



PACIFIC SMALL ISLAND DEVELOPING STATES
United Nations Member States

Permanent Mission of the Republic of Nauru to the United Nations
800 Second Avenue, Suite 400A, New York, NY 10017

Phone: 212-937-0074

Fax: 212-693-6079

E-mail: nsu@psids.int

Statement by

Honourable Minister Lotuala Metia
Minister of Finance, Economic Planning and Industries
of Tuvalu

on behalf of the

Pacific Small Island Developing States

Eighteenth Session of the Commission on Sustainable
Development

SIDS Day

10 May 2010
New York

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States and Developing States represented at the United Nations, namely, Fiji, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu, and my own country, Tuvalu.

The Pacific SIDS align themselves with the statement made by the distinguished representative of Grenada on behalf of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS). We wish to highlight the following issues:

First, like all SIDS, one of the major challenges the Pacific countries face is insufficient and inadequate data. Unless we have consistent, timely, and internationally-comparable data that is recognized and accepted, we cannot properly evaluate progress and ensure that projects are funded appropriately and deliver results. We look forward to working with our partners and the international community to address this critical issue.

Secondly, as raised in the AOSIS statement, it is important to recognize that SIDS remain highly vulnerable to external shocks. The impacts of the global economic crisis have been particularly acute for SIDS. While we have acted individually and collectively to mitigate its effects on our economies, only through increased international attention and support can the realities of the global economic crisis be properly addressed.

Thirdly, many SIDS, including in the Pacific region, lack natural marine resources for food security and economic growth. Accordingly, the Pacific has shown global leadership in marine biodiversity protection. Kiribati created what was at the time the world's largest marine protected area. Micronesia, Palau, and the Federated States of Micronesia are also involved in the Micronesian challenge, which commits those nations to effectively conserve at least 30% of their marine and inland resources and 20% of their terrestrial resources through 2025. This ground-breaking and bold initiative assists in protecting resources that support the livelihoods of the Micronesian people and contributes to global biodiversity protection for the benefit of all.

Yet, marine resources are being depleted by activities beyond our control. As noted in the Secretary-General's report on the progress of the

sustainable development (E/CN.17/2010/1) and the world's oceans have lost more than 90 percent of the large fish that humans rely on for food, income and other purposes. More fish are caught now than the oceans can replace.

We seek real commitments from the international community for transformative action in the management of fish stocks to ensure sustainability and greater economic self-sufficiency. The international community needs to make concerted efforts and consider innovative options to reduce or restructure their fleets, so as to allow SIDS to further develop their own fisheries. We look forward to this being reflected in the political declaration emanating from the high-level review of the Mauritius Strategy.

Finally, as stated in the AOSIS statement, we cannot talk meaningfully about sustainable development unless we acknowledge the reality and the very survival of many SIDS is at stake. The current dialogue in some quarters that appears to embrace lowering of expectations for fear of another Copenhagen outcome is disturbing. Our islands do not have all the time on their side as we are already experiencing the dangerous impacts of climate change, and climate change displacement has already occurred. We need to build trust through delivery of fast-track technology transfers urgently, and we believe that success will require a high level of ambition and an ambitious success.

Further, we reiterate our call for the relevant UN organs, including the Security Council, to take up the security implications of climate change as a matter of urgency.

These issues are common to all SIDS and they all directly affect our vulnerabilities and our sustainable development.

We wish to underscore that the time has come for SIDS to be recognised as a formal category within the United Nations and to call for increased support by the international community. Let us agree to take this critical step as part of the Mauritius Strategy.

Thank you.