

A photograph of two people riding bicycles on a sandy beach path. The person in the foreground is wearing a blue tank top and is riding a blue bicycle. The person in the background is wearing a red tank top and is also riding a blue bicycle. The path is wet and reflective, suggesting recent rain. The background shows a calm ocean and a line of palm trees under a cloudy sky.

# **SAVE TUVALU, SAVE THE WORLD: THE CLIMATE CRISIS AND THE PACIFIC**

**A BACKGROUND BRIEFING FOR THE  
50TH PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM,  
TUVALU, 12–16 AUGUST 2019**



**OXFAM**

## Save Tuvalu, Save the World: The Climate Crisis and the Pacific

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**Acknowledgements:** Oxfam acknowledges the assistance of the Pacific Calling Partnership, Pacific Islands Climate Action Network, Tuvalu Climate Action Network, Vanuatu Climate Action Network, Raising Pacific Voices, Tom Widdup, Mariam Mathew, Conor Costello, Ula Majewski, Jo Spratt, Alex Johnston and Sarah Heeringa in preparing this report.

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**Cover photo:** The narrowest part of Fogafale islet, Funafuti, Tuvalu, is only 20 metres across. During the king tides and in many average tides during a storm surge, water and debris washes right over from the ocean into the lagoon. Photo: Jocelyn Carlin/Panos



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Isso Nihmei is from the island of Futuna, Vanuatu. He is a Pacific Climate Warrior and campaigns with 350. Photo: Arlene Bax/OxfamAUS

# EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Pacific Island countries have long recognised the climate crisis as the greatest threat to their futures. Drawing on the region's strengths, values and a united Pacific voice, Pacific Island countries have sought to lead by example – making bold national commitments, playing a major role in international negotiations, and holding their bigger neighbours – Australia and New Zealand – to account.

This year's Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting will mark another important step in the region's response to the climate crisis, and a key test for Australia and New Zealand's credibility. It is the first since the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's landmark report on limiting warming to 1.5°C, which laid out in stark terms the scale of global action necessary to ensure Pacific Island countries and communities are able to survive and thrive. It comes three months after the Morrison Government was returned to power in the 2019 Australian Federal Election and as both Australia and New Zealand are aiming to renew and strengthen their standing in the region.

In 2018, as members of the Pacific Islands Forum, Australia and New Zealand endorsed the Boe Declaration on Regional Security, reaffirming that climate change is the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and members' commitment to the Paris Agreement.

However, their actions, and particularly those of Australia, tell a different story. Australia and New Zealand are both among a tiny minority of developed countries in which climate pollution is going up not down.

Australia's emissions per person are around 15 times those of Tuvalu and each year Australia produces six times more climate pollution than all other Forum members combined. This outsized and growing contribution to the climate crisis is compounded by Australia's status as the world's largest exporter of coal and gas, with plans to further ramp up these industries. The climate pollution from the proposed Adani mine alone would, over its life, be greater than that of all Pacific Island countries combined.

While recognising the importance of the Paris Agreement to the Pacific, Australia plans to undermine the spirit of cooperation and ambition on which it depends, by counting avoided emissions during the Kyoto period towards achieving its modest 2030 target. In real terms, this would mean Australia reducing its emission reduction commitment between now and 2030 by an amount equivalent to around five times the emissions of every small island member of the Pacific Islands Forum over that period. Australia has also said it will not make further contributions to the Green Climate Fund – a critical source of support to vulnerable communities worldwide, and a central pillar of the global response to the climate crisis.

New Zealand has regained significant international credibility through its proposed Zero Carbon Act – a long-term framework for developing national policies and actions through which to contribute to international efforts to limit global heating to 1.5°C. However, the near term picture is more concerning, with New Zealand's emissions projected to continue rising until the mid-2020s, reflecting a sustained lack of effective climate policy over successive governments. While the Zero Carbon Act is a very significant step and would place New Zealand well ahead of Australia, it would not be without significant failings if passed in its current form. In particular, far stronger efforts would be required to reduce emissions from agriculture – New Zealand's biggest contribution to climate pollution.

When it comes to the complex challenges of displacement in the context of climate change, Australia and New Zealand must follow the lead of Pacific Island countries and communities. They must recognise communities' deep connection to their land and seas and their right to maintain their culture and sovereignty, and accept that for many migration is not considered an option. Both countries must scale up their support to vulnerable communities with building resilience in the face of climate damage, including new contributions to the Green Climate Fund, and work with the region to ensure that funding is accessible to those who need it most.

Most importantly, Australia and New Zealand must heed the call from Pacific leaders and UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres that all countries come to September's UN Climate Summit with plans to strengthen their commitments to the Paris Agreement by 2020, and to rapidly move beyond fossil fuels.

For Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific, the 50th Pacific Islands Forum marks the start of a crucial 18 month window that will culminate at the 26th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP26) in 2020. Decisions taken over this period will profoundly affect the lives and prospects of communities worldwide, and in particular the peoples of the Pacific, far into the future. Continuing down the current path risks global heating in excess of 3°C and undermining all the development progress of recent decades.

The year's Pacific Islands Forum also comes at a time when great powers from China to the UK are stepping up their engagement with the Pacific. The region now faces a greater number of prospective development and security partners, and is determined to chart its own course within this new and more complex landscape.

Put simply, if Australia and New Zealand are to remain trusted partners to the region and valued members of the Pacific family, and with that, retain the ability to help shape the region's future, they must immediately step up their response to the number one priority of Pacific Island countries – climate change.

# INTRODUCTION

## FOR MANY YEARS NOW, PACIFIC ISLAND COUNTRIES HAVE BEEN AT THE LEADING EDGE OF INTERNATIONAL EFFORTS TO CONFRONT THE GREATEST CHALLENGE OF OUR TIMES – THE CLIMATE CRISIS.

Facing a truly existential threat not of their making, these 'large ocean states' have worked collectively to pioneer solutions, catalyse international action, and hold the world to account.

The story of climate change and the Pacific is one of extreme and intensifying threats to all aspects of life, culture and security, but also a story of resilience, resolve and leadership.

In this endeavour – of protecting their islands, oceans, livelihoods and cultures from the scourge of rising seas, destructive storms, acidifying oceans, and shifting rains – Pacific Island countries have long sought the cooperation and solidarity of their bigger neighbours, Australia and New Zealand.

Australia is one of the world's heaviest polluters (on a per person basis), the world's largest exporter of coal and gas and the loudest voice in the region. Its actions are well understood among Pacific Islander people to have a heavy bearing on their future.

The 50th Pacific Islands Forum is taking place in the atoll nation of Tuvalu. Even relative to other Pacific Island countries, Tuvalu, whose tiny land area rises on average less than two metres above sea level, is at the extreme end of the spectrum when it comes to vulnerability to climate damage. For Tuvalu and other atoll nations of the Pacific, climate change is a matter of survival.

Coming in the wake of the 2019 Australian Federal Election, which saw the Morrison Government returned to power, and with both Australia and New Zealand in the process of reinventing their relationship with the Pacific region, August's Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting is a key test for both countries' credentials on climate action, and whether they can remain valued partners and trusted members of the Pacific family into the future.

This briefing paper takes stock of the climate crisis in the Pacific, the legacy of Pacific climate leadership, the significance of this year's Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting, and expectations for Australia and New Zealand. It situates these questions within the tectonic geopolitical shifts facing the Pacific today, which are seeing some of the world's great powers stepping up their presence in the region, and Pacific large ocean states occupying an ever more influential role on the world stage.

### *"Save Tuvalu, save the World!"*

[A rallying cry from Tuvalu, echoed by UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres during his May 2019 visit, ahead of the UN Climate Summit in September 2019]

This year's Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Meeting also comes a month ahead of one of the most important moments in international climate negotiations since the Paris Agreement was finalised in 2015. On 23 September, world leaders will convene in New York for a UN Climate Summit, designed to encourage as many countries as possible to strengthen their commitments to the Paris Agreement before it enters into force in 2020.

Fully aware of the acute vulnerability of Pacific Island countries in the era of extreme climate damage, along with their ability to drive international action, UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres visited Fiji, Vanuatu and Tuvalu in May, on a mission to build momentum ahead of the critical summit. The cover of the 24 June edition of Time magazine featured a symbolic image of the UN Secretary General standing knee-deep in water in Tuvalu.<sup>1</sup>

### *"Nowhere have I seen the heartbreaking impacts of climate change more starkly than in Tuvalu."*

[UN Secretary General Antonio Guterres]

Knowing their future depends on major polluters like Australia substantially stepping up, Pacific Island countries have been leading by example, taking on world-leading commitments in the hope of inspiring others to follow. For example, the Marshall Islands became the first country in the world to update and strengthen its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) to the Paris Agreement.

### *"If we can do it, so can you!"*

[President Hilda Heine of the Marshall Islands]

New Zealand is currently finalising its Zero Carbon Act – a national framework for developing policies and actions through which to contribute to global efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. In Australia, on the other hand, pollution is on the rise, compounded by the immense and growing footprint of Australia's fossil fuel exports. The Australian Government currently has no long-term plan of action for reducing Australia's climate pollution.

## “THE SINGLE GREATEST THREAT”

At the 49th Pacific Islands Forum (Nauru, 2018), all Forum members, including Australia, adopted the Boe Declaration on Regional Security. Among other measures, the Boe Declaration reaffirmed “that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific and our commitment to progress the implementation of the Paris Agreement”.<sup>2</sup>

Around the same time, Prime Minister Scott Morrison, facing pressure from some members of his backbench to withdraw from

the Paris Agreement, defended staying in on the basis that “this is an enormously important issue to partners in the Pacific”.

Nonetheless, far from working towards the Agreement’s long-term goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C – a provision hard fought for by Pacific Island countries – Australia’s current actions, if followed by all other countries, would place us on a path to over 3°C of warming,<sup>3</sup> and a future of unimaginable suffering for the region.

## THE BLUE PACIFIC: A POWERFUL REGION UNITED

*“The Blue Pacific seeks to re-capture the collective potential of our shared stewardship of the Pacific Ocean, based on an explicit recognition of our shared ocean identity, ocean geography, and ocean resources. It aims to strengthen collective action as one “Blue Pacific Continent” by putting “The Blue Pacific” at the centre of policy making and collective action for advancing the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders’ Vision for our Region.”*

(Dame Meg Taylor, Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat<sup>4</sup>)

The Blue Pacific narrative, endorsed by Forum leaders at their 2017 meeting (Samoa), has forged a common vision and identity for the region. It is a narrative that binds together the diverse peoples of the Pacific, captures the growing geostrategic and economic significance of the region, and cements a powerful narrative of self-determination based on Pacific values. It replaces outdated notions of ‘small island states’ – remote, vulnerable, and with little power of their own – with that of a single oceanic continent, made up of

‘large ocean states’ that are determined to chart their own development path and own their place in the world.

The Blue Pacific narrative has its roots in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, endorsed by Forum leaders at their 2014 meeting (Palau). The emergence of a more united Pacific region has coincided with significant shifts in the global balance of power, which have placed the Pacific back on the map as an arena for strategic competition between great powers.

## BACK ON THE MAP: THE PACIFIC AND GLOBAL POWERPLAYS

The Morrison and Ardern Governments are under no illusions as to the renewed importance of the Pacific region to the global order, and both countries have been working to renew their status as trusted partners of Pacific Island countries amidst growing interest and investment from the wider world, most notably China.

While Australia remains by far the largest provider of development assistance to the region,<sup>5</sup> China’s presence is being felt throughout the Pacific. And China is not alone in ramping up its engagement with the ocean continent. For example, the UK has scaled-up its development assistance to the region, with a particular focus on supporting communities with building resilience to climate change.<sup>6</sup> Ireland, working

with the Asian Development Bank, has established a fund to boost climate and disaster resilience in the Pacific.<sup>7</sup> Indonesia, Russia and the United Arab Emirates are also providing increased assistance to the Pacific.<sup>8</sup>

Pacific Island countries now face a wider array of choices when it comes to development partners, and consequently less dependence upon their traditional allies. What’s more, they have made clear that they intend to exercise this greater agency.<sup>9</sup>

If Australia is to remain a valued and trusted member of the Pacific family, and with that retain the ability to have a say in the region’s future, then it must begin responding to the number one priority of Pacific Island countries – climate change.<sup>10</sup>

## FROM PARIS TO TUVALU: “WE ARE NOT DROWNING, WE ARE FIGHTING!”

While often portrayed as hapless victims of climate change, Pacific Island countries and communities have long been at the leading edge of action to confront the climate crisis. The region is determined to take charge of its future and show the rest of the world what real climate leadership looks like; from skilful international diplomacy to world-leading policies and commitments at the regional level to local community-driven actions built upon millennia’s worth of indigenous knowledge.

Key pillars of the international response to climate change owe a considerable amount to the determined advocacy of Pacific Island countries. These include the Paris commitment

of striving to limit warming to 1.5°C, the earthshaking Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C that followed from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, and today’s growing and long overdue focus on the oceans within international negotiations and action on the climate crisis.

Pacific Island countries have contributed almost nothing to the causes of the climate crisis yet are being hit first and hardest by its impacts. The severe injustice of the climate crisis in the Pacific has been matched only by the determination of Pacific leaders and peoples to lead the world to a more just and sustainable future.

### PACIFIC CLIMATE LEADERSHIP – A SNAPSHOT OF KEY MOMENTS SINCE 2015

**SEPTEMBER 2015:** The Pacific Islands Development Forum, with its **Suva Declaration**, puts forward a strong and united position ahead of crucial final negotiations on the Paris Agreement.

**DECEMBER 2015:** The ‘**High Ambition Coalition**’, led by the Marshall Islands, is pivotal in securing a strong **Paris Agreement**. Pacific Island countries succeed in their two most important aims – enshrining the goal of **limiting warming to 1.5°C**, and ensuring a separate element of the Agreement on addressing **loss and damage** from climate change.

**SEPTEMBER 2016:** The Pacific Islands Forum adopts the **Framework for Resilient Development of the Pacific** – a world first regional framework for integrated climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction as part of an overall vision of inclusive development.

**NOVEMBER 2017: Fiji is President of COP23** – the first small island state to preside over international climate negotiations under the UNFCCC. The legacy of Fiji’s presidency includes the **Talanoa Dialogue** (a process for enhancing collaboration, trust and collective ambition based on traditional Pacific methods of open and inclusive dialogue), and elevating the importance of **oceans** within the climate system.

**SEPTEMBER 2018:** The Pacific Islands Forum adopts the **Boe Declaration** on Regional Security, reaffirming that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific, and recommitting members to progressing implementation of the Paris Agreement.





Maria Tekaië stands on the beach by a fallen palm tree, close to where her family used to live. Tebontebike village, Abaiang, Kiribati. Parts of her village now lie underneath the ocean in the background. Photo: Ula Majewski/OxfamAUS

# KEY CHALLENGES

## 1.5°C TO SURVIVE AND THRIVE

Against the odds, and after staring down some of the world's most powerful countries, Pacific Island countries were successful in ensuring the Paris Agreement committed all countries to aiming to limit warming to 1.5°C. Published in October 2018, the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming 1.5°C made clear the stark consequences of failure, reaffirming that this is a matter of survival for vulnerable communities throughout the Pacific.

The IPCC concluded that for a chance of limiting warming to 1.5°C, global emissions must be roughly halved by 2030 and reach zero by the middle of this century at the latest.<sup>11</sup>

Under the equity principles of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, it is also clear that those whose development and wealth have been built through decades of using fossil energy and who have a greater capacity to respond

to this crisis, must lead the charge. In other words, advanced economies such as Australia and New Zealand should aspire to achieve zero emissions well before the middle of the century.

With their very futures at stake, in December 2018 at the UN Climate Change Conference in Katowice (COP24), the leaders of the group of Pacific Small Island Developing States issued yet another urgent appeal to the international community, urging all countries to significantly strengthen their NDCs to the Paris Agreement. The group also called on all OECD countries to phase out their use of coal by 2030, and for all other countries to do so by 2040.

*"There must be no expansion of coal mines or the creation of new mines."*

(From a statement by the Pacific Small Island Developing States, COP24, December 2018<sup>12</sup>)

## LOSS AND DAMAGE

For Pacific Islander peoples, the climate crisis is not a distant future but a very real, present and deepening reality. Its effects are many, varied and compounding on one another. In the atoll nations of Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands, rising seas and higher storm surges are already swallowing land and homes and contaminating scarce water supplies. Further south, countries including Fiji, Vanuatu and Tonga face a trend of increasingly destructive tropical cyclones. Like peoples all over the world, Pacific peoples face shifts in weather patterns, manifesting variously as crippling droughts or devastating downpours. These changes are felt particularly severely in Papua New Guinea, the largest country in the region, where a very large proportion of the population live in rural and remote areas, dependent on subsistence agriculture. With so much of their culture, identity and livelihoods deeply entwined with the ocean, all Pacific Island peoples are impacted by the devastation of climate change upon ocean ecosystems through ocean acidification and rising ocean temperatures.

A recent study by Climate Analytics projected the likely economic damage inflicted upon the world's Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) by warming of 3°C (an amount commensurate with the current pace of climate action globally) versus warming of

1.5°C (the long-term goal of the Paris Agreement). The study shows that even with warming held at 1.5°C, on average Pacific Island countries would suffer a hit to their GDP per capita of around 25% by 2100. At 3°C, this would rise, on average, to well over 50%.<sup>13</sup> For a crude comparison: if Australia were to suffer similar economic damage, this would equate, based on Australia's current GDP of around AUD\$2 trillion, to losing around AUD\$1 trillion a year, or AUD\$40,000 per person, by 2100 compared to a world without climate change.

However, as striking as these figures appear, they present only part of the story of loss and damage associated with the climate crisis. Estimates of economic cost fail to capture the non-economic impacts and losses of an increasingly dangerous and disrupted world. These include loss of life, impacts upon health and wellbeing, mental duress and the loss and identity, culture and belonging that may result from being displaced from one's land and home.

Despite this disturbing reality, progress on measures to address loss and damage under the Paris Agreement, including mobilising funds to support affected communities, have been painfully slow, due in no small part to the staunch resistance of developed countries including Australia.

## CLIMATE CHANGE AND MIGRATION

While the risk of Pacific Islander people being forcibly displaced by climate change has been widely acknowledged by politicians and media in Australia and New Zealand, there remains little understanding outside the Pacific of the perspectives, priorities and choices of Pacific Island communities when it comes to migration in the context of climate change.

Outside of the Pacific, popular discourse on climate-forced migration has tended to become divorced from the lived experiences and rights of those on the move or facing the prospect of displacement. It has failed to understand the impact of displacement upon a community's culture, identity, security and wellbeing, and on the interconnections between people and place. At worst, it has come to be viewed solely through the lens of national security. Discussion typically focuses on how to manage the seemingly inevitable displacement of millions of vulnerable people, rather than focusing on actions to minimise forced displacement. Or, if a community is faced with no option but to move, helping ensure they are able to migrate with dignity and on their own terms.

While the majority of movement linked to climate change occurs within a country's borders, the increasing severity of climate damage raises the prospect of communities eventually being forced to move across borders. For the most vulnerable Pacific Island countries, including Tuvalu, who face the possibility of losing much or even all of their land area, the climate crisis even raises fears for their sovereignty and the long-term ability to survive as a nation.

Understandably, Pacific Island leaders and community representatives have typically presented migration as "not an option" for responding to climate change. And they have urged that greater focus be placed on ending global climate pollution and supporting vulnerable communities with adapting to the impacts of climate change, thereby upholding their right to remain where they are. This has even prompted the atoll nations, for whom there is little or no land more than a few metres above sea level, to explore the feasibility of artificially raising some of their atolls.

## CLIMATE FINANCE

Climate finance refers to the flow of funds from developed to developing countries to assist with adapting to the impacts of climate change and building the clean economies of the future. It is a central pillar of the global response to climate change. For Pacific Island countries and communities facing particularly severe climate threats and existing strains on their

Where Pacific leaders, including former President Anote Tong of Kiribati and others, have recognised the need to plan for a future in which many more people will nonetheless need, or chose, to leave their land, the focus has been on ensuring people are able to migrate with dignity and with their culture and sovereignty intact.

Many outside the Pacific have failed to understand Pacific perspectives on climate-forced migration — epitomised by Kevin Rudd's ill-fated proposal in early 2019. The former Prime Minister of Australia suggested that Australia offer citizenship to residents of Tuvalu, Kiribati and Nauru in exchange for control of their vast Exclusive Economic Zones. In essence, that these countries cede their sovereignty to Australia.

Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga of Tuvalu was swift to criticise this suggestion as a neo-colonial response to a crisis that Tuvaluans have done nothing to create, and tone deaf to the injustice of climate change and its human impact. He instead urged Australia to get serious about phasing out coal.

*"The days of that type of imperial thinking are over."*

[Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga of Tuvalu<sup>14</sup>]

No issue epitomises the human cost of the climate crisis, or the determination of Pacific peoples to chart their own future, more than that of forced displacement.

The starting point for considering the challenges of displacement in the context of the climate crisis must be upholding the choices and rights of affected communities. This includes the right of islanders to remain in their place of origin for as long as possible, while ensuring there are also policies and initiatives in place to enable those who may need or chose to move to do so with dignity. This requires a commitment to listen to those on the frontlines of the climate crisis, far stronger efforts towards ending global climate pollution, and providing resources to enable communities to adapt to the impacts that can no longer be avoided.

meagre budgets, adequate and accessible climate finance is critical to their ability to thrive in a warming world. Access to climate finance is also a matter of global justice: those who have contributed least to the causes of climate change are typically the most vulnerable to its impacts, and have the least resources with which to respond.



Tiiria balances on a fallen coconut tree near her family home in Teaoaraereke village, South Tarawa, Kiribati. Sea-level rise, increased wave heights, higher storm surges and other pressures are causing extensive coastal erosion and saltwater inundation. Photo: Vlad Sokhin/Panos/OxfamAUS

Oxfam's research has consistently shown that when it comes to climate finance and the Pacific, the challenge is not just of increasing the overall flow of funding to the region. It is just as important to ensure funds can be accessed by those who need them most, are aligned with national and local priorities, and are supporting outcomes for the region's most vulnerable communities.

The challenge for Australia and New Zealand is to steadily increase their overall contributions to international climate finance, as part of growing aid programs, and in line with global climate financing goals. And at the same time to ensure these contributions are enabling Pacific countries and communities to lead their responses, in ways that leave no-one in the community behind. This means ensuring that support is aligned with the development aspirations and needs of the region, rather than being driven by the contributing countries' foreign policy interests. It means ensuring that funding is primarily in the form of grants, recognising that recipient communities, who typically have done nothing to cause the

climate damage they now endure, should not be burdened with debt, compounding the injustices they already face. In addition to contributions through bilateral aid programs, Australia and New Zealand should continue to help shape multilateral funds, including the Green Climate Fund, to be more responsive to Pacific needs and priorities.

The challenge for Pacific Island countries is to ensure that funds flowing into the region deliver the best possible outcomes for local communities, in particular for those facing the more severe risks from climate change. At a practical level, this means investing in social accountability measures and ensuring greater participation of affected communities in the design and implementation of initiatives and the allocation of funding. This involves strengthening partnerships between government, civil society and the private sector; and in particular prioritising the full participation of women in planning and decision-making, from the local to the international level.

## **WOMEN, REMOTE COMMUNITIES AND OTHER MARGINALISED GROUPS FACING HEIGHTENED RISKS**

While the climate crisis is an acute threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of all Pacific peoples, certain groups face heightened risks linked to existing vulnerabilities and inequality, and must be at the centre of responses.

Women, sexual and gender minorities and other vulnerable groups, particularly from rural and remote communities, are disproportionately impacted by climate change, as are poor people in urban areas. They face a high rate of gender based violence and limited power to influence the decisions that

affect their lives. In times of disaster, such groups are hardest hit and find it most difficult to recover.

They are generally more heavily dependent on livelihoods that are highly sensitive to climate change, such as rain-fed agriculture, and often have the least to fall back on in harsh times, and least access to resources through which to build their resilience, including land, training or capital. Yet they are grossly underrepresented in decision-making and governance structures, in which traditional patriarchal systems of authority tend to dominate.

## **THE LEGACY OF NUCLEAR TESTING, COLONISATION AND HISTORICAL INJUSTICES**

For the Pacific, the challenges of climate change come on top of a long history of exploitation, militarisation, forced displacement and the impacts of colonisation.

Countries of the north Pacific, including the Marshall Islands, continue to live with the horrific toll of US nuclear testing during the Cold War, which saw communities displaced from

their islands, some of which remain uninhabitable to this day.<sup>15</sup> The Runit Dome at Enewetak Atoll, built to contain radioactive debris from US nuclear tests, has come to epitomise how the legacy of nuclear testing is now being exacerbated by climate change, with potentially devastating consequences. The dome, which is already leaking radioactive waste, is now threatened by rising seas.<sup>16</sup>

# POLICIES AND ACTIONS OF AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND

## AUSTRALIA

*“We cannot be regional partners under this step-up initiative – genuine and durable partners – unless the Government of Australia takes a more progressive response to climate change. ...They know very well that we will not be happy as a partner, to move forwards, unless they are serious.”*

[Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga of Tuvalu<sup>17</sup>]

### RISING POLLUTION AT HOME

Australia’s emissions per person remain among the highest in the world.<sup>18</sup> And in absolute terms, Australia’s emissions have been rising since 2015. Australia’s emissions per person are around fifteen times those of Tuvalu, and around six times the average of all Pacific Island countries. Each year, Australia produces six times more climate pollution than all other Forum members combined.<sup>19</sup> In a 2018 report tracking countries’ progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals, Australia was identified as the worst performing country in the world on climate action.<sup>20</sup>

These objective realities, supported by the Government’s own data, are in stark contrast to the spin put out by the Australian Government each time it is pressured into releasing its latest round of emissions data. The claim that Australia’s target is ‘ambitious’ relative to comparable countries is based on reduction in per capita emissions – a metric used by no other country – rather than an overall reduction in emissions. As Australia is starting from such a high base, even if it meets its current emissions reduction target for 2030, it would still be one of the heaviest per capita polluters and most carbon intensive economies in the world.<sup>21</sup> The claim that it is a ‘responsible’ target is a wilful misrepresentation of the scale and pace of action necessary to achieve the goals of the Paris Agreement and avoid a future of far greater dangers and hardship for the Pacific and entire world.

Put simply, Australia’s climate pollution is going up not down, and the country is not on track to meet even its existing and woefully inadequate contribution to the Paris Agreement.

### EXPORTING POLLUTION TO THE WORLD

Assessing Australia’s overall contribution to the global climate crisis requires that we also take into account the country’s very large and growing fossil fuel exports.

Australia, already the world’s largest exporter of coal and gas, is working towards a significant expansion of these industries. Most controversially, the Australian Government has approved the Adani mega mine and the opening up of a major new coal

deposit in the Galilee Basin. The Adani mine may pave the way for several further mines in the Galilee Basin. At the same time, the Government has continued through funding, advocacy, and the transfer of technology to support new coal-fired power stations and other fossil fuel projects overseas, thereby prolonging the market for its exports and slowing the global transition to renewable energy.<sup>22</sup>

The climate pollution from the Adani mine alone would, over its life, be greater than that of all Pacific Island countries combined.<sup>23</sup> Expansion of Australia’s liquefied natural gas (LNG) industry may ultimately generate even more climate pollution than the opening up of the Galilee Basin to coal mining.<sup>24</sup> By one recent assessment, if Australia were to continue on its current path, and assuming the world at large takes actions consistent with the Paris goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C, the country would be responsible for up to 17% of global climate pollution by 2030.<sup>25</sup> The suggestion from the Australian Government that the country’s fossil fuel exports are reducing global climate pollution by, for example, enabling some customers to shift from coal to LNG, has been strongly disputed.<sup>26</sup>

Approval of new mines is being conducted in full knowledge of the long-term risks that this poses to Pacific Island countries and people worldwide. Studies have shown that for an even chance of limiting warming to 2°C – let alone the 1.5°C limit to which we must aspire – more than 95% of Australia’s known coal reserves would need to be left in the ground.<sup>27</sup>

### UNCERTAIN FUTURE FOR INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT

In 2015, then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull committed Australia to providing AUD\$1 billion over five years in international support for climate change adaptation and mitigation. This commitment roughly maintained the annual quantity of international climate finance that Australia had provided since 2010, with a large share going to the Pacific.

Australia’s support for climate action overseas has only been a fraction of what could reasonably be considered a fair contribution towards meeting the international goal of mobilising US\$100 billion a year by 2020.<sup>28</sup> Nevertheless, it

has been distinguished by the priority the Government has accorded to adaptation and resilience building (also a high priority for recipient countries) and for assistance being entirely through grants rather than loans. Australia also served as co-chair of the Board of the Green Climate Fund during its formative years and worked in particular to ensure that Green Climate Fund could better cater to the unique circumstances of Pacific Island countries.

However, the future of Australia's support for climate programs in the Pacific and beyond is now highly uncertain. A long-awaited strategy for "Tackling Climate Change Through Australia's Aid Program" was developed by the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade in 2018 though, at time of writing, is yet to be approved by the Minister.<sup>29</sup> Australia has made no quantified commitment of international climate finance beyond the AUD\$1bn promised for the five years up to 2020. And, in line with its growing focus on infrastructure development, Australia appears to be moving away from what were arguably its most valuable contributions to climate resilience in the Pacific, including community-based climate change adaptation, access to climate information, and supporting the capacity of countries and communities to develop and implement comprehensive and inclusive national strategies on their own terms.

In October 2018, Prime Minister Scott Morrison drew immediate ire from some Pacific leaders when he ruled out providing further contributions to the Green Climate Fund.

*"Deeply disappointed that Australia set to stop contributing to the Green Climate Fund. The Pacific is particularly vulnerable to climate change impacts and the challenges we face are only set to increase. We look to our regional partners for leadership and solidarity. Not this."*

[President Hilda Heine of the Marshall Islands]

Pacific leaders have at times been critical of the Green Climate Fund, in particular the difficulty faced by small countries in navigating the complex procedures for accessing funds. And it is appropriate that Australia continue to provide a significant proportion of its international climate assistance directly through bilateral partnerships. However, the Green Climate Fund remains a mainstay of the international response to the climate crisis and it is likely to be an increasingly important source of funding in future. The Green Climate Fund's success is critical to maintaining trust and cooperation within the global climate regime. Australia's withdrawal means it will no longer be able to help shape the fund to be more responsive to the needs of the

Pacific. And it is likely to further damage Australia's international credibility on climate change.

## **BREACHING THE SPIRIT OF THE PARIS AGREEMENT**

While the Morrison Government remains nominally committed to the Paris Agreement, its actions remain in clear breach of the Agreement's long-term goals and the spirit of cooperation and ambition on which it depends.

To date, Australia has failed to signal any intention to update and strengthen its first NDC to the Agreement (including its 2030 target), or to put in place a long-term (mid-century) emissions reduction strategy – both steps it is required to take by 2020. There is a worrying trend of Australia working against Pacific Island positions and priorities in international negotiations. At both the 24th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (COP24) in Katowice, and the recent intersessional meeting in Bonn, Australia failed to help resist a push from the US, Saudi Arabia and a small number of other fossil fuel rich nations, to prevent the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C from informing negotiations on countries' future commitments.<sup>30</sup>

Perhaps most damningly, Australia intends to make use of surplus units from its commitments under the Kyoto Protocol (the precursor to the Paris Agreement) to achieve its modest first commitment under the Paris Agreement – a move already ruled out by most other countries.

The Australian Government's boast that it 'met and beat' its target during the first period of the Kyoto Protocol (2008-12) and is on track to do the same during the second period (2013-2020) must be understood in the context of the very weak targets and special exemption that Australia managed to negotiate for itself. Australia was allowed to count emissions saved through a modest change in land-clearing laws, and to actually increase emissions by 8% over the first commitment period.

Australia now plans to use 'carry-over credits' from the Kyoto period to achieve its first target under the Paris Agreement, to reduce emissions to 26-28% below 2005 levels by 2030 – a commitment already among the weakest of any advanced economy. In real terms, this would mean only a 15% reduction on 2005 levels by 2030.<sup>31</sup>

The 367 million tonnes of emissions that Australia plans to discount from its 2030 target through this 'accounting trick' would, at current rates of emissions, be equivalent to around five times the total emissions of every small island member of the Pacific Islands Forum combined between now and 2030.<sup>32</sup>

## NEW ZEALAND

### ZERO CARBON THE GOAL, BUT EMISSIONS STILL ON THE RISE

Despite the clean, green image it promotes to the world, New Zealand's emissions have risen by 64.9% since 1990, reflecting a sustained lack of effective climate policy over successive governments.<sup>33</sup> Within this context, New Zealand is currently seeking to step up its efforts in tackling climate destruction. At the time of publication, New Zealand's landmark 'Zero Carbon Act' is being considered by the Parliament's Environment Select Committee.

The proposed act would provide a framework for New Zealand to develop policies and actions through which to contribute to global efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. It includes four key elements: a target to reduce all greenhouse gases (except methane from agriculture) to net zero by 2050; a separate target to reduce methane emissions from agriculture (within the range of 24-47% below 2017 levels by 2050, and 10% by 2030); the setting of a series of emissions budgets as stepping stones towards the long-term target; the development and implementation of policies for climate change adaptation and mitigation; and establishing a new, independent Climate Change Commission to help keep successive governments on track.

Importantly, the proposed act also requires that in setting emissions budgets, due regard be given to the impacts on different communities, thereby helping ensure a just transition for New Zealand.

While the proposed act is a very significant step, it will contain significant failings if adopted in its current form. Methane emissions make up a major part of New Zealand's contribution to climate change owing to its large agricultural sector. The long-term goals of the act, and in particular the separate and relatively modest target for reducing methane emissions, falls short of the necessary action from a developed nation to truly support global efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C. Achieving that would require reducing all greenhouse gases to zero well before the middle of the century. The legal effect of the targets on decision-making in other areas of government is also restricted. Nonetheless, it should be noted that if passed, the Zero Carbon Act would place New Zealand well ahead of most comparable countries, including Australia, in its long-term targets for confronting the climate crisis.

While the Zero Carbon Act would provide a promising long-term framework for decision making, the near-term picture is more concerning. On current projections, New Zealand's emissions are expected to increase into the mid-2020s.<sup>34</sup> This incongruence between the country's targets and the effectiveness of its policies looks set to get worse. The current government continues to delay inclusion of its largest polluting sector, agriculture, within its Emissions Trading Scheme. It proposes

introducing agriculture to the emissions trading scheme in 2025, but that the industry should only pay 5% of the emissions price, equating to NZD\$0.01 per kg of milk solids or beef.<sup>35</sup> The lack of effective near-term policies places New Zealand, alongside Australia, within the tiny majority of developed countries in which emissions are still going up not down.<sup>36</sup>

### INTERNATIONAL SUPPORT: BETTER TARGETED, BUT MORE NEEDED

By Oxfam's assessment, the Ardern Government has put New Zealand on a solid track when it comes to supporting climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts in the Pacific. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's new NZD\$300 million (four year) Climate Change Program is well aligned with longstanding Pacific priorities. This includes strengthening the institutional capacity to respond to climate change, access to information for decision making, boosting access to international finance and driving stronger global action through influencing international actions. The program places a priority on the region's ability to adapt and build resilience to the impacts of climate change, including enhancing water security and the resilience of ecosystems. And it seeks to foster dialogue on migration and displacement in the context of climate change. Most importantly, it is designed to enable Pacific Island Countries to lead their response.

However, while New Zealand's contribution of international support looks to be well targeted and aligned with Pacific priorities, like Australia its contribution is small in global terms and a long way short of a fair share of global climate financing goals. For example, New Zealand would, by Oxfam's assessment, need to contribute USD\$147 million to the upcoming replenishment of the Green Climate Fund, if it were to provide a fair share, and assuming the international community collectively doubles the size of the contributions it made in 2014. New Zealand contributed around USD\$3 million at that time.

### NEW ZEALAND AND INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE DIPLOMACY

The last two years have also seen New Zealand take on a more active role in encouraging stronger global action on climate change. New Zealand is working with China as co-lead on the 'Nature-Based Solutions' track leading up to the UN Climate Summit in September, is part of the Carbon Neutrality Coalition and the Powering Past Coal Alliance, has taken a lead role in efforts to phase-out fossil fuel subsidies including establishing the Friends of Fossil Fuel Subsidy Reform (FFFSR), and is a member of the High Ambition Coalition – an influential grouping within international negotiations.





Nayavutoka village, Ra province, Fiji. Iliavi Waqa, the village headman, sits on the sea wall in his village. Photo: Alicja Grocz/Oxfam

New Zealand has regained significant international credibility on climate change and has clearly stated its intention to support the priorities of Pacific Island countries. It is a member of the Umbrella Group – the influential negotiating bloc that includes the US and Australia – which is often opposed to Pacific priorities such as strengthening action to address loss and damage from

climate change. As part of a more active role in encouraging global action, New Zealand must do more to help back the priorities of Pacific Island countries during ongoing negotiations under the Paris Agreement, including challenging the positions of its peer countries in the Umbrella Group.

# VOICES FROM THE CLIMATE FRONTLINES:

## RECENT TESTIMONIES FROM TUVALU, KIRIBATI, MARSHALL ISLANDS, FIJI, VANUATU AND PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Oxfam is grateful to the Edmund Rice Centre's Pacific Calling Partnership, Tuvalu Climate Action Network, Vanuatu Climate Action Network, Raising Pacific Voices, and the individuals named below for these statements. They are extracts from longer testimonies prepared between 2014 and 2019. Further statements and testimonies are available on request.

### TUVALU

*After Tropical Cyclone Pam, entire islets just vanished. The hungry sea took it away and I believe that in years to come more islets will vanish. Where I live, if you stand in the middle of the island you can see both sides – the ocean and the lagoon side. During a strong wind or strong surge a wave can come from the ocean side all the way to the lagoon side, which is very dangerous. We don't want to relocate. We want to stay in Tuvalu. We were born there and raised there.*

[Kuata Taumaheke]

*I am from Tuvalu, the peaceful and beautiful country which the media identify as a sinking nation. We are not sinking, we are fighting for our rights to life and to remain on our islands.*

*Today I see that our rights to our lands and seas are being destroyed. People are being displaced. It is a big challenge to our health, our wellbeing, and to our rights as humans.*

*We are taking action to promote and support the goal of the Paris Agreement, which is to limit warming to 1.5°C. This is not an easy job, we and our government will be sleepless, and negotiating hard to ensure the world takes the issue seriously.*

*Australia is well known in the Pacific for its coal industry, supplying coal overseas as well as burning it in Australia. They are a bigger country, a powerful leader, with a big economy, but not wise enough to walk in our shoes. Coal is the biggest contributor to climate change.*

*When it comes to forced displacement, our hope is for people to recognise the rights of Tuvaluans. We want to be seen as human beings, not as refugees.*

*The world is a long way from achieving the goal of limiting warming to 1.5°C. It has been four years since the Paris Agreement. Take action now!*

*I am a mother. My son is my great inspiration, my now and my future. I pray for his future and for others like him.*

[Auiluma Lotoala]

*We want Australia to be very proactive on this issue and to cut down your greenhouse gas emissions in order to save the future of the young generation of Tuvalu. We want Australia to take the lead in the Pacific in taking action on climate change.*

*Some of you might think that the best solution is to move the people of Tuvalu to another country, but I strongly feel that this is not a good solution for us. Our people love their country, our people love their culture and they want to stay and die on their mother land. Climate change is a global issue and therefore developed and rich countries like Australia need to work together as a team with our government in order to save our islands.*

*I love my country and I have a daughter and I am concerned about her future. If Australia continues with the way it is now my daughter's future will be lost.*

[Seimila Filioma]

*My island Funafuti is the main island of Tuvalu. It is so thin that you can stand on one side and see across to the other. Tuvalu has always had cyclones but now they are getting more intense and dangerous, doing more damage.*

*In March 2015 we had Tropical Cyclone Pam. Four islands lost 30% of their crops and three islands lost 90% of their crops. Drinking water was spoilt; we have to use treated water or bottled water.*

[Saineta Sioni]



South Tarawa, Kiribati. Aso Ioapo is a climate leader from Tuvalu. He works with the church and the Tuvalu Climate Action Network (TuCAN) to raise community awareness about climate change and to advocate for stronger action. Photo: Ula Majewski/OxfamAUS

## KIRIBATI

*In Kiribati coastal erosion is getting worse. We're losing our land and people have to move closer and closer together. As an I-Kiribati I don't want to lose our islands to climate change. I fear that we will lose our culture alongside our islands. Our culture is our identity and that is what we treasure. Music, dancing, storytelling is part of us and we don't want to lose that.*

[Kotei Temakei]

*I have two children, a son and daughter. Every year my wife and I talk about leaving Kiribati and moving to another country, to give our children more opportunities. But we and our children are I-Kiribati, Kiribati is our home, it has our language, traditions, culture and we don't want to lose it.*

*Kiribati is going under water. We are having more storms and more powerful waves.*

*We want to adapt to climate change as we want to exist forever in our beautiful islands. We won't accept that climate change is destroying our country and we will find ways to adapt, and to push the big companies causing climate change to stop.*

*Climate change is about justice. It is causing conflict in our country, for example, when a village has to move because the sea has flooded into the village, the people move further in land. But that land is owned by other people and there is conflict. Our islands are not big enough for us to just get up and move to higher land.*

*Leaving our country is the very last option.*

[Erietera Aram]

*I love my country Kiribati, I love my culture and most of all, I love my family and my home.*

*Now that the tides are taking the land away from us, we are not only faced with losing houses and lands, but we are also struggling to survive because there is really nowhere to move to because the islands are getting thinner and thinner ...Salt water has entered our wells, and our children are suffering for it. Crops cannot grow because our soil is bad and there is a slow and horrible decay of life on our country. Life of plants, animals and humans.*

*I am only nineteen as I want to live in my country with my future children, but I'm afraid there might be no more land for me and my children.*

[Saineta Sioni]



Nayavutoka village, Ra province, Fiji. Mangrove plants play a key part in efforts to rehabilitate the coastal environment after Cyclone Winston wreaked havoc in 2016. Photo: Alicja Grocz/Oxfam

## FJI

*During Cyclone Winston, the damage to my mother's village in Fiji was devastating. It ruined houses, crops and shops. With global warming, the intensity of these cyclones are likely to worsen. Cyclone Winston was the worst ever to hit Fiji. It also affected agriculture in these islands. My grandfather, his father and my uncles all live off the land and rely on crops for their income and to feed their families. With cyclones getting worse, increasing floods and coastal erosion, it puts many islanders who rely heavily on growing crops at risk. While Fiji is not as vulnerable as Kiribati and Tuvalu, the very thought of these islands one day disappearing is something that scares me. I'm worried about the future of my cousins, nieces and nephews who still live there and will likely grow up there.*

[Melaia Turagaiviu]

## PAPUA NEW GUINEA

*I spent the whole of my childhood in Karawara Island, one of the Duke of York Islands in East New Britain. The island is one to two metres above sea level, with a landmass of 70 hectares and a population of 663.*

*Climate change impacts are very substantial on the island. Mangroves that grew along the beach front are now skeletons in the water. An area that was a playing field for our ancestors is now one to two metres below the surface. The shoreline has been eroded by six metres since the 1990s.*

*Inhabitants of the island depend on rain fed structures for drinking water supply. During dry seasons, access to drinkable safe water is always a challenge.*

*There is nothing much we can do on the issue of sea level rise and coastal degradation. Primary school students have been planting trees along the degraded beach front.*

*Australia continues to export coal to the world, contradicting its commitment to the Paris Agreement.*

*On behalf of the atolls of the Pacific, we would kindly request the Australian Government to relook at its climate change policies, especially its exporting of coal, and the emissions this produces.*

*Climate migration is not an appropriate option for our small atolls but could be seen as the last resort. It has more negative implications compared to the positives.*

*If Australia is really committed to tackling climate change, then it has to reduce coal exports.*

[Kotei Temakei]

## MARSHALL ISLANDS

*In 1968 Bikini Atoll was declared safe to go back. Only a few of us went back. I recall running around the beach, enjoying life. Didn't even think about radiation. Didn't know what it was. After years of living on Bikini, they found out that we can't live there because of radiation.*

*Sadly today because of climate change, inundation happens two to three times a year. So you cannot plant your food trees. People there mostly depend on imported food. Now that I'm an adult, I'm finding out that I was actually living on a radiated island.*

[Alson Kelen]

## VANUATU

*I come from Tongariki in the Shepherds Group – the offshore islands of Efate. Cyclone Pam in early 2015 was a devastating experience for us. Many families were forced to take refuge behind large stones and inside small caves because their houses were blown away by the wind.*

*We have set up a development working committee called the Erata Development Committee. Our main objective is to build multi-purpose cyclone proof community halls for our communities on the island.*

*We are doing this work without any financial assistance from the national government, though there are rumours that there is climate finance that can assist us. Though we tried to understand, the mechanisms of this climate finance is too complicated to understand and to get access to.*

*We are calling on Pacific Leaders to please simplify this climate finance so that it is accessible to community based organisations, and I believe I am speaking on behalf of many community based organisations in Vanuatu.*

*We are also calling on Pacific Leaders to strongly call on Australia, our big brother, to take climate responsibility and adopt climate friendly policies, because at the end of the day, we are all in the same boat.*

[John Obed]

# RECOMMENDATIONS

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR AUSTRALIA

- Commit to a review and strengthening of Australia's Nationally Determined Contribution to the Paris Agreement, and to putting in place a long-term emissions reduction strategy that sees Australia achieve zero emissions well before the middle of the century - in line with international expectations under the Paris Agreement and the scale of action necessary to limit global warming to 1.5°C.
- Rule-out the use of Kyoto carry-over units in meeting Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement.
- Develop a timeline for the managed phase-out of coal-fired power in Australia and transition to 100% renewable energy.
- Impose a moratorium on new fossil fuel exploration and extraction.
- Ensure at least a doubling of Australia's overall contribution of international climate finance, as part of a growing aid program, and including a new contribution to the Green Climate Fund.
- Ensure that Australia's international development assistance, including climate finance is aligned with Pacific regional, national and local priorities, promotes inclusive development, builds on existing strengths, and responds to the needs of the most vulnerable communities.

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR NEW ZEALAND

- Ensure that the Zero Carbon Act has a 2040 target for net zero emissions, covering all greenhouse gases and representing a fair share towards global efforts to limit warming to 1.5°C, and upgrade New Zealand's Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement accordingly.
- Accelerate reforms of the Emissions Trading Scheme, including ending free allocations to industry, setting a minimum price of NZD\$50 per tonne of CO<sub>2</sub>-e and a faster timeline for phasing agriculture into the scheme with full obligations.
- Accelerate reforms of the Resource Management Act for climate change decision-making and urban planning, including the repeal of section 104E.
- Continue to increase the scale of New Zealand's international climate finance within a rising aid budget, ensuring continued alignment with Pacific priorities and including a new contribution to the Green Climate Fund that represents a fair share of the global contribution.

Ambo, South Tarawa, Kiribati. Claire Anterea stands by a broken sea wall near the airport, on the ocean side of South Tarawa. There used to be land behind her, but now the sea has eaten it away. Claire works for Kiribati Climate Action Network (KiriCAN) and is one of the country's leading climate advocates. Photo: Ula Majewski/OxfamAUS

## RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL MEMBERS OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

- Reaffirm full endorsement of the findings of the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C, including that the world must reduce climate pollution by at least 45% by 2030 and net zero by the middle of the century at the latest.
- Call on all states to bring more ambitious targets and actions to the UN Climate Summit in September, or by 2020 at the latest (as required under the Paris Agreement).
- Call on all states to set credible long-term emissions reduction strategies by 2020 (as required under the Paris Agreement) that are aligned with the IPCC's Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C.
- Support new contributions to the Green Climate Fund, noting the upcoming Pledging Conference in October.
- Invest in measures to ensure climate finance is delivering benefits for all, including enhancing social accountability and transparency of climate finance flows, and full participation of communities in decision-making.
- Support progress under the UNFCCC on mobilising additional finance to address loss and damage from climate change.
- Support further dialogue between government and communities in Pacific Island countries, Australia and New Zealand on addressing the challenges of migration and displacement in the context of climate change.
- Request the UN General Assembly to adopt a resolution requesting the International Court of Justice to provide an Advisory Opinion on the obligations of states under international law to protect the rights of present and future generations against the adverse effects of climate change.



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Eton village, Efate, Vanuatu. Daniel Kaltonga is a fisherman and farmer. He has been told to relocate his family from their home on the coast due to the risk of tidal storm surges similar to the one resulting from Cyclone Pam in 2015. Photo: Arlene Bax/OxfamAUS



