

PACNEWS

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UN - COP27: UN NEWS CENTRE

PACNEWS 3: Thu 17 Nov 2022

UNICEF launches new child-focused climate initiative to head off disasters

SHARM EL SHEIKH/ GENEVA, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (UN NEWS CENTRE) ---The UN Children's Fund (UNICEF) on Wednesday launched a new climate financing initiative designed to help countries address current and growing impacts of the climate crisis, and better cope with disasters.

"We know more climate disasters are in the making. We just do not know where or when they will hit", said Karin Hulshof, UNICEF Deputy Executive Director for Partnerships.

The *Today and Tomorrow initiative*, for the first time, combines funding for immediate resilience and risk prevention programmes for children today, with risk transfer finance provided by the insurance market to help cope with future cyclones.

"The risks of climate change are no longer hypothetical. They are here. And even while we work to build communities' resilience against climate disasters, we have to become much better in pre-empting risks for our children", she added.

Youth are a critically vulnerable population who are among the most affected by extreme weather events.

Last year, UNICEF's Children's Climate Risk Index estimated that 400 million children are currently at high exposure to cyclones.

During the initial three-year pilot, the initiative will focus on Bangladesh, Comoros, Haiti, Fiji, Madagascar, Mozambique, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu.

To move forward, UNICEF is raising US\$30 million for the project and calling for additional private and public partners to join the agency in closing the intensifying humanitarian financing gap for disaster protection for children and youth.

Although extreme weather damage perpetuates and deepens inequality and poverty across generations, existing risk transfer mechanisms do not meet the specific needs of hundreds of millions of children and youth.

Today and Tomorrow is the first pre-arranged and event-based climate disaster risk financing mechanism that specifically targets the "child protection gap", with full support for the future, as secured by the governments of Germany and the United Kingdom under the newly launched G7-V20 Global Shield against Climate Risks.

Heike Henn, a Director at the German Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development, expects the initiative to deliver in the areas of knowledge-sharing and increased familiarity with risk financing instruments; improved shock resilience of development institutions; and help close the disaster risk protection gap, "especially for children and mothers".

UK Minister for Development and Africa, Andrew Mitchell, strongly supports "bringing pre-arranged and trigger-based financing to the humanitarian sector...including this new grant to UNICEF...to protect up to 15 million children, young people and their families across Africa, the Caribbean, Asia and the Pacific and respond rapidly if tropical cyclones hit".

Cyclones and the disasters they spark, such as floods and landslides, are the fastest-growing category of climate-influenced disasters and a major cause of global losses and damages, according to UNICEF.

UNICEF's research has shown that investments that reduce exposure to and negative impacts from cyclones and other hazards can considerably reduce overall climate risk for millions of children.

"UNICEF is the first UN institution, as well as one of the largest humanitarian organisations worldwide, to take out a bespoke disaster risk coverage for the protection of children, youth and parents, especially mothers", said Simon Young, a Senior Director in the Climate and Resilience Hub at international insurance advisors WTW, which designed the insurance solution.

As well as pressing Governments and big businesses to rapidly reduce emissions, UNICEF urges leaders to take immediate action to protect children from climate devastation by adapting the critical social services they rely on.

UNICEF also urges parties to find and fund solutions to support those facing loss and damage beyond the limits to which communities can adapt....PACNEWS

PAC - COP27: COMSEC

PACNEWS 3: Thu 17 Nov 2022

COP27: Samoa PM commends Commonwealth as a valuable platform for small states

SHARM EL SHEIKH, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (COMSEC)---Samoa Prime Minister Fiame Naomi Mata'afa has highlighted the Commonwealth's role as an advocate for small states at the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP27), taking place in Sharm El-Sheikh, Egypt.

In the margins of the summit, the Prime Minister met with Commonwealth Secretary-General, Patricia Scotland, to underscore the concerns of Pacific small island developing states such as Samoa, as well as discuss ongoing preparations for the forthcoming Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in 2024.

Samoa will be the first small island developing state from the Pacific to host the biennial meeting. The event will bring together leaders from the 56 Commonwealth nations – including 33 small states, 25 of them developing island nations – to discuss issues of shared concern and take joint actions on global challenges such as climate change, human rights, rule of law and sustainable development.

Prime Minister Mata'afa said: "The Commonwealth has always worked for the interests of small states. It finds resources and develops programmes that can address their specific needs and challenges, whether it be programmes to promote biodiversity or the development of legislation around climate change. We very

much appreciate the opportunity to host the next Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting [CHOGM] which will further enhance the profile of small island states."

Secretary-General Patricia Scotland welcomed the delegation, saying: "Pacific countries have been at the vanguard of global climate advocacy and they are fighting here at COP27 for their survival and a viable future for us all. For island nations such as Samoa, climate change is a lived experience that intersects with a host of other acute challenges. The Commonwealth is committed to supporting all our member countries to tackle these challenges together each step of the way."

Touching on the COP27 negotiations, PM Mata'afa said Samoa's priorities reflect those of the wider Pacific region, and include limiting global temperature rise to the 1.5 degree limit, addressing loss and damage, mobilising climate finance and the climate change-ocean nexus.

She added that the climate-related outcomes of the recent Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting held in Kigali, Rwanda in June, including the adoption of the Commonwealth Living Lands Charter, were a "natural link" to the discussions at COP27.

During the meeting, the Secretary-General also shared information about other Commonwealth Secretariat initiatives such as the Commonwealth Blue Charter, the Commonwealth Sustainable Energy Transition Agenda, and the Commonwealth Universal Vulnerability Index....PACNEWS

PAC - COP27: PACNEWS

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Vanuatu's director of women relishes her role as a technical co-ordinator for negotiators on gender and climate change for PSIDS

By Makereta Komai, PACNEWS Editor in Sharm El Sek

SHARM EL SHEIKH, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (PACNEWS)--- Apart from the tough negotiations going into its final stages, one of the Pacific negotiators is not only relishing the experience and lessons learnt from the tough environment in the negotiating room, she is already thinking of what she can take away from COP27.

Rothina Ilo Noka is the director of women's affairs in Vanuatu. She's excited about her learnings at the climate change talks in Sharm El Sheikh and is ready to go back and share that knowledge with her peers in Port Vila.

"I guess for me it's going back home and building the capacity of the department of women's affairs first because gender is our mandate. It's also important that my team understand what's available from the gender financing mechanism so we can access them for our women's groups and incorporate that into our national programmes.

"For me it's marrying gender mainstreaming and climate change and also budgeting and planning.

"We also need to ensure that our grassroots women are able to access funding. I'll also find out if our local women are accessing these funds that are available. Or is it our structure and bureaucracy that prevents women from accessing funding support, asked Noka.

The head of the Vanuatu women's affairs is one of the technical negotiators on gender and climate change for PSIDS.

"I'm glad that Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) through G77 and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) support our call for simplified climate financing mechanism available for women, local and indigenous communities."

"Unfortunately we have three options in paragraph 12. I'm hoping that when it's taken up to the COP Presidency, he can decide on what option will be in the text. For us it's the 'simplified' success.:

Currently the three options on the table that are bracketed are "enhanced/simplified.

"I guess our 'simplified' text is what we are asking for because it addresses some of the issues that our women are facing – and that is accessing finance.

Noka said the trip to COP27 also enhanced her understanding of the UN region and its unique challenges and opportunities.... PACNEWS

Makereta Komai attendance at COP27 is supported by SPREP and Irish Aid.

AUST - COP27: THE GUARDIAN

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Australia still trails most developed countries in climate performance ranking

SHARM EL -SHEIKH, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (THE GUARDIAN) ---Australia continues to trail other developed countries in addressing the climate crisis, in part due to the Albanese government's support for new fossil fuel developments, according to an analysis released at the Cop27 UN conference in Egypt.

The climate change performance index, published by Germanwatch, the NewClimate Institute and the Climate Action Network with input from 450 climate and energy experts and campaigners, found Australia was still a "very low performing country". It ranked 55th on a list of 63 countries and country groupings, up from 59th last year.

The authors welcome Australia's increased 2030 emissions reduction target – a legislated 43 percent cut compared with 2005 levels, up from a 26 percent under the Morrison government – but said it was still relatively weak. They noted its plans to introduce measures to tackle industrial emissions, slow electric vehicle uptake and energy use but said many of these changes were at an early stage action, and there would be a lag before they would have an impact on emissions.

The country received a "very low" score for its performance on emissions, renewable energy and energy use, and "low" for climate policy. It was marked down for having "no policies or national plan on phasing out coal and gas mining" and planning to increase coal and gas production by more than 5% by 2030.

"The increase is not compatible with the global 1.5C target," the report said.

Richie Merzian, climate and energy director with the Australia Institute, said the index showed while the Albanese government's climate policies were a major improvement compared with its predecessor, they were only a minor improvement compared to other countries.

"Without a plan to stop new gas and coal mining, which could be done through reforms to the safeguard mechanism, Australia lags well behind other major economies," he said.

Nicki Hutley, an economist with the Climate Council, said Australia had "gone from dead last to a pass". "Despite the nation's recent progress, there is no escaping just how far behind we are and how much catching up we've got to do," she said.

The climate change minister, Chris Bowen, said the government was proud of its achievements in climate and energy in the less than six months since it was elected.

He said it had increased Australia's UN commitment – known as a nationally determined contribution – to a 43 percent cut by 2030 compared with 2005 levels, and was "driving an unprecedented transformation to a renewable grid" through its rewiring the nation policy and electricity transmission deals, including to deliver the Marinus link across Bass Strait.

"Australia is pleased that this increased ambition has been warmly welcomed by countless nations and private sector investors at Cop27," he said.

Australia trailed the world's two biggest emitters, China and the U.S, which were ranked 51st and 52nd. While China was found to be backing renewable energy at substantial levels, it was marked down for

continuing to invest in new coal plants and failing to curb rising emissions. The U.S was praised for the passage of legislation including \$US369bn in climate measures, but was held back by its high per capita emissions and renewable energy share.

The authors found no country was yet on a 1.5C pathway. The top three spots on the table were left blank, reflecting that no one was performing at the level expected to justify such a high ranking. The top 10 countries, ranked from 4th to 13th, were Denmark, Sweden, Chile, Morocco, India, Estonia, Norway, the UK, the Philippines, and the Netherlands.

The bottom 10 was dominated by fossil fuel producers: Poland, Australia, Malaysia, Chinese Taipei, Canada, Russia, Korea, Kazakhstan, Saudi Arabia and, in last place, Iran.

The authors said rather than cutting fossil fuel production, governments across the globe were planning to produce twice as much coal, oil and gas by 2030 as would be consistent with the global goal of limiting heating to 1.5C above pre-industrial levels.

"To keep the Paris agreement promises in reach no new permits for fossil fuel extraction should be handed out, and no new fossil fuel infrastructure switched on," the report said....PACNEWS

PALAU - HEALTH: ISLAND TIMES

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Palau COVID-19 cases on the rise again

KOROR, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (ISLAND TIMES)---The latest report from Palau's Ministry of Health shows COVID-19 cases rising again.

As of 11 November 2022, the new cases identified have risen to 42 from 17 on 04 November.

Total active cases have doubled to 40 from 20 reported on November 4th. In addition, in the 11 November situation report, there were two hospitalised COVID cases. There haven't been reported hospitalized cases since mid-September.

Ministry of Health and Human Services (MHHS) continues to urge eligible persons to obtain booster shots. It offers fuel vouchers worth US\$25 each to people getting their COVID-19 booster vaccines.

"MHHS encourages everyone to get vaccinated or get boosters when eligible for the best protection against COVID-19. Getting a COVID-19 vaccine after you recover from a COVID-19 infection provides added protection against COVID-19. You may receive your COVID-19 vaccine or booster at least 3 months after a COVID infection. It is also safe to get your COVID-19 and your flu vaccine simultaneously," states the MHHS public service announcement.PACNEWS

NZ - HEALTH: TVNZ

PACNEWS 3: Thu 17 Nov 2022

Māori, Pasifika leaders welcome drop in Covid booster age eligibility

AUCKLAND, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (TVNZ)--Lowering the age of eligibility of the second Covid-19 booster for Māori and Pacific people has been widely welcomed by community leaders and health care professionals, even as some express disappointment it wasn't widened to all under 40.

Health officials announced the change in a media conference at Auckland's Middlemore Hospital, as they warned of a likely spike in cases over the summer holidays.

At the moment only those who are health workers, the severely immuno-compromised or over 50 are eligible for a second booster. But come Friday for Māori and Pacific that age will drop to 40.

It's a change that community advocates have long been calling for due to the existing health inequity that's seen Māori and Pacific populations more at risk from the effects of Covid-19.

Asa Foundation chief executive Tofilau Esther Tofilau says the change is better late than never.

"It's wonderful they have lowered it now, it's perfect timing with Christmas coming around the corner," she says.

"It's very crucial, as there's a lot of parties and festivities that are happening, so it's always great to be safe than sorry [and get a booster] especially when you are around your loved ones and the elderly."

Pacific community leader Teleiai Edwin Puni says the expansion of the eligibility criteria will not only protect those in New Zealand but also our Pacific neighbours.

"A lot of the young people will be out and about and will be visiting families across New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, so this is a good call," he said.

Mixed views on the streets of Auckland with some telling 1News they weren't too keen on another jab as they felt one booster was enough protection, while others welcomed being able to add another layer.

One woman, who'd just turned 40, says she'll be getting it.

"I've got kids, I've got elderly parents, so why not?" she said.

Another young man says it's a good move for his community.

"For Polynesians, it's really hard to have accessibility to healthcare, so it's a good move."

University of Auckland immunologist Anna Brooks also welcomed the move, but says there are other pockets of the population who could stand to benefit from an additional booster.

"We know that immunity [from the vaccine] wanes, and what that also means is the risk of severe illness creeps back up again," she said.

"It would still be good for people who are vulnerable, who haven't been infected, and other vulnerable groups to have access to that booster again."

The Ministry of Health's chief science adviser Dr Ian Town says the focus around the decision had been on those who were at greatest risk.

"The risk of death from Covid-19 is around twice for Māori and Pacific people and that risk kicks in earlier, around the age of 40."

And he says they are also two to three times more likely to end up in hospital....PACNEWS

FIJI - RETIREMENT AGE: FIJI TIMES

PACNEWS 3: Thu 17 Nov 2022

Hassan: 55 a very early retirement

SUVA, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (FIJI TIMES)---Many older persons in Fiji continue to work post-retirement as they are strapped for funds to keep themselves and their families going, says Pearce Home Trust chairman Mohammed Hassan Khan.

Khan, who is also the former director of the Fiji Council of Social Services (FCOSS) and a member of the National Council for Older Persons, made the statement in an interview with *The Fiji Times'* western bureau chief Anish Chand.

He also compared the lifestyle retirees abroad enjoyed with Fijians at home.

"You see nowadays, boat loads of people coming. They're all retirees and they want to go for holiday," Mr Khan said.

"Our people can't even go to Deuba for holidays. A lot of people have not even seen the new Rewa Bridge, so these are the types of things we know about."

He maintained that 55 was a very early retirement age and added that people should be able to work for however long they wanted, especially if they were in the right physical and mental state to do so.

"Those who cannot work can retire. Some have to work because they don't have enough pensions, they have to work because they don't have food on the table, looking after their grandchildren.

"They have to work because they're looking after their own people, they have to work because they're looking after people with disabilities, et cetera, in their own families and environments, so these are the reasons why they're working."

Khan also said there was a need to have a national health policy that would work across the board for all services and sectors.

"Yes, it should be workable and that is something that has been discussed on and off, but never been put on the table and there hasn't been anything much written to discuss that issue.

"Again, that is something that the National Council of Older Persons needs to discuss or address.

"We have a national policy on older persons, but there is no national policy on health, healthy living," he said...PACNEWS

PACNEWS BIZ

USA - TUNA INDUSTRY: REUTERS

PACNEWS BIZ: Thu 17 Nov 2022

U.S Supreme Court rejects StarKist's tuna price-fixing class action appeal

VIRGINIA, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (REUTERS)---The U.S. Supreme Court on Monday declined to hear a bid by StarKist Co, owned by South Korea's Dongwon Industries (006040.KS), to avoid a lawsuit by tuna buyers accusing it of fixing prices.

The justices turned away StarKist's appeal of a lower court's decision that let three groups of tuna purchasers receive class action status to jointly sue the canned tuna company even though a large number of buyers may not have been overcharged and injured by the price fixing.

The case could have given the justices, had they decided to hear it, a chance to make it harder for consumers and other plaintiffs to receive class action status.

The Reston, Virginia-based company, which produces StarKist Tuna, had asked the Supreme Court to consider whether plaintiffs could still win class action status in cases in which some of the members of the class were not injured by a company's alleged wrongdoing.

StarKist's appeal garnered the support of business groups including the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, which in a brief to the justices said "there are too many judges who, despite this court's instructions, continue to put a heavy thumb on the scale in favour of class certification."

Class action status allows a few plaintiffs to litigate on behalf of a much larger group rather than forcing individuals to litigate separately. Businesses fight to avoid cases winning class action status, which can expose them to massive potential damages and create pressure to settle.

The litigation, filed in federal court in California, followed a U.S Justice Department investigation into a three-year conspiracy by U.S suppliers of packaged tuna including StarKist and Bumble Bee Foods to fix prices for their products in violation of antitrust laws.

StarKist pleaded guilty, admitting to having fixed the prices of canned tuna from as early as November 2011 through at least as late as December 2013, and was sentenced in 2019 to a US\$100 million fine. Bumble Bee and three industry executives also pleaded guilty. Former Bumble Bee CEO Christopher Lischewski was convicted at trial and sentenced in 2020 to 40 months in prison.

Prosecutors said the scheme affected more than US\$600 million dollars of canned tuna sales.

Amid the investigation, a number of packaged tuna purchasers filed proposed class actions against Bumble Bee, StarKist and a third company, Chicken of the Sea, who together sold more than 80% of the packaged tuna in the United States. The plaintiffs accused the companies of violating federal and state antitrust laws through a scheme that caused them to overpay for tuna.

In 2019, a trial judge granted class action status to three separate groups of tuna buyers: direct purchasers such as national retailers and regional grocery stores; commercial food preparers; and individual consumers.

The companies appealed, saying 28 percent or more of direct purchasers by their analysis may not have been harmed.

A three-judge panel of the San Francisco-based 9th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in 2021 decertified the three classes, saying the judge had failed to determine whether or not the number of uninjured tuna buyers was too small to justify class action status.

On further review, an 11-judge 9th Circuit panel voted 9-2 in April to break the three classes apart and declined to adopt a rule against certifying a class action even if only a trivial number of class members were harmed. StarKist appealed that ruling to the Supreme Court....PACNEWS

PAC - TUNA INDUSTRY: ISLAND TIMES

PACNEWS BIZ: Thu 17 Nov 2022

U.S. calling for stronger transshipment measures at WCPFC

KOROR, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (ISLAND TIMES)---The United States is calling for strengthened regional management measures on transshipment which they hoped to be addressed in the upcoming Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission (WCPFC) meeting in Vietnam later this month.

"The United States remains concerned about the risks that transshipment represents in supporting illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing operations and other criminal activities," the proposal stated

Over US\$142 million worth of illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) products is transshipped each year, a 2016 study estimated, most of it misreported or not reported by licensed fishing vessels.

"To address this concern, the U.S supports strengthening the WCPFC Conservation and Management Measure on the Regulation of Transshipment (CMM 2009-06) to help address such concerns," the US proposed in the upcoming meeting.

In the last meeting, the Commission agreed to conduct a review of the current measure in transshipment...PACNEWS

PNG must develop beef industry

PORT MORESBY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (THE NATIONAL)---The head of a State-owned entity tasked with developing the livestock industry says Papua New Guinea must look to develop its own beef industry to lessen its reliance on imports.

Livestock Development Corporation Ltd (LDCL) managing director Terry Koim said the country spent K450 million (US\$127 million) annually to import meat because its own domestic production could not supply that demand.

Koim said LDCL aimed to expand and improve cattle farming by rehabilitating the existing six abattoirs nationwide.

These abattoirs are Wariman (East Sepik), Sagalau (Madang), Bihute (Eastern Highlands), Korn Farm (Jiwaka), Tiaba (Port Moresby) and Kurakakaul (East New Britain).

Koim added that work had been done on distribution centres for cattle.

He noted funding constraints as a challenge in achieving national government's aim in downstream processing. '

In 2020, the Government appropriated K5 million (US\$1.4 million) to LDCL.

Koim said LDCL had achieved some good results with the funding.

He said they had reclaimed state land, re-opened cattle ranches and revived rundown abattoirs, among others.

Koim said he had set targets for 2025 and these were import replacement, food security and job creation.

He said he would need about K50 million (US\$14.2 million) annually to ensure LDCL met the targets.

Koim added that one long-term goal was to eventually become the country's regulator of the livestock industry....PACNEWS

Investment on PNG PM's agenda

PORT MORESBY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (POST COURIER)---Papua New Guinea Prime Minister James Marape says attracting investment will be his main agenda while attending his first APEC summit in Bangkok, Thailand, this week.

Jetting out of Port Moresby, Marape said it will be an opportune time to tickle the interest of some of the global superpowers and Pacific neighbours who may have interest in spending money in PNG.

He said: "In my view, the competitive advantage PNG has is exporting our produce to these markets, with Asia having a massive population.

"This massive population, which is growing all the time, will have an increasing need for food and energy which PNG can supply."

With the 2023 budget presentation just a week away, investment to boost government coffers is no doubt on the top of Marape's mind.

He said the APEC summit will discuss present and future investments, and he will use the opportunity to attract investors into PNG.

"This will not only be in the traditional PNG exports like mining, oil and gas, but more so in downstream processing of our timber, our fisheries and our agriculture," he said.

"My generation of leadership wants to make the leap from being an exporter of raw resources to becoming an exporter of finished produce."

Marape said International Trade and Investment Minister Richard Maru and Foreign Affairs Minister Justin Tkatchenko, would accompany him to progress what was discussed.

"We are moving in a big way into special economic zones, as well as downstream processing of our natural resources, as these are long overdue," he said....PACNEWS

PACNEWS DIGEST

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COP27: Health Organisations issue stern demand for Loss and Damage fund

SHARM EL - SHEIK, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (GLOBAL CLIMATE AND HEALTH ALLIANCE) --- As negotiations move to the ministerial level at COP27 Climate Summit in Egypt, the Global Climate and Health Alliance reiterated its call for governments to commit to establishing a Loss and Damage fund under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

Outside COP27's negotiating halls, protesters have been chanting, "Pay up! Pay up! Pay up for loss and damage!". Inside, a negotiator for Guinea noted on November 10th that climate change has existential impacts throughout the African continent, with homes destroyed, populations displaced, and huge economic costs. While the G77 and China are keen to agree on the establishment of a fund at COP27, with the finer details to be confirmed by COP28, Canada, the EU and the U.S are pushing for a further two years to review the current context and assess the need and potential mechanisms for a dedicated loss and damage funding arrangement.

"A two-year delay to assess whether or not to create a dedicated Loss and Damage fund would be utterly unacceptable, given the urgency of the climate crisis, and the delays that lower income countries have already had to endure in receiving funds to combat climate impacts", said Dr Jeni Miller, Executive Director of the Global Climate and Health Alliance, which brings together over 130 health organisations from around the world to tackle climate change and to protect and promote public health.

"Before COP27 closes, governments of developed/high-income countries must prioritise the establishment of a Loss and Damage fund to deliver finance to lower income countries that have been harmed by climate change, including for the damage to people's health, and to health systems - there can be no further delay", said Miller.

"Vulnerable and impacted countries desperately need these funds to compensate for the impacts on people's health and wellbeing, as they respond to climate crises not of their making. Low income countries feeling the brunt of climate change cannot afford two years of discussion - they need guarantees of receiving the critical funds they desperately need," added Miller.

Health losses and damages include damage to health facilities and supply chain infrastructure, the costs of treating people experiencing health impacts, and the costs to households and the national economy resulting from loss of labour productivity. These losses can be acute, such as deaths during floods or chronic, such as malnutrition arising from food scarcity, or the increased burden of vector-borne disease - linked to climate-driven changes in rainfall and temperature.

"Around the world health workers are seeing the human face of loss and damage", said Jen Kuhl, Networks and Engagement Lead for the Global Climate and Health Alliance. "Malaria is being reported in the highlands of Uganda, where it was previously unseen. Recent floods in Pakistan destroyed health centres and homes, and displaced millions of people including thousands of pregnant women who have been forced to give birth in unsafe conditions."

"Vulnerable nations have been calling for increased recognition of losses and damages for years," added Kuhl. "As extreme weather events ramp up in frequency and intensity, people should not have to wait for international donors to mobilize every time there is a climate disaster. Meanwhile slower moving impacts such as droughts that impact agriculture and thus exacerbate hunger are a stark reality in many developing regions. Developed countries must urgently commit to implementing a Loss and Damage fund - there is no time to waste", said Kuhl.

"We're still not seeing any convincing progress with regard to comprehensive and accountable mechanisms to deliver the level and type of funding required", said Jess Beagley, Policy Lead for the Global Climate and Health Alliance. "While New Zealand announced funding for loss and damage, by reallocating funding from its commitment for mitigation and adaptation finance, Germany and G7 countries have proposed an insurance structure, the Global Shield. None of this is good enough", added Beagley.

"Funding for loss and damage must come as new and additional, on top of already existing climate finance for mitigation and adaptation and wider development assistance. Reallocating funding away from mitigation and adaptation to loss and damage only makes subsequent losses and damage more inevitable. Insurance-based mechanisms are insufficient - mounting climate impacts mean that the most vulnerable regions may simply not be considered insurable, and it's unclear how insurance would address slow-onset events. Moreover, loss and damage finance must be delivered the form of grants, not loans that only serve to mire developing countries in years of foreign debt," concluded Beagley.

Contact: For interviews with health professionals during COP27, contact Dave Walsh, Communications Advisor, Global Climate and Health Alliance, +34 691 826 764 (Europe) – press@climateandhealthalliance.org

PACNEWS DIGEST

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FSM congratulates U.S - China for resumption of climate change talks, "dialogue essential for peace," says President Panuelo

POHNPEI, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (FSM GOVT) --- The Federated States of Micronesia's President David W. Panuelo has welcomed the recent meeting between U.S President Joe Biden and Chinese President Xi Jinping, on the margins of the Group of Twenty (G20) summit held in Bali, Indonesia.

"The Federated States of Micronesia and I, in my capacity as its President, recognises, appreciates, and applauds the United States and China for the recent meeting of their Heads of State on the margins of the G20 in Indonesia. The expansion of direct and in-person communication between the U.S. and Chinese Governments is central towards the responsible pursuit of strategic competition in a way that greatly reduces the likelihood of outright conflict."

"It is worth emphasising why the meeting between President Biden and President Xi is significant to the Government and People of Micronesia. Limited connectivity between our Nation's closest allies and friends poses the very real risk of dehumanisation of the other side, the loss of hope that problems can be tackled, and a fatalistic attitude about the relationship's trajectory, which can plausibly lead to intensified planning for worst-case scenarios and a continued escalation of tensions. Having an honest peer-to-peer

conversation, by contrast, humanises the other side; engenders hope that problems can be tackled; and reverses attitudes about a relationship's trajectory, including the development of opportunities to de-escalate tensions, and pathways for solving truly global challenges, such as Climate Change."

"The Federated States of Micronesia recognises, appreciates, and applauds that both President Biden and President Xi have agreed to empower their key senior officials to maintain communication, and to deepen constructive efforts on tackling Climate Change, global macroeconomic stability, health security, and food security. It is certainly the case that the Federated States of Micronesia, and I would humbly suggest that this is also true for every island in our Blue Pacific Continent, views Climate Change as an existential security threat, and sees an intertwined relationship between combatting Climate Change with ensuring economic, health, and food security. It is positive for Micronesia, and it is positive for the Pacific, that the Americans and the Chinese partner together on these important issues for the good of the Planet, and so the resumption of cooperation in these areas is both noteworthy and significant."

"The Federated States of Micronesia further recognises, appreciates, and applauds President Biden's and President Xi's agreement that a nuclear war should never be fought and can never be won. Our Nation's brothers and sisters in the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and our Japanese friends with whom we share a special bond or Kizuna, still deal with the effects of such weapons seventy years after their use. In this regard, the Federated States of Micronesia calls on both the United States and China to reiterate their agreement that a nuclear war should never be fought, and can never be won, to the Russian Federation and the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), who both continue to irresponsibly threaten the use of nuclear weapons."

"The Federated States of Micronesia recognises, appreciates, and applauds President Biden's and President Xi's honest discussions regarding peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait. In this regard, I will note that the U.S White House's readout of the meeting says that 'the United States opposes any unilateral changes to the status quo by either side, and the world has an interest in the maintenance of peace and stability in the Taiwan Strait.' I also note that China's Ministry of Foreign Affairs' readout of the meeting says that '[China] hopes to see, and are all along committed to, peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait.'

"It is the view of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia that dialogue is essential for peace. In this regard, the Federated States of Micronesia solicits the United States and China to also consider enhancing their People-to-People ties. It is to the knowledge of our Government that, in 2018, approximately 11,000 American students were studying in China and that, as of 2022, that number is now less than 300. As the President of a country that has benefited tremendously from genuine People-to-People engagement with the United States and China, such as through the U.S Peace Corps, and that has led to our People's positive view of both the Americans and the Chinese, I believe that it is in the interest of peace and stability, in the Indo-Pacific at large and the Blue Pacific Continent specifically, for more Americans to experience and know that China is not a monolith, and that the Chinese People are adept at demonstrating peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity, as well as for more Chinese to experience and know that the United States is not a monolith, and that the American People are equally adept at demonstrating peace, friendship, cooperation, and love in our common humanity."

"Finally, the Federated States of Micronesia recognises, appreciates, and applauds that President Biden and President Xi have agreed that the U.S Secretary of State, Antony J. Blinken, will visit China at some to-be-determined date to follow-up on the recent discussions. It is the hope of the Government of the Federated States of Micronesia that U.S-China relations will continue to improve, as the only way for this Paradise in Our Backyards, as well as our Blue Pacific Continent, to escape the possibility of collapse due to anthropogenic Climate Change is for our Enduring Partners and Great Friends to work together for the benefit of each other, our collective humanity, and our Planet."....PACNEWS

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USD\$ 23 million water project to increase water security for 215,000 people in Vanuatu

NOUMEA, 27 NOVEMBER 2022 (SPC)---The Board of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) has approved USD 23 million in funding for enhancing adaptation and community resilience by improving water security in Vanuatu.

This five-year project, developed with the support of the Pacific Community (SPC) and UNICEF, will climate-proof water sanitation and hygiene (WASH) infrastructure and improve water management planning systems. More than 215,000 people, mainly in rural areas, will benefit from this programme.

The Pacific region has one of the lowest levels of access to water security and sanitation services globally, with disasters and climate change exacerbating the risk communities face in accessing safe drinking water and sanitation services.

Vanuatu is recognised as one of the most vulnerable countries globally to disaster (World Risk Index 2021) and the impacts of climate change. This reality threatens water resources across the country as sea-level rise may undermine freshwater sources in low-lying areas of Vanuatu, affecting drinking water quality. At the same time, climate-induced disasters are likely to cause damage to critical WASH infrastructure.

The Enhancing Adaptation and Community Resilience by Improving Water Security in Vanuatu project will climate-proof water management systems to protect fragile freshwater resources. It will also ensure infrastructure is built to withstand the predicted impacts of climate- and disaster-related events for future generations.

It aims to address water-related impacts of climate change by empowering rural communities to plan and manage climate-resilient water resources, enhancing climate-resilient rural water infrastructure, and strengthening provincial and national institutions to address climate risks associated with water security.

The project is led by the Vanuatu Government in partnership with SPC, the Pacific region's lead scientific and technical agency, and will be supported by key partners such as UNICEF to drive effective delivery for the 215,000 people who will benefit from the work.

"The Vanuatu Water Security project is the second large-scale Green Climate Fund project to be approved by the board of GCF in 2022; the first one being the 3.3 billion vatu worth Vanuatu Community-based Climate Resilience Project (VCCRP) approved in August 2022 followed by this VT2.6 billion worth Vanuatu Water Security Project approved in October 2022, which makes a total of 5.9 billion vatu grant approved by Green Climate fund board for Vanuatu in 2022." explains Eslie Garaebiti, Director-General of the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, Environment, Energy and Disaster Management and Vanuatu's National Designated Authority to GCF.

According to Erickson Sammy, Director of Vanuatu's Department of Water Resources: "Vanuatu communities are very much in need for access to sufficient and safe water, especially in the rural communities. It is therefore an obligation of the Department of Water Resources to ensure all population of Vanuatu have access to safe and secure water supply."

Scaling access to systematic, large-scale climate finance opportunities for countries such as Vanuatu is core to SPC's work and is a critical action that must be accelerated rapidly to support genuine solutions that protect communities on the frontline of climate change.

"Unlocking climate finance is a cornerstone of SPC's work to promote livelihoods, build resilience, and enhance disaster risk reduction in Pacific communities. We are thankful for this second project to be approved by the GCF in the past twelve months. However, we must rapidly increase access to climate

finance for Pacific countries to ensure the region is best placed to face the brunt of climate change and the realities already being felt on the ground." said Director-General Dr Stuart Minchin, SPC....PACNEWS

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Can civic nationalism help reduce corruption? Insights from Solomon Islands

By Grant Walton

SYDNEY, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (DEV POLICY.ORG)----In many parts of the world "nationalism" has earned itself a bad rap. Ethnic cleansing, war, genocide and other atrocities have been committed in its name. In recent years we've seen political leaders, like Donald Trump, whip up a toxic form of nationalist sentiment defined by race and a disdain for foreigners.

On the other hand, nationalism can be a force for good; a devotion to one's nation can encourage solidarity, pride and belonging. And for some practitioners, policymakers and academics, a certain type of nationalism – civic nationalism – has the potential to help address corruption in poor countries.

Built on the liberal foundations of the enlightenment, civic nationalism defines the nation in terms of common citizenship regardless of ethnic or other identities. This concept is often considered as opposed to ethnic nationalism, which defines the nation in terms of shared religion, language, cultures and traditions.

While some studies fail to find a direct link, much of the quantitative research suggests that weaker civic nationalism helps perpetuate corruption.

In turn, governments and development practitioners devote significant resources towards nation-building efforts aimed at disrupting ethnic patronage networks that can exacerbate corruption. This includes exposing elites from poor countries to the liberal values of relatively well-governed and mostly rich countries – for example, through educational scholarships and international workshops and conferences that help transfer global anti-corruption norms. As elites become more global in their outlook, it is argued, they will more likely see themselves as a part of a world of states underpinned by civic rather than ethnic nationalism, and transfer anti-corruption norms into their home countries. However, there has been little research to test such claims.

In an article published in the journal Political Geography, I examine narratives about the potential role civic nationalism could play in reducing corruption in Solomon Islands.

Solomon Islands is an important case study because the country has undergone significant reforms aimed at both building the nation and fighting corruption, through the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) intervention (2003–2017). Part of this intervention included the systematic rebuilding of key state institutions, and a push for anti-corruption reforms that were part of broader efforts to rebuild the state and promote civic nationalism.

The article draws on interviews with 18 respondents connected to anti-corruption reform and activism in Solomon Islands. It finds that for those on the front line, civic nationalism can be important for addressing corruption.

A senior official from one integrity agency argued that to fight "against corruption, you have to be ... patriotic about our country." This view was strongest when respondents drew on their experiences in other countries. For example, an official trip to discuss the United Nations Convention Against Corruption had made one senior adviser realise there are:

some countries ... [where] corruption is not an issue ... I kind of wish that we can be like that in Solomon [Islands]. I want my country, my children or my grandchildren [to] never be into corruption.

This respondent and others said overseas trips supported by donors reinforced the notion that the high level of corruption in Solomon Islands was due, at least in part, to the lack of civic nationalism amongst their compatriots.

However, as the interviews wore on, most respondents became more circumspect and ambivalent about the relationship between civic nationalism and corruption.

Reflecting on their everyday experiences in Solomon Islands (including engaging with friends and relatives and walking the streets of Honiara), most suggested it was unlikely that Solomon Islanders could afford to subscribe to civic virtues above economic necessities. One respondent said:

... before we go to conversation of the nation, I think it's important that we deal with some of the economic and social realities. Unless we deal with ... social issues and economic issues, I don't think nationhood will be achieved. Always government colleagues talk about peace building, nationhood; yeah, but if people don't have jobs, they can't even provide food on their table, I think we have a bigger problem.

Many respondents also said that most Solomon Islanders cannot afford to say no to corruption: "people struggle to survive and that's the truth ... It is a bigger issue in terms of corruption. Some people have to do it [corruption] to survive."

In other words, even those tasked with addressing corruption were sceptical that Solomon Islanders could turn into nationalistic anti-corruption warriors.

While more research is needed, these findings raise questions about the impacts of nation-building efforts on attitudes towards corruption. If cosmopolitan anti-corruption experts in Solomon Islands are ambivalent about the potential for civic nationalism to address corruption, then it is unlikely others with weaker affiliation to the nation-state will be convinced.

These findings provide even more evidence that fighting corruption needs to be about more than improving national integrity institutions, introducing new laws or building civic nationalism. As important as these are, until the social, cultural and economic conditions that drive corruption are addressed, it is unlikely that policymakers will make significant headway into addressing corruption in Solomon Islands or, likely, many other contexts....PACNEWS

This article is based on the article, Grant W. Walton, 'Can civic nationalism reduce corruption? Transnational and translocal insights from Solomon Islands', Political Geography, 89 (2021).

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Indigenous representatives make an impact at COP27

SHARM EL- SHEIKH, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (NATIONAL INDIGENOUS TIMES) ---The United Nations kicked off their 27th climate summit in Sharm el-Sheikh, Egypt, on 6 November for governments to come together to discuss limiting the rise in global temperatures.

Referred to as a 'Conference of the Parties' or COPs, more than 200 governments have been invited, with delegates from many countries also making their way over.

Amongst the Australian delegates attending, many are Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people campaigning for a reduction in greenhouse gas emissions and a better quality of life for First Nations people.

First Nations Australians are calling for better protections for Country, and encouraging Indigenous people from all over the world to stand up for their climate rights. Here are some of the First Nations activists who are taking part in COP27:

National Native Title Council

The National Native Title Council chief executive Jamie Lowe is at COP27 hoping to elevate First Nations voices on a global platform.

Lowe also hopes to ensure NNTC are building networks to ensure member organisations are an active part of the climate change solution.

Lowe said there are short and long term climate issues immediately plaguing First Nations people in Australia.

"We are looking at what the global ambition of meeting net zero looks like for First Nations people, and protecting our rights through the transition to clean energy," said Mr Lowe.

"In terms of land mass, what foot print is required to do that, we don't have the full data set but we know it will be significant for our people and our rights need to be protected.

"Free prior and informed consent is crucial. Our rights need to be at the forefront and central to industry and also government as we move to the new clean energy market."

Uncle Paul Kabai and Uncle Pabai Pabai

The duo from Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait) have filed a case against the Australian government and argued they failed to commit to their 'duty of care' to the Torres Strait Treaty and Native Title.

Both Uncle Paul and Uncle Pabai are Traditional Owners whose ancestors have lived on Zenadth Kes for more than 65,000 years.

Because of the rising sea levels, they are in danger of losing their homes, sacred sites and their entire history.

The people from Zenadth Kes have had a history of fighting for their rights through the courts with Eddie Mabo from Mer Island (Murray Island) famously fighting for the law to recognise Indigenous traditional ownership.

Uncle Paul and Uncle Pabai are now going to COP27 to emphasise to world leaders how urgent their case is, as tides in the Torres Straits continue to rise.

"As Indigenous people, as an Indigenous person of Australia representing my Guda Maluyligal nation and Torres Strait Australia," Uncle Paul said.

"I want the world leaders to listen to our voice. We depend on government otherwise it will be too late.

"We need support from government, show us your support, otherwise we will become climate refugees."

Yessie Mosby

Also from Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait), Mosby is one of the Torres Strait 8 from Masig Island (Yorke Island).

The Torres Strait 8 have also taken legal action against the Australian government through the UN Human Rights Committee.

In September, the Human Rights Committee found the Federal Government had violated its obligation to the people of Zenadth Kes in their inaction toward tackling the impacts of climate change.

The eight are pushing for the Australian government to commit to 100 per cent renewables by 2030, funding for climate change adaptation programs for the islands, self-owned renewable energy, and restricting global warming to 1.5 degrees alongside a transition away from fossil fuels in the near future.

The Kulkalgal activist is now at COP27 to share with the world their story.

"The world really needs to know that our people have never contributed anything (to climate change), but we're the first on the hit list," he said in a social video for Client Earth.

"The world needs to know that there are people like us around the world, who needs help from the world to help us live an ancient culture for another 100 years to come.

"What is going to be impacting my children's life is also going to impact your children's life."

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander International Engagement Organisation

ATSIIEO executive director and Nyoongar man Jack Collard has been in attendance at COP27 sharing his perspectives on climate change as a Nyoongar man.

He opened the first Local Community and Indigenous Peoples Platform round table and addressed the table in the Nyoongar language.

ATSIIEO chairman Jesse Martin said COP27 was a chance for First Nations people to be their own diplomats.

"Where once we pushed for our own standards, responsibilities, and investment in the idea of our own governance, development and principle, today they have traded our legitimacy and power for the opportunity to sit under their table content with what crumbs they drop," he said.

"The voices which represent us now internationally do not speak for us no matter how much window dressing the government look to put on these positions.

"They have usurped the responsibility of position for the privilege it provides and convey to the world a false image of who we are, what we look to achieve and what we value."....PACNEWS

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Fiji dogged by strays after Covid breeding boom

After neutering services were shut down during the pandemic, the population of stray dogs roaming the Pacific country has soared

By Angus Delaney

SUVA, 17 NOVEMBER 2022 (THE GUARDIAN)---Amid the iconic sounds of Fiji – the rolling of the ocean, a church choir – is an unexpected and unwelcome noise: the insistent barking of stray dogs.

The population of stray dogs across the Pacific country has exploded in the last few years, sparked by a dog baby boom, which occurred as neutering initiatives stopped during the pandemic and border closures halted the flow of essential international volunteer vets.

"It's a huge problem ... there are so many dogs," says Shaneel Narayan, manager of Suva's SPCA shelter. Naryan estimates that in the capital, Suva, alone, there are between 20,000 and 30,000 dogs on the loose. Some are stray while others are roaming – owned by people but allowed to freely roam the streets.

"In a year we used to desex about 3,000 animals and because of Covid for two years, we couldn't do any of these programmes because of the restrictions," says Narayan. "[The dogs] have five or six puppies in one litter. So in two years you can imagine how many animals we're looking at in a neighbourhood."

The dogs themselves are largely left to scavenge for scraps, nurse injuries from abandonment and raise litters in the city outskirts.

Even as neutering services have resumed post-pandemic, SPCA and other animal shelters are struggling to cope with the number of animals.

"Post-Covid it has gone really bad, intake per week we're looking at around 40 to 50 animals coming into the shelter," he says. "We are pretty much overwhelmed."

Stray dogs carry diseases, frequent busy roads and some have even made headlines for vicious attacks on children.

Petero Bole, security guard at the University of the South Pacific, has to remove dogs from the campus. "We have to chase them out," he says.

"At night-time dogs roam the campus. Suva city council sets traps for them, we get maybe two to three dogs in the morning."

On the other side of Fiji's largest island, Viti Levu, the situation is just as dire, especially at the Greater Good Foundation (GGF) in Lautoka, which houses more than 200 dogs in an open sanctuary.

The sanctuary is a jigsaw of fenced pens, each home to dozens of barking and nipping dogs. Mere Ranedi, who cares for the dogs, knows each animal by name. One of the biggest challenges is keeping them fed. "Every day we go through 47 kilograms of rice and 52 kilograms of dhal."

Naomi Nacagilevu, a volunteer with the GGF, says many of the dogs in the sanctuary's care have experienced abuse.

"Most of the dogs that are there are rescued from the street, some are abandoned by owners, some of them are mammas with puppies that were dumped in Nadi or Lauktoka that we had to rescue."

"Small Fijian boys go past innocent animals and hit them with sticks or kick them ... some of them have injured legs from a car accident ... pig hunters cut off the dogs' ears."

Nacagilevu, who assists in GGF's trap, neuter and release programme (TNR), says it is this mistreatment that has contributed to dog attacks within the community.

"So many people are complaining about dogs charging at people in the community but the reason they are charging and biting people is because of mistreatment they receive from people," she says.

For Nacagilevu, Narayan and other experts, the way forward is a simple three-step process of TNR. By desexing dogs they are hoping to reduce the numbers over several years.

"It won't work overnight; it takes at least eight to 20 years. It has worked in certain parts of Sri Lanka and the Philippines," says Narayan.

The dog problem in Fiji has no winners – the animals are subject to abuse, carry disease, bite people, and run across busy roads. Vets are overwhelmed and the community is frustrated with the impact of the animals.

The situation could still get worse, with sanctuaries like the GGF struggling to care for the animals. In July the sanctuary warned that its funds were critically low, leaving it weeks away from closing. It managed to secure enough donations to stay open, but does not have any government funding or corporate partners.

"If we are forced to close, the dogs in our care ... would have nowhere to go," said the charity in a statement in July. As well as reducing the risk to the community, Ranedi says, their sanctuary is the safest place for the dogs. "These dogs are so fortunate to be rescued and brought here."....PACNEWS