

MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION



E-NEWSLETTER

Issue No. 04 | July 2022



Forum Leaders Commend Vanuatu For ICJ Initiative

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Welcome!

Welcome to Issue No. 4 of the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and National Disaster Management's e-newsletter.



The Pacific Islands Forum meeting took place in Fiji this month and Leaders have commended Vanuatu for the initiative to seek an Advisory Opinion from the International Court of Justice. The Advisory Opinion

sought is to clarify legal consequences of climate change, as the Forum leaders noted the urgency of the climate change threat and the need for accelerated global climate action and implementation of the Paris Agreement. This united stand of Forum leaders to support the Advisory Opinion initiative is welcomed and commended by Vanuatu.

This e-newsletter initiative is part of the Ministry's strategy to fulfil our vision of promoting a resilient, sustainable, safe and informed Vanuatu. Our mission is to develop sound policies and legislative frameworks and provide timely, reliable scientific information service delivery to enable resilient commu-

nities, a sustainable environment and economic development.

I acknowledge our international, regional and national partners that work with the Ministry's Corporate Services Unit and the Department of Climate Change, Department of Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and the National Disaster Management Office, through bilateral and multilateral support, to ensure targets are met and projects are developed, planned, implemented and completed within their timeframes.

Director General
Esline Garaebiti Bule

Part of the Communique of the 51st Pacific Islands Forum Meeting

UN GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION FOR AN ADVISORY OPINION ON CLIMATE CHANGE FROM THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE

44. Leaders commended Vanuatu on its initiative on a pathway to secure a request from the UN General Assembly (UNGA) for an advisory opinion from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to clarify legal consequences of climate change, noting the urgency of the climate change threat and the need for accelerated global climate action and implementation of the Paris Agreement.

45. Leaders welcomed progress since the initiative was reported to, and noted by, Forum Leaders at their 50th Meeting in Tuvalu in 2019, including progress on ongoing international and regional consultations on the initiative and related legal question(s) to be developed through the UNGA process, and noted that the initiative is consistent with, and complementary to, regional efforts and ambitious actions on climate change to safeguard our people against the adverse effects of climate change, and noting that an ICJ advisory opinion is non-binding but may change the course of current negotiations and boost commitments.

46. Leaders called on the UN General Assembly for a resolution requesting the International Court of Justice to provide an advisory opinion on the obligations of states under international law to protect the rights of present and future generations against the adverse impacts of climate change, and looked forward to close collaboration in the development of the specific question to ensure maximum impact in terms of limiting emissions to 1.5 degrees, including obligations of all major emitters past, present and future.

Forum Leaders Agree to Vanuatu AO Initiative



Photo: PIF

Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) have agreed to follow the pathway of getting an Advisory Opinion (AO) from the International Court of Justice (ICJ) on the rights of the countries and people that are affected by climate change.

This is a pathway that was initiated in Vanuatu and has received support from the Forum leaders.

The support of the Forum leaders was revealed by the Secretary General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Forum, Henry Puna, during a press conference after the Leaders Retreat.

Mr Puna revealed the stand of the Pacific leaders when answering a question raised by a journalist during the press conference.

On the other hand, the Chair of the Small Island States of the Pacific Islands Forum, Hon. Simon Kofe, Minister of Foreign Affairs for Tuvalu, says the Vanuatu Initiative of seeking legal

opinion from the ICJ was supported.

“All the leaders agree that it (climate change) is an existential threat and that is reflected in the language of the Communique that you (journalists) will receive shortly.

“The leaders have agreed on that pathway to seek an Advisory Opinion from the ICJ.

“Officials will meet and discuss to formulate a question.

“That’s something that obviously we did not have time to discuss at the meeting,” Hon. Kofe said.

The question here will form the basis of the advisory opinion sought.

Vanuatu’s intention is to target the next United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) meeting for a resolution on this matter is raised.

But there will be meetings before the

UNGA, among the PIF members to agree on the question.

Secretary General of the PIF Secretariat, said the Pacific is looking at all sorts of options in order to fight for our survival because our leaders have agreed that we are in climate red.

“We are very close to the tipping point and unless we do something, it may be too late.

“We’ve been to COP meetings and we’ll keep going to COP meetings but a lot of countries are still hanging on to their old ways and not changing.

“The Pacific is looking at new ways to compel, particularly the big emitters, to do something and change their ways and make some commitment to climate change.

“This is one that Vanuatu has come up with and has been agreed to by all Forum members,” Mr Puna said.

DoCC Staff Participates in UNFCCC Negotiations Skills and Technical Language Training



Department of Climate Change Senior Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Officer, Pauliane Basil, kneeling front far left

The Department of Climate Change's (DoCC) Senior Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management Officer, Mrs Pauliane Basil, participated in a two-night series on the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) Negotiations Skills and Technical Language Training organised jointly by the Women's Environment and Development Organizations (WEDO) and UNFCCC Secretariat on behalf the Women Delegates Fund (WDF).

The WDF was founded in 2009 to promote women's leadership in climate change decision-making by providing

travel support, capacity building and networking opportunities to women particularly from Least Developed Countries, to join and effectively participate on their national delegations at the UNFCCC. The WDF is supported by the Governments of Australia and Scotland and administered by WEDO.

This training included a mock negotiation exercise and provides tools and materials that participants can utilize in upcoming UNFCCC meetings.

Mrs Basil is part of the Vanuatu delegation that attended the climate conference in Bonn, Germany in June.

"I wish to express a heart-full thank you to Dr Chris, in-country team of MoCC (Ministry of Climate Change) and colleagues Nelo and the Director Mr Mike Waiwai to trust me and allowed me take up this negotiations training by WEDO.

"I have completed the training and feel more comfortable with the UNFCCC platform and when I return home I will encourage other female colleagues to step up and believe in themselves that they can be good negotiators despite language barriers, technicality in science of climate change, fear etc.. you can do it if you love your job and the country you serve," Mrs Basil said



First Aid Training

Staff from the five departments under the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation went through a First Aid training by the Vanuatu Red Cross Society (VRCS).

Because of the nature of their job to go out to the islands of Vanuatu, it is important that staff have to go through and pass a First Aid Training with the VRCS.

Two sessions were run by the VRCS where staff were given brief lessons on what First Aid is all about and then go through a practical to put theory into practice.

Their first session in February this year saw the participation of the National Disaster Manager Office's Provincial Disaster Officers. Provincial Disaster Officers are based at provincial headquarters of the six provinces of Vanuatu.

Paperless Licensing and Permitting System



Mr Patterson (in front of laptop) going live during the launching under the direction of National Single Window Manager, Stanley Trief

The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation (DEPC) has moved to a paperless licensing and permitting system since the launch of the Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) Module in December 2021.

The staff overseeing the electronic import applications at the DEPC, Richard Patterson, says the connection with the Vanuatu Electronic Single Window (VeSW) systems has improved data storage and makes it easy for Vanuatu to report on obligations to the Ozone Secretariat regarding the Country Program report and also Article 7 (A7) report under the Montreal Protocol.

The system also ensures all companies apply without by-passing the permitting

system implemented by DEPC.

Not only does it ensure processes being adhered to, but also it contributes to the increase in funds collected, ensures smooth transactions of imports of refrigerants and equipment containing refrigerants.

Mr Patterson says going live with the ODS Module on the Vanuatu Electronic Single Window System cuts down the cost and time taken to process import permits and more time for ozone officers to do compliance and other work.

It also assists Customs brokers to work more closely with the ozone officers to ensure correct HS code is inserted in the system to avoid mislabelling.

There are about more 230 import permits so far being processed in the system and more than 100 companies and individuals have used this online system.

This is the first VeSW module for the Department and the second for the Ministry of Climate Change, after the Energy module for Energy Efficient appliances, which was launched in April 2021. Such initiatives demonstrate Vanuatu's commitment to implement actual practical solutions to protect the globe's climate and environment. Stakeholders, traders and members of the public can get more information about the VeSW System at

<https://singlewindow.gov.vu>.



Composting Project Enhances Waste Management

Port Vila Main Market Waste Separation



Going To Compost

Going To Etas Landfill

A pilot project on waste management in Port Vila has started this year where organic waste from Port Vila's Central Market and the Seaside Market are separated and turned into compost.

This project is a collaboration between the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation (DEPC), Port Vila City Council (PVCC), Department of Agriculture, V.Organic, Department of Trade and assistance from the European Development Fund (EDF11).

The company that turns these waste into compost is V.Organic, a company that produces green organic liquid fertilizer, owned by Junior Michel.

The compost site is provided by the PVCC. One of the roles of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation is to work with municipal and provincial government councils to manage waste as outlined under the Waste Management Act.

V.Organic owner, Mr Michel says his staff have started to produce compost with



The final product in the bag

the assistance of a small shredding machine, but his company is holding discussions with the European Development Fund for a bigger machine to be obtained that will shred and mix the organic waste.

Senior Officer of the DEPC, Mrs Roselyn Bue, says market vendors have been informed about separating their market

waste into allocated rubbish collecting bins. Mrs Bue says so far, the separation of organic waste from other wastes has reduced the large quantity of waste going to the Port Vila City Council's landfill at Etas on Efate. It is planned that the compost produced will be properly packaged for distribution to be used to keep trees and other plants healthy.



The Minister delivering his statement at Etas

Etas Electricity Grid Extension Reflects Progress Under NERM

On June 10, 2022 the Honourable Minister of Climate Change Adaptation, Silas Bule Melve, participated in the launching of the extension of electricity grid to Etas, in the outskirts of Port Vila, on Efate Island.

The extension has been made possible through the joint initiative of utility company, UNELCO, the Vanuatu Government, land owners and the community of Etas.

During the launching, the Hon. Minister of Climate Change Adapta-

tion, who is also responsible for Energy, Silas Bule Melve the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) or the People's Plan, preaches a number of goals such as quality education, quality healthcare, social inclusion, food security, Blue and Green economic growth, good infrastructure, enhancing rural community living and ensuring jobs and business opportunities.

"The National Energy Road Map (NERM) 2016-2030 is the main pol-

icy of the energy sector, also has goals in it such as access to energy, cheap energy, secure and reliable energy and sustainable energy as well as green growth.

"It also has a vision to ensure that when 2030 comes, everyone around Vanuatu must have access to electricity or 100 percent by that time," the Minister said, during the Etas extension launching."

A large community from different islands of Vanuatu live at the Etas area.

Minister Leads Delegation to UN Ocean Conference

From June 27 to July 1, a high-level delegation from Vanuatu made waves at the 2nd United Nations Oceans Conference held in Lisbon, Portugal.

The ocean is critical for Vanuatu's development, and for global sustainability. Oceans cover 70 percent of the Earth's surface, is the planet's largest biosphere, and is home to up to 80 percent of all life in the world. It generates 50 percent of the oxygen we need, absorbs 25 percent of all carbon dioxide emissions and captures 90 percent of the additional heat generated from those emissions. It is not just 'the lungs of the planet' but also its largest carbon sink - a vital buffer against the impacts of climate change.

And that is why Vanuatu attended this year's conference, to make high-level political gains in its campaign to bring climate change to the International Court of Justice.

Minister of Climate Change, the Hon. Silas Bule Melve headed the delegation, which also included Director General of Climate Change, Ms. Esline Garaebiti, as well as technical and legal advisors from Port Vila and Vanuatu's mission in New York.

Minister Bule remarked to the plenary that "Climate change is the single greatest threat facing the Blue Pacific and our global oceans.

"We simply cannot continue with business as usual.

"The window to act will have closed by the end of this critical decade.

"We must see transformational action to protect our coral reefs, our coastal environments and the fundamental human rights of all of us who depend on them."

Speaking at a range of events, including a special side event on the International Court of Justice (ICJ) campaign, several



interactive dialogues on behalf of the Pacific Small Island Developing States, a Commonwealth Blue Charter event, and a Summit convened by the Pacific Islands Forum, Minister Bule made it clear that "The ICJ campaign is not a court case, but a request for legal clarity that will help us all make policies and plans with sufficient climate action to save our Blue Pacific.

"He reminded delegates that the International Court of Justice is the only principal organ of the UN System that has not yet been given an opportunity to help address the climate crisis."

Prime Minister Bob Loughman also made a video address to the Conference, stating that although climate change "started out as a technical issue, it is now a political one, and that Governments must put a stop to this destruction of our one planet one oceans."

The Vanuatu delegation held bilateral meetings with numerous Ministers on the topic of climate change and oceans, including with Ministers from Australia, Portugal, Kenya, Angola, Slovenia, Tanzania and more.

During the bilateral meeting between the

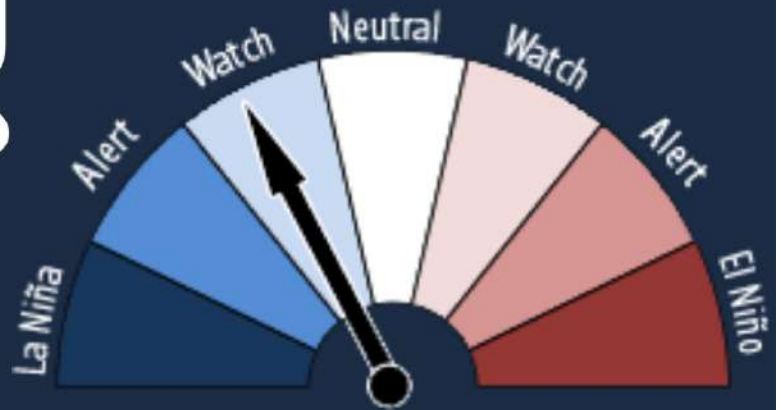
Vanuatu delegation and the Portugal delegation, there were discussions on advancing areas of common interests between the two countries.

More than climate change, Vanuatu highlighted its early first mover status in the Pacific to ban single use plastics, and showcase best practice in marine conservation including through traditional knowledge. Several donors expressed interest in supporting community ocean action and first steps to open funding channels have been taken.

Overall, the one-week conference led to further global confirmation of the science – that the ocean is facing unprecedented threats as a result of human activities. Its health and ability to sustain life will only get worse as the world population grows and human activities increase. If we want to address some of the most defining issues of our time such as climate change, food insecurity, diseases and pandemics, diminishing biodiversity, economic inequality and even conflicts and strife, we must act now to protect the state of our ocean. Vanuatu is leading the way in the Pacific to protect, manage and safeguard our oceans.

DID YOU KNOW?

"50% chance of La Nina forming again later in 2022"



The Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department has advised that the 2021–2022 La Nina (long period of extreme rainfall) event has ended.

However, some models suggested that La Nina may form again later in 2022. As a result, the Bureau's ENSO status has moved to La Nina Watch. This means there is around 50% chance of La Nina forming later in 2022.

