



## NGO and CSO Closing Statement

Climate Action Pacific Partnerships (CAPP) Event, Grand Pacific Hotel, Suva, Fiji

04 July 2017

Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentleman

My name is Genevieve Jiva from the Pacific Islands Climate Action Network, representing the Pacific NGO and civil society organizations.

Two years ago, we all had gathered here in this very room in preparation for COP21 and we had adopted the Suva Declaration on Climate Change which we championed in Paris. Our Pacific leadership was key in negotiating the Paris Agreement. Today, we have gathered once again to discuss the Climate Action Agenda towards COP23 and beyond. Fiji's leadership of COP23 provides the opportunity to elevate the importance of climate change issues in our region and shine the light on Pacific actions required to address climate change.

We welcome the collaborative approach taken by the COP23 Presidency and in particular the Global Climate Action Agenda - a process recognized by COP. We want to emphasize that the role of Civil Society and other non-party stakeholder is critical in ensuring a 'stronger and more ambitious climate action. We want to thank the COP23 Presidency for our invitation to take part.

Your Excellencies, the truth is, real Pacific climate action, needs to influence global change. The Pacific collectively is responsible for 0.03% of global carbon emissions. Even if we are to achieve 100% renewable energy in our region, it is not even close to enough to begin tackling the global crisis. That is the fact.

As the Honorable Prime Minister of Fiji said yesterday, Pacific islanders tread lightly on this earth. Even if we weren't to tread at all, it wouldn't save our planet. Unfortunately it wouldn't even really affect energy market prices.

**Pacific Islands Climate Action Network**

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One new proposed coal mine (to be built in our near neighborhood) ALONE, will emit THREE times more carbon than the whole Pacific combined. With ample coal capacity already approved into the 2040s it is time to end plans for enormous new coal mines.

Ladies and gentlemen, as custodians of the 2017 'Pacific COP', and of the moral fight against climate change, it is time for us to recognize that our local action plans NEED to include increasing our international diplomatic pressure - regardless of conflicted-interest of development finance. Which continues to pale in comparison to the finances going into new fossil fuel development, and climate perpetuation.

This year is the Pacific COP. Our survival needs to, now more than ever, TRUMP our Pacific politeness. Pardon the pun.

There is a strong call from civil society for the true Pacific Island States, to now more than ever, strategically, collectively and ambitiously use our position as Big Ocean States to encourage global climate action.

This year, at COP23, is our chance AND RESPONSIBILITY, as one Pacific Islands, to stand up as a powerful global collective and challenge the governance surrounding climate change. We have done it before. We are stronger than the rest of the world wants us to know. We have come together in the past, and changed international regulations around nuclear dumping, radioactive waste, laws of the sea and driftnet fishing.

Promises and conventions are being broken every day in our region, and will continue to be broken, until we decide to forbid it. For example, new fossil fuel development is a direct contradiction to the Paris Agreement. As well as the UNFCCC objective.



The targets agreed to in the Paris Agreement effectively rule out new fossil fuel extraction projects. The call for No New Fossil Fuels, is no more than a reaffirmation of the Paris Agreement promises, laid out in actionable terms.

The Pacific must continue to call for No New Fossil Fuels in all jurisdictions, mechanisms and bodies. You have heard the environmental and economic sense. Much like the successful fight against nuclear, the Pacific will start setting the guidelines, parameters and precedents for the future of fossil fuels within all appropriate relevant policy areas, until it becomes blanketed international law.

Meeting the goals of the Paris Agreement and ensuring a safe, just sustainable future for all means, an immediate and drastic acceleration in international action and cooperation on climate change.

**Fundamentally, COP23 – the “Pacific COP” – must trigger a transformative leap in collective international efforts.**

- It must ensure the gap between current commitments and the scale and scope of action required to limit warming to 1.5°C can be rapidly closed.
- It must deliver progress across all elements of the Paris Agreement, including the delivery of support for adaptation and resilience building; the promotion of human rights, indigenous rights and gender justice; and provisions for addressing loss and damage from climate change.
- It must set the stage for the 2018 Facilitative Dialogue, ensuring that it leads to substantial and immediate increases in mitigation ambition. We cannot wait until 2020 and the next round of NDCs, or the first full global stock take in 2023, to see an increase in Parties’ commitments.
- It must include a Pacific-led talanoa of a moratorium on new fossil fuel development, particularly new coal mines. A plan for a coal mine is a plan to increase emissions and weaken the Paris Agreement.
- The “Paris rulebook” must ensure compliance with the Agreement, the operationalization of the UNFCCC’s equity principles, and that the process of five-yearly global stock takes is effective in driving both increased mitigation and support to developing countries.
- It must lead to far greater recognition of the scale and pace of action necessary to meet the Paris Agreement’s goals, and be a powerful springboard for increased commitments.



- It must include access to international climate finance is a matter of global justice: those countries who have contributed least to the causes of climate change are typically the most vulnerable to its impacts and the least able to respond.
- It must include a climate change insurance mechanism for vulnerable states such as PSIDS. We stand firmly with Tuvalu on this.
- The Pacific COP must be grounded in the voices and experience of frontline communities. This is fundamental to driving ambitious and equitable action on climate change.
- It must finally recognize that for too long, the fossil fuel industry has been a brake on international action and cooperation on climate change and worked against the objectives of the UNFCCC. Currently, many fossil fuel giants are accredited observers to the UNFCCC, providing them with access to negotiators and ample opportunities to push their agenda. **For over two decades, the world's biggest polluters have delayed, weakened and blocked climate policy at every level.**

It is time for the Pacific Islands to truly understand the meaning of Conflict of Interest and implement it locally, and internationally.

As long as the best interests of life in the Pacific Islands, and on earth ... Are in direct conflict with the economic interests of those **making the decisions for life in the Pacific Islands, and on earth....** we have a big problem.

In order to arrive at real and timely solutions to the climate crisis, this year, we must create a political space that is cleared of directly opposing and conflicting interests.

Your Excellences, we are grateful for the opportunity to be able to speak at this important forum. Climate change is real and it is affecting all of us.

We commend the efforts of our Pacific Leaders in championing our climate change plight with the international community. In our opinion, the Leaders Suva declaration is the best common political platform and narrative to help guide we respond to the impending climate crisis.

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The SAMOA pathway takes us further in advancing our Sustainable development agenda as Small islands states.

We welcome the Marrakesh partnership global climate action agenda and we want to emphasize that partnership across all sectors recognizing the importance of our collective responsibility to human rights, gender neutrality and empowerment for our current generation and ensuring that the future of those that we are defending, and those for whom we are securing their future for are realized and recognized across the entirety of this process.

It is time for International politics to begin embracing new economies, new technologies, to begin fighting for the interests of their people, not the polluters.

We reaffirm our commitment to assist the leadership positions and high ambition of the Pacific Island States, this year and beyond, in order to achieve a safe, just & sustainable future for all humankind, including Pacific people, of this generation, and those to follow.

Vinaka.



### **About Pacific Islands Climate Action Network**

The Pacific Islands Climate Action Network (PICAN) is a regional alliance of 55 non-governmental organizations (NGO's), civil society organizations (CSO's), social movements and not-for-profit organizations from the Pacific islands region working on various aspects of climate change, disaster risk and response and sustainable development. PICAN is the Pacific regional node of the Climate Action Network International – the largest civil society climate change network in the world with 1,100 members in 120 countries and 28 years of experience in the climate change negotiations at the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).