

**STATEMENT BY THE PIFS SECRETARY GENERAL, DAME MEG
TAYLOR**

Delivered at the High-Level Segment of COP 23

Thursday, 16 November 2017

Bonn, Germany

Mr President,

I speak today as the Secretary General of the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat and the Pacific Ocean Commissioner.

2. *The Blue Pacific* identity reinforces the potential of our shared stewardship of the world's largest oceanic continent, and it reaffirms the connections of Pacific peoples with their natural resources, environment, culture and livelihoods – but this is all threatened by climate change. By failing to safeguard our world's oceans - irrevocable change will occur to our blue planet, and this will affect us all now and forever.

3. For the Pacific - Climate change is an existential threat. Our Leaders and people have come to support Fiji as COP23 President - to raise our strong united voice on the urgent need for action but the window for action is narrowing.

4. I would like to emphasis three key issues for the Pacific as conveyed by Forum Leaders in 2017.

5. This COP is not in a vacuum, for in June at the inaugural UN Ocean Conference the need to improve our understanding and action on the nexus between climate and ocean was agreed. We strongly support using the IPCC Special Report on Oceans to assist discussions here and in other fora.

6. Loss and damage is a top priority for the Pacific but while we welcome the progress we strongly believe that more is required. We need dedicated financing for loss and damage. Building resilience is necessary as development gains that have taken decades to build can be wiped away in a matter of hours by extreme weather and climate events that are becoming more intense and frequent.

7. Simplified access to climate finance is essential for countries to implement their NDCs and their adaptation priorities. This COP must deliver a decision that the 'Adaptation Fund **shall** serve the Paris Agreement'.

8. As a SIDS COP you must accelerate action and enhance action on implementing the Paris Agreement.

9. I urge you to action – to help our peoples and place, by concluding the negotiations at this COP and, by adopting an outcome that turns the Paris Agreement into a living instrument of higher ambition. Pacific lives, Pacific cultures, Pacific futures, matter.