



Pacific Islands
Development Forum



THE
OCEAN
CONFERENCE
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, 5-9 JUNE 2017



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



14
CONSERVE AND SUSTAINABLY USE THE OCEANS, SEAS AND MARINE RESOURCES FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT

SYMPOSIUM REPORT:

SDG14 Pacific commitments -

2018 Action Agenda

19 December 2017, Fiji



Pacific Islands
Development Forum

SYMPOSIUM :
SDG14
Pacific
commitments -
2018 Action
Agenda



Pacific Islands
Development Forum

CONTACT US

Pacific Islands Development Forum Secretariat

56 Domain Road, Suva, Fiji

PO Box 2050, Government Buildings, Suva, Fiji

+679 3311 518

Copyright © Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) Secretariat, 2018.

Reproduction for educational or other non-commercial purposes is authorised without prior written permission from the copyright holder provided that the source is fully acknowledged. Reproduction of this publication for resale or other commercial purposes is prohibited without prior written consent of the copyright owner.

Table of Contents

Introduction	4
Sessions Account	6
• Invocation	6
• Welcome Remarks and Introduction to the meeting	6
• Opening Remarks	7
• Call for Action and Voluntary Commitments	8
• Ocean Pathway Partnership Initiative	10
• Outcomes of the Pacific Blue Economy Conference (PBEC)	12
• WWF Voluntary Contribution Implementation Update	15
• SDG14 Support Activities and proposed programme for 2018	16
• Wrap up	17
• Closing Remarks	18
Take away points	19
Further Reading	20
Annexes	21
• Annex 1: Symposium flyer	
• Annex 2: Symposium Concept Note	
• Annex 3: Symposium programme	
• Annex 4: List of Participants	
• Annex 5: The SDG14 Symposium in the media (links)	



**There could be
MORE PLASTIC
THAN FISH**

**in our ocean by 2050,
if we continue using
single - use plastic
the way we are!**

**We are ready to
change the story.**

ARE YOU WITH US?

INTRODUCTION

The Symposium on the SDG14 Pacific commitments - 2018 Action Agenda, took place on 19th December 2017 at the Novotel Hotel, Lami, Fiji.

The objectives of the Symposium were:

- To discuss the analysis of the global and Pacific voluntary commitments.
- To review and promote the Communities of Ocean Action among Pacific stakeholders
- To report on the COP23 launch of the Ocean Pathway initiative.
- To discuss the outcomes of Pacific Blue Economy Conference
- To discuss regional activities

The Symposium follows a number of events that took place in 2017.

The high-level United Nations Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017.

It adopted an agreed declaration in the form of a "Call for Action" and a report containing the co-chairs' summaries of the partnership dialogues, as well as a list of voluntary commitments for the implementation of Goal 14. One of the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference was the appointment of Ambassador Peter Thomson as the Special Envoy for the Ocean to lead UN's advocacy and public outreach efforts to ensure the outcomes and the voluntary commitments are implemented.

The UN Ocean Conference had seven themes or clusters. These were:

- Addressing marine pollution.
- Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems.
- Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification.
- Making fisheries sustainable.
- Increasing economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.
- Increasing scientific knowledge, and developing research capacity and transfer for marine technology.
- Implementing international law, as reflected in UNCLOS.

These themes were further clustered into three groups to suit the Pacific preparation for the UN Ocean Conference. These were:

- Marine Pollution and Protection of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems.
- Climate Change and Ocean Acidification.
- Fisheries, Fisheries Subsidies and Blue Growth / Economy Benefits to SIDS/LDCs, including the outcomes from PBEC.

Close to 1,400 voluntary commitments for concrete action to advance implementation of SDG 14 were made by governments, the United Nations system, civil society organizations, academia, the scientific community, and the private sector. These commitments, together with the Conference outcome document *Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action*, mark a global breakthrough on the path to sustainable management and conservation of our oceans, seas and marine resources.

Each of the Ocean Conference voluntary commitments addresses one or several of the SDG 14 targets, often with associated positive impact on other SDGs, including for example SDG 3 on good health and well-being and SDG13 on climate action, among others. In the Pacific context, the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) hosted the 1st High Level Pacific Blue Economy Conference (PBEC) in August 2017, building on the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference.

The PBEC was the first step in providing a roadmap for refining the concept and implementing a Blue Economy in the Pacific. An Oceans Pathway Partnership was also launched on the 16 November 2017 in Bonn by the COP23 Fiji Secretariat to include oceans in the negotiations with acknowledgement of the Call for Action from the UN Ocean Conference and develop a work programme on oceans by 2019. It involves all the existing alliances, parties, civil society organisations, observers and interested institutions.

To follow-up on the implementation of these global voluntary commitments; to catalyze and generate new voluntary commitments; and to facilitate collaboration and networking amongst different actors in support of SDG 14, the United Nations is launching nine thematic multi-stakeholder Communities of Ocean Action.

These issues were discussed in the Symposium, held under the patronage of Ambassador Peter Thomson, to review the Call for Action voluntary commitments globally and for the Pacific, to present and promote participation in the nine thematic multi-stakeholders Communities for Ocean Actions platforms and finally to discuss regional activities to be taken up in 2018 in pursuit of SDG14 implementation in the Pacific.





Invocation - **Pastor James Bhagwan - Chaplain of the Fiji Voyaging Society, the Uto Ni Yalo Trust**

Pastor James Bhagwan reminded participants that the People of the Pacific are not only connected by the ocean but also by spirituality. The Ocean is an integral part of creation - we are connected rather than separated by the ocean in the Pacific. Pacific people are voyagers and have a history in sustainable sea travel with vast traditional ocean knowledge. We know the ocean is alive... it is the life for creatures living beneath the sea and it gives life for the entire planet and all creatures living above the ocean. If we care for the planet, we need to care for the ocean. He said that unfortunately we are in a toxic relationship with our ocean... we treat it like a rubbish dump.



Welcome Remarks and Introduction to the meeting – **Mr. François Martel, Secretary General, PIDF**

PIDF Secretary General Martel welcomed all those present and thanked the Special Envoy for the Ocean, Ambassador Peter Thomson, for tasking the Pacific Islands Development Forum to coordinate this very important Symposium to present and promote participation in the nine thematic multi-stakeholders Communities for Ocean Actions platforms and to discuss regional activities to be taken up in 2018 in pursuit of SDG14 implementation in the Pacific.

As an introduction to the Symposium Mr Martel made reference to the voluntary commitments that were made at the UN Oceans Conference, of which 29% out of a total of some 1400 commitments are for the South Pacific region. He also referred to the Oceans Pathway Partnership Initiative under Fiji's Ministry of Economy launched on 16 November 2017 in Bonn by the COP23 Secretariat to include oceans in the climate change negotiations with acknowledgement of the Call for Action from the UN Ocean Conference. Together with these initiatives, the Pacific also had the PIDF Pacific Blue Economy Conference that built on the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference.

He said that after all these events, now it is time to plan and deliver on the commitments by working together to address the targets of SDG 14.

Mr Martel said that the Symposium provides the platform to work out what needs to be done to support SDG14 in achieving all of its targets by the year 2030. The "Symposium should not be the symposium of commitments but one of results."

[Full speech can be viewed here.](#)



Opening Remarks – Mr. Sanaila Naqali, Permanent Secretary for Fisheries

Mr Naqali welcomed all participants to the Symposium, in particular the UN Special Envoy for the Ocean. He went on to inform the meeting that Fiji has a goal that "by 2020, at least 30% of Fiji's inshore and off-shore marine areas will have come under a comprehensive, ecologically, representative networks of Marine Protected areas which are effectively managed and financed."

He further informed participants that as part of Fiji's contribution towards the United Nations Ocean Conference, the Government, working together with retailers, consumers and manufacturers, has reinforced a ban on non-biodegradable plastic bags. This begins with plans to phase out the single use check-out plastic bags. He said there are also discussions to house dedicated recycling plants in Fiji.

The Fiji Ministry of Fisheries is also putting in place a program to deploy more coastal and offshore Fish aggregating devices (FADs) to encourage people to move seaward outside of the reef systems, and to fish around FADS which will relieve fishing pressure within the reef system, and ensure that damaged coral colonies or depleted reef systems recover.

Efforts are being made to properly manage coral reef biodiversity and productivity, and efforts in promoting non-extractive and ecofriendly activities such as sustainable tourism.

A significant threat to the health of the ocean is also due to the impact of climate change and therefore, Fiji initiated the launch of the Ocean Pathway Partnership to provide the nexus between ocean and climate change, which also affirms the Call for Action from the UN Ocean Conference.

The progress on Fiji's other voluntary commitments include 17 SDG14 voluntary commitments that have been published and released by the Fiji Government into the UN SDG14 Ocean Portal on 7 June 2017 in New York, and all or most of these commitments are progressing and being implemented very well.

Fiji's Voluntary Commitments included:

- The Conservation and management of grouper spawning aggregations across all coral reefs system in Fiji – during their spawning aggregation seasons from June- September, each year. This seasonal band on harvest and sales of groupers in Fiji would commence 1 June, 2018, and continue thereafter.
- The Conservation and Management of all Shark species are critical habitat units across coastal waters in Fiji, and into the archipelagic and territorial waters.
- The conservation and management of all sea turtles population across Fiji waters.
- The Conservation and management of all whales and dolphins within the Fiji waters. The Ministry of Fisheries is adopting a stronger conservation stands in support of Fiji's commitment to the United Nations Conference on Oceans which links directly to the other commitments: a number of which are given below:
- Integrated coastal management to preserve ecosystem services, improved climate resilient and sustained livelihood in Fiji;
- Delivering improved coastal fisheries management services in Fiji;
- Expansion of large scale marine managed areas in Fiji;

Mr Naqali said that “in addition to these, all other UN Oceans conference commitments have direct and indirect link and focus on the sustainable use and development of the ocean and coastal fisheries resources, and highlight the need for higher level and urgent considerations to conserve, manage and even protect coral reefs, rivers, streams, lakes, coastal forests and mangroves ecosystems, and all associated wet lands and water shed areas, and does not promote the unsustainable removal of the natural resources and habitat units. In this, the Ministry continues to acknowledge the important ecological services provided by the coral reefs system and to a large extent, the blue carbon ecosystems such as mangrove, seagrass beds, salt and intertidal marsh ecosystem in the conservation of biodiversity and their intrinsic role in the carbon sequestration.”

Permanent Secretary Naqali concluded by saying that “the solutions to sustainable natural resource use and development are available but we need to change our attitudes and the way we do things.”

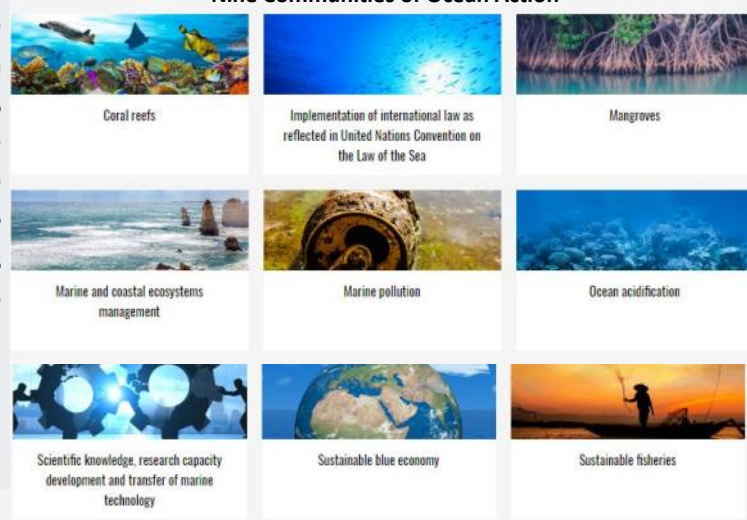
[The full speech can be viewed here.](#)



Call for Action and Voluntary Commitments - Ambassador Peter Thomson, UNSG's Special Envoy for the Ocean

Session Objective: To present a summary of the Call for Action and detailed assessment of the global and Pacific voluntary commitments.

Ambassador Thomson spoke on the launch of nine Communities of Ocean Action that will follow-up on the implementation of the voluntary commitments registered and announced at The Ocean Conference for implementation of SDG 14, catalyse and generate new voluntary commitments and facilitate collaboration and networking amongst different actors in support of SDG 14. Each community will be coordinated by two focal points.



He also informed participants that there were:

- Over 90 voluntary commitments relate to coral reefs;
- More than 270 commitments relate to some aspects of implementing international law as reflected in UNCLOS;
- 90 voluntary commitments that relate to the restoration, rehabilitation, protection and management of mangroves and associated ecosystems;
- More than 130 voluntary commitments relate to marine protected areas, and over 30 commitments include marine spatial planning;
- Over 540 voluntary commitments relate to the reduction of marine pollution;
- Over 330 voluntary commitments relate to some aspects of sustainable ocean-based economic development.

In collaboration with UNDESA and Mr. Thomson, focal points are expected to:

- Generate multi-stakeholder interest and engagement in the Communities of Ocean Action and in the follow-up to The Ocean Conference in general;
- Participate in online and in-person meetings as necessary;
- Consult broadly with the relevant community to provide assessments of progress of voluntary commitments, and collect examples of successful implementation of voluntary commitments;
- Consult with the relevant thematic community to identify challenges to implementation of voluntary commitments;
- Help identify gaps in implementation in the Ocean Action area and spur the creation and registration of new voluntary commitments by all stakeholders;
- Collect expertise in areas related to the community of action and help channel best practices and policies to the voluntary commitments follow-up process;
- Contribute to the preparation of materials such as briefing notes and online newsletters;
- Identify experts who could be qualified to participate in expert meetings and panel discussions.

The Expected outputs by 2020 include:

- Assessment on the progress of registered voluntary commitments in the areas related to the Community of Ocean Action;
- Increased registrations of new voluntary commitments in the area related to the Community of Ocean Action; and
- Increased multi-stakeholder interest and engagement in the Community of Ocean Action and in the follow-up to The Ocean Conference.

During discussions on Ambassadors Thompson presentation the point was made that USP was keen to play a role in acidification. USP has built its work on oceans into its strategic plan. It has committed to fund a research fellowship and two Masters Scholarships. USP is close to making an appointment for a Chair in Ocean and Climate Change(working with Norway) and is working with the government of the Marshall Islands on the operations of a Micronesian Centre for Sustainable Transportation. Ambassador Thomson recognised USP's role as being very valuable. He said a lot of resources were going into marine research, including philanthropic resources. The Pacific was ideal for such research. He said the Government of Monaco, through the Prince Albert II Foundation, was also focussing on marine research and had a research boat dedicated for this.

Ambassador Thomson said there was a new resurgence in marine research and the Pacific needed to make sure they were part of this opportunity.

A comment was raised:

- that there were already a number of regional networks established and we needed to see how we could engage these in the Communities of Ocean Action. Mr Thomson said UNEP had an important role to make this happen. He said it was positive that there was now a bigger interest in ocean matters. We should not be overly concerned by the possibility of duplication of efforts...we should let efforts flourish.
- that only 5% of ocean bottom had been mapped and we needed to develop the Ocean industry in the region.
- that the region has had a policy since 2003. He said we needed to implement rather than talk about it. He said that the Pacific needed to demonstrate stewardship. A lot need to be done on coastal fisheries and there was a need to mesh traditional management with modern fishing methods. The budgets allocated to coastal fisheries did not reflect the importance of the sector to Pacific people.

[Full presentation can be viewed here.](#)



Ocean Pathway Partnership Initiative – Mr. Nilesh Prakash, Director Climate Change, Ministry of Economy, Fiji

Session Objective: To present on the Oceans Pathway Partnership Initiative and discuss plans for its implementation

Mr Prakash said there was a consensus on the important relationship between the ocean and climate change in terms of management of carbon, the absorption of heat and regulation of global weather patterns. There is serious concern on the current degradation of ocean health and the impact of and on climate change. Climate change has negative impacts on the ocean in terms of acidification, warming, rising sea levels and de-oxygenation. Fiji's COP 23 Presidency wanted to implement an effective ocean pathway that would strengthen the role of the ocean in the UNFCCC while maintaining the neutrality and effectiveness of the Presidency. The concept of an Ocean Pathway in the UNFCCC will work with other initiatives (e.g. the Ocean & Climate Initiatives Alliance, the International Alliance to Combat Ocean Acidification and the International Ocean Commission) and will require continued advocacy to make

He said the Ocean Pathway Partnership (OPP) will work with partners including:

- “Representatives of parties and stakeholders”
- “Co-chair between Fiji and a developed coastal state”
- “Observer organizations, CSO, private sector, academic and sub regional governments”
- “Established ocean and climate alliances, coalitions and platforms”
- “1-3 key donor partners that will fund OPP and activities”
- Co-chairs and partners to establish an OPP Steering Committee that will be responsible for coordination of the OPP and special teams / groups as needed.

Mr Prakash mentioned the following activities planned for 2018:

- 1) Host roundtable on Sustainable Transport / shipping;
- 2) Host roundtable on Coastal Cities, Towns and Settlements with PSIDS and invited Pacific Rim cities;
- 3) Host roundtable on climate and ocean financing opportunities; and
- 4) Host Ocean Pathway planning meeting for COP 24.

Discussion

Asked:

- whether there was a financial plan in place apart from technical assistance from agencies, Mr. Prakash said that OPP would have a work programme and its implementation would require resources that could become available from different parties.
- how could the Pacific increase its presence in IMO when currently discussing decarbonisation in shipping and considering that the IMO works through consensus, when it was becoming very difficult to find the financial resources to support the travel to these meetings, Mr Prakash agreed that it was Important to have a Pacific delegation at these meetings and that one should approach regional organisations for resources to get delegates at the IMO meetings.
- what the timeframe of the 2018 programme was, Mr Prakash said that initially the oceans issues needed to get in the COP through a soft landing. He said the expectations were that it would be at COP25 that we could get something off the ground within UNFCCC.
- whether The Ocean Pathway Strategy for the Ocean into COP23 document presented was in its final form or whether it could still be added to. There was substantial climate financing that could be used to address many ocean health issues seeing that very little money was currently coming to address ocean issues.

Mr Prakash responded that one could not talk about adaptation without having people on the ground doing the hard work needed to implement. Mr Prakash said that other relevant information could be proposed to be added to the document.

[Full paper can be viewed here.](#)



Outcomes of the Pacific Blue Economy Conference (PBEC) – Ms Arpana Pratap, PIDF Team Leader Member Capacity

Session Objective: To present on the outcomes of PBEC and discuss a way forward to developing blue economies for the Pacific.

Ms Pratap informed the meeting that the Pacific Blue Economy Conference (PBEC) was one of the commitments made by PIDF at the UN SDG14 Conference. The other was the Pacific Year for the Ocean 2017. PBEC was a two-day High Level Conference held at the Grand Pacific Hotel in Suva, Fiji on 23 - 24 August, 2017.

It provided a knowledge platform on the blue economy for the Pacific Islands and explored lessons learned, innovations and emerging industries based on ocean resources. It built on the UN Conference on SDG 14 outcomes and existing Pacific commitments and frameworks, to provide a roadmap for refining the concept and implementing a Blue Economy in the Pacific.

More specifically the objectives of the conference were:

- to inform Pacific senior officials and stakeholders on emerging ocean resources management issues and opportunities;
- to assist the Pacific in defining the blue economy concept and ways to implement it;
- to support the Pacific by debating the complex issues surrounding the blue economy; and
- to facilitate exchange of experiences, lessons learned and good practices in the region and other parts of the globe on the concept of blue growth and the blue economy that are adapted and aligned with Pacific islands perspectives, priorities and solutions.

The Conference attracted more than 200 delegates from 35 countries and territories, thirteen of them from the Pacific. They included a varied audience made of government, private sector, civil society, research institutions and the academia, representatives of multilateral institutions and other development partners, international and regional organizations.

Pacific Blue Economy Conference Sessions

• SDG 14 and the Blue Economy

Objective: To share knowledge and experiences from the UN Ocean Conference in the context of blue economy.

• The Blue Economy: The Global Experience

Objective: To discuss the global perspective on blue economy and how it can be applied in the Pacific.

• The Blue Economy: A Pacific Perspective

Objective: To discuss blue economy in a Pacific perspective and its opportunities implications and impact.

• Key Ocean Industries

Objective: To discuss the opportunities for existing industries facing the transition to more environmentally sustainable practices, where technologies and business models and innovations are focused on promoting or restoring ocean health.

• Innovation in the Blue Economy: Emerging Industries

Objective: To discuss the opportunities and challenges of emerging industries and policy implications within a blue economy context.

Key Ocean Industries

Parallel session 1: Oceanic Fisheries

Parallel session 2: Marine & Coastal Tourism

Parallel session 3: Coastal Fisheries & Community Livelihoods

Innovation in the Blue Economy: Emerging Industries

Parallel session 1: Seabed Resources

Parallel session 2: Ocean Energy

Parallel session 3: Ocean Afforestation & Blue Carbon

Pacific Blue Economy Conference Sessions

• Education, research and capacity building: challenges for a growing blue economy

Objective: To discuss what technical, scientific, economic and finance knowledge or skills are needed for a blue economy.

• Blue growth and ocean governance - balance between use and protection of the ocean

Objective: To provide a platform for discussions and to explore how to strengthen ocean governance at the regional level drawing on lessons learned from past regional experiences and develop concrete recommendations for advancing good oceans governance as a cornerstone of blue economy development.

• Financing the Blue Economy

Objective: To discuss blue financing and new and innovative financing mechanisms.

• Developing Blue Economies for the Pacific

Objective: To provide a platform for discussions for developing a roadmap for blue economies in the Pacific.

Development Partner Statements Summary of Conference Outcomes

Side Event

Professor Gunter Pauli, Serial entrepreneur, author and initiator of the Blue Economy



The key recommendations included:

- Creating a sustainable Pacific Blue Economy will require the collective and coordinated actions of many stakeholders.
- Partnerships across governments, private sector and civil society organisations needed to shape a Blue Economy future which is people-centred, and places human rights and human dignity at its core.
- A sustainable Blue Economy is one in which the use of our oceans today enhances rather than undermines natural capital and does not compromise the ability of future generations to generate cultural, social and economic wealth.
- Many commitments have been made and actions taken. The focus should be on implementation and actively monitoring existing commitments to ensure they are appropriate, people-centered and reflective of the needs and aspirations of all stakeholders.
- Climate action and ocean action are two sides of the same coin, and the Pacific will continue to ensure both remain at the top of the global agenda.
- The foundation of the Pacific Blue Economy is the coastal and near shore fisheries which are integral to the lives, livelihoods, social and cultural wellbeing of Pacific Islanders.
- Governance and leadership at the community level is critical and communities need to be supported to better understand the value and lead the management of their resources.
- Incorporating the value of marine resources and ecosystems into national statistical accounts can also make the value of these resources more evident to decision makers.
- The current economic model has resulted in overfishing, increasing marine pollution and climate change. A sustainable Blue Economy requires: (1) a rethink of our current economic system including expanding marine protected and managed areas at the national and local level, (2) addressing illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing, (3) banning micro-plastics and microbeads and phasing out single use plastics, (4) developing innovative business solutions and supporting ethical investments and ensuring that education systems are developing ocean-literate populations.
- A healthy ocean is the foundation of our fisheries and tourism industries. Improvements in regional and national governance arrangements can secure and strengthen the revenue from these sources.
- The Parties of the Nauru Agreement (PNA) have demonstrated that locally grown solutions, driven by our own leaders, can successfully drive transformation towards a sustainable Blue Economy.
- Emerging industries, such as deep sea minerals, ocean afforestation and bioprospecting, where appropriately regulated, can support additional revenue streams from the ocean asset base.
- Additional research is needed to better understand the economic, social and environmental costs and the benefits and their distribution.
- Participatory marine spatial planning and the full engagement of affected communities in the decision making process is required.
- Resource rights holders should be supported by government to: (1) promote integrated planning, (2) reduce the negative impacts of land-based activities and (3) address illegal and non-compliant activities.
- Adequate recurrent resourcing from within government budgets needs to be allocated for sustainable ocean use and conservation.
- Most research on islands is not done from a Pacific perspective. Research is needed that looks at

islands the way they are viewed by Islanders.

- Nurturing future ocean literate leaders must start at the primary school level.
- More discussions are needed at the national level to facilitate locally-driven solutions.
- There is a need to revisit our traditional knowledge, learn from our communities, support research efforts to drive local research and build capacity.
- Capacity development and research are fundamental to transforming business as usual, and to drive innovation and development.
- A diversity of skills, people and multidisciplinary approaches are needed to implement sustainable blue economies. Governments, drawing on national needs should set priorities for our tertiary and vocational educational institutions using existing institutional planning and governance mechanisms.
- Scientists need to engage policymakers, understand how decisions are made and provide timely inputs.
- The ratification and implementation of the UN Convention on the Laws of the Seas (UNCLOS) provides a means to secure rights over our maritime domains and respect each other as neighbours.
- As a region, the Pacific could declare to recognise each other's boundaries in the face of climate change while awaiting official recognition by the Commission on the Limits of the Continental Shelf (UN CLCS).
- The private sector can grow a sustainable Blue Economy given the appropriate and coherent regulatory environment and can be an ally in dealing with non-compliance.
- Governments should drive policies that encourage equitable growth and provide incentives for businesses and non-profits that raise ethical standards and promote fairness.
- Governments should implement, monitor, enforce and strengthen policies and laws to protect people and the environment. Government budgets should reflect commitments to the oceans and the climate.
- Governments can streamline existing legislation and reduce fragmentation to encourage local entrepreneurs and create an enabling environment to do business better.
- Innovative business models require innovative financial solutions. Ethics needs to be at the centre of financing mechanisms if they are to be truly sustainable.
- A Pacific Region Ocean Business leadership coalition for Corporate Ocean Responsibility is being established.

The proposed next steps were:

- The PBEC outcomes to guide the development of regional and national Blue Economy roadmaps (the regional to support the national Blue Economy roadmaps);
- To establish regional and national Blue Economy steering committees to steer the implementation of roadmaps;
- To establish a regional Blue Economy Think Tank and a Blue Economy Knowledge Hub to support the steering committees.

[The full presentation can be viewed here.](#)



WWF Voluntary Contribution Implementation Update – Ms. Kesaia Tabunakawai (Representative, WWF-Pacific)

Session Objective: To outline WWF's support to Fiji's Voluntary Commitments particularly in regards to the protection of the Great Sea Reef.

Ms Tabunakawai informed the meeting that out of the 17 commitments made by Fiji, WWF is contributing to seven of these.

She said that with Fiji's ocean asset of over 1.29 million km², Coral reefs cover an area of 10,200 km², representing 9.0 % of the coral reefs of the Pacific; 3.5 % of the world's coral reefs.

Fiji's Great Sea Reef (GSR), at 260 KMs in length, is the 3rd longest barrier reef system in the southern hemisphere. The GSR Seascape is adjoined to the landscape - of Ba, Ra, Bua and Macuata provinces, out of which 4 of the 6 largest rivers in the country – Labasa, Dreketi, Ba & Nadi flow and into the GSR. It is home to 41.5% of Fijians and to 44% of Fiji's endemic reef species including twelve IUCN Red listed species. This is an important reef system especially in the backdrop of expectations by scientists that, principally as a result of climate change, 90 percent of corals will die by 2050, unless there is a serious intervention to save them. World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) latest [Greenhouse Gas Bulletin](#) reveals that atmospheric concentrations of CO² are the highest level they've been for more than three million years. Continued high-levels of human-made emissions are leading to climate change and ocean acidification.

The GSR vision is that “By 2025, the Great Sea Reef and coastal ecosystems are healthy and resilient to a changing climate, supporting sustainable business, inclusive livelihoods, food security and community wellbeing.”

There are five indicative programmes in the GSR project. These are:

1. Forest and Mangrove Regeneration
2. Organic Agriculture
3. Renewable Energy
4. Sustainable Fisheries
5. Sustainable Sea transport

The GSR vision needs an investment of \$115 million but there is forecast of a return-revenue of \$849 million by 2030. Ms Tabunakawai concluded that “without action, Fiji's reefs will not exist in 2050”.



SDG14 Support Activities and proposed programme for 2018 – Discussion facilitated by Ambassador Peter Thomson

Session Objective: To discuss and contribute to the action plan for the regionally desired activities for the implementation of SDG 14.

Prior to going into the topic of this session, Ambassador Thomson shared some personal thought on the Ocean. He reminded all that we live in this very fragile ecosystem and we know there are consequences to our actions. There is a lot of bad news. We know that from accumulated human activity and effect of greenhouse gases on our oceans, we are making life in the ocean harder particularly in the tropics. Sea level rise has devastating implications for island countries but it's not only impacting islands - the majority of humanity lives on the coasts.

We see the spread of dead zones in our oceans – declining fish stocks – overfishing that carries on. Subsidies for fishing still continue, but there's good news too because the WTO has taken the decision to address these subsidies.

He informed the participants that one big truck of garbage is dumped in the ocean every minute of every day. Micro-plastics micro beads and fibres have now penetrated the ocean biosphere.

Ambassador Thomson said there was a lot of work to be done and a lot to learn about the ocean. We know more about Mars than about what's under the sea.

The good news is that more is being done about the Ocean. The Commonwealth is now talking about the Blue Charter, the establishment of the Ross Sea MPA in Antarctica, leading fishing nations in the world has declared MPA at the Arctic, the work of the China Council, considering that most land based pollution is from China and Asia.

We look forward to the next Ocean conference in Indonesia. Ambassador Thomson said he was confident that the full implementation of the SDG 14 would fully restore the Ocean.

Discussion

Globally there was more fish consumed from Aquaculture sources than wild catch. Part of the future solution is aquaculture. Aquaculture needs partnership with the Private Sector for its development. There are many aquaculture opportunities for villages to provide them with healthy options. Only starting in Fiji but there are plenty opportunities for the private sector in this area.

We need to walk the talk. We can't pay lip-service overseas and then not follow through in the country – particularly in regards to conservation of mangroves and coral reefs. In response, Ambassador Thomson said it does not take a lot to organise a mangrove replanting scheme and this should be done in all the countries with mangroves. People need to be aware of the implications of their actions... including the use of single use plastic bags and disposable items. Sea Level monitoring being done in the Pacific. SPC doing capacity building on data such as sea level rise and acidification in Kiribati, Tonga and Tuvalu. There is a Pacific Research Ocean Alliance in place. A Center for Ocean Science has just been established by SPC. UNESCO has an initiative on Ocean literacy and is involved in sea level rise monitoring.

A representative of the Private Sector acknowledged all the work that has been going on for decades. He said these need to be the years of implementation. Private sector is responsible for a lot that is happening – there is the good, the bad and the evil. The work that CSOs are doing with our villages is commendable. There are things that can be done without manuals and money – behavioural change also needs to be enforced. He said many companies are willing to work with our communities to help move these efforts.

Kenya have realised that their wild animals are worth more alive than dead. Maldives have preserved their oceans because they have realised they can get more value from tourism than fisheries. Indonesia has realised they are losing tourism jobs because what they are doing to the ocean. There are private sector benefits in conservation.

Things are happening in the Pacific too. Vanuatu has declared itself plastic free. Fiji, Solomon Islands and Tonga are developing marine ocean spatial plans.

The Fiji Ministry for Rural Development informed the meeting of the capacity building work done in local communities through dissemination of information. Also there is work being done through the self-help projects for communities through the rural development district offices. Important to emphasize the stewardship and good management of resources at the communities. Need to appreciate Fiji outboard motors in the tourism and fishing sectors pollute most in the maritime sector.

On Ocean literacy PIDF is exploring the production of Gunter's Fables dedicated to the ocean. Also developing a Seaweed project for biogas production with the Gunter Pauli's ZERI Foundation. On maritime transport, PIDF will be organising a technical workshop for Pacific IMO delegates in preparation for the Maritime Environment Protection Committee meeting in April.

PANG highlighted the need for regulations on the exploitation of Sea Bed for Mining. Importance of finding the right balance in the use of resources, while being vigilant on conservation needs.



Wrap up – Mr. François Martel, Secretary General, PIDF

Mr Martel went over the presentations and discussions that took place over the day and highlighted many salient points made by the various speakers and the discussions that ensued.

Mr. Martel reminded everyone of the nine Communities of Ocean Action that have been established to respond to SDG14. He encouraged participants to register into those communities that are in their sphere of interest and ensure the Pacific voice is heard.

He thanked everyone, particularly Ambassador Peter Thomson, UN Special Envoy for the Ocean, for making the time to be at the symposium and for the many valuable contributions made by those present.

[The full wrap up notes can be viewed here.](#)



Closing Remarks - His Excellency Patteson Oti, High Commissioner of Solomon Islands to Fiji and Chair of PIDF Senior Officials Committee (SOC)

As Chair of PIDF SOC, High Commissioner Oti thanked the Special Envoy for the Ocean, Ambassador Peter Thomson, for being part of this Symposium.

He observed that the Pacific commitments included: progressing marine protected areas, marine spatial planning, ocean literacy, increasing ocean research, developing blue economies, etc. He said we needed to analyse how many of these commitments were fulfilled or still active. The credibility of these commitments depended on their implementation.

His Excellency Patteson Oti said, "We know that the ocean connects us and we have a cultural tie to the ocean. We know that the ocean is in crisis and we have failed in managing it effectively. But we also know that through partnerships and through strong leadership at local, national and regional levels, we can reverse the damages."

The High Commissioner observed that those present had at least one thing in common - their love for the ocean and their commitment to preserve and protect it and now work needed to be done to fulfil those commitments made.

[The full speech can be viewed here.](#)



TAKE AWAY POINTS

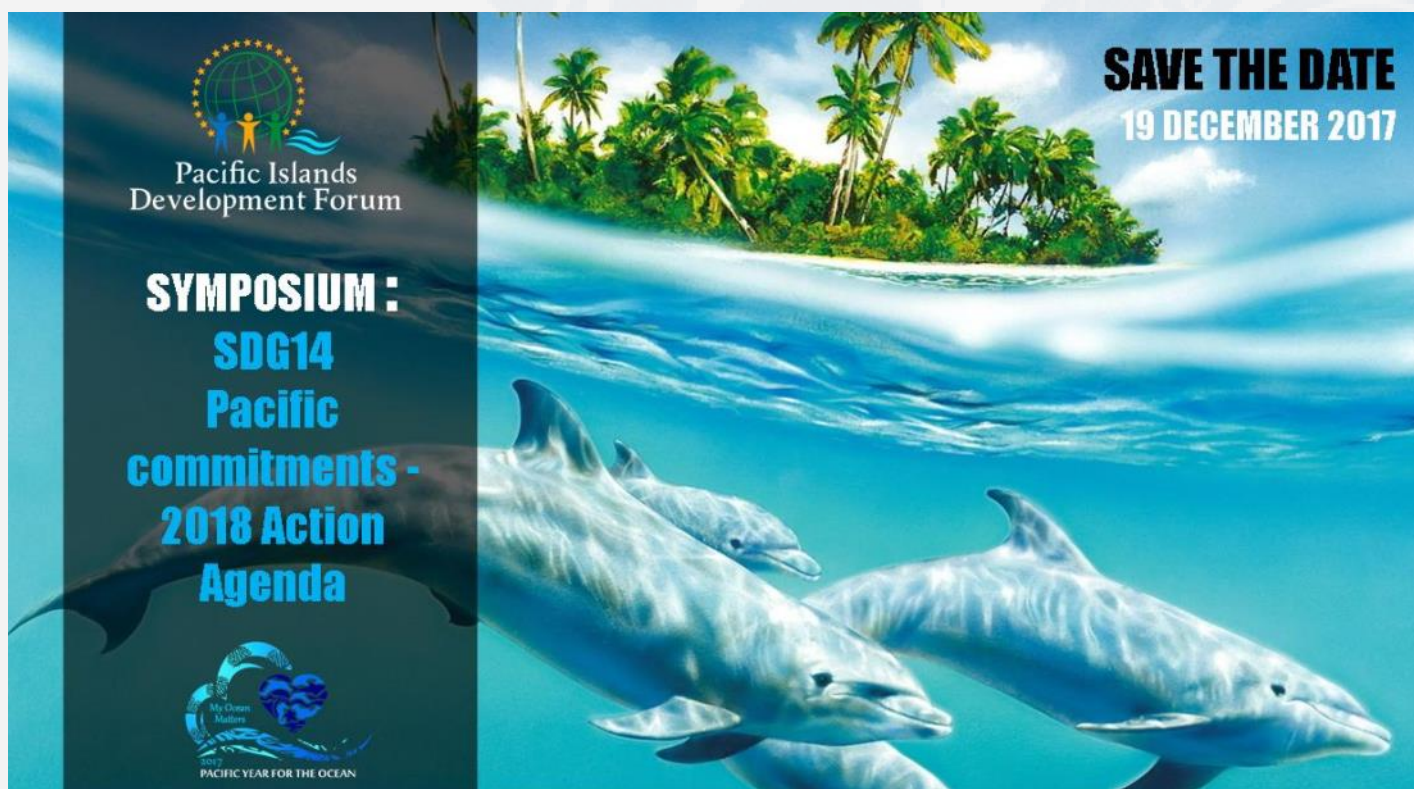
- Many of the commitments made at the UN Conference are either fulfilled or in the process of being fulfilled. Countries, organisations or businesses can still add more commitments as the register will remain open. One can register commitments at URL: <https://oceanconference.un.org/commitments/register/>
- Nine communities of Ocean Action have been established to respond to SDG14. People from the Pacific should register (<https://oceanconference.un.org/coa>) into those communities that are in their sphere of interest and ensure the Pacific voice is heard.
- We should not be overly concerned by the possibility of duplication of efforts...we should let efforts flourish.
- Fiji is committed to the conservation and management of endangered marine species including groupers, all shark species, all sea turtles and all whales and dolphin species.
- Oceans Pathway Partnership is an attempt at bringing ocean issues into the COP discussions through a soft landing. The expectations were that it would be at COP25 that we could get something off the ground within UNFCCC.
- The outcomes of the Pacific Blue Economy Conference can be used as a guide for the development of regional and national Blue Economy roadmaps. The roadmaps would require regional and national Blue Economy steering committees to steer their implementation, and a Blue Economy Think Tank and Knowledge Hub to support the work of the steering committees.
- The Great Sea Reef needs an investment of \$115 million which would give a return-revenue of \$849 million by 2030. The investment currently needed is that of USD 360,000 to fully develop the concept, and USD 838,000 to turn the concept to a full proposal.



FURTHER READING

- [The UN Ocean Conference](#)
- [SDG 14 Targets and Indicators](#)
- [In-depth analysis of Ocean Conference Voluntary Commitments to support and monitor their implementation](#)
- [Communities of Ocean Action](#)
- [Pacific Blue Economy Conference](#)
- [Ocean Symposium page on PIDF website](#)
- [Symposium Photo gallery](#)





SAVE THE DATE
19 DECEMBER 2017

The high-level United Nations Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017.

It adopted an agreed declaration in the form of a "Call for Action" and a report containing the co -chairs' summaries of the partnership dialogues, as well as a list of voluntary commitments for the implementation of Goal 14. One of the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference was the appointment of Ambassador Peter Thomson as the Special Envoy for the Ocean to lead UN's advocacy and public outreach efforts to ensure the outcomes and the voluntary commitments are implemented. In the Pacific context, the PIDF hosted the 1st high level Pacific Blue Economy Conference (PBEC) in August 2017, building on the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference and in Bonn, the COP23 Fiji Secretariat launched the Ocean Pathways Partnership initiative.

This half day symposium for the Pacific will be held, under the patronage of Ambassador Peter Thomson, to review the Call for Action voluntary commitments globally and for the Pacific, to present and promote participation in the nine thematic multi-stakeholders Communities for Ocean Actions platforms and finally to discuss regional activities to be taken up in 2018 in pursuit of SDG14 implementation in the Pacific.

Date: 19 December, 2017

Time: 9am - 1pm

Venue: Novotel, Lami

For further information contact:

Ms. Arpana Pratap
Team Leader Member Capacity
Mobile: (679) 9907896
apratap@pacificidf.org

www.pacificidf.org
Find us on Twitter/Facebook: @PIDF01

Pacific Islands Development Forum
56 Domain Road, Suva, Republic of Fiji,
Phone: (679) 3311518 Fax: (679) 3311529,
Email: secretariat@pacificidf.org



SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS



Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development



THE
**OCEAN
CONFERENCE**
UNITED NATIONS, NEW YORK, 5-9 JUNE 2017



Scan QR code for access to
Program and other documents



Pacific Islands
Development Forum

CONCEPT NOTE

**SYMPOSIUM: SDG14 Pacific commitments -
2018 Action Agenda**



19 December 2017
Novotel, Suva, Republic of Fiji



INTRODUCTION

The high-level United Nations Conference to support the implementation of Sustainable Development Goal 14: Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York from 5 to 9 June 2017. It adopted an agreed declaration in the form of a "Call for Action" and a report containing the co-chairs' summaries of the partnership dialogues, as well as a list of voluntary commitments for the implementation of Goal 14.

One of the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference was the appointment of Ambassador Peter Thomson as the Special Envoy for the Ocean to lead UN's advocacy and public outreach efforts to ensure the outcomes and the voluntary commitments are implemented.

The UN had seven themes or clusters including:

- Addressing marine pollution.
- Managing, protecting, conserving and restoring marine and coastal ecosystems.
- Minimizing and addressing ocean acidification.
- Making fisheries sustainable.
- Increasing economic benefits to SIDS and LDCs and providing access for small-scale artisanal fishers to marine resources and markets.
- Increasing scientific knowledge, and developing research capacity and transfer for marine technology.
- Implementing international law, as reflected in UNCLOS.

These themes were further clustered into three groups to suit the Pacific preparation for the UN Ocean Conference, which are:

- Marine Pollution and Protection of Coastal and Marine Ecosystems.
- Climate Change and Ocean Acidification.
- Fisheries, Fisheries Subsidies and Blue Growth / Economy Benefits to SIDS/LDCs, including the outcomes from PBEC.

Close to 1,400 voluntary commitments for concrete action to advance implementation of SDG 14 were made by governments, the United Nations system, civil society organizations, academia, the scientific community, and the private sector. These commitments, together with the Conference outcome document Our Ocean, Our Future: Call for Action, mark a global breakthrough on the path to sustainable management and conservation of our oceans, seas and marine resources.

Each of the Ocean Conference voluntary commitments addresses one or several of the SDG 14 targets, often with associated positive impact on other SDGs, including for example SDG 3 on good health and well-being and SDG13 on climate action, among others. In the Pacific context, the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) hosted the 1st high level Pacific Blue Economy Conference (PBEC) in August 2017, building on the outcomes of the UN Ocean Conference.

The PBEC was the first step in providing a roadmap for refining the concept and implementing a Blue Economy in the Pacific.



An Oceans Pathway Partnership was also launched on the 16 November 2017 in Bonn by the COP23 Fiji Secretariat to include oceans in the negotiations with acknowledgement of the Call for Action from the UN Ocean Conference and develop a work programme on oceans by 2019. It involves all the existing alliances, parties, civil society organisations, observers and interested institutions.

To follow-up on the implementation of these global voluntary commitments; to catalyze and generate new voluntary commitments; and to facilitate collaboration and networking amongst different actors in support of SDG 14, the United Nations is launching nine thematic multi-stakeholder Communities of Ocean Action.

This half day symposium for the Pacific will be held, under the patronage of Ambassador Peter Thomson, to review the Call for Action voluntary commitments globally and for the Pacific, to present and promote participation in the nine thematic multi-stakeholders Communities for Ocean Actions platforms and finally to discuss regional activities to be taken up in 2018 in pursuit of SDG14 implementation in the Pacific.

Objectives

- To discuss the analysis of the global and Pacific voluntary commitments.
- To review and promote the Communities of Ocean Action among Pacific stakeholders
- To report on the COP23 launch of the Ocean Pathway initiative.
- To discuss the outcomes of Pacific Blue Economy Conference
- To discuss regional activities to be taken up in 2018 in pursuit of SDG14 implementation in the Pacific.

Partners

Division for Sustainable Development, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN-DESA)
Office of the UN Secretary General's Special Envoy for the Ocean

Participation

This official level Meeting will include participation from relevant government representatives, Pacific island country missions, civil society organisations, academic institutes and the relevant private sector.

Contact

For further queries, please contact:

Ms Arpana Pratap
Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF)
Team Leader – Member Capacity
apratap@pacificidf.org
[Ph: +679 9469433](tel:+6799469433)

ANNEX 4: LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Surname	Forename	Organization	Title/Designation	Email Address
Govan	Hugh	LMMA Network	Adviser	hgovan@gmail.com
Vurobaravu	Nikenike	Vanuatu High Commission	High Commissioner	jtokona@vanuatu.gov.vu
Lui	Joe Pakoa	Vanuatu High Commission	First Secretary	jtokona@vanuatu.gov.vu
Nawadra	Sefanaia	UN Environment Programme	Head, Pacific Office	sefanaia.nawadra@un.org
Cavuiliati	Kelera	South Pacific Tourism Organisation	Executive Adviser	kcavuiliati@spto.org
Chandra	Rajesh	The University of the South Pacific	Vice-Chancellor and President	rajesh.chandra@usp.ac.fj
Catanasiga	Vani	Pacific Islands Association of NGOs (PIANGO)	Programme Officer	vani@piango.org
Karan	Jaindra	The University of the South Pacific	Director Development, 'Marketing, Communication and Alumni	anabelle.chand@usp.ac.fj
Deo	Seema	Footprints in the Sand	Consultant	seema@seemadeo.com
Bailey	Sally	Tierra Mar Consultancy	Consultant	Salimalifiji@gmail.com
Katonivualiku	Manasa	UN ESCAP Pacific Office	Associate Programme Officer	manasa.katonivualiku@un.org
Powers-Tora	Molly	SPC	Coordinator, Ocean Intelligence	mollyp@spc.int
Elder	Maria	U.S Embassy, Suva	Regional Environmental Specialist	ElderMB@state.gov
Morris	Cherie	Institute of Marine Resources, USP	Fellow	morris_c@usp.ac.fj
Seruiraduvatu	Lavetanalagi	Project Survival Pacific	Co -Coordinator	lagiseru@gmail.com
Joyce	Cathy	Pacific Ocean Culture	Manager	cathy@pacificoceanculture.com
Ryan	Paul Christian	Pacific Ocean Culture	Director	paul@pacificoceanculture.com
PRASAD	RAJENDRA	INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC COMMISSION of UNESCO	Programme Officer for Disaster Risk Reduction	r.prasad@unesco.org
Penjueli	Maureen	Pacific Network on Globalisation	Coordinator	coordinator@pang.org.fj
Kabasi	Tony Junior	Solomon Islands High Commission to Fiji	Counsellor	kabasi.tony@gmail.com
Tabunakawai	Kesaia	WWF Pacific	WWF Pacific Representative	ktabunakawai@wwfpacific.org
Singh	Deepika	Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism	Senior Economist	deepika.singh@govnet.gov.fj
Narayan	Karishma	Ministry of Industry, Trade and Tourism	Senior Economist	narayan.karishma@gmail.com
Holland	Elisabeth	PaCE-SD	Professor	eholland1@mac.com
Pratap	Ashna	Pacific Urgent Action Hub for Climate Justice	Member	ashprat22@gmail.com
Lubrani	Osnat	UNDP	UN Resident Coordinator	
Nuttall	Peter	USP	Research Fellow	
Newell	Alison	Sustainability for Shipping	Director	
Tawaka	Sarah	Department of Environment		sarah.tawaka@govnet.gov.fj
Nacoke	Akuila	Ministry of Agriculture	Principal Agriculture Officer	akuila.nacoke@govnet.gov.fj
Meo	Semisi	Conservation International		
Prakash	Nilesh	Ministry of Economy	Head of Climate Change Division	nprakash001@economy.gov.fj

Simon	Star	Australian High Commission	1st Secretary	simon.star@dfat.gov.au
Andrew	Jones	SPC		andrewj@spc.int
Tomasi	Raiyawa	CIRDAP		tomasi@cirdap.org
Aisake	Batibasaga	Ministry of Fisheries		
Amitesh	Jeet	Ministry of Rural Development		amitesh.jeet001@govnet.gov.fj
Laisiasa	Corerega	Ministry of Youth & Sports		
Im Sung	Jung	Korean Embassy	2nd Secretary	isjung90@mofa.go.kr
Jiyeon	Kim	Korean Embassy	3rd Secretary	jykim12@mofa.go.kr
Howard	Politini	PIPSO	Chairman	
Alisi	Tuqa	PIPSO		
Lia	Tuivuya	Ministry of Land & Minerals Resources	SEO	lia.tuivuya@govnet.gov.fj
Lui	Naisara	MOIT	DS MOIT	
Fernandes	Leanne	IUCN		leanne.fernandes@iucn.org
Young	Gina	ECREA		admin@ecrea.org.fj

ANNEX 5: THE SDG14 SYMPOSIUM IN THE MEDIA

- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-QFz2ZiFR98&feature=youtu.be&t=566>
- <https://vanuatuindependent.com/2017/12/20/pacific-countries-implement-sdg14-commitments-thomson/>
- <http://www.fbc.com.fj/fiji/57858/pacific-countries-should-implement-sdg14-commitments-thomson>
- <http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=14927455185a3984113791491e5925>





Pacific Islands Development Forum

56 Domain Road, Suva, Republic of Fiji,
Phone: (679) 3311518 Fax: (679) 3311527,

Email: secretariat@pacificidf.org

www.pacificidf.org

Follow us on Social Media: @PIDF01