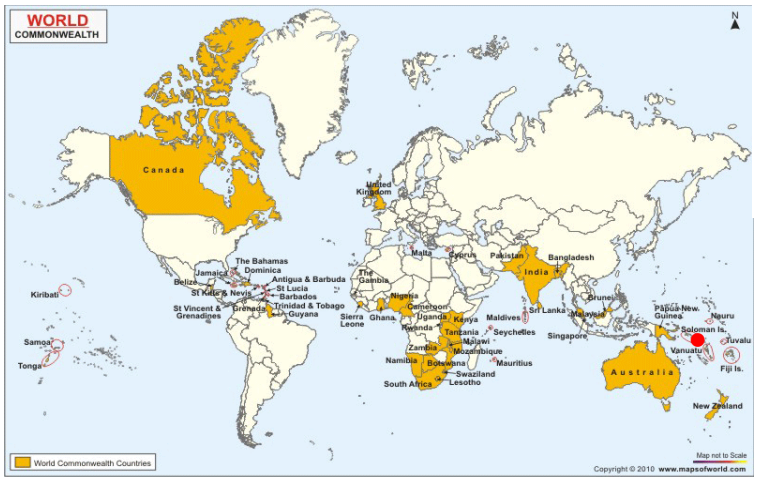
Solomon Islands

Joined the Commonwealth in 1978 - visited by the Queen in 1982



Soloman Islands is an archipelago nation in the south-west Pacific

Pop: (2013) 561,000 Capital: Honiara Area: 28,370 sq km

The Solomon Islands archipelago is made up of a double chain of rocky islands and several smaller coral islands. The six larger islands are remarkable for their steep sided, rugged mountainous terrain and heavy rainfall. There are several dormant volcanoes and two active ones. The islands can also be affected by earthquakes and cyclones.

The equatorial climate is hot and humid all round. These conditions are ideal for hardwoods such as teak and mahogany and timber is an important export. Most farmers are subsistence farmers but some agricultural products, such as palm oil, are exported. The Solomon Islands are rich in minerals such as gold, lead, zinc and nickel, though these resources are still largely undeveloped. There is a high potential for eco-tourism but the lack of infrastructure and the remoteness of the region are drawbacks.

A fuzzy lake bird on Rennell Island. The atoll is a natural World Heritage Site recognised for its unique biodiversity and scientific study