The Pacific ACP Leaders Statement on COP 26 for a 1.5-degree World
Leaders of the Pacific ACP States issue this Statement in the lead up to the twenty sixth Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UNFCCC in Glasgow in November 2021, recognising the urgency of the climate change crisis facing our Blue Pacific region, and COP 26 as the world’s best chance to save our One Blue Planet by taking decisive action to limit global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels.

Recalling that our Pacific region is facing a three-pronged crisis being caused by the big, rich industrialised and powerful nations of the world, and the three-pronged crisis are: the existential threat from climate change, the prolonged health impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the consequent downturn in our economies;

Aligning this Statement to the recent African, Caribbean and Pacific States’ Resolution on Climate Action for the UNFCCC COP 26, the 2021 Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the face of Climate Change-related Sea-level rise and the 2019 Kainaki II Declaration for Urgent Climate Change Action Now issued by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders;

In the lead up to COP 26, Pacific ACP Leaders:

1) Reaffirm that climate change is the single greatest threat facing the Blue Pacific region and recommit to implementing our obligations to the Paris Agreement;

2) Reiterate that the COVID-19 pandemic is not an excuse for wealthy nations and global major emitters to delay ambitious climate action, rather sustainable economic recovery should be catalysed through investments that are clean, climate-smart and in line with net zero emissions by 2050;

3) Note with deep concern the findings of the recent Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group 1 report, and before that in 2019 the IPCC Special Report on 1.5 Degrees, confirming what we already know in the Pacific, that the unprecedented changes in the climate are caused by human activities, and without deep reductions in global emissions levels, the world is on track to surpass 1.5 degree Celsius by 2040 which will be catastrophic for our Blue Pacific;

4) Welcome the commitments from the 47th G7 Summit in June and the Leaders Summit on Climate hosted by President Biden in April, and urge G7 members to urgently implement their commitments toward carbon neutrality by mid-century by promoting and investing in clean and renewable energy and expedite the immediate phasing out of coal plants and of subsidies, new investments and licensing for fossil fuels in order to limit global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial level;
5) Urge the leaders of the G20 Summit in Rome in October 2021 to take decisive commitments on climate action including, but not limited to: revised Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets that keep 1.5 degree Celsius within reach, carbon neutrality by 2050, phase out of coal plants and all fossil fuel subsidies and investments, and delivery of the USD 100 billion goal with balanced allocation between adaptation and mitigation;

6) Support the incoming COP 26 presidency’s global campaign to ensure COP 26 consigns coal to history. This is essential to keep 1.5 degree Celsius alive;

7) Recognise the importance of elevating Pacific priorities and voice at COP 26 through senior political representation, including COP 26 Political Climate Champions;

8) Endorse the following COP 26 Political Climate Champions and call on world leaders and the global community to render their support towards Pacific ACP priorities;

a. Honourable Mark Brown, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands – Champion for Climate Finance
b. Honourable Christopher Loeak, Minister in-Assistance-to-the President & Environment of the Republic of the Marshall Islands – Champion for Climate Ambition
c. Honourable Seve Paeniu, Minister of Finance for Tuvalu – Champion for Loss and Damage
d. Honourable Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, Attorney General and Minister of Economy for Fiji – Champion for Oceans and Climate Finance
e. Honourable Steven Victor, Minister of Agriculture, Fisheries & Environment for the Republic of Palau – Champion for Environmental Integrity

9) Call on all Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change to ensure that COP 26 delivers an outcome that will once and for all limit global warming to 1.5 degree Celsius above pre-industrial levels by the end of this century, including;

a. Finalisation of the Paris Rulebook and the Markets mechanism which delivers meaningful global emissions reductions to facilitate a shift from negotiations to actual implementation of the Paris Agreement,
b. New commitments to stronger 2030 NDC targets and carbon neutrality by 2050,
c. Transparency on the delivery of the USD100 billion climate finance goal per year by 2020,
d. Negotiations on the new post-2025 quantitative climate finance target building on USD100 billion as the floor as soon as possible,
e. Increased allocation of climate finance towards the implementation of adaptation and resilience building priorities,
f. Dedicated financing for Loss and Damage and ease of access to the Santiago Network of technical experts on Loss and Damage, and
g. The work on Oceans being advanced in the UNFCCC process as a matter of priority, in recognition of its centrality to the Blue Pacific Continent.
This page: Tropical Cyclone Bune bears down on Fiji, March 27, 2011.
Cover image: In Vanuatu, Ceriel and his mother Marie stand in their village, Taunono community, after it was completely destroyed by Cyclone Pam. The Category 5 storm on March 13, 2015 was one of the strongest cyclones ever recorded in the South Pacific Ocean.