



**European Commission Roundtable:
“Engaging with Asia-Pacific
on climate change”**

Brussels, 4 June 2012

A Pacific island’s perspective with a Samoan bias.

Aliioaiga Feturi Elisaia

The most vulnerable of the vulnerable.

The Pacific island countries:

❖ Island paradox

- High level of vulnerability of their natural, economic & social systems to external shocks, both natural and man-made.

❖ Their specific features:

- Isolation from major markets;
- Enormous distances between and within some countries;
- Small population sizes and economies of scale;
- High frequency of natural disasters;
- Narrow resource base;
- Fragile freshwater supplies;
- Costly infrastructure;
- Extreme vulnerability to climate change and sea level rise.

Pacific islands challenges and vulnerabilities

- ❖ Impacts of climate change;
- ❖ Need for clear articulation of priority needs;
- ❖ Capacity constraints to effectively access climate resources due to;
 - Complex global structures not designed for small island countries;
 - Mainstreaming climate change into national plans and budgets;
 - Small bureaucracies;
 - Donor harmonization's and aid effectiveness.
- ❖ Limited absorptive capacity to implement major projects.

Underpinnings of European Union engagement with the Pacific Region

- ❖ Climate Change as a cross sectoral issue;
- ❖ 3 Yearly EU/PIF Ministerial meeting;
- ❖ Global Climate Change Alliance [GCCA]
- ❖ Declaration by EU and Pacific Islands Forum States on Climate change, 7 November 2008
- ❖ MOU between the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and European Commission of 15 December 2010.

Areas of EU/Pacific cooperation to date

- ❖ Pursuit of more ambitious commitments to deeper emission reductions targets within the UNFCCC process;
- ❖ Provision of enabling environment to foster technology transfer with transformational impacts;
- ❖ Building resilience of Pacific islands;
- ❖ Empowerment through capacity building and up-skilling;
- ❖ Strengthening national systems to receive climate finance .

Possible modalities for Pacific Region to access climate change resources

- ❖ Direct Budgetary support;
- ❖ National Trust Fund;
- ❖ Regional or Sub-regional Climate Fund;
- ❖ PICs to have a floor of (minimum) allocation in any funding mechanisms ;
- ❖ Simplified approval process commensurate with size and cost of projects;
- ❖ Direct access to climate finances through National, Regional or Multilateral Implementing Entities.

Some “Takeaways” & “ Unsolicited advice”

- ❖ The “one-size-fits-all approach” has limitations;
 - Customized modalities of access and delivery are needed commensurate with islands small sizes and capacity constraints;
- ❖ Technology transfer can turn a challenge into an opportunity;
 - Tech development for mitigation and adaptation should be on equal footing and be part of future EU/PICs initiatives;
 - Technology should be appropriate, affordable, proven and tested and easily disposable if found unsuitable to PICs situations;
- ❖ Genuine partnerships are a must – Need to measure success.
 - Monitoring and evaluation partnerships to ensure goals & objectives are met;
 - Capacity of PICs in relevant technical areas is strengthened and bi-partisan approach an important start to a long-term relationship.

“Challenges for the Vulnerable”

Success is possible in the Pacific region as demonstrated by SAMOA

❖ Country-level activities

- Key lessons:
 - ✓ Greater ownership of development process by partner countries;
 - ✓ Better co-ordination among donors;
 - ✓ Alignment of external flows to domestic policies and systems.

We all learn from borrowed knowledge

Some good practices for the taking

- ❖ Some good practices that can be replicated/adapted in the Pacific Region
 - Sectoral budget support by the EU is used to integrate climate change adaptation into water sanitation sector policies;
 - Horizontal climate fund to blend domestic and external sources of finance and disburse them in a cross-sectoral manner;
 - Targeted investment through climate change resilience grant financing;
 - Use of Multilateral implementing entity, e.g. UNDP in Samoa's case while awaiting certification of our Finance Ministry as our designated National Implementing Entity.

Success requires extra effort & work

Key activities undertaken to effectively manage climate change finance

- ❖ Establishing institutional mechanism to manage climate finance
 - Climate Resilience Coordination Unit established in 2011 within Samoa's Ministry of Finance;
 - Role of the CRC Unit's include;
 - ✓ Integrating climate change into national planning;
 - ✓ Establishing clear co-ordination mechanism;
 - ✓ Promoting national pooled funding for climate change activities.

Transparency and accountability are both sides of the same coin

- ❖ Samoa's development partners are supporting this initiative to develop a capacity development plan to effectively track and control climate finance;
 - Capabilities would include:-
 - ✓ Capacity to track external climate finance flows;
 - ✓ Capacity to identify climate-relevant components of domestic budgets e.g. Climate Public Expenditure and Institutional Review (CPEIR).



Thank you!