



PIANGO

Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations
Association des ONGs des Iles de Pacifique

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MEDIA STATEMENT

REGIONAL NGO BACKS CLIMATE CHANGE POLICY

Suva, Fiji Islands (23 April, 2010) – The Pacific Islands Association of Non Government Organisations (PIANGO) has commended this week's move by the Fiji government to re-activate talks to develop a national policy on climate change.

PIANGO's Interim Executive Director, Emele Duituturaga-Jale said: "The impacts of climate are immense and wide ranging and affect all ecosystem sectors in terms of basic needs such as food, clothing, housing, health, education and traditional knowledge. All these pose serious threats to the economies of small island developing states, the environment and society, particularly the poor and vulnerable.

"Even though the Pacific region contributes less than .01% of total global greenhouse gas emissions, we are now experiencing threats to our ability to sustainably live and survive on our island homes.

"Our challenge is how to achieve a strong, effective, fair and equitable climate deal which will keep temperatures well below 1.5 degrees Celsius in the Pacific by the end of 2100 under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change," Mrs Duituturaga-Jale said.

"It is important for Pacific Island countries and people to see the implications of climate change on a global scale and equally important is solidarity and working together to combat its effects."

PIANGO, as the regional coordinating umbrella NGO, is currently working with Coordination Sud in France and its national liaison units in the Pacific Islands on advocacy around climate change issues.

Some of the major impacts of climate change include: droughts, floods and changing rainfall patterns; extreme weather events (storms, floods); rising sea level (1-2 metres within this century); decline of glaciers and melt water; decreasing fish population, coral destruction; loss in biodiversity (20-30% loss in species at increase in temperature of 2 degrees celcius); reduced biomass production in particular in tropics/subtropics and impacts on traditional knowledge.

In addition, there are also severe impacts of global warming on food security such as bleaching of coral polyps, hunger and dramatic losses of plant growing potential. (ENDS)

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