

Concept Note

Date: 3rd – 4th August 2021

Background

Climate change remains to be the single greatest threat to the Pacific people's livelihood, security, and wellbeing, and has over the years exacerbated other development challenges. In 2015, the global community agreed to limit warming to 1.5 degrees but have not lived up to this promise. Commitments continue to be insufficient to meet the 1.5-degree goal that was agreed to in Paris that will give the Pacific a chance to survive. The recent published National Determined Contributions Synthesis Report¹ captured the national climate plans of 75 parties of the Paris Agreement, representing 30% of the global greenhouse gas emissions has a combined impact to achieve a reduction of 1% by 2030, and is far from putting the world on a pathway to meet the Paris goals.

In the Pacific, communities are at the frontline, experiencing and battling the adverse impacts of the climate crisis, an issue that they have little to contribute to. Further at the peripheries are marginalized and/or vulnerable groups, such as the indigenous people, youth, people with disabilities, persons of diverse sexual orientation, gender identities and expressions [Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgenders & Intersex], and elderly people who disproportionately have to live with the impact of climate crisis, often undermining the full enjoyment of their human rights, and driving further economic and social inequalities, including gender inequality.

With the theme “*The Rising Tide: A United Pacific for Climate Justice*”, the event will bring together a wide range of key actors from national governments, civil society, faith communities, development partners and communities with the primary objective of solidifying a strong human rights and climate justice policy positions in lead up to COP 26². The summit will also provide an opportunity to enhance understanding on intersectional climate justice and will provide a platform for exchange of knowledge and experience among the key actors in the region.

¹ The interim NDC Synthesis Report was published by the United Nations Framework on Convention on Climate Change and can be accessed on the link; <https://unfccc.int/documents/268571>

² COP26 is the 26th session of the Summit of Parties of the United Nations Framework on Convention on Climate, and will be held in Glasgow, Scotland.

Objectives

The Summit aims to:

- Enhance regional understanding of the relationship between climate change and human rights.
- Provide a platform for dialogue, knowledge, information, and experience sharing on policy, advocacy, and practice in the context of climate change and human rights.
- Identify key challenges, learnings, and opportunities, in the context of human rights and climate justice policy influencing and climate negotiations.
- Provide an overview on the impact of climate change on vulnerable community members, including women & girls, persons with disabilities and identify inclusive climate adaptation and climate mitigation policies.
- Garner greater awareness and visibility of PICAN members programmes leading to greater appreciation and advocacy of human rights and climate justice issues.
- Identify priorities in the Summit that will create a strong foundation for partnerships with key stakeholders, development partners, government, and civil society organizations to promote human rights & climate justice.

Outcomes

As a result of this Summit, we expect to achieve the following:

- A unified and inclusive Pacific regional voice that will advocate, campaign and push for human rights and climate justice.
- A solidified human rights and climate justice position for key regional state and non-state actors in lead up to COP 26.
- Garnered the support of national Governments, civil society, and communities to support and amplify the work of Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change and Vanuatu Climate Action Network who are seeking an Advisory Opinion by the International Court of Justice on human rights and climate change.
- High level engagement and participation of the Chair of the U.N. Human Rights Council that will draw attention to the topic of human rights and climate justice in the Pacific.
- Increased participation of frontline communities, such as indigenous people, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups and their organizations in climate justice processes.
- Contribute to increased awareness/knowledge and skills on advocacy, research/evidence gathering; understanding of the policy development process; influencing skills; policy analysis; lobbying / campaigning; media relations; awareness raising.

Format

The two-day Summit will be hosted virtually on the 3rd & 4th of August, with key speakers and participants joining in virtually from across the Pacific region.



The Rising Tide: A United Pacific for Climate Justice

Summit Language: The main language for Summit presentations will be in English, while translators may be arranged should the need arises. Sign language interpreters will be available to ensure reasonable accommodation for people with disabilities.

About the Pacific Islands Climate Action Network [PICAN]

The Pacific Islands Climate Action Network (PICAN) is a network of over 130 member organizations in Kiribati, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Fiji. We work across the region with members, partners, and allies to champion Pacific leadership on the climate crisis, amplify and support our members work on the ground, and jointly develop climate policy asks for influencing in national, regional, and international spaces.

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