

HONIARA MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

For

STRENGTHENING SUSTAINABLE WEATHER, CLIMATE, OCEAN AND WATER SERVICES FOR A RESILIENT PACIFIC

18 August 2017, Honiara, Solomon Islands

1. The Second Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology was held on 18 August, 2017 in Honiara, Solomon Islands with representation from Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. It was organized by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the Government of the Solomon Islands.
2. **WE**, the attending SPREP Member Countries' Cabinet Ministers responsible for Meteorology, and their designated representatives, are calling for further support from our governments, development partners and donors to ensure that National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) have the necessary capacity to support sustainable and resilient development;
3. **WE** pay tribute to the late Honourable Mattlan Zachras, Minister in Assistance to the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, who passed away before this meeting;
4. **REAFFIRMING** the Nuku'alofa Ministerial Declaration for Sustainable Weather and Climate Services for a Resilient Pacific, adopted by the 1st Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology on 24th July 2015 at Nuku'alofa, Tonga;

5. **RECOGNIZING** that 80% of disasters are caused by severe weather events. While the loss of human life due to weather related disasters has markedly decreased in recent years the economic losses have dramatically increased. We further recognize that, according to the 5th IPCC Assessment, 7 out of the 10 countries most vulnerable to the impacts of climate change, with respect to % of exposed population, are Pacific Island Countries, and that 4 out of the 5 most low lying islands are in the Pacific.

6. **PRESENT** this Statement to show our political will to support the development of sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services in the Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) fully taking into account national development priorities, regional and global meteorological strategies and other relevant frameworks;

7. **RECOGNISE** the vital importance of the mission of NMHSs, as stated in the Convention of the WMO, in providing sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services in support of relevant national needs, including protection of life and property, sustainable development and safeguarding the environment;

8. **FURTHER RECOGNISE THAT:**
 - i. impacts of climate variability and change represent a major challenge to small islands. The priority issues of particular concern to the region include: sea level rise, salt water intrusion, drought, flooding, coastal inundation, ocean state (tides, swells, waves, acidification), and impacts on health (e.g. malaria and dengue), water resources, agriculture and fisheries (invasive species, etc);

 - ii. demands for sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services to reduce these impacts are growing in the region;

 - iii. targeted capacity building for NMHSs in PICTs and partner organisations, for improved provision of sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services

tailored for the needs of communities and development sectors, are crucial for sustainable development;

- iv. customized sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services accounting for differences in information content and channels for accessing this information that meet the needs of men, women and people with disabilities in communities and development sectors, are needed, thus contributing to effective Early Warning Systems;
- v. while NMHSs are committed to providing sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services, we are conscious of the lack of capacity within NMHSs and the competing demands for Governments' budget allocations;
- vi. the Pacific Islands Meteorological Strategy 2017-2026 (PIMS) provides guidance on NMHS priorities in supporting sustainable and resilient development through the provision of sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services;
- vii. the Pacific Roadmap for Strengthened Climate Services (PRSCS) provides guidance on how the Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) is implemented in the Pacific Region;
- viii. the development of science-based climate information and prediction needs to be incorporated into planning, decision making, policy and practice on the global, regional and national scale;
- ix. the guiding principles behind the PIMS and the PRSCS are to strengthen the institutional mechanisms for interaction between national institutions and seek engagement with organisations working at the community level; and recommend use of open source coded where possible, focusing on software tools without proprietary software implications.

9. **WE CALL** on the WMO together with all the donors and Pacific partners to lead in facilitating and negotiating finances for resources to expedite the implementation of the PIMS 2017-2026 and the PRSCS 2017-2026, acknowledging the key supporting roles of the PMC;

10. **REQUEST** SPREP, University of the South Pacific (USP), the Pacific Community (SPC) and other regional organizations, WMO and development partners to expedite the implementation of the PIMS and the PRSCS in the Pacific region;

11. **WE SUPPORT** the establishment and operation of a RA V Pacific Islands Regional Climate Centre (RCC), and the continuation of the annual Pacific Island Climate Outlook Forum (PICOFF);

12. **RECOGNISE** the need to further improve the capacities and services of PICTs' NMHSs to address weather, climate, ocean, water and related environmental impacts and hazards and to improve the safety and security of our region;

13. **RECOGNISE** the need for PICTs NMHSs to promulgate maritime safety information and develop ocean services to strengthen sustainable economic growth, public safety and security and comply with national obligations under the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention;

14. **RECOGNISE** the need for cooperation and coordination across all the work of PMC that is underway or planned to ensure effective services for the people of the Pacific;

15. **RECOGNISE** that the uniform application of aeronautical meteorological services by States in accordance with ICAO Annex 3 (Meteorological Service for International Air Navigation) support a safe, efficient, secure, economically sustainable and environmentally responsible international civil aviation sector across the PICTs and globally;

16. **COMMIT** to compliance (by States) with the Standards and Recommended Practices (SARPs) where reasonably practicable in ICAO Annex 3 recognized as necessary or desirable for the safety, regularity or efficiency of international air navigation, including the fundamental SARPs governing quality management of meteorological information, competency of aeronautical meteorological personnel and the designation of and role of the 'meteorological authority';
17. **REQUEST** the PIAWS Panel to consider the global developments for enhancements to meteorological service for international air navigation, including the exchange of meteorological information within the ICAO Meteorological Information Exchange Model (IWXXM) and the associated planning for the implementation phase taking into account opportunities for international coordination and cooperation through the appropriate forums of the ICAO Asia-Pacific Air Navigation Planning and Implementation Regional Group (APANPIRG);
18. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the vital contributions of environmental satellites from United States of America, Japan, China, Korea and Europe necessary for the provision of remotely sensed data and derived products to the PICTs' NMHSs to improve weather, climate, ocean, water and related environmental services;
19. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the importance of traditional knowledge about weather, climate, ocean and water especially in the context of climate change adaptation;
20. **EXPRESS CONCERN** about inadequate infrastructure and limited human resources of PICTs' NMHSs as factors that limit the effective uptake of scientific and technological advances to improve and effective service delivery;
21. **AFFIRM** that telecommunication networks and Information Communications Technology (ICT) infrastructure used by NMHSs are critical for exchange and delivery of weather, climate,

ocean, water and related environmental observations and data, and products vital for the timely delivery of alerts, Multi Hazard Early Warnings and impact-based forecasting;

22. **AGREE** on the need for NMHSs to cooperate with the regulatory authorities in their countries including participation in the development of the National Emergency Telecommunications Plans (NETP), and in aligning policies and regulations to ensure effective and robust telecommunications systems for early warning;

23. **WE FURTHER AGREE** to prioritize improvements in the capabilities of PICTs' NMHSs with our national telecommunication authorities and mobile phone carriers to provide greater reach for warning services to remote areas and people with disabilities;

24. **REQUEST** support from SPREP, SPC, USP and other regional organisations and WMO to improve the capacity of National Hydrological Services in the region to ensure adequate level of service delivery in PICTs in the areas of drought, flood and flash flood forecasting and early warnings; and **CALL** for further collaboration between WMO, UNESCO, SPREP and SPC to increase support for operational hydrology, and endorse the establishment of the expert panel on Hydrology (PHS) to assist the PMC in progressing initiatives to support national capacity needs;

25. **REQUEST** UNESCO IOC, WMO, SPREP, SPC and development partners to support further investment in strengthening earthquake and tsunami detection and analysis, data collection and exchange, tsunami warning and dissemination, up-scaling of competencies and capabilities, and community tsunami readiness;

26. **ENCOURAGE** PICTs NMHSs to participate in climate change and disaster risk reduction forums at national, regional and international levels including the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific and the Pacific Resilience Partnership, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), the Sendai Framework and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC);
27. **ALSO ENCOURAGE** NMHSs to participate in the implementation of and reporting on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national and regional levels including through the PMC;
28. **RECOGNISE** the opportunities that the Pacific Climate Change Centre (PCCC) to be established at SPREP will bring for enhancing sustainable weather, climate, ocean and water services in the region;
29. **COMMEND** the continuous support from WMO to PICTs' NMHSs through initiatives such as the Voluntary Cooperation Programme (VCP), Canada/WMO Programme for Implementing Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS) at Regional and National Levels, training fellowships, the Severe Weather Forecast and Disaster Risk Reduction Demonstration Project (SWFDDP), the Coastal Inundation Forecast Demonstration Project (CIFDP) and other initiatives;
30. **EXPRESS APPRECIATION** to the Government of Finland for their support to the meteorological Services in the Pacific region since 2006 and the FINPAC Project from 2013 to 2017;

31. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the support of the Government of Fiji through Fiji Meteorological Service to perform its functions as the WMO designated Regional Specialized Meteorological Centre for Tropical Cyclones (RSMC Nadi-TCC); as the ICAO designated Tropical Cyclone Advisory Center (TCAC) designated to prepare tropical cyclone advisory information and Meteorological Watch Office (MWO) to maintain continuous watch on meteorological conditions affecting flight operations within the Nadi Flight Information Region (FIR). **NOTE** that meteorological services are provided by Fiji on behalf of to Cook Islands, Kiribati, Nauru, Niue, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga and Tuvalu with no formal arrangements with these countries;
32. **ACKNOWLEDGE** the continuous support from development partners and donors for critical programmes, projects and other initiatives which have supported WMO, SPREP, SPC, USP and other regional organisations, in the various roles that they play in the region;
33. **EXPRESS APPRECIATION** to the Government and the people of Solomon Islands for the excellent facilities and hosting of the Second Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology;
34. **EXPRESS APPRECIATION** to the Governments of Solomon Islands, Australia, Finland, United States, United Nations Development Programme, WMO and SPREP for co-sponsoring the Second Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology, and **WE ENCOURAGE** them and other development partners to continue providing financial support for future Meetings;
35. **DECIDE** to hold the sessions of the Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology at least once every four years and **REQUEST** SPREP, with the support of WMO and development partners to convene the Meetings;
36. **COMMIT** to implementing this Statement and **INVITE** SPREP Director-General and WMO Secretary-General to bring this Statement to the attention of the 2017 Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting, the SPREP Meeting and the Council of Regional Organizations in the Pacific (CROP) agencies and to the WMO Executive Council, respectively.

Adopted in Honiara, Solomon Islands, on 18th August 2017
