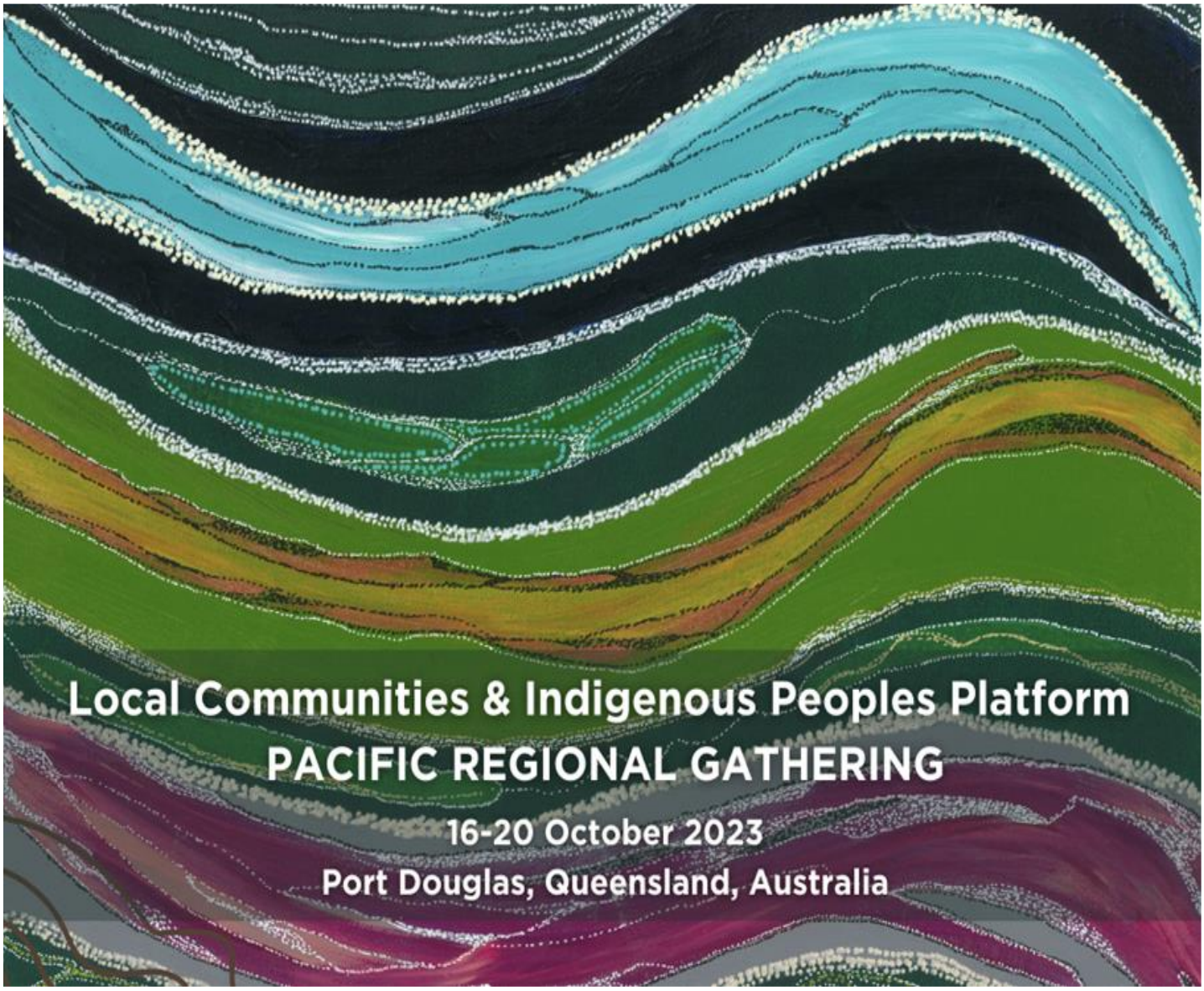

Informal Summary Report

The FWG acknowledges all Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples' and all Indigenous Peoples' and recognizes their continuing connection to land, sea, culture, and community. We pay respect to Elders past and present.

The artwork displayed on the cover page and in the report has been created and generously donated by Josie Rose of the Gumbaynggir Nation, NSW, Australia

Images from the regional gathering, incorporated in the report were shared by the participants, and are taken from the report drafted by Indigenous Peoples' Organization-Australia

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List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

COP	Conference of Parties
CSOs	Civil Society Organizations
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
FPIC	Free, Prior, and Informed Consent
FWG	Facilitative Working Group of the LCIPP
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
IPO	Indigenous Peoples Organization
LCIPP	Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform
LEG	Least Developed Countries Expert Group
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NDCs	Nationally Determined Contributions
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
TEK	Traditional Ecological Knowledge
WEOG	Western Europe and Others Group
WIM ExCom	Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage

I. Introduction

a. Background

In 2015, the Conference of Parties (COP) established the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP) for the exchange of experiences and sharing of best practices on climate mitigation and adaptation in a holistic and integrated manner. In the years that followed, the COP decided that the LCIPP would perform three functions: Knowledge, Capacity for Engagement, and Climate Policies and Actions (see Annex I). In addition, the COP established the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) to further operationalize the Platform and facilitate the implementation of its three functions. The development and implementation of the LCIPP work plans are essential ways to implement the LCIPP's functions and avenues to enhance the engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the UNFCCC process. During its twenty-sixth session, the COP welcomed the second three-year workplan (2022-24) of the LCIPP.

The LCIPP workplan calls for the organization of at least two regional or biregional gatherings per year in the years 2022 and 2023, for and in a different United Nations Indigenous sociocultural region or United Nations region, with the direct involvement of elders, practitioners, knowledge holders, women, and youth from the respective region(s). In addition, the workplan calls for LCIPP regional gatherings to focus on identifying and addressing the impacts of climate change and bringing together strategies and techniques to reduce emissions and build resilience, in a manner that respects and promotes human rights.

This is an informal summary of the regional gathering held in the Pacific region.

b. Overview of the gathering

The LCIPP Pacific Regional Gathering took place from 16 to 20 October 2023 in Australia at Port Douglas, Queensland, Kuku Yalanji Country. The Australian Government hosted the mandated event under the LCIPP workplan for 2022-2024.

As the host country, the Australian Government provided all logistical and related arrangements for the regional gathering. To facilitate a First Nations-led approach to the Gathering, the Australian Government partnered with the Indigenous Peoples Organization (IPO) in Australia to deliver the event.

The programme development was led by FWG members, with the support of the UNFCCC secretariat. The FWG member representing the UN Indigenous Sociocultural region in the Pacific, along with the FWG members representing the UN Regional Group, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) and Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG), coordinated to design the agenda of the gathering.

In addition, the FWG member representing the Pacific UN Indigenous sociocultural region set up two advisory committees to gather Indigenous and expert advice on programme development and to inform participation.

Ninety-six (96) participants attended the gathering, including Pacific knowledge holders, Party delegates, representatives from constituted bodies, NGOs, UN agencies and other stakeholders. The UNFCCC Secretariat funded 25 participants from the Pacific, out of which 23 knowledge holders were chosen by the FWG member representing the Pacific sociocultural region, following the principles of self-selection (see Annex III: List of Regionally Nominated Knowledge Holders . The

Australian Government provided funding to support the participation of 25 Indigenous knowledge holders. Additionally, the government of New Zealand and several NGOs also provided additional financial support. The list of participants of the gathering can be found in Annex IV: List of Participants

The FWG applies the principles proposed by Indigenous Peoples organizations, including the full and effective participation of Indigenous Peoples, equal status of Indigenous Peoples and Parties, including in leadership roles, and the self-selection of representatives of Indigenous Peoples following their procedures. These are applied when selecting participants in mandated events, including in this regional gathering.

Figure 1 Participants of the LCIPP Pacific Regional Gathering in the Kuku Yalanji Country

c. Approach and design of the gathering

In line with the LCIPP second three-year workplan (2022-24) deliverables, the LCIPP Regional Gathering followed a framework approach (as illustrated in Annex II).

Guided by the functions of the LCIPP and the vision of the FWG[1], various segments of the gathering were designed based on priority areas of the Pacific region.

The agenda of the gathering[2], provided unique opportunities for participants to exchange lived experiences, share practices anchored in Indigenous values and knowledge systems and local knowledge and engage in a dialogue with Parties, constituted body representatives and other stakeholders. Additionally, the gathering provided an opportunity to build capacity of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to enable their engagement in the UNFCCC process as well as the capacity of Parties and other relevant stakeholders to respectfully and equitably engage with local communities and Indigenous Peoples. The subsequent sections of this informal summary report will cover each of the segments in greater detail as deliberated during the LCIPP Pacific regional gathering.

[1] See here https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-06/FWG%20Vision_FINAL.pdf
[2] See the event webpage here: https://lcipp.unfccc.int/events/lcipp-pacific-regional-gathering

The Pacific Regional Gathering commenced with two cultural immersions on the first day with the local Kuku Yalanji community, the traditional owners of the Daintree Forest at Mossman Gorge, the oldest rainforest in the world, extending over 135 million years. Participants experienced the interconnected relationship the community had with their environment, it explained custodial responsibilities and practices of caring for the country. The Kuku Yalanji People have a history dating back at least 50,000 years, living in harmony with the rainforest, their culture is based on a deep respect for the natural environment and an intimate understanding of the seasons, passed down from countless generations. Community representatives generously explained aspects of their culture, traditions, and legends, showing how plants were traditionally used for medicines and touched on sacred cultural practices, such as how those who had passed were reunited with their ancestors.

Figure 2 Participants experiencing the Ngadiku[3] Dreamtime Walks, conducted by the Indigenous Peoples

This was followed by a visit to the coastal region of Cooya beach, where participants attempted the fishing practices of the Kuku Yalanji, on the mudflats and tidal waters. They also explained traditional hunting practices which are vulnerable to global warming.

[3] Ngadiku (Nar-di-gul) means stories and legends from a long time ago in local Kuku Yalanji language

Figure 3 Participants understanding the traditional fishing practices of the Indigenous Peoples at the Cooya Beach

The next two days were dedicated to sharing of impact of climate change on ecosystems and livelihoods and solutions from the Pacific on mitigating and adapting to climate change and capacity building for Indigenous Peoples and local communities of the Pacific to understanding and contributing to the UNFCCC processes. The last two days of the gathering focused on exchange of solutions with Parties and other stakeholders through roundtable Talanoas[4].

Figure 4: Participants of the LCIPP Pacific Regional Gathering in the Kuku Yalanji Country

[4] Talanoa is a traditional word used in Fiji and across the Pacific to reflect a process of inclusive, participatory and transparent dialogue

II. Impact of Climate Change on Livelihoods and Ecosystems

Participants of the gathering highlighted the impact on livelihoods, biodiversity and ecosystems and culture and knowledge systems which are summarized in the following sections.

A participant set the scene with an overview of the diversity of the Pacific Islands and highlighting their vulnerability to climate change [5]. The Pacific Islands region is vast, comprising thousands of islands and spanning millions of square miles of ocean (see ***Figure 5***). The Pacific Islands region includes demographically, culturally, and economically varied communities. As many as 1,500 languages are spoken in the region. [6]

Pacific islands are extremely vulnerable to climate change. Some of the substantial impacts of climate change include losses of coastal infrastructure and land, more intense cyclones, and droughts, threatening of food security due to impacts on both agriculture and fisheries, loss of habitats and ecosystems, most notably coral reefs and mangroves, and the spread of certain diseases. Climate change has been affecting the life in the Pacific in profound ways.

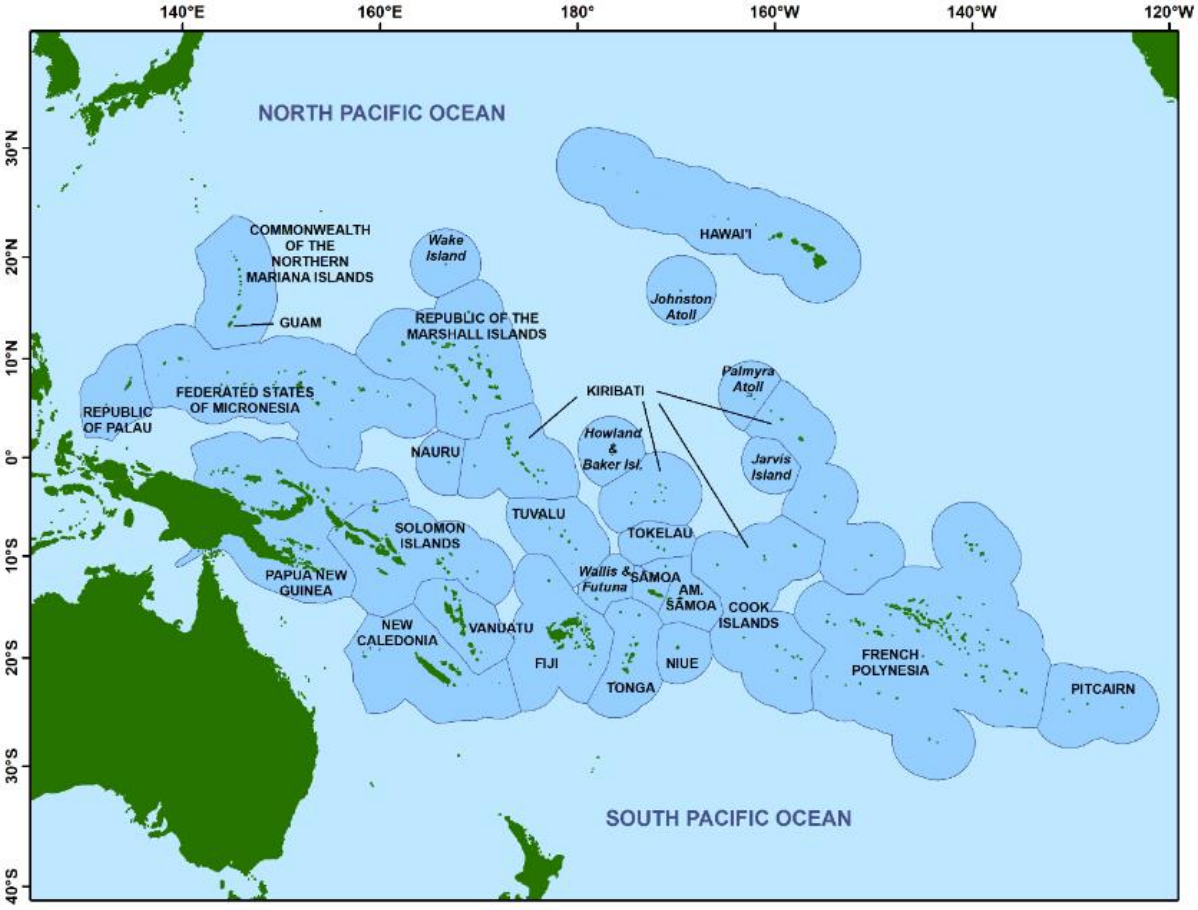


Figure 5: The Pacific Islands. Shading indicates each island's Exclusive Economic Zone (Source: Pacific Islands Climate Change Monitor: 2021)[6]

[5]Pacific Islands Climate Change Monitor: 2021. See https://www.pacificmet.net/sites/default/files/inline-files/documents/PICC%20Monitor_2021_FINALpp_0.pdf

[6]Pacific Islands Climate Change Monitor: 2021. See https://www.pacificmet.net/sites/default/files/inline-files/documents/PICC%20Monitor_2021_FINALpp_0.pdf

The participants through roundtable Talanoas[4] highlighted that the climate change affects both humans and biodiversity, emphasizing the interconnectedness of people and nature. Participants from small island states underscored the ecological richness of their islands, which are home to numerous endemic species now facing heightened risks due to human-driven impacts. Encroaching seas, exacerbated by developmental projects, are diminishing land areas, and disrupting both terrestrial and marine ecosystems. This includes the disruption of freshwater systems and the habitats of species like crocodiles and barramundi. Unique ecosystems such as South Australian rangelands, are experiencing irreversible damage, impacting their ability to support biodiversity. Coastal erosion and mangrove loss are pressing concerns requiring urgent restoration efforts and community involvement. Climate change has further complicated traditional agricultural practices and altered fish migration patterns. In Nauru, extreme weather events and ocean acidification are accelerating biodiversity loss, affecting cultural practices and food sources. Clean water scarcity is impeding agricultural production, and inadequate infrastructure, coupled with climate change effects, is limiting marine activities and food access. Additionally, mining activities are negatively impacting bush medicines and freshwater sources crucial to several Indigenous communities. The ongoing sea level rise poses threats to freshwater species, cultural practices, and overall production due to land loss.

Some case studies presented by the participants through oral and visual presentations are highlighted below

a. Decline in traditional food systems impacting health

Participants highlighted how soil is deteriorating due to changing climate conditions. Deteriorating land and soil quality, introduces new pests and diseases affecting food crops. This is ultimately leading to nutritional deficiencies due to limited food sources and poor soil nutrient value.

In Kiribati, increasing saltwater intrusion and more extreme weather patterns are threatening already limited agricultural production. Traditional foods like breadfruit are affected by climate change, leading to their disappearance. The declining traditional food systems is giving way to imported foods - foods typically rich in fats and sugar and low in nutritional value, impacting the health of communities.

b. Impact on Coral reefs and beyond

Several participants highlighted the impacts of climate change on coral reefs. For instance, the coral reefs in New Caledonia are deteriorating due to various factors like cyclones, coral bleaching, and sedimentation. The degradation affects ecosystem services, including coastal protection, food sources, tourism, and biodiversity. Coral bleaching also affects marine species and the main produce like tuna, impacting economic development.

A participant highlighted the importance of Fiji's Great Sea Reef. Over 450 kms long, the Great Sea Reef is the third longest barrier reef globally. The reef is highly biodiverse and consists of 55% of the known coral reef fish in Fiji, 74% of the known corals found in Fiji and a total of 40% of all the known marine flora and fauna in the Fiji Islands. Anthropogenic stressors including climate change, pollution and overfishing has made the ecosystem extremely fragile. Given the increased intensity and frequency of cyclones the impacts on the coral reefs have amplified. The participant shared an

example of impact of Cyclone Winston[7] which had a profound impact on the coral reefs in the Vatu-i-ra Seascape in Fiji. The cyclone altered landscapes and communities along its path, causing extensive damage to coral reefs, particularly in the northern region where the eye of the cyclone passed. The damage extended up to 20-30 meters below the sea surface. This damage has had significant consequences for reef fish populations, leading to loss of habitats, feeding grounds, and increased exposure to predators. The already stressed reef ecosystems, due to severe sea surface temperature increases and coral bleaching events prior to Cyclone Winston, further exacerbated the impact. Additionally, the cyclone's effects on land and mangroves have worsened the situation for coral reefs and marine biodiversity. Human activities, such as pollution, agricultural runoffs, sedimentation, and over-fishing, have further amplified the damage, making the reefs more susceptible to diseases and parasites. The interconnected nature of ecosystems and the migratory patterns of certain species mean that the impacts on the Vatu-i-ra Seascape will have far-reaching consequences beyond the immediate area.

c. Intangible Impacts - Impact on culture and knowledge systems

The participants highlighted that the relationship between Indigenous communities and their land is intrinsic to their identity. Interference in communities equates to interference in their identities. Knowledge and culture are fundamental to Indigenous identities, which are deeply connected to the land and oceans. Participants highlighted that climate change, colonization, and self-determination are interconnected issues that need to be addressed holistically. Some of the major impacts that the participants highlighted are summarized below

- Traditional Practices: Climate change impacts traditional weaving, food sourcing, and cultural practices.
- Gender Roles: Climate change affects traditional gender roles and responsibilities.
- Traditional Knowledge: Changes in temperature and sea level rise are outpacing the timely transfer of traditional knowledge.
- Food Systems: Climate change-induced disruptions in food systems are reshaping traditional practices and knowledge held by communities. Alterations in soil and environmental conditions are affecting the growth of Indigenous plants, which not only impacts food security but also erodes cultural identity and knowledge
- Displacement: Rising sea levels and environmental changes are leading to displacement and migration.
- Loss of connection to ancestors: Increase in bushfires also leads to loss of culture, for instance the bushfires in the Carnarvon Gorge led to destruction of ancient rock art at the Baloon Cave. This has been a deep loss for the community as it provided an intangible link between Bidjara, Ghungalu and Garingbal ancestors over millennia and their descendants today.

d. Cascading tangible and intangible impacts of climate change impact on Australian First Nations People

A participant shared impacts on the First Nations People of Australia which had been discussed at the National First Peoples Gathering on Climate Change, where First Peoples and the scientists'

[7] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Alfred%20Ralifo%20-%20Pacific%20Community%20Led%20Initiatves.pdf

found discussions of cascading impacts a useful way to bring their knowledge together. Climate change has created a series of cascading environmental impacts affecting resident plant and animal species, and in turn, Indigenous Peoples through their deep connection to the country. ***Figure 6*** below shows the impacts of marine heatwaves. Marine heatwaves are causing loss of seagrass, kelp forests and mangroves. Coral reefs are bleaching. Culturally important animals are suffering e.g., dugong, turtle, fish, sea snake, crabs, conch-shells, prawns. First Peoples cultural activities, e.g., making kelp baskets and shell necklaces, are reduced, leading to a loss of health and wellbeing.

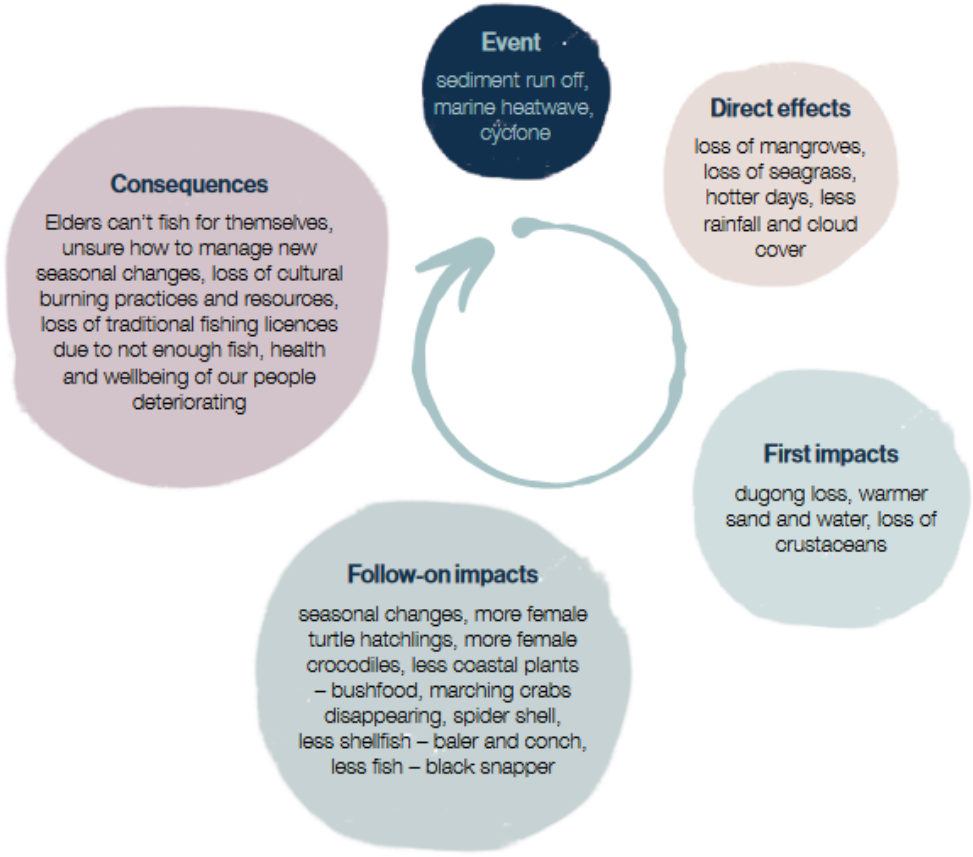


Figure 6 Cascading consequences diagram used to facilitate discussion on the effects of marine heatwaves for the Western Australia and Northern Territory sub-group[8]

Bushfires have also become more intense, resulting in erosion, loss of wildlife e.g., flying foxes, and shifts from forest to savanna. Intense fires in the wrong place at the wrong time put a heavy emotional and mental toll on First Peoples. Cultural sites are damaged in the big fires. Aboriginal Rangers are playing a vital role in controlling bushfires and bringing back cultural burning.

Heatwaves are very intense on the lands of central Australia, which is warming faster than other parts of the continent. Mulga is dying, waterholes are drying up, and people are finding lots of dead kangaroos. Heatwaves also affect Elders. Rangers need to spend more time on country to watch, look and listen to the changes and become part of the climate change conversation.

[8] See https://nespclimate.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/National-First-Peoples-Gathering-on-Climate-Change-Report_final.pdf

Another participant highlighted that the Great Western Woodlands in Australia have massive carbon stores in its biomass, woody debris and soil. Increased heatwaves leading to bushfires combined with poor land management practices are releasing this carbon and leading to further greenhouse gas pollution.

Sea level rise is also causing flooding of fish traps, middens, burial sites and erosion of these and other culturally significant sites. In the Torres Strait, islands are going underwater. Erosion affects food and fuel delivery, and people may become climate refugees. Sharks, rays, fish, eels, insects and the monsoon are out of step with their seasonal patterns.

Cyclones are increasing in their intensity. Negative impacts of cyclones include habitat loss, risks to animal safety and life, risks to people and infrastructure, and land and sea management difficulties.

e. Loss of culturally significant sites

In New Zealand, a participant highlighted that the relationship between colonization and capitalization has significantly impacted the Māori community's connection to natural resources and cultural heritage. The country's heavy reliance on primary industries, including commercial Pine forests, has intensified the negative effects of climate events, leading to the loss of culturally significant sites and environmental degradation. This has resulted in the loss of millions of metric tonnes of soil to the sea, affecting traditional meeting places and cultural practices. However, efforts are underway to restore and rebuild cultural and ecological elements, such as wetlands, and revive traditional practices like using the placenta (Fenuwa) to ground individuals. To preserve their heritage, Māori are now adopting long-term restoration plans, spanning up to 100 years, and documenting traditional stories to ensure their preservation and accessibility for future generations.

f. Disruption of cultural governance structures, family hierarchies, and connections to ancestral lands

In the Solomon Islands, community relocation projects have raised concerns due to a lack of consultation with the affected communities. These projects, driven by government-defined plans, often do not align with the cultural and Indigenous practices of the communities involved. In the Pacific, individuals are traditionally identified with a totem at birth, symbolizing their connection to specific cultural and ancestral roots. The government's relocation strategies, such as tiered structures, fail to consider the concentric cultural plans that communities have developed over generations. As a result, these relocations can disrupt cultural governance structures, family hierarchies, and connections to ancestral lands, leading to the loss of inherited knowledge and cultural practices. Furthermore, the relocation process tends to prioritize monetary values over the cultural significance of properties, further marginalizing Indigenous communities and undermining their cultural heritage.

g. Indirect impacts from the implementation of renewable energy projects

From the perspective of First Nations communities in Australia, there is a complex relationship with renewable energy projects. While First Nations communities are interested in transitioning to renewable energy sources, there are concerns about whether such transition will take into consideration the rights and equitable benefits to these communities.

Additionally, when it comes to renewable energy projects managed through the Prescribed Body Corporate, there is a sense of urgency from the private sector and the government that often outpaces the readiness and capacity of First Nations landholders. This rapid pace raises concerns about adequate consultation, understanding, and participation in long-term projects that could

impact Indigenous lands and communities for generations to come. The need for meaningful engagement, capacity building, and equitable partnerships remains critical to ensure that First Nations communities are not left behind or disadvantaged in the renewable energy transition.

h. Indirect impacts from land reclamation projects

From the perspective of communities in Tuvalu, rising sea levels and resulting salinization of land have significantly impacted local diets and livelihoods. The changing conditions have put increased pressure on the fishing industry as people seek alternative food sources due to the unsuitability of certain crops for growth in salinized soils.

Additionally, land reclamation projects aimed at building up the height of the islands are altering the ecology of the lagoon and causing displacement of species. While these adaptation measures may address immediate challenges related to sea-level rise, they introduce new environmental and ecological concerns, highlighting the complex trade-offs involved in responding to climate change impacts in low-lying island nations like Tuvalu.

i. Indirect impacts – Conflict within the community

In Fiji, participants shared two case studies highlighting challenges related to consultation, community involvement, and decision-making processes in environmental and conservation initiatives.

In the first case, an ocean acidification project faced issues with fund dispersal and limited consultation with the affected village. Following a king tide, the community was forced to relocate to the only available land, which happened to be their plantation area. This displacement disrupted their livelihoods and food sources, leading to tensions within the community due to shared tenure of the plantation fields. Despite ongoing adaptation efforts, adequate consultation and resolution remain elusive, causing continued strain in the village.

The second case involves the establishment of a Marine Protected Area (MPA) on an island in Fiji. The MPA boundaries were determined by an international NGO without adequate consultation with the traditional fisherfolk, who hold cultural authority including on overfishing activities in the area. This lack of consultation led to conflict when traditional fisherfolk directed fishermen to areas that conflicted with the MPA boundaries. The situation underscores the importance of meaningful engagement and consultation in ensuring that conservation initiatives align with the needs and cultural practices of local communities.

III. Practices and Approaches of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities in Addressing Climate Change and Safeguarding Nature

Human rights and climate change – a rights-based approach

A brief overview on the concepts of Indigeneity[9] from FWG member representing the UN Indigenous Sociocultural region of Pacific, set the scene during the gathering. Indigenity, rooted in ancestral connections and distinct cultures, plays a crucial role in international law, particularly through the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples adopted by the UN in 2007. This Declaration, after over two decades of negotiations, affirms key principles like self-determination, participation in decision-making, and the protection of cultural rights. Central to this framework is the principle of Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), ensuring Indigenous Peoples have a say in projects affecting their lands and communities. International mechanisms, including the Global Biodiversity Framework Fund, allocate resources specifically to Indigenous groups, emphasizing their vital role in conservation and sustainable development, especially pertinent to Pacific communities.

Through the various sessions of the gathering, participants including the special rapporteur on human rights and climate change, emphasized the deep connections between climate change and human rights, particularly for Indigenous Peoples. The special rapporteur and other participants through specific examples highlighted how climate change threatens rights such as water, food, health, and life. The role of litigation in achieving climate justice was also emphasized.

Indigenous-led and Community-led Climate Solutions

During the regional gathering, participants through Roundtable Talanoas[4] discussed many possible solutions to address climate change. The solutions included incorporating traditional knowledge into climate solutions, emphasizing sustainable environmental management, and ensuring responsive strategies for island and coastal communities. For instance, a participant highlighted that the response of flora and fauna to climate change highlights the importance of understanding and respecting environmental cues. Another participant highlighted the urgent need for sustainable water management solutions. A participant also suggested urban solutions grounded in Indigenous values including full electrification of new builds and retrofitting older apartments, greening initiatives focused on native plants and highlighted accountability for these initiatives, and grassroots consultations across local councils. Across the discussions, it was emphasized that as the clean energy industry grows, decisions should protect country and culture, ensuring the freedom to choose projects and safeguard sacred sites. Gender equality and community engagement were also highlighted as vital, along with education on climate realities and traditional practices.

Many best practices, solutions and projects being implemented were also shared through presentations and stories. These are briefly described below

a. Hybrid sea walls

A participant describing Kiwa Initiative, shared a presentation[10] identifying key societal challenges that include climate change mitigation and adaptation, disaster risk reduction, economic and social

[9] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Presentation%20-%20Indigenieety.pdf
[10] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Kiwa%20_%20LCIPP.pptx_%20Filomena%20Vuetaki.pdf

development, and environmental degradation with a focus on biodiversity loss. To address these challenges, the presentation emphasizes on use of nature-based solutions. One such example is construction of sea walls using locally sourced boulders, planting mangroves in front of the sea wall to absorb tidal flows, diffuse waves, and mitigate storm surges and planting vetiver grass behind the wall to form a robust hedge. The deep roots stabilize the soil and can thrive in seawater-inundated conditions. Implementing these sea walls offers several advantages, such as they are more effective and cost-efficient compared to traditional concrete sea walls. Additionally, mangrove ecosystems serve as a vital local food source, sequester carbon, protect coral reefs by retaining soil, and provide habitats for shellfish and marine life. The solution also reduces soil erosion and minimize impacts on local food crops, enhancing community resilience and sustainability

b. Tuvalu Community Water Cistern Project

A participant presented a case study from Nanumaga Island in Tuvalu. The island is home to four tribal clans—Fale Kalava, Fale Mouhala, Fale Magomahi, and Fale Magatai—each having distinct cultural roles and responsibilities in managing the island's resources. The Tuvalu Association of Non-Governmental Organizations[11] collaborates with the Fale Kalava Community on Nanumaga Island to address the island's vulnerabilities to tropical storms, rainfall variability, and sea-level rise. The island experienced significant infrastructure damage from Tropical Storm Pam in 2015 and faces challenges related to limited freshwater availability. To mitigate water scarcity issues arising from infrequent rainfall and drought, a 20,000L water cistern was constructed to enhance water security for the community. This initiative highlights the importance of community-based solutions tailored to local challenges and cultural contexts.

c. Indigenous women leading the change

A participant[12] presented the Kavewa Clean Cooking Energy Project from the Kavewa Island, Nadogo District, Macuata Province in Fiji. The Clean Cooking Energy Project aims to benefit the entire community by providing cleaner and more efficient cooking solutions. By reducing reliance on firewood for cooking, the project helps alleviate pressure on local forests and contributes to forest conservation efforts. Additionally, managing household waste effectively is another positive outcome, further enhancing environmental sustainability and community well-being. She emphasized that gaining community support, particularly from men, was important for the success of the initiative. To achieve this, identifying a male champion within the community proved to be instrumental in rallying support and promoting the project's objectives. Additionally, involving young Indigenous women professionals also played a significant role in garnering broader community backing, leveraging their influence and expertise to advocate for the initiative's goals. The project focused on sustainable development and environmental conservation through various initiatives like partnering with research institutions, developing bio-fertilizers, and engaging in peer learning with community-based organizations. She highlighted some challenges faced in the implementation of the project, including the remoteness of island communities, high climate vulnerability, and pressure from poaching. Despite these obstacles, the community benefited from strong partnerships, learning opportunities, and support from stakeholders. Recent achievements include the declaration of community-managed Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) covering significant marine and terrestrial habitats, showcasing their commitment to preserving natural heritage and supporting local fisheries.

[11] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-11/GEF_SGP_overview.pdf
[12] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Talei%20Silibaravi%20Cagimaiwai%20Womens%20Club%20ppt.pdf

d. Incorporating traditional practices in Solomon Islands

In the Solomon Islands, Indigenous communities are implementing climate solutions that emphasize food security and resilience. Villages are cultivating resilient crops in the bush to ensure a reliable food source during the wet season. Additionally, the use of fire trees serves a dual purpose: providing traditional food sources and serving as a mitigation measure against climate impacts. By integrating these practices, communities are advancing towards sustainability and building resilience against climate change.

e. Night Dew in Rapa Nui

A participant highlighted the use of collecting night dew as a sustainable practice to preserve plants and ensure food security for the Indigenous peoples of Rapa Nui. This approach utilizes natural energy to hydrate crops, reducing reliance on traditional irrigation and emphasizing the importance of integrating traditional knowledge and practices to innovate and address food security challenges sustainably.

f. Fishing practices in West Papua

A participant highlighted West Papua's coastal areas, particularly the "sasse" fishing zones. These areas have fishing restrictions for 3-6 months to support conservation and local fisheries management. The collaboration between authorities and communities serves as a model for sustainable resource management, emphasizing the importance of local knowledge and community involvement in conservation efforts.

g. Torres Strait Island community project

The Torres Strait Island's case study highlighted various concerns, including visitor management, Indigenous involvement, erosion, and land claims. The community has implemented an online registration system for visitors, which undergoes approval by council committees, including Indigenous rangers and council members, ensuring discussions on visiting areas and protecting sacred sites. Erosion issues have led to restrictions on vehicle access, prompting climate-focused green waste initiatives. Notably, the Torres Strait experienced a significant loss of 6 meters of land in 2022, underscoring the need for sustainable actions. In a groundbreaking legal victory, the UN's Human Rights Committee ruled against the Government in favor of Torres Strait climate claimants in 2022. The Committee found Australia's climate inaction to be a violation of the islanders' human rights, specifically their right to family life and culture. This decision marked a historic moment in international legal proceedings.

h. Respecting the cultural practices in Papua New Guinea

The case study from Papua New Guinea focused on the integration of nature-based solutions and traditional non-encroachment practices to preserve biodiversity and uphold cultural traditions. Papua New Guinea boasts a rich cultural heritage where customary spiritual beliefs are deeply intertwined with natural resource management. Traditional non-encroachment practices have been passed down through generations to safeguard sacred areas with significant spiritual importance, making them off-limits to disruptive human activities. Additionally, the discussion highlighted the importance of MPAs in ocean conservation. These designated marine zones are managed to protect biodiversity, sustain ecological processes, and preserve cultural practices linked to these areas. By melding traditional non-encroachment practices with modern MPA strategies, Papua New Guinea exemplifies a holistic approach to conservation, safeguarding both its natural and cultural heritage.

i. Nature based solutions involving planting of native trees

A participant from the Sambora Community Association[13] on Vella la Vella Island in the Western Province of the Solomon Islands presented a project implemented to address environmental challenges which is a community-driven nature-based solution. The initiative focuses on planting native trees to protect coastlines from sea-level rise and coastal erosion. Additionally, the community is actively involved in managing marine areas to sustainably utilize and conserve marine resources through the Community Based Fisheries Managed Program. To enhance food security, the association is replanting native coastal trees and cultivating native banana and swampy taro varieties. The management of seagrapes is also prioritized in the Sairagi community. Youth engagement and inclusive planning are integral components of this initiative, ensuring an inclusive approach that considers gender, environment, disability, social, and cultural factors. Biological monitoring surveys are conducted to assess the impact and effectiveness of these conservation efforts.

j. Woppaburra Coral Project

A participant presented[14] the Woppaburra Coral Project which is a five-year initiative that extends beyond just scientific research. It aims to reconnect Woppaburra families with their Country, an experience some have had for the first time. The project emphasizes co-designing study sites and approaches, ensuring that Indigenous voices and knowledge are central to the work. Training and capacity building in reef restoration methods are integral, facilitating two-way sharing of knowledge and practices between researchers and the community. This collaboration has led to the introduction of new cultural practices and even a new Woppaburra coral dance. Additionally, the project ensures cultural safety in biobanking, respecting and preserving Indigenous heritage and practices.

[13] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Alfred%20Ralifo%20-%20Pacific%20Challenges%20and%20Opportunities.pdf

[14] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Pacific%20Regional%20Forum%2020231200.pdf

IV. Weaving values and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in national climate policies and actions and the UNFCCC process

At the gathering, participants highlighted climate change being a consequence of inversion of natural laws governing human interactions with the Earth. Traditional wisdom prioritizes the Laws of Nature as the foundational principles that should guide human actions, fostering a sacred relationship with the environment. Following this, the Laws of Humans, (reflecting human-centric governance) and the Law of Economy (economic systems that prioritize resource utilization) should come into play. The participants discussed a mindset shift to challenge the dominant economic paradigm, advocating for an understanding and alignment with the unified laws of nature, humans, and economy to address climate change effectively.

Participants[15] also highlighted that islands face a range of challenges in adapting to climate change and achieving sustainability. These include managing landfill and transitioning to green energy sources. There's a pressing need to build capacity among the local population and secure resources for sustainable development. Additionally, protecting the ocean as a sanctuary and supporting Pacific sustainability projects are crucial for the long-term well-being and resilience of these island communities.

This section highlights some good practices from the region where the values and wisdom of Indigenous Peoples and perspectives of local communities were prioritized in the formulations of policies and actions

a. National Determined Contributions of the Pacific Island States

A participant at the gathering [16] highlighted that the Pacific Island Countries are diligently working towards fulfilling their climate commitments by implementing their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) to achieve their climate goals. By 2015, all 14 Pacific states had submitted their Intended NDCs, marking their commitment to the Paris Agreement. By April 2016, these became the first official NDCs. As of 2023, all 14 Pacific states have either updated or submitted enhanced NDCs, reflecting their evolving climate strategies. Additionally, four Pacific states, namely Tonga, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, and the Marshall Islands, have submitted their second NDCs, demonstrating their continued efforts to enhance their climate ambitions and contribute to global climate action.

The participant also highlighted the setup of the Regional NDC Hub, which was established by the Pacific Island nations to support the implementation of their NDCs. This initiative aims to provide Pacific Island Countries with the necessary data, resources, and expertise to achieve their climate targets, contributing to the global effort of limiting the rise in global temperatures to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

b. Consultative NAP process – Marshall Islands

The FWG representative of Small Islands Developing States (SIDS) outlined the experiences of Marshall Islands in the development of the Marshall Islands' National Adaptation Plan (NAP). The Republic of Marshall Islands developed its NAP with support from the World Bank, under the Tile Til Eo Committee for climate oversight through a participatory, self-determined approach building upon

[15] https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Erity%20Preentation%20.pdf
[16] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/NDC%20Pacific%20George%20Carter.pdf

existing policies and strategies, engaging stakeholders across all atolls. The NAP considers the pressing impacts of climate change, such as sea-level rise, stronger storms, droughts, and freshwater scarcity. Majuro the most populated atoll is especially vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The NAP undertook extensive consultations to assess risks and vulnerabilities and to develop a pathway forward. Adaptation solutions included coastal protection solutions, nature-based solutions, water efficiency measures, infrastructure planning, social services and disaster risk management.

c. National Adaptation Actions – development of Australia's National Adaptation Plan

Deputy secretary from the Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia[17], highlighted that successful adaptation strategies need to be place-based, community-led approaches that are deeply rooted in local values. Inclusive participation across all sectors of society is vital for a comprehensive and effective national response to climate challenges. Furthermore, these adaptation efforts must be grounded in rigorous scientific analysis to ensure their effectiveness and sustainability. She highlighted that Australia's National Adaptation Plan marks a significant step towards a unified approach to climate adaptation across the country. It aims to be the first truly national plan, reflecting a collective vision for adaptation. Importantly, the plan acknowledges the invaluable contributions of First Nations peoples, incorporating their unique values and knowledge systems into the National Risk Assessment. Recognizing the essential role of Indigenous science, knowledge, and practices in climate action, there's an initiative to establish a climate center focused on the Torres Strait and Northern Peninsula Area. Additionally, the plan encourages private investment in natural capital and nature-based solutions as part of its climate adaptation strategy.

Additionally, she emphasized the Indigenous Rangers Program and Indigenous Protected Areas which have seen a doubling in the number of Indigenous rangers, leading to advancements in modern environmental science and contemporary approaches to land and water management. She also highlighted the Climate Systems Hub under the National Environmental Science Program which is facilitating the creation of the National First Peoples Platform on Climate Change. This initiative brings together Traditional Owner participants from across Australia, with recent meetings held in the Torres Strait Islands. The committee plans to convene regularly over the next five years to address climate change challenges.

d. Tuvua District Development plan

A participant presented the the Tavua District Development Plan[18] which adopts a bottom-up approach to formulate its District Integrated Development Plans, ensuring grassroots participation and inclusivity in decision-making. The plan undertook three layers of consultation:

- Village Level Consultations: Engage with local communities at the village level, organizing discussions around various thematic areas.
- District-Level Consultations: Conduct broader consultations at the district level, involving relevant government agencies and partners to gather insights and perspectives.

[17] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/National%20Adaptation%20Plan%20-%20Jo%20Evans%20%28LCIPP%20PRG%29.pdf

[18] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Ratu%20Ovini%20_Community%20led%20climate%20adaptation%20and%20disaster%20risk%20reduction.pdf

- Urban Dwelling Member Consultations: Include urban residents in the consultations to ensure comprehensive representation.

Thematic areas organized to priorities that were identified during consultations include Education, Spiritual Development, Health and Wellbeing, Water, Electrification, Transportation, Energy, Economic Security, Women development, Youth Development, Traditional leadership& Community Governance, Sustainable Resource Management, Climate Change, Shelter and Housing Needs, Development Financing Plan.

The Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR) plans under the thematic area of Climate Change in the village-level planning emphasize the importance of community involvement and experience-based insights. During consultations, communities leveraged their past experiences with disasters to shape these plans, highlighting the critical need to address food security issues post-disasters. The plans are comprehensive, covering pre-disaster preparedness, response during disasters, and post-disaster recovery to enhance community resilience. Key lessons underscore the invaluable benefits of well-managed ecosystems, such as forests, mangroves, and coral reefs, in supporting food security and livelihoods, aiding quick recovery post-disaster. Additionally, community engagement is prioritized, ensuring inclusive participation from women, youth, and vulnerable groups in decision-making and intervention activities. A noteworthy initiative is the ongoing development of a parametric insurance project aimed at insuring critical coral and mangrove ecosystems, enhancing community adaptation, resilience, and well-being.

e. Project Cokonaki Cogea

A participant at the gathering highlighted the Cokonaki Cogea relocation project[19] . The primary objective of the project was to establish a minimum standard that ensures consensus and ownership from all community groups, including women and vulnerable populations, during the planning of community-led relocations in climate-impacted areas. The second objective aimed to offer a guide for rebuilding communities affected by climate change. This guide recommends Standard Operating Procedures for construction, resettlement, and transitional support to ensure sustainable and resilient reconstruction in climate-affected communities.

In Phase 1 of the community consensus and planning process, the focus is on co-designing a proposed village layout and understanding essential aspects like house design and wastewater treatment. Stakeholder engagement is prioritized, involving the confirmation of households, raising awareness on child protection, and obtaining community approval for plans. Stakeholders are briefed on Cokonaki Cogea's operations to gather feedback and garner intersectoral support for the Cogea community. The Bose Vanua Village Plan is developed, emphasizing the use of timber and validation of the community layout through ground-truthing. This phase ensures formalized consent from the community for the project's successful implementation. The document outlines that the planned relocation process needs to be structured on three main pillars: decision, planning and implementation. Furthermore, these three pillars embedded together with the principles enumerated below have been put in place to ensure that the values the rights of the Fijian affected communities, households and individuals are being respected in the process of planned relocation.

1. A Human- Centered Approach that derives from the application of anthropocentric concepts in environmental management and raises ethical issues when discussing the role of human beings in shaping and accessing environmental resources. This principle is to ensure that the

[19] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Cokonaki%20Cogea%20October%2023.pdf

community bottom- up perception is prioritized, that the interests of communities are considered, and the lessons learnt from Fiji's past experiences with relocation processes where community movements have been associated with numerous social, cultural, gender, economic and environmental issues relating to tensions over land, dislocation of communities, inadequate resources and unsuitable sites -- are to be avoided in the future application of these Guidelines.

2. A Livelihood- Based Approach to adaptation (rather than a sectoral approach) is an integral part of many rural livelihood strategies, as opposed to planned relocation being merely a reaction to climate change. This is to ensure that people who have relocated are not negatively affected and contribute to the process of "migration as adaptation". It is also considered to reflect the fact that the planned relocation process needs to be sensitive to the specific needs of communities and households that may be on the move. Characterizing the communities and households' profiles associated with climate related relocation will facilitate developing policy and operational options that build livelihood in respect to those climatic stressors.
3. A Human- Rights Based Approach, that after the adoption of the Paris Agreement in 2015 becomes more present in positioning rights close to the mobility process and associates inexorably to the climate change discourse. The Paris Agreement, together with the ICCPR and the ICESCR reflects the countries' rationale to relate climate change triggers to rights belonging to the affected people, ensuring that men, women, elderly and persons with disabilities are meaningfully engaged and participate in the decision-making, planning, and implementation related to the planned relocation.
4. The Preemptive Approach is also considered by these Guidelines when planning, implementing and follow up the stages of the relocation process, both holistically and Fijian specific. This is to ensure that any potential humanitarian crises are avoided. It is also demonstrated that preemptive action collaborated with country-specific solutions create an efficient response to environmental scenarios and protect the vulnerable groups on a medium- and long-term basis, contributing inter alia, to successful adaptive measures, decreasing potential risks and building resilience at the new destination (site).

f. Just Transition – a Nacula Story

A participant[20] shared that since 2018, significant progress has been made in the electrification of villages in the district of Nacula:

- Five out of seven villages are now electrified using solar energy, with only two villages remaining to be equipped with solar power.
- All five schools in the district are connected to solar power, supporting educational needs.
- Four out of twelve resorts in the district have transitioned to fully solar-powered operations.
- The health center is now fully powered by solar energy, thanks to funding received and Kiwa Kits, recently launched by the Ministry of Health.

This district-wide solar electrification effort aligns with Fiji's National Determined Contribution, emphasizing sustainable management and utilization of natural resources. This includes the conservation of mangroves, sustainable land use, and protection of reefs and marine areas to

[20] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Lavenia%20Naivalu%20-%20Just%20Transition%20%E2%80%93%20A%20Nacula%20Story.pdf

enhance carbon sequestration. Collaborative efforts with corporate partners in the district are also underway to reduce carbon footprints.

Some challenges and lessons learned were also shared during the presentation as enumerated below

- It's crucial to ensure that communities receive adequate training to maintain the solar systems, including protection against storms and cyclones.
- Support for repairs and maintenance is lacking when systems break down, especially in remote island communities like Nacula District.
- The high cost of solar power systems remains a barrier for remote communities with limited access to support services.
- Securing funding for electrifying the remaining two villages remains a challenge.
- The installation site for the Health Center's solar panels is vulnerable to sea-level rise and erosion, indicating the need for better planning and community consultation.

g. Just Transition – solar-powered outboard engines on locally-built catamarans in Marshall Islands

A participant highlighted that the Marshall Islands are advancing sustainable ocean transport with the testing of solar-powered outboard engines on locally built catamarans. This initiative is part of a broader sustainable transport program aimed at developing low-carbon vessel options to reduce dependency on high-priced fuel for remote outer island communities. The program has designed and built several types of boats and is training outer islanders in boat-building skills and low-carbon technology. This transition aims to achieve low-carbon, sustainable sea transport and reduce costs for communities and businesses.

h. Climate finance access and building capacity of the communities in the Pacific Islands

A presenter from WWF highlighted[21] that addressing barriers to climate action requires a multifaceted approach tailored to the unique needs of Pacific Island communities. This involves providing targeted capacity-building initiatives, simplifying climate finance application processes, and promoting awareness and education on climate change. Strategic support and collaboration are essential, emphasizing knowledge-sharing with international donors, regional organizations, and local community groups. Recognizing the distinct vulnerabilities and needs of the Pacific region is crucial to ensuring equitable access to climate finance. Furthermore, there is a need for climate finance mechanisms to be specifically tailored to the Pacific context to effectively address the challenges faced by these island nations**.**

Capacity building tailored to the specific needs of communities is vital for effective climate action. This involves empowering community leaders and civil society organizations (CSOs) through targeted training in monitoring, evaluation, and reporting. Community facilitators play a crucial role in brokering technical knowledge to communities, equipping them with the necessary skills and tools for data recording and monitoring methods. By strengthening community networks and fostering local expertise, capacity building initiatives enhance community resilience and empower local stakeholders to drive sustainable climate solutions.

[21] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/LCIPP%20Rachel%20James%20Climate%20Finance%20-%20Reporting%20Barriers.pdf

Building community capacity through advocacy, policy training, and regional networks is crucial for effective climate action. In Papua New Guinea, Fiji, and the Solomon Islands, CSOs conducted regional advocacy training workshops aimed at blending local traditional knowledge with scientific approaches, particularly in marine monitoring methods. Community facilitators, known as rangers, work closely with Conservation and Resilience Networks to implement these initiatives. For example, the Seagrapes Community Partner program engaged four communities in water transect monitoring, emphasizing youth empowerment and engagement. Climate Resilient by Nature, focuses on scaling sustainable seaweeds management and protecting critical climate ecosystems through baseline and ongoing monitoring, ecosystem assessments, and community capacity building. Additionally, women's leadership in fisheries and across community networks through regional initiatives was emphasized. These efforts underscore the importance of community-led, gender-responsive approaches in building climate resilience and protecting vital ecosystems.

i. Pacific contributions to the IPCC Report

A participant highlighted[22] that the key findings from the IPCC WG1/Pacific Next Gen report (2021/22) indicate further warming, increased heatwaves, rising sea levels, changes in annual rainfall, intensifying cyclones, an uptick in extreme daily rainfall, and ongoing ocean acidification. She emphasized some regional achievements such as organization of Next Generation Climate Projections for the Western Tropical Pacific write-shops, supported by Australian government. The in-person workshops in 2019, involving national meteorological services, regional and national universities, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organization led to multiple peer-reviewed journal publications and ongoing research partnerships. She highlighted key options for engagement with the IPCC and recommended enhancing Pacific involvement, improving accessibility to IPCC data, and building capacity. Pacific webinars on IPCC Assessment Report 6 (AR6) were also conducted, focusing on the physical science, climate change mitigation, and the synthesis report, facilitated by the IPCC and partners like the Australian National University's Institute for Climate, Energy & Disaster Solutions and Climate Analytics. This included the design and distribution of 15 factsheets summarizing key IPCC AR6 findings.

j. Reef monitoring in the Pacific: Combining Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with Western science methods

A participant presented [23]the reef monitoring efforts in the Pacific, a collaborative effort involving the Australian Institute of Marine Science (AIMS), the Samoan Government and the First Nations peoples from Samoa, Papua New Guniea (Sea Women of Melanesia), and Australia (Gidarjil Development Corporation), along with CI and SPREP. This initiative combines Traditional Ecological Knowledge (TEK) with Western science methods. Fieldwork and knowledge-sharing workshops have been conducted in both Australia and Samoa, aiming to deliver to the Pacific Coral Reef Action Plan. The project focuses on integrating monitoring efforts, building capabilities, and incorporating TEK to ensure a holistic approach to reef conservation and management.

The Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network highlights the importance of monitoring for reef sea country managers and scientists, including Traditional Owners, government bodies, and NGOs. This global network encompasses 24 Pacific countries and territories, emphasizing collaboration on a worldwide scale. Their 2020 report, "Status of Coral Reefs of the World," compiled data from 10

[22] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/sina%20luiLCIPP_IPCCC_sl_0.pdf
[23] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Pacific%20Regional%20Forum%2020231200.pdf

regions spanning 73 years, with contributions from 300 participants and over 2 million observations. AIMS coordinates this network with funding from the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, underscoring the significance of collective efforts in understanding and preserving coral reef ecosystems.

ReefCloud aims to integrate global coral reef monitoring by combining human collaboration with Artificial Intelligence through digital photography of reefs. This platform enables the world's reef monitoring community to collaborate in real time, making it accessible to everyone, not just coral scientists. ReefCloud employs standardized methods for integrated monitoring and offers features like managing and storing photo data, analyzing images through manual and AI tagging, automated analysis and reports, and ensuring image and data safety with access controls that prioritize data owner control.

k. Facilitating marine research partnerships with First Nations peoples through Australian Institute of Marine Science

A participant[24], emphasized that country, in the Indigenous context, extends beyond its biophysical aspects. It represents the interconnectedness of all living and non-living elements, tangible and intangible, and the cultural obligations tied to a specific place for Traditional Custodians. Country is managed based on Lore, which transcends mere legal regulations. Therefore, any Indigenous partnerships plan must recognize and honor both the tangible and intangible facets of country to effectively engage with and respect Indigenous communities. He presented how the AIMS is providing the necessary research and knowledge about Australia's tropical marine estate to promote its sustainable use, effective environmental management, and protection of its unique ecosystems, engaging the traditional custodians. Through their projects AIMS has engaged with Traditional Custodians to understand their priorities in marine science, reviewed numerous healthy country plans and regional syntheses, and sought input from Traditional Owners. The approach adopted emphasizes respecting and valuing Traditional Knowledge on par with western science, upholding the principle of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC), and supporting Traditional Custodians' inherent rights and responsibilities for sea country. To strengthen Indigenous engagement and capacity building, an Indigenous training coordinator has been deployed. Mentorship programs are in place with an internal Indigenous staff group, fostering professional development and knowledge sharing. The Pipeline School programs offer educational opportunities, while paid undergraduate internships and graduate programs provide hands-on experience. Vocational training is offered to aquaculture trainees. Furthermore, ranger training emphasizes reef restoration methods, and there's an emphasis on two-way learning, involving Traditional Owners in projects to ensure mutual understanding and collaboration.

l. Regional Collaborations – An effective way for moving forward as a region

Several examples of regional collaborations were presented during the gathering. For example, the Blue Pacific Continent 2050 Strategy, highlighted[25] by a participant reinforced the commitment & working together as a collective for advancing Pacific regionalism based on the Blue Pacific Narrative. Two other examples of existing and future opportunities for collaborations were highlighted during the gathering and are highlighted below

[24] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Pacific%20Regional%20Forum%2020231200.pdf
[25] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/Alfred%20Ralifo%20-%20Pacific%20Challenges%20and%20Opportunities.pdf

Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management Outcomes

A participant presented[26] the outcomes of discussions of the 1st Pacific Islands Conference on Ocean Science and Ocean Management aimed to identify, discuss, and prioritize ocean science and management priorities in the Pacific with relevant stakeholders. It provided a platform for Pacific Ocean and marine scientists to showcase their work and prioritize key scientific focuses and questions. The conference was designed to understand the current situation of integrated ocean management in Pacific Island Countries and Territories and develop a shared way forward. It emphasized the practical implications of integrating traditional knowledge into science projects and ocean management. Key topics included ocean policy and management initiatives, traditional knowledge and governance, advances in ocean science, capacity strengthening, and the United Nations Decade of Ocean Science for Sustainable Development. The conference outlined priority actions for the Ocean Decade in the Pacific, focusing on science and knowledge, infrastructure, capacity development, and traditional knowledge. It stressed the importance of partnerships, resource mobilization, and regional and national coordination for successful implementation, paving the way towards the 2024 Ocean Decade Conference and beyond.

UNFCCC -Regional Collaboration Center

The Regional Lead of the UNFCCCC Regional Collaboration Center for Asia[27] and the Pacific highlighted the establishment of the center in in 2015 by the UNFCCC and the Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES), initially aimed to promote the benefits of the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) in under-represented regions. Since the adoption of the Paris Agreement, its role has expanded to facilitate support for climate action aligned with countries NDCs and various Paris Agreement goals. Serving as the primary regional contact point, the center channels regional perspectives and needs to the UNFCCC and provides technical support to facilitate the implementation of Paris Agreement. The center could potentially serve as a coordination hub to facilitate effective collaboration in the Pacific region and support capacity building for local communities and Indigenous Peoples and foster strategic partnerships.

m. Building capacity of Indigenous Peoples and local community representatives to engage in the work of constituted bodies under the UNFCCC

The various segments during the gathering, provided an opportunity to build capacity of Indigenous Peoples and local communities to enable their engagement in the UNFCCC process. In addition to contributing to the work of LCIPP and its FWG, members of various constituted bodies were invited to provide an overview of their work and the opportunities for Indigenous Peoples and local community representatives to meaningfully and ethically engage in their work.

The Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM ExCom)

The representative from WIM ExCom[28] highlighted its key functions, including enhancing knowledge on risk management, fostering stakeholder collaboration, and mobilizing support in finance, technology, and capacity-building. Expert groups under WIM ExCom, such as those addressing displacement, slow-onset events, and non-economic losses, were highlighted, along with engagement efforts for Indigenous knowledge holders and local community representatives. The representative also emphasized on key opportunities to engage at COP 28, including a photography

[26] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/LCIPP_PICOSOM_Outcomes.pdf
[27] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/RCC-Asia%20Pacific%20-%20final.pdf
[28] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/WIMExCom_Presentation_LCIPP_Pacific_Regional_Gathering_15102023.pdf

exhibition and a high-level event on the 10-year progress of 10 Years of the Warsaw International Mechanism.

Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)

The representative from Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)[29] provided insights and examples on the engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the formulation and implementation of NAPs. Emphasizing on the work by LEG, the representative highlighted engagement opportunities such as NAP Expo to showcase experiences, knowledge sharing, and highlight progress in adaptation strategies and multistakeholder forums subgroup to enhance stakeholder engagement in the formulation and implementation of NAPs

Transitional Committee

While members of the transitional committee on the operationalization of the new funding arrangements for responding to loss and damage and the fund established in paragraph 3 of decisions 2/CP.27 and 2/CMA.4, could not attend the gathering, the co-chairs sent written inputs that was shared with the participants of the gathering. The written input highlighted that with three committee meetings, two workshops, and ministerial consultations completed, the final meeting of the transitional committee was underway in Aswan, Egypt. The committee was focusing on refining funding structures, ensuring coordination among financial institutions, and resolving key issues such as fund scope, allocation, and eligibility. An important aspect emphasized through the written input was the inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and local communities, acknowledging their knowledge systems. The committee reaffirmed its commitment to delivering concrete recommendations by COP 28, ensuring Indigenous voices remain central to the process.

[29] See https://lcipp.unfccc.int/sites/default/files/2023-10/LEG%20at%20LCIPP%20event_2023.pdf

V. Challenges, Lessons Learned and Recommendations

Through the Talanoa[4] roundtable discussions and presentations, participants reflected on various challenges, lessons learned and proposed solutions on meaningful engagement of Indigenous Peoples and local communities into climate action and policies at all levels. Additionally on the last day of the gathering, the participants identified ways to collectively move forward as one region and put forward several recommendations. These are summarized in the section below.

Challenges, lessons learned and proposed opportunities

- With respect to **NDCs,** the challenges highlighted by Indigenous communities include limited awareness, unrecognized contributions, misrepresentation, language barriers, threats to livelihoods, and a lack of trust and collaboration with governments. To address these issues, solutions such as educational initiatives, integrating global frameworks, increasing financial commitment to green projects, enhancing communication, promoting community engagement and representation, and ensuring transparent and inclusive processes were suggested. These approaches aim to improve understanding, recognition, and participation of Indigenous communities in shaping and implementing effective climate policies.
- On **just transition**, the participants highlighted the necessity of meaningful consultation and engagement in the shift towards renewable energy and sustainable practices. They expressed concerns that the current top-down approach by certain domestic governments does not adequately incorporate their perspectives and needs, which raises questions about the fairness of the transition process. There are several good practices, focusing on bottom-up strategies seen especially in Pacific communities, highlighted in the previous sections of the report. Indigenous Peoples and local community participants emphasized the growing demand for a consultative and community-centric approach that values Indigenous knowledge and aligns with the rights and values of First Nations communities to ensure a truly "Just Transition" to a sustainable future.
- On **climate finance**, participants highlighted challenges in accessing private capital markets, often due to process bottlenecks and profitability requirements that overlook community needs. A participant highlighted that the reliance on Official Development Assistance further limits financial flexibility. To overcome these barriers, it's crucial to streamline processes, provide project preparation assistance, and prioritize financial sustainability. Enhancing community representation through local council advisory groups, direct funding applications, and building bankability can boost engagement. Additionally, establishing self-sustaining funds, cultural impact bonds, and climate insurance were suggested approaches to empower Indigenous communities, foster wealth creation, and mitigate risks. Standardizing procedures, emphasizing capacity building, and ensuring inclusivity are essential for meaningful Indigenous participation in climate actions and policies
- On **reporting**, participants highlighted that innovation in reporting methods can simplify the process and apply a Pacific "Talanoa[4]" lens, making reporting more engaging and culturally relevant. For instance, utilizing film and video, including folktale reporting, can effectively convey the community's experiences and perspectives. This approach allows Pacific voices to be heard directly, creating a more authentic and compelling narrative for donors and stakeholders.
- On **regional gathering and LCIPP** and integrating cultural elements into the activities of the Platform, participants reflected on the ways it could be enhanced in the future. To enhance the design of the regional gathering, participants suggested to seamlessly integrate cultural

elements throughout the event, emphasizing cultural immersion activities spread over various days and facilitating nightly informal caucuses or yarning circles. These circles would aim to foster inclusivity, reflection, and the formulation of coordinated recommendations. Encouraging Talanoa[4] discussions in informal settings, moving away from traditional conference rooms, was also suggested to boost open dialogue. Leveraging pre-recorded videos for certain topics and further opportunities for questions and answers can promote interactive discussions and provide clarity. Lastly, as regional gatherings evolve, participants emphasized that it's crucial to preserve the principles of community engagement, ensuring LCIPP remains an open platform for all Indigenous voices.

- On specific **project implementation**, through all the experience sharing, participants reiterated the need for a multi-faceted, integrated, rights-based approach that prioritizes both people and nature in decision-making processes. They emphasized several important elements for effective climate policies and actions, including fostering collaboration among diverse stakeholders, directly involving Indigenous Peoples and local communities in on-the-ground action and implementation, enhancing communication channels to ensure meaningful engagement and representation of local communities and Indigenous Peoples, and scaling up initiatives to reach wider audiences for deeper impact and effectiveness.

Recommendations

After four days of learning from the experiences and values from the different Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the Pacific, and recognizing their diversity and uniqueness, the participants identified ways to collectively move forward as one region. On the day 5 of the gathering, they collectively put forward the following recommendations for the Facilitative Working Group (FWG) and Parties to consider in their work plans, priorities, and future deliberations. The recommendations were presented to the Minister for Climate Change and Energy of Australia, who joined the gathering virtually.

Recognizing the uniqueness, diversity and richness of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in the Pacific, the participants recommended the following:

1. Terminology and Language: Encouraging the use of specific Indigenous terms and language unique to the culture, traditions and knowledge in the Pacific such a Moana, Napurrula etc. in discussions and documents

2. Priorities of the Pacific: Identifying priority issues of the local communities and Indigenous Peoples related to climate change, such as oceans, climate migration and displacement, end use of fossil fuels (eg. Non-Proliferation Treaty) and strengthen community and local engagement

3. Linking with Existing Processes and Organizations: Highlighting the need for better alignment and linkage of local communities and Indigenous Peoples to existing Pacific processes

4. Meaningful Engagement and Consultation: Emphasizing the importance of meaningful engagement, consultation, collaboration and partnership

5. Funding and Capacity Building: Stressing the need for increased funding and capacity building opportunities for the Pacific

6. Strengthening Connectivity: Creating further structures within the region to strengthen connectivity, enabling sharing of information amongst Indigenous communities, and to ensure inclusivity and equitable access

7. Regional Collaboration and Proposals: Exploring Pacific-wide regional binding agreements between Indigenous Peoples, local communities, Parties and other relevant organizations

8. Regional Hub: Creating a Pacific Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Regional Hub for research, sharing of resources, networking, capacity building and engagement

Annex I: Functions of the Local Communities and Indigenous Peoples Platform (LCIPP)

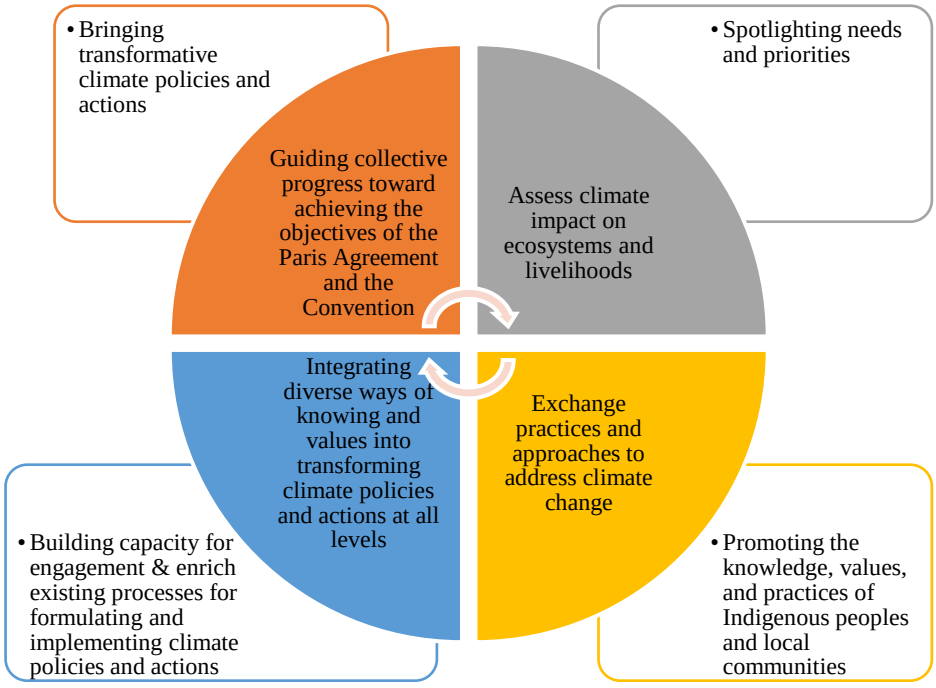
Decision 2/CP.23 decided that the Platform will perform the following functions:

a. **Knowledge:** the platform should promote the exchange of experience and best practices with a view to applying, strengthening, protecting and preserving traditional knowledge, knowledge of indigenous peoples and local knowledge systems, as well as technologies, practices and efforts of local communities and indigenous peoples related to addressing and responding to climate change, taking into account the free, prior and informed consent of the holders of such knowledge, innovations and practices;

b. **Capacity for engagement:** the platform should build the capacity of indigenous peoples and local communities to enable their engagement in the UNFCCC process and the capacity of Parties and other relevant stakeholders to engage with the platform and with local communities and indigenous peoples, including in the context of the implementation of the Paris Agreement and other climate change related processes;

c. **Climate change policies and actions:** the platform should facilitate the integration of diverse knowledge systems, practices and innovations in designing and implementing international and national actions, programmes and policies in a manner that respects and promotes the rights and interests of local communities and indigenous peoples. The platform should also facilitate the undertaking of stronger and more ambitious climate action by indigenous peoples and local communities that could contribute to the achievement of the nationally determined contributions of the Parties concerned

Annex II: Framework approach to the LCIPP regional gatherings



This conceptual model, depicted as a circular figure is divided into four interlocking segments:

- Identifying climate impacts on ecosystems and livelihoods, setting the stage for a targeted approach;
- Highlighting practices and approaches of Indigenous Peoples and local communities in responding to climate change;
- Weaving diverse knowledge systems, worldviews, and values into transforming global climate action;
- Thereby guiding the collective progress toward achieving the goals as detailed in Article 2 of the Paris Agreement and the Convention

Annex III: List of Regionally Nominated Knowledge Holders[30]

In line with the Activity 2 of the second three-year workplan of the LCIPP, the UNFCCC Secretariat funded 25 participants from the Pacific.

This included 23 knowledge holders, chosen by the FWG member representing the Pacific sociocultural region, following the principles of self-selection listed below:

No	Name	Country
1	Alaita Taulima	Tuvalu
2	Alicia Anne Garrido Limtiaco	USA
3	Bill Rerigeto Apusae	Solomon Islands
4	Cressida Kuala	Papua New Guinea
5	Elisabeta Torava	Fiji
6	Erity Teave-Hey	Chile
7	Esther Haluk	Indonesia
8	Jamal Eddie Namo	Solomon Islands
9	Maurice Tyaou Wimian	France
10	Morgane Reix--Tronquet	France
11	Rachel Menvi	Solomon Islands
12	Regina Kabweaa Teem	Kiribati
13	Robert David Karoro	Kiribati
14	Rossette Kalmet	Vanuatu
15	Samuel Womsiwor	Indonesia
16	Saramita Salle	Micronesia
17	Selevasio Naivals Tagivuni	Fiji
18	Taksey Dobon	Papua New Guinea
19	Ursula Regina Rakova	Papua New Guinea
20	Usaia Raibe Cirikiwai Moli	Fiji
21	Willy Missack	Vanuatu
22	Wilson Maeriua Jnr	Solomon Islands
23	Zedi Akao Devesi	Solomon Islands

In addition, two FWG members from the Pacific: Cathryn Eatock, FWG member representing the UN Indigenous Sociocultural region in the Pacific, and Kathy Neien Jetnil-Kijiner, FWG member representing the UN Regional Group, Small Island Developing States (SIDS) were also funded by the UNFCCC secretariat.

[30] Listed in alphabetical order

Annex IV: List of Participants[31]

Representatives nominated by Parties

No	Full name	Affiliation
1	Alexander John Archibald-Binge	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
2	Birrin Keiran Hooper	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
3	Chris Bowen (Keynote Speaker, Virtual)	Minister for Climate Change and Energy of Australia, Australia
4	Damian Blunden	National Indigenous Australians Agency, Australia
5	Elise Frances Murphy	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
6	Ilisapeci Lagilagi Lyons	Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation
7	Joanne Leigh Evans	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
8	Justin Raheem Mohamed	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade Australia
9	Kathy Jetnil-Kijiner	FWG member representing the UN Regional Group, Small Island Developing States (SIDS)
10	Kay Harrison (Keynote Speaker, Virtual)	Climate Change Ambassador, New Zealand
11	Kristin Maree Tilley	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia
12	Leslie Philip Duncan (Moderator)	University of Canberra (Supported by Australian Government)
13	Liam James Rigg	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
14	Millisha-Maree Salvemini	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
15	Murray Gordon Korff	Department of Agriculture of Fisheries and Forestry, Australia
16	Narelle Kay Hill	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
17	Philip George Fitzgerald	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
18	Roan David Plotz	Victoria University (Supported by Australian Government)
19	Sally Box	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water
20	Sonia Lyn Fedorow Spry	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
21	Terrence Jesse Oberleuter	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Australia

[31] Listed in alphabetical order

22	Tiana Michelle Joscelyn Carter	FWG member representing the UN Regional Group, Western Europe and Others Group (WEOG)
23	Tibau Stanley Lui	Torres Strait Islander (Supported by Australian Government)
24	Timothy Peter Guthrie	Department of Climate Change, Energy, the Environment and Water, Australia
25	Vonda Lisa Malone	Torres Strait Regional Authority, Australia

Representatives from constituted bodies under the Convention

No	Full name	Affiliation
1	Graeme Reed (Virtual)	Facilitative Working Group of the LCIPP
2	Jamie Ovia (Virtual)	The Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG)
3	Jerome Ilagan (Virtual)	The Executive Committee of the Warsaw International Mechanism for Loss and Damage (WIM ExCom)

Representatives from constituencies – Indigenous Peoples Organizations

No	Name	Affiliation
1	Adi Asenaca Kakua Mara	Soqosoqo Vakamarama iTaukei ni Yasana ko Lau
2	Alicia Anne Garrido Limtiaco	Pacific Indigenous Women's Network (PIWN)
3	Alumita Talei Sekinairai	The University of Edinburgh
4	Amber Roberts	Australia
5	Anne Poelina	Martuwarra Fitzroy River Council
6	Barry Hunter	Aboriginal Carbon Foundation
7	Bill Rerigeto Apusae	Live and Learn Environmental Education
8	Bronwyn Yolande Lee Wharerau	Te Runanga o Ngapuhi
9	Caleb Grayson Adams	IPO, CANA
10	Cassandra Jones	Indigenous Peoples Organisation Australia
11	Cathryn Anne Eatock	Indigenous Peoples Organisations-Australia and FWG member representing the UN Indigenous Sociocultural region in the Pacific
12	Cressida Kuala	Porgera Red Wara (River) Women's Association Incorporated (PRWWA INC)
13	Cynthia Ann Coyne	Griffith University
14	Daniel Billy	350 Australia - Our Islands, Our Home Campaign
15	Elisabeta Torava	Tent 9 Investment
16	Emelda Mary Davis	Australian South Sea Islanders (Port Jackson)
17	Emmanuel Ghanny	Sambora Community Association in partnership with WWF Pacific Solomon Islands Program
18	Erity Teave-Hey	Rapa Nui Parliament & Rapa Nui Foundation
19	ESTHER HALUK	IPO AUSTRALIA

20	George Joseph Carter	Australia
21	Glen Wingfield	Kokatha \ Arabuna
22	Haylee Davis	IPO
23	Hinekaa Catherine Mako	Ihirangi - Māori Climate Network
24	Hinemoerangi Tawhai-Mako-McKenna	Ihirangi - Māori Climate Network and National Iwi Chairs Forum
25	JAMAL EDDIE NAMO	Huitarau Footprint Association (HFA)
26	Jamie Robert Lowe	NNTC (National Native Title Council)
27	Karrina Alice Nolan	First Nations Clean Energy Network
28	Katja Jane Henaway	Blax Capital Pty Ltd
29	Lavenia Yasikula Naivalu	Nacula Tikina, Ba Province, Fiji
30	Learna Michelle Langworthy	National First Peoples Platform on Climate Change
31	Leslie Edward Shultz	Indigenous Peoples Organisation-Australia
32	Linda Louise Keevers-Lock	Indigenous Peoples Organisation Australia
33	Masepah Richard Harry Banu	NSW Aboriginal Land Council and Coalition of Aboriginal Peak Organisations
34	MAURICE TYAOU WIMIAN	HO UT
35	Michael John Smith	National Iwi Chairs Forum
36	Michael Otoara Ha'apio	Tookina Tribal Conservation Trust / Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
37	Morgane REIX--TRONQUET	Pala Dalik : L'écho du récif
38	Patrick Pate	WWF Pacific
39	Rachel Menvi	Solomon Island Climate Action Network (SICAN)
40	Raelene Cooper	Save our Songlines
41	Rangiwhero Whaingaroa Wawata Tautu Smith	Ihirangi
42	Ratu Ovini Bokini Vakananumi Nauarabota	WWF
43	Raymond Clyde Minniecon	Indigenous Peoples Organisation. Australia
44	Regina Kabweaa Teem	Tungaru Climate Alliance, Tungaru Youth Action,
45	Robert David Karoro	Kiribati Climate Action Network
46	Robert Michael Muir	Australian Institute of Marine Science
47	Rossette Kalmet	Actionaid Australia & Actionaid Vanuatu
48	Samarla Louise Deshong	NESP HUB 2 First Nations People's Climate Change Gathering Platform
49	Saramita Salle	Chuuk Women's Council
50	SELEVASIO NAIVALS TAGIVUNI	GRACE TRIFAM MINISTRY/ VATUKALOKO DEVELOPMENT ADVISORY COMMITTEE (VDAC)
51	Shiva Gounden	Greenpeace Australia Pacific
52	Shola Anthony Diop	Indigenous Peoples' Organisation-Australia & Pacific
53	Sonia Lee Cooper	Yorta Yorta Nation Aboriginal Corporation
54	Talei Tepora Rayalana Silibaravi	Cagimaiwai Womens Club
55	Usaia Raibe Cirikiwai Moli	Fiji Council of Social Services

56	Valda Naburula Shannon	Community Justice Centre
57	Wane Wharerau	Te Runanga o Ngapui / National Iwi Chairs Forum / Pou Take Ahuarangi
58	Zedi Akao Devesi	Network for indigenous people Solomon Islands

Representatives from constituencies – Environmental NGOs

No	Full name	Affiliation
1	Alfred Iane Ralifo	World Wide Fund
2	Ariane Wilkinson	World Wide Fund-Australia
3	Clifford Michael Cobbo	World Wide Fund-Australia
4	Dermot Michael O'Gorman	World Wide Fund-Australia
5	Filomena Serenia Vuetaki	International Union for the Conservation of Nature
6	Rachel Sapery James	World Wide Fund

Representatives from intergovernmental organizations (IGOs)

No	Full name	Affiliation
1	Siosinamele Lui	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

Representatives from the UNFCCC Secretariat

No	Full name	Affiliation
1	Donna Lagdameo	UNFCCC Secretariat
2	Julie Amoroso-Garbin	UNFCCC Secretariat
3	Supriya Dharkar	UNFCCC Secretariat