



## Workshop Summary and Recommendations

6 May 2019, New York

# CLIMATE CHANGE, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE

*Perspectives from the Pacific*



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*Perspectives from the Pacific*

*Workshop Summary and Recommendations*  
*6 May 2019, New York*



**PREVENTING CONFLICT**  
**KEEPING THE PEACE**  
**SUSTAINING PEACE**



**Least Developed Countries**  
**Landlocked Developing Countries**  
**Small Island Developing States**

United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries,  
Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States





## **CLIMATE CHANGE, CONFLICT PREVENTION AND SUSTAINABLE PEACE**

### **Perspectives from the Pacific**

United Nations Publication

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## Contents

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***Acknowledgments i***

---

***Introduction ii***

---

***Workshop Agenda iii***

---

***Participant and Contributor Biographies v***

---

***SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS 1***

---

*Session 1: Understanding the Climate-Security Nexus in the Pacific 1*

---

*Session 2: Climate-Security Challenges in the Pacific – Country and Regional Experiences 4*

---

*Session 3: Climate-Security Risk Assessment Frameworks – Developing Pacific-relevant Tools and Approaches 6*

---

*Session 4: Responding to Climate-Security Challenges in the Pacific – The Role of the United Nations in Supporting Regional and National Efforts 8*

---

***SECTION 2: BACKGROUND PAPERS 11***

---

*Climate Change and Security: Findings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report and their Implications for the Pacific Islands by Jon Barnett 11*

---

*Confronting Climate Change and Grappling with Security: Framing Outward-Looking Pacific Indigenous Solutions by Malakai Koloamatangi 12*

---

*Sea-Level Rise and Security in the Pacific by Clement Yow Mulalap 17*

---

*Climate Security Risk Assessment and Management in the Caribbean Shiloh Fetzek 20*

---

*Climate Security Issues in the Region and Engagement Opportunities by Coral Pasisi 24*

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## Introduction

The impacts of climate change are being felt across the globe, with profound consequences – economic, environmental, political and social. This is especially true for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), particularly in the Pacific, with climate change posing a significant risk to their efforts to achieve sustainable development. The Pacific islands are among the most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, where they face rising sea levels and increased frequency and severity of extreme weather events, such as droughts, floods and cyclones, and as a result, increased displacement and greater competition over resources. Unfortunately, governments sometimes do not have the capacity to respond effectively to these challenges. In this context, Pacific countries and others are calling for the United Nations to expand its efforts to understand and respond to growing climate-related security risks, develop better frameworks to help countries evaluate the risks they face, and undertake appropriate adaptation and mitigation measures.

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“The Pacific island states have the moral authority to tell the world that climate change needs to be reversed, because the Pacific island states are leading by example... Not only are they building resilience and investing in adaptation to protect their citizens, their communities and their culture to protect their environment, but they are fixing for themselves very ambitious targets in relation to mitigation.”

- *António Guterres, UN Secretary-General speaking at the High-level Political Dialogue of the Pacific Islands Forum on 15 May 2019*

Organized by the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and the United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States, and hosted by the Mission of New Zealand to the United Nations, some 50 participants from national governments, the UN and academia took part on 6 May 2019 in a workshop on Climate Change, Conflict Prevention and Sustainable Peace: Perspectives from the Pacific. The aim of the workshop was to better understand the climate-security nexus in the Pacific, share country and regional experiences, review efforts to develop a toolkit for climate-security risk assessment frameworks, and explore how the United Nations system can respond to climate-security challenges threatening the Pacific.

The workshop was especially timely as it took place a week before the visit of United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres to New Zealand, Fiji, Tuvalu and Vanuatu to spotlight the issue of climate change ahead of the Climate Action Summit that he is convening in September 2019 in New York. While there, the United Nations Secretary-General met with government leaders, civil society representatives and youth groups in the region to hear from those already impacted by climate change and who are also successfully engaging in meaningful climate action.



## Workshop Agenda

6 May 2019, New York

### **OPENING REMARKS**

Welcome by H.E. Mr. Craig Hawke, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations

Opening remarks:

- Ms. Rosemary A. DiCarlo, Under Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
- Statement on behalf of H.E. Ms. Marlene Moses, Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations
- Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States

### **SESSION 1: Understanding the climate-security nexus in the Pacific**

Speakers:

- Prof. Jon Barnett, University of Melbourne
- Prof. Gerard A. Finin, Cornell University
- Prof. Malakai Kolomatangi, Massey University

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Max Rai, Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations

### **SESSION 2: Climate-security challenges in the Pacific: country and regional experiences**

Speakers:

- H.E. Mr. Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations
- Mr. Sylvain Kalsakau, Permanent Mission of Vanuatu to the United Nations
- Ms. Rose Kautoke, Permanent Mission of Tonga to the United Nations
- Mr. Timothy Bryar, Pacific Island Forum Secretariat

Moderator: Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States


### **SESSION 3: Climate-security risk assessment Frameworks: developing Pacific-relevant tools and approaches**

Speakers:

- Mr. Thomas Ritzer, UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs
- Ms. Shiloh Fetzek, Center for Climate and Security
- Prof. Gerard A. Finin, Cornell University

Moderator: Prof. Jon Barnett, University of Melbourne





**SESSION 4: Responding to climate-security challenges in the Pacific: The role of the United Nations in supporting regional and national efforts**

Speakers:

- Ms. Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States
- Ms. Roselyn Akombe, UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs, Policy and Mediation Division
- Ms. Barrie Lynne Freeman, UN Peacebuilding Support Office
- Capt. Steve Brock (retd), Center for Climate and Security

Moderator: H.E. Mr. Satyendra Prasad, Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations

**CLOSING REMARKS**

- H.E. Ms. Amatlain Elizabeth Kabua, Permanent Representative of Marshall Islands to the United Nations
- Ms. Mari Yamashita, Deputy Director, Asia-Pacific Division, DPPA-DPO

## Participant and Contributor Biographies

### Roselyn Akombe



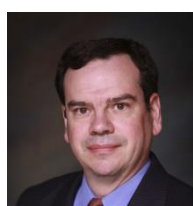
Roselyn Akombe is Chief of Policy, Guidance and Learning in the Policy and Mediation Division at the United Nations. Prior to joining the division in 2018, she worked at the Office of the Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs in various capacities, including being responsible for several region-specific portfolios for Africa, Central Asia and the Middle East, as well as management issues, staff security and presenting the department's budgets to the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) and the UN General Assembly's Fifth Committee (2006-2016). Before joining the UN, Akombe served as Commissioner of the Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission of Kenya. She was also a Senior Electoral Affairs Officer in Burundi in 2015. Akombe has also worked as an Economist with the African Union (2003-2006), WomenRising Inc. (2001-2003) and the Collaborative Center for Gender and Development (1999-2000). Akombe holds a PhD and MA in Global Affairs, with a specialization in Political Economy, from Rutgers University, and a BA in Education from the University of Nairobi.

### Jon Barnett



Jon Barnett is a Political Geographer whose research investigates social impacts and responses to environmental change. He has 20 years of experience conducting field-based research in several Pacific Island countries, and in Australia, China and Timor-Leste. This research has helped explain the impacts of climate change on cultures, food security, inequality, instability, migration and water security, and ways in which adaptation can promote social justice and peace. Barnett is Professor and an Australian Research Council Laureate Fellow in the School of Geography at the University of Melbourne. He was a lead author of the chapter on Human Security in the IPCC Fifth Assessment Report, and he co-edits the journal *Global Environmental Change*.

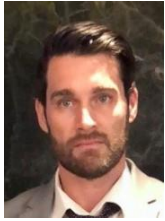
### Steven V. Brock



Steven Brock serves as Senior Adviser at the Council on Strategic Risk and at the Center for Climate and Security. He is Co-Founder of Earth Ethic for Environmental Security, a consultancy harnessing the power of ecosystem services to reverse climate change. Under the Obama administration, Brock served as Director for Asia Security Affairs on the National Security Council as well as Acting Director for Australia, New Zealand and the Pacific. He also co-chaired an Interagency Policy Committee at the White House Council on Environmental Quality. Before retiring as a Captain in the US Navy, he served in multiple operational assignments and senior positions at the US Defense Department, including Deputy Director for Intelligence for the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff and briefed then-Secretary of Defense Leon Panetta on intelligence issues. He also served as Adviser to the US Mission to the United Nations, focusing on UN Security Council issues, and was a Federal Executive Fellow at the RAND Corp, where he focused on the nexus of climate and national security. He is a distinguished graduate of Georgetown University and the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, where he received an MA in National Security Studies and a BS in Marine Engineering, respectively.



## Timothy Bryar



Timothy Bryar is Senior Adviser to the Office of the Secretary-General at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). Previously, he served as the organization’s Conflict Prevention Adviser, where he worked on issues including climate change-related displacement and migration. He was also a Facilitator with the Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding, where he helped promote dialogue between civil society, political parties and government. Bryar has a PhD from the Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies at the University of Sydney in Australia. He is a national of both Fiji and Australia.

## Rosemary A. DiCarlo



Rosemary A. DiCarlo is Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs at the United Nations, advising the UN Secretary-General on peace and security issues globally, and overseeing political missions carrying out peacemaking, preventive diplomacy and peacebuilding activities in Africa, Europe, the Middle East, Central and South-East Asia, and the Americas. DiCarlo brings more than 35 years of experience in public service and academia. During her distinguished career with the US Department of State, she served, among other functions, as Deputy Permanent Representative of the US to the United Nations. Prior assignments included Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs, and Director for United Nations Affairs at the National Security Council in Washington, D.C. Her overseas tours took her to the United States embassies in Moscow and Oslo. She also served as President of the National Committee on American Foreign Policy from August 2015 to May 2018 and was concurrently appointed a Senior Fellow and Lecturer at Yale University’s Jackson Institute for Global Affairs. DiCarlo graduated from Brown University with a BA, MA and PhD in Comparative Literature, as well as Slavic Languages and Literature.

## H.E. Ambassador Ali’ioaiga Feturi Elisaia



Ali’ioaiga Feturi Elisaia is the Permanent Representative of Samoa to the United Nations. Prior to his appointment in 2003, he was Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Corporate and Support Services, in the Samoan Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade. Before that he was Co-Director of the Hanns Seidel Foundation in Samoa (1988-2001) and served as Deputy Secretary for Foreign Affairs (1984-1988). Other diplomatic positions include Division Head in the Economic and Aid Division at the Samoan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and postings in New Zealand and New York. Elisaia holds a post-graduate certificate in diplomacy from the University of Oxford and a BA in Political Science and Administration from the University of the South Pacific, Fiji.



## Shiloh Fetzek



Shiloh Fetzek is Senior Fellow for International Affairs at the Center for Climate and Security in Washington, D.C., Chair of the Climate Security Working Group – International and Climate Security Working Group – Asia-Pacific, and Associate Fellow at the International Institute for Strategic Studies (IISS). She previously led climate security research projects at IISS and the Royal United Services Institute (RUSI) in London. Fetzek’s research interests include the social and political repercussions of rapid, large-scale ecological change and their interplay with other drivers of insecurity, including demographic dynamics, interactions with nuclear threats and other traditional security issues, and tools for managing systemic risk. At International Alert, she supported the New Climate for Peace project commissioned by the G7 foreign ministers. Her research at IISS also included climate and demographic security, Syria and the Arctic. As Head of the Climate Change and Security Programme at RUSI, she led projects in collaboration with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office on China and Mexico/Central America. She holds a BA in Justice and Peace Studies from the University of St Thomas in St. Paul, Minnesota and an MA in International Politics and Security Studies from the University of Bradford’s Peace Studies department in the United Kingdom.

## Gerard A. Finin




Following three decades of work in the Asia-Pacific region, with an emphasis on Oceania and South-East Asia, Gerard Finin recently joined the faculty of Cornell University’s Department of City and Regional Planning. In his previous capacity as Director of the East-West Center’s Pacific Islands Development Program in Honolulu, he worked directly with Pacific Island governments on issues of economic development, climate change and sustainability. His research and consulting have been supported by the Asian Development Bank, United Nations, Ford Foundation and US Department of State. Through the Hawaii-based Pacific Islands Conference of Leaders, Finin has organized Track 1.5 policy dialogues with Australia and New Zealand, as well as four US presidential summits. He earned his undergraduate from the State University of New York at Albany and received his doctorate from Cornell University.

## Barrie Lynne Freeman



Barrie Lynne Freeman is Deputy and Political Director of the United Nations Peacebuilding Support Office. Prior to her appointment in January 2018, she served as Chief of Staff for the Multidimensional Integrated Stabilization Mission in the Central African Republic (MINUSCA), and previously as the Mission’s Political Affairs Director. From 2011-2014, she served as Director for North Africa at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in Washington, D.C., managing a range of political development programmes in response to the Arab Spring. Prior to that she served as the NDI’s Deputy Regional Director for Central and West Africa, managing a diverse portfolio of country programmes across the region that included support to electoral processes, civil society development, legislative strengthening and political party development. Before joining NDI in 2002, Freeman spent 15 years with the US State Department, working in the political, economic and consular sections of US embassies in Tunisia, Morocco, Lesotho and Nigeria. In Washington, D.C. she served in the State Department’s Office of the Inspector General and in the Office of African



Analysis. Freeman is a contributing writer to *Freedom in the World*, an annual survey of political rights and civil liberties published by Freedom House. A graduate of Tulane University in New Orleans, Louisiana, she completed master's coursework at Georgetown University. She is the co-author of *Transparency and Accountability in Africa's Extractive Industries: The Role of the Legislature*.

**H.E. Ambassador Craig Hawke**



Craig Hawke is the Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations. Prior to his appointment in 2017, he was Principal Adviser on Small Island Developing States in the Bureau of Policy and Programme Support of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). Hawke held several senior government positions, including Acting Chief Executive Officer in the Ministry for Foreign Affairs and Trade in Wellington, Deputy Secretary for International Development and Head of the New Zealand Aid Programme. He was also Director of the Pacific Group of the New Zealand Agency for International Development, and Deputy Director of the Asia, Africa and Latin America Development Cooperation Division, also within the Foreign Ministry. Hawke's diplomatic career included postings as Deputy High Commissioner in Samoa, Private Secretary to the Minister for International Trade in the New Zealand Parliament, and First Secretary at the New Zealand Embassy in the Republic of Korea. He received a BA in Social Sciences and an MA in Economics from Waikato University in New Zealand.

**H.E. Ambassador Amatlain Elizabeth Kabua**



Amatlain Elizabeth Kabua is the Permanent Representative of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations. Prior to her appointment in 2016, she served as Ambassador to Fiji (2003-2009) and Ambassador to Japan (1997-2003). She was also a Field Service Consultant at her country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as Mayor of the Majuro Atoll Local Government. Previously, she was a teacher at the Garapan Elementary School in Saipan. Kabua was educated at Chaminade University in Honolulu, Hawaii, in the United States, at Saint Francis High School, also in Honolulu, and at Mount Carmel High School in Saipan, Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands.

**Sylvain Kalsakau**



Sylvain Kalsakau is the Deputy Permanent Representative of the Republic of Vanuatu to the United Nations. Prior to his appointment in 2016, he was Head of the Multilateral Division in Vanuatu's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation. Before joining the Foreign Ministry, he had various roles in the Reserve Bank of Vanuatu. Kalsakau received an MA in International Affairs and Diplomacy from the Australian National University and a BA in Commerce from the University of the South Pacific in Fiji.

## Rose Lesley Kautoke



Rose Lesley Kautoke is a Senior Legal Adviser at the Permanent Mission of Tonga to the United Nations. She has over seven years of work experience as a lawyer at the Attorney-General's Office of the Government of Tonga, handling different legal issues in various fields of law, including climate change and law of the sea. Her experience has allowed her, at the national level, to work with government ministries on issues relating to accession and ratification of climate change treaties and the distribution of disaster relief, and at the regional level, in collaboration with experts from the Pacific, to develop potential strategies in addressing the issue of sea-level rise.

## Malakai Koloamatangi



Malakai Koloamatangi is Pasifika Director, Associate Professor and Co-Director of the Pacific Research and Policy Centre at Massey University in New Zealand. He is also Vice-President of the Pacific Political Studies Association (PIPSA). Koloamatangi was born in Tonga and grew up in Auckland, New Zealand. He was educated at the University of Auckland where he received his PhD. His doctorate thesis was entitled *Constitutionalism, Culture and Democracy: Tongan Politics Between 1991 and 1996*. Koloamatangi's research interests include democratic theory and practice, international political economy, Pacific politics and economic development. He has recently authored a United Nations-commissioned survey on climate change and security in the Pacific, *Climate Change and Security in the Pacific: Framing and Articulating a Pacific View*, and is working on a soon-to-be-published book called *The Possibility of Democracy: Tonga's Progression from Absolute Rule to Power Sharing*. For the past decade, Koloamatangi was Foundation Director of the Office for Pacific Excellence and Acting Director of the Macmillan Brown Centre for Pacific Studies at the University of Canterbury New Zealand. He is a regular media commentator on Pacific Island issues.

## H.E. Ambassador Marlene Moses



Marlene Inemwin Moses is the Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations. Prior to her appointment in 2005, she was the Deputy Permanent Representative. She also served as Acting Chief Secretary and Public Service Commissioner and Secretary to the Cabinet of Nauru, as well as the country's Permanent Secretary for Health and Medical Services (2000-2003) and Permanent Secretary for Internal Affairs (1999-2000). Moses joined the Nauru Foreign Ministry in 1983. She served as Consul in Tokyo, Japan (1988-1990), Consul-General in Auckland, New Zealand (1991-1995) and as Assistant Director in the Department of Foreign Affairs (1995-1996). She was also Chairperson of the Lands Negotiation Committee, Coordinator of the Economic Strategy Committee, and a Member of the Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation Land Use Planning Committee. Moses studied at the University of Canberra and Monash University in Australia.



## **Coral Pasisi**



Coral Pasisi is an Earth Scientist and Development Planner with over 20 years of experience in the Pacific Islands region, focusing on sustainable development, climate change and financing. She has worked at the government level in Niue as a Sustainable Development Planner, and at the regional level for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme as a Sustainable Development Officer and the Pacific Islands Forum as a Regional and International Issues Adviser. In the past five years, Pasisi has worked as a consultant, predominately for the Green Climate Fund as their Regional Adviser for the Pacific. This has involved supporting the engagement of Pacific countries with the fund through project development and review. She is also a Member of the Climate Security Expert Network, established by the German government, which currently holds the UN Security Council Presidency, to advance climate security issues. In addition, Pasisi runs the non-profit organization Tofia Niue, which works in partnership with the local government and global philanthropic organizations, including Oceans 5 and National Geographic Pristine Seas, to protect and sustainably manage ocean resources.

## **Anna Powles**



Dr. Anna Powles is a Senior Lecturer at the Centre for Defence and Security Studies at Massey University in New Zealand. Her research is focused on state and non-state actors shaping regional dynamics in the Pacific Islands region from geopolitics to climate diplomacy. She is a Member of the Pacific Reset Advisory Group to the Government of New Zealand, Co-Director of the Security, Politics and Development Network and Director of Women in International Security New Zealand. Her forthcoming publications include a book on contemporary geopolitical shifts in the Pacific Islands and an edited volume on private security governance in the Pacific. She will take up a Visiting Senior Fellowship at the East-West Center in September 2019.

## **H.E. Ambassador Satyendra Prasad**



Satyendra Prasad is the Permanent Representative of Fiji to the United Nations. Prior to his appointment in 2018, he was Chief Executive Officer of the Papua New Guinea Governance Facility. Before that, he served as Senior Governance Adviser at the World Bank (2009-2016), Governance Adviser at the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (2003-2009) and Commissioner of Fiji's Public Service Commission (1998-2000). Prasad was also an Associate Professor of International Management at Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University in Japan, having previously been a Senior Lecturer and Head of Department at the University of South Pacific and Lecturer in Development Studies at University College in Cork, Ireland. He holds a BA from the University of the South Pacific, an MA in Sociology from the University of New Brunswick in Canada and a PhD in the same field from Warwick University in the United Kingdom.

## **H.E. Ambassador Max Hufanen Rai**



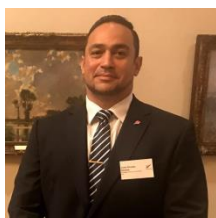
Max Hufanen Rai is the Permanent Representative of Papua New Guinea to the United Nations. Prior to his appointment in 2016, he was Director-General of the Trade Division in his country's Department of Trade, Commerce and Industry (2014-2016). Previously, he served as First Secretary and Adviser to the Minister for Mining and Statutory Body from 2013. Rai was also Ambassador to China (2003-2007) and Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia and the Marshall Islands (1997-2003). Rai holds an MA in International Law from the Australian National University in Canberra and a BA from the University of Papua New Guinea.

## **Thomas Ritzer**



Thomas Ritzer is a Political Affairs Officer in the Policy Planning Unit of the United Nations Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA). He represents the unit in a joint DPPA-UNDP-UN Environment initiative that seeks to strengthen UN capacity to address climate-related security risks through the development of a systematic approach to risk assessments, an evidence base for climate risk prevention and management strategies, and more effective global advocacy. In this capacity, Ritzer works closely with a range of stakeholders from across the UN system, NGOs and the research community. Prior to his current role, he worked in the UN departments of Peacekeeping Operations and Political Affairs on cross-cutting policy issues such as the protection of civilians in armed conflict and transnational organized crime.

## **José Sousa-Santos**




José Sousa-Santos is a Research Scholar at the Joint Centre for Disaster Research at Massey University, New Zealand. His research examines the nexus between climate security and transnational organized crime in vulnerable states and societies in the Pacific and Asia. With a background in conflict transformation and peacebuilding, he has served with the Australian Army, New Zealand Police and United Nations Joint Mission Analysis Cell, as well as with various humanitarian agencies, including the Norwegian Refugee Council. Sousa-Santos is a Member of the Pacific Reset Group advising the Government of New Zealand on policy towards the Pacific Islands and a subject matter expert for the US Special Operations Command Pacific on the nexus between terrorism and transnational crime. His upcoming publication on the trends and drivers of transnational crime in the Pacific region will be available next month.

## **Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu**



Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu is the United Nations' High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States. 'Utoikamanu has a wealth of national, regional and international experience at various senior leadership levels. She was previously Acting Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the Council of the University of the South Pacific (2015), Deputy Pro-Chancellor and Deputy Chair of the Council of the University of the South Pacific (2009-2016), Deputy Director-General and Director of Education,





Training and Human Development of the Secretariat of Pacific Community (2009-2015), Permanent Representative and Ambassador of Tonga to the United Nations, the United States of America, Cuba and Venezuela and High Commissioner to Canada (2005-2009), and Secretary for Foreign Affairs and European Commission's National Authorizing Officer for Tonga (2002-2005). She holds a BA and MA in Economics from the University of Auckland in New Zealand.

### **Mari Yamashita**



Mari Yamashita's career with the United Nations spans over 28 years in political affairs, peacebuilding, strategic communication and electoral assistance. Since 2019, she has been Deputy-Director for Asia-Pacific in the newly reformed Departments for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs and Peace Operations. Prior to that, she was Director of the Asia and the Pacific Division in the Department of Political Affairs (2012-2015 and 2015-2018) and Deputy Head of Office and Director of the Peacebuilding Support Office (2015-2017). Other positions include Director of the UN Information Centre in Japan (2010-2012), Head of the Political Affairs Office at the UN Mission in Nepal (2010), Deputy Chief Electoral Officer with the UN Transitional Administration in Eastern Slavonia, Baranja and Western Sirmium (1996-1997) and UN Coordinator of the OSCE-UN Joint Operation in Armenia (1994). She was also a Political Officer covering South-East Asia and the Pacific (2007-2010) and Southern Africa (2001-2006), including support to offices in Myanmar, Fiji, Timor-Leste, Angola, Northern Uganda and Zimbabwe. Yamashita has an MA in Law and Diplomacy from the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy in the US and a BA in Laws from Jochi Daigaku in Japan.



## SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS



## SECTION 1: SUMMARY OF DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Session 1: Understanding the Climate-Security Nexus in the Pacific

#### Takeaways

- Seen as an existential threat, many Pacific island nations look to the United Nations for more enhanced responses to tackling climate change-related security risks.
- Building and reinforcing partnerships to leverage existing capacities to address the climate-security nexus within and outside the UN system are important for keeping the issue high on the agenda.
- With climate change impacts leading to relocation and migration, land tenure issues and maritime boundaries will need to be addressed and properly managed to avoid conflict.
- Policy-makers should look to indigenous knowledge and systems to resolve conflict associated with climate change-related threats and their impacts.
- Free migration associations with Pacific Islands in the event of relocation due to climate change impact can be a more cost-effective way than investing in adaptation plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.


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“Climate change is the critical issue of our time. Our region can be at the vanguard of solutions to the climate-security challenge”

- *H.E. Ambassador Craig Hawke, Permanent Representative of New Zealand to the United Nations*

With global sea levels climbing on average of 2-3 millimetres each year due to climate change, many Pacific Islands are at risk. As sea levels continue to rise, many inhabitants will be forced to move to higher ground, or even relocate to another island. Several low-lying islands in the region have already disappeared under rising seas, and many more are being threatened. This is an existential threat with significant security implications.

According to a 2014 assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), climate change is a risk to sovereignty, state integrity, human security and peace, and these risks are interdependent and mutually reinforcing. This is particularly the case in the Pacific, where climate change poses risks to territory (as a result of sea-level rise and coastal erosion), critical infrastructure and economies, especially the agriculture and fisheries sectors. Climate change can also increase tensions within states through a combination of impacts on livelihoods, urban areas and state



effectiveness. This is compounded by extreme weather events, such as cyclones, and the disappearance of low-lying islands, and with its cultural heritage and land ownership.


In the event of relocation, resettlement processes for climate-displaced persons and communities need to be managed properly, especially as land tenure and ownership issues are the biggest contributing factors to conflict in the Pacific. Renegotiating land rights in situations where land is lost to sea will be a challenge. And it is not just about land, as reefs, lagoons and oceans can have just as much, if not more, value and importance to Pacific Islanders. It will be important to address maritime boundaries in a sensitive way, especially as conflict can arise when climate change impacts exclusive economic zones (EEZs), such as through transboundary migration of valuable fishstock.

There is concern that climate change will cause a decline in the abundance of pelagic fish, causing increasing tensions around access and within EEZs, and there are projections that most commercial species of tuna will move further eastward, thereby decreasing the potential value of access fees to countries in the West, and increasing them in countries to the East. Peacefully managing these changes within the region's fisheries and the increased interest from outside parties will require strategic planning and solidarity among Pacific Island countries.

While many problems can be addressed through adaptation, broaching the land (and sea) tenure conversation among communities in a changing environment will be harder. Here, indigenous systems can play a role. Much can be gained from indigenous knowledge and its contribution to the climate change-security discourse. The use of cultural methods in anticipating conflict and trying to resolve conflict can be effective for addressing climate change-related threats and their impacts. The idea of resilience and adaptation is ingrained in Pacific societies, with its long history of sea-based and migratory cultures. This includes traditional dialogue processes from the top down and bottom up to discuss shared futures. In relation to meeting the climate change and the security challenge, it is the ethics of migration, adaptation and collectivism that can be invoked in order to adapt and survive.

At the national and regional level, governments in the Pacific will need to deal with increasing natural disasters and their costs. A vastly enhanced commitment to support adaptation in the region will be required to mitigate these risks. This includes investments in climate-resilient infrastructure in both rural and urban areas, healthcare, education and rule of law, particularly in regards to resolving disputes over property rights and access to land, to promote peace and order. There is also a need for regional mechanisms that promote adaptation and peacebuilding, such as a regional centre for adaptation innovation and a regional adaptation trust fund. Some even call for a regional mechanism that allows free and unrestricted movement of people within and between the region and Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America.

The US already has a free association compact with Micronesia, the Marshall Islands and Palau. However, unlike New Zealand's relationship with the Cook Islands, the US does not bestow citizenship on these three Pacific nations. Some experts believe that free association should include citizenship, especially in a situation where inhabitants have to relocate because of climate impacts that make their communities no longer viable. This could prove to be more cost-effective than investing in adaptation plans to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.



Even though climate change poses an existential threat to humankind in the decades to come, the nature of climate change is in many cases incremental and somewhat distant, and therefore easy to place as a lower priority than more immediate peace and security issues. It is for this reason that climate change still does not feature prominently in the United Nations Security Council, much to the disappointment of Pacific island states. Despite this, many agree that building and reinforcing partnerships to leverage existing capacities to address the climate change-security nexus within and outside the UN system remain key, as well as the need to ensure the issue remains high on the agenda in the lead up to the Climate Action Summit in 2019 and beyond.



## Session 2: Climate-Security Challenges in the Pacific – Country and Regional Experiences

### Takeaways

- Pacific countries need support to strengthen national government action plans and security strategies to build and maintain resilience and commit to large-scale “climate-proof” adaptation and mitigation activities.
- More regional efforts, such as commitments made in the Boe Declaration, are key to driving collective action in tackling the climate-security challenge.
- To acknowledge the urgency of sea-level rise, the UN International Law Commission should move the issue from its long-term programme to its active programme of work.
- Pacific leaders want to see the UN appoint a special adviser specifically dedicated to climate change and security issues.

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“Entire island nations are at threat, with their sovereignty and identity at stake. We are committed to strengthening relations with Pacific islands to address challenges posed by climate change.”

- *Rosemary DiCarlo, Under-Secretary-General for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs*

The Pacific is on the frontline of climate change and vulnerable to its impacts. In March 2015, Tropical Cyclone Pam, one of the worst storms ever to hit the region, wreaked havoc in Vanuatu, killing 16 people and displacing thousands. It destroyed the majority of the country’s crops, damaged 50% of its schools and wiped out 65% of the economy. This was followed by two years of drought. In 2018, Cyclone Gita struck Tonga, impacting 80,000 people and causing \$164 million in damage; fortunately, no lives were lost thanks to early warning systems.

Increased climate variability and extreme weather patterns can reverse years of economic development in a matter of hours, and sudden and slow-onset disasters are putting increased pressure on local communities. Sea-level rise, for example, threatens the security of various critical aspects of life in the Pacific, including the natural environment, maritime limits and boundaries, natural resource bases, health, food, water, cultural practices and communal integrity.

Several islands belonging to the Solomon Islands and Federated States of Micronesia have reportedly already been submerged by sea-level rise, and several villages in the Pacific, including in Fiji and the Solomon Islands, have already relocated due to coastal inundation caused by sea-level rise. Samoa is no exception and is working on a number of “climate-proof” activities, such as the World Bank-supported climate resilient transport project, a Global Climate Change Alliance-funded marine resource management project, and a two million tree planting campaign to help rehabilitate




degraded land areas. The country also aims to ban single-use plastic bags in time for the Pacific Games, to be held in Samoa in July 2019.

Other responses to tackling climate change throughout the Pacific have included a number of adaptation strategies, such as planting more resilient crop types, and improving food preservation techniques and storage capacity of water. It also calls for delivering effective early warning systems and stricter building codes, and strengthening well-coordinated national government action plans and security strategies to build and maintain resilience. These need to be better coordinated through a regional approach.

In 2018, Pacific leaders signed on to the Boe Declaration at the Pacific Islands Forum in Nauru, reaffirming that climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-being of the peoples of the Pacific. The declaration expands the concept of security to include human security, humanitarian assistance, prioritizing environmental security and regional cooperation in building resilience to disasters and climate change. In particular, it endorses a “Blue Pacific” identity to drive collective action to develop regional action plans, capacities and response systems. The declaration also commits signatories to follow through on the promises made in the 2015 Paris Agreement on climate change.

The Boe Declaration is one example where Pacific island nations are working together to influence the climate change agenda and its security implications at the regional level. But more support is needed at the international level, especially from the UN, to advance the concerns of Pacific voices, including the need for mobilizing resources and finances to address risk and migration issues. Some steps have been made, such as the inclusion of sea-level rise in relation to international law and maritime boundaries being included on the UN International Law Commission’s long-term programme of work. But, in order for the topic to be considered in a more substantive manner, many SIDS are advocating for the topic to be moved to the commission’s active programme of work. This would acknowledge the urgency and importance of securing the region's maritime boundaries as a key issue for the development and security of the region. Several Pacific leaders have also called on the UN Secretary-General to appoint a Special Adviser on Climate Change and Security, and for the UN Security Council to appoint a Special Rapporteur to produce a regular review of global, regional and national security threats caused by climate change.



## Session 3: Climate-Security Risk Assessment Frameworks – Developing Pacific-relevant Tools and Approaches

### Takeaways

- An UN-wide, climate-related security risk assessment framework is being developed and has the potential to find common understanding on the climate change-security nexus and close the gaps between the consequences of climate change and plans and preparations on the ground.
- Such a tool would be more useful to the Pacific at the country level as opposed to the regional level.
- The framework would benefit from the development of climate change scenarios to serve as a catalyst for better planning and preparation.
- Other regional frameworks, like one developed by the Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA), could be useful for the Pacific, but needs to draw on its local institutions and experience.

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“A robust response to tackling the climate change-security challenge should include integrated risk assessments, best practices and better cross-border cooperation to address vulnerabilities.”


- *H.E. Marlene Moses, Permanent Representative of Nauru to the United Nations*

The UN Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA) outlined a climate-related security risk assessment framework to address climate risk prevention and management strategies throughout the United Nations system. The framework is not to be used as a predictive tool or statistical assessment, but rather as a conceptual approach to find common understanding and improve performance and collaboration when it comes to climate change and security. The target audience would be the UN system as early adopters of the approach, and if successful, taken up by Member States.

The assessment process is based on three steps: define the objective of assessment; identify most severe risks and develop a coherent, holistic understanding of pathways; and identify response options to prevent, mitigate or manage the impact of climate-related security. The three dimensions are captured by the formula: climate-related security risks = hazard x exposure x vulnerability and coping capacity. (Hazards include heat waves, desertification, floods, etc.; exposure means affected populations, affected assets and the economic fabric; and vulnerability and coping capacity refers to community mechanisms, state mechanisms, governance, organized migration, vulnerable groups, etc.)

Many agreed that the risk assessment framework would be more useful to the Pacific region as a tool at the country (or even sub-national) level, as opposed to the regional level, particularly as there





is so much diversity across Oceania; for example, given the substantive differences in land tenure arrangements from Tonga to Fiji to Papua New Guinea. Before the framework is rolled out, it should be piloted at the country level and complemented with the development of climate change scenarios to serve as a catalyst for better planning and preparation. Scenario development is one way to advance thinking in the face of great uncertainty. Such scenarios about future climate-induced events may be startling or shocking enough to prompt greater action today.

The Pacific region can also look to other existing frameworks from other regions for guidance. A Caribbean Disaster and Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) action plan, for example, plays a key role in advancing the climate resilience agenda in the Caribbean region from a climate security perspective. It is focused on human security, which encompasses traditional security as well as economic development, social protection and environmental security demands. The plan is based on: strengthening capacity, knowledge and regional coordination in support of humanitarian crises; advancing food and water security, and a renewable energy transition; and advocating for stronger political support for the regional climate and security agenda.

The success of the action plan is based on strong regional institutions and expertise on climate science and modelling to improve predictive capabilities as well as data and information sharing. Existing institutional infrastructure for climate adaptation, regional disaster response, resilience and security provides a platform for more integrated and comprehensive risk management activities. The considerable climate resilience expertise of the Caribbean has applicability for other SIDS, such as in the Pacific. However, local ownership and expertise in the Pacific are essential for mapping their own action plans, especially as a good knowledge base already exists.



## Session 4: Responding to Climate-Security Challenges in the Pacific – The Role of the United Nations in Supporting Regional and National Efforts

### Takeaways

- The United Nations has a strong role to play in responding to climate-security challenges through its collective capacities and is looking to pilot risk assessment frameworks in volunteer countries.
- The UN Peacebuilding Fund should be used to invest in projects that address climate-security issues in the Pacific.
- The UN Secretary-General's visit to the Pacific was seen as an opportunity to capture the region's concerns on climate change and security and will help ensure the issue is high on the agenda at the Climate Action Summit in September.
- The UN Department of Peace Operations could use its experience to monitor military plans to anticipate changes required by climate change complications; Member State military advisers at their UN Missions can help drive policy on the security implications of climate change.


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“We are moving into a reality where climate impacts are a threat in themselves that can undermine peace, cause social and political tensions, and create new fault lines. The international community is becoming increasingly concerned that we need to address the interplay between impacts of climate change and sustaining peace at the highest political level.”

- *Fekitamoeloa Katoa 'Utoikamanu, UN High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States*

Despite the doom and gloom often associated with sea-level rise and extreme weather events, the Pacific region has shown to be resilient; although hit hard by Cyclone Pam, Vanuatu is bouncing back four years after the Category 5 storm. But the region will need more support to mitigate and adapt to climate change impacts. Here, the United Nations, such as the Department of Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA), can play a role in responding to climate-security challenges by focusing on the following areas: collective and analytical capacities; working better with national and regional actors; building stronger institutions to promote social cohesion; and promoting national ownership.

While there is concern that the climate-security challenge is not viewed as enough of a priority to make it on the agenda of United Nations Security Council, there are other ways to address this critical issue across the UN system. One area is at the UN's field support and peacekeeping operations level, including troop contributions. The collective forces of the UN troop contributors have tremendous untapped potential to lead on climate mitigation. Collectively, the defense



establishments of the UN Member States have the potential to leverage their resources – the US military, for example, uses more fossil fuels than any other institution in the world – in their home nations to demonstrate leadership by example on mitigation and sustainability.

Within the UN system itself, the Department of Peace Operations (DPO) has experience in producing strategic military planning and has the capacity to produce military guidance documents for Member States engaged in UN peacekeeping operations. It could use this experience to monitor military plans to anticipate changes required by climate change complications, specifying climate-related core competencies of force or operational requirements for personnel and unit equipment.

DPO is also well positioned to address climate and security considerations manifesting in UN peacekeeping operations. Its geographically-based teams and integrated operations teams can incorporate climate security advice to the heads of military components of deployed operations and encourage its inclusion in the field's operational reporting. For example, UN peacekeeping force commanders can be briefed by DPO on climate and security considerations to be on the lookout for what either affects their operations or planning in some way, or that impacts on the stability and well-being of the communities they are entrusted to protect. New force commanders can be briefed on climate-security issues before taking command, and UN officials in the field that support the force commanders can also add climate and security-related analysis and reporting to their tasks. In addition, a network of military advisers based at their respective UN Missions in New York can be a valuable resource to tap into to help drive policy on the security implications of climate change.

Climate change also poses risks to human security, and responses require tailored solutions to prevent conflict that can arise from climate impacts. Incorporating climate impacts into peacebuilding efforts have traditionally been more reactionary as opposed to preventative, but this is starting to change. The United Nations Peacebuilding Fund (PBF) – which was established to provide more sustained engagement in support of countries emerging from conflict – currently has projects that address climate security in the Sahel and water scarcity in Yemen, but is interested in expanding its programme in the Pacific to incorporate climate-security impacts. What all these projects have in common is a space for dialogue and local solutions. To consolidate any peacebuilding dividends, the consequences of climate change must be factored in and must have national ownership, as outlined in the Boe Declaration.

The visit of the UN Secretary-General to the Pacific region in May 2019 was seen as a good opportunity to capture the region's concerns on climate change and security. Insights from the trip should feed into the High-Level Review of the SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action (SAMOA) Pathway in September 2019, as well as the agenda of the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit, also in September. These will be good venues to strengthen partnerships and focus on workable action to tackle the climate-security challenge.



## SECTION 2: BACKGROUND PAPERS





## SECTION 2: BACKGROUND PAPERS

### **Climate Change and Security: Findings from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Fifth Assessment Report and their Implications for the Pacific Islands**

*Jon Barnett, Australian Research Council Laureate Professor, School of Geography, University of Melbourne*

#### **Key message**

- The 2014 assessment from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) concluded that climate change is a risk to sovereignty, state integrity, human security and peace, and that these risks are interdependent and mutually reinforcing.

Five key lessons from this report and their implications for the Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are as follows:

1. Climate change poses risks to the territory, critical infrastructure and economic structure of small island states. Managing these risks demands deep cuts in emissions to slow the rate of change so that adaptation strategies can take effect, and requires a vastly enhanced commitment to support adaptation in the region.
2. Climate change may increase tensions within states through a combination of impacts on livelihoods, urban areas and state effectiveness. A vastly enhanced commitment to support adaptation in the region is required to manage these risks, including: a renewed focus on sustainable rural development; a focused programme of activity on planning, infrastructure and social services in urban areas; and investments in strengthening justice systems, the rule of law, and processes for resolving disputes over property rights.
3. Violence increases vulnerability to climate change, and this includes domestic violence which can limit the adaptation opportunities available for women and children. Strategies to reduce domestic violence are therefore the same strategies that protect human security and enhance the capacity of Pacific Island populations to adapt to climate change.
4. Poorly designed climate change interventions can increase the risk of violence as these can change property rights, economic opportunities and access to services, all of which may increase inequality and grievances. Mechanisms for screening climate change mitigation and adaptation projects for their potential to increase violence are necessary.
5. There is significant scope for regional mechanisms that promote adaptation and peacebuilding, such as: a regional centre for adaptation innovation; an index-based regional disaster insurance mechanism; a regional adaptation trust fund; a regional climate change and security forum; and a regional migration union that allows free and unrestricted movement of people within and between the region and Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America.



# Confronting Climate Change and Grappling with Security: Framing Outward-Looking Pacific Indigenous Solutions

*Malakai Koloamatangi, Pasifika Director, Massey University*

## Key messages

- Development partners and actors need to seriously consider existing indigenous, not just traditional, knowledge and approaches in meeting the climate change-security challenge.
- Cultural approaches are being used increasingly by communities to offset the impact of climate change.
- More research is required to understand Pacific indigenous knowledge and its possible contribution to the climate change-security discourse.

## Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to analyse existing Pacific indigenous thinking and practices holistically in order to sketch the rudiments of a possible paradigm, or hopefully a transformative dynamic paradigm, that is comprised of existing and past cultural learnings; cultural in the sense that such wisdom is normally imbued and conveyed by tradition or via traditional means, but normally encompasses a myriad of factors not normally conceptualized as cultural, including development, geopolitics and governance. In other words, culture provides a basis for a multi-dimensional analysis.

The objective is to use this learning to anticipate, mitigate and consequently to fashion an approach to meet the climate change and security challenge. The logic behind the approach is that organic cultural thinking and practices in encountering phenomena, whether from the inside or without, mainly because of their “longitudinal effect”, have been tested by time and proven to be effective. Otherwise, they would have lost their efficacy and relevance becoming redundant. Pacific cultures are semiotic, so metaphors (and abstraction) are unavoidable in their analysis.


## The blue continent

The overarching narrative that underlies the following discussion is the idea of the blue continent, blue Pacific or aquatic continent. Their uses as metaphors and literal representations of the Pacific are fast gaining currency at the regional level. It is increasingly referred to by academics, researchers, civil society organizations and to a certain extent the public.

The narrative emanates from the following matrix: Pacific cultures are maritime-based initially because of the “great migration” from north Asia.<sup>1</sup> One of the habits learned during the sea existence is the idea of sharing and being economical with possessions. Living in limited space on a canoe precludes being individualistic; it is just not practical or possible. The idea of the extended family became the most effective unit of organization, particularly when facing uncertainty, scarcity

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<sup>1</sup> I rely on Helu for the main contours of the following characterization. ‘I.F. Helu, *Critical essays: cultural perspectives from the South Seas*, 1999.



and challenges due to the provision of reciprocity and collective security in a constrained and limited space.

This sea-based and migratory culture was kept alive for millennia through custom and cultural memory, but Pacific cultures eventually settled on land. Tongan philosopher Futa Helu suggests this is reflected in the Maui myths where the Maui's legendary exploits originated in the ocean, for example, fishing up of lands, eventually to Maui being land-based, for example, from snaring the sun to becoming an agriculturalist. In relation to meeting the climate change and security challenge, it is the ethics of migration, survival, adaptation, development, collectivism and *va* ("space") relational values that have to be invoked and strengthened if workable practical solutions are to be found.

### **Indigenous frameworks**

The following processes are possible ways of operationalizing the blue continent idea:

#### *Talanoa*

I define the concept of *talanoa* stipulatively and generally, while respecting the academic discourse that the concept has generated<sup>2</sup> and the attempts at its practical usage,<sup>3</sup> to mean a way of talking and listening to each other in an environment that is free, just, equal and non-confrontational (because critical and conflictual viewpoints are not encouraged). It is a way of *tala* (telling/conversing) without a predetermined *noa* (void, nothingness) goal or outcome in mind. In other words, *talanoa* lends itself easily to multiple contexts as a way of strengthening relationships and communicating common understanding among people, whether related or not. *Talanoa* is now employed throughout the Pacific as a tool for conversation and cultivating relationships.

#### *Tālanga*

*Tālanga* is the overarching analytical framework that will be used to assess climate change and security in the Pacific. *Tālanga*, I take to be both different and similar to *talanoa*, but only insofar as the two concepts are about conversations and relationships. *Tālanga* is used here as both an extension of *talanoa* in the sense that it is no longer focused on the conversation and relationships, but that this formative/initial stage of relationship building has led to a progressive movement "forward". Not only has the conversation become more focused on an agreed objective and desired outcome, but it has also become focused on a practical outcome. I must point out that the use of *tālanga*, especially in more ceremonial settings in Tongan culture, can be discursive and dialectical, but usually with the common desire for an accepted outcome. It is this dual nature of *tālanga* that makes it attractive.<sup>4</sup> I am aware that the concept is used in other Pacific cultures, such as Samoan culture, with either different or similar meanings to how it is used in the Tongan context. Tongan etymology and its characterizations underpin my use of *tālanga*.


Specifically, I employ *tālanga* to depict the conversation and relationship building about climate change and security in the Pacific. I also use the concept to project the solidifying Pacific response to the impacts of climate change in order for Pacific Islanders and others to understand what is

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<sup>2</sup> Vaiioleti, *Talanoa research methodology: a developing position on pacific research*, 2006; Latu, *Divisions within Tongan Methodism: The Impact of Fakatonga and Fakakainga*, 2011; Latu, *Ko E Tala-Tukufakahalo 'O Tonga (Historio-Art and Crafting, Historio-Graphing and Historio-Grafting of the Past of Tonga): An Alter-Native Historiography of Tonga from an Insider Kainanga-E-Fonua Perspective*, 2015.

<sup>3</sup> For example, <https://talanoadialogue.com>; <https://unfccc.int/topics/2018-talanoa-dialogue-platform>.

<sup>4</sup> Vaka'uta, *Talanga: A Tongan Mode of Interpretation*, 2010.



occurring at the grassroots and community level. Finally, I use *tālanga* to point to the increasing use of indigenous traditional knowledge, approaches and systems to respond to the climate change challenge. Let me introduce two other manifestations and transformations of *tālanga* that help to set it up, potentially, as a political analytical framework and conflict prevention and resolution mechanism.

### **Tālanga as a political analytical framework**

I have pointed out the use of *tālanga* generally and ceremonially as a method for genuine free discussion, where differences can be voiced and which could lead to conflict. However, the fact that there is a common desire for an equitable and effective outcome ensures that the discussants are bound to the discussion commonly without the option of exiting. This genuine desire for an outcome, which is most likely to be made up of negotiated and shared views, guarantees that the eventual decision and position produced is made up of the different points of view, in a similar way to the process of *talanoa*. However, where *tālanga* might differ from *talanoa* is in relation to the discussants' expressed intention of *tā* (cut, deconstruct) and subsequently to *langa* (reconstruct, develop).<sup>5</sup> I consider the dialogic nature of *tālanga* as *grafting* where different positions are collated to form a collective position, even if it is an uneasy amalgamation. The actual development and reconstruction of previously different and deconstructed positions into a synthesis, whether in ideology or practical terms, I refer to as *crafting*.<sup>6</sup>

The Pacific and indigenous response to climate change and its implications for the “security environment” can be easily analysed through the *tālanga* (grafting and crafting) political lens because of the need for collective action aiming for an outcome that is predicated on the “common good”. The idea, whether political or not, that authenticity is “real” is contentious.<sup>7</sup> It is more likely that social enterprise, no less than individual identities are not “pure” constructs, but consists of a conglomeration of factors, opinions and genes. *Tālanga* also lends itself easily to political analysis because, as I have argued, it is particularly relevant for bringing about concrete and real world solutions by combining the new and the old.

### **Tālanga Fakafonua – National dialogue as a conflict prevention and resolution tool**

There is another aspect of *tālanga*, which makes it pertinent as a conflict prevention and resolution tool. This is its ability not only to encourage the achievement of group goals, but that it can act as a safe, practical platform on which to pursue group outcomes. The Tongan (and Samoan) saying *fofola e fala kae alea/tālanga e kainga* (literally, roll out the mat so that the family – nuclear and extended – can talk on it) explains this.<sup>8</sup> An additional feature of *tālanga* in this context is that while honest, and at times disruptive, discussion is encouraged, at no time should it deteriorate to the point of physical conflict, because that would defeat the purpose of the *tālanga*. This is true for family- and community-level discussion as well as for national-level forums, or *tālanga fakafonua*.

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<sup>5</sup> Shown most clearly in Vaka'uta's “alter-native” idea.

<sup>6</sup> Grafting and crafting, which are not new concepts, are being used increasingly in scholarship to highlight a phenomenon that has existed perhaps since time immemorial, but are often overlooked and taken for granted. They are particularly relevant for the Pacific region because of the juxtaposition between existing knowledge and other knowledge/belief systems and the need for practical approaches that are inclusive (Koloamatangi 2016, 2016a; di Palma 1992).

<sup>7</sup> For example, see Kolo (1996).

<sup>8</sup> The ‘mat’ can be literal, a different physical form, philosophical, symbolic or, in the case of ‘Epeli Hau’ofa’s ‘Sea of Islands’ (1993), watery and oceanic.





Stigant and Murray<sup>9</sup> discuss the utility of national dialogues as a conflict transformation tool in African nations. They propose key principles such as inclusion, transparency and public participation, a credible convener, and an agenda that addresses the root causes of conflict, a clear mandate and appropriate rules and procedures to guide the dialogue and an agreed mechanism to implement the outcomes as crucial for the success of the dialogue. Although, as they caution, there are no guarantees as to the successful outcome of particular dialogues and there is not a one-size-fits-all template, the fact that the use of dialogues as conflict transformation tools is increasing demonstrates their usefulness.

Interestingly too, Ireland has instituted a National Dialogue on Climate Action<sup>10</sup> “to build awareness, engagement and motivation to act in relation to the challenges presented by climate change”. It is government-led, aiming “to create structures, information flows and events to facilitate discussion and deliberation on responses to climate change challenges, as well as enabling and empowering action at local, regional and national levels”. The strength of the initiative is in its formal sanctioning by government. In the Pacific context, the approach would be strengthened by cultural protocols and processes outside government circles. They could be further enforced if they are sanctioned by national governments.

Tālanga fakafonua as an approach is increasingly being used in the Pacific to decide issues of national importance, whether it is for reconciliation in the Solomon Islands or Bougainville, climate change and its effects in Kiribati, or post-coup discussions in Fiji. A tālanga fakafonua was held on democracy in Tonga in October 2017. The only other comparable national forum on this subject was perhaps the Convention on the Tongan Constitution and Democracy in 1992. Although not without teething issues, the tālanga was successful for several reasons. One, it was inclusive of all sides of the democracy discourse, including the royal family. Second, it had clear practical objectives. Third, it was organized and conducted independently by a New Zealand university in genuine partnership with a local NGO, which was recognized by participants and attendees with respect. Lastly, the proceedings were held in the Tongan language, following clear cultural protocols.

A tālanga fakafonua on conflict prevention, resolution and transformation could utilize the philosophical as well as the practical underpinnings discussed here, but tailored to suit local, cultural conditions. In terms of the process, there needs to be a two-way approach where input is systematically gathered from a series of local, district, provincial tālanga that is conveyed to and tabled at the national tālanga. Similarly, the proceedings from the national dialogue have to be properly filtered back down to the lower levels. Government buy-in is crucial as it not only needs to sponsor the national forum, but also monitor that resolutions are implemented at the appropriate levels. The overall aim of the tālanga process would be an effective and focused collective deliberation and action, based on people relationships and shared futures.


### **Resilience and adaptation**

The notion of adaptation inherent in Pacific cultural thinking and practice, it is suggested, may have come from the migration and settlement of the Pacific, when the arduous journey across the Pacific

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<sup>9</sup> Stigant and Murray, *National dialogues: a tool for conflict transformation?* <https://www.usip.org/publications/2015/10/national-dialogues-tool-conflict-transformation>.

<sup>10</sup> Department of Communications, Climate Action & Environment, *National Dialogue on Climate Action*, <https://www.dccae.gov.ie/en-ie/climate-action/topics/national-dialogue-on-climate-action/Pages/default.aspx>.



would have required resilience in the face of adversity over millennia so that adaptation and acceptance of disasters and environmental change was a fact of life if one were to survive.<sup>11</sup>

This “tradition” has given rise to the use of customary calendars to prepare for anticipated natural phenomena such as floods and hurricanes, in their appointed time (migration of fowls and animal life, for example, to safer roosts indicate that a storm is coming). Or the way that the spirituality which pervades Pacific lives gives strength of conviction in survival techniques. Or the construction of artificial islands as living habitats, for example in Pohnpei in Micronesia, long before the arrival of Europeans. Or the non-reliance on fuel-powered sea crafts where sailing vessels were the norm (sailing ships now regularly sail between the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea). Or the food storage and preservation methods that ensured a sustainable food supply. Or the deep understanding of changing weather patterns and their impacts on sources of sustenance.<sup>12</sup> The most valuable aspect of indigenous knowledge is its “longitudinal extent”. In fact, a strong case can be made for propping up indigenous knowledge and methods in confronting the climate change-security nexus as the “mainstream” and not the “alternative” to other knowledge systems.

### **Security and conflict resolution mechanisms**

The easing of the potential tensions, which could lead to conflict and insecure environments that comes from utilizing indigenous approaches, is an important, but largely unexplored aspect of the climate change, security and conflict intersection. It is clear that climate change is a threat multiplier. However, I have pointed to the potential conflict prevention and ability of tālanga fakafonua.

The talanoa process has been tested in Fiji in efforts to heal the social rifts left by the coups. The reconciliation process in the Solomon Islands after the 1997-2003 ethnic violence followed a similar process. Another possible approach is the ifoga process in Samoa where the offenders submit to a ritual and public humiliation process while seeking forgiveness from the aggrieved party. After the Tongan riots of 2006, the government set about creating a reconciliation process using similar methods to tālanga and talanoa. These cultural approaches, generally, start the process of reconciliation and resolution by “blunting” the sharp edges of the reasons for conflict. Other gains can then be built on this initial engagement.

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<sup>11</sup> Bryant-Tokalau, *Indigenous Pacific Approaches to Climate Change*, 3.

<sup>12</sup> Bryant-Tokalau, 86-87.



## Sea-Level Rise and Security in the Pacific

*Clement Yow Mulalap, Legal Adviser, Permanent Mission of the Federated States of Micronesia to the United Nations*

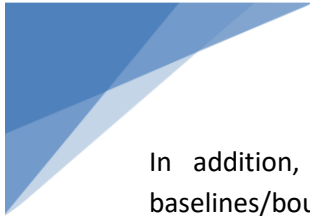
### Key messages

- Sea-level rise threatens the security of various critical aspects of life in the Pacific, including, inter alia, the natural environment, maritime limits and boundaries, natural resource bases, health, food, water, cultural practices and communal integrity.
- The Federated States of Micronesia, along with the rest of the members of the Pacific Islands Forum, has advocated for an authoritative examination of the legal implications of sea-level rise, including by the International Law Commission. Such an examination will, among other things, clarify the extent to which sea-level rise triggers international law considerations related to the security threats listed above.
- Recognizing ongoing threats faced by Small Island Developing States, sea-level rise in relation to international law has been included on the UN International Law Commission's long-term programme of work; in order for the topic to be considered in a more substantive manner, many SIDS are advocating for the topic to be moved to the ILC's active programme of work.

### Discussion

Over three days in June 2011, Columbia Law School hosted a conference titled "Threatened Island Nations: Legal Implications of Rising Seas and a Changing Climate." The conference attracted hundreds of lawyers, government officials and law scholars, all of whom tackled a dizzying array of questions and issues of international law pertaining to sea-level rise and climate change, including impacts on maritime baselines, migration and Statehood. Representatives from the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Grenada – both Small Island Developing States (SIDS) – made significant contributions at the conference, putting human faces to the slow but steady deleterious effects of sea-level rise and climate change among SIDS, including effects on health, food, water, territorial integrity and Statehood. Still, despite the high level of interest and the active participation of attendees in the three days of discussions, the conference raised more questions than answers. What, exactly, are the legal implications of sea-level rise and related natural phenomena, including in terms of the law of the sea?

Sea-level rise is an urgent and pressing security matter for the Pacific, as well as for all other coastal states around the world and the rest of the international community with interests in the ocean and its resources. A large number of Pacific islands are only 2-3 metres in elevation. Several islands belonging to the Solomon Islands and Federated States of Micronesia have reportedly already been submerged by sea-level rise, and a number of villages in the Pacific (e.g. in Fiji and the Solomon Islands) have already relocated due to coastal inundation caused by sea-level rise. This type of human migration induced by sea-level rise will likely occur in other parts of the world throughout this century and beyond, especially from low-lying atolls and coastal areas.



In addition, sea-level rise has the potential to impact: a country's Statehood; maritime baselines/boundaries; exploitation of maritime resources, which is dependent on stable maritime baselines, boundaries and zones; and human rights, including the right to enjoy the ocean and its resources for sustenance, shelter and cultural/religious practices.


Approximately six years after the Columbia Law School conference, during the United Nations Conference to Support the Implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14 of the 2030 Agenda in June 2017, the Honorable Enele Sopoaga, Prime Minister of Tuvalu, delivered a statement that highlighted the legal complications posed by sea-level rise. Noting that the drafters of the 1982 United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) did not anticipate that maritime baselines could potentially shift due to sea-level rise, Prime Minister Sopoaga called on the International Law Commission (ILC) to provide "legal clarification of the implications of sea-level rise with respect to the determination of baselines and hence the territorial sea and exclusive economic zone" generated by those baselines under UNCLOS.

The Honorable Enele Sopoaga's entreaty set off a chain of events. In October 2017, H.E. Ambassador Amatlain E. Kabua, the Permanent Representative of the Republic of the Marshall Islands to the United Nations, on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS), delivered a statement in the Sixth Committee (the UN's Legal Committee) of the 72nd Session of the UN General Assembly that, among other things, called on the ILC "to include legal implications of sea-level rise as a topic on its Long-Term Programme of Work as soon as possible, including consideration of questions which may be unique to atoll nations and other low-lying small island developing states."

During the same session, the Federated States of Micronesia delivered a statement in the Sixth Committee that aligned with the PSIDS statement delivered by Ambassador Kabua and expanded on the PSIDS statement by highlighting several subjects of international law that the ILC could study as part of the sea-level rise topic: the law of the sea (particularly, but not limited to, the impacts of sea-level rise on the drawing and permanence of maritime baselines and maritime zones), Statehood, human rights and human migration.

The next year, inspired in part by the statements from the PSIDS, five members of the ILC produced a syllabus for the topic "Sea-level rise in relation to international law" that mirrors many of the elements advanced by the Federated States of Micronesia and the rest of the PSIDS, and envisions the establishment of a Study Group to examine those elements. In August 2018, just a few months after the production of the syllabus and less than a year after the PSIDS statements in the Sixth Committee, the full ILC decided to place the topic of "Sea-level rise in relation to international law" on its long-term programme of work.

The placement of the topic on its long-term programme of work does not guarantee that the ILC will actually consider the topic in a substantive manner. To do so, the ILC must move the topic to its active programme of work. Toward that end, in September of 2018, during the 28th Meeting of Smaller Island States Leaders in Nauru, the President of the Federated States of Micronesia joined leaders from Tuvalu, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, the Republic of Palau and the Cook Islands in adopting a summary of decisions that, among other things, "recognized the pressing and ongoing threats faced by Smaller Island States regarding the effects of sea level rise and supported the decision to request the International Law Commission to place the topic of 'Sea Level Rise in relation to international law' on its long term programme of work, as well as its active



programme of work in order to examine the international law implications of sea-level rise as a matter of extreme urgency.” A few days later, the Leaders of the 49th Meeting of the Pacific Islands Forum (i.e. a larger grouping of Pacific States that includes the PSIDS as well as Australia and New Zealand) issued a communiqué that, among other things, endorsed the summary of decisions from the 28th Smaller Island States Meeting (inclusive of the call for the ILC to move the sea-level rise topic to its active programme of work). With that, the Pacific region made clear that it was committed at the highest levels to pursuing an authoritative examination of the legal implications of sea-level rise, including in relation to law of the sea issues, Statehood and the protection of persons (e.g. human migration, human rights), all of which implicate numerous security concerns for the Pacific.

As of this writing, the ILC has not yet formally decided whether to move the topic to its active programme of work. However, signs are promising that it will decide to do so sometime this summer. Last October, Ambassador Kabua delivered a statement in the Sixth Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on behalf of the Pacific Islands Forum (thus including Australia and New Zealand) that clearly tied the issue of sea-level rise to pressing security challenges in the Pacific. In her statement, Ambassador Kabua stressed that the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum “acknowledged the urgency and importance of securing the region's maritime boundaries as a key issue for the development and security of our region... While sea-level rise poses significant development, economic and environmental challenges, the phenomenon also raises complex and pressing questions in international law. We therefore call on the Commission to move the topic of ‘Sea-level rise in relation to international law’ to its current programme of work in order to examine the international law implications of sea level rise as a matter of extreme urgency.”

Including the members of the Pacific Islands Forum, over 100 Member States of the United Nations General Assembly (coastal and landlocked, developing and developed, from all major regions of the world) spoke positively in the Sixth Committee about the ILC’s decision to put the topic on its long-term programme of work, and nearly all of those Member States explicitly called on the ILC to move the topic to its active programme of work as soon as possible. Given this overwhelming call from the international community, it is likely that the ILC will take a decision on the matter soon.



# Climate Security Risk Assessment and Management in the Caribbean

*Shiloh Fetzek, Senior Fellow for International Affairs, Center for Climate and Security*

## Key messages

- The Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency's action plan focuses on strengthening knowledge and coordination on climate security, food and water security, energy security/transition and building political support for the agenda.
- Key principles for implementation include networking regional institutions, data and information sharing, building and strengthening regional governance structures, incentivizing resilience, and public participation and engagement.
- Policy-makers have unprecedented foresight on future climate threats to the region, including predictive capacities deriving from regional research institutions. This gives security, development and political actors a responsibility to prepare for multifaceted security threats on the horizon.


## Regional climate risks

Sea levels are rising in the Caribbean and are projected to be 24-84cm higher by 2050 compared with 2000 levels. This will have significant implications for the region's economy and livelihoods, especially as an estimated 90% of economic activity in the region takes place on the coastline and 60% of all Caribbean nationals live in coastal areas. Significant drying is projected by mid-century and within 20-30 years mass coral bleaching events in the Eastern Caribbean could occur twice a year. Combined, these will generate additional stresses on food and water security and commercial fishing and tourism, which accounts for a significant portion of many Caribbean countries' GDP.

While the region is facing an increasing number of climatic risks, it has acquired considerable experience in building resilience to extreme weather events. This is due in part to a response to its exposure to tropical cyclones, where the Caribbean has developed a number of sophisticated climate science information sharing and extreme weather early warning systems. Nevertheless, the scale and pace of projected climate change pose particular challenges for under-resourced Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

## Underlying security challenges

Situated between North and South America, the Caribbean is on a natural trans-shipment route between the primary source and market regions for illegal drugs. The Caribbean is also a source, transit and destination region for human trafficking, including migrant labour, forced labour and sex trafficking. Cartel and gang activity is present across the region, and serious organized crime continues to create security threats, challenge state authority, and impair economic growth and stable development for some countries.



For example, the recent breakdown of state function in Venezuela has boosted piracy and illicit flows of goods, and created a dramatic increase in migrant outflows, leading to tension in some areas. Another example is the rise of violent extremist networks in Trinidad & Tobago, where there is a close nexus between Islamist groups and urban criminal gangs.

### **Security challenges and climate change**

Climate change is acting as a threat multiplier in the Caribbean as well as in Pacific SIDS. Slow and sudden onset disasters are adding additional stresses to some of the underlying security challenges in the region noted above, as well as increasing the difficulty of responding and recovering from climate impacts. Some of those challenges that are especially sensitive to climate shocks include high unemployment, undiversified economies and dependency on climate-sensitive natural resources.


Dependence on external countries for disaster assistance can slow response times. Delayed or inadequate responses to natural disasters can fuel citizens' frustrations. If tropical storms lead to a temporary breakdown in the rule of law, it can dramatically reduce revenue and employment in the wake of a major disaster. In the longer term, such events can damage private sector confidence necessary for investment and recovery, or impact tourism, cutting revenues and creating further problems that can have security consequences.

Many Caribbean countries' climate preparedness capacities are limited by their weak financial positions, with high debt-to-GDP ratios, e.g. Jamaica (101%) and Barbados (157.3%). China holds most of this debt and has a significant and growing political and economic presence in the region. This has implications for balancing the costs and benefits of dedicating funding for traditional security risks and the costs of preparing for and recovery from both slow- and rapid-onset climate impacts.

### **Caribbean climate security risk management frameworks**

Existing institutional infrastructure for climate adaptation, regional disaster response, resilience and security provides a platform for more integrated and comprehensive risk management activities, essentially helping to make the difficult decisions of how to manage the risks with limited resources. Given that some of the climate risks emerging are more frequent and severe than in the past, climate security risk assessment requires new institutional relationships and connective tissue, along with additional capacities, personnel and expertise, in order to implement preventive measures.

The Planetary Security in the Caribbean Region: A Roadmap to Climate Resilience Plan of Action – developed in part by the Caribbean Disaster Emergency Management Agency (CDEMA) – plays a key role in advancing the climate resilience agenda from a climate security perspective. It is focused on human security, which encompasses traditional security as well as economic development, social protection and environmental security demands. The action plan defines how different sectors, disciplines and institutions should be aligned in order to achieve these objectives. The intention is to weave the requirements for this plan into existing, related plans and strategies in the region. It is



also contextualized within the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, the Samoa Pathway 2014 and the Caribbean Strategy on Comprehensive Disaster Management 2014-2024.


**The action plan consists of six pillars:**

1. Strengthen capacity and knowledge of Caribbean SIDS on climate and security: An accessible body of knowledge, as well as a community of identified thematic experts, is required to ensure adequate knowledge generation, dissemination and application in order to support evidence-based decision-making.
2. Strengthen regional coordination in support of humanitarian crises: The Multi-National Civil Military Coordination Cell improves disaster response capacity and civil-military cooperation around the region. CDEMA has built a Regional Response Mechanism for coordinating disaster response among participating states throughout the region, and there is a space to build upon these existing coordination arrangements to expand the mechanism's geographical coverage.
3. Advance food security within the context of a changing climate: The use of big data for planning, risk, forecasting and insurance, such as through the Standardized Audit Instrument developed by the CARICOM Agriculture Thematic Group on Environment, Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, is a key resource in moving this area forward.
4. Advance water security within the context of a changing climate: Prolonged drought and resulting implications for water availability have already resulted in civil unrest in some Caribbean SIDS; salinization has also resulted in tensions. Demand is one half of the water security equation, necessitating consideration of water quality and water quantity, economic growth and population growth when investing in water security.
5. Advance the renewable energy transition of Caribbean SIDS within the context of a changing climate: Strategic guidance is necessary to develop a roadmap for this energy transition. Island economies' import dependency on fossil fuels increases vulnerability to shocks to the supply chain and a strategic external dependency. Shifting to renewables reduces this dependency, improves the balance of payments and facilitates currency stabilisation, which strengthens the internal economy and fosters a circular economy which can facilitate development.
6. Advocate for stronger political support for the regional climate and security agenda: The collective voice of SIDS can be a powerful agent of global influence and change. High-level political buy-in has been important in establishing the institutions and processes that have been successful in the Caribbean; heads of state and senior ministers have been and should continue to be engaged to maintain and increase political will in order to reduce climate hazard exposure.

**Key principles for implementation include:**

*Networking regional institutions:* The Caribbean has an array of expertise and organizations relevant to assessing and managing climate security risks. This action plan builds on a previous effort following the 2017 Atlantic hurricane season, to define a resilience pathway and develop targets and the metrics to track it. This was a collaborative process involving academics, international financial institutions and NGOs; more such processes are needed. In addition, better connecting and expanding institutions promote cross-pollination and break down compartmentalization of issues (e.g. climate, disasters, sustainable development, security issues) when they address similar – and interconnected – risks and threats. This also allows leveraging the comparative advantages of a variety of institutions, rather than facilitating mandate encroachment. Molding existing institutional





infrastructure to maximize efficiency and effectiveness has been broadly preferable to establishing new frameworks that increase actors competing for finite resources.

*Data and information sharing:* Regional security architecture, including CARICOM Impacts, uses crime analytics to track issues across borders. Along with CDEMA, it is becoming a focal point to monitor and address migration. Regional research institutions can be a source of data for the security community and for resilience planning. Security studies programmes at Caribbean universities are improving data analytics around identifying the potential for crime; this analysis could help to inform critical decisions around resilience planning and broader prevention strategies to avoid future security issues arising from development shortcomings and lack of access. Likewise, security actors can identify threats early and take strategic steps, along with development actors, to make corrective actions. This information flow is beginning to happen in the Caribbean, and more is needed to support preventive action.

*Building and strengthening regional governance structures:* CDEMA and partner states operate an innovative Regional Response Mechanism that is seeking to bring the disaster response capacities of the entire Caribbean together to respond to the needs of individual Caribbean territories as they are impacted. This is cost-effective, coordinating with military actors around maintaining high-value assets necessary for disaster response. Building bridges between the security actors and others by drawing on the production of information across sectors can support critical decision-making around resilience and security implications. Such processes can also work to manage or overcome sovereignty issues that impede effective risk management.

*Incentivizing resilience:* Incentivizing the private sector to develop business continuity plans has helped accelerate recovery and ensure that economic activity and normalcy can return as quickly as possible following disruptions to prevent civil uprisings and unrest that can occur in the aftermath of storms. Similarly, discussions are underway to define how to incentivize states and shift resources toward preventive rather than responsive resilience building. These include financial protection measures, insurance and other risk transfer mechanisms and schemes that are more accessible and affordable to households and businesses, and to ensure that the financial system and the private sector are better able to recover and respond to natural disasters. However, a chronic funding gap remains between emergency response and long-term resilience planning.

*Real public participation and engagement:* Tailoring solutions to local contexts by understanding their history, development, resource capacity and absorptive capacity can support securing ownership of these processes, including from the private sector and civil society.

While SIDS are vulnerable to unprecedented risks, policy-makers have unprecedented foresight on future climate threats to the region. Such foresight capabilities give security, development and political actors a responsibility to prepare for multifaceted security threats on the horizon. The considerable climate resilience expertise of the Caribbean has applicability not only for SIDS in other regions, but also for other regional cooperation efforts to manage climate-related risks.



## Climate Security Issues in the Region and Engagement Opportunities

*Coral Pasisi, Consultant, Climate Security Experts Network*

### **Key messages**

- The single greatest threat to the livelihood, security and well-being of Pacific people is climate change.
- Pacific Island countries exist in a dynamic geopolitical environment and must contend with complex security challenges.
- There is a range of critical climate fragility risks emerging that will require greater examination, monitoring and coordinated action by many stakeholders at the national, regional and international level.
- To be effective, responses must be tailored to the unique political-economic, cultural, environment and development circumstances, and must work with and through national systems.

### **Challenges**

#### *Displacement and forced migration*


Keeping at 1.5°C spares the homes of an estimated 60,000 people from inundation (Pringle, 2018). However, long before lands disappear beneath the ocean, they will become unproductive due to salt water intrusion, erosion and reef degradation, and in the absence of ambitious adaptations will force the migration of thousands of people. This is already happening in a number of Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS), such as in Tuvalu, Kiribati, Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea. The effect of such changes on complex and at times contested traditional land tenure systems increases the potential for conflict and fragility of communal systems.

#### *Developmental stress and coping capacity*

Countries are facing significant loss in revenues at the same as their expenditure on recovery and adaptation is rising. They have far less to invest in maintaining development, social services, peace, and law and order. Up to 20% of national budgets in some SIDS are being spent on climate change investments.

#### *Challenges to the blue economy*

Coral reef degradation – 70-90% of corals at 1.5°C, and 99% at 2°C (IPCC 1.5°C) – stands to devastate coral reef systems, which are the basis of the blue economy food chain, as well as important coastal infrastructure across Pacific SIDS. Marine-based tourism accounts for a significant part of regional GDP, and for some smaller islands it is in excess of 60% of GDP and 25-35% of employment (SPTO). Tourists do not come to see dead coral reef systems. Coastal and pelagic fisheries are critical for Pacific economies. A race for dwindling and moving migratory fisheries stocks is already causing tension between countries in the region and distant water fishing nations over the sustainable



management of migratory fish stocks. Revenues from the blue economy are under serious risk and will become threat multipliers for coastal communities and national economies.

#### *Health, food and water security*

The region is suffering irreversible coastal fisheries degradation where between 70-90% of Pacific populations access healthy foods and livelihoods. This is increasingly leading to a dependency on low nutritional imports as alternatives (noodles, rice, flour, mutton flaps). This occurs against a backdrop of Pacific populations with some of the highest non-communicable disease (NCD) rates in the world (70-75% of deaths due to NDCs). Coupled with diminishing fresh water supplies for low-lying atolls from inundation and saltwater intrusion, and droughts, increased water-borne diseases like dengue and malaria are a real threat as are pathogens affecting key food crops. There are a number of complex risks that combine together in this space resulting in increased fragility with potential for instability.

#### *Coping capacity and natural disasters*

The vulnerability of Pacific SIDS has increased while investments in capacity to cope have not. The Pacific is the highest exposed region in the world to natural disasters (tropical cyclones, droughts and floods) and least insurable. Single tropical cyclone events have caused losses up to 64% of GDP for some Pacific Island nations in the last three years, and for some small countries, has been equivalent in cost to 200 years' worth of exports. Traditional defense force responders (New Zealand and Australian militaries) are already indicating this may strain their capacity to respond effectively in supporting Pacific nations' resilience and recovery efforts.

#### *Impacts of sea-level rise on maritime zone and boundaries*

All SIDS are at risk of losing land and thus of contracting exclusive economic zone (EEZs); the lowest-lying atolls are at risk of complete extinction. Boundary delimitation efforts are ongoing, and require concerted negotiations between island countries and larger neighbouring countries with territories in the region. Loss of land and EEZ delimited marine resources is a point of considerable tension and uncertainty within and between countries in the region, where the right to govern one's resources in the case of their country being lost to inundation is still a matter of legal and ethical debate. Pacific leaders of low-lying atolls want to ensure that the rights of their people to their countries' resources are protected in the future, especially noting climate change is causing this and they are contributing least to this problem. Options to fix boundaries to avoid legal loss of EEZs to countries are the subject of considerable ongoing research and debate.

### **Responses**

Pacific leaders endorsed the *Boe Declaration* in September 2018 as the basis for addressing the expanded concept of security to include climate security. Associated with its implementation, the region is developing an action plan and comprehensive framework to bring to bear the collective arsenal of leadership, policy and capacities for this purpose. Without preempting the outcomes of that work, which will be considered by leaders at their meeting this year in Tuvalu, there are a number of responses to the challenges that can be done now:

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- Support the universal implementation of the Paris Climate Change Agreement. To achieve goals set out in the agreement, ambitious and united global leadership supporting deep cuts in greenhouse gas emissions is essential. The UN system must amplify voices of the most vulnerable and lead a coordinated and collaborative global effort; the UN secretary-general's climate action summit, UN General Assembly, UN Security Council, and the G7 and G20 have critical roles to play.
  - Deliver ambitious mobilization of resources. A range of sources of finance is required to address risks and build resilience. Ideally delivered through country systems, resilient private sector and non-state actors, and existing regional arrangements wherever possible, will help to reduce transaction costs and administrative burden in Pacific SIDS. Scaled up climate finance is critical in this space as are grants and highly concessional finance options.
  - Accelerate international cooperation and efficient development programmes to reduce forced instances of climate migration and create sustainable and resilient island states. Support for the development of local vulnerability assessments, plans and displacement policies is critical to give more certainty and security to climate-displaced persons and communities affected by this migration.
  - Support Pacific SIDS voices and concerns. Develop suitable proposals for progressive international law and associated technical approaches and capacities to support Pacific SIDS address this issue, such as through the International Law Association (ILA) Committee on International Law and Sea Level, and build on efforts already underway by the region, including boundary fixing and delimitation programmes of the Pacific Community (SPC).
  - Strengthen monitoring and early warning systems and improve understanding and knowledge of localised impact and risk. It is important to gather sufficiently robust and granular data and information, including extensive traditional and cultural knowledge, around some of the key climate fragility issues in the region. This will help to inform policy, resilience building and response reducing risk profiles across all sectors, and better understanding the nexus between climate and security for the Pacific.
  - Develop or strengthen regionally/sub-regionally grown coordinated swift and pre-approved response systems for climate impacts and disasters. The region should prepare for multiple response scenarios that factor in comprehensive recovery planning. This could help to facilitate collaborative peacebuilding efforts more widely among existing diverse geopolitical interests operating in the region. The region has successful examples of applicable models, for example the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands (RAMSI).
  - Ensure clear, coordinated and efficient UN system support to the region and country-specific situations. A coordinated multilateral system approach and informed climate security assessment framework should complement the region's efforts to implement the Boe Declaration and Action Plan, as well as support the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) and the development of the Pacific Resilience Facility. Application of a climate security assessment framework must be trialled in practical site-specific situations.
  - Appoint a special adviser on climate change and security. In their 49th Leaders Communiqué (2018), Pacific leaders requested the UN secretary-general appoint a special adviser on climate change and security and called on the UN Security Council to appoint a special rapporteur to produce a regular review of global, regional and national security threats caused by climate change.



**PREVENTING CONFLICT**  
**KEEPING THE PEACE**  
**SUSTAINING PEACE**



**Least Developed Countries**  
**Landlocked Developing Countries**  
**Small Island Developing States**

United Nations Office of the High Representative for Least Developed Countries,  
Landlocked Developing Countries and Small Island Developing States