



# MESSAGE IN A BOTTLE

January 2019





## Table of Contents

Introduction	3
01-04 January 2019	3
Organisations update	3
ILO	3
PIFS	3
WB	4
Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update	4
Fiji	4
Nauru	4
07-11 January 2019	5
Organisations update	5
UNFCCC	5
IPCC	5
ILC	5
ILO	6
IOM	6
Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update	6
Papua New Guinea	6
Pacific	6
14-18 January 2019	7
Organisations update	7
UNFCCC	7
IPCC	7
Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update	7
Vanuatu	7
Niue	8
21-25 January 2019	9
Organisations update	9
ADB PACIFIC	9
WB	9
Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update	9
Solomon Islands	10
28-31 January 2019	11
Organisations update	11
PIDC	11



Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update

11

West Papua

11



## 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.

## 01-04 January 2019

### Organisations update

#### ILO

The International Labour Organization (ILO) estimates that 164 million people are migrant workers – a rise of 9 per cent since 2013, when they numbered 150 million.

According to the 2nd edition of the ILO's Global Estimates on International Migrant Workers, which covers the period between 2013 and 2017, the majority of migrant workers – 96 million – are men, while 68 million are women. This represents an increase in the share of men among migrant workers, from 56 per cent to 58 per cent, and a decrease by two percentage points in women's share, from 44 per cent to 42 per cent.

The report is available at: [https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS\\_652001/lang--en/index.htm](https://www.ilo.org/global/publications/books/WCMS_652001/lang--en/index.htm)

"The Future of Work can be the future we want – one that provides decent and sustainable work opportunities for all – if we shape it accordingly", said ILO Director-General Guy Ryder at the thirteenth G20 Summit in Argentina.

The G20 Leaders' Communiqué covers such crucial issues as the future of work, infrastructure for development, a sustainable food future and a gender mainstreaming strategy across the whole G20 agenda.

In the main section Putting People First and Embracing the Future, it calls for coordinated policy responses and international cooperation to ensure that the benefits of technological change are shared by all.

#### PIFS

Pacific officials are preparing for a major international meeting to agree on an international treaty on the high seas. Opening a three-day workshop on the Conservation of Biodiversity on Areas Beyond National Jurisdiction, Dame Meg Taylor who is also the Secretary General of the Pacific Islands Forum told the participants that they have a vital role in progressing the vision of the Blue Pacific continent, by working together to see a legally binding treaty for the high seas in place by 2020.



## WB

World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim announced that he will be stepping down from his position after more than six years in which the institution's shareholders provided strong support to multiple initiatives to ensure that the Bank Group retains strong leadership in the world of global development.

Under Kim's leadership, and with the backing of the Bank Group's 189 member countries, the institution in 2012 established two goals: to end extreme poverty by 2030; and to boost shared prosperity, focusing on the bottom 40 percent of the population in developing countries. These goals now guide and inform the institution in its daily work around the globe.

## Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update

### Fiji

Nearly 800-thousand visitor arrivals were recorded in Fiji from January to November in 2018. Tourism Minister Premila Kumar said this was a 3.6 percent increase over the same period in 2017. The Minister said Fiji achieved record earnings of US\$892-million in 2018 and that she would like to keep the industry on track to exceed US\$1 billion in line with the Fiji Tourism 2021 plan.

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/379857/around-800-000-people-visit-fiji-in-2018>

### Nauru

New Zealand has announced that it is increasing the money it gives to Nauru, the small Pacific Island Australia uses as an offshore refugee processing centre. The total aid contribution will be \$18.5 million over three years.

The Foreign Affairs Minister Winston Peters said the additional money was for human development, good governance and to help build economic resilience.

The increase comes three years after New Zealand suspended some of its aid over concerns that the judiciary was compromised.

It does not change the situation for the refugees stuck on Nauru however.

New Zealand's offer to Australia to take 150 refugees from Nauru and Manus Islands still stands.

Last year, the New Zealand Law Society said Nauru was sliding towards authoritarianism.

Speaking after the Nauru government rushed through controversial legislation, the society's convenor, Austin Forbes, said the rule of law was under threat on the island.

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/381318/new-zealand-pumping-more-aid-into-nauru>



# 07-11 January 2019

## Organisations update

### UNFCCC

In Katowice, governments finalised the Paris Agreement Work Programme, which operationalises the climate change regime contained in the 2015 Paris Agreement. However, global greenhouse gas emissions continued to grow last year, and the current concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is the highest it has been in 3 million years.

Speaking at the Bauhaus-Universität Weimar on the topic: *"Diplomacy and Participation: Towards Sustainable Solutions in Climate Policy"*, the Executive Secretary of UN Climate Change, Patricia Espinosa, called on non-State actors, including academia, to help governments achieve their climate goals.

Her speech is available at:

<https://unfccc.int/news/constructing-a-safer-climate-patricia-espinosa-at-bauhaus-university>

### IPCC

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Working Group II, which deals with the impacts, adaptation and vulnerability to climate change, will start preparing its contribution to the IPCC Sixth Assessment Report (AR6) with a meeting of experts in Durban, South Africa, on 20-25 January 2019.

More than 250 authors and IPCC Bureau members from more than 60 countries will come together in Durban for their First Lead Author Meeting to map out their assessment and details of the drafting process.

The report, along with contributions from the other two IPCC Working Groups, will be finalized in 2021.

In 2022, a Synthesis Report integrating the three working group contributions and other IPCC products in the sixth assessment cycle will complete AR6, in time for the first global stocktake in 2023 by United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) when countries will review progress under the Paris Agreement towards their goal of keeping global warming to well below 2°C while pursuing efforts to limit it to 1.5°C.

### ILC

The provisional agenda for the seventy-first session of the ILC is available at:

<http://legal.un.org/docs/?symbol=A/CN.4/723>



## **ILO**

To coincide with its 100th year, the ILO has announced a Global Campaign, "Taking the ILO to the people", that demonstrates the relevance of the Organization's founding mandate to contemporary challenges and its central role in helping build a fairer future for all.

The campaign materials are designed to be flexible for use on outdoor billboards, public transport, in magazines and websites. A series of ready-to-go social media cards and GIFs are also publically available for use on social media, using the hashtag #ILO100.

The social media cards are available at:

<https://trello.com/b/dmhn7euX/ilo-100>

## **IOM**

The International Organization for Migration (IOM) has begun 2019 with the launch of E-Campus, a free online learning platform on migration. E-campus provides an opportunity for government officials, civil society, students, academics and anyone interested in updating their knowledge in human mobility.

The E-Campus online learning tool, which was initially created as the Migration Learning Platform (PAM, by its acronym in Spanish), already has thousands of users. Most courses can be completed within three to five hours, with an IOM certificate awarded at the end.

The platform can be accessed here:

<http://www.ecampus.iom.int/>

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

### **Papua New Guinea**

Papua New Guinea should negotiate a deadline with Australia for the removal of refugees from Manus Island, the Catholic church says. The request was made in a letter to the PNG prime minister, Peter O'Neill, from the general secretary of the Catholic Bishops Conference of PNG. Giorgio Licini said ending almost six years of indefinite detention for about 600 male refugees should be done on medical and humanitarian grounds.

The letter also included a warning that prolonging their detention would compromise the refugees' chances of being resettled elsewhere.

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/381187/catholic-church-calls-for-manus-detention-deadline>

### **Pacific**

The new regional director for the World Health Organisation says the Pacific must prepare for the threat of a pandemic from re-emerging diseases. Takeshi Kasai said populations are ageing, and NCDs - such as heart disease and diabetes - are already the leading cause of death in the Western Pacific. Dr Kasai said the island nations must develop new approaches.



# 14-18 January 2019

## Organisations update

### UNFCCC

In the latest edition of its Global Risks Report, the World Economic Forum ranks environmental threats at the top of the list for the third year in a row - both in terms of impact and likelihood. Extreme weather events, exacerbated by climate change, are listed as the risk most likely to happen over the next 10 years.

'Failure of climate-change mitigation and adaptation' comes in second place both for the list of most likely risks and impact, reflecting respondents' increasing concerns about environmental policy failure.

The report says: "The results of climate inaction are becoming increasingly clear. The accelerating pace of biodiversity loss is a particular concern."

The World Economic Forum Annual Meeting 2019 outcomes can be accessed from here:

<https://www.weforum.org/events/world-economic-forum-annual-meeting#>

### IPCC

IPCC will open the final draft of its new methodology report, the 2019 Refinement, to government review on 28 January, bringing the report one step closer to consideration for adoption by the IPCC in May.

The 2019 Refinement, whose full name is 2019 Refinement to the 2006 IPCC Guidelines for National Greenhouse Gas Inventories, is an update to the guidelines or methodologies that countries use to estimate their anthropogenic emissions by sources and removals by sinks of greenhouse gases.

Among other things, the 2019 Refinement will help countries enhance national inventory reports of emissions and removals under the 2015 Paris Agreement, if they agree to use it.

## Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update

### Vanuatu

People already displaced by Ambae's volcanic eruptions are at serious risk of extreme weather events. Thousands of former Ambae residents remain in temporary settlements on nearby Santo, in often flimsy and leaky tents.

Kevin Kapalu from World Vision Vanuatu says thousands of people remaining on Santo are already suffering because of heavy rainfall.

But he said if there is not enough warning, a cyclone could be devastating for the evacuees.

Another World Vision Vanuatu worker, Joanna Halili, said many evacuation shelters are increasingly overcrowded.





<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/381176/aid-workers-warn-of-ambae-evacuees-vulnerability>

## Niue

Niue's government is bringing in overseas workers amid a labour shortage on the island.

A media release from the office of the Premier, Sir Toke Talagi, says six Indonesian workers will be arriving in Niue soon.

It says the foreign workers won't replace Niuean workers, but will assist them because of problems getting jobs completed on time.

The Indonesians, who will be in Niue for up to two years, will assist with roading, picking noni fruit and "other odd jobs".

The government has put aside \$US34,000 into an account for the workers, but it's expected they will be paid by the relative departments, state-owned enterprises or projects employing them.

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/381155/niue-brings-in-foreign-workers-amid-labour-shortage>



## 21-25 January 2019

### Organisations update

#### ADB PACIFIC

ADB and the governments of Australia and Nauru participated in a groundbreaking ceremony to officially mark the first step toward the construction of the country's first international port. Financed by ADB, GCF, and the governments of Australia and Nauru, the Nauru Sustainable and Climate Resilient Connectivity Project will upgrade the largely unworkable boat harbor into an international port.

The project's next milestone will be a port dedication ceremony in March 2019.

#### WB

The Kiribati Adaptation Program works with communities to provide safe drinking water and strengthen coastal protection in the face of drought, storm surges and rising seas.

The program supports community-led projects including solar-powered water pumps, ensuring residents can access clean drinking water close to their home.

Part of the World Bank's Kiribati Adaptation Program, which recently wrapped-up its third phase, the new solar water pump in Nabeina draws from an underground water source to a raised water tank, with gravity then transporting the clean water down to three taps scattered around the Nabeina community, ensuring residents have 24-hour access to fresh drinking water close to their homes.

Yet even by Kiribati's tough standards, the location of Nabeina village makes these challenges particularly difficult. While still part of the main island group of Kiribati, North Tarawa is only accessible by boat and remains largely subsistence-based; with residents gathering most of their food and water from their surroundings and using groundwater from shallow wells – that are easily contaminated – for all their cooking, drinking and farming needs.

The Kiribati Adaptation Program and its activities were led by the Government of Kiribati, and supported through the Governments of Australia, Japan, as well as the Global Environment Facility and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery.

The video for the project is available at:

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2019/01/31/kiribati-spirit-of-dedication-increases-community-resilience-towards-climate-change>

### Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update

#### Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands Foreign Minister, Milner Tozaka, has dismissed concerns a regional free trade agreement will hurt Pacific economies.

The October report, by the Pacific Network on Globalisation (PANG), claimed PACER Plus signatories would lose more than \$US60 million each year, mostly in slashed tariffs.



Analysts have also said the trade agreement could give China a strategic opening in the Pacific.

But Milner Tozaka says the report is inaccurate and riddled with errors.

He says Pacific Island signatories to PACER Plus will face zero or negligible revenue losses.

The trade deal, which has only been ratified by Australia and New Zealand so far, is due to be finalised in 2019.

PANG's report claimed Pacific Island countries would see significant drops in revenue from import taxes and loosened regulatory controls due to PACER Plus.

Cleo Paskal, of the global think tank Chatham House, said in an October interview that the weakened Pacific Island economies would then give way to China, which would bid for pieces of critical infrastructure, like ports, like telecoms.

In October, the Cook Islands said it was putting PACER Plus ratification on hold.

Fiji and Papua New Guinea, the region's two biggest economies, have so far refused to sign.

In January, Australian Prime Minister Scott Morrison said Australia and Fiji were undertaking a joint study on the trade and economic impact of PACER Plus.

<https://www.radionz.co.nz/international/pacific-news/381346/solomons-dismisses-regional-free-trade-agreement-concerns>



## 28-31 January 2019

### Organisations update

#### PIDC

A fishing boat with nearly 260 migrants, including women and children, may be heading to New Zealand, police said on Monday. The boat, which is carrying people from New Delhi and Tamil Nadu, left Munambam harbour in Kerala on January 12, two officers involved in the case told Reuters. An individual from New Delhi arrested in connection with the investigation, Prabhu Dhandapani, told police the boat was heading to New Zealand, according to both officers. Police have recovered more than 70 bags left behind by the migrants, as well as around 20 identification documents, officer VG Ravindran said.

For the migrants to reach New Zealand, they would need to travel more than 7,000 miles through some of the roughest seas in the world. Cyclones and storms are common in the straits between Indonesia and Australia, the most likely route for the boat.

<https://www.pidcsec.org/news/migrant-boat-from-india-could-be-heading-to-new-zealand/>

### Pacific Island Countries & Territories news update

#### West Papua

Indonesia has agreed in principle to allow the UN office of the human rights commissioner into West Papua amid continuing violence in the region.

The long-running low-level insurgency violently escalated late last year, after West Papuan guerrillas attacked a construction site in Nduga, killing at least 17 people they claimed were Indonesian military but who Jakarta insists were civilian workers.

In response Indonesia launched a military crackdown in the region, leading to a number of deaths and thousands of people allegedly being displaced after they fled into the jungle.

The office of the high commissioner for human rights, Michelle Bachelet, told the Guardian she had been engaging with Indonesian authorities on the issue of West Papua and “the prevailing human rights situation” and had requested access to the area.

West Papuan leaders were informed of the development at a Geneva meeting between the commissioner and Vanuatu representatives on Friday, during which the exiled West Papuan leader Benny Wenda handed over a petition signed by 1.8 million of his people.

The petition, smuggled out of the region in 2017, calls for a UN investigation into allegations of human rights abuses and for an internationally supervised vote on independence.

“Today, with official state-level support from the Vanuatu government, we, the people of West Papua, have presented it to the UN high commissioner for human rights. We are working day and night to approach the UN general assembly in New York” said the exiled West Papuan leader Benny Wenda.

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2019/jan/30/indonesia-to-let-un-workers-into-west-papua-as-violence-continues#img-1>