



## LISTENING TO THE PACIFIC

### FRAMEWORK FOR PACIFIC REGIONALISM REGIONAL INITIATIVE SUBMISSION TEMPLATE 2016

#### **The Framework for Pacific Regionalism**

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism represents a high-level commitment to pursuing deeper regionalism and establishes a process for developing and prioritising regional public policy. It articulates the vision, values and objectives of an enhanced Pacific regionalism. It also sets out an inclusive process by which anyone can propose ideas for regional initiatives to address key challenges facing the Pacific. For more information, [click here](#).

#### **Regional Issues and Guidance**

When preparing your submission, think carefully about why this is an issue of regional significance and why it should be placed before the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum. For further information on the process and types of submissions being sought, please refer to the guideline below.

#### **To Submit a Regional Initiative**

1. Complete the below regional initiative template below.
2. Submit initiative to the Forum Secretariat by deadline: **5pm, Fiji time, Sunday 10 April 2016.**
3. Initiatives should be submitted to the Forum Secretariat, through one of the following ways:



## FRAMEWORK FOR PACIFIC REGIONALISM – REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

*Please complete each section below.*

### 1. Contact Details

*Please provide the following contact details:*

**Name of individual or group submitting initiative**

Pacific Civil Societies groups: IFRC Pacific, Oxfam Pacific, Pacific Disability Forum, Worldvision Pacific.

**Name and position of primary contact**

Finau Limuloa, Regional Humanitarian Diplomacy & Disaster Law Delegate

**Email address**

**Phone number**

**Fax number**

**Mailing address**

### 2. Name of Initiative

Pacific Regional Arrangement for Disaster Response (PRADR)



**3. What is the common regional issue or challenge that this regional initiative aims to address?**

*You may also want to address the following: What are the causes of this issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?*

*Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.*

The Pacific region is on the frontline of climate change. Changes to global weather patterns are leading to severe drought, heavy rainfall and flooding, increased cyclone frequency and intensity, and rising sea levels. In addition to weather-related hazards, Pacific Islands experience high rates of volcanic and seismic activity, leading to tsunami and landslide threats. Vulnerability to natural disasters is further exacerbated by growing populations, urbanization, gender-based violence, and weak governance and institutional arrangements.

In recent years, the frequency and severity of storm activity has intensified and tested the capacity of small island nations to respond. In the last three years alone, the Pacific has been hit by four category five cyclones – Typhoon Haiyan in Palau (November 2013), Tropical Cyclone Ian in Tonga (January 2014), Tropical Cyclone Pam in Vanuatu, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Solomon Islands (March 2015) and, most recently, Tropical Cyclone Winston in Fiji (February 2016). And these category five cyclones are not just affecting a single country, TC Pam affected four countries across the Pacific's three geographic regions (Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu) while TC Winston impacted both Tonga and Fiji.

Natural disasters are affecting the region in uncharacteristic and unprecedented ways. **The Pacific must therefore seek new and innovative solutions to address this unprecedented threat to its security.**

Globally, there has been a move to regionalism for disaster management. Many governments within their existing regional forum are now increasingly seeing the value of working in collaboration and examining the possibility of enacting new laws and developed joint mechanisms to implement strategy that is beyond the capabilities of any single member state. Regional bodies have a significant level of expertise and are in tune to the level of response required to assist another state depending on the state's known level of vulnerability and capacity to provide the adequate resources and response for their people in the event of a disaster. Strong regional bodies can also serve to support smaller states to implement congruent domestic law, which will in turn empower communities to strengthen frontline ability.

**4. Briefly describe this regional initiative**



*You may also want to address the following in this section:*

*How would this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region?*

*Who are the main beneficiaries?*

*How would the initiative contribute to the vision, values and objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism?*

*Has the initiative been carried out previously?*

*What are the key risks in implementing this initiative?*

*Are there any complementary projects and programmes that are currently active?*

***Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.***

This submission is for a Pacific Regional Arrangement for Disaster Response (“PRADR”)

Pacific states often find themselves overwhelmed in the wake of a large scale natural disaster. International humanitarian response mechanisms should ideally respect and reinforce national response systems, not replace or circumvent them. Unfortunately, this interface between international humanitarian support systems and national domestic response systems has proven somewhat strained in recent years with national governments feeling overwhelmed and drowned out by the sudden influx of international humanitarian assistance and by actors with little to no experience of pacific island context, culture or social dynamics – see attached a fantastic report “One size doesn’t fit all” by Rebecca Barber on TC Pam reflections.

A collective regional framework for disaster response may be just the solution the Pacific needs.

Ideally, in the event that a natural disaster exceeds national capacity to respond, that affected member state would then activate the PRADR which calls for a collaborative, coordinated response from member states within the region. It makes sense to draw on humanitarian assistance from within the region first, as regional experts are, inter alia, familiar with the context and complex social structures of the pacific; regional experts often have pre-existing relationships with government and community leaders making access and working together easier; and communities and affected persons respond differently when aid is being delivered by a familiar face. A perfect example are the Fiji Medical teams that were deployed during TC Pam, their impact out in the communities and in the field was a resounding success, in large part due to cultural familiarity coupled with technical expertise.

While this submission won’t go into detail of what a PRADR will look like, it will outline some suggestions as to what it should include:

1. Clear and concise coordination provisions clearly outlining the stages of a response and the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders at each stage, for example, how PRADR is activated, the role of the affected state/s, the role of assisting states, the role regional bodies, the role of the international community, how PRADR is deactivated etc.
2. Who is directly responsible for PRADR (for example, which existing body/agency/unit should it sit under? Or does it require a new agency be developed that deals solely with PRADR? Etc)



3. A database of technical expertise in the region which may be called upon during an emergency response. It is important that this database not be limited to government officials but include experts within Civil Society, NGOs and Private Sector.
4. Provide for disaster management training to ensure everyone on the database is trained to a minimum standard and deployable during a disaster (there are many existing regional disaster management trainings that can be linked in to here). The development of a corresponding roster system.
5. A temporary visa waiver amongst all Forum member states for the duration of the emergency response period. For example, directly after TC Pam struck Vanuatu, all commercial flights to Vanuatu were halted due to damage to the airport runway, as a result for the first few days, only the C4's from Australia and New Zealand could fly and land in Vanuatu. Vanuatu Red Cross submitted a number of requests for support from our office, however, we couldn't deploy our local Pacific technical experts as they all needed visas to travel to Australia and New Zealand. Instead, technical experts from Finland and far flung Europe easily jumped on a plane and headed straight to Vanuatu to support while our local regional expertise had to wait for the commercial flights to be up and running before we could deploy them. This is plain nonsense.

A PRADR should improve the way we respond to disasters to move from a reactive, ad hoc, bilateral approach to a more proactive, coordinated, regional approach that would strengthen the resilience, capacity and security of pacific peoples. The main beneficiaries of a PRADR are pacific states and her peoples.

To my knowledge, the Pacific has never had a PRADR. But we certainly would not be the first to consider one. Attached is a research paper commissioned as part of this submission to look into existing models of regional disaster response frameworks around the globe as a reference point and means of knowledge sharing. This paper briefly outlines how each regional mechanism is established, facilitated and funded also citing recent activities, success and challenges – see attached Pacific Regional Mechanisms for Disaster Response, Gabrielle McMullen.

The IFRC Pacific currently runs a disaster law programme which looks at strengthening domestic legal frameworks in order to facilitate and coordinate international assistance coming into a country during a natural disaster emergency response and has currently worked in the Cook Islands, Tonga, Samoa and this year will be working with Vanuatu. While this work has thus far been only at a domestic level, the principles of facilitating and coordinating international aid apply to all sectors of society, government, CSO/NGO and private sector and most certainly can be applied at a regional level.

## **5. Why does this initiative require the attention of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum?**

*Please consider whether this initiative requires the attention and consideration of the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum in order to be implemented and outline why this is the case. Could it not be overseen or implemented at the level of Ministers, officials or by a regional agency?*

*Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.*



This issue requires the attention of Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum because it deal with matters of sovereignty. Regional frameworks and commitments can be viewed by some leaders as over-shadowing or competing with national agendas and interests. However an issue such as disaster response is one that strikes to the heart of national and regional security and a decisive stand must be taken at the highest level by our Leaders in order to collectively and effectively address this issue.

Certainly, once the endorsement of Leaders has been received, no doubt Ministers and Permanent Secretaries with relevant stakeholders will likely be the ones to flesh out the details of the PRADR but there must first be high level agreement and endorsement.

## **6. Attachments**

Please attach additional information in support of this initiative.

*Please attach no more than 3 pages.*

## **7. Uploading initiatives to the Forum Secretariat website**

In line with the process outlined in the [Framework for Pacific Regionalism](#), all submitted initiatives, inclusive of all attachments, will be publicly available via the Forum Secretariat website.

## **8. Guidelines and Contact Details**

For further information on completing this template, consult the submissions guideline below or contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat: Email: [FPR@forumsec.org](mailto:FPR@forumsec.org) | Phone: +679 322 0327



## Submission Guidelines

These guidelines are designed to assist those submitting regional initiatives through the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. For more information contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat:

### 1. About the Framework for Pacific Regionalism

The Framework for Pacific Regionalism represents a high-level commitment to pursuing deeper regionalism and establishes a process for developing and prioritising regional public policy. It articulates the vision, values and objectives of an enhanced Pacific regionalism. It also sets out an inclusive process by which anyone can propose ideas for regional initiatives to address key challenges facing the Pacific. For more information, [click here](#).

### 2. How do I submit a regional initiative?

To submit a regional initiative, complete all sections of the submission template and submit to the Forum Secretariat by no later **5pm, Fiji time, Sunday 10 April 2016**.

Submissions must be made on this template. Submissions made directly via email, letter or other format will not be considered.



### 3. Who can submit an initiative?

Any interested stakeholder can submit a regional initiative. This may include individuals, or groups of individuals or organisations, including government, civil society (including church or religious organisations), the private sector, community groups, multilateral agencies and CROP agencies.

### 4. What information is required?

In completing the regional initiative template, you should:

- a. Identify and seek to respond to issues and challenges that are common to the Pacific region and that could be best addressed through a regional response.
- b. Demonstrate that a high level political decision needs to be made.

**This is not a process for seeking endorsement of existing projects or activities. No standing fund exists in which to allocate funds to initiatives that are endorsed.** Submissions that consist of projects or initiatives that may be ordinarily carried out under the governance arrangements or work-plan of the submitting organisation are unlikely to be successful.

- c. Demonstrate how the initiative would contribute to one or more of the objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

### 5. What assistance will the Forum Secretariat provide through this process

The Forum Secretariat will provide general advice and suggestions to those making submissions. This advice will include clarifying the information set out in this guideline, such as how initiatives can be completed and submitted; the type and level of information sought; the assessment process; and clarification of the overall process.

### 6. Assessment process

- Step 1** The Forum Secretariat will collate all submitted initiatives and check them for completeness.
- Step 2** The Forum Secretariat will, in collaboration with CROP agency officials and other experts as required, conduct a first round of assessment of all submitted initiatives using the tests for regional action (see Table 1 below).
- Step 3** The Forum Secretariat will provide all assessed initiatives to the Specialist Sub-Committee on Regionalism (SSCR), which will assess initiatives against the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework (see Table 2 below). Reports on current regional initiatives under the Framework for Pacific Regionalism that are in progress will also be considered by the SSCR when they assess initiatives.
- Step 4** Based on its assessment of all submissions, the SSCR may recommend a limited number of initiatives to Forum Leaders. Those initiatives recommended to Leaders will be first sent to the Forum Officials



Committee for commentary and incorporation on the Leaders' annual meeting agenda. Forum Leaders will then receive the final recommendations of the SSCR and make decisions on these at the annual Forum Leaders Meeting. In 2016 this meeting will take place in the Federated States of Micronesia

Proponents whose initiatives have been selected for Leaders' consideration will be informed of this selection within two weeks of the SSCR's decision. All proponents will be informed in due course of the outcome of their submissions.

### **7. Leaders' decisions on initiatives**

Forum Leaders' decisions on initiatives will be publicly announced through the Forum Leaders' Communique that is issued at the conclusion of the Leaders' meeting. As directed by Leaders, the Forum Secretariat will initiate implementation of the decisions in consultation with the proponent, the proposed implementing agencies, funding partners, and other relevant organisations or stakeholders.

### **8. Further help and feedback**

For further information or guidance or to provide feedback on the process, contact Pacific Regionalism Adviser Joel Nilon at the Forum Secretariat:



**Table 1 – Tests for Regionalism**

<b>TEST</b>	<b>CRITERIA FOR REGIONAL IMPLEMENTATION</b>
<b>Market test</b>	The initiative should not involve a service that markets can provide well.
<b>Sovereignty test</b>	The initiative should maintain the degree of effective sovereignty held by national governments (countries, not regional bodies, should decide priorities).
<b>Regionalism test</b>	<p>The initiative should meet one of the following criteria at a sub-regional or regional level, in support of national priorities and objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ establish a shared norm or standard</li><li>▪ establish a common position on an issue</li><li>▪ deliver a public or quasi-public good which is regional (or sub-regional) in its scope realise economies of scale</li><li>▪ overcome national capacity constraints</li><li>▪ complement national governments where they lack capacity to provide national public goods like security or the rule of law</li><li>▪ facilitate economic or political integration</li><li>▪ Where benefits accrue sub-regionally, the contribution to broader regionalism should be clear.</li></ul>
<b>Benefit test</b>	<p>The initiative should bring substantial net benefits, as demonstrated by a cost-benefit analysis. The distribution of benefits across countries and across stakeholders within the region should also be considered—particularly with respect to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>▪ The relative costs and benefits for smaller island states (an “SIS test”)</li><li>▪ How inclusive the proposal is of all stakeholders who might benefit from regionalism.</li></ul>
<b>Political oversight test</b>	The initiative should require the Leaders’ attention and input (as opposed to being within the mandate of Ministers or other governing bodies).
<b>Risk and sustainability test</b>	The initiative should demonstrate a robust risk and sustainability evaluation, be based on a sound implementation plan, be supported by some identified funding, and demonstrate available capacity and experience for successful implementation.
<b>Duplication test</b>	The initiative should not be currently under progress by another organisation or process, and there should be no duplication of effort.



## **Table 2 – Vision, Values and Objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism**

### **Vision:**

Our Pacific Vision is for a region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives

### **Values:**

- We value and depend upon the integrity of our vast ocean and our island resources.
- We treasure the diversity and heritage of the Pacific and seek an inclusive future in which cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed.
- We embrace good governance, the full observance of democratic values, the rule of law, the defence and promotion of all human rights, gender equality, and commitment to just societies.
- We seek peaceful, safe, and stable communities and countries, ensuring full security and wellbeing for the peoples of the Pacific.
- We support full inclusivity, equity and equality for all people of the Pacific.
- We strive for effective, open and honest relationships and inclusive and enduring partnerships—based on mutual accountability and respect—with each other, within our sub-regions, within our region, and beyond.

These Pacific regional values will guide all our policy-making and implementation.

### **Principal Objectives:**

- Sustainable development that combines economic social, and cultural development in ways that improve livelihoods and well-being and use the environment sustainably;
- Economic growth that is inclusive and equitable;
- Strengthened governance, legal, financial, and administrative systems; and
- Security that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all.