



# Pacific Youth Dialogue on Climate Security 2022

## **Background:**

Climate Change is an existential crisis with global ramifications. The impacts of this crisis, however, are disproportionate. The large ocean states of the Pacific have experienced the earliest onset of the impacts of the climate crisis and continue to experience these at an exacerbated rate, yet the entire Pacific Region is said to only contribute 0.03% of global GHG emissions.

Warming oceans, sea level rise, more frequent and severe extreme weather events and extended dry and wet seasons are some of the most apparent features of the new normal for countries in the Pacific. Long before islands are submerged, saltwater will contaminate the ground water supply and destroy agricultural lands. The latest IPCC report confirmed this grave impact on Pacific countries, and based on climate projections, these impacts will get worse. The effects of climate change also exacerbate other risk factors, such as food and water shortages, loss of livelihoods or forced displacement, and lead to social unrest.

Youth have always been the changemakers at the forefront, especially in the Pacific. In the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), youth are explicitly mentioned as critical agents of change and crucial actors for implementation. The meaningful inclusion of young people is also key to the commitment in the 2030 Agenda to “leave no one behind”.

## **Objectives:**

Leaders are already preparing for the 27<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties (COP27) to the UNFCCC in Sharm el Sheikh, Egypt scheduled for November 2022.

This dialogue series will be an opportunity to use the auspices of the UN to support Pacific Islands youth, inform discussions leading up to the event, and to engage and formulate key priorities and demands, both to their own communities, to Pacific Island Leaders, and the international community. Recognising that Pacific leaders are the vehicles for Pacific Island countries at these negotiating spaces, it is important that they are equipped with the insight and technical input that young people contribute to the climate security conversation.

The dialogue series seek to be a platform for Pacific Island youth to expand their roles and engagement in formal and informal processes and institutions relating to climate security. The UN Secretary-General’s “Our Common Agenda”, published in September 2021, invites “institutions to establish better ways of listening to people [...] especially groups that are frequently overlooked, such as women, young people, minority groups or persons with disabilities”. In line with this forward-looking ambition, the project seeks to create and support a network of Pacific youth convened to consider, question and envision the future of their region in a collaborative way.



**Format & participation**

The dialogue is organized in partnership between the United Nations in the Pacific (Resident Coordinator Office in Fiji), the United Nations Secretary General’s Youth Advisory Group (SG YAG) on Climate Change and the UN Department for Political and Peacebuilding Affairs (DPPA).

Participation includes representatives from the Pacific Youth Council, Pacific Islands Forum, national authorities in the Pacific, other relevant United Nations agencies, and youth representing various regional, national, and local youth networks in the Pacific region.

An open call for participants (both as speakers/participants) was sent to Youth Councils and networks across the region, as well as universities. There is a need to ensure the participation of young women and the inclusion of youth from all Pacific Island countries/territories.

**Aim:**

An outcome document highlighting key points will be produced from each dialogue, and the goal is that at the end of the dialogue series, a set of recommendations from Pacific youth will be made and presented to Pacific leaders and the global community. This will provide something tangible to bring to COP27.

**Date & time:**

Date: Session 1: 31<sup>st</sup> May 2022

Time: 2 hours morning session: 8:30 – 10:30 AM - GMT +12 – Fiji Time.

Place: Virtual

Time	Topics and agenda	Moderator and Panelists	Logistics
#1 31 May 8:30 – 10:30 AM	<p><b>What does climate security mean for youth in the Pacific?</b></p> <p><b>Engagement of youth and non-state actors</b></p> <p>General questions for session/ open discussion:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- How is ‘climate security’ defined in the Pacific? What does the concept encompass? What associations does this word have for youth?</li> <li>- When thinking about ‘climate security’, what are the perceived risks?</li> <li>- Do you see any potential opportunities associated with Climate Security?</li> </ul>	<p><b>Moderator:</b> Agus Wandri</p> <p><b>Opening remarks:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Youth Advisor to SG. – Ernest Gibson</li> </ul> <p><b>Guest speakers:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Climate Envoy - Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner</li> <li>• Pacific Climate Warriors - Alisi Rabukawaqa</li> <li>• Pacific Islands Forum representative - Michael Crowe</li> <li>• Vice President of PISFCC - Belyndar Rikimani</li> </ul>	<p>The dialogue will be organized in horizontal conversation style, i.e., short 5-minute presentations by each speaker followed by interactive Q&amp;A and insight-sharing by audience for the remaining time</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Who are engaged and who are typically not engaged in climate efforts? What can be done to broaden engagement at all levels?</li> <li>- Are there any intergenerational differences?</li> <li>- How do Pacific youth view themselves; as passive and powerless or active and important?</li> </ul> <p>Guiding questions for speakers (1-2 questions each):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tuvalu Climate Change Activist - Eleala Avanitele</li> </ul>	
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### Guest Speaker Bio:

#### Belyndar Rikimani



Belyndar Rikimani is from the Solomon Islands but currently based in Vanuatu. A Young Climate Activist and an active member of the Pacific Islands Students Fighting Climate Change (PISFCC). Belyndar is currently, doing her Final Year Law Studies at the University of the South Pacific.

She has been involved in the Climate Space for the past 4 years and saw the need for more climate awareness and climate education in institutions and communities. As part of her advocacy, she works with various CSO's in Vanuatu and across the region and writes blogs that amplifies women's issues that are affected by the climate crisis.

#### Alisi Rabukawaqa-Nacewa



Alisi Rabukawaqa-Nacewa has spent the past decade working in environment conservation, climate activism and indigenous peoples' traditional rights and knowledge advocacy. She sits on the youth-led grassroots network 350.org Pacific Climate Warriors Council of Elders as the Melanesian representative, providing traditional knowledge on working with Pacific communities and indigenous perspectives to their climate justice work.

She volunteers her time as the Coordinator for a youth network of young professionals from her province in Bua, Fiji, called the Bua Urban Youth Network. In her professional capacity she is a marine program officer with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature, working towards the design and protection of marine protected areas within Fiji.

### Eleala Avanitele



Eleala Avanitele has been at the forefront of gender equality and climate change action as the Communications Manager for the Tuvalu Red Cross Society. With over 7 years in communication, Ms. Avanitele has not only contributed to policy making but also the development and implementation of strategies for the mentioned, across communities in Tuvalu.

As a daughter, sister and wife, Ms. Avanitele knows firsthand the cultural stigma behind the expected role of a woman and has been a strong advocate for women rights. Ms. Avanitele is currently the Communication Officer for Climate Change Department and a student at USP, completing her bachelor's in law while juggling her full-time job as a Communication Officer.

### Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner



Kathy Jetñil-Kijiner is a writer and performer of Marshall Islander ancestry. She was born in the Marshall Islands, raised in Hawai'i, and is currently based in Majuro, the capital city of the Marshall Islands. Kathy's primary creative practice explores her culture's rich storytelling and how they intersect and dialogue with evolving issues threatening Pacific islands and communities. Her focus has been on climate change and the legacy of nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands. She shares these explorations through the mediums of poetry, performance, and media. This practice is also informed by the community organizing that Kathy spearheads through the Marshall Islands based nonprofit Jo-Jikum that she co-founded and directs, a nonprofit dedicated to Marshallese youth and environmentalism. In addition to continuing to write and run Jo-Jikum, Kathy currently

serves as Climate Envoy for the Marshall Islands Ministry of Environment and is pursuing her PhD in Pacific Studies at Australia National University.

### Michael Crowe



Mr Michael Crowe is the Regional Security Advisor at the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS). In this role, Michael advises the Secretariat's leadership and Pacific Islands Forum Members on security policy issues that affect peace, stability, and prosperity in the Pacific region. Prior to joining PIFS, Michael served as a diplomat and policy advisor for the Australian Government in the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and the Australian Department of Defence. Michael has served Australia overseas in Solomon Islands, Zimbabwe, and Afghanistan, and speaks fluent Solomon Islands Pidjin, Spanish and English. Michael is a keen surfer, sailor, husband of Fleur and father of his two young children, Otto, and Elia.