

**From Kāinaki II to COP 26**

**Pacific Islands Forum High-Level Roundtable on Urgent Climate Change Action**

**Friday 11 December**

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Statement by Hon. Philippe Germain

Minister for Sustainable development, Innovation and the Coral Sea Marine Park

Government of New Caledonia

*Mr. Chairman of the Pacific Islands Forum,*

*Distinguished leaders and members of the Pacific Forum,*

*Distinguished dialogue partners of the Forum,*

The health crisis affecting humanity is a cruel demonstration of the vulnerability of our societies and their economies.

We were already, without being responsible for it, the first victims of climate change. Today we are also hard hit by the global health crisis.

Some of us have been hard hit like our compatriots in French Polynesia. Others, such as Solomon Islands, Fiji, Tonga and Vanuatu, were particularly isolated at the worst time, when Hurricane Harold struck in April.

And all of us have been hard hit economically.

As Oceanians, we are calling for change, for rethinking the global development model, planning its transformation, and working together to rebuild our social models and economic systems better.

We are calling for a world that is more inclusive, more resilient, that leaves no one on the side, that better protects the health and well-being of its people and that is better able to protect its land and marine environment.

We also call for a global recovery to achieve this goal.

We are determined to be part of it, but we will not do it alone.

Our economies, as I have already indicated, have been heavily impacted. Our limited resources no longer allow us to meet the immediate challenges related to health crisis management, the recovery of our economies and public accounts, or the humanitarian consequences of natural phenomena as we enter the hurricane period to which we are so exposed.

We therefore call for the support and alignment funding from the international community.

We take this opportunity to reiterate our determination that urgent measures to combat climate change be adopted in accordance with our KAINAKI II declaration and to meet the targets of the Paris Agreement and the 2030 Agenda.

New Caledonia is fully in line with these recommendations.

Considered a world biodiversity hot spot, New Caledonia has initiated an ambitious policy to protect its natural heritage.

After having listed a large part of its lagoons on the UNESCO World Heritage List in 2008, New Caledonia has also listed all of its remote islands and pristine reefs on the IUCN Category One reserve list. Our seamounts will also soon come under the same protection status.

New Caledonia is thus determined promote the preservation of its natural and cultural heritage as a new model of sustainable development through research, innovation and regional integration.

New Caledonia is also committed to complete its energy transition policy document with the aim to achieve 100% autonomy for public electricity distribution by 2030.

*(This statement was simultaneously translated into English while speaking)*