



Caritas Australia submission to the

Inquiry into Australia's response to the priorities of Pacific Island countries and the Pacific region

July 2024



5 July 2024

Mr Josh Burns MP
Chair, Foreign Affairs and Aid Subcommittee
Joint Standing Committee on Foreign Affairs, Defence and Trade
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Dear Mr Burns and Committee Members,

Australia's response to the priorities of Pacific Island countries and the Pacific region

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to the discussion on this important topic, critical to the future of Australia's relationships with the peoples of the Pacific and the large ocean states of the region.

Our initial response to the four key areas of the Terms of Reference for the Inquiry is provided below and expanded in the body of the submission.

Identify the key priorities for Pacific Island countries: to understand Pacific priorities, listening to the voices of the Pacific community through civil society and faith-based networks is critical. Caritas Oceania, the regional confederation of Caritas member organisations is an example of these networks connecting voices across the region, as are the Pacific Conference of Churches and other organisations such as PICAN and PIANGO. These priorities have been expressed in a range of collective statements including the Kioa Climate Emergency Declaration in 2022 (annexed to this submission) and the Tuākoī 'Lei Declaration in June 2024 (available on request) made on the 20th anniversary of the first climate change declaration of Pacific faith-based organisations, the Otin Taai Declaration.

Assess Australia's regional engagement in line with these priorities: Australia's ability to address the key priorities of the Pacific is constrained by the small size of its budget for Overseas Development Assistance, one of the lowest amongst all developing countries. At just 0.69% of Government spending in 23/24, projected to decrease to 0.68% for 24/25 Australia's limited development budget places us at the rank of 26 out of 31 OECD countries (using the related measure of the proportion of ODA as part of Gross National Income (GNI)). Our ability to engage with and meet the development needs of the Pacific, in the growing context of climate impacts, adaptation requirements and massive loss and damage is constrained by this funding.

Assess Pacific climate mitigation and adaptation responses: to properly align Australian responses with Pacific priorities, substantial shifts in climate diplomacy are needed including stronger advocacy by Australia for Pacific interests in establishing and resourcing the Loss and Damage Fund, and engaging with the Pacific around emissions reduction ambition expressed at COP conferences and the Pacific leadership of initiatives such as the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty. Major obstacles to community access for climate adaptation resources need to be addressed by Australia directly and through international climate funding authorities: multiple year delays in funding applications, and lack of processes to deliver resources to the communities most vulnerable to climate change.

Strengthen People-to-People Links and Partnerships:

Well-designed development programs are an important way to strengthen people-to-people links and partnerships. Development programs provide opportunities for technical and cultural exchange between Australia and the region, leading to benefits for all parties. This has generated strong church/faith connections across the Pacific as communities, faith groups and civil society

collaborate with each other on long term, transformative projects. Funding programs leads communities across the region to see the value and genuine commitment of Australia to the Pacific.

About Caritas Australia

As the international aid agency of the Catholic Church in Australia, Caritas Australia works to uphold human dignity and promote justice in partnership with marginalised communities, regardless of their ethnicity, political beliefs, or religion.

Caritas Australia has development and humanitarian aid projects across the Pacific including in Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Samoa, and Fiji.

Caritas Australia is a member of Caritas Oceania, which is a regional network of the Caritas confederation. The Caritas confederation is the world's second largest humanitarian organisation. The confederation has seven members in the Pacific, each with strong links to local communities through Catholic parishes. Together, we work on development, emergency response, climate change and peace building.

We are also a member of the Church Agency Network Disaster Operations (CAN DO), a network of eight Australian church-based aid and development agencies with long-established relationships in humanitarian and development programs in the Pacific. CAN DO members work with local church partners and grassroots organisations to increase their capacity to respond to emergencies, as well as supporting them to build resilience and implement disaster risk reduction activities in their communities.

Caritas Australia welcomes the opportunity to participate in the consultation for the Australia's response to the priorities of Pacific Island countries and the Pacific region. Our submission is based on over 55 years of experience in working with our development and humanitarian partners and with the communities we serve.

Priorities of Pacific Island countries and the Pacific region

Climate justice and international climate finance

The Pacific is one of the world's most vulnerable regions to the effects of climate change and environmental degradation. Communities are losing homes, food and water security, public infrastructure, health, wellbeing, livelihoods and even lives as a result of climate-related and environmental disasters.

The proposed joint Australia/Pacific COP31 in 2026 presents an ideal opportunity to work with Pacific countries and communities on shared development outcomes.

Pacific leaders have been unequivocal in saying that Australia's stance on climate change mitigation efforts at home is affecting Australia's relationships with small island Pacific nations and have urged the Australian Government to align its domestic climate policies with Australia's commitments under the Paris Agreement to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees. Australia now has a unique opportunity as it considers new strategies in light of its recent International Development Policy and in its bid for COP31, to invest in climate-friendly systems to future-proof our economy against increasing climate shocks and protect our shared climate. Australia must also respond to the calls of the Pacific through a range of statements and declarations to address climate change

and phase out fossil fuels. Pacific churches and civil society, as well as Pacific Governments and parliamentarians have made this clear through declarations such as that of Otin Taai declaration (church leaders - 2004) Suva Climate Change Declaration (2015), Boe Declaration (2018), Kainaki II Declaration (2019) and the 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy (2022), as well as those mentioned above, the Kioa Climate Emergency Declaration (churches and civil society 2022) and the Tuakoi Lei Declaration (churches - 2024). The Catholic community has been strong in advocating for climate justice, including through cultural events such as the Tagi production and the statements in support of it by [Archbishop Peter Loy Chong](#). These are also reflected in [the statement](#) by His Holiness Pope Francis to COP28, where he discussed the issues of ecological debt, our common home and called for the elimination of fossil fuels.

Under the Paris Agreement, the Australian Government has also committed to contributing to the global climate finance goal to help fund climate adaptation and mitigation for less wealthy countries. We encourage the Australian Government to increase investment in funding mechanisms that enable grassroots organisations to access climate finance. This has been a challenge for many communities in the Pacific, who have found that 'processes are complicated, time-consuming and not tailored to local culture. All too often, climate finance instruments do not provide for realistic support to local communities or small-scale projects. These issues were examined extensively in the Caritas Oceania 2022 [Twin Clouds](#) report with Jubilee Australia which include the following:

Recommendations

Contributing countries (those making climate finance donations) should provide more grant-based climate finance and financing for loss and damage by

- providing their fair share towards meeting the target of US\$100 billion per year in climate finance, and support a new post-2025 climate finance goal that meets the needs of recipient countries for financing for mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage.
- Bilateral and multilateral contributors should substantially increase the volume of climate finance they provide to Pacific Island countries and organisations, based on the estimated adaptation costs of 6-9% of GDP per country per annum.
- Climate finance should be new and additional, and reported transparently.
- The shortfall in climate finance in the Pacific should be made up from grants, not loans.

Local communities and civil society should be put at the heart of climate finance by:

- Contributor countries, working closely with Pacific governments and civil society, should reform the global climate finance architecture to address barriers to access and place decision-making power in the hands of Pacific actors.
- Contributor countries and Pacific governments should explore mechanisms that deliver finance directly to local level, working closely with civil society on the design of those mechanisms. This should include offering the required support for civil society and local actors to deliver, monitor and evaluate their work.
- Contributor countries and Pacific governments should ensure that vulnerable and marginalised groups - including women and people with disabilities - are prioritised for access to climate finance.

The Report also made recommendations for the funding of the Pacific Resilience Facility (PRF) by the Government, to give the Pacific greater control over climate finance and adaptation funds in the region, rather than having to negotiate often time-consuming processes with global climate funds

which do not have as deep an understanding of the needs of the Pacific. The Australian Government has announced \$100m in funding for the PRF.

As part of its climate finance commitments, we also urge the Australian Government to take action to deliver adequate Loss and Damage funding and response to the Pacific. The term “loss and damage” refers to the impacts of climate change that go beyond those that communities can adapt to. This includes loss and damage caused by extreme weather events such as cyclones and floods, and slow onset events such as sea level rise, salinisation and ocean acidification. Loss and damage can be either economic, including the impacts of climate change on farmers or the cost of replacing damaged infrastructure, or non-economic, including loss of life, degraded health, losses induced by human mobility, as well as loss or degradation of territory, cultural heritage, Indigenous knowledge, societal/cultural identity, biodiversity, and ecosystem services.

Recommendations:

The Australian Government

- Make a contribution to the global Loss and Damage fund based on a fair share methodology, with an initial contribution of \$100m.
- Support diplomatic efforts in climate negotiations to include Loss and Damage quantum targets in the National Collective Quantified Goals to ensure that targets for the amount in the new Loss and Damage Fund will be of sufficient scale to adequately address loss and damage from climate change in the Pacific and around the world
- Encourage the consideration of how Non-Economic Loss and Damage will be addressed in the Fund, giving the impacts of NELD in the Pacific Region, using the framework set out in the Caritas Australia [Unheard, Uncharted](#) report on the issue.

The proposed joint Australia Pacific COP31 presents DFAT with a unique opportunity to highlight the issues in the Pacific, hear directly from communities, and commit to ambitious targets to see change. Given the importance placed on amplifying the voices of the Pacific in the proposed Australian COP31, and the challenges outlined above that civil society organisations face, the Australian Government should deliver support to groups that can bring these voices to international fora like COP31. This should include groups like the Pacific Climate Warriors, Pacific Islands Climate Action Network (PICAN), and the Pacific Council of Churches (PCC), all of whom have a strong connection with communities across the Pacific and have a focus on addressing climate change. This support should also extend to other groups, like the Pacific Disability Forum, who can bring a focus on the devastating effects of climate change are having on the people it represents.

Aid and Development: empowering communities through Localisation

Inclusive, locally led development programming is a prerequisite for effective and sustainable development. The most effective method to achieve improved outcomes on locally led development is **by leveraging existing civil society networks to deliver on shared priorities** and for this reason Caritas Australia works with local partners in the Pacific who have extensive local community networks. We recommend that the Australian Government support this approach in its own work in the region.

We encourage the Australian Government, through DFAT, to continue to prioritise mechanisms and approaches that help local partners to build their capacity to lead inclusive programming that prioritises the participation and leadership of marginalised groups including women and people with

disabilities. In the Pacific region, civil society organisations including churches are the most effective and widespread social and cultural institutions.

Disaster risk reduction

There is an ongoing need for investment in regional Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). The risk of extreme weather events and manmade disasters is rising for the Pacific and the expense for countries to respond impacts on development outcomes including the Sustainable Development Goals. Consistent investment in DRR will help reduce response cost and make communities and institutions more resilient.

Recommendations

- Australia should prioritise investment in gender-inclusive climate adaptation, climate-smart agriculture, nature-based solutions and gender-inclusive infrastructure to help communities protect their livelihoods and wellbeing as well as promoting their economic reliance and market linkages in the face of increasing climate change impacts.
- Ensure these investments are made with appropriate consultation with local communities especially women, people with disabilities and other marginalized groups.

The most effective way of consulting with local communities is through churches, a major network that connects Pacific society. Caritas Australia's DRR work in the region is primarily based on these networks that have unparalleled reach across the region and a highly effective means of engaging with Pacific communities.

Gender Equity, Disability and Social Inclusion

For Australia to achieve the aims outlined in DFAT's the New International Development Policy and detailed further in the Gender and LGBTQAI+ strategies, resourcing needs to be accessible to local representative groups in communities across the Pacific. This resourcing needs to be complemented by resourcing to Australian NGOs working in the region to deliver on the goals outlined in the policy and strategies.

Supporting Pacific civil society

In the Pacific region, civil society organisations (CSOs) including churches, play an essential role in building stable, cohesive and peaceful societies. They are the most effective and widespread social and cultural institutions. Locally, they are often the first responders and shelters during disasters, site of community wide meetings, and in rural and remote areas often the best built physical infrastructure in the area.

Despite their importance, CSOs in the Pacific are increasingly constrained by resourcing challenges. Affected by skills shortages, staff retention issues, lack of access to sufficient and long-term funding as well as an unfavourable power imbalance with their donors. There is a pressing need in the region to develop common resources including toolkits and hubs for safeguarding, finance management, human resources, and governance that are contextualised to the legal environment, and mentoring for support staff working in these areas. Financial sustainability is an emerging area of focus for CSOs. Supporting CSOs in strategies to diversify income will be key to ensuring the long-term strength of the civil society ecosystem. There is a need for research into what financial diversification strategies work well within the region to be shared with CSOs.

The Australian Government, and the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) benefits from active collaboration with the Pacific civil society, building its capacity, youth leadership and fostering links with Australian civil society. Leveraging civil society networks to deliver on shared priorities is the most effective way for Australia to contribute to the economic, environmental, and social development of the region while incorporating a genuine commitment to Pacific perspectives and values.

We urge the Australian government to partner with and support local CSOs to document and promote Pacific led initiatives and incorporating Pacific ways of working, locally led emergency response and Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR), and initiatives that focus on promoting gender equality, social inclusion, and the protection of minority rights.

DFAT should prioritise mechanisms and approaches that help local partners to build their capacity to lead inclusive programming that prioritises the participation and leadership of marginalised groups including women and people with disabilities. This can be done by promoting women's participation in decision-making, integrating women's economic empowerment and challenging domestic violence in economic support activities.

Support for the Pacific community climate advocacy to amplify the voice of Pacific peoples and communities in climate advocacy. This can be achieved by funding diplomatic and advocacy training as well as travel costs to international forums. Transportation costs across the region and from the region to other parts of the world is a major limiting factor for Pacific civil society. The Pacific Australian Emerging Leaders' Summit (PAELS) is an example of an existing civil society and faith-based network that DFAT has a relationship with. Contributing to initiatives to develop diplomatic and advocacy skills, such as through the Diplomacy Training Program are also important contributions to advocacy in the region.

Pacific churches as key community and development partners

With over 90 per cent of people across the Pacific identifying as Christian, faith is central to the lives of Pacific peoples and churches play a central role in Pacific societies. Churches in the Pacific have extensive reach and long-established networks, and have been key actors in community development, humanitarian emergency response, peace-building and advocating for good governance. Churches are often amongst the first responders in emergencies, with the ability to activate their local networks quickly, use their infrastructure for emergency shelter and distribution centres, and facilitate the fast flow of information and communications. Church leaders are trusted and influential messengers in the Pacific and can frame social issues in locally appropriate terms. For all these reasons they are key community and development partners in the Pacific.

There are strong partnerships between Australian and Pacific churches and faith-based organisations which reflect the shared values around the freedom of belief and the importance that faith plays in open and democratic societies.

At the international level, the Pacific Conference of Churches (PCC) is one of the most influential organisations across the region. They have an important agenda-setting role in regional development frameworks, for example publishing 'Reweaving the Ecological Mat Framework: Toward an Ecological Framework for Development'¹ in 2020 (see page X). They also lead the climate justice advocacy and policy, bringing together civil society groups for initiatives such as the

Kioa Climate Emergency Declaration and the Otin Taai+20 Conference, and play a significant role in initiatives addressing family-based violence.

Australia should consider building on the success of the Papua New Guinea Church Partnership Program and expanding the Pacific Church Partnership Program. There should be a focus investment in institutional capacity and governance structures, resourcing for disaster response and risk reduction, and on developing local church leadership particularly in youth leadership in addressing climate change impacts locally and regionally.

Recommendations

- Engage and empower Pacific churches as key community and development partners as part of the Australian Government's strategy to strengthen partnership with Pacific civil society.
- the Australian government review how it could expand the operations of the Pacific church partnership program to build the capacity of faith based Pacific civil society organisations to respond to the priorities of Pacific island communities.

Support Pacific Churches to frame their own development narratives

'Reweaving the Ecological Mat' is a transformative, Pacific-wide initiative driven by Churches and faith-based groups to re-frame the Pacific development narrative into one that is uniquely Pacific and based on their own value system including placing ecology at the heart of their development. As described by Reverend James Bhagwan, General Secretary of the Pacific Conference of Churches: 'It's about reframing the narrative or conversation in the way we address the issue of life in the Pacific, holistic life, looking at the way we learn things and the world, the influence of global structures and systems, recognizing those, and offering alternatives so that people of the Pacific and creation and the environment is able to live a truly sustainable life and we are able to grow into the future with a more healthy outlook, not just spiritually, physically, emotionally but also in the sense of how we thrive.'

Reweaving the Ecological Mat is led by the Pacific Theological College's Institute of Mission and Research and the Pacific Conference of Churches and was developed in conversation with church leaders, academic institutions, governments and other civil society groups. DFAT has supported the REM project through its partnership with members of the Church Agency Network including Caritas Australia.

Recommendation

- Support partnerships and initiatives that empower Pacific churches and communities to frame their own development narratives based on Pacific values and including environmentally resilient approaches.

Decolonisation and self-determination

Pacific churches, faith-based organisations and civil society have a strong connection to issues of self-determination, decolonisation and human rights in the region, with West Papua and the Kanaky independence in New Caledonia.

The Pacific Conference of Churches and other networks have expressed deep concern about the violence seen in New Caledonia in 2024, which is a result of intergenerational trauma and frustration of Kanaky.

Recommendation

- The Australian Government should listen to the concerns of Pacific churches and civil society, and take steps to respond to these concerns in its regional foreign policy.

Annexe: Kioa Climate Emergency Declaration 2022

SUMMARY OF THE PRIORITIES OF PACIFIC CIVIL SOCIETY BASED ON THE KIOA TALANOA 17-19 OCTOBER 2022

“Toku fenua se tifa samasama kae ko se ile nei ne te tuigala. Fakalaga ake la” (My island is a mother of pearl that now no longer glows from the rays of the sun. We seek its restoration).

Preamble

We the Pacific civil societies gathered at the Alofi¹ of Kioa Island, uphold the civic values and rights of our respective peoples, villages and neighbourhoods, including;

Values and qualities such as spirituality, reciprocity, compassion, love for people, ecosystems: te fenua [land], te lagi [sky] and te moana [ocean]; and

With collective aspirations, for a just and dignified legacy for our families and future generations.

Our Stories

We present six of the many stories about climate change impacts across the Pacific:

1. Cogeia, Fiji

Cogeia village prepared for Category 5 Tropical Cyclone Yasa, but did not expect the devastating flooding that ensued. To our surprise, at 8pm 17th December 2020, the two neighboring rivers broke their banks, and floodwaters began to rise, we watched our homeland with a heavy heart knowing that the pieces of land that we call home were no more. A total of 18 houses were washed away.

2. Rabi, Fiji

The history of the Banaba people is a lesson to the world. We were forcibly relocated, by Australian, British and New Zealand governments, from our island home in modern day Kiribati to an island in Fiji. Our relocation was a direct result of extractive industry and global trade. We bear testimony to the zhuman cost and trauma borne by a community. We are what non-economic loss and damage looks like. We do not want any other community to go through what we experienced.

3. Republic of Marshall Islands

Marshallese have always been a people of the sea, navigators sailing from one island to another, over the vast blue ocean. Always moving today. They have become nomads, wandering in foreign lands, lamenting over their loss.

Today, the threat of climate change puts us on the verge of displacement once again.

¹ Alofi is where the land meets the sea or the sea front.

But this time we are putting our foot on the door. Never again do we want to be put in that position. We are adapting, we are mitigating, we are staying, “even if it means we are swimming in our own homes”.

4. Torres Strait

We are a speck in the ocean between two major continents, Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Our people are fighting, fighting against climate change. While people are sitting in their lounge room enjoying life, me and my people are picking up the bones of my ancestors like shells off the beach.

We are in a fight for survival. As the time is ticking, and our home is being washed away, the greediness of this world, hungry for money, shows it is neglecting a very ancient race of people.

We appeal to the Leaders of the world to have remorse and save what you can. Our future can be preserved for our future generations, not only our generations but your generations too.

5. Tuvalu

Loss and Damage, such as loss of burial grounds, ancestral land, shorelines, fishing grounds and culture, is a lived reality for our people. We are surrounded by water but do not have enough to drink. Rising sea levels, have contaminated the ground water, and have affected agriculture and water sources. The changes in rainfall pattern have resulted in prolonged dry season leading to extreme water shortage. Rising temperatures are causing severe heat stress leading to significant health impacts. People are not able to do outdoor activities such as working on plantations and fishing for long periods because of the intense heat, which is also affecting the marine environment which is a major source of daily food supply for our people. As we say in Tuvalu, “if we can save Tuvalu, we can save the world from climate change”, Tuvalu depicts all the impacts of climate change and is also an example of the resiliency of her people.

6. Kioa

As a migrant community on the frontlines of the climate crisis, we have called our sisters and brothers of Pacific civil society to talanoa here, on our island, because it is about the fate of our very own people. Kioa is a story of planned relocation. However, today we carry the dangerous futures of our homeland Tuvalu who face forced relocation due to sea level rise. Ours is a story about our ‘tears of resilience’.

We acknowledge these and all other Pacific communities fighting for climate justice and the struggles of other marginalised groups and indigenous communities, including from Aotearoa, Australia, Taiwan, Torres Strait, and many others across the world.

We make this **Declaration** recognising that everyone has a role and responsibility in ensuring just, equitable and secure futures for Pacific peoples.

We acknowledge the roles played by Pacific Leaders in championing climate action through previous statements, including the Suva Climate Change Declaration (2015), Boe Declaration (2018), Kainaki II Declaration (2019) and 2050 Blue Pacific Strategy (2022).

We make this declaration to ensure our communities' access to resources for climate adaptation, mitigation, relocation, resettlement and human security amidst the climate emergency.

In this spirit, we call on Leaders of Pacific nations to support and act on this Declaration on regional and international platforms, and continue the struggle for urgent and effective climate action by State Parties. We call on Leaders to do this through:

- Strengthened cooperation, collaboration and co-implementation with civil societies;
- Greater coordination and coherence of policies and programs at all levels;
- Endorsement and support for the Kioa Pledge including the Kioa Finance Mechanism²;
- The appointment of Pacific Civil Society Special Advocates³.

Through this Declaration we demand urgent and decisive actions through:

1. Greater action on mitigation, to reduce greenhouse gas emissions to align to the 1.5°C temperature goal, to ensure survival of small island communities.
 - This will be realised by completely phasing out fossil fuels, including no new fossil fuel projects, ending subsidies and financing of fossil fuel and other carbon-emitting extractive industries;
 - Through safe and just transition to renewable and sustainable energy by 2050; and
 - Achieving actual emissions reductions at source rather than through the use of 'blue' carbon credits and other carbon offset schemes.
2. Urgent action on adaptation including financing and support for community-led initiatives.
3. Urgent progress on the issue of Loss & Damage (L&D) by:
 - a. Securing separate, new and additional financing;
 - b. Establishing a Global Civil Society Taskforce, under the Warsaw International Mechanism, for Non-Economic Loss and Damage;
 - c. Establishing a Regional Civil Society Taskforce to ensure the Pacific voice in this process.
4. Ensure the just, dignified and safe movement of peoples, in the context of climate change, especially:
 - a. Migration with dignity is protected by law and promoted in policy;
 - b. Planned relocation and resettlement programs are community-focussed, consultative and based on free, prior and informed consent;
 - c. Utilise technology for collection and upkeep of data in the service of Pacific people.

² See Annex

³ One each from the subregions of Melanesia, Micronesia, and Polynesia as well as one from the First Nations of Australia and one from tangata whenua of Aotearoa New Zealand)

5. Guaranteed access to finance, and the creation of more equitable finance arrangements, beginning with a review of regional and international financial architectures, with inputs from civil society organisations and other stakeholders.
6. Ocean policies that are compatible with the climate goals, including:
 - a. Ban on deep sea mining;
 - b. Ban on discharge of wastes, including nuclear;
 - c. Protect the oceans for the survival of small island communities and ecosystems; d. Recognise, respect, uphold and value the contributions traditional knowledge, culture and faith have played and continue to play in sustaining the unique relationship between the oceans and the environment.
7. Achieve inter-generational equity, ensuring we leave a better world for our descendants, by cancelling climate debt and a commitment to a debt-free future.

As Civil Society Organisations of the Pacific, we hear the resounding response from our people that telling our stories is no longer enough. For far too long, the realities of our people have been used to highlight the urgency of the climate crisis. Fatigue from the constant retelling of stories and the burden of reliving the trauma connected to them without seeing any tangible changes has placed a heavy weight on the communities we serve.

Gathered on Kioa Island we call on our leaders to champion The Kioa Climate Emergency Declaration.

Signing onto the Kioa Climate Emergency Declaration is only the beginning of the journey.

ISSUED ON THE ISLAND OF KIOA, FIJI, 19 OCTOBER 2022

Annex 1: Kioa Pledge

As CSOs working on climate change in the Pacific, we acknowledge our access to different streams of funding and resources. Our responsibility to our people is to clear a pathway to these resources, to facilitate the quality of life of their communities.

We pledge to work together, to mobilise and allocate resources, whether they be monetary, technical or technological, to run and sustain the development of a Kioa Finance Mechanism.

The Kioa Finance Mechanism will be a platform that brings together the resources and expertise of our organisations to support our communities to access funding and resources for the projects needed in their homes, villages and islands.

The Kioa Finance Mechanism will exist as a user-friendly process that communities can access upon request. This request can range in scale, including but not limited to capacity building, community adaptation projects, utilities access, planned relocation and more.

We pledge to support this Mechanism and work together to connect communities with the resources necessary to meet their requests. This ensures the burden of access does not fall back on affected communities.

We call for national and subnational recognition and support for this community-responsible initiative.