

Fifth Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development and Capacity Building Workshop for Pacific SIDS

Implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the Context of COVID-19 and the Climate Emergency

25–26 November 2021

Shangri-La's Fijian Resort, Coral Coast, Fiji
Hybrid (Set Location and Virtual) Format

CONCEPT NOTE & AGENDA

Context and Background

The prolonged COVID-19 pandemic is affecting the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly in small island developing States (SIDS). At the same time, there has been a strong consensus that pandemic responses should not undermine the continued effort on and collective commitment to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Paris Agreement. Accelerating the implementation of the SDGs will support countries' recovery plans, to build back better and improve resilience against future pandemics and climate change.

The recently released Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR6) confirms that the Pacific and other small islands are the most vulnerable to climate change and are already experiencing its devastating effects. The report reconfirms that sea-level rise is irreversible and that the 1.5 degrees threshold could be breached within the next 15 years (i.e., 2030) with the eventual consequence of the ocean dying from heat and carbon (acidification) and corals being wiped out along with fisheries and livelihoods.

The report provides world leaders with the most timely and accurate information on climate change ahead of the crucial climate summit (COP26) in Glasgow, UK in November 2021. Much more political leadership is needed to tackle climate change, just as the UN Secretary-General has called for the *most ambitious* climate actions for rapid transition to cleaner energy; and for leaders of governments, business and civil society to *unite* behind the goal of keeping the 1.5 degrees threshold alive. The UN Secretary-General also highlighted the *economic and moral imperatives* of protecting the lives and livelihoods of those on the frontline suffering the most. The UN Secretary-General also reiterated the call for COVID-19 response spending must be in line with the priorities of the Paris Agreement.

The recent Forum Leaders' Meeting endorsed regional positions on COVID-19, including the strengthening of regional pandemic, and disaster, planning and resilience. It also endorsed key messages in preparation for COP26:

- (i) reaffirming climate change as the single greatest threat facing the Blue Pacific;
- (ii) reiterating that COVID-19 must not delay global climate actions but promote recovery investments that are climate smart and in line with low emissions development; and
- (iii) advancing the work on Oceans under UNFCCC.

The Forum Leaders also endorsed the Declaration on Preserving the Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-related Sea-Level Rise; and the Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific 2021-2030. The issue of climate mobility (relating to migration, displacement and relocation) is the being submitted by Climate Vulnerable Countries (including PIF Members) to COP26 as one their priorities and the development of an appropriate regional framework for the short and medium term is under active consideration by a Joint Working Group co-chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu and inclusive of other Member States and relevant CROP and UN organizations.

These Pacific priorities are consistent with ESCAP Resolution 77/1 'Building back better from crises through regional cooperation in Asia and the Pacific'. The Asia-Pacific regional mandates also support recent decisions by the Pacific Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Economy and Trade on:

- (i) promoting COVID-19 recovery strategies and policies at regional and national levels in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Paris Agreement;
- (ii) enhancing national social protection and inclusion and strengthening regional cooperation for support;
- (iii) promoting regional integration and cooperation including on trade connectivity, energy and the digital economy; and
- (iv) better access to, and use of, development and climate finance for recovery and resilience building.

At the global level, the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) continues to serve as the main platform for dialogue on SDG implementation. In 2022, the HLPF will review in 2022 SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17 under the theme "Building back better from COVID-19 while advancing the full implementation of the 2030 Agenda". The Asia-Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development (APFSD) is the Asia-Pacific regional forum for the HLPF and recognized as such by the Pacific Forum Leaders through their *Pacific Roadmap for Sustainable Development*. Along with the APFSD, the 2022 ESCAP Commission with the theme "A common agenda to advance sustainable development in Asia and the Pacific" will facilitate SDG implementation by contextualizing global efforts and scaling up regional and sub-regional cooperation and synergies to contribute to national aspirations.

As in previous years, the Pacific Forum on Sustainable Development (PFSD) will include a capacity building workshop for the implementation and review of the 2030 Agenda with a focus on follow-up actions highlighted through Voluntary National Review (VNR). Typical follow-up actions from VNRs presented by Pacific SIDS include:

- (i) facilitating meaningful stakeholder engagement and mechanisms for institutionalized consultation with civil society;
- (ii) deepening integration of the SDGs into national sustainable development strategies and development plans and budgets;
- (iii) accessing predictable and effective financing for development; and
- (iv) strengthening data availability and national monitoring and evaluation systems.

Objectives

The Pacific Forum for Sustainable Development, which is the Pacific preparatory multi-stakeholder meeting for APFSD, provides a unique platform to share perspectives and learn from one another on common priorities and approaches to address, inter alia, COVID-19 and the climate change crisis facing the Pacific member States.

The PFSD will include discussion on the progress in SDG implementation with a focus on SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15 and 17. A related objective is to build capacity around the VNRs, with a focus on implementation of follow-up actions.

Organization

The Government of Fiji will co-host the PFSD and the capacity building workshop with ESCAP. Selected development partners, including the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Pacific Community (SPC) and relevant UN agencies, together with CSO representatives, will be involved in the delivery of substantive sessions.

Participants

By invitation:

1. Representatives from UN member States in the Pacific;
2. National Planning, Statistics and VNR focal points;
3. Representatives of CROP organizations, Development Partners and UN agencies; and
4. Private sector, academia, think tanks, and civil society representatives.

Expected Outcome

The outcome of the PFSD will include clear messages, priorities and recommendations from the Pacific to inform deliberations at the 2022 APFSD and the report to the HLPF.

PFSD outcome documents and related resources will be made available via:

<https://www.unescap.org/events/2021/fifth-pacific-forum-sustainable-development-pfsd-2021>

Further Information and Registration

The Fifth PFSD and capacity building workshop will take place from 25-26 November 2021, at Shangri-La's Fijian Resort, Coral Coast, Fiji in a hybrid (set location and virtual) format.

Further information, including the final programme and virtual connection details, will be made available in due course.

For any enquires, please contact ESCAP Pacific Office via Ms. Rosa Minju Kim at minju.kim@un.org and Ms. Patricia Momoivalu at momoivalu@un.org, with a copy to escap-pacific@un.org.

Day 1	Thursday, 25 November 2021
9:00am – 9:30am	<p>Opening Session</p> <p>Master of Ceremony – Mr. Shiri Gounder, Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Economy (TBC)</p> <p>a) <u>Opening Prayer</u></p> <p>Rev. Prof. Upolu Luma Vaai, Principal, Pacific Theological College</p> <p>b) <u>Keynote and Introductory Remarks</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ms. Armida Salsiah Alisjahbana, Under-Secretary-General of the UN and Executive Secretary of ESCAP • Mr. Henry Puna, Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum • Mr. Sanaka Samarasingha, UN Resident Coordinator <p>c) <u>Official Opening</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum, Attorney-General and Minister for Economy, Civil Service, Communications, Housing and Community Development <p>d) <u>Housekeeping Matters and Participant Guidelines</u></p>
9:30am – 11:00am	<p>Session 1: Climate Change Disaster Risks and Resilience</p> <p>In the lead up to COP26, the Pacific Forum Leaders agreed that COVID-19 should not delay global climate actions and that recovery investment should be climate smart and in line with low-emission development. The decision was made in the wake of the Sixth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC AR6) and this session, taking place immediately after COP26, provides a good opportunity to consider the COP outcomes against the decision of PIF Leaders on global climate actions and the initiatives being pursued by the Pacific region in support of such actions and resilience building. The session provides the overarching framework within which some of the key vulnerabilities exacerbated by the COVID-19 and the climate emergency in the Pacific will be highlighted and discussed in the other Sessions.</p> <p>Moderator - Fiji</p> <p>a) <u>Introductory Presentation (10 mins)</u></p> <p>e) Fiji as Chair of PIF on key COP26 outcomes for the Pacific</p> <p>b) <u>Issue Presentation (20 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPREP commentary on COP26 outcomes • ESCAP on COP26 Outcomes and disaster risks and resilience <p>c) <u>Questions and Comments (10 mins)</u></p> <p>d) <u>Issues Discussion (30 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiji on climate mobility issues and initiatives • Tuvalu on climate mobility in the face of rising sea levels • RMI on global shipping emissions and Blue Pacific Shipping Partnership

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fiji on COP26 Outcomes and ocean issues • Pacific Network on Globalization a civil society perspective • Pacific Theological College a faith based/spiritual perspective <p>e) <u>Plenary Discussion (20 mins)</u></p> <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the implications that the COP26 Outcomes have for the Pacific? 2. What are examples of key regional initiatives and investments that support the recent decisions of the Pacific Leaders and Ministers? 3. What more can the Pacific do to strengthen global climate actions including in relation to COVID-19 responses? <p>References: Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué and relevant decisions of the Forum Ministers – Foreign Affairs Ministers Meeting (July 2021), FETMM (July 2021), and ESCAP Commission (Res 77/1 (14 a and b))</p>
11:00am – 11:30am	Tea Break
11:30am – 12:30pm	<p>Session 2: Inclusive Recovery through Health and Social Protection Systems</p> <p>The session will assess regional and national coping mechanisms for mitigating existing vulnerabilities along with the immediate and medium-term socio-economic impacts of COVID-19. It will showcase good practices and lessons on health and social protection systems in the Pacific, with a focus on addressing the multidimensional needs of vulnerable groups. The session will also take stock of the gender and disability concerns and explore ways in which response and recovery strategies can be implemented in an inclusive and resilient manner.</p> <p>Moderator - Nauru</p> <p>a) <u>Introductory Presentation (10 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP overview on regional social protection and health initiatives, including the <i>Action Plan to Strengthen Regional Cooperation on Social Protection in Asia and the Pacific</i> and relevant national mechanisms in the Pacific region <p>b) <u>Issue Presentations (30 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIFS presentation on the <i>Socio-Economic Impact Assessment of COVID-19 in the Pacific Region</i> and <i>Pacific Humanitarian Pathway for COVID-19 (PHP-C)</i> • SPC presentation on existing public health policies and their synergies with environmental aspects • UNDP presentation on initiatives to strengthen national social protection systems • Country and Civil Society experiences shared on supporting vulnerable groups through national mechanisms, including social protection and health initiatives <p>c) <u>Plenary Discussion (20 mins)</u></p> <p>Guiding Questions:</p>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the remaining gaps in the social protection and health systems for delivering services to vulnerable groups in an inclusive manner and how can these disparities be addressed? 2. What priorities have or need to become more salient in COVID-19 response strategies with respect to inclusivity and resilience? 3. How can partners and regional initiatives support countries scale up and strengthen the associated national and regional systems? <p>References: ESCAP Resolution 77/1 (14c), 2020 Pacific Islands Forum, FETMM, July 2021</p>
12:30pm – 1:30pm	Lunch Break

1:30pm – 3:00pm	<p>Session 3: Regional Cooperation for Accelerating Climate-Smart Trade and Sustainable Energy Transition</p> <p>The session will share policy action points and concrete deliverables on how to leverage regional cooperation to overcome challenges posed by the COVID-19 pandemic, and to align the national strategies and initiatives to build resilience by accelerating regional trade and investment policies in addressing climate change. The discussions will highlight the benefits of regional trade agreements and trade facilitation measures in reducing greenhouse gas emissions in the context of a regional framework. It will also focus on the development of an integrated energy policy and planning to support the achievement of the SDG 7 targets and to enhance Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs), as well as to align with the Framework for Energy Security and Resilience in the Pacific 2021-2030.</p> <p>Moderator – Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization</p> <p>a) <u>Introductory Presentation (15 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Issue overview by ESCAP <p>b) <u>Issues Discussion (50 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PIFS presentation on regional trade • SPC presentation on energy framework • Country statements on specific gaps and related actions required for follow-ups <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Trade: PNG (TBC), Vanuatu (TBC) and Tuvalu ○ Energy: Fiji, Tonga (TBC) and Kiribati • Pacific Islands Private Sector Organization presentation on supply chain issues <p>c) <u>Plenary Discussion (25 mins)</u></p> <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the key policy measures for promoting paperless trade and e-commerce through regional frameworks in the Pacific? 2. What type of policies are necessary to support energy policy and security in the Pacific? <p>References: FEMM and JFTEMM Outcomes, July 2021</p>
3:00pm – 3:15pm	Tea Break

**3:15pm –
4:30pm**

Session 4: Leveraging Climate and Disaster Risk Finance

This session will consider initiatives and opportunities for improved access to, and use of, disaster risk and climate adaptation funds. The session will discuss follow-up actions, building on the 2021 FEMM, relevant UN and ESCAP Commission resolutions.

Moderator – Australia

a) Introductory Presentation (15 mins)

- Overview presentation by **PIFS**, including on regional initiatives on financing – 2021 FEMM mandates and follow-up actions, including climate and disaster risk finance, and Pacific Resilience Facility

b) Issues Presentations (35 minutes)

- **ESCAP** on outcomes from the Workshop on Innovative Climate Financing Instruments: Supporting COVID-19 Pandemic Recovery in Asia-Pacific Small Island Developing States, and next steps
- **Cook Islands** on challenges and opportunities with climate and disaster risk financing
- **IMF-PFTAC** on national systems pre-requisites for access to, and management of, climate adaptation and disaster risk financing
- **Australia** on disaster risk financing in the Pacific – lessons and opportunities
- **United Kingdom** (on behalf of co-chairs Belize, Fiji and the Alliance of Small Island Developing States), on solutions and call to action for SIDS access to finance, and on SIDS climate finance initiatives

c) Plenary Discussion (25 mins)

Guiding Questions:

1. Which climate and disaster risk financing sources are working well, and others which could be tapped further?
2. What actions and instruments could be further explored to leverage disaster risk and climate financing?
3. Are there specific follow-up actions that could support PSIDS through regional cooperation, research and dialogue?

References: FETMM (July 2021) and ESCAP Resolution (77/1)

Day 2	Friday, 26 November 2021
9:00am – 10:30am	<p>Session 5: Capacity building workshop – Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific</p> <p>The session will provide an overview of the progress made with SDG implementation in the Pacific region, including the goals under review (Goal 4 (Quality education); Goal 5 (Gender equality); Goal 14 (Life below water); Goal 15 (Life on land) and Goal 17 (Partnership for the Goals)).</p> <p>The session will focus on common challenges and priority actions from VNR reports in the region, and discuss national and regional actions required to facilitate and accelerate implementation. Selected implementation issues in VNR reports will be discussed in some detail, in particular: improving data availability and strengthening monitoring; and stakeholder engagement and partnerships.</p> <p>Moderator - ESCAP</p> <p>a) <u>Introductory Presentations: SDG Implementation Progress (30 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ESCAP presentation on a snapshot of progress across all goals, including progress on Goals under review • PIFS presentation on areas of focus in the biennial and quadrennial reports, focusing on outstanding challenges and actions being implemented to address the challenges • ESCAP and DESA presentation on priority follow-up actions in the VNR reports, including integration of planning and budgeting, and outline associated measures <p><u>Plenary Discussion (30 minutes)</u></p> <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the specific actions identified in the VNRs for supporting implementation of national development priorities and SDGs? 2. What progress has been made in following up on the actions in the VNRs? 3. Are there follow-up issues which remain a challenge? <p>b) <u>Issue Presentation: Improving Data Availability and Strengthening Monitoring (30 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview presentation from ESCAP on data challenges, and selected actions to address • SPC to present on regional actions and coordination initiatives • Samoa presentation on national actions and issues
10:30am – 11:00am	Tea Break

<p>11:00am – 12:00pm</p>	<p>Session 5: Capacity building workshop – Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in the Pacific (cont.)</p> <p><u>Plenary Discussion (15 mins)</u></p> <p>Guiding Questions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are the good practices that can be shared to improve data and information flows for tracking progress? 2. What are the actions that have been adopted to track and monitor implementation progress at national and regional levels? <p>c) <u>Issue Presentation: Stakeholder Engagement and Partnerships (25 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview presentation from ESCAP and DESA • Tonga presentation on national actions and issues • PDF to present on national and regional issues <p><u>Plenary Discussion (20 mins)</u></p> <p>Guiding Question:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What actions can be taken to improve stakeholder engagement in the implementation process – at national and regional levels? <p>References: HLPF <u>Ministerial Declaration</u> 2021, Forum Leaders Meeting, FEMM 2021</p>
<p>12:00pm – 1:00pm</p>	<p>Lunch Break</p>
<p>1:00pm – 3:00pm</p>	<p>Session 6: Consultation on the 2022 Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership Report</p> <p>This session will consider interim findings of the 2022 Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership Report, a joint report of ESCAP, ADB and UNDP that examines regional challenges and priorities for resilient and inclusive recovery from the pandemic. The session will explore priorities, policies and stakeholder-led initiatives to inform the thematic priorities of the 2022 Report, with specific emphasis on the SDGs under review at the 2022 HLPF: Goal 4 on quality education; Goal 5 on gender equality, Goal 14 on life below water; Goal 15 on life on land and Goal 17 on partnerships for the goals.</p> <p>Moderator – Pacific Islands Association of Non-Government Organization (TBC)</p> <p>a) <u>Introductory Presentation (20 mins)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ADB and UNDP to present key messages and findings from 2021 Asia-Pacific SDG Partnership Report and Introduction to the 2022 SDG Partnership Report • PIFS - 2050 Pacific Strategy, in the context of SDGs 4, 5, 14 and 15 <p>Comments and Questions (10 mins)</p> <p>b) <u>Issues Presentations (30 minutes)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDG 4 - Quality Education – UNESCO • SDG 5 - Gender Equality – UNWOMEN

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SDG 14 - Life under Water – SPREP • SDG 15 - Life on Land – SPREP • Country experience sharing <p>c) Group Discussion (45 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two groups ((i) SDGs 4 and 5, and (ii) SDGs 14 and 15) will be formed to deliberate on the questions below. Each group will have a chair (FCOSS and PIANGO, respectively) and a rapporteur (TBC). • How has COVID-19 affected quality education, gender equality, life under water, life on land and biodiversity (marine and terrestrial) conservation (SDGs 4, 5, 14, 15, respectively)? How have these issues been included or mainstreamed in the COVID-19 recovery measures of your government and institutions? • How are the above effects of COVID-19 and recovery measures different for groups within countries and between countries? • Where are you seeing emerging possibilities, initiatives and priorities to invest in these goal areas to enable a more sustainable recovery? <p>d) Plenary Discussion (15 mins)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The discussion will provide the Pacific perspectives on the cluster of goals under review in 2022, by the rapporteurs of the two clusters on the respective SDGs based on group discussions.
3:00pm – 3:30pm	Tea Break
3:30pm – 4:15pm	<p>Session 7: Way Forward and Closing Remarks</p> <p>This session will take stock of the key messages from the discussions in all PFSD sessions, capacity building workshop, and discuss a way forward.</p>