

PACIFIC LEADERS' CALL TO ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE

6 August 2009

For Pacific Island states, climate change is the great challenge of our time. It threatens not only our livelihoods and living standards, but the very viability of some of our communities.

Though the role of Pacific Island states in the causes of climate change is small, the impact on them is great. Many Pacific people face new challenges in access to water. The security of our communities and the health of populations are placed in greater jeopardy. And some habitats and island States face obliteration.

Mindful of the Niue Declaration, we therefore address this Call to Action to all leaders in the global community, and urgently seek their support to address this grave threat.

Many actions are needed, but a strong global agreement is vital. We therefore seek redoubled efforts from all states to secure a successful agreement at Copenhagen in December.

With 122 days to go, the international community is not on track to achieve the outcome we need unless we see a renewed mandate across all participating nations.

We call upon world Leaders to urgently increase their level of ambition and to give their negotiators fresh mandates to secure a truly effective global agreement.

We call for a post-2012 outcome that sets the world on a path to limit the increase in global average temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius or less.

We call on states to reduce global emissions by at least 50 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050.

We call on states to ensure that global emissions peak no later than 2020.

We call on developed economies to take the lead by setting ambitious and robust mid-term emissions reduction targets – consistent with the agreed science and the directions embraced by the Major Economies Forum Meeting in July 2009.

We also call on developed economies to strengthen the seriousness and credibility of their claims at Copenhagen by putting in place domestic policies and legislation now to achieve emission reductions targets.

And we call on major developing economies to commit to slow and then reduce emissions growth over time, to nominate a peaking year for their emissions, and to ensure a substantial collective reduction below business-as-usual levels by 2020.

We call upon each major emitter to show leadership – to demonstrate by their words and deeds that they are willing to make the tough decisions necessary to secure the agreement that we need; and not to wait for others to show the way forward.

We understand that just as deforestation is part of the problem, so reducing deforestation and providing incentives to preserve forests should be part of the solution.

To defeat deforestation and forest degradation, we acknowledge that finance, technology and capacity development are necessary to underpin a step-wise process necessary to increase emissions reductions and carbon sequestration. Global carbon markets will play an important role, requiring robust methodological standards for measurable, reportable and verifiable actions.

For our part, we know that we will need to adapt to the changes in our climate that are already inevitable. We stand ready to lead our peoples in this adaptation process. But developing countries cannot do this alone. We call for increased support, prioritised to those developing countries most vulnerable and least able to respond.

We call for increased financing through carbon markets and other channels for climate change adaptation and mitigation action in developing countries, including through technology development and diffusion, and we welcome initiatives by G20 Leaders to develop financing options.

We call upon world leaders to recognise and act upon the threat climate change poses to our marine environment, particularly its effect on coral reefs, fisheries and food security.

We also call upon world leaders to include in a post-2012 arrangement practical and concrete solutions for those whose future existence is under threat.

In view of the situation of Small Island States and their future survival action by the major emitters, both developed and developing countries, should embrace the possibility of going beyond the 2050 targets contained within this Call to Action.

The world has shown, in responding to the global financial crisis, that it is prepared to act swiftly and decisively to address tough challenges. There will be no tougher challenge than addressing climate change, and no greater imperative for the peoples of the Pacific.

We, the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, commit ourselves to working intensively with Leaders of all states to achieve an effective agreement at Copenhagen. We stand ready to play our part in securing an outcome that can safeguard our people, their prosperity and the planet.