

Pacific Climate Change & Migration Project NEWSLETTER

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(Photo: A. Jacobs)

HSH Prince Albert II of Monaco joins Kiribati President, HE Anote Tong and Tuvalu's Prime Minister Hon. Enele Sopoaga and other delegates at the high level dialogue on climate induced migration in Kiribati in September.

High Level Dialogue on Climate Induced Migration

The President of Kiribati, His Excellency Anote Tong hosted a high-level dialogue on climate induced migration in Ambo, Kiribati from 9-10 October, 2015.

The PCCM project partnered with the Kiribati government and the Prince Albert II Foundation of Monaco in the successful forum which discussed threats to Pacific atoll nations at the forefront of climate change.

A key outcome of the forum agreed that relocation from atoll nations was a last resort, with the meeting rejecting the "climate refugee" connotation.

Addressing leaders and development partners, His Serene Highness Prince Albert II said: "It is currently estimated that the number of people who have been forced to leave their homes for climate-related reasons is three times higher than those who have had to do so due to war or political conflict. And yet these figures do not include the victims of sudden disaster, nor those who have to face ever-increasing daily dangers such as rising water levels and desertification.

"Millions of our fellow human-beings are forced to abandon their land and property, their history and belongings,

to flee from a tragedy for which they are not responsible. Millions of victims, the majority of whom live in Asia or Oceania, in countries with a low-carbon economy, in these countries which have contributed only slightly to the disruption of which they are the victims," HSH Prince Albert II said.

Funded by the Government of Kiribati, the European Union (through the PCCM project) and the Prince Albert II Foundation of Monaco, the meeting brought together delegates from Tuvalu led by Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga, Marshall Islands Charge d'Affairs Tregar Albon Ishoda, Fiji's Roving Ambassador Litiā Mawi and Tokelau's Special Envoy Paula Faiva. The United Nations Assistant Secretary General Haoliang Xu and the European Union Ambassador for the Pacific His Excellency, Andrew Jacobs, also attended the meeting.

In a closing statement delegates called on the global community and all those with the capacity to assist, to provide urgent financial and technical support to people of atoll nations. This could include immediate access to the Green Climate Fund, additional funding facilities and new support mechanisms.

EU and UN Partner to Support Kiribati, Tuvalu and Nauru on Labour Migration Research

Representatives from Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu gained skills to tap into decent foreign employment opportunities at a workshop on Foreign Employment Research and Promotion in Suva in May. The three-day workshop was funded by the European Union through the Pacific Climate Change and Migration (PCCM) project.

International labour migration, particularly temporary migration has been identified as a key development priority in Kiribati, Nauru and Tuvalu where domestic employment opportunities are limited.

Creating decent work opportunities in foreign labour markets requires detailed knowledge of labour shortages, immigration system requirements, and recruitment channels, as well as the ability to use the information to undertake labour marketing and promotion. The training provided a basic foundation for government officials to develop the required skills to facilitate their work.

Addressing the workshop, Head of the European Union Delegation for the Pacific, Ambassador Andrew Jacobs said: "The European Union understands that each of your countries - Tuvalu, Kiribati and Nauru - face challenges in creating decent work opportunities for your citizens – challenges that may become even more complex with

the increasing adverse impacts of climate change.

"While creating opportunities domestically is of course, your prime priority, labour migration and decent work abroad is an important adaptation strategy for Pacific Islanders - alleviating strain on local resources and unemployment, diversifying a household's income and providing new opportunities for training, skills and market access. These benefits can be particularly important for your communities especially vulnerable to climate change," Ambassador Jacobs said.

Also launched at a side event in the margins of the workshop was a Guide on International Labour Migration Statistics for Policymakers and Statistics Organisations in the Pacific. The guide explains key concepts relevant to international labour migration statistics and makes concrete recommendations on how Pacific Island countries can move towards a harmonised system for collection and analysis of timely, accurate and relevant migration statistics.

Sasaki Satoshi, Decent Work Specialist for the ILO Office for Pacific Island countries said the guide is a useful tool which will help better understand and better plan labour migration in the Pacific.



Kiribati children at play.

PCCM Project Launches Film on Climate Change and Migration



Head of the Delegation of the European Union for the Pacific, His Excellency, Ambassador Andrew Jacobs launches "The Land Beyond the Horizon" at Damodar Event cinemas in Suva in September.

A film highlighting the issue of climate change and its impact on migration was launched by the European Union's Pacific Climate Change and Migration (PCCM) project in Suva in September.

"The Land Beyond the Horizon" <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r4qyNRbWZ6l> captures the stories of Pacific islanders whose lands and livelihoods are threatened by climate change, as well as those who have had to relocate to other countries, and discusses the impacts on their lives, cultures, languages and traditions.

The film features exclusive footage and interviews with prominent leaders in the frontline of climate change efforts throughout the world such as President Anote Tong of Kiribati, Prime Minister Enele Sopoaga of Tuvalu and Mary Robinson, the United Nations Special Envoy on Climate Change.

Launching the film as part of the European Year for Development campaign, Ambassador Andrew Jacobs, Head of the European Union Delegation for the Pacific, explained: "The phenomenon of migration is going to become more significant in the Pacific. People are starting to leave not just for economic reasons but because their very futures are threatened by climate change, by rising waters. The European Union is supporting the PCCM project to help prepare our partner governments for migration and to manage it in a way that really benefits those who are going to be leaving their countries, either temporarily or on a permanent basis. We also want to help those countries who are going to be receiving the migrants to maximise the opportunities that the additional labour, expertise and experience can offer." Highlighting the work of the project, Prime Minister Sopoaga said:

"I think that this project on migration is working well in helping to provide data, information, options that are extremely important. We are very grateful that ESCAP, with the help of the European Union, is helping our governments in this way. Certainly, the way I see it, it could be a very important link to coordinate other projects in response to climate change."

Discussing the importance of formulating relevant policies in the context of the Pacific's cultural realities Iosefa Maiava, Head of the UNESCAP Pacific Office explained: "We are in a position to be the first generation to be able to solve the problems of poverty and inequality, but probably the last generation to do anything about climate change. It's very important that we understand cultural realities - the way people think and behave - so that relevant policies on climate change and migration can be formulated".

Speaking in the film, UN Special Envoy on Climate Change Her Excellency, Mary Robinson explained: "It's the most vulnerable and the poorest that suffer the most and there is a very strong gender dimension to all climate action and inaction. The fact that women find it more difficult, have problems that are different to the problems that men face. We have to recognise that there is a gender dimension which has to be brought out."

Satoshi Sasaki of the ILO said: "Information is very important for the planning or the process, particularly preparing for the migration system itself and the policy coherency aspect. Policy is always based on evidence and identifying the needs of the people who are going to migrate and for these reasons, first of all, the research is very important.

Tuvalu Submits Climate Action Plan Ahead of December Paris Climate Conference

The Government of Tuvalu launched its new climate action plan on 19 November, 2015 at the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) in Suva, Fiji. The plan will be submitted to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) in Paris.

The Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (INDC) comes ahead of negotiations on a new universal climate change pact to be reached at the 21st UN Climate Conference of the Parties (COP21) taking place in Paris from 30 November to 11 December, 2015.

Tuvalu is the world's second lowest-lying country and sea level rise poses a fundamental risk to its very existence. Climate change, through rising temperatures and irregular rainfall, are already impacting on livelihoods. In this context, the target of zero dependence on fossil fuels for electricity generation by 2025 cannot be more ambitious.

"Tuvalu's emissions of global greenhouse gases, at less than 0.000005%, are one of the smallest from any country. In submitting such an ambitious target, Tuvalu wants to show that we are playing our part in the collective response to climate change. This puts us on a strong path to a decarbonised economy," Tuvalu's Prime Minister, Enele Sopoaga said.

"We note with great concern that the submitted INDCs, from over 150 countries, are still taking us on a path to a warming of around 2.7C, possibly 4C. This is a far cry from our stated objective of maintaining the temperature rise to below 1.5C to save countries like Tuvalu.

"Global temperature has already risen by 1C since preindustrial times and I hope the world understands that we are two-thirds of the way to crossing the 1.5 C, which will spell the worst possible scenarios for countries like Tuvalu.

"Small island countries are still struggling with bureaucracy issues which continue to make it difficult for small islands to access global funding. This needs to be seriously addressed. There is a worry that Green Climate funding is dependent on the ability to craft an acceptable project proposal and not on the level of vulnerability. Small island states appreciate the need for transparency and accountability, however, the target should be to get assistance to the most vulnerable communities on the ground", PM Sopoaga said.



(L-R) Francois Martel, Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) and the Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Hon. Enele Sopoaga at a press conference to launch Tuvalu's climate action plan in Suva in November

Pacific Neighbours Unite on Climate Change Action

The Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Hon. Enele Sopoaga and the President of Kiribati, His Excellency Anote Tong met in the Tuvalu capital of Funafuti on 2 October, 2015 to call for a strong and effective climate change agreement at the COP21 climate conference in Paris at the end of the year.

Prime Minister Sopoaga said: "This is our last chance to get it right. If we fail in Paris, we fail the people of Tuvalu and the people of Kiribati. We will fail mankind. We must have a strong and effective legally binding climate change agreement that creates a greenhouse gas limitation pathway that will ensure that global temperatures stabilise well below 1.5C relative to pre-industrial levels. The commitments made by countries so far, in the lead up to Paris, are steering us to a 3 C warming world. This would be disastrous for countries like Tuvalu and Kiribati."

President of Kiribati, Anote Tong, said: "We are facing imminent danger that a significant proportion of the population of Kiribati will have to look for somewhere else to live. We are very proud of our nation and this is a last resort. The Paris COP21 meeting must be the decisive moment for the world to conclude a legally binding agreement to cap temperature increase to well below 1.5C, and on urgent actions on adaptation. We cannot fail Kiribati, Tuvalu, and the world".

PM Sopoaga said that the Paris agreement must also include a mechanism to address the process of rehabilitation after the impacts of climate change. The Paris legal

agreement, he said, must include the establishment of a new mechanism on loss and damage.

"It is inevitable that our people will suffer the impacts of climate change. Cyclone Pam, earlier this year, was a clear indication that climate change is here to stay. We must have the means to allow our people rebuild and restore their livelihoods after climate change events," he said.

Calling for a moratorium on new coal mines, President Tong said: "The Paris agreement must deliver strong commitments by all countries to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions. We must decarbonise our economies by the middle of this century. As a first step in this decarbonisation pathway we are calling for a moratorium on all new coal mines. We must rapidly move to a global renewable energy economy free from fossil fuels. New coal mines will only lock-in dirty energy and make it far more costly to reach the temperature stabilisation goal that we need to save our countries."

"Both our nations are low lying and highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. Our future and the future of the world must be guaranteed in Paris. There is too much to lose if we fail. We call on the French government to do everything in its powers to ensure that Paris delivers a decarbonised world and a world that is compassionate for those suffering the impacts of climate change".



A child in Kiribati looks at his home submerged as a result of heavy rain this year.

Key Findings of Climate Change and Migration Surveys

ESCAP held consultations in Nauru, Kiribati and Tuvalu in September and October 2015 to discuss key findings following a survey on climate change and migration in the Pacific, conducted under the PCCM project. The consultations included stakeholders from government and civil society in the three countries. The survey included 155 households/1,246 individuals in Nauru; 377 households/2,799 individuals in Kiribati; and 320 households /2,807 individuals in Tuvalu.

Key messages for each country were identified based on the consultations and survey analysis. Results from all three countries highlighted the need for improved access to international migration to avoid individuals being “trapped” by worsening environmental conditions. The need for improved access to international migration was most pronounced in the case of Kiribati.

All Pacific countries would benefit from effective national migration policies and a coordinated regional approach for maximizing the benefit of migration. Well-managed migration could increase the adaptive capacity of Pacific countries to better cope with climate change.

Specifically, migration can:

- Increase resilience to crises;
- Increase capacity to cope with future impacts of climate change and can
- Result in diversification of opportunities for an economy based on multiple sources of revenue. However, migration as an adaptive strategy would require careful policy planning, well placed policy interventions and international agreements.

Nauru

Nauruans are already experiencing climate change, particularly increased droughts. Three quarters (74%) of Nauruan households have experienced one or more impact of climate change in the last decade. In particular, drought and irregular rains have affected most families.

The adaptive capacity in Nauru to cope with climate change is limited and internal migration is not a solution. Since Nauru is a single island, internal migration will not result in increased remittances or reduce the demands on the environment.

Nauru has some history of migration. Roughly 10% of people (and one-third of households) experienced migration between 2005 and 2015.

Current climate change adaptation benefits from migration are mixed. According to the 2012/2013 HIES, remittance volumes in Nauru were less than 0.2% of annual household income. In order for migration to diversify incomes, increased opportunity for labour migration and systems for sending remittances will be necessary.

Migration demand is greater than the access to migration opportunities. Although many people have experienced migration, 7% of people stated that they

attempted to migrate between 2005 and 2012 but were unable to do so.

Economic and cultural motivations are a primary driver of migration. The majority of households (52%) in Nauru stated someone in their house was likely to migrate if that person achieved a college degree.

Migration is less related to subsistence agriculture than in other parts of the world. Very few people felt that they would need to migrate if growing agriculture or catching fish became more difficult.

Climate change will impact migration demand. More than one-third of households felt that migration would also be a likely response if droughts, sea-level rise or floods worsened.

Many potential migrants will not have the means to migrate. Only a quarter of household representatives (26%) believe that their households have the requisite finances to realise the migration of a member of the household. A similar proportion of households (28%) believe they would be able to get a visa for a trip. In contrast, over half of household representatives believe they have the contacts, education and procedural knowledge necessary to migrate.

Tuvalu

Climate related environmental hazards are already affecting households and livelihoods on Tuvalu; particularly drought, cyclones and sea-level rise. Between 2005 and 2015, 97% of households were impacted by natural hazards.

Migration is a common experience in Tuvalu. In total 28% of the population (three quarters of households) engaged in migration in the decade 2005-2015. Over half of all trips were international, primarily to Fiji and New Zealand.

Internal migration is putting pressure on constrained natural resources in Funafuti. The population of Funafuti has increased dramatically in the last two decades as a result of high birth rates in the past and internal migration.

Migration experiences of women and men differ. Men and women migrate in approximately equal numbers but men are more likely to migrate for work and women for education.

Migration decisions are taken communally with households consulting their social networks and seeking assistance to migrate through various institutions. Most decisions are made after consultation with several people outside of their household.

Kiribati

The environment impacts households on Kiribati regularly. Almost every household (94%) has been impacted over the preceding 10 years and 81% affected by sea level rise over the same period. In Kiritimati, only 52% of households have been affected by sea level rise, compared to 85% on South Tarawa and 80% on the outer islands.

Migration rates are quite low in Kiribati, but climate change is already a significant cause of migration for I-Kiribati. Compared to other Pacific island states, the rates of migration for Kiribati are quite low: only 1.3% of people moved internationally and only 7% moved domestically between 2005 and 2015. Migrants attributed almost a quarter of these movements to climate change (23%).

Approximately 83% of all migration trips experienced in the ten years up to 2015 were internal. Two thirds of migrants from the outer islands go to South Tarawa.

Whilst some I-Kiribati are able to migrate to Australia, New Zealand and other international destinations, these trips alone will not bring "migration with dignity" for the vast majority of the sizeable population. Kiribati has a relatively large population compared to other atoll countries thus the volume of migration necessary to cope with climate change is quite high. The constrained natural resources on atolls make these islands particularly sensitive to both population growth and climate change.

Migration has a positive relationship with income as migrant households are associated with higher incomes. In

Households who engaged in international migration in the last ten years are on average less vulnerable than those which did not. Households with international movers and seafarers have lower vulnerability than average, while households with internal movers have a higher vulnerability.

Flows of remittances from migrants bolster household incomes. Tuvalu receives high volumes of international remittances.

There is unmet demand for migration which is constrained by a lack of cash. While the majority of households (73%) experienced a migration trip in the preceding 10 years, in the same period, 8% of the surveyed population wanted to leave but could not. The main reason for the desire not being realized was a lack of money, accounting for half of all instances (51%).

Migration trips within Tuvalu will increase by 70% and international trips will double by 2055 (based on a medium climate change scenario). The population of Tuvalu will increase by 30% and the population of Funafuti will increase by 44%. The growth of the population of Tuvalu will be slowed by climate change migration, but climate change will lead to a further concentration of the population into Funafuti.

Kiribati, only the less vulnerable households have the ability to access migration. Low English comprehension and low median per capita income (at \$12 AUD per month) restricts the ability of a family to access migration.

There large differences in the migration experiences and desires of men and women. Men are much more likely to move overseas, as international trips account for 17% of their trips, as compared to 9% of women's trips.

Migration is constrained by a lack of money. There could potentially be far more migration, as in the period 2005-2015, almost 10,000 people wanted to migrate but could not. The most common reason given as an obstacle to migration is a lack of money.

The high population density and growth on South Tarawa suggests that the environmental issues that it already faces are likely to worsen over time. South Tarawa already has an extremely high population density, which is increasing faster than the outer islands. Increasing internal migration to South Tarawa will create additionally pressure. There is a lack of movement from South Tarawa to other islands or overseas which could reduce this pressure.

Internal migration to Kiritimati could potentially act as a release valve for the strain placed on South Tarawa. Kiritimati is primarily an island of in-migration, with 72% of all trips inward and only 28% outward. It presents a viable destination for internal migrants due to the relative abundance of land and fish; however, Kiritimati is also highly vulnerable to climate change.

Climate Change and Migration Focus of PIDF High-Level Panel Discussion

In September, the Pacific Climate Change and Migration (PCCM) project co-ordinated a high-level panel discussion on climate change and migration as a side event during the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) summit in Suva. The panel comprised of key leaders and policy makers such as the UN Envoy on Climate Change, Her Excellency, Mary Robinson; President of Kiribati, HE Anote Tong; Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Hon. Enele Sopoaga; Prime Minister of Tonga Hon. Akilisi Pohiva and Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Hon. Tony de Brum. Discussions were facilitated by the Head of ESCAP's Pacific Office, Iosefa Maiava. The Charge d'Affaires at the European Union Delegation for the Pacific, Johnny Engell-Hansen also made a statement on behalf of the EU as the PCCM project funder. Speakers commended the work of the PCCM project, noting the importance of the research and capacity building work being undertaken.



Leaders at the high-level panel discussion on climate change and migration. (L-R) UN Special Envoy on Climate Change, HE Mary Robinson; Foreign Minister of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Hon. Tony de Brum (partially obscured); Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Hon. Enele Sopoaga; President of Kiribati, HE Anote Tong and the Prime Minister of Tonga Hon. Akilisi Pohiva.

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