

Concept Note (DRAFT)

Policy Discussion among Leaders of Pacific SIDS Countries to Accelerate Green Transformation in the Pacific region through Just Energy Transition

A policy dialogue for the 10th Pacific Island Leaders Meeting (PALM10)

Date and time: Friday, 12 July 2024,
10:00-12:10 JST (100 minutes for the event + 30 minutes for networking)

Event venue: Elizabeth Rose Conference Hall, United Nations University
Mode of the organization: Hybrid (via Zoom)

(Link for online registration:

https://undp.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_lv8HQWeeSQyOo2ihdvBWpA)

OBJECTIVES

The objective of this policy event is to facilitate high-level discussions on national policy making, international partnerships, and regional South-South and triangular cooperation opportunities including the private sector engagement, in the Pacific region to **promote green transformation and climate resilience**. This dialogue will focus on key roles and anticipated contributions of national leadership in enabling domestic potentials, enhancing ecosystems and economic prospects, and facilitating international cooperations and **the public-private partnerships** to drive green transformation forward. Discussions during the event will encompass various facets of green transformation relevant and acute in each Pacific country, thereby providing additional complementarity to the 10th Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM 10) by sharing diverse perspectives on policy options and existing constraints.

Promoting knowledge sharing and learning from best practices among countries of the Global South is particularly important for Pacific Islands countries (PICs). This side event will also facilitate discussions on the role of such cooperation among Pacific countries, including roles of ongoing interventions funded by the Government of Japan and how those interventions align with national development goals and contribute to improving the environmental and socio-economic conditions. The policy dialogue will also inform UNDP in shaping policy recommendations derived from the Pacific Green Transformation Project and UNDP's future programming aimed at building an ecosystem to promote green transformation in the Pacific region and beyond.

BACKGROUND

Building on the longstanding partnership between Japan and PICs, the Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting (PALM) was launched in 1997 as the top-level inter-governmental platform between Japan and PICs to enhance the partnership and collectively address common challenges through candid dialogues. Under the PALM framework, Japan has been hosting an in-person meetings among the heads of states every three years. Among policies, and issues and challenges discussed during the PALMs, **impacts of climate change** and **climate-induced natural disasters** has been one of the areas which is the top priorities of all PALM members throughout. Issues such as extreme weather patterns and raising sea levels threaten the survival of entire communities in the region. The region's vulnerability is further exacerbated by limited resources, small country sizes, and a heavy dependence on fossil fuels. However, despite the many challenges posed by climate change, the PALM member countries have set ambitious goals to not only preserve their diverse ecosystems but also to enhance their vibrant and colorful cultures by

creating sustainable livelihoods. The aspiration of Pacific countries to build self-sufficient sustainable economies can be achieved through an accelerated green transformation. This transformative shift towards green and sustainable growth offers viable opportunities for the Pacific region to build a more resilient, inclusive, and equitable future.

Japan is promoting the concept of “Green Transformation (GX)” for net-zero emissions, which will benefit the country with enhanced industrial competitiveness and drive economic growth. The Government of Japan aims to facilitate JPY 150 trillion of GX (public and private) investment domestically over the next 10 years to improve predictability for the business sectors and introduce growth-oriented carbon pricing. At the G7 Summit in June 2021, Japan announced its intention to provide public and private climate finance, totaling approximately USD 60 billion over the next five years from 2021 to support developing countries. In COP26 in December 2021, Prime Minister Kishida further announced to provide an additional USD 10 billion in the coming five years, for decarbonization efforts in Asia and beyond. [The Government of Japan’s revised Development Cooperation Charter](#) which was adopted on 9 June 2023, has identified climate change as one of focus areas for Japan’s Official Development Assistance, and demonstrated the country’s continued interest in strengthening the partnership with PICs in the context of promoting the free and open Indo-Pacific region.

Japan has been one of the leading partners to UNDP’s Climate Promise and provided a total of approximately USD 66 million to support 28 countries and regions in achieving national climate action targets and in advancing net-zero pathways and climate-resilience development, grounded in Japan’s vision to “contribute to decarbonization and adaptation to climate change through the deployment of Japanese technologies.” Contributing to the overarching framework of the Climate Promise, a USD37.53 million multi-country project for ‘*Promoting Green Transformation in the Pacific Region towards Net-Zero and Climate-resilient Development (Pacific Green Transformation Project)*’ is the investment at scale by the Government of Japan to the Pacific to accelerate a transformational shift to the decarbonized transportation sector in Samoa, to renewable energy in Vanuatu, and to clean and more reliable energy sources which can also reduce vulnerabilities in remote communities in Papua New Guinea and Timor Leste. For more information, please refer to the Project Brief attached.

OUTCOMES

The side event is expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- Facilitate dialogues among government representatives, the private sector and civil society from the Pacific GX countries, Japan and beyond to foster knowledge exchange and build partnerships, to accelerate green transformation in the Pacific region and highlight the potential for SIDS economies to achieve sustainable energy access and transition to cleaner, more resilient energy systems.
- Promote regional cooperation to translate policy dialogues into practical actions and data driven strategies, fostering green transformation in the Pacific region.
- Explore opportunities for South-South and triangular cooperation and the public and private partnership with multistakeholder collaboration.

SESSION PLAN

The session will begin with opening remarks by Representatives of the Government of Japan and UNDP, which will be followed by a keynote address and video screening on ongoing efforts in various areas of green transformation across the Pacific region. The session will conclude with guided discussions featuring a panel of government representatives and the private sector in Japan who will share their perspectives and country-specific prospects. Simultaneous translation between English and Japanese

will be available throughout the event. After the event, there will be a short networking session over refreshments.

Tentative Agenda

**Friday, 12 July 2024,
10:00-12:10 (Japan Time)**

09:30-10:00: Registration (Screening a Weather Kids video)

MC: Mio Yokota, Strategic Partnerships Specialist, UNDP

Opening Remarks:

10:00-10:03 Representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan (TBC)

10:04-10:08 Kanni Wignaraja, UN Assistant Secretary-General and Director of Regional Bureau for Asia and the Pacific, UNDP (Pre-recorded video message)

Session I: Keynote presentation and video screening:

10:08-10:13 Video screening on GX in the Pacific

10:14-10:29 Keynote presentation on policy options to promote energy transition for carbon neutral with an integrated approach and international cooperation (TBC)

Dr. Kentaro Tamura, Programme Director, Climate and Energy, Institute for Global Environmental Strategies (IGES)

Session II: High-level Policy Dialogue: The Future we want – Transformative shift to an Inclusive and Just Green Transformation in the Pacific

10:30-10:32 Setting the scene and panel introduction

Session moderator: Akiko Yamamoto, Regional Team Leader for Asia and the Pacific, Environment and Energy Team, UNDP

10:33-11:18 Panel discussion (with guiding questions)

- Representative of the Government of Papua New Guinea (TBC)
- Representative of the Government of Samoa:
Mr. Kalavini Shalom Maualaivao, Assistant Chief Executive Officer, Transport and Infrastructure Sector Coordination Division, Ministry of Works, Transport, and Infrastructure
- Representative of the Government of Vanuatu
Mr. Antony Garae Liu, Director, Department of Energy, Ministry of Climate Change and Natural Disaster
- Representative of the private sector in Japan (TBC)
- Representative of the Ministry of Environment, Japan (TBC)

11:18-11:30 Q&A with the audience

Key Takeaways and Closing Remarks:

11:30-11:35 Mr. Shintaro Ito, Minister of Environment, Japan

11:35-11:40 Hideko Hadzialic, Director, UNDP Representation Office in Tokyo

11:40- Networking

EXPECTED AUDIENCE

- Government officials of the Pacific GX countries and other PALM10 members
- Development practitioners (UNDP, development partners, etc.)
- Private sector in Japan
- Academia and students (TBD)

MEDIA AND VISIBILITY

TBC

ITEMS TO DISSEMINATE

Publications and brochures will be disseminated in QR codes and digital form to the extent possible.

Annex 1: GUIDING QUESTIONS (Preliminary draft – To be discussed and updated further)

[For Samoa]:

Samoa's energy sector is transitioning from heavy dependence on imported diesel to a more sustainable and resilient energy system. Decarbonizing transport, one of the largest GHG emitter in Samoa, is a top priority for the government to achieve the country's enhanced NDC.

- a. What are the key steps your country is taking to promote the transformation of the land and maritime transport sectors?
- b. What are the main challenges you face? (e.g. financial, technical, social and education)
- c. How can international cooperation, for example through the UNDP-led Green Transformation Program financed by the Government of Japan, help overcome these obstacles?

[For Vanuatu]:

Vanuatu is unique among Pacific Island countries since the private sector generates and supplies electricity. Its over-reliance on imported diesel for power generation has a negative macroeconomic impact, being more expensive than renewable energy options such as hydropower. Upward pressure on electricity tariffs is constraining economic growth.

- a. With a focus on deploying renewables, particularly sustainable hydro (pico), what advancements have been made in integrating hydroelectric power into Vanuatu's energy mix?
- b. What technical or financial barriers exist, and how can local communities be included and trained to play an active role in Vanuatu's sustainable energy transition?
- c. What role can regional partnerships with Japan and UNDP play in addressing these barriers?

[For PNG]

PNG energy sector hold substantial promise, driven by their rich natural resources. However, the country also faces important challenges such as limited infrastructure, high energy costs, and a need for enhanced energy security and diversification. Continued development of sustainable energy projects, supported by sovereigns, international donors, financial institutions and private sector participation, is essential for the countries' green transformation.

- a. Which steps are governments taking to address infrastructure challenges and fostering a stable regulatory environment?
- b. How can South-South cooperation, technology innovation and international investment support unlocking the full potential of PNG energy sector?
- c. Can you share specific examples where collaborations with Japan and UNDP under the Green Transformation Program are being successful in advancing energy and climate targets?

[For MoEJ]

Greener energy transition, NDC implementation, and advancing circular economy (TBC)

[For the Private Sector in Japan]

Possible solutions by the private sector to promote circularity for just energy transition (TBC)

[For all panelists]:

- a. Considering the diverse priorities of Samoa, Papua New Guinea, and Vanuatu, how can we ensure that the transition to cleaner, more resilient energy systems is inclusive and just for all communities?
- b. What policies or strategies have been effective in engaging local stakeholders in this transition?
- c. How can South-South and triangular cooperation be leveraged to support SIDS in their unique energy transition pathways?