



# MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

September - October 2018



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## Introduction

This weekly update aims to highlight recent news on climate change, migration, and the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

Prepared as a part of the CLI\_M\_CO2 project, undertaken at the World Trade Institute, University of Bern, Switzerland.

## 24-28 September 2018

### Organisations update

#### UNFCCC

UN Climate Change at New York Climate Week 24-30 September.

This week in New York, UN Secretary-General António Guterres urged countries to show "greater ambition and a greater sense of urgency" to confront the "direct existential threat" of climate change, and to adopt implementation guidelines of the Paris Agreement in in Poland in December of this year.

The Marshall Islands has published a landmark strategy to reach net zero emissions by 2050. The strategy, called "Lighting the Way" in Marshallese also provides the basis for the country to increase the level of ambition of its existing 2025 emissions reduction target (or Nationally Determined Contribution) under the Paris Agreement. Having launched the strategy at the opening of Climate Week NYC, the Marshall Islands is the tenth Party to the Paris Climate Change Agreement and the first island nation to submit a long-term strategy.

<https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/180924%20RMI%20press%20release%202050%20Strategy%20FINAL.pdf>

<https://unfccc.int/node/182635>

15 Projects Win 2018 UN Climate Action Award:

<https://unfccc.int/news/winners-of-the-2018-un-climate-action-award-announced>

Huge Potential for Green Bond Market – Report:

<https://unfccc.int/news/huge-potential-for-green-bond-market-report>

#### IPCC

On 1 - 5 October 2018, the #IPCC will be meeting for its 48th Session in Incheon, Republic of Korea

#### UNISDR

A unique city-to-city, disaster risk reduction peer review tool for cities in Europe and beyond has been finalized on 28 September 2018.

The USCORE tool, the first of its kind, was developed under UNISDR's Making Cities Resilient campaign and funded by the European Commission. The two-year project to design the tool was a strongly collaborative work programme across Europe engaging the municipalities of Greater Manchester, Amadora and Viggiano, the University of Manchester, UNISDR, the UK Department of Communities and Local Government, the Portuguese National Authority of Civil Protection and the Associazione di Protezione Civile Gruppo Lucano.

Key to these efforts is improved understanding and use of the online Sendai Framework Monitor (SFM), launched in March, to monitor progress on implementing the global plan to reduce disaster losses by 2030, the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

To date, 61 countries have started using the SFM to report against four targets for disaster losses, specifically, mortality, numbers of people affected, economic losses and damage to critical infrastructure.

## **UNHCR**

Available online as an app, UNHCR's Emergency Handbook gives hands-on guidance to humanitarians in all areas of life-saving assistance from registering refugees, to providing shelter, food, sanitation and more.

<https://emergency.unhcr.org/>

## **IOM**

New Framework for Addressing Gender-Based Violence in Crises 'Reinforces IOM's Accountability':

<https://www.iom.int/news/new-framework-addressing-gender-based-violence-crises-reinforces-ioms-accountability>

Vanuatu Launches National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-Induced Displacement:

[https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press\\_release/file/iom-vanuatu-policy-climate-change-disaster-induced-displacement-2018.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press_release/file/iom-vanuatu-policy-climate-change-disaster-induced-displacement-2018.pdf)

## **PIFS**

Pacific Islands Forum Leaders are in New York this week for the 73rd United Nations General Assembly (UNGA), providing an opportunity for collective advocacy and engagement as the Blue Pacific:

<https://www.forumsec.org/promoting-blue-pacific-priorities-at-73rd-united-nations-general-assembly/>

## **SPREP**

Emerging environmental issues, a subject of interest for Pacific Judges:

<https://www.sprep.org/news/emerging-environmental-issues-a-subject-of-interest-for-pacific-judges>

“First of its kind” report on the Pacific coral reefs, launched:

<https://www.sprep.org/sites/default/files/documents/publications/status-coral-reefs-pacific.pdf>

## **UNDP PACIFIC**

New report shows steady progress on Human Development for Pacific Island states. “Fiji, Palau, Samoa, and Tonga remain in the High Human Development category of the latest Human Development Index (HDI) and are joined by the Republic of Marshall Islands which is included in the index for the first time. At the other end of the spectrum, the Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea are rated as Low Human Development on the HDI’s measurement of national achievements in health, education and income, released this month by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).”

<http://www.pacific.undp.org/content/pacific/en/home/presscenter/pressreleases/2018/new-report-shows-steady-progress-on-human-development.html>

## **Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update**

### **Marshall Islands**

2050 Climate Strategy :

[https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/180924%20rmi%202050%20climate%20strategy%20final\\_0.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/180924%20rmi%202050%20climate%20strategy%20final_0.pdf)

### **Vanuatu**

National Policy on Climate Change and Disaster-induced Displacement:

[https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press\\_release/file/iom-vanuatu-policy-climate-change-disaster-induced-displacement-2018.pdf](https://www.iom.int/sites/default/files/press_release/file/iom-vanuatu-policy-climate-change-disaster-induced-displacement-2018.pdf)

### **Pacific**

“For the past two weeks, the Pacific has been at the heart of the first Intergovernmental Conference (IGC1) on Biological Diversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ). The IGC was held at the United Nations Headquarters in New York between 4 – 17 September, dedicated towards to the elaboration of an international legally binding instrument under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) to govern biological diversity in areas beyond national jurisdiction.

There are four overarching elements on BBNJ as set out in the General Assembly resolution 69/292, including: (i) Marine Genetic Resources; (ii) Area Based Management Tools including Marine Protected Areas and Marine Spatial Planning; (iii) Environment Impact Assessment; and (iv.) Capacity Building and Technology Transfer. These elements form the basis of the discussions

during the PrepCom and now IGC stages for the elaboration of an internationally binding instrument on BBNJ.”

Source:

<http://www.pina.com.fj/?p=pacnews&m=read&o=1410046595bb1974a919df945c3eff>

# 01-05 October 2018

## Organisations update

### UNFCCC

Wetlands, amongst the world's most economically valuable ecosystems and essential regulators of the global climate, are disappearing three times faster than forests- the key finding of the first-ever Global Wetland Outlook by the Ramsar Convention, a globally treaty ratified by 170 countries to protect wetlands and promote their wise use:

<https://unfccc.int/news/wetlands-disappearing-three-times-faster-than-forests>

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) - 48th Session- For the 'Global Warming 1.5C' report, the IPCC has therefore assessed the most up-to-date scientific findings about the damage that will be caused by a 1.5°C warming. It also compared this to the damage that would be caused by a 2°C warming:

<https://unfccc.int/news/ipcc-begins-discussion-on-global-warming-of-15degc>

### IPCC

The First joint session of the Working Group I, II and III and the 48th Session of the IPCC will take place in Incheon, Republic of Korea from 1 to 5 October 2018.

Opening address >

[http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/session48/180930\\_Chair\\_opening\\_P48.pdf](http://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/session48/180930_Chair_opening_P48.pdf)

Understanding the IPCC Special Report on 1.5C :

[https://library.wmo.int/doc\\_num.php?explnum\\_id=5188](https://library.wmo.int/doc_num.php?explnum_id=5188)

### UNISDR

Africa-Arab Platform On Disaster Risk Reduction- 9 - 13 October 2018 | Tunisia

UNISDR calls for greater attention to disaster risk in Pacific's "Ring of Fire" : "The earthquake and tsunami are a reminder that the Pacific's Ring of Fire is the most active seismic zone on the planet and requires special attention when it comes to disaster risk management. About 90% of the world's earthquakes occur there and the risk of an associated tsunami is extremely high which is why early warnings are so important along with public awareness raising and evacuation drills."

<https://www.unisdr.org/archive/60938>



## UNHCR

UN refugee chief Filippo Grandi today called for a push to reinvigorate multilateralism to curb growing conflicts and deepening crises that have driven record numbers of people from their homes worldwide.

"The principles and values of international cooperation have come under immense pressure," Grandi said in his opening address to the annual meeting of the Executive Committee of UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency.

"Yet, amidst so much adversity, multilateralism has held its ground. But ... we must reinvigorate it.":

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/latest/2018/10/5bb1fa864/grandi-urges-boost-multilateralism-tackle-record-displacement.html>

South Sudan signs the 1951 Refugee Convention

## IOM

**António Vitorino** *Begins Term as IOM Director General*

"I am a migrant" is the UN Migration Agency's platform to promote diversity and inclusion of migrants in society. It's specifically designed to support volunteer groups, local authorities, companies, associations, groups, indeed, anyone of goodwill who is concerned about the hostile public discourse against migrants:

<http://iamamigrant.org/about>

## PIFS

"Leaders of the Pacific Islands Forum met with United Nations Secretary-General Mr. António Guterres. Baron Waqa, President of Nauru and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum outlined the region's priorities – climate change and disaster risk management, ensuring greater benefits from the region's fisheries, and enhanced regional security arrangements, discussed at their recent meeting in Nauru.

Secretary-General Guterres acknowledged the important contribution of Pacific countries towards the implementation of the Paris Agreement and decisive climate action. The Secretary-General highlighted the urgency of stepping up efforts to ensure a successful COP24 and Climate Summit and noted that increasing efforts to reduce the vulnerability of Small Island States will be a top priority. Secretary-General Guterres outlined his intention to visit the Pacific region as part of his advocacy on climate change.":

<https://www.forumsec.org/meeting-of-pacific-islands-forum-leaders-with-the-united-nations-secretary-general/>

## SPC

AFD, the French agency for international development, together with Australia, the European Union and New Zealand launched the Pacific initiative last month in New York as a side event to the One

Planet Summit. This 21m-euro fund is focused on biodiversity and climate change adaptation; SPC and SPREP are the main implementing agencies:

<https://www.spc.int/fr/actualite/actus-web/2018/10/la-communaute-du-pacifique-partenaire-du-climat-et-de-la-biodiversite>

## **SPREP**

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) through the Pacific Met Desk Partnership have worked with partners to develop a range of dynamic models such as the Climate Information Toolkit for Pacific (CLIK-P) and Pacific Island Countries Advanced Seasonal Outlook (PICASO), as well as statistical climate models such as Seasonal Climate Outlook for Pacific Island countries (SCOPIIC). These products were tailored and provided to the National Met Services of Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

Vanuatu Klaemet Infomesen blong Redy, Adapt mo Protekt (Van-KIRAP) is the new name given to the Climate Information Services for Resilient Development Project in Vanuatu. The project is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) with a total investment of USD\$20.4 million over 4 years; using science to better prepare Vanuatu's policy makers and public for a changing climate.

## **WB PACIFIC**

World Bank East Asia and Pacific Economic Update, October 2018 : Navigating Uncertainty, Report:

<https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/bitstream/handle/10986/30447/9781464813665.pdf?sequence=5&isAllowed=y>

## **Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update**

### **FSM**

The Federated States of Micronesia President says at the UN that islands in the Pacific will be the first to disappear unless countries get behind the implementation of climate change agreements:

<http://www.fsmgov.org/fsmun/ga73main.pdf>

### **Marshall Islands**

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors has approved a US\$2.5 million grant to support the Republic of the Marshall Islands' goal to strengthen resilience to natural hazards, including tropical cyclones and tsunamis, and its ability to respond quickly to disasters. This additional grant will extend the Pacific Resilience Program's support to the government of the Marshall Islands, providing funding for five more years of premiums for disaster risk insurance under the Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Finance Initiative (PCRAFI), a regional, market-based parametric catastrophe risk insurance pool that provides immediate funds in the event of a major natural disaster:

<https://www.devdiscourse.com/Article/science-environment/198462-world-bank-approves-loan-to-improve-climate-resilience-in-marshall-islands>

## **Pacific**

Indigenous views crucial in climate change debate:

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/367929/indigenous-views-crucial-in-climate-change-debate>

President Tommy Remengesau from Palau calls for the United Nations to appoint a special representative on climate change during his address at the General Assembly in New York. The European Union (EU) has committed \$25 million (€10 million) for the Pacific region under a joint initiative to assist in adapting to the challenges of climate change and increasing resilience. The contribution was announced by the European Union Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development Neven Mimica at the One Planet Summit in New York:

<http://www.fijitimes.com/eu-commits-25m-climate-support-in-pacific/>

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has announced a boost in funding for Pacific countries to help them adapt to climate change. Ms Ardern is pledging \$300 million in climate-related assistance over four years, an increase of \$100 million. The prime minister made the announcement in New York where she is attending for the United Nations General Assembly this week along with about 140 other world leaders. Action on climate change is high on her agenda. In a speech to the Climate Week conference she said climate change posed a security threat to vulnerable nations including New Zealand's Pacific neighbours:

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/news/political/367194/pm-announces-increase-in-climate-change-funding-for-pacific>

# 8-12 October 2018

## Organisations update

### UNFCCC

"Against the backdrop of accelerating extreme weather events around the world, a new report by the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction (UNISDR) has revealed a sharp increase in economic losses caused by climate-related disasters during the past 20 years. The number of reported direct economic losses rose from US\$ 895 billion between 1978 and 1997 to almost US\$ 2,300 billion during the past 20 years." UNISDR report:

[https://www.preventionweb.net/files/61119\\_credeconomiclosses.pdf](https://www.preventionweb.net/files/61119_credeconomiclosses.pdf)

Informal consultations on the outcome of COP24:

[https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Summary%20of%20the%20informal%20consultations%20by%20the%20incoming%20COP24%20Presidency\\_NYC\\_27.10.2018.pdf](https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/resource/Summary%20of%20the%20informal%20consultations%20by%20the%20incoming%20COP24%20Presidency_NYC_27.10.2018.pdf)

### IPCC

Summary for Policymakers of IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C approved by governments

IPCC presents findings of the Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5°C at event to discuss Viet Nam's response to climate change

Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 °C:

[http://report.ipcc.ch/sr15/pdf/sr15\\_spm\\_final.pdf](http://report.ipcc.ch/sr15/pdf/sr15_spm_final.pdf)

### UNISDR

UNISDR Annual Report 2017:

<https://www.unisdr.org/we/inform/publications/58158>

10 reasons businesses need to build resilience to disasters:

<https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2018/09/10-reasons-businesses-build-resilience-disaster/>

### UNHCR

UNHCR urges Australia to evacuate off-shore facilities as health situation deteriorates:

<http://www.unhcr.org/news/briefing/2018/10/5bc059d24/unhcr-urges-australia-evacuate-off-shore-facilities-health-situation-deteriorates.html>

## **ILA**

ILW 2018, to be held October 18-20 in New York City. The theme will be "Why International Law Matters." This exciting annual event co-incides with the 97th annual meeting of the American Branch.

Call for Abstracts: Yearbook of International Disaster Law (Brill/Nijhoff Publisher): Deadline 15 November 2018.

## **ILO**

ILO expresses concern about World Bank report on future of work: "Nonetheless, we remain concerned about the WDR's approach to labour market institutions, regulations, the informal economy and social protection, and its lack of consideration of the gender dynamics of the changing nature of work. In addition, where we may agree with certain observations in the WDR, we find that the analysis and policy solutions fall short of a comprehensive approach to reducing inequality.":

[https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/statements-and-speeches/WCMS\\_646884/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/statements-and-speeches/WCMS_646884/lang--en/index.htm)

## **IOM**

"Prepared by IOM's Global Migration Data Analysis Centre (GMDAC), the Global Migration Indicators Report 2018 summarizes key global migration trends based on the latest statistics, showcasing 21 indicators across 17 migration topics. The report compiles the most up-to-date statistics on topics including labour migration, refugees, international students, remittances, migrant smuggling, migration governance and many others, enabling policy-makers and the public alike to have an overview of the scale and dynamics of migration around the world."

## **SPREP**

1.5 to stay alive: Reflecting on the IPCC Special Report on Global Warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius :

<https://www.sprep.org/news/15-to-stay-alive-reflecting-on-the-ipcc-special-report-on-global-warming-of-15-degrees-celsius>

## **MSG**

"Labour mobility, a key chapter of the Melanesian Free Trade Agreement (MFTA), facilitates the movement and engagement of skilled MSG workers for temporary employment within MSG countries. To operationalise the implementation of this chapter, the MSG Secretariat with financial support from IOM, conducted a study which recommended Standard Operating Procedures to facilitate movement of nationals within the MSG sub-region. The SOP will also be supported by the Melanesian Travel Card which aims to improve efficiency and effectiveness in the movement within the MSG sub-region of certain categories of visas for MSG nationals." :

<http://www.msgsec.info/index.php/news/1347-validation-workshop-on-the-msg-labour-mobility-and-melanesian-travel-card-successfully-completed-at-the-msg-secretariat>

## Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update

### Nauru

“The Nauru government last week forced the medical charity Médecins Sans Frontières off the island, abruptly ending its free medical care for refugees and locals.”

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/368575/nauru-hits-back-at-charity-as-un-calls-for-refugee-evacuation>

### Fiji

“Fiji has been successful in its campaign for a seat on the UN Human Rights Council. It is one of 18 countries elected to the council, which is responsible for promoting and protecting human rights, for a three-year term from 2019 to 2021. Human rights groups evaluating each candidate said Fiji was among the countries whose candidacies were “questionable,” with a problematic human rights record. Other candidates criticised include the Philippines, Eritrea, Bahrain and Cameroon - all these countries also gained a seat. Fiji Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama had earlier said his country's robust constitution and long experience in peacekeeping would add value to the council.” Source: Radio NZ

