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New Zealand

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## **THIRTY-FOURTH PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM**

Auckland, New Zealand

14 - 16 August 2003

### **FORUM COMMUNIQUÉ**

#### **Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea Level Rise**

28. Leaders noted the strengthening of regional coordination and support to address climate change, climate variability and sea level rise negotiations and affirmed that given the particular vulnerability of Pacific Island Countries to climate change, it was vital:

- for urgent action to be undertaken to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and for there to be further commitments in the future by all major emitters;
- for all nations to commit to a global effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and the adverse impacts of climate change, taking into account the special circumstances of small island developing states;
- that Forum members continue to advocate internationally for immediate reductions and limits to greenhouse gas emissions to the atmosphere at levels that will prevent dangerous interference, consistent with the objective of the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), and that the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific continue to provide support at UNFCCC related meetings;
- to identify and implement a range of adaptation options, particularly for extreme weather and climate events, which have been given high attention at previous Forums, and for them to be maintained and well funded through various means, including through the Global Environmental Facility; and
- to continue to be proactive and develop appropriate, affordable, and cost-effective adaptation response measures immediately with support from relevant regional and national institutions.

Leaders also noted:

- that Forum members are taking significant domestic action to mitigate climate change;
- the continuing concerns of those Forum members that have ratified the Kyoto Protocol that it was yet to enter into force and that the Russian ratification would be sufficient to bring it into force;
- that while Australia had not ratified the Kyoto Protocol, it intended to meet its target under the Protocol;
- the Okinawa Initiative in which Pacific Island Forum members that had ratified the Kyoto Protocol, and Japan, strongly urged countries that had not already done

- so to ratify the protocol in a timely manner.
29. Leaders agreed that both the Vulnerability and Adaptation Pacific Type 2 Initiatives that were launched at the WSSD should be used to seek out partners to address especially climate variability and sea level rise risks and coping options.
30. Leaders stated the need to ensure all relevant aspects of addressing climate change were captured fully in the Ten Year Review of the Barbados Program of Action (BPOA+10) review process and in the outcomes of the International Meeting to be held in Mauritius, and for initiatives to strengthen the national efforts of Pacific Islands Countries to reduce vulnerability and in particular coping strategies for adaptation to climate change, climate variability and sea level rise.
31. Leaders agreed to establish an Ad-Hoc Working Group, based on the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable with a mandate, inter alia, to review the "Regional Framework on Climate Change, Climate Variability and Sea-Level Rise" and forward its recommendations to the 2004 South Pacific Regional Environment Programme meeting for its consideration.
32. Leaders welcomed the progress made through the South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project with regard to scientific research in establishing Absolute Sea Level Rise and climate variability assessments in addressing the global warming predictions, and the regional effort to promote the widespread utilisation of feasible renewable energy technologies in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.
33. Leaders noted the work that had been done in relation to the concept of a regional adaptation financing facility as of July 2003 and the need for further work and direction to advance this concept further.