

Rio+20 Pacific Preparatory Meeting

Joint Ministerial Meeting

Apia, Samoa

21-22 July 2011

FINAL RECORD OF DISCUSSIONS AND DECISIONS



Introduction

1. The Pacific Preparatory Meeting for the UN Conference on Sustainable Development (UNCSD/Rio+20) was held in Apia, Samoa on 21st-22nd July 2011. It was held as the third meeting of the series of small islands developing countries (SIDS) with the view to provide opportunities for Pacific SIDS to highlight their priority issues and coordinate their views in advance of the Asia Pacific Regional PrepCom in October and the ongoing global preparatory process. The Meeting addressed the objective of Rio+20, stated in General Assembly resolution 64/236, “to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, assessing the progress to date and the remaining gaps in the implementation of the outcomes of the major summits on sustainable development and addressing new and emerging challenges.” The two designated themes of Rio+20 are: “a green economy in the context of sustainable development and poverty eradication” and “the institutional framework for sustainable development.” The Pacific Preparatory Meeting in Apia was organised around these two key themes.

2. The Meeting was a joint discussion between regional Ministers of Environment and Finance, the Chairperson of the Forum Fisheries Committee, development partners and senior officials. It was opened on the evening of 21st July by the Prime Minister of Samoa, the Honourable Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi. It was reconvened on 22nd July and chaired by Samoa’s Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Fa’amoetaulua Lealaiauloto Taito Dr Faale Tumaalii. The session on the first Rio+20 theme was chaired by the Nauru Minister of Finance, Dr Kieren Keke, and the session on theme two by the Cook Islands Minister of Finance, Mr Mark Brown.

3. Present at the Meeting were the Prime Minister of the Cook Islands and 11 Ministers of Environment, Finance and Fisheries from the Cook Islands, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu. There were representatives of Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu. Australia, France, New Caledonia, New Zealand and Tokelau attended as Observers. Representatives of the UN, International Organizations, Regional Organisations of the Pacific, Non-Government Organisations (NGOs), the Private Sector and Civil Society including Youth Representatives also attended. A list of participants is attached as Annex I.

4. The Joint Ministerial Meeting was preceded by an Open Forum on Green Growth 20th - 21st July, which was attended by representatives of Government, Civil Society and NGOs, Youth, Private Sector, Church, Development Partners, and International and Regional Organizations.

Opening

5. In opening the Joint Ministerial Meeting (opening statement attached as Annex II), the Prime Minister of Samoa, Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, highlighted the importance of achieving a delicate balance between the environmental, economic and social dimensions of development to ensure that the attainment of one aspect will not be detrimental to the others. While noting the need to ensure that the owners of natural capital are not short-changed, the Prime Minister went on to say that green growth does encourage the “right kind of growth” and requires a shift in the way development, progress and the environment are perceived. He also noted the transformational nature of the green economy and agreed that it was a timely response to the “shortcomings” of the conventional development model. Furthermore, it was an outcome-oriented concept deliberately aimed at improving human well-being without undermining the resource base on which current and future generations depended. To underscore Samoa’s commitment to greening growth, the Prime Minister referred to the site visits during the Open Forum when participants saw firsthand some of Samoa’s green projects in renewable energy, waste-to-energy and organic farming, waste management and natural parks. He also noted that Samoa was targeting to be a carbon neutral economy by 2020.

6. The Prime Minister highlighted the need for Pacific countries to receive an equitable share of marine resources, a goal which remains elusive up to now. Looking ahead, he stated that the “green economy” theme was an opportunity to develop goals and priorities that will go beyond the MDGs target year of 2015. Finally, he stressed the need for the close engagement of Finance, Fisheries and Environment Ministers to discuss and pursue green growth. This was to ensure that green growth was pursued as a whole-of-economy matter and a “mainstream approach” to development. He therefore congratulated the organizers of the Meeting for convening it as a joint ministerial session.

The Rio+20 Process Explained

7. A video message was received from UNCED Secretary-General Sha Zukang, welcoming the convening of the Meeting and wishing the participants success in their deliberations. This was followed by presentations from the UN and Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) who explained to the Meeting the background to the Rio+20 Conference and the preparatory process including the meeting in Apia.

8. The Meeting recalled that the Pacific Island region had played a full and meaningful role at the Rio Earth Summit – United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) in 1992. The Pacific welcomed the recognition of a special case for SIDS¹ captured in Chapter 17 of Agenda 21 which resulted in the development of the Global Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (Barbados Programme of Action, BPoA, 1994). These agreements have been further elaborated in subsequent reviews, including the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPOI)², Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) and MSI+5, which remain the framework against which commitments for and by the SIDS were made and should be measured.

9. The Meeting was urged to take a strong and united voice to the Rio+20 Conference and beyond. Recognising the limited overall progress towards sustainable development in the 20 years since Rio, the Pacific perspective for Rio+20 must build on previous experiences and lessons from Rio+5 and Rio+10 including the many positive developments that the Pacific has undertaken, as highlighted in the MSI+5 review of 2010. The Pacific Plan, which was endorsed by Forum Leaders in 2005, has become the agreed regional framework to pursue sustainable development goals of the Pacific through regional cooperation and integration. The MSI+5 review also found over thirty regional policies, plans, initiatives and strategies being implemented under the Pacific Plan across a range of sectors including energy, water, climate change, conservation, fisheries, agriculture, forests and transport.

10. However, the MSI+5 review also concluded that the vulnerabilities of the Pacific SIDS were increasing while their coping capacity was not. The review noted the persistence of many old challenges of smallness and isolation. It also found that the recent food, financial and fuel crises had compounded the ongoing impacts of climate change and had served as a reminder of the need for change. The review of MDGs undertaken in 2010 had also found that performance varied but was generally poor in Pacific

¹17.123. Small island developing States, and islands supporting small communities are a special case both for environment and development. They are ecologically fragile and vulnerable. Their small size, limited resources, geographic dispersion and isolation from markets, place them at a disadvantage economically and prevent economies of scale. For small island developing States the ocean and coastal environment is of strategic importance and constitutes a valuable development resource

² The mandate and role of the UN Regional Commissions re Sustainable Development and Agenda 21 vis-à-vis other regional and sub-regional bodies are to be found in the JPOI paras 159-161.

SIDS. At the end of the MSI+5 review, the UN General Assembly (Res A/65/2) called for “concrete and additional” measures and adopt a “coordinated, balanced and integrated” to further implement the MSI. It also called on the UN to review and report on its support for the implementation of the MSI and of the SIDS.

11. It is against this backdrop that the Rio+20 Pacific Preparatory Meeting noted that the Rio+20 with its theme of green economy offered the opportunity to rekindle the true spirit of sustainability and to create more economically vibrant, environmentally sustainable, climate-change resistant, and socially equitable nations and communities. Green growth was seen as a culturally relevant development paradigm; indeed the cultural ‘investment’ in environmental conservation and sustainable resource use, both land and marine-based, is centuries old. The principles of sustainable development like the conservation of biological diversity and ecological integrity, intra-generational and inter-generational equity, resonate strongly with cherished traditional and faith-based Pacific values, knowledge and production systems, in particular the trust placed in communities (as custodians) to take care of the environment, a sacred gift for present and future generations.

12. Given that there are many other regions competing for international support, the Meeting was urged to seek from Rio+20 a renewed political commitment to and reaffirmation of the special case of SIDS and their acknowledged vulnerabilities. It should encourage the international community to meet existing commitments and agree to new commitments that will facilitate the transformation of global economies towards greener and more sustainable pathways, with the necessary institutional structures to sustain these efforts.

13. The Meeting heard of the need to provide the Pacific SIDS missions in New York with technical assistance in the lead-up to Rio+20. CROP agencies and UN agencies in the region would explore how this assistance could be provided. Assistance would also need to be maintained to smaller SIDS in the preparation process for Rio+20, recognising their limited capacity to fully engage in the process.

Theme 1: Green Economy in the Context of Sustainable Development and Poverty Eradication

14. Under the session on the first theme of Rio+20—green economy in the context of sustainable development—the Meeting heard from the United Nations about the current definitions of the green economy and the five recommended pathways for transformation to a green economy: (1) Investment in Natural Capital; (2) Sustainable Consumption and Production; (3) Sustainable Infrastructure; (4) Greening Business and Markets; and (5) Green Taxes and Budget Reforms.

15. The Meeting was briefed on the main reason for supporting the kind of transformation highlighted by the Prime Minister of Samoa in his opening remarks. The Pacific region continued to face some enormous environmental, social, and economic challenges and the conventional model has not succeeded in maintaining the necessary balance between the three pillars by not valuing the rich natural resources and biodiversity that are unique to the Pacific. This has resulted in depleted and degraded environments, and been to the detriment of community livelihoods. Poverty continues to be a challenge while economic growth has been generally low, variable and uneven. Climate change, largely the product of unsustainable production and consumption patterns outside the region, now threatens the very existence of all vulnerable small island developing states.

16. The Meeting was also informed of some of the key issues arising out of, and information shared at, the Open Forum. These included information on the many initiatives being pursued under the five recommended pathways of green growth. The Forum had also highlighted the need for better balance between the three pillars of sustainable development, more investment in natural capital (for example through the expansion of ‘protected areas’), the application of the polluter pays principle of pricing, the

development of green businesses and markets, improved access to climate change funding, and green taxation and budget reform to promote and facilitate the transformation. There was a need to apply the precautionary principle of Rio to the handling of new opportunities including in deep sea mineral exploration and mining. The Open Forum also discussed how a green growth transformation requires a socially inclusive approach involving women, youth, faith-based organizations and education. There was a need as well to revive and apply traditional values and systems that support sustainable development and social equity and to integrate the large informal sector that on average represents 60 per cent of all Pacific island economies.

17. While noting support for green economy the Meeting also understood that there was no one-size-fits all and that there was a need to address the major vulnerabilities of the Pacific SIDS in particular relating to impacts of climate change. It was most important to consider that the livelihoods and sustenance of island communities rely on maintaining healthy ecosystems.

18. The Representative of the Pacific SIDS missions in New York clarified that the “Blue Economy concept” they had put forward was not a competing approach to the Green Economy but rather an initiative to ensure that issues related to the Pacific ocean and islands are given prominence in the Rio+20 agenda. Occupying some one third of the earth’s surface, the Pacific Ocean provides a significant global environmental, social and developmental contribution to sustainable development. PSIDS missions have successfully raised this and gained wide spread support for its inclusion within the agenda for Rio+20.

19. As well, the potential of possible mineral resources in the ocean seabed in Pacific SIDS EEZs and in the adjacent high seas offers an exciting prospect in terms of an expanded economic resource base for Pacific SIDS – hence the clear need to encompass the blue economy as an integral part of the green economy. Due prominence should therefore be given to the sustainable development and management and conservation of marine and ocean resources as well as the need for Pacific SIDS to receive greater economic returns from the utilization of their marine resources. This requires measures such as the application of the precautionary principle to protect ocean (including seabed) ecosystems; enhance sustainable fisheries and coastal/coral reef management; and reduce the adverse impacts of climate change, which is already affecting Pacific SIDS populations, including their food and water security.

20. The Meeting heard of the need to reduce over-fishing and illegal, unregulated fishing including through the removal of perverse subsidies; and to build the resilience of marine ecosystems to the impact of climate change and ocean acidification. Maintaining the health of the ocean also requires the expansion of Marine Protected Areas. Protected areas result in healthy ecosystems which contribute, amongst other things, to biodiversity conservation, food security and water quality. The Meeting was told of how sharks are an integral part of a healthy ocean Ecosystem and should not be harvested at unsustainable rates. A proposal was made to consider banning shark fishing and shark finning.

21. It was noted that the Pacific regional ocean policies and frameworks for the sustainable development and management and conservation measures were in place and already delivering on best practices, good governance and institutional structures. There was an intention to show-case these processes and mechanisms for greening ocean-based economies at Rio+20. The Pacific would seek financial resources to help SIDS successfully implement these efforts based on: the importance of a healthy Pacific ocean to the future of the world; the “special case of SIDS” and the need for more equitable sharing of the benefits; and the need for the international community to live up to past commitments. The region would also seek to increase its participation in commercial fisheries and the development of domestic operations within sustainable limits; greater direct financing and budgetary support of ocean related programs; and more direct investment in tuna fisheries.

22. Delegates and participants heard from each other of the many efforts to transform Pacific economies, for example through organic farming, renewable energy and solid waste disposal, ecotourism, marine parks and fish sanctuaries, protected areas and innovative campaigns like ‘One-tree, One-day, One-life’ by New Caledonia. Energy reforms were also underway, for example the development of an Energy Road Map in Tonga, and a carbon tax scheme in Australia. Many Pacific countries have significant energy targets, e.g. a carbon neutral economy in Samoa by 2020. The energy sector is critical to determining the carbon footprint of any country so sectoral reforms are pivotal to a green transformation. Energy costs are a substantial proportion of Pacific import costs and fossil fuel supplies over 90% of Pacific energy needs in transport and electricity. Reducing fossil consumption and dependence and switching to renewable energy, and improving energy efficiency and conservation, will enhance energy security, make economic savings, and promote climate mitigation.

23. The Meeting also heard of how taxes, the removal of perverse subsidies, payment for ecological services and the application of polluter pays principles could provide economic incentives to change environmentally harmful behaviour and encourage technological innovation. The experience of OECD and of other SIDS regions point to these measures being increasingly adopted as key policy instruments. They also point to the opportunities that are available for assistance to those countries that wish to implement such measures. The Meeting was advised that the OECD countries with the highest debts were also the ones with the lowest green/carbon taxes. The carbon tax scheme being introduced into Australia imposes a price on pollution. It will levy a charge of AUD23 per tonne of carbon and will be paid by 500 big polluters. The tax is revenue neutral as revenue raised will be returned to households and small business. The main effect of the tax is to change attitudes and perceptions about pollution and to encourage more sustainable consumption patterns.

24. Also discussed during the Meeting were some of the innovative green financing emerging in the Pacific e.g. a green departure tax in Palau levied on tourists to help protect the country’s ecological assets, a marine pollution levy in Fiji, community-based trust funds, concessional loans for energy efficient development projects in Palau, protected areas in the Cook Islands and Kiribati, and the Micronesian Challenge and Trust Fund, whose conservation of marine and terrestrial assets is globally beneficial and has exceeded global CBD targets.

25. A key message conveyed in the discussion was that the type of transformational changes needed to succeed in sustainable development required strong political will and “smart” planning to mainstream the principles of sustainability at all levels and across all sectors. The Pacific Youth Representative added their own support to the call by Pacific Government Representatives to green economies in the Pacific as a practical means to achieve sustainable development. On moving forward, tools were needed to assist countries devise and implement their own green plans.

Recommendations

26. Support was expressed for the recommendations as a practical way forward for the Pacific³. Based on the papers, presentations and the discussions, the Meeting **agreed** to proceed as follows regarding the green economy theme of Rio+20:

- (1) National country analyses should be completed and form the basis of country-specific strategies for greening economies, building on the solid evidence of challenges and opportunities which were identified by Pacific SIDS through the MSI+5 process and other regional and national reviews. National country analyses, as well as the outcomes of this meeting, should also feed

³ The chairman of the session summarized this in his remarks and comments by other government delegations referred to the need for smart plans as well as to previous decisions of the Pacific countries in support of the same recommendations.

into the development of any roadmap or implementation plans that might be developed by countries and region.

- (2) Enabling policy, legal, regulatory and institutional frameworks should be developed in order for green growth strategies to be pursued. The green growth paradigm should be adopted as part of national macro-economic and structural reform policies, as well as law reform.
- (3) Fiscal and Budget Reform are necessary to achieve a low carbon green economy and sustainable development. They are also required if environmental costs are to be internalized. The reform process should aim to harmonize the imperatives of environmental sustainability, social inclusiveness and economic growth.
- (4) A regional green growth roadmap could be developed through the CROP Sustainable Development Working Group to assist Pacific SIDS countries and to help support the implementation of the sustainable development goal of the Pacific Plan. The roadmap should build on other existing frameworks such as the Pacific Islands Ocean Policy (PIROP), its related Framework for Integrated Strategic Action (PIROP-ISA), the Pacific Oceanscape Framework, the Regional Framework for Energy, the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable, the Regional Platform for Disaster Risk Reduction, and other relevant regional initiatives. It should also include the blue economy as an integral component given its critical importance to all Pacific SIDS and should prominently feature the sustainable development, conservation and management of all marine and ocean resources as well as terrestrial resources. An important objective is to ensure that the Pacific SIDS deriving equitable economic returns from these resources. Community participation and ownership are important if the roadmap is to have credibility and legitimacy, and implementation is to be effective.

Theme 2: Institutional Frameworks for Sustainable Development

27. The Meeting heard from the UN and CROP about the status of the institutional frameworks for sustainable development within the region. The Pacific Plan and its associated sector policy documents provide a sound regional institutional framework for sustainable development.

28. The Meeting noted that all countries have some form of National Sustainable Development Strategies (NSDS) or the like. Progress in the implementation of these has been slow, and there continue to be capacity limitations. There was a need for improved integration of the three pillars as well as better planning, coordination and budgeting. Other impediments to implementation are the inadequate legal and institutional frameworks and the lack of effective monitoring mechanisms. Assistance was needed with aligning sector plans with national development goals, coordination, and effective use of Monitoring and Evaluation and stakeholder participation.

29. A paper was presented to the Meeting on Climate Change Financing as well as other financing mechanisms and their potential for resourcing the transformation to green economies. The view was expressed that climate change activities should be funded by those responsible for climate change as existing funds should not be diverted from existing programmes. It was also noted that a significant amount of funding was available to the Pacific Islands Countries for climate change activities, but there was a need to simplify access to these funds. There was little capacity to access climate change finance funds, and scarce national capacity was being diverted to accessing these funds. Support was needed to improve capacity to access funds. In addition, better coordination and political will were needed to pursue climate change initiatives.

30. A call was made for direct budget support as a mechanism to deliver climate change funds. This should be bilateral in order to cut out the middleman. There was a need to clarify the role of CROP agencies with regard to climate change financing and activities and to inform Pacific Island Countries of the funding available and funding windows for SIDS. CROP agencies wanting to be 'Implementing Agencies' for climate change finance would need to minimize the administrative costs of doing so.

31. The Meeting also heard of the 14 Pacific partnerships for sustainable development which were launched at World Summit for Sustainable Development in 2002. Some of these have proven to be an effective mechanism for a more inclusive approach to implementing sustainable development by facilitating the engagement of development partners and non-state actors, the exchange of information and the leveraging of new resources. Voluntary partnerships are important and should be pursued. They should be driven by country needs and, following the example of the Disaster Management Partnership, other partnerships could merge to be more effective.

32. The Meeting heard that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) Council has approved direct access for countries but the required paperwork to access funds was not easy to complete. New Zealand has committed NZ\$30 million pa to Fast Start Finance for the period 2010-2012, the majority of which was being delivered as bilateral assistance through the NZ Aid programme. It was pointed out that having a good sector plan with targets and high level political commitment helped attract donor finance. For example, Tonga had attracted donor finance from New Zealand and others for its Energy Road Map because it is a good plan that is well targeted.

Recommendations

33. While noting that the Barbados Plan of Action (BPoA), Johannesburg Plan of Implementation (JPoI), and the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) remained the internationally agreed strategies and frameworks for pursuing sustainable development for and in SIDS, the Meeting **agreed** that:

- (1) The overall objective of sustainable development must be at the centre of all work in the Pacific SIDS by international, regional and sub-regional organizations. To ensure maximum impact of such efforts, it is important for respective mandates to be fully respected and maximum collaboration and cooperation emphasized.
- (2) The NSDS or the like provides the best framework to integrate the opportunities that green economy approaches may offer to sustainable development for Pacific SIDS. It should therefore be retained as the basis for developing and implementing sustainable development policies.
- (3) For Forum Members, the Cairns Compact Peer Review process is beneficial as a means of strengthening policy development, planning, budgeting, and aid management. It can also help identify solutions and has proven to be beneficial for those countries which have been reviewed as well as those who have participated as reviewers. In this vein, more Forum members are encouraged to be involved in this process⁴.
- (4) Partnerships have proven a useful tool for promoting sustainable development. They should be encouraged to broaden their membership to include other key stakeholders like faith-based groups, traditional leaders, women and youth. Successful partnerships should be encouraged to keep their activities relevant to national needs and priorities. Joint initiatives between regional

⁴ Fiji is suspended from the PIF and is not able to associate itself with this recommendation.

partnerships are an effective way to use scarce resources. These initiatives could be extended beyond the region to include collaboration with similar partnerships in other SIDS regions. Steps should be taken to review and, where relevant, revitalize those partnerships that have not been active. A number of new partnerships are to be tabled at Rio+20.

- (5) The Pacific NSDS Regional Support Partnership could be used by Pacific SIDS to improve their NSDS preparation, review and implementation. To facilitate this process, stronger support is needed for the CROP SDWG. The Green Growth subsidiary partnership could provide the diagnostic work required for ‘greening’ as well as assisting countries to assess and implement the opportunities identified for green growth. It is important that these partnerships are integrated so that unnecessary duplication and fragmentation are avoided.
- (6) Climate change financing provides a significant opportunity for resourcing the climate-resilient and low carbon elements of green economy initiatives. This requires the engagement of a range of ministries to explore combining these resources with the existing allocations in domestic budgets. A clear articulation of priorities within national policy and systems is required to guide resources effectively and in a sustainable manner. It also requires innovative modalities of access through global funds, and improved donor practice and flexibility through bilateral funding as well as better coordination and articulation of needs across the Pacific region. In this regard, regional organizations can play a significant role in supporting country efforts to demystify the complex financing architecture around climate change and strengthen collaboration at all levels (bilateral, multilateral and South-South). It may be useful to explore the development of a web-based platform with detailed description of projects and activities in need of financing in the region for donors to access. It is also important for donor partners to be cognizant that burdensome conditions on accessing funding can prevent the smallest and most vulnerable from accessing aid.
- (7) Innovative national financing options and tax incentives are already being implemented in the Pacific and experiences from these different examples should be captured and shared to foster similar approaches in other PICs. The National Assessments currently underway should provide a good opportunity to capture these experiences and examples en route to Rio+20.

Call to the International Community

34. Based on the discussions and decisions of the Meeting, and in order to secure renewed political commitment for sustainable development, the following messages are proposed for guiding the participation of the Pacific SIDS in the Rio+20 preparatory process:

- (1) The Pacific is renewing its own political commitment for sustainable development by adopting a “green economy in a blue world” approach as an inclusive and practical way of promoting the right kind of growth and achieving the delicate balance between the three dimensions of sustainable development. It’s an approach that will also help the Pacific adapt to and mitigate the impact of climate change which the Pacific regards as its most critical challenge. The initiatives described at, and the progress made in implementing the decisions of, this Meeting can all be showcased at Rio+20 to underscore the renewed commitment that the Pacific has made towards sustainable development. Valuable lessons could also be learnt from the sustainable lifestyles that have long been practiced by the people of the Pacific region, whose wellbeing and cultures are intrinsically linked to the natural resources and biodiversity of their islands. For example, the stewardship of the Pacific Ocean for present and future generations is

ingrained within Pacific island cultures⁵.

- (2) Occupying some one third of the earth's surface, the Pacific Ocean provides a significant global environmental, social and developmental contribution to sustainable development. This global resource is under threat from climate change and unsustainable practice and, while the Pacific has done much at the national and regional levels to sustainably develop, manage and conserve Pacific oceans and marine resources, the international community also needs to take immediate steps to strengthen the governance of oceans so that the global community can sustainably manage this global resource. The opportunities in marine and ocean resources need to be managed sustainably and equitably so that the Pacific does get its fair share of the benefits. The Pacific therefore wishes to ensure that the "blue economy" aspects of sustainable development are featured prominently at Rio+20.
- (3) The Small Pacific island developing states are also acutely aware that although they are not responsible for climate change and the financial, fuel and food crises facing the world, these have the impact of delaying or even jeopardising development gains in the Pacific while also threatening the survival of many island nations and communities. They recognize that they have little control over the carbon emissions and excessive resource use that result from unsustainable production and consumption patterns in industrialized countries. And they are deeply concerned that current levels of economic activity will cause a temperature rise of greater than 1.5 degrees which will not only destroy coral reefs and ecosystems, and undermine sources of livelihood for Pacific peoples, but will also threaten the very existence of some of the Pacific countries. As a region, the Pacific is committed to pursuing a green economy transformation, including through all relevant climate mitigation and adaptation strategies. However, the international community must accept that it bears the moral responsibility, and in turn the financial burden, for mitigation and adaptation. The Pacific therefore calls on the international community to take immediate action to mainstream sustainable development in its own backyard and to ensure that the international systems and institutions including the UN mainstream the MSI+5 review outcomes and the SIDS priorities in their plans and programmes.
- (4) The special consideration given to SIDS has been a prominent feature of both the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development and the World Summit for Sustainable Development. The Barbados Programme of Action and the Mauritius Strategy have provided a framework by which SIDS have taken significant steps to address their sustainable development challenges. However as evidenced by the recent Pacific regional report for the 5 year review of the Mauritius Strategy, the special vulnerabilities of Pacific SIDS remain and in some cases have increased as a result of climate change impact, natural disasters and the recent financial, food and fuel crises. Pacific SIDS therefore reaffirms the need to maintain a special consideration of SIDS at Rio+20. In this regard, while there has been a considerable development of global financing mechanisms, by and large, developed nations have not met their commitments to funding sustainable development or climate change mitigation and adaptation. In addition, funds that have been channelled through global funding architecture have not been designed to accommodate the capacity constraints of SIDS. As a result SIDS countries have not been able to access these effectively. Pacific SIDS therefore seeks agreement by the international community to improve access to funds for the transformation of their economies; and to ease the reporting burden faced by small island administrations.

⁵ This was also clearly recognised by Leaders when they gave affect to the Pacific Plan through the Auckland Declaration of 2004 – "the peoples of the Pacific are custodians of the largest, most peaceful and abundant ocean...".

Annex I

Rio+20 Pacific Preparatory Meeting
20-22 July 2011
Apia, Samoa

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

PACIFIC SIDS

COOK ISLANDS

Hon Henry Puna, Prime Minister and Minister for Environment

Hon. Mark Brown, Minister for Finance and Economic Management

Hon Atatoa Herman, Assistant Minister for Environment

Ms Elizabeth Wright-Koteka, Director, Central Policy and Planning Office

Ms Priscilla Maruariki, Acting Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

Mr Edwin Pittman, Chief Executive Officer for the Prime Minister

Mr Carl Hunter, Office of the Prime Minister,

FIJI

Mr Krishna D. Prasad, Deputy Secretary, Ministry of Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics

Mr Sele N. Tagivuni, Principal Environment Officer – Biodiversity and Sustainable Management, Department of Environment

KIRIBATI

Hon Amberoti Nikora, Minister for Environment

Ms Wiriki Tooma, Secretary, Ministry of Environment

MARSHALL ISLANDS, REPUBLIC OF

Hon Mattlan Zackhras, Minister, Ministry of Resources and Development

Hon Jack Ading, Minister, Ministry of Finance

Ms Yumiko Crisostomo, Director, Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination (OEPPC)

MICRONESIA, FEDERATED STATES OF

Mr Jeem Lippwe, Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN, FSM Mission – New York

NAURU

Hon Dr Kieren Keke, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade and Finance

Ms Berilyn Jeremiah, Director of Social Sector Planning

NIUE

Mr Sauni Tongatule, Director of Environment

PALAU

Hon Harry Fritz, Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism

Mr Joseph N. Aitaro, National Coordinator, Protected Areas Network, Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism

Ms Nanette Malsol, Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment & Tourism

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Dr Wari Lea Iamo, Secretary, Department of Environment and Conservation & Acting Executive Director of Office of Climate Change & Development, Department of Environment and Conservation

Ms Kay Kalim, Deputy Secretary, Sustainable Environment Programme Wing, Department of Environment and Conservation, Department of Environment and Conservation

Ms Gwen Sissiou, Deputy Secretary, Department of Environment and Conservation & Director – MRV & National Communications, Office of Climate Change & Development

SAMOA

Hon Fa'amoetauloa Lealaialoto Taito Dr Faale Tumaalii, Minister, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Hon Le Mamea Ropati, Minister of Agriculture & Fisheries

Hon Faumuina Liuga, Minister of Finance

Mr Taulealeausumai Tuifuisa'a Laavasa Malua, Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Mr Ali'ioaiga Feturi Elisaia, Ambassador & Permanent Representative to the United Nations, New York

Ms Josephine Stowers, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

Ms Tuiolo Schuster, Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Mr Chanel Iroi, Under Secretary – Technical, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology

Ms Agnetha Vave-Karamui, Chief Conservation Officer, Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology

TOKELAU

Hon Aliko Faipule Foua Toloa, Ulu o Tokelau, Head of Delegation, Tokelau

Mr Jovilisi Suveinakama, Chief Adviser, Tokelau

Ms Lili Tuioti, Senior Adviser, Tokelau

TONGA

Hon Sunia Manu, Minister of Finance, Nukualofa, Tonga

Mr Asipeli Palaki, Director of Environment and Climate Change, Ministry of Environment and Climate Change

TUVALU

Hon Apisai Ielemia, Minister for Foreign Affairs, Trade, Tourism, Environment and Labour

Mr Pasuna Tuaga, Assistant Secretary, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Trade, Tourism, Environment and Labour

Hon Lotoala Metia, Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Industries

Mr Minute Taupo, Ministry of Finance, Economic Planning and Industries

VANUATU

Mr Trinison Tarivonda, Senior Environment Officer, Department of Environmental Protection & Conservation (DEPC)

DEVELOPMENT PARTNERS

AUSTRALIA

Hon Senator Don Farrell, Senator

Mr Timothy R. Picton, Adviser to Parliamentary Secretary for Sustainability and Urban Water

Dr Stephen Powell, Director – International Section, Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities, Strategic Advice Branch, Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Ms Edwina Jones, Senior Policy Officer – Rio+20 Taskforce, Strategic Advice Branch, Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities

Ms Paula M. Watt, Director, Marine Environment Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Mr Edward Smith, Pacific Fisheries Officer, Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID)

Ms Annemarie Watt, Director, Integration & Environment, Australian Agency for International Development (AUSAID)

Mr Leslie P. Humphries, Executive Officer, Pacific Regional Section, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

FRANCE

Ms Josyane Couratier, Représentante Permanente Ajointe auprès de la CPS, Nouméa, New Caledonia

NEW CALEDONIA

Hon Anthony Lecren, Minister, Economy, External Trade and Sustainable Development

Mr Bruno Iekawe, Advisor to the Minister, Economy, External Trade and Sustainable Development

Mr Yves Paul Guy Lafoy, Senior Advisor, Department of Regional Cooperation and External Relations

Mr Bertold Schmitt, Interpreter to the Minister

NEW ZEALAND

Ms Caroline McDonald, Director, Environment Division, Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade

Mr Stuart Calman, Director, Climate Risk, Ministry for the Environment

UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

Mr George Carter, Embassy of the United States of America - Apia, Samoa

INTERNATIONAL ORGANISATIONS

Ms Constance Vigilance, Economic Adviser, Economic Affairs Division, Commonwealth Secretariat

Ms Tamara Levine, Administrator, Environment and Development Network, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD)

REGIONAL ORGANISATIONS

SPREP

Mr Kosi Latu, Deputy Director, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP),

Mr Sefanaia Nawadra, Sustainable Development Adviser

Mr Espen Ronneberg, Climate Change Adviser

Ms Seema Deo, Education and Communication Adviser

Mr Taniela Faletau

Ms Netatua Pelesikoti

Mr Posa Skelton

Mr Clive Hawigen

Mr Nixon Kua

Mr Andrew Kennedy, Legal Intern

PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT (PIFS)

Mr Tuiloma Neroni Slade, Secretary General, Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

Mr Su'a Kevin Thomsen, Director, Strategic Partnerships & Coordination Programme, PIFS

Mr Scott Hook, Economic Infrastructure Adviser, Economic Governance Programme, PIFS

SPC - SOPAC

Mr Russell Howorth, Director, Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) and SPC Applied Geoscience Technology Division

FFA

Mr Samasoni Sauni, Fisheries Management Adviser, Forum Fisheries Agency

NON-GOVERNMENTAL / CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANISATIONS

Ms Imogen P. Ingram, Secretary/Treasurer, ISACI, Rarotonga, Cook Islands

Ms Morena Rigamoto, Country Manager, Live & Learn Environmental Education, Suva, Fiji

Mr Feiloakitau Tevi, General Secretary, Pacific Conference of Churches, Suva, Fiji

Mr Taholo Kami, Director, World Conservation Union /International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) – Oceania Regional Office, Suva, Fiji

Ms Jackie Thomas, World Wildlife Fund South Pacific Programme (WWF-SP), Suva, Fiji

Ms Mereia Volavola, Chief Executive Officer, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO), Suva, Fiji

Ms Joan Yang, Senior Officer, International Policy, Pew Environment Group, Washington DC, USA

Mr Michael Donoghue, Executive Director, Pacific Islands Programme, Conservation International, Apia, Samoa

Ms Sue Taei, Director, Pacific Islands Programme, Conservation International, Apia, Samoa

Ms Leilani Duffy, Conservation International, Apia, Samoa

Mr James Atherton, Conservation International, Apia, Samoa

Schannel van Dijken, Marine Programme Manager, Conservation International, Apia, Samoa

Ratu Maseikula Niumataiwalu, The Econesian Society, Suva, Fiji

Mr Ewan Cameron, 350.org Pacific Moving Planet Coordinator, Vailima, Samoa

Ms Lucille M. Sain, Student Activity Coordinator, College of Micronesia, Chuuk, FSM

Ms Makereta Komai, News Editor, PACNEWS, Suva, Fiji

Ms Cherelle Jackson, Writer, Earth Negotiations Bulletin, International Institute for Sustainable Development – UN Office, New York, USA

Ms Melanie Ashton, Writer, Earth Negotiations Bulletin, International Institute for Sustainable Development – UN Office, New York, USA

Ms Kate Brown, Partnership Coordinator, Global Island Partnership, Washington DC, USA

Faainu Latu, Lecturer – Environmental Science, National University of Samoa, Apia, Samoa

Rev. Maauga F. Motu, Samoa Council of Churches, Apia, Samoa

Mr Sam Sesega, Pacific Environment Consultants Ltd, Apia, Samoa

Ms Karen Mapusua, Associate Director, Women in Business Development, Apia, Samoa

Ms Tusitina Nuvalu, Women in Business Development, Apia, Samoa

Ms Alberta Malielegaoi, Women in Business Development, Apia, Samoa

Patea Setefano, Chief Executive Officer, STEC, Apia, Samoa

Ms Ioana K. Williams, STEC, Apia, Samoa

Rapa Young, EPC, Apia, Samoa

Bobby Ah To, EPC, Apia, Samoa

Mr Fiu Mataese, Siosiomaga Society, Apia, Samoa

Ms Valentina Masoe, Weekender Newspaper, Apia, Samoa

Unumoe Esera, Talamua, Apia, Samoa

UNITED NATIONS BODIES

DEPARTMENT FOR ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL AFFAIRS (DESA)

Ms Hiroko Morita-Lou, Chief, SIDS Unit, UN DESA, New York, USA

Ms Elena Zoubanova de Jesús, Associate Sustainable Development Officer, SIDS Unit, UN DESA, New York NY, USA

Mr Keneti Faulalo, Adviser on Water Resource Management and Adaptation to Climate Change, Division for Sustainable Development, UN DESA, New York, USA

FAO

Mr Aru Mathias, Forestry Officer, FAO Office - Apia

Ms Fiasili Vaeau, FAO Office - Apia

UNITED NATIONS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMME

Mr Toily Kurbanov, Assistant Resident Representative, UNDP, Suva, Fiji

Mr Garry Wiseman, Manager, UNDP Pacific Centre, Suva, Fiji

Mr David Payton, Senior Sustainable Development Adviser, UNDP, New York, USA

Mr Armstrong Alexis, UNDP, Apia, Samoa

Mr Richard Crichton, UNDP, Apia, Samoa

Ms Tupepepa Aumua, UN Coordination Specialist, UNDP, Apia, Samoa

Ms Elisapeta Kerslake, Communications Associate, UNDP, Apia, Samoa

Ms Elenoa Salele, UNDP, Apia, Samoa

Ms Yvette Kerslake, UNDP, Apia, Samoa

UNESCO

Mr Gunther Cyranek, Advisor – Communications & Information, UNESCO, Apia, Samoa

UNITED NATIONS ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME (UNEP)

Mr Greg Sherley, Task Manager Biodiversity Conservation, United Nations Environment Programme, Apia, Samoa

UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTEERS (UNV)

Mr Nobumasa Kitajima, UNV Programme Officer, UNDP Samoa Multi Country Office, Apia, Samoa

UN WOMEN

Ms Carin Naike Kohl, Programme Associate, UN Women, Apia, Samoa

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION

Dr Baoping Yang, WHO, Apia, Samoa

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANISATION (WMO)

Mr Henry Taiki, Director, World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Apia, Samoa

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC (ESCAP)

Mr. Iosefa Maiava, Head, ESCAP Pacific Office, Suva, Fiji

Mr David Smith, Deputy Head & Senior Economist, ESCAP Pacific Office, Suva, Fiji

Mr Timothy Westbury, Economic Affairs Officer, ESCAP Pacific Office, Suva, Fiji

Ms Atu Emberson-Bain, Regional Adviser – Social Development and Policy (Temp), ESCAP Pacific Office, Suva, Fiji

Ms Leba Petersen, Administrative Assistant, ESCAP Pacific Office, Suva, Fiji

Ms Patricia Momoivalu, Personal Assistant, ESCAP Pacific Office, Suva, Fiji

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Annex II



**Statement by
Honourable Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, Prime Minister of Samoa
to officially open the
“Rio+20 Environment Ministers Meeting”
at Robert Louis Stevenson Museum, Vailima
5.30pm, 21 July 2011, Apia, Samoa**

Reverend Dr Eletise Sulivale
Honourable Prime Ministers, Ministers
United Nations Representatives and Members of the Diplomatic Corp
Distinguished delegates
Ladies and gentlemen,

It is with great pleasure to join you and say a few words, on the occasion of the official opening of the Rio+20 Environment Ministers Meeting, here in Samoa. Let me extend a very warm welcome to all our overseas guests and hope that you have been able to enjoy our country since your arrival.

It was just in May earlier this year that I was invited to share my views on what “Green growth” meant for Samoa at the meeting of Least Developed Countries in Turkey, where I shared with frankness the realities of the challenges that we face and the opportunities that could be availed through taking on development with a Green growth flavour.

Also at that gathering, a stance was confirmed to host in the Pacific the next meeting on Green growth and sustainable development. The convening of this meeting of Pacific SIDS Ministers here in Apia, is therefore, significant for us to pause and consider how we had lived up to the commitments made in Rio de Janeiro some 20 years ago, and to call on others to also consider it likewise. I am grateful to the United Nations, ESCAP and our own CROP agencies for bringing

you together here in Apia to commence the dialogue on how best to approach Green growth in our countries and region to realize the goals of UNCED, and the Mauritius programme of action.

Ladies and Gentlemen, the Green economy, like other endeavours in development, encompasses both opportunities and challenges. But the bottom line is to achieve a delicate balance amongst the environmental, economic and social dimensions to ensure that the attainment of one aspect, will not be detrimental to the others. For instance, achieving sustainable development should not result in environmental degradation or forced unemployment, and vice versa. Obviously finding balance is not straight forward, hence the challenges that needs to be addressed in your deliberations. Nevertheless, the opportunities of rewards for our peoples, countries and the future of the world are well worth the effort.

In the push for Green growth, we must ensure that owners of natural capital, mainly from the South, are neither short-changed nor find themselves dispossessed of their resources and assets in their desperation to achieve some leverage on the economic front. It is not being proposed that growth is slowed down, but rather encourages the right kind of growth, because at the end of the day, a green economy requires a shift in the way we perceive development, define their progress, and view the environment.

Green economy is premised on the need to usher in transformational development for countries less able to do so under present economic paradigms. It is a timely response to the shortcomings of conventional development models. It is also an outcome-oriented concept deliberately aimed at improving human well-being without undermining the resource base that current and future generations depend on for their livelihoods.

Against this backdrop, let me briefly contextualize the notion of green growth from Samoa's perspective. Yesterday, some of you visited sites and projects that are promoting green growth in our country. While few in number, a start has been made to promote organic farming, various technological research of renewable energy generation and sources, safe disposal of solid waste, and demonstration of private sector and community groups in a consultative manner that reflects integration of social, economic and environment livelihoods. Targeting a carbon neutral economy by 2020 is also being seriously pursued as an indication to the world that greening economies may inevitably become our main choice for future growth.

Moreover, Samoa, like its island neighbours, is surrounded by the oceans and is dependent on its resources for its livelihood and food security. Yet the marine ecosystems are under serious threats from human actions and unregulated over-fishing and from the impacts of climate change. Combined, they threaten the sustainability of our islands' so called Blue Economy. Hence why we must work strategically with our partners and like-minded countries to ensure that the Blue economy gets the priority and prominence it deserves in the Rio+20 agenda next year to guarantee that it remains a viable economic option for us. Equally important, Pacific countries should be entitled to an equitable share of the marine and ocean resources, a goal that remains elusive up to now.

That is why Pacific SIDS issues ought to be articulated and placed on the global agenda as it did in 1992 when it recognized islands as a special group of vulnerable countries. We need to continue to press our case about the Pacific SIDS vulnerability, particularly to climate change impacts, and our special needs with our fellow SIDS in other regions. This can be achieved through ensuring high visibility of Pacific SIDS' needs at the global forum. At the same time, we need to develop goals and priorities that will go beyond the MDGs target year of 2015. Hence I would encourage you all to seriously consider taking up the opportunities a Green economy offers.

Finally, ladies and gentlemen, the close engagement of Economic/Finance Ministers, Fisheries Ministers, and other resource sector ministers with Environment Ministers in deliberations of this issue is vital, because Green growth is a whole of economy issue. It ensures that Green growth is not just an environment issue but rather signals a wish by the Pacific leadership and policy makers to pursue it as a mainstream approach. In fact I am delighted to learn that your meeting which takes place tomorrow, has been preceded by a two-day Open Forum involving representatives of Civil Society, private sector, denominations groups, and government agencies. The involvement of UN agencies, international bodies and regional organizations was also critical in clarifying options for future structuring of institutional regimes to manage the global environment processes. On that note I would like to congratulate the organizers of this Rio+20 meeting for convening the meeting as a joint ministerial session.

To conclude, let me stress once again that governments we all represent shall be made keenly aware of our responsibility to provide for the needs of our people within the confines of our meagre resources. In doing so, and within striking that delicate balance between environment conservation and sustainable economic

growth and development, we would then be able to meet our obligations to leave a better world to future generations.

With those few words, it is with much honour and pleasure that I would now like to formally declare the Pacific SIDS Rio+20 Joint Environment and Economic and Finance Ministers' Meeting officially opened.

Faafetai ma ia Soifua.