

FORTIETH PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM
CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA
5 - 6 AUGUST 2009

FORUM COMMUNIQUÉ



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

FORTIETH PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

CAIRNS, AUSTRALIA

5 - 6 AUGUST 2009

FORUM COMMUNIQUÉ

FORTIETH PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

Cairns, Australia
5 - 6 August 2009

FORUM COMMUNIQUÉ

The Fortieth Pacific Islands Forum was held in Cairns, Australia from 5 to 6 August 2009 and was attended by Heads of State and Governments of Australia, the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, the Republic of Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Papua New Guinea, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Republic of Vanuatu and representatives of Republic of Kiribati and Republic of Palau. New Caledonia and French Polynesia attended the formal session as associate members. Timor-Leste, Tokelau, Wallis and Futuna, the Commonwealth Secretariat, the United Nations and the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission attended as observers. The Forum Retreat was held at Whitfield House, Cairns.

2. Leaders expressed their deep gratitude to the Prime Minister, the Government and people of Australia for the excellent arrangements made in hosting the 2009 Leaders' meeting, and for the kind hospitality extended to them during their stay in Cairns. Leaders also expressed their sincere appreciation to the people of Cairns and the Government of the State of Queensland for the warm reception received and goodwill extended during their participation in the 2009 Forum meeting.

PACIFIC MARITIME SAFETY

3. Leaders expressed their deep personal sympathies to the Government and people of Tonga concerning the sinking of the passenger ferry *Princess Ashika* on 6 August. Leaders noted the offer of Australia and New Zealand to provide any necessary temporary support to the Government of Tonga to maintain maritime transport services. Leaders also expressed their condolences for the sinking last month of a vessel in Kiribati and welcomed the offer of Australia and New Zealand to work with appropriate regional organizations and national authorities to strengthen maritime safety in the Pacific region.

CLIMATE CHANGE

4. Leaders recognised that for Pacific Islands States climate change is the great challenge of our time and adopted the Pacific Leaders Call for Action on Climate Change, attached as **Annex A**.

5. Leaders also welcomed the adoption on 3 June 2009 by the UN General Assembly of Resolution A/Res/63/281 entitled *Climate change and its possible security implications* which was an initiative of the Pacific Small Island Developing States at the United Nations, and undertook to continue to assist, encourage and strengthen work in the region in support of its recommendations.

CAIRNS COMPACT ON STRENGTHENING DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION IN THE PACIFIC

6. Against the backdrop of the global economic crisis, Leaders declared their new determination and an invigorated commitment to lift the economic and development performance of the region, and adopted the Cairns Compact on Strengthening Development Coordination in the Pacific, attached as **Annex B**.

7. Leaders agreed that there is an urgent and ongoing need for the development of effective policy measures and practical responses aimed at supporting Pacific island countries in alleviating adverse effects of the global economic crisis, with the objective of building sustained economic resilience in the Pacific.

8. Leaders acknowledged the substantive contribution of the joint Australia and New Zealand report titled *Surviving the Global Economic Crisis: Strengthening Economic Growth and Resilience in the Pacific*, and the 2009 update to the *Tracking Development and Governance in the Pacific* prepared by Australia in consultation with the Forum Secretariat, SPC, New Zealand and the UNDP Pacific Centre. The respective reports highlighted the need for strengthened development coordination in the region to promote effective responses to the global recession, and to accelerate progress towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

PACIFIC PLAN

9. Leaders noted that over the last four years, steady progress has been made in implementing various initiatives across all four pillars of the Pacific Plan, including decisions taken at their meeting in 2008 in Niue, to address new and existing challenges faced by the Pacific region. Notwithstanding such progress, Leaders recognised that key challenges remained and that more determined work under the Pacific Plan must continue to ensure ongoing momentum of greater regional cooperation and integration. Leaders noted that limited human and financial capacities at national levels continue to delay the implementation of some Pacific Plan initiatives.

10. Leaders noted that an independent comprehensive review of the progress on implementation of the Pacific Plan was undertaken in the first quarter of 2009. Leaders further noted that a draft report of the initial three-year review of the Pacific Plan had been submitted for consideration by the Pacific Plan Action Committee (PPAC).

11. As with preceding years, and reflecting this year's key theme of building economic resilience, Leaders agreed to accord priority to a range of sectors for implementation under the Pacific Plan, acknowledging the importance of addressing the new challenges to Forum members presented by the global economic crisis, and their continuing vulnerability to external shocks.

12. Implementation of work under the Pacific Plan would be guided by the continued direction and targets provided by Leaders to members, regional agencies and development partners. Leaders also agreed on a number of key commitments and priority areas in order to advance the Plan over the next three years from 2010. These commitments and priority areas are provided below and at **Annex C**.

Bulk Procurement of Petroleum

13. Leaders noted that since their last meeting in 2008 in Niue, significant progress have been made in the implementation of the bulk procurement of petroleum initiative. Leaders welcomed the signing by the Governments of the Cook Islands, Nauru, Tuvalu and Niue of a government-to-government memorandum of understanding (MOU), which outlined the responsibilities of Forum members who sign up to this initiative under the auspices of the Pacific Petroleum Project. Leaders further noted that the Governments of Tonga, Solomon Islands and the Republic of the Marshall Islands have expressed their intention to sign the MOU. To ensure that the benefits of the initiative are maximised, Leaders strongly encouraged as many Forum members as possible to sign up. Leaders expressed their appreciation to the Government of New Zealand for its assistance in facilitating the meeting of national petroleum authorities, CROP agencies, sectors experts and industry in October 2008.

14. Leaders reaffirmed that energy remains one of the region's key priorities, and urged members to remain vigilant in the face of growing world oil prices, not least given the potential to place pressure on scarce national resources and budgets as a result of poorly secured energy supply. Leaders welcomed the launching of the Phase One of the Pacific Petroleum Project in June 2009, and urged Forum members to lend their support to the Project to ensure its success, while maintaining a whole-of-region position on such matters.

Fisheries

15. Leaders noted that fisheries resources of the Pacific represent a major source of food and income for Pacific Islands Countries (PICs) and for many Pacific people is the main prospect for sustainable economic development. The maximization of return from these resources and their sustainable conservation and management is therefore fundamental to the long-term socio-economic wellbeing and stability of the region, as is the protection of those resources.

16. Leaders committed to working collectively to ensure that the Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) adopts and implements effective measures to address overfishing of highly migratory fish stocks that are critical to the development opportunities of many Forum members countries.

17. Leaders also committed to working with the Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) to ensure coastal States in the region are able to manage tuna resources, and maximise economic returns from the long-term sustainable utilisation of this resource for the enhancement of sustainable development and food security for the Pacific islands. To achieve these objectives it is important that the WCPFC, as well as national, conservation and management measures are underpinned by a strong, monitoring, control and surveillance framework. Leaders therefore welcome the initiative of the FFA to develop a Regional Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Strategy.

18. Leaders recalled the Vava'u Declaration and its reaffirmation in Niue in 2008, in particular, their call for "*strengthened mechanisms to protect regional fisheries via new multilateral Pacific regional arrangements patterned on the Niue Treaty Subsidiary Agreement model for exchange of fisheries law enforcement data, cross-vesting of enforcement powers and the use of fisheries data for other law enforcement activities.*"

19. Leaders agreed that in order to overcome the current hiatus in implementing this call to protect fisheries, that Australia host a meeting of PIC ministers responsible for both fisheries and law enforcement/justice in early 2010; at which agreement is to be reached both on the form of new legal arrangements to be negotiated and on a roadmap for the negotiation process, which should conclude no later than the end of 2012. Leaders further instructed that Ministers report back to Leaders on progress at the 2010 Leaders meeting, in the expectation that, at that time, Leaders will be able to endorse proposals put forward by Ministers on the form of the arrangements to be negotiated and the details of what areas are to be covered by those arrangements, thereby allowing formal negotiations on the detail to begin.

Trade

20. Leaders agreed to the recommendation from Forum Trade Ministers to commence PACER Plus negotiations forthwith.

21. Leaders welcomed the decision by Trade Ministers to establish the Office of Chief Trade Adviser (OCTA) along the lines outlined in the Apia FTMM decision. They affirmed their wish for Forum Trade Ministers to meet as soon as practicable after the Forum Leaders meeting and no later than November, and welcomed the offer from the Federated States of Micronesia to host this meeting.

22. Leaders directed that the Trade Ministers should discuss a framework for PACER Plus negotiations including timelines; identification of issues; and issues in respect of which the CTA could negotiate. Leaders affirmed the need for an annual review of progress of the PACER Plus negotiations and the arrangements for the OCTA. Leaders noted the need for Forum Island Countries to undertake national consultations with all stakeholders and capacity building for the negotiations.

23. Leaders agreed that consistent with the Forum's decisions, the Fiji military regime would not participate in the PACER Plus negotiations. However, Leaders agreed to a mechanism for Fiji to be kept informed on the negotiations. In this mechanism, Fiji officials will be briefed in Suva following each negotiating meeting by a representative from the meeting, with the representative also able to convey back to the next meeting any views from Fiji.

Health

24. Leaders noted with concern the threat posed by the Influenza A (H1N1) pandemic on their respective health systems, including the preparedness of each Forum country to deal with the impacts of a major health threat, including broader social and economic impacts. Leaders called for a more coordinated regional approach to address as a matter of priority the immediate impacts of with Influenza A (H1N1). Respective health administrations remain stretched and pressure continues on health resources, both human and material, limiting the ability of individual members to respond independently with any great effect. The *Pacific Regional Influenza Preparedness Project* clearly demonstrates the benefits of collective action and planning. Importantly for members, it highlights the benefits of a regional approach to addressing a common challenge. Leaders noted that this initiative is scheduled to conclude in June 2010.

SPORT

25. Acknowledging the historic sporting ties between the members of the Pacific Islands Forum, Leaders recognised the powerful and positive role sport can play in building communities. They also recognised that sport is a powerful tool for reinforcing positive social and health messages in communities and strengthening relations between countries.

26. They welcomed Australia's increased \$26 million of support for grass-roots and higher level sport in the Pacific, including support for community sports administration.

27. The nature of the support will be settled collaboratively between Australia and Pacific Island countries and will be coordinated with sports programs in Pacific Island countries' education systems and will focus on the major sports in each Pacific country.

28. They welcomed the fact that partnerships between Australian and regional sporting bodies would be a key mechanism for providing this support and that partnerships in rugby league, rugby union, cricket and netball would be developed, similar to the partnership signed between the Australian Government, Football Federation Australia, and the Oceania Football Confederation on 5 August. Support for other sports would be considered in countries where these sports are not played.

29. Leaders noted Australia and New Zealand's support for increased Pacific participation in international rugby union competitions and their desire to work with the Pacific Island countries to achieve this goal.

30. Leaders expressed a desire to see a team with strong Pacific island representation join the Southern Hemisphere Rugby Union competition.

31. Leaders also urged the International Rugby Board to consider its rules on Board representation and on player eligibility to ensure that Pacific players are able to retain links to their nations.

SUPPORTING PACIFIC PEOPLES WITH DISABILITIES

32. Leaders reaffirmed the need for more attention to be directed to the region's most disadvantaged group - people with disabilities - who are among the poorest and most vulnerable in the world. People with disability face many barriers to full participation in society, and this is no exception in the Pacific.

33. Leaders reaffirmed their strong support for the convening of a Forum meeting, to be held in Cook Islands in October 2009, for Ministers with responsibility for persons with disabilities and welcomed the support of the Australian Government for this initiative. Leaders agreed that the proposed Ministerial meeting should consider a Regional Disability Strategy with an associated plan of action for future implementation.

34. The Regional Disability Strategy should focus attention on the need to address issues facing persons with disabilities in the Pacific, to build greater awareness on the importance of allowing those with disabilities access to greater and more equitable opportunities to enhance their quality of life and fully enjoy all inalienable human rights. Leaders requested that a report of the Ministerial meeting be submitted for their consideration.

RENEWABLE ENERGY

35. Leaders observed that renewable energy offers the promise of cost-effective, reliable energy services to rural households and will provide a contribution to global greenhouse gas mitigation efforts. Now is the time, with appropriate technology and expanding carbon markets, to drive the development of projects to bring to reality the promise of renewable solutions to the region's energy needs.

36. Leaders acknowledged the role that renewable energy targets can play in driving the transition of national energy sectors to a low carbon future. Leaders commended the initiatives of Tonga and Tuvalu in incorporating renewable energy targets into national energy strategies.

37. Leaders welcomed the offer from the Government of Australia to convene an early meeting of officials, initially within the framework of the Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility, to identify options for scaled-up, better-coordinated financing for clean and affordable energy in the region. They further agreed that action to scale up financing for clean and affordable energy should be discussed during a special meeting of Forum Energy Ministers and that progress with resource mobilisation and activity identification should be reported back to the 2010 Forum.

38. Leaders also welcomed the pledge by the Australian Government that it would provide funding of at least \$25 million over four years for initiatives in clean and affordable energy in the Pacific region.

REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

39. Following the Leaders' decisions taken in Niue in 2008, the respective Governing Councils of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), including the South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA), they met to finalise decisions on new institutional arrangements and rationalisation of programmes and services of their respective organisations, effective from 1 January 2010.

40. Leaders noted and welcomed the decisions of the respective Governing Councils of the SPC, SOPAC and SPREP, including the SPBEA, in respect of the new institutional arrangements and implementation plans for their respective organisations, to be become effective from 1 January 2010. Leaders commended the work and contribution of the respective CEO's of the regional organisations in this regard, under the chairmanship of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretary General.

41. These decisions are attached as **ANNEX D**.

REGIONAL PARTNERSHIP MECHANISMS

42. Leaders recalled their decision taken in Niue in 2008 that countries which have

expressed interest in becoming a Post-Forum Dialogue (PFD) Partner are encouraged to engage, as an initial step towards becoming a PFD partner, in the Pacific Island Countries and Development Partners' Meeting before a comprehensive analysis of their application for Post-Forum Dialogue status is undertaken.

43. Recognising the continued and increasing demands on the members and the Secretariat to service individual consultative mechanism with each of the PFD partners and potential partners, Leaders noted a proposal by the Forum Officials Committee to seek from PFD partners an annual financial contribution to defray the expenses incurred by the Secretariat in managing the PFD mechanism on a cost recovery basis. Leaders requested that the Secretariat pursue the proposal with PFD partners and report back to the 2010 FOC.

FIJI

44. Leaders noted activities carried out under the Biketawa Declaration in relation to Fiji and reaffirmed their unanimous and resolute support for the January 2009 Port Moresby decisions.

45. They noted the implementation on 2 May of the Port Moresby decisions. Leaders took note of the Ministerial Contact Group (MCG) report and its recommendations. They took careful note of the grave concerns about the situation in Fiji, as expressed directly to Leaders from respected individuals and organisations in Fiji.

46. Leaders strongly condemned the actions of the Fiji military regime which have led to a severe deterioration in basic liberties and democratic institutions in Fiji since Leaders last met, including the abrogation of the Constitution, the imposition of media controls, restrictions on freedom of assembly, and the ongoing erosion to the traditional pillars of Fijian civil society, including the churches and chiefs. They deplored the recent detentions of church Leaders by the regime.

47. They welcomed the clear solidarity and support for Forum positions shown by the Commonwealth, and by other members of the international community, for a prompt and credible timetable for the restoration of democracy. They expressed their deep concern at the rejection by the military regime of the Commonwealth's call for elections.

48. Leaders reaffirmed the importance of continued strong solidarity for the region's position on Fiji from the United Nations, the EU and across the international community.

49. Leaders expressed their deep concern for the people of Fiji in the face of Fiji's deteriorating economy as a consequence of the military regime's actions, including the undermining of the private sector and the negative effect on business confidence in the absence of the rule of law.

50. Leaders called again for political dialogue in Fiji between parties on the principles of genuine, inclusive dialogue without preconditions or pre-determined outcomes.

51. In this context, Leaders reiterated a commitment to engage Fiji on an early return to democracy so that Fiji could again take its proper place in the community of the Forum. They noted that the MCG and the PIF-Fiji Joint Working Group remained important mechanisms for continued dialogue and called on Fiji to re-engage.

REGIONAL ASSISTANCE MISSION TO SOLOMON ISLANDS (RAMSI)

51. Leaders noted the activities carried out under the Biketawa Declaration in relation to Solomon Islands.
52. Leaders warmly welcomed the productive partnership and increasingly positive relationship between the Solomon Islands Government (SIG) and the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI);
53. Leaders highly commended the spirit of cooperation and consultation at all levels between RAMSI and the SIG culminating in the conclusion of the SIG-RAMSI Partnership Framework that was endorsed by the SIG on 14 May 2009 and subsequently by the Forum Ministerial Standing Committee (FMSC) on RAMSI on 15 May 2009.
54. Leaders welcomed progress made in implementing the Leaders' decisions at the 2008 Forum regarding the RAMSI, including Japan's offer of assistance.
55. Leaders endorsed the Solomon Islands Government's proposal for Papua New Guinea to become a permanent member of the FMSC on RAMSI.

PACIFIC REGIONAL ASSISTANCE TO NAURU (PRAN)

56. Leaders noted the valuable assistance provided to Nauru under the Biketawa Declaration. As a result of the success of PRAN, Nauru has emerged from the crisis phase and is on the path to sustainable economic recovery and development. Leaders agreed with Nauru that, having achieved its objectives, PRAN is no longer required.
57. Leaders, however, recognised the ongoing economic, social, infrastructure and development challenges facing Nauru and committed themselves to continue to supporting Nauru's reform agenda.

BILATERAL SECURITY PARTNERSHIPS

58. Leaders welcomed Australia's initiative to develop, in close consultation with Pacific Island countries, bilateral Partnerships for Security with Pacific Island countries as a complement to Australia's successful bilateral Partnerships for Development. They agreed that such Security Partnerships could streamline, consolidate and strengthen existing bilateral security cooperation between Australia and Pacific Island countries. They underlined that negotiation of the proposed partnerships would be based on mutual agreement, reflect the needs and priorities of each partner and take account of the capacity and resources of both parties.

PACIFIC PATROL BOAT REPLACEMENT PROGRAM

59. Leaders noted Australia's commitment to continued assistance to Pacific Island countries through the Pacific Patrol Boat Program. Australia signalled its intention to undertake an assessment of a new maritime security program to replace the current program

at the end of its life, in consultation with Pacific Island countries.

60. Leaders also welcomed New Zealand's continuing contribution to maritime surveillance in the region.

SMALL ARMS AND LIGHT WEAPONS (SALW)

61. Leaders noted with extreme concern the availability throughout the Pacific of guns and small arms and light weapons (both legal and illegal), which more often than not have been used in tribal fights and criminal activities, and in furthering political power. Small arms and light weapons are used to fuel and exacerbate violence and conflict. They are widely used in armed conflict, terrorism, and crime and there are significant costs and impacts, including financial (healthcare) and loss of life. They can be easily produced, concealed and transferred and more often than not, threaten peace, security, development and human rights.

62. In an effort to support activities in the region to address the threat of SALW, Leaders:

- (a) endorsed activities relating to the control of small arms and light weapons (SALW) and implementation of the global Programme of Action;
- (b) supported the proposed Control of Ammunition Project of the Forum Secretariat Law Enforcement Unit; and
- (c) encouraged all efforts to build national and regional capacity for the effective and successful implementation of the Programme of Action on SALW.

SEXUAL AND GENDER-BASED VIOLENCE

63. Sexual and gender-based violence (SGBV) is now widely recognised as a risk to human security and a potential destabilising factor for communities and societies alike. It remains pervasive across the Pacific, and as it is still considered a sensitive issue in most Pacific cultures, its prevalence often goes underreported. There is an urgent need to acknowledge the prevalence of SGBV in the Pacific at all levels of the community, whether occurring in the domestic context or during conflict and post-conflict situations.

64. While accepting the differing contexts of Forum member countries, Leaders noted the importance of encouraging and ensuring national ownership of necessary processes to address SGBV. Recognising the significance of this issue, Leaders:

- (a) reaffirmed support for ongoing action by the Secretariat and Forum members at the highest level, in collaboration with relevant stakeholders, to raise awareness of the seriousness of sexual and gender based violence (SGBV) and its impact on the Pacific, and to establish firmly on the political agendas of Forum members the issue of SGBV;
- (b) acknowledged the prevalence of SGBV in the Pacific and the risk that it poses to human security and as a potential de-stabilising factor for communities and societies alike;

- (c) welcomed and supported efforts and important contributions at the local, national and regional levels to address SGBV, including through increased Pacific engagement in relevant global initiatives aimed at preventing and eliminating violence against women and girls in all parts of the world; and
- (d) committed to eradicate SGBV and to ensure all individuals have equal protection of the law and equal access to justice Leaders committed to eradicating SGBV and to ensure that all individuals have equal protection and access to justice.

RADIOACTIVE CONTAMINANTS IN THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

65. Leaders recognised the special circumstances pertaining to the continued presence of radioactive contaminants in the Republic of the Marshall Islands and reaffirmed the existence of a special responsibility by the United States of America towards the people of the Marshall Islands, who have been, and continue to be, adversely affected as a direct result of nuclear weapons tests conducted by the U.S. during its administration of the Marshall Islands under the United Nations Trusteeship mandate.

66. Leaders reiterated their call on the United States of America to live up to its full obligations on the provision of adequate compensation and commitment to its responsibility for the safe resettlement of displaced populations, including the full and final restoration to economic productivity of all affected areas, and direct the Secretary General to write a letter to the United States Government expressing the Forum Leaders' support.

67. Leaders further encouraged Forum members to lend their support to the Marshall Islands on this issue at the United Nations General Assembly and other international fora.

COUNTRY INITIATIVES

68. Leaders welcomed the Pacific Oceanscape concept and its companion Pacific Ocean Arc initiative tabled by Kiribati aimed at increasing marine protected area investment, learning and networking. Leaders tasked the Secretariat, together with relevant CROP agencies and key partners, to develop a framework for the Pacific Oceanscape, drawing on the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy, as a priority area for attention under the Pacific Plan.

69. Leaders welcomed the convening of a Pacific-UN conference on *The Human Face of the Global Economic Crisis in the Pacific* to be hosted by the Vanuatu Government in February 2010. The conference will be sponsored by the UN and partnered by regional organisations.

70. Leaders agreed that there was an urgent need to agree on how best to address the impact of this and future crises on the people of the Pacific and requested the Secretariat to work closely with the Vanuatu Government and the UN to ensure that the conference outcomes were well aligned with the views and wishes of the Pacific Leaders and people.

71. Leaders agreed to further consider the recommendations of the conference at their next meeting in 2010.

72. Leaders considered and welcomed the presentation made by Samoa regarding a proposal for the establishment of a Regional PACP Office in Brussels. Leaders noted the decision by the PACP Leaders on this proposal.

SMALLER ISLAND STATES LEADERS' SUMMIT

73. Leaders noted the outcomes of the Smaller Island States Leaders' Summit in particular issues relating to SIS Unit, bulk procurement initiatives, shipping services, Temporary Movement of Natural Persons (TMNP), renewable energy, and climate change, including the *Majuro Declaration on Climate Change*.

PACIFIC ACP LEADERS' MEETING

74. Leaders noted the outcomes of the Pacific ACP Leaders' meeting.

CANDIDATURES

75. Leaders reaffirmed their strong and unanimous support for Australia's candidature for the UN Security Council (UNSC) for the two year term 2013-2014 and New Zealand's candidature for the two year term 2015-2016. Recognising the importance of Canada as a constructive partner for the region, the Forum also reaffirmed its support for Canada's candidacy for the 2011-2012 term. Leaders agreed on the benefit that Australia and New Zealand could bring to represent Pacific islands interests on the UNSC in the event of successful candidacies.

SOCCER WORLD CUP BID

76. Leaders affirmed their strong support for Australia's bid to host the 2018/2022 Soccer World Cup.

APPRECIATION

77. Leaders commended the outgoing Chair, Honourable Toke T Talagi MP, Premier of Niue, and his Government, for their outstanding leadership of the Forum over the past year.

78. Leaders expressed appreciation for the strong leadership of the Secretary General and the professionalism and commitment of Secretariat staff. They noted the strong performance of the Secretary General in his first year in office, notwithstanding the challenges.

VENUE

79. Leaders welcomed the Government of Vanuatu offer to host the 2010 Forum, the timing of which will be confirmed in consultation with Leaders.

PACIFIC LEADERS' CALL TO ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**6 August 2009**

For Pacific Island states, climate change is the great challenge of our time. It threatens not only our livelihoods and living standards, but the very viability of some of our communities.

Though the role of Pacific Island States in the causes of climate change is small, the impact on them is great. Many Pacific people face new challenges in access to water. The security of our communities and the health of populations is placed in greater jeopardy. And some habitats and island states face obliteration.

Mindful of the Niue Declaration, we therefore address this Call to Action to all leaders in the global community, and urgently seek their support to address this grave threat.

Many actions are needed, but a strong global agreement is vital. We therefore seek redoubled efforts from all states to secure a successful agreement at Copenhagen in December.

With 122 days to go, the international community is not on track to achieve the outcome we need unless we see a renewed mandate across all participating nations.

We call upon world leaders to urgently increase their level of ambition and to give their negotiators fresh mandates to secure a truly effective global agreement.

We call for a post-2012 outcome that sets the world on a path to limit the increase in global average temperatures to 2 degrees Celsius or less.

We call on states to reduce global emissions by at least 50 per cent below 1990 levels by 2050.

We call on states to ensure that global emissions peak no later than 2020.

We call on developed economies to take the lead by setting ambitious and robust mid-term emissions reduction targets – consistent with the agreed science and the directions embraced by the Major Economies Forum Meeting in July 2009.

We also call on developed economies to strengthen the seriousness and credibility of their claims at Copenhagen by putting in place domestic policies and legislation now to achieve emission reductions targets.

And we call on major developing economies to commit to slow and then reduce emissions growth over time, to nominate a peaking year for their emissions, and to ensure a substantial collective reduction below business-as-usual levels by 2020.

We call upon each major emitter to show leadership – to demonstrate by their words and deeds that they are willing to make the tough decisions necessary to secure the agreement that we need; and not to wait for others to show the way forward.

We understand that just as deforestation is part of the problem, so reducing deforestation and providing incentives to preserve forests should be part of the solution.

To defeat deforestation and forest degradation, we acknowledge that finance, technology and capacity development are necessary to underpin a step-wise process necessary to increase emissions reductions and carbon sequestration. Global carbon markets will play an important role, requiring robust methodological standards for measurable, reportable and verifiable actions.

For our part, we know that we will need to adapt to the changes in our climate that are already inevitable. We stand ready to lead our peoples in this adaptation process. But developing countries cannot do this alone. We call for increased support, prioritised to those developing countries most vulnerable and least able to respond.

We call for increased financing through carbon markets and other channels for climate change adaptation and mitigation action in developing countries, including through technology development and diffusion, and we welcome initiatives by G20 Leaders to develop financing options.

We call upon world leaders to recognise and act upon the threat climate change poses to our marine environment, particularly its effect on coral reefs, fisheries and food security.

We also call upon world leaders to include in a post-2012 arrangement practical and concrete solutions for those whose future existence is under threat.

In view of the situation of Small Island States and their future survival action by the major emitters, both developed and developing countries, should embrace the possibility of going beyond the 2050 targets contained within this Call to Action.

The world has shown, in responding to the global financial crisis, that it is prepared to act swiftly and decisively to address tough challenges. There will be no tougher challenge than addressing climate change, and no greater imperative for the peoples of the Pacific.

We, the leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum, commit ourselves to working intensively with leaders of all states to achieve an effective agreement at Copenhagen. We stand ready to play our part in securing an outcome that can safeguard our people, their prosperity and the planet.

CAIRNS COMPACT ON STRENGTHENING DEVELOPMENT COORDINATION IN THE PACIFIC

The Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum met 4–7 August 2009 in Cairns to bring new determination and an invigorated commitment to lift the economic and development performance of the region.

Leaders expressed their deep concern that, despite continued high levels of development assistance over many years, the Pacific region remains off-track to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) by 2015. Given the need to improve development outcomes, address the impact of the global economic downturn, and strengthen long-term economic resilience, Leaders agreed there was an urgent need to establish a new development compact for the Pacific. The key objective of this compact will be to drive more effective coordination of available development resources from both Forum Island countries and all development partners, centred on the aim of achieving real progress against the MDGs. They also called on the International Financial Institutions to assist the Pacific Islands countries in responding to the global economic crisis, including through supporting better coordination mechanisms.

To realise this objective, Leaders agreed that the new development compact would be based on the following principles:

- a recognition that broad-based, private sector-led growth was essential to achieving faster development progress and that donors should encourage the private sector, including through micro-finance and support for larger-scale private sector projects;
- a recognition that improved governance and service delivery are essential to achieving faster development progress;
- a recognition that greater investment in infrastructure would underpin greater economic development;
- an acknowledgement that country leadership, mutual accountability and mutual responsibility between Forum Island countries and their development partners are fundamental to successful development outcomes;
- the need to draw on international best-practice as expressed in the Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness and the Accra Agenda for Action; and
- a revitalised commitment to the achievement of the MDGs in the Pacific.

Leaders agreed that the Post Forum Dialogue will be the preeminent mechanism for collective review of progress in strengthening development coordination, to improve development outcomes and ensure effective use of all resources for development. To this end, Leaders agreed that:

- The Forum Secretariat establish and report annually to the Post Forum Dialogue on a process of regular peer review of Forum Island countries' national development plans to promote international best practice in key sectors, improve effective budget allocation processes and guide support from development partners;

- To help Pacific Island countries, especially small island states, meet these reporting requirements Australia and New Zealand in consultation with the Forum Secretariat would develop models for the presentation of national development plans to the Post-Forum Dialogue, and would assist states and the Forum Secretariat in preparing these reports by providing appropriate resourcing;
- Development partners be urged to provide an annual report to the Forum Secretariat on their efforts in support of this Compact, including efforts to reduce aid fragmentation, ease the burden of aid administration and improve aid effectiveness, through measures such as increased use of country partner systems, multi-year funding commitments, pooled funding, the delegation of aid delivery to lead donors, and collaborative analytical work; the Forum Secretariat would be tasked to prepare a consolidated assessment of annual reports from development partners for consideration by the Post Forum Dialogue;
- The Forum Secretariat also prepare and present to the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and the Post Forum Dialogue an annual report on progress towards the MDGs and the effectiveness of overall development efforts in the region;
- Leaders ensure the capacity and resources of the Forum Secretariat are enhanced to support improved development coordination and implementation of this Compact.

At the regional and national levels, Leaders agreed to the following additional practical measures to give effect to a new development compact for the Pacific:

- committing to an annual high level dialogue with national, regional and international representatives of the private sector, as part of the Pacific Islands Forum, to foster the reforms required for faster private sector growth and employment generation;
- directing the Forum Secretariat to coordinate with relevant development partners to develop a “road map” aimed at progressive strengthening of Forum Island countries’ public expenditure management, procurement, accountability and monitoring systems so they are the best delivery mechanisms for official development assistance;
- the close alignment of regional aid efforts with regional priorities – as identified by Leaders, including through the *Pacific Plan* and Leaders’ other initiatives on regional trade and economic integration;
- the improvement of Forum Island countries’ development data to guide better decision-making; and
- committing to drive a higher-level of development coordination through the Forum Economic Ministers’ Meeting, the Pacific Island Countries-Development Partners Meeting and annual national-level dialogues with development partners.

Leaders called on all development partners to join with Pacific Islands Forum countries in supporting the principles and the implementation of this Compact. Development partners were asked to ensure high level participation to review progress at future Post Forum Dialogue meetings.

Leaders directed the Forum Secretariat to work with Forum members to develop an implementation schedule and timetable to track progress in delivering on this Compact.

Leaders also agreed that, ultimately, national development plans were matters for national governments to determine.

Recommendations for Progressing the Pacific Plan

Noting the new challenges for the region presented by the global economic crisis and on-going vulnerability to external shocks, PPAC recommends to Forum Leaders that they prioritise the areas presented below to progress the implementation of the Pacific Plan over the next three years by:

a. fostering economic development and promoting opportunities for broad-based growth by:

- i. developing effective policy and practical responses to the global economic crisis with the objective of building sustained economic resilience, including through: safeguarding macro-economic stability; protecting core services; targeted support for the vulnerable; boosting national competitiveness and strengthened development coordination;
- ii. continuing to support action in the fisheries sector which would see commitment to implementing the direction offered by the Forum Leaders through the *Vava'u Declaration* and Forum Fisheries Committee, and in particular: progressing the development and implementation of fisheries management and development regimes including Regional Strategies on Sustainable Fisheries; Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission conservation and management measures; Monitoring, Control and Surveillance Strategies; addressing ongoing barriers to international market access; the re-negotiation of the Multilateral Treaty on Fisheries between Pacific Island States and the United States; the fostering of coastal fisheries; and strengthening the sector's governance;
- iii. building on existing marine protected areas and initiatives;
- iv. expediting the implementation of the 2009 Pacific Energy Ministers' decisions and, in particular, the five key areas highlighted by these Ministers to achieve greater energy security across the Pacific;
- v. providing greater support to tourism, the region's largest economic driver, and, in particular: accelerating development of emerging geographic and niche markets; improving access to Pacific destinations by air and sea; and continuing to build the capacity of small and medium service providers to cater to current and emerging international markets and generate employment opportunities;
- vi. developing regional and national frameworks to enable the development of the economic potential of marine mineral resources; and strengthening regional and national capacity in the mining, environment, labour and financial sectors to comply with relevant standards for the deep-sea mining industry within the region, while supporting environmental monitoring that preserves ecosystems and terrestrial and marine biodiversity;
- vii. fostering greater international and intra-regional trade opportunities by proceeding with the implementation of key regional trade agreements and, in particular, working to allow for the freer movement of goods and services;

- viii. strengthening the ability of the private sector to participate competitively in an integrated economy through the necessary enabling environments and support mechanisms;
- ix. addressing issues that hinder the movement of goods and services through expediting fit-for-purpose solutions in the transport sector and, in particular: improving and developing necessary infrastructure; supporting the implementation of the region's 2009 Shipping Ministers' directions; and the ongoing implementation of PIASA in the aviation sector, to ensure greater security, safety, reliability and competition of services across the region;
- x. implementing the directions provided by the region's Ministers for ICT and, in particular, revising and updating the Regional Digital Strategy;
- xi. continuing the implementation of the economic integration agenda promoted and regularly reviewed by the Forum Economic Ministers and, in particular, establishing components of the Regional Regulatory Stepladder as directed by these Ministers; and
- xii. increasing support for infrastructure development and maintenance across the region.

b. Improving livelihoods and the well-being of Pacific peoples by:

- i. continuing efforts to better ensure food security for people across the region and, in particular, expediting efforts to improve food standards and food quality and support agriculture, aquaculture and fisheries, through initiatives such as the Pacific Food Summit proposed for 2010;
- ii. Ensuring healthy populations through: the ongoing implementation of the Vanuatu Commitment and the recent *Madang Declaration for Action* from the 2009 Ministers of Health Meeting including enhanced efforts to better understand health determinants and build the sector's governance and ability to respond pro-actively to current and emerging health needs;
- iii. improving access to opportunities afforded through stronger education systems at all levels by implementing the directions given by Forum Education Ministers and, in particular, progressing the implementation of the Pacific Education Development Framework to better provide Pacific peoples access to economic opportunities through skills and prospects for mobility;
- iv. Urging efforts to pursue the opportunities offered by the appropriate utilisation and development of land resources to minimise the risk of conflict, improve security and assist in economic development, while recognising that land is a national responsibility;
- v. supporting the implementation of measures, existing commitments and programmes aimed at increasing awareness of and addressing the causes and consequences of sexual and gender-based violence and developing legislation to criminalize gender-based violence in all forms;

- vi. prioritising national actions to mainstream youth issues into the national development agenda; and
 - vii. acknowledging the importance of ensuring access to greater and more equitable opportunities for those with disabilities, to enhance their quality of life and promote and protect their rights and dignity.
- c. *Addressing the impacts of Climate Change by:*
- i. continuing the implementation of the Niue Declaration on Climate Change;
 - ii. Developing Pacific-tailored responses to support adaptation and mitigation measures and better coordination of Disaster Risk Management-Climate Change Adaptation (DRM-CCA), and furthering regional and international efforts and research to support national action in combating climate change;
 - iii. coordinating regional efforts in the completion and early implementation of the outcomes of the December 2009 Copenhagen meetings;
 - iv. enhancing the resilience of ecological systems and associated biodiversity and providing ecosystem services with a focus on the impacts of climate change in line with the Year of Biodiversity in 2010;
 - v. assisting with the assessment called for by the United Nations General Assembly Resolution A/Res/63/281 *Climate Change and its Possible Security Implications*;
 - vi. Strengthening data collection and analysis for improved climatic monitoring and preparedness through integrated whole-system approaches;
 - vii. building scientific capacity across the region through strategic partnerships with bodies such as the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change, and an expansion in scientific education and training programmes; and
 - viii. building support, with the assistance of regional and international partners, for the new Coral Triangle Initiative on Coral Reefs, Fisheries and Food security, and capitalising on the offer made by Papua New Guinea and Solomon Islands to share relevant lessons learned.
- d. *Achieving stronger national development through better governance by:*
- i. demonstrating strong national leadership and enhanced regional attention to accelerate improvements to development coordination in the region, to maximise the effectiveness and impact of the resources of Pacific island governments and development partners to make faster progress towards the Millennium Development Goals;
 - ii. committing to sustainable and appropriate: collection and compilation of statistics; information management; and records-keeping, to ensure the development and implementation of better-informed national policy;
 - iii. implementing efforts to allow for improved access to official information;

- iv. supporting efforts to allow an enhanced role for women in national decision-making processes;
 - v. Continuing to strengthen accountability and integrity institutions, through approaches such as the Pacific Ombudsman Alliance and Pacific Regional Audit Initiative;
 - vi. encouraging greater involvement of parliamentarians in the development agenda, through the Forum Presiding Officers and Clerks/Pacific Parliamentary Assembly for Population and Development (FPOC-PPAPD) and other leadership groups;
 - vii. addressing corruption through the use and implementation of relevant and existing national, regional and international mechanisms and commitments;
- e. *Ensuring improved social, political and legal conditions for stability, safety and security by:*
- i. improving human security outcomes for Members, through advancing effective conflict prevention, conflict resolution mechanisms and peace building;
 - ii. strengthening cooperation in the law enforcement and border security sectors to address terrorism and transnational crime; and
 - iii. promoting and consolidating regional stability through adherence to Forum values and the principles of the Biketawa Declaration.

SPC-SOPAC-SPREP/RIF (01)

Summary of decisions
ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

**JOINT MEETING OF SOPAC, SPC AND SPREP GOVERNING BODIES
ON THE REGIONAL INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK (RIF)**
(Tradewinds Convention Centre, Suva, Fiji, 7-8 July 2009)

SUMMARY OF DECISIONS

1. The governing bodies of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), the Pacific Community (SPC), and the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) met together under the chairmanship of the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to consider options for new institutional arrangements for their organisations. The meeting was an historic occasion, being the first time that such a joint meeting has been held. Work on the reform of the current Regional Institutional Framework (RIF) has been carried out in response to the decision of Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and the previous decisions of the three governing bodies that SOPAC programmes and services should be rationalised into SPC and SPREP. As a result, the CEOs of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP, with the support of their staff, have undertaken extensive consultation to develop options for such a rationalisation and have commissioned reports from independent consultants on the financial, legal and operational implications of various options. An overriding consideration of these consultations has been the need to avoid fragmentation or diminution of SOPAC's core services, which are highly valued by its members, and to ensure that the region benefits from enhanced synergies and efficiencies as a result of the rationalisation, in accordance with the objectives of the RIF process and the wishes of Forum leaders. After extensive deliberation of the options *and associated implementation plans* presented, the joint meeting of the governing bodies of SOPAC, SPC and SPREP agreed on the following decisions. These decisions will be provided to Forum Leaders through the Pacific Plan Action Committee.

DECISIONS

a) With respect to the ICT Outreach Programme of SOPAC, the joint meeting of the governing bodies:

- (i)* endorsed the integration of the ICT Outreach Programme of SOPAC into the Digital Strategy component of the proposed, new division of Economic Development, Energy, Transport, Infrastructure and Communication of SPC from January 2010;
- (ii)* noted that the final implementation plan will be presented to the meetings of the respective governing bodies of SPC and SOPAC in October 2009; and
- (iii)* noted further that the GIS and remote sensing functions constitute an integral part of the core scientific work of SOPAC and will transfer to SPC from January 2010.

b) With respect to the Energy Programme of SOPAC, the joint meeting of the governing bodies:

- (i) endorsed the decision taken by Pacific Energy Ministers in Tonga in April 2009 in which *Energy Ministers*:
 - a. agreed that regional and donor coordination and delivery of energy services to Pacific Island countries be strengthened and delivered through one energy agency and through one programme contributing to the development of a stronger energy sector and improved service to member countries; and
 - b. in this context, noted that there was a need to ensure that energy policy and climate change policy remained separate, where environmental aspects are managed by SPREP and energy sector activities by SPC so as to ensure that the socio-economic aspects of energy were adequately addressed;
- (ii) recognised the interrelationship and links between energy and climate change and the need to address energy policy in relation to climate change as an integral part of the final implementation plan for rationalisation of the energy programme of SOPAC;
- (iii) noted that this plan will be presented for consideration to the meetings of the governing body of SPREP in September and of SOPAC and SPC in October 2009 to enable implementation from January 2010.

c) With respect to the balance of the SOPAC core work programme, the joint meeting of the governing bodies:

- (i) welcomed the commitment by members to strengthen SPREP as the region's lead environmental agency, including through support for the implementation of the approved decisions relating to the independent corporate review of SPREP;
- (ii) agreed that the following specific SOPAC functions be transferred to SPREP *from January 2010*: the Pacific Islands Global Ocean Observing System, the Islands Climate Update, the Climate and Meteorological Database, and the component of the energy sector relating to monitoring and evaluation of greenhouse gases and the clean development mechanism (CDM);
- (iii) agreed that the remaining functions of SOPAC be transferred to SPC as a new geoscience division from January 2010 based on the final implementation plan to be presented to and considered by the governing bodies of SOPAC and SPC in October 2009;
- (iv) encouraged SPREP and SPC to optimise linkages between their work programmes and activities in the area of environment to strengthen service delivery and coordination; and
- (v) agreed that progress with the transfer of SOPAC functions be reported to the annual meetings of the governing bodies and Pacific Plan Action Committee.