



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT

2019 UNITED NATIONS CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE

Statement by the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum

Dame Meg Taylor

10 December 2019

Madam President,

1. I speak as the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum and the Pacific Ocean Commissioner and stand before you as a representative of a regional bloc comprising 18 Pacific Countries that span 40 million square kilometres of the Pacific Ocean. A regional bloc at the forefront of the drastic and life-changing impacts of climate change – impacts that are altering lives, communities, and economies on a daily basis.

2. Collectively, we are custodians the Pacific Ocean, the Blue Planet's largest oceanic continent and carbon sink.

3. Madam President, the UNFCCC represents the pinnacle of the multilateral system that governs the global conversation on how to effectively mitigate and adapt to climate change. The vitality of this

process and its outcomes to the Pacific people cannot be underscored enough.

4. We need action! We need decisions! Our future – as oceanic peoples living on a sea of islands, is in the hands of this multilateral process and the related global commitments that emerge from it. If there were a time where multilateralism was ever so crucial to humanity – it is now. The time to act is now!

5. The three Special IPCC Reports present unwavering, indisputable scientific evidence on the dire situation of our Blue Planet. We cannot afford to stall these climate change negotiations and delay the crucial decisions any longer. The heightened occurrence of catastrophic climatic-related disasters all over the world attest to why we must act with absolute urgency. We must ensure progress of negotiations keeps pace with the scale of the climate change crisis facing our planet.

6. This past August, our Pacific Islands Forum Leaders declared the climate change crisis facing Pacific island nations. Pacific Islands Forum Leaders reaffirmed their commitment to the Paris Agreement and its principles and committed to a single regional position on climate change through the *Kainaki Lua Declaration for Urgent Climate Change Action Now*.

7. Coming into these COP 25 negotiations, Pacific Islands Forum Leaders agreed to welcome the work of the Special IPCC Reports. The

18 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders collectively called on all State Parties to support the formal recognition of the climate-ocean nexus in the UNFCCC process; to agree to pursue the mobilisation of international climate finance including financing for loss and damage and most importantly, to commit to meeting or exceeding their *nationally determined contribution* commitments.

8. Madam President, I urge this COP 25 to join with the collective commitment of the 18 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' *Kainaki Lua Declaration*. We cannot delay. Pacific lives, Pacific cultures, Pacific futures, matter. The Blue Planet – as we have known it - matters.