

'No Island Left Behind'

Pacific Regional NGO Alliance Position on Climate Change

(July, 2009)

The world's leaders agreed and signed the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in 1992 and the Kyoto Protocol in 1997 in recognition that earth temperatures spiralling out of control will have devastating impacts on all life forms.

Yet, despite the strong scientific evidence presented in the Fourth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, over the last 15 months, united political will to collectively deal with this problem remains the greatest challenge.

At the thirteenth Conference of Parties (COP13) meeting in Bali in December 2007, the world Leaders launched the Bali Action Plan (BAP). The BAP commits governments to obtain a workable and fair agreement by the COP15 in Copenhagen in December 2009. A robust and ambitious agreement out of Copenhagen is critical in order to keep global temperature increase as far below 1.5 degrees Celsius as possible.

In 2008, at the COP14 in Poznan, Leaders of the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS), upon evidence of the impacts that climate variability is having on their economies and livelihoods, urged the global forum (the COP14) that in fact, 2 degrees may be too high and made a call that in order to avoid further harm to Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and its communities, emissions reductions targets must keep the global temperature increases to below 1.5 degrees Celsius (above pre-industrial levels).

The Copenhagen Summit must agree to a legally binding, timely and deep emissions reduction that is ambitious and fair in order to prevent climate chaos that is already causing unacceptable impacts on communities and the environment. These efforts must be supported by funding mechanisms and policies that will enable a sustainable future, fast track a renewable energy revolution, protect our natural and cultural heritage while meeting the needs of the world's most vulnerable communities and in particular SIDS.

Without political will from Annex 1 and developed countries, developing countries are highly unlikely to engage in negotiating commitments. Furthermore, withholding clear commitment to provide financial support to vulnerable countries already struggling to adapt to the devastating impacts of climate change – an additional burden placed on them by the developed countries historical actions – is morally unacceptable.

The Pacific CSO position paper will address the four pillars of the Bali Action Plan (BAP), which are:

I. Adaptation; II. Mitigation; III. Technology Transfer; IV. Financing Mechanisms.

I. ADAPTATION:

Adaptation to climate change is vital: its impacts are already happening, and will worsen in the future. Shortages of water and food, increased intensity and frequency of tropical storms, coastal inundation and spread of vector and water borne diseases poses great risks to the livelihoods and health of billions of people, particularly in developing countries.

Recognising the many adverse impacts of climate change, of particular concern to Pacific Island peoples is sea level rise that is already creating internally and internationally displaced peoples.

Scientific evidence of the adverse impacts of climate change is available and NOW is the time for action.

The planet and its inhabitants cannot afford strategic delaying tactics under the guise of assessments, studies and research. Furthermore, there is a need to differentiate between financing for adaptation and for mitigation. Although securing financing for mitigation is a major challenge, it is more readily available and easier to access than financing for adaptation.

Pacific Islands Civil Society Organisations call on Industrialised Countries to:

- i) Acknowledge the extreme situation of low-lying atoll people facing inevitable forced displacement as a result of sea level rise in SIDS.
- ii) Support a proactive approach by low-lying Atoll people in determining actions and processes in response to the inevitable loss of lands, culture, tradition and identity of SIDS.
- iii) Establish a financial mechanism in the Copenhagen Agreement to address the true cost of the effects of forced displacement of peoples living in SIDS.
- iv) Ensure that SIDS respective governments and developing countries have the necessary skills and knowledge to undertake adaptation programmes.
- v) Build the capacity and awareness of SIDS and governments of developing countries on adaptation to climate change through the transfer of appropriate adaptation technologies.
- vi) Build a framework process for applying and integrating adaptation measures into national and local development strategies.
- vii) Assist SIDS and their respective governments and developing countries with the implementation of COP 15 adaptation programmes.
- viii) Make available energy efficient technologies and appropriate clean renewable energy excluding nuclear, Carbon Capture and Storage [CCS], coal, and other environmentally damaging technology.

II. MITIGATION:

In order to avoid the adverse impacts of catastrophic climate change, greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced by 45% of 1990 levels by 2020 with the long term vision of a reduction of more than 80% by 2050. Recent scientific evidence suggests that the 4th IPCC assessment report underestimates the impacts the carbon cycle feedbacks (the interrelationship of climate change effects), which have not been well understood and underestimated in many cases.

Pacific Islands Civil Society Organisations call for:

- i) Global carbon emissions to peak and decline by 2015.
- ii) Industrialized countries to rapidly reduce their respective emissions in aggregate by 45% of 1990 levels by the year 2020.
- iii) Industrialized and Annex 1 countries to commit to a long-term vision of more than 85% reduction of 1990 levels of carbon emissions by 2050.
- iv) Efforts to Reduce Emissions for Deforestation and Degradation (REDD) to address specific concerns related to forests including permanence, leakage, biodiversity and the rights of indigenous peoples and other traditional forest dependent communities.
- v) Any new market mechanism not to include the use of forest offset credits.

III. TECHNOLOGY TRANSFERS:

In order for the world to shift to an equitable, low-carbon development path that manages the risk of higher ranges of climate sensitivity, environmentally sound, low-carbon, climate-resilient technology and know-how must be made available to assist developing countries in their Nationally-Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) and adaptation needs within the context of sustainable development. SIDS must be supported, financially and technically to strengthen their decision making processes to explicitly include climate change related risk considerations at all level of climate discussions and policy setting platforms.

The unsustainable practices adopted by Annex 1 and industrialized countries are causing climate change. They must bear the responsibility for arresting and reversing the problem and for introducing alternative clean and sustainable technologies.

Pacific Islands Civil Society Organisations call for:

- i) The strengthening of technological capabilities in SIDS to address effects of climate change at the national level.
- ii) The promotion and development of the capacity of endogenous (Home grown locally – appropriate technologies), environmentally friendly and gender/disability sensitive technologies.
- iii) Financial and technical support to MVCs and developing countries to strengthen their decision-making processes in addressing climate related risks.
- iv) A revised and robust Clean Development Mechanism to focus on delivering environmentally sound and nationally appropriate technology to the SIDS and Least Developed Countries (LDCs) to facilitate a transition to a clean energy economy.
- v) Industrialised countries must provide full costs of supporting national and regional scientific bodies in conducting appropriate: Research, Development and Deployment of new and clean technology within the SIDS in the next commitment period (2013-2017).

IV. FINANCING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE and FINANCIAL MECHANISMS:

There is still a lack of clear commitment from developed countries to not only reducing their carbon footprint, but also to increase their contribution towards helping SIDS and other vulnerable developing countries to adapt to climate change. This has placed additional constraints on countries struggling to improve the basic living conditions of their populations.

It is clear that achieving low carbon development, and livelihoods that are adapted to a changing climate, will mean that development and climate action must go hand in hand. However, funding mechanisms for climate change must be entirely separate from ODA funds already committed to support improvements in sectors

such as health, education, and the achievement of Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

Pacific Islands Civil Society Organisations call for:

- i) Annex 1 and other developed countries to commit to ensuring that climate financing will be new and additional monies, and will not result in the diversion of existing and committed ODA (Overseas Development Assistance) flows.
- ii) Industrialised countries to contribute to an Adaptation Fund that is independent from national budgets and uses a formula comprised of the following components:
 - 1. The level of the countries' green house gas emissions (reflecting responsibility) and
 - 2. A GDP Index (reflecting their ability to pay).
- iii) An annual contribution of at least 300 Billion USD per annum of which USD140 billion is to be obtained utilizing the formula in point ii above. This is for clean energy and other mitigation, forest protection and adaptation. For adaptation alone, at least USD 63 billion per year is required.
- iv) Special and differentiated funding for SIDS, in particular low-lying Atoll people facing partial and/or total resettlement.
- v) The funds generated to be directed to SIDS and other vulnerable developing countries to support adaptation programmes, risk reduction and risk management efforts.
- vi) Funds not be used to perpetuate dirty, expensive, outdated technologies such as coal, nuclear energy and Carbon Capture and Storage (CCS).

New Institutional arrangements and mechanisms to support international financing:

- vii) The Copenhagen agreement to identify a new financing institutional arrangement to facilitate adaptation, mitigation, and technology activities.
- viii) This financing institutional arrangement to be created inside the UNFCCC (accountable to the United Nations), thereby requiring additional resources and technical assistance to ensure the funds are delivered fairly, in a timely, efficient, equitable and incentivising manner.
- ix) The governance of these mechanisms to be democratic, inclusive and transparent, allowing participation and input from those directly affected, particularly SIDS.
- x) The proposal of the World Bank as a distribution mechanism to be rejected.¹
- xi) A multi-mechanism window, which covers not only the costs of implementing adaptation actions, but also the costs of insurance, rehabilitation and compensation for unavoidable adverse impacts of climate change.

¹ These Funds are viewed with great concern by Pacific CSOs as a Bank makes money on loans whereas, the funds needed for climate change can only be grants otherwise, they defeat their whole purpose.