

FORUM: Sustainable Development Commission: Sub-commission 1

QUESTION OF: Battling Rising Sea Levels: Saving the Pacific Island Small States

SUBMITTED BY: Seychelles

CO-SUBMITTERS: Costa Rica, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, Thailand, Kiribati, Japan, UNHCR, Tanzania, New Zealand, Mozambique, Azerbaijan, Finland, Turkey, Namibia, Qatar, Fiji, Morocco, Germany, Brazil, Canada, San Marino

THE SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION,

Noting that the Paris Agreement under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is the central intergovernmental agreement on combating climate change,

Recognizing the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) as the primary forum for global response to climate change,

Taking into account A/RES/47/186 on Specific measures in favor of island developing countries, and UNEP/EA.3/Res.5 on Investing in innovative environmental solutions for accelerating the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals,

Concerned by the 200 million people who will be displaced by 2050 due to the adverse effects of climate change,

Alarmed by the state of countries where sea levels are rising and cities, towns, and villages have to be relocated due to high water levels,

Recognizing the potential danger to human health and wellbeing, and the ramifications rising sea levels will have on quality of life in Pacific island small states,

Conscious that the World Bank's Small Island States Resilience Initiative works with governments of the small island states to construct infrastructure that will be resilient to threatening natural disasters exacerbated by climate change and rising sea levels,

Deeply concerned that Small Island Developing States account for two-thirds of countries with the highest number of relative natural disaster losses,

Taking into account the importance of achieving the UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), namely SDG 13: Taking urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts,

1. Stresses the importance of creating an Open-ended Working Group on Rising Sea Levels with the purpose of combating the adverse effects of such, overseen by the United Nations Environment Program and the Sustainable Development Commission, which has the purpose of functioning with the mandate of:
 - a) collaborating with governmental institutions, UN agencies, academic institutions, private sector institutions, and the international community in order to reduce the world's collective carbon footprint, and soften the blow of the negative effects of rising sea levels through the Rising Sea Levels Action Plan
 - b) gathering data and conducting studies in order to effectively gauge the long-term effects of rising sea levels on human health and its economic implications
 - c) implementing campaigns into the education system for at-risk island states on the effects of rising sea levels in order for island locals to inform them of the severity of the issue at hand
 - d) creating a supplement program to elementary school education which will include information on climate change and its adverse effects to build a global respect for the planet and will be carried out through:
 - i. collaboration between the Open-Ended Working Group and UNICEF to make sure

- every child has access to this information
 - ii. representatives of the Open-Ended Working Group who will complete annual assessments of the progress of the program for the first three years after implementation
 - iii. close connection with the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change to ensure the information is relevant and current
 - iv. creation of community outreach programs sponsored by the Open-Ended Working Group to further ensure access and engage adults in participating with this program;
2. Calls upon governments in collaboration with the aforementioned Open-ended Working Group on Rising Sea Levels to implement the Rising Sea Levels Action Plan, it will comprise of:
- a) recommending establishing and implementing various fiscal policies with the objective of incentivizing corporations and individuals to diminish their carbon footprint, these fiscal policies could include:
 - i. tax exemptions (or tax credit) for individuals who purchase electric vehicles and/or install solar panels, additionally, half the exemption/credits for those who purchase hybrid vehicles
 - ii. carbon tax of 10% per tonne of carbon produced in the production of fossil-fuel-based goods by the end of 2022
 - iii. lowered taxation on sustainable locally sourced produce and products
 - iv. tax breaks for companies that can prove complete use of sustainable energy and sustainable production practices
 - b) collaborating with the World Bank on their existing small island states resilience initiative to expand their outreach and produce reports so progress can be monitored, details of such being:
 - i. released bi-annually
 - ii. includes the statistics on sea level rise per year
 - iii. puts forward projections for future sea level rise
 - c) setting a timeline for the banning of single-use plastics:
 - i. banning styrofoam and single-use plastic bags, cups, and drink stirrers by 2021
 - ii. banning single-use plastic straws, cutlery, plates, and food containers, alongside single-use coffee cups and lids by 2023
 - iii. banning single-use plastic bottles and packaging (wrapping and six ring) by 2025
 - d) working with the United Nations Human Settlements Program (UN-Habitat) to create the Urban Sustainability Standards, a set of achievable standards to make cities more sustainable, these standards should be adjusted based on the city and should include but are not limited to:
 - i. electricity powered from green energy sources, i.e. solar power, wind power, tidal power
 - ii. creating a suggested amount of greenery for developments and cities, much like the Seattle Green Factor, where certain species of plants and trees are planted to absorb carbon dioxide and produce oxygen
 - iii. easy access to compost bins for citizens
 - iv. city buses must be electric and/or battery powered and not have a Diesel engine;
3. Designates a sub-committee of the open-ended working group (Open-ended Working Group on Rising Sea Levels: Food & Water) to work in collaboration with UN-Water and the FAO with the purpose of ensuring food and water security, it will be tasked with:
- a) creating an educational workshop for islanders on:
 - i. effectively storing crop harvests and food products
 - ii. selecting the best crops based on both their needs and the surroundings
 - iii. using modern and effective crop cultivating and harvesting techniques
 - b) producing inter-agency and inter-governmental research on creative solutions to the

- impending food and water crises
- c) researching and implementing an adapted filtration and water treatment system;

4. Calls for the following to be done in order to delay the effects of rising sea levels on Small Pacific Island States:
 - a) build seawalls and restore natural barriers from rising sea levels, such as mangroves and coral, which will act as a barrier from impeding rising sea levels
 - b) urge the governments in the Pacific affected by rising sea levels to refrain from clearing mangrove forests in order to grow crops and build infrastructure, as mangrove forests will help to combat higher tides
 - c) creating an advanced evacuation plan by:
 - i. requesting the UNHCR to cooperate with the Pacific States in order to provide a plan on ensuring the safety of these people in case of migration related to the rising sea level
 - ii. cooperating with governments in order to put in place an individual evacuation plan based on the already existing infrastructure and both demographic and geographic specifics;
5. Requests that the Secretary General bring the formation of the new Open-ended Working Group on Rising Sea Levels to the attention of intergovernmental organizations and to submit to the General Assembly at its next session a comprehensive report on the implementation of the present resolution, through the governing bodies of the Sustainable Development Commission and the United Nation Environment Programme.