



Fiji Climate Change Newsletter: COP23 Issue



Fijian delegation in Bonn, Germany , 2017

Fiji Takes the Lead on Global Climate Action

Being the first island nation to hold the presidency of the Conference of Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Fiji’s vision is to:

1. Advance the work of UNFCCC and preserve the multilateral consensus for decisive action to address the underlying causes of climate change, respecting climate science.
2. Uphold and advance the Paris Agreement, ensure progress on the implementation guidelines and undertake consultations together with the Moroccan COP22 Presidency to design the process for the Facilitative Dialogue in 2018.
3. Build greater resilience for all vulnerable nations to the impacts of climate change, including extreme weather events and rising sea levels; enable access to climate adaptation finance, renewable energy, clean water and affordable climate risk and disaster insurance; and promote sustainable agriculture.
4. Forge a grand coalition to accelerate climate action before 2020 and beyond between civil society, the scientific community, the private sector and all levels of government, including cities and regions. We are all vulnerable and we all need to act.
5. Harness innovation, enterprise and investment to fast track the development and deployment of climate solutions that will build future economies with net zero greenhouse gas emissions, in an effort to limit the rise of global temperatures to 1.5°C above pre-industrial levels.
6. Draw a stronger link between the health of the world’s oceans and seas and the impacts of, and solutions to, climate change as part of a holistic approach to the protection of our planet.
7. Infuse COP23 with the Fijian “Bula Spirit” of inclusiveness, friendliness and solidarity and promote the Pacific concept of talanoa. This is a process of inclusive, participatory and transparent dialogue that builds empathy and leads to decision making for the collective good. It is not about finger pointing and laying blame but is about listening to each other, learning from each other, sharing stories, skills and experiences. By focusing on the benefits of action, this process will move the global climate agenda forward.

“Fiji’s vision is for a Presidency that is transparent and inclusive of all, advances the Paris Agreement and accelerates climate action for vulnerable societies, drawing on our own experiences as a small island developing state in the Pacific.”

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Events Prior to COP23 in Brief

Oceans Summit

Fiji and Sweden co-chaired the inaugural UN Ocean Conference in June 2017. A key outcome of the conference was the Call for Action by UN member states underlining the urgency for a healthy ocean and the critical relationship between the ocean and climate. Countries rallied support and made pledges to collectively achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 14: *Life Below Water*. Building on the need to mainstream ocean issues in global climate negotiations, the Fijian COP23 Presidency began to work on developing the Ocean Pathway which was subsequently launched at COP23. The Ocean Summit has become a landmark achievement in the global journey towards sustainable development and Fiji is proud to have led this initiative.



CAPP, 2017

Climate Actions Pacific Partnership

The inaugural Climate Action Pacific Partnership (CAPP) event took place on the 3rd and 4th July 2017 in Suva. Its aim was to ascertain inclusive, transformational and regional solutions to speed up climate actions in order to meet the objectives of the Paris Agreement. As Pacific Island nations are at the fore front of climate change, it has pledged towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement in holding the global average temperature to well below 2°C above pre-industrial and implementing efforts to limit the temperature to 1.5°C. In achieving these goals, it requires a significant input in rapid decarbonisation and working towards the end of fossil fuels to achieve 100% renewable energy for the Pacific. Pacific Island Countries needs to find ways to increase recognition and build action on strengthening climate resilience and to increase investment in the areas of climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction efforts. Acknowledging that climate change is a common concern of humankind and intergenerational equity, addressing climate change actions in this regards shall be of utmost priority for the Pacific people.

Fiji Climate Change Week

The National Climate Change Week was a week-long series of events and activities in Fiji designed to raise awareness on climate change issues, educate the Fijian people on Fiji's COP Presidency and highlight Fijian experiences relating to climate change. The inaugural event took place in 2017 from 23-29 September, towards accelerating climate action for a resilient Fiji. The week-long event included exhibition, tree planting, clean up campaigns, recycling activities, carbon fasting, climate change seminars, demonstrating climate action and commitments by the private sector, mangrove planting, talanoa sessions in communities and with stakeholders to share Climate Witness stories. Sustainable seafood movement activities along with oratory contest was also organised for school children. Two students, who won the contest, were chosen to represent Fiji at COP23 and highlight how climate change is affecting their lives and what can be done to be more prepared for the effects of climate change.



Fiji Climate Change week, 2017

Pre-Cop23

To build momentum and achieve a sense of coherence towards issues to be discussed at COP23, the Pre-COP event was held in Fiji from the 17th to 18th October 2017. Participants of the event included National Leaders, Government Representatives and Non-State Stakeholders from 68 different countries to address issues to be discussed and negotiated at COP23 in Bonn, Germany. The Pre-COP agenda items included expectations for COP23, the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement, access to adequate climate finance, raising ambitions through Nationally Determined Contributions and enhancing risk management and resilience.



Climate Change Minister's Statement at COP23



The hosting of the Fijian Presidency in Bonn, Germany, was symbolic of the cooperation that can, should and indeed must exist between developed and developing countries in meeting the challenges of climate change.

As an island state at the forefront of climate change, Fiji is completely committed to addressing the effects of climate change. We believe in the multi-lateral process under the UNFCCC and its mechanisms to deliver tangible and timely actions to protect the world from the adversities of climate change. The Paris Agreement is the framework through which such tangible actions can emanate from and is the very reason why Fiji was the first country in the world to ratify it.

As our Prime Minister and President of COP23 has said throughout our Presidency, it is why we bring to this challenge the *talanoa* spirit of Fiji and certain other Pacific countries – a dialogue based on trust, empathy and the collective good. In our experience, it is the

best way of getting things done, especially in difficult circumstances. Engagement that is respectful, honest and cooperative and acknowledges that no-one, no matter how powerful, can solve the climate challenge on their own. For humanity to survive, flourish and prosper, we have no alternative but to cooperate.

To further reiterate our commitment towards fully implementing the Paris Agreement and limiting the global temperature to 1.5 degrees above pre-industrial levels, Fiji is taking real and decisive action at home. It should be noted that we cannot differentiate between climate change adaptation and mitigation on the one hand and economic development on the other. They are one and the same. Therefore, development finance and climate finance is also one and the same.

In Fiji's case, we are innovating finance. At COP23, with the support of ADB and Luxembourg, we launched the Pacific Climate Finance and Insurance Incubator to deliver real investments in the fight against climate change. On 1st November 2017, we launched our first-ever Sovereign Green Bond, the first emerging economy to do so and only the world's third after Poland and France. Also, we are

developing insurance products which are currently not available for climate related matters or events. Finally, through the Oceans Pathway, we are working with other countries to develop ways to protect our oceans and finance the long term preservation of our blue carbon systems.

Fiji, like any other country, cannot do it alone. We value the collective efforts of all our countries working together to develop innovative solutions to address climate change.

We believe that it is critically important that there continues to be the transfer of technology, skills and capacity from developed and developing countries. We welcome the expeditious transfer of climate smart innovations and ideas that may assist vulnerable countries who are suffering from the impacts of climate change.

Fiji stands with all small and island developing and vulnerable states, those countries which face an existential threat and all nations, in firmly focusing on the target of limiting global warming to within 1.5 degrees Celsius above that of the pre-industrial age, as the world agreed to in Paris three years ago - Hon. Minister for Economy, Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum.

Climate Action Zone: Key Highlights

“In the Bonn Zone, we have the power of ideas, the power of organisation, the power of partnerships” –

COP23 President Frank Bainimarama.

At the COP 23, the “Bonn Zone”, also known as the Climate Action Zone, was erected to accommodate climate action events, side events and exhibits, media activities, and events in the delegation pavilions.

There were over 100 events spread over the period of 5 days, combining a range of formats, such as plenary events, roundtable discussions, press conferences, and digital dialogues for broadcast on Facebook Live.

Participants in these events represented the range of climate action champions and included Prime Ministers, CEOs, Mayors, Governors and other figureheads from civil society at large. Some of the speakers included Arnold Schwarzenegger, Paris Mayor Anne Hidalgo, California Governor Jerry Brown, Marshall Islands President Hilda Heine, Astronaut Thomas Pesquet, Unilever CEO Paul Polman, Scotland's First Minister

Nicola Sturgeon and Explorer Bertrand Picard.

Each of the days had their own themes. The first three days, 10th to the 12th November 2017, was dedicated to discuss the 8 core thematic areas; namely Energy, Water, Agriculture, Oceans & Coastal Zones, Human Settlements, Transport, Industry and Forests. The final two days, 13th and 14th November 2017, was allocated for a high-level segment, featuring the most prominent speakers who can spotlight the crosscutting themes of finance, innovation, resilience, Sustainable Development Goal 11 (Sustainable Cities & Communities) and Sustainable Development Goal 2 (Zero Hunger).

“In the Bonn Zone, we see mayors, officials and administrators from other levels of government. We see civil society in all its forms. We see business and academia. We see faith-based organisations in all their diversity. And finally and wonderfully, many ordinary citizens from all over the world and especially the young – our future” – COP23 President Frank Bainimarama.



Highlights of COP23

In November 2017, Fiji made history by becoming the first - ever small island State to convene the 23rd United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP23) in Bonn, Germany. Climate change was placed at the center of global diplomacy as diplomats and ministers gathered for the annual round of United Nations climate talks.

COP23 was somewhat a technical affair as countries continued to negotiate the finer details of how the agreement will work from 2020 onwards. While it was the second COP since the Paris Agreement was struck in 2015, it was, however, the first set of negotiations since the US withdrew from the Paris deal.

Fiji gave impetus to the negotiations and a voice to the concerns of all the Small Island Developing States around the world through its Presidency by bringing a perspective to the negotiations on behalf of some of the nations who are most vulnerable to the effects of climate change.

A number of outcomes were touted as significant achievements. These are:

- Gender Action Plan – highlights the role of women in climate action and promotes gender equality.
- Local communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform – aims to support the exchange of experience and sharing of best practices on mitigation and adaptation.
- Ocean Pathway Partnership – aims to strengthen the inclusion of oceans with the UNFCCC process.
- Agriculture – notable, yet low-profile outcome, ending a deadlock which lasted for years. Parties agreed to work over the next few years on a series of issues linking climate change and agriculture.

- Adaptation Fund – replenished with a total of US\$93.3 million, and it would serve the Paris Agreement.
- Launch of the Fiji Clearing House for Risk Transfer – this online resource will help connect vulnerable countries with the best available information on affordable insurance and solutions, tailored to their unique circumstances, which will allow them to better prepare for the risks posed by climate change.
- Drua Incubator – incubation of transformational and scalable financial and insurance products.
- InsuResilience Initiative – new global partnership launched and backed by an additional US\$125 million from the German government to support its aim to provide affordable cover to 400 more million poor and vulnerable people by 2020.

Above all the achievements mentioned, the Fijian Presidency launched an innovative Pacific island concept called *Talanoa Dialogue*. The purpose of the concept is to share stories, build empathy and to make wise decisions for the collective good. The *Talanoa* method purposely avoids blame and criticism to create a safe space for the exchange of ideas and collective decision-making.

The Fijian Presidency also made a solid progress towards delivering a new rulebook for the Paris Agreement. COP23 represented an important political moment for the UNFCCC regime. The outcomes of the conference definitely appear as positive. First, COP23 managed to bring to the international spotlight a strengthened leadership by non-State actors. Secondly, the Fijian Presidency left its footprint on the *Talanoa Dialogue* which was well-conceived.





COP23 Puts a Spotlight on National Policy

Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) Implementation Roadmap



Fiji's NDC targets a 30% mitigation of Business As Usual (BAU) CO₂ for the period of 2020-2030 from the energy sector. This goal will be achieved through:

- 20% Renewable Energy Power Generation (Grid connection)
- 10% economy wide energy efficiency, implicitly in the transport, industry and electricity demand-side sub-sectors.

5-year and 20-year National Development Plan (NDP)



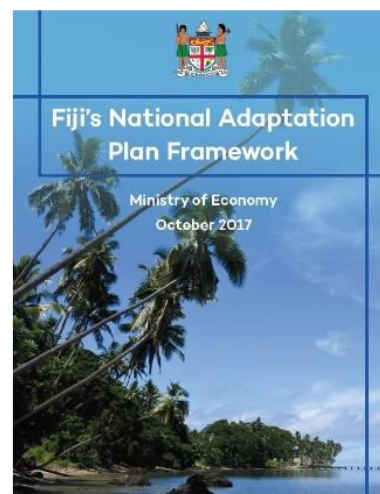
Fiji 20 year NDP provides a vision for “Transforming Fiji” towards an even more progressive, vibrant and inclusive society.

Inclusive socio-economic development would ensure improved living standards of Fijians through affordable housing, reducing unemployment rates, eradicating poverty, improving medical and education quality in the country and women empowerment.

Complimentarily, transformational strategic thrusts would ensure climate resilient and safe infrastructure development and digital connectivity. The integrated nature of development and the need for multi-sectoral solutions are recognised and addressed.

Critical cross-cutting issues such as climate change, green growth, the environment, gender equality, disability and governance are mainstreamed in the NDP.

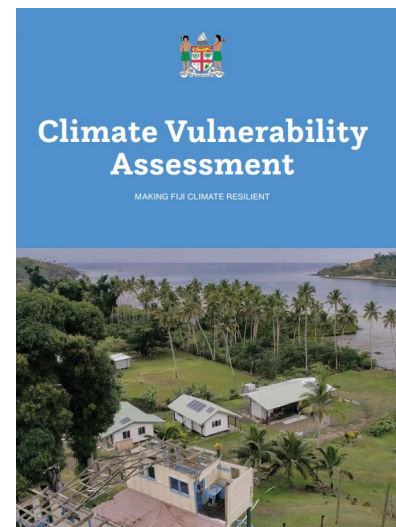
National Adaptation Plan (NAP) Framework



NAP process is a means to identify medium and long term adaptation needs, as well as develop and implement strategies and programmes to address these needs. The NAP framework sets out the approaches and principles which will underpin a systematic and strategic approach to adaptation in all government deci-

sion making in Fiji. This will facilitate institutional coordination, resource mobilization, and ultimately effective adaptation actions.

Climate Vulnerability Assessment (CVA)



The CVA will inform Fiji's development planning and investment decisions for years to come, and provides a specific blueprint that quantifies the resources necessary to climate-proof Fiji, giving us a full account of the threat that climate change poses to our national development.

The five priority areas highlighted under the CVA include the design and construction of more resilient towns and cities, with a focus on developing safe greenfield sites; improving infrastructure services; support to climate-smart agriculture and fisheries; the conservation of ecosystems and the natural environment to protect development assets; and building up our overall socioeconomic resilience by caring for those most vulnerable and promoting inclusive economic growth.

The total cost of development in underlined under the CVA is estimated at FJD 9.3 billion.



Young Fijians @ COP23



Shalvi Shakshi and Timoci Naulusala with their parents at Bonn, Germany, 2017

“We have heard, we have seen, we have witnessed, we were victims. Now it is time to conquer!... We need to act now!”

Those were the powerful words of twelve year old, Timoci Naulusala to leaders and the international community at the opening of COP23 in Bonn last year.

Timoci, a lad from Naivicula Village in Tailevu, won the Climate Change Week national oratory competition which gave him the rare opportunity to address leaders at COP23. In an interview, Timoci remarked that he accepted this opportunity not for himself, but for the future generations.

After witnessing the devastating impacts of TC Winston on his village and school, Timoci’s message was simple and clear – Climate change is real!

In his address, he stated that climate action is not about what, how or who; but rather about what one can do as an individual. Examples of this are the 3 R’s (Reuse, Reduce, Recycle) and replanting of trees, which are simple yet effective activities that contribute to climate action.

Shalvi Shakshi, a Year 5 student of Nasarawaqa District School in Bua, became the youngest speaker in the COP23 side events in Bonn, Germany.

Shalvi was declared a winner of the Fiji Climate Change Week national oratory competition for the Northern Division. She was given the opportunity to attend COP23 and share her story with delegates.

In a side event organized for Youth and Future Generations Day, Shalvi stressed the inter-linkages between human activities and climate change. She passionately highlighted the growing impacts climate change is having on our environment and day-to-day living.

As the youngest speaker at COP23, Shalvi called for immediate action towards addressing climate change. She also highlighted the importance of individual action, stating that *“it is our action that bring about changes.”*

Shalvi gave examples of initiatives taken by her school to replant trees, implement the 3Rs, organic farming and raise awareness in communities.

Both Timoci and Shalvi were accompanied by a parent to COP23, sponsored by UNICEF Pacific.

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