

REGIONAL INITIATIVE TEMPLATE

Please complete each section below.

1. Contact Details

Please provide the following contact details:

Name of individual or group submitting initiative	<i>Pacific Islands Climate Action Network (PICAN)</i>
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2. Name of Initiative

Proposing a 'Moresby Declaration for an effective global climate agreement'

3. Background and Rationale

You may consider: What is the issue being addressed by this initiative? What are the causes of this issue? Are there relevant studies that have been carried out to support the issue? Are there links to national, regional or international goals/policies?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Climate Change: It's about survival

Pacific island communities are extraordinarily strong and resilient. For countless generations we have lived in a sustainable balance with our environment, growing our own food and trading in local, culturally-embedded, systems of exchange. We continue to draw resources from the sea, from our land and waterways, and from each other. As stewards of our island ecosystems and navigators of our ocean, we draw on a rich and diverse store of traditional knowledge. We understand that we are just one generation in an unfolding procession of life. We understand that the future is not ours to steal. We have responsibilities to our ancestors, to each other, to our children, and to every

generation to come.

Changes in the global climate system – driven by ongoing and short-sighted pollution – present catastrophic threats to our way of life. Pacific island countries possess unique and particular vulnerabilities to the adverse impacts of a changing climate. Already, with warming of less than a degree, Pacific island communities are experiencing an increase in such impacts, including extreme weather events, sea-level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification

In the context of a warming climate, more severe cyclones are expected to become more common. Already in 2015, Pacific communities have borne the devastating consequences of severe cyclones. Category Five Severe Tropical Cyclone Pam tore through Vanuatu in March, bearing wind gusts of over 300kph and delivering unprecedented destruction. Cyclone Pam destroyed the homes of 75,000 people, decimated food crops and crippled sorely needed infrastructure. Cyclone Pam also affected communities in Solomon Islands, Tuvalu, Kiribati, and Marshall Islands. Also in March, Category Five Severe Tropical Cyclone Maysak destroyed the homes of thousands of people in the Federated States of Micronesia.

The global peak body for climate science – the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) – has indicated that as temperatures continue to rise, Pacific island countries will continue to face significant challenges, including changing rainfall patterns, ocean acidification and coral bleaching. Coastal communities are likely to experience stronger storm surges, increased erosion and inundation as sea-levels rise. Increasing salination is also likely to compromise groundwater resources.

Climate change will have far-reaching consequences for all Pacific communities. These consequences will be experienced differently by everyone, based on their existing circumstances. Strategies for climate change mitigation and adaptation should take account of the gendered dimensions of climate change impacts, and assist to advance gender equality in their implementation. Furthermore, as Pacific islanders, we have always drawn on the traditional, and local, knowledge women and men carry with them to cope with natural climate variability. This knowledge will continue to be crucial for adaptation to a changing climate.

Changes to the global climate system are driven by pollution. Human activity is increasing atmospheric concentrations of greenhouse gases, including carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide. In order to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change, global action is needed to reduce these emissions. Pacific Islands Forum leaders have long agreed that the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the appropriate body for negotiating a global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

2015 is a critical moment in history for Pacific island countries. In December this year, representatives of the international community will meet in Paris to negotiate a new global agreement to tackle climate change. This agreement will enter into effect from 2020. No group of countries has more at stake in the negotiations than those of the Pacific. Unless policymakers worldwide take urgent steps now to reduce emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, Pacific island communities will face devastating consequences. Failure to secure a meaningful agreement to reduce emissions, and to limit global average temperature rise to 1.5

degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, will push Pacific island countries beyond their ability to adapt to the changes wrought by a warming climate. It is no exaggeration to say that a bad agreement threatens the very survival of members of the Pacific Islands Forum.

It is hard to imagine a more important time for Pacific leaders to participate in international diplomacy. Climate change is a global problem, and one that requires a global solution. Our leaders must convince the world of the need for a fair and ambitious outcome in the Paris talks. The 46th meeting of leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, to be held in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea on September 7-11, presents an opportunity for leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum to take a strong and united stand in the lead up to the global climate negotiations. It presents an opportunity for all Forum leaders to demand a global agreement that will ensure the survival of all Forum members.

4. Description

Please provide a brief overview of this initiative. Try to address the following: Does this initiative contribute to a positive change to the region? What makes this initiative of importance to the Pacific region as a whole? Who would implement this initiative? Who are the main beneficiaries? Are regulatory or legislative changes required at the national level to implement this initiative? How would the initiative be funded? Has this initiative been carried out previously? What are the key risks in implementing this initiative? Are there any complementary projects and programmes currently active? What is the proposed timeframe for this initiative? How would the initiative be sustained over the proposed timeframe?

Please limit your response to no more than 750 words.

Time for a 'Moresby Declaration for an effective global climate agreement'

The invitation from Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, and from the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, to contribute regional initiatives which convey to Leaders 'the issues that should be focussed on at the regional level' is most welcome. The opportunity for Pacific civil society to participate in the regional policymaking process, and to convey our concerns regarding climate change directly to island leaders, is a very positive development, and one that should continue.

This proposed initiative consists of a 'Moresby Declaration for an effective global climate agreement' (see Section 6 below for the text of the proposed Moresby Declaration). It is clear that members of the Pacific Islands Forum need to work together to present the strongest possible call for action to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the lead up to negotiations in Paris. Our leaders must demand an ambitious, fair and binding international agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, sufficient to limit the global average temperature increase to 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Indeed such an agreement is necessary to ensure the survival of all member states of the Pacific Islands Forum.

The 'Moresby Declaration' proposed here builds on previous statements and positions shared by Pacific island leaders. It also draws from previous Pacific Islands Forum Communiqués and declarations by Forum Leaders.¹ The annual Pacific Islands Forum is an avowedly political forum. It is the occasion for Pacific leaders to make choices that will make a substantial difference in the lives of peoples of the Pacific. This initiative would clearly benefit all Pacific Islands Forum member states (indeed all member states will face significant costs arising from a failure to tackle greenhouse gas emissions as soon as possible). In itself, this initiative would entail minimal cost implications for Pacific governments. As it pertains to the negotiation of a global agreement to address climate change (from 2020) the Moresby Declaration would also not, in itself, require immediate legislative or regulatory changes at the national level. However, clearly, all Forum members need to show leadership by urgently initiating policies, and regulatory reforms, aimed at reducing and phasing out altogether greenhouse gas pollution.

¹ See especially: Palau Declaration on 'The Ocean: Life and Future'. 45th Pacific Islands Forum, 2014; Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership, 44th Pacific Islands Forum, 2013; 43rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Communiqué 2012; 42nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Communiqué 2011; 41st Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Communiqué 2010; Pacific Leaders' Call to Action on Climate Change. 40th Pacific Islands Forum. 2009; Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Retreat Statement on Climate Change 28th South Pacific Forum, 1997.

This initiative is most immediately relevant to global climate negotiations – specifically the 21st Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, to be held in Paris, France, in late November and early December 2015. However, the outcome of the Paris negotiations will have implications for Pacific island countries that are effectively indefinite. A failure to secure an effective global agreement will have ongoing, and growing, negative repercussions.

The Pacific Islands Forum has a proud history of joint diplomacy. Forum members have previously worked together to lobby the international community around issues of concern to Pacific island states, like nuclear testing and decolonisation. Forum leaders have taken on some of the world's largest powers, and won. Joint diplomacy, through the auspices of the Pacific Islands Forum has culminated in international treaties on resource protection, environmental issues, tuna access; and prohibitions on driftnet fishing, the dumping of radioactive wastes in Pacific waters, and nuclear testing.² Members of the Pacific Islands Forum also worked together to have New Caledonia re-inscribed on the UN list of territories to be decolonised.

With regard to climate change, Pacific island states have long been at the forefront of global efforts to address the issue. Indeed the first United Nations proposal calling for a multilateral approach to tackling the dilemma, what would eventually become the Kyoto Protocol, was drafted by Nauru and submitted by the Alliance of Small Island States in 1994.³ All members of the Pacific Islands Forum have long recognised the need for urgent action to address the causes of a changing climate. Furthermore, all members of the have long argued for a legally binding global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. See especially the following Leaders' declarations:

- *Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership. 44th Pacific Islands Forum. 2013.*
- *Pacific Leaders' Call to Action on Climate Change. 40th Pacific Islands Forum. 2009.*
- *Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Retreat Statement on Climate Change. 28th South Pacific Forum. 1997.*

Now is the moment of truth. Our leaders must ensure that discussions in Paris produce an effective global climate agreement. A failure to do so will be the burden of our children, and generations to come.

5. Alignment to Regional Vision, Values and Objectives

Briefly describe how your initiative supports the vision, values and objectives set out in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism. These can be found in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism document or in the submissions guideline document.

Please limit your response to no more than 500 words

² See Fry, G. 2015. *Recapturing the Spirit of 1971: Towards a New Regional Political Settlement in the Pacific*. State, Society and Governance in Melanesia (SSGM) Program. Australian National University, Canberra.

³ See Moses, M. 2013. *UN climate change negotiations: The role and influence of the Alliance of Small Island States*. Speech delivered by Marlene Moses, Nauru's ambassador to the United Nations and Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). February 19, 2013. Australian National University, Canberra.

Protecting our ‘Pacific Vision’

The overarching vision, values and objectives of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism are a welcome and necessary guide to regional cooperation and policymaking.

As part of the Framework for Pacific Regionalism, Pacific leaders have declared a Pacific Vision for a ‘region of peace, harmony, security, social inclusion, and prosperity, so that all Pacific people can lead free, healthy, and productive lives’. The Framework also explains that Pacific communities ‘value and depend upon the integrity of our vast ocean and our island resources’. Finally the Framework lists as a key objective the need for ‘security that ensures stable and safe human, environmental and political conditions for all’.

Over the past five years, Pacific Islands Forum Leaders have repeatedly affirmed that climate change is ‘the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-beings of the peoples of the Pacific’.⁴ Clearly, working together to call for an effective global climate agreement, to avoid the most damaging effects of climate change, is the single most important task Pacific leaders can undertake to support the ‘Pacific Vision’ outlined in the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.

6. Additional Information

Please provide or attach additional information in support of this initiative.

Please limit your response to no more than 5 pages.

Text of the proposed Moresby Declaration

Note that this proposed Declaration is not an ‘appendix’ to this proposal, but constitutes the core of this proposed initiative. It must appear with this proposal where this initiative is made available online or otherwise published.

Moresby declaration for an effective global climate agreement

We, the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, meeting in Port Moresby in September 2015,

Reaffirming:

1. That climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and well-beings of the peoples of the Pacificⁱ, and one of the greatest challenges for the entire worldⁱⁱ;
2. That urgent action is needed at all levels to reduce greenhouse gas emissions commensurate with the findings of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change in its Fifth Assessment Report, and the

⁴ See: Palau Declaration on ‘The Ocean: Life and Future’ 2014, Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership 2013, Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué 2011, Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué 2010

findings of other scientific bodies;

3. That we must respond urgently and sufficiently to the social, economic and security impacts of climate change, to ensure the survival and viability of all Pacific small island developing states, in particular low-lying atoll states, and other vulnerable countries and regions worldwideⁱⁱⁱ;

4. That the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the primary international intergovernmental forum for negotiating the global response to climate change in order to protect the global climate, and recalling its objectives, principles and provisions^{iv};

5. The decision of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to extend the Kyoto Protocol, through the Doha Amendment, thereby ensuring a second commitment period for Parties to make bound commitments to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the lead up to the year 2020^v;

6. The decision of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to adopt a protocol, another legal instrument or an agreed outcome with legal force under the Convention that is applicable to all parties and respects the principles and provisions of the Convention, including common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities, at its twenty-first session, to be held in Paris in December 2015, and for it to enter into effect and be implemented as from 2020^{vi};

7. The importance of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other international instruments relating to human rights and international law, and emphasizing the responsibilities of all states, in conformity with the Charter of the United Nations, to respect, protect and promote human rights and fundamental freedoms for all^{vii};

8. Our call on all states to ensure that global greenhouse gas emissions peak no later than 2020.^{viii}

Recognising:

9. The recent damage and suffering wrought by Category 5 Severe Tropical Cyclone Pam across Vanuatu, Solomon Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu, and the Republic of the Marshall Islands;

10. The recent damage and suffering wrought across the Federated States of Micronesia by Category 5 Severe Tropical Cyclone Maysak, Cyclone Noul and Cyclone Dolphin.

11. That, for some Pacific island countries, climate change represents the gravest threat to their survival and viability^{ix};

12. That all Pacific island countries possess unique and particular vulnerabilities to the adverse impacts of climate change, and are already, with warming of less than a degree, experiencing an increase in such impacts, including more frequent and extreme weather events, sea-level rise, coastal erosion and ocean acidification^{x,xi};

13. That Pacific island countries are already facing irreversible loss and damage from the slow onset of climate change, and that warming of 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels will push many

countries beyond their capacity to adapt and poses serious threats to the human rights of Pacific islanders^{xii};

14. That unless we act quickly to reduce emissions, global average temperatures are projected to rise by 4 degrees Celsius or more above pre-industrial levels by the end of the Century, resulting in unprecedented human and environmental impacts^{xiii};

15. That the latest science suggests the 'guardrail' concept, in which up to 2 degrees Celsius of warming is considered safe, is inadequate, and reinforces the call from Pacific small island developing states for a strengthening of the global goal to 1.5 degrees Celsius^{xiv};

16. That all states have a responsibility to act to urgently to reduce and phase down greenhouse gas pollution in order to avert a climate crisis for present and future generations^{xv};

17. That current commitments from developed countries to reduce emissions fall well short of what is required to limit temperature increases below the internationally agreed goal of 2 degrees Celsius, let alone the 1.5 degree goal that we are demanding for our very survival^{xvi};

18. That negotiations in Paris may be our last chance to limit warming to below 2 degrees Celsius;

19. That Pacific islands countries are showing determination and leadership by advocating for ambitious global efforts to address climate change, raising awareness of the need for urgent and ambitious action to address climate change at the global level, and making efforts to adapt to the intensifying impacts of climate change^{xvii};

20. That Pacific island countries are also showing determination and leadership in the form of ambitious and timely commitments to reduce or avoid greenhouse gas emissions, in particular through an increasing reliance on renewable energy;

21. That a priority of Pacific island states remains the securing of sustainable financing for immediate and effective implementation of concrete adaptation programs on the ground^{xviii};

22. That the Pacific islands region is leading the world in the integration of policy frameworks concerning climate change and disaster risk management;

23. The importance of retaining the Pacific's social and cultural identity, and the right of Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries, and furthermore, that if the international community fails to deliver an effective global climate agreement in 2015, it is increasingly likely that the impacts of climate change will lead to induced displacement of vulnerable Pacific communities and exacerbate pressure for migration and planned relocation;

24. The importance of engaging a broad range of Pacific stakeholders in all efforts towards climate change mitigation and adaptation, including local governments and the scientific community, private businesses and civil society and also including youth and persons with disabilities, and that gender equality and the effective participation of women and indigenous peoples are important for effective action on all aspects of climate change.^{xix}

Expressing profound alarm:

25. That emissions of greenhouse gases continue to rise at a distressing rate globally, and that international action to address climate change remains grossly inadequate.^{xx}

Welcome:

26. Those countries who have submitted Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs), while urging other states to submit their INDCs as soon as possible, and noting that in aggregate the contributions submitted thus far fall well short of what is necessary to safeguard our future^{xxi};

27. New and additional support from donors and development partners towards building the resilience of Pacific islands countries in the face of climate change, while emphasising that this support must be planned and implemented in partnership and consultation with Pacific islanders;

28. The establishment, at the 19th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts; while noting that the work programme for the Warsaw International Mechanism will need to be extended beyond the two-year programme approved at the 20th Conference of Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change;

29. Commitments from donors and development partners to the Green Climate Fund (GCF), the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund and other multilateral mechanisms, to provide the funding necessary for mitigation and adaptation initiatives;

30. The growing calls for urgent climate action, from businesses, unions, churches and faith-based organisations, the health sector, and many other sections of the international community;

31. Growing international recognition of, and commitments towards, the need to rapidly decarbonise the global economy, phase-out fossil fuels, and achieve 100% renewable energy.

Call for:

32. All states to contribute to an ambitious, fair and binding international protocol to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, sufficient to limit the global average temperature rise to 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels^{xxii}, and sufficient to ensure the survival of all member states of the Pacific Islands Forum;

33. A global climate agreement containing commitments by developed country Parties to ensure scaled-up, adequate, long-term, predictable, new and additional finance to support mitigation, and adaptation to the adverse impacts of climate change in Pacific island countries and other vulnerable countries and territories^{xxiii};

34. Loss and damage provisions to form a separate and specific area of the global climate negotiations, and for the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage associated with Climate Change Impacts to be anchored and extended under the Paris agreement^{xxiv};

35. All states to increase the scope of pre-2020 mitigation actions, to ensure global greenhouse emissions peak no later than 2020;

36. All Parties to the Kyoto Protocol to ratify the Doha Amendment to the Kyoto Protocol as soon as possible;

37. States to include in a post-2020 arrangement practical and concrete solutions for those whose future existence is under threat^{xxv}. The international community must develop strategies to protect the rights and dignity of communities who will face serious challenges to their wellbeing and livelihoods, and those who will be displaced – forced to resettle elsewhere – by the adverse impacts of climate change.

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We, the Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, commit ourselves to working intensively with Leaders of all states to achieve an effective agreement at Paris.

We stand ready to play our part in securing an outcome that can safeguard our people, their wellbeing and prosperity and the planet.

Adopted in Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea, on this, the 11th of September 2015.

ⁱ Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Communiqué 2011, Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué 2010.

ⁱⁱ Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership 2013

ⁱⁱⁱ Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership 2013, Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué 2010

^{iv} SIDS ‘SAMOA pathway’ 2014, and AOSIS Leaders statement (2014)

^v UNFCCC Conference of Parties (18), Decision 1.

^{vi} SIDS ‘SAMOA pathway’ 2014

^{vii} SIDS ‘SAMOA pathway’ 2014

^{viii} Pacific Leaders’ Call to Action on Climate Change. Annex A: Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué, 2009.

^{ix} Statement by Ms Lara Daniel, Second Secretary of the Republic of Nauru to the United Nations on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States at the Adoption of the Rio+20 Outcomes Document. 27 July 2012. General Assembly Hall, New York.

^x SIDS SAMOA Pathway 2014, AOSIS Leaders’ Statement 2014

^{xi} See also the Palau Declaration 2014

^{xii} Statement by the Climate Vulnerable forum, 1 May 2015

^{xiii} Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership 2013

^{xiv} Report on the structured expert dialogue on the 2013-2015 review. UNFCCC/SB/2015/INF.1

^{xv} Majuro Declaration for Climate Leadership 2013

^{xvi} SIDS SAMOA Pathway 2014

^{xvii} SIDS SAMOA Pathway 2014

^{xviii} Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Communiqué, Niue 2008.

^{xix} SIDS ‘SAMOA pathway’ 2014

^{xx} AOSIS Leaders’ Statement 2014

^{xxi} See also UNFCCC Conference of Parties (17), Decision 1.

^{xxii} AOSIS Leaders’ Statement 2014

^{xxiii} AOSIS positions taken to COP 20, Lima, 2014

^{xxiv} AOSIS positions taken to COP 20, Lima, 2014

^{xxv} Pacific Leaders’ Call to Action on Climate Change. Annex A: Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué, 2009.