



REGIONAL PROCESS SESSION DESCRIPTION FORM 2.

10TH WORLD WATER FORUM

Regional Session Code and Title:

RP9 - Water Security and Pacific Small Island Developing States (SIDS)

Regional Session Coordinators (Name, Position, Organization, email, mobile number):

1. Dave Hebblethwaite, Water Security and Governance Coordinator, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Email: daveh@spc.int, Mobile: +679 9983059. 2. Mary Alalo, Water Security Engagement Lead, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC). Email: marya@spc.int. Mobile: +679 2350385.

Regional Session Description including objectives and expected outcomes (500 words maximum):

Small Island Developing States (SIDS) of the Oceania Sub-Region continue to endure some of the lowest levels of access to safe water and sanitation of any region in the world and remain disproportionately impacted by the water-related impacts of disasters and climate change - including floods and drought that continue to impact the sub-region in the months leading up to this Forum. Latest data gathered by Pacific Island Countries and Territories indicate that approximately half of the Pacific population lives without access to basic drinking water facilities, and more than two thirds live without access to basic sanitation. These whole-of-Pacific numbers remain relatively stagnant compared to other global regions that have seen significant improvements in access over the past decade.

While every Pacific Island Country and Territory remains active in improving the water security of their vulnerable communities, in many cases these efforts are not keeping pace with the pressures of population growth and movement, disaster setbacks and the accelerating impacts of climate change. If current trajectories persist, millions of Pacific islanders will continue to endure water insecurity for generations to come, with profound implications for public health, socio-economic development, food and energy security, the environment, and human rights. The scale of the challenge for the region as a whole requires a fundamental recalibration of government priorities and investments, along with a meaningful shift in the scale and type of support provided by development partners.

The **objectives** of the session are to: provide a space for Pacific Island Country and Territory representatives to convey stories of Pacific resilience, including local water security solutions that harness traditional knowledge and governance systems; and highlight the importance of accelerated support to empower Pacific communities to establish, operate, and maintain safe and resilient water and sanitation systems throughout all conditions.

Expected **outcomes** include: an improved understanding of the water security issues of Small Island Developing States and the role of innovative and climate-resilient solutions; and strengthened collaboration and partnerships between Pacific SIDS and development partners on water security actions.



Day: Tuesday 21st May 2025 (16:20 - 18:10pm)

Venue: Kintamani 3.

Detailed Regional Session Plan:

Chair: Dr Chris Vehe, Permanent Secretary of the Solomon Islands Ministry of Mines, Energy, Rural Electrification, Water Resources Management and Geohazards.

ESTIMATED TIMING	ITEM DESCRIPTION / ROLE	SPEAKERS	Key Points	SPEAKERS STATUS (OK OR TBC)
10 mins	Introduction of session objectives and keynote speakers.	Dr. Chris Vehe Permanent Secretary, Solomon Islands Ministry of Mines, Energy, Rural Electrification, Water Resources Management and Geohazards.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Pacific Island countries and territories have extreme vulnerabilities to climate change risks and related disasters. ➤ Small low-lying islands thus have limited fresh groundwater resources and surface water that are prone to increasing salination due to saltwater intrusion, loss of freshwater sources, pollution, and the increasing impacts of droughts and flooding on low-lying and volcanic small island states. ➤ The critical importance of accelerating access to climate finance, innovative and sustainable financing, and technical support to empower Pacific communities to establish, operate, and maintain safe and resilient water and sanitation 	Ok

			<p>systems throughout all conditions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Importance of strengthening engagement in water security as a key element of resilience ➤ Critical importance of including water security as a key strategic outcome pillar in international, regional, and national level documents 	
10 mins	Water security and Pacific resilience	Dave Hebblethwaite, Water Security Coordinator and Governance Lead, Pacific Community (SPC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ High Exposure of Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTS) to the recurring risks of climate-related disasters and geohazards ➤ PICTS lagging behind other regions in SDG 6 targets. ➤ Progress made but not keeping pace with increasing populations and the ongoing impacts of recurring disasters on water resources, systems, and services. ➤ Importance of multi-sectoral partnerships such as the Pacific Islands Atoll Partnership and the Pacific Water Security Technical Working Group ➤ Water Security Action in PICTS requires strengthening 	OK

			<p>engagement in water security as a key determinant of resilience.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Water Action is climate Action 	
10 mins	<p>Progress on Access to Household access to Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene services in the Pacific Island Countries and territories - Joint Monitoring Program Report 2000 -2022.</p>	<p>Kencho Namgyal - Chief WASH Officer, UNICEF Pacific & Co-chair of the Pacific Resilience Partnership Water Security Technical Working Group</p>	<p>Key Words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Water security ➤ Basic and safely managed drinking water ➤ Basic and safely managed sanitation services ➤ Basic Hygiene services <p>Key Focus</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ SDG6- Clean water and sanitation ➤ Progress on access to Household WASH ➤ UN-Water Integrated Monitoring Initiative for SDG 6 ➤ WASH in households in odd years. ➤ WASH in schools and health facilities in even years. ➤ National data sources used for the JMP 2023 report. ➤ Safely managed drinking water services ➤ Safely managed sanitation services ➤ Basic Hygiene Services ➤ Data on the Pacific Island countries shows that by 2030 at 	Ok

			<p>current rates of progress, universal access to basic drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene will not be achieved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ At current trends, 67% of the sub-regional population is estimated to have access to basic WASH services by 2030. ➤ Coverage with basic sanitation is low and declining. ➤ In 2022, 38% of the regional population had access to basic hygiene services at home. ➤ In 2022, two out of five people in the Pacific lack access to basic drinking water facilities. ➤ Since 2010 the population of people without access to basic sanitation increased by 2.2 million ➤ The Pacific's access to basic drinking water services has slightly declined over the past decade. ➤ Seven years after the formation of the SDGs, half of the Pacific Island countries still lack nationally representative estimates for access to safely managed drinking water and services, and safely managed sanitation and services. ➤ Pacific island countries did not increase the proportion of the population with access to basic 	
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			<p>sanitation services of the past decade.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Excluding PNG almost half of the Pacific population have access to safely managed sanitation. ➤ Significant fecal contamination of drinking water ➤ Recurring climate-related disaster impacts (droughts, El Nino, cyclones, floods, sea level rise, earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis) on WASH infrastructures and services lead to disease outbreaks, water pollution and contamination, displaced populations, and loss of dignity. <p>Key Points going forward.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Significant acceleration is required across the Pacific to meet the SDG target of basic drinking water services by 2030. 2. Achieving global SDG targets by 2030 will require a 10x increase in current rates of progress and commitment and increased financing is critical. 3. Huge disparities between and within countries (Urban/Rural areas- main Island and outer Island) exist, and more efforts 	
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			<p>are needed to close the inequities and enhance water security.</p> <p>4. Pacific Water Utilities plays a major role in the contribution to the achievement of SDGs extension of climate and disaster resilient services and monitoring</p>	
10 mins	Water Security from a Pacific water utility perspective.	Ms Misileti Masoe Satuala, Project Development Coordinator, Pacific Water and Wastewater Association (PWWA)	<p>Key Words:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Water Utilities ➤ Benchmarking ➤ Capacity Building ➤ Young Water Professionals ➤ Ministerial Meeting ➤ Gender Inclusion <p>Key Points</p> <p>Bench Marking :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Shaping a high-performing and sustainable Pacific water and wastewater utilities sector. ➤ Performance assessment and benchmarking as a key instrument in the development and sustainment of water and sanitation services in the Pacific Island states and territories. 	OK

			<p>Capacity Building of Utilities and Governance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Developing expertise and capacities, collaborating, and advocating for the sustainable management of water and wastewater services in the Pacific region ➤ Coordinate with donors a training program for utilities to address gaps that are identified as part of the benchmarking exercise and also its training needs analysis. <p>Annual Conference and Expo:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ An annual event for the water and wastewater sector in the Pacific islands bringing together like-minded professionals, leaders in water and wastewater in the public and private sectors, and leaders in the political arena from across the Pacific to share experiences and knowledge, learn from each other, and build new relationships. ➤ Provide an opportunity for the private sector and partners to exhibit their products and any emerging technologies at the EXPO and network with 	
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			<p>representatives of 30 utilities from around the Pacific.</p> <p>Young Water Professional Program:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ PWWA Flagship Program focuses on building leadership skills and mentoring experts from the region. ➤ Sharing ideas on resolving emerging issues ➤ Developing “together” innovative solutions ➤ Promoting and strengthening the roles of gender equality in the sector. <p>Ministerial Forum:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Annual Water ministerial meeting bringing water leaders of the region in this critical sector to elevate water and sanitation challenges faced by the region into prominence at the regional and international level. ➤ Ministerial Communique with Water Security Commitment Outcomes 	
10 mins	Supporting the water security of remote rural	Sheilla Funubo- Researcher and Lecturer,	Key Words:	Ok

	<p>island communities: The Importance of Local and Cultural Knowledge to Support Planning for Climate-Resilient Water in Solomon Islands</p>	<p>Solomon Islands National University (SINU)</p> <p>Dr Regina Souter, International Water Centre, Griffith University</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Potential impacts of climate hazards ➤ Resilience of water systems ➤ Local and cultural knowledge ➤ Building bridges <p>Key Points:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Solomon Islands - the majority of the population lives in small, remote communities. Only 35 - 40% of rural communities have access to drinking water 58% of the rural population practices open defecation. One of many Pacific Island countries that faces unique challenges in achieving water security for all. ➤ Local and cultural knowledge has proven important in community water management for understanding of potential impacts of climate hazards, traditional practices that could be revived to improve the resilience of water systems, building bridges between old and young people with an interest in traditional knowledge and practices, appreciating their own cultures and customs and that many solutions are within them (especially for behavioral actions), inspiring and 	
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			<p>motivating action (that is linked to reviving traditional customs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Communities are responsible to plan and manage WASH through the community water committee. ➤ Very limited support from the government or other external actors ➤ Increasing Climate hazards & disasters affecting both infrastructure and water resources due to more/stronger cyclones, more flooding & landslides, changing rainfall patterns (more floods; more/longer droughts) increasing sea level rising & increasing storm surges and earthquakes ➤ high failure rate of community piped water systems due to non-functional Water Committees and difficulty planning and mitigating future risks. ➤ Community-based Water Security Improvement Planning (CWSIP 1 & 2) ➤ Community facilitation and capacity development approach based on Water Safety Planning to improve risk-based planning and management of water quality and quantity, by community Water Committees 	
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Designed to build on strengths of local culture & knowledge. ➤ Planning for climate hazards - building on local and cultural histories. ➤ Community-associated past traditional practices with better 'past situations' for water access/management ➤ Working with the grain” - building on existing levels of social cohesion ➤ Innovative planning processes, facilitated by supporting actors, should be designed to work with existing cultural strengths, such as levels of social cohesion (e.g. zones) and local cultural knowledge. 	
20 mins	Interactive Session on Q & A	Moderator - Mary Alalo, Water Security Engagement Lead, Pacific Community	1. Why are Pacific Water Security issues different from other regions?	Ok
10 mins	Session Outcomes, Policy Recommendations, and Conclusions	Dr. Chris Vehe, Permanent Secretary, Solomon Islands Ministry of Mines, Energy, Rural Electrification, Water Resources Management and Geohazards.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing access to climate and disaster financing for the establishment of resilient water and sanitation infrastructures and capacities. 2. Strengthening the capacity of Water Utilities as key actors in achieving SDG 6 targets. 3. The critical need to accelerate water security action to address the gaps in SDG 6 targets with 	Ok

			<p>climate and sustainable financing for water security investments.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 4. The need for partners to support PICTS strengthen WASH data collection capacity for WASH monitoring and reporting. 5. Strengthened collaboration and partnerships between Pacific SIDS and development partners on water security actions. 6. Strengthening Community Water Management capacities combining technical knowledge, science, local knowledge, and cultural values and practices to build resilient water infrastructures and systems. 7. Critical need for innovative and climate-resilient solutions 8. Inclusion of GEDSI in Water Security Programs. 	
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