

**Sustainable Sea Transport Talanoa 2014 and the  
International Conference on Renewable Energy and Climate Change**

Lower Laucala Campus, USP, Suva, Fiji  
14 – 18 July, 2014

**Address by Feleti Teo; PIDF Secretary General**

Excellencies

Vice Chancellor and President of USP

Faipule and Minister Toloa from Tokelau

Ladies and gentlemen

1. Let me thank the Vice Chancellor and organisers of the two conferences for the invitation to participate and to present at this opening session.
2. It is indeed an enormous pleasure and privilege for me and for the Pacific Islands Development Forum (PIDF) to be part of these two conferences: the 2<sup>nd</sup> Sustainable Sea Transport Talanoa and the International Conference on Renewable Energy and Climate Change.
3. The subject matters of these conferences are of vital importance to our island communities and are at the heart of PIDF's core work programme.
4. I am very impressed with the arrangements for these conferences and the many partners and stakeholders that have come together to support the conferences which is demonstrative of the kind of relationships needed to actively tackle these issues.
5. As you know the PIDF advocate for inclusivity and multi-stakeholder participation and is very pleased to be part of these conferences.
6. The PIDF is a relatively new regional arrangement (organisation) and is designed to provide the space for dialogue and talanoa that all sectors of society (public, private sector and civil society) participate as equal.
7. At the PIDF inaugural summit in 2013, the summit was presented with a compelling argument that reducing fuel dependency and prioritising low carbon transport solutions was critical to transitioning to green-growth.

8. As a result, sustainable transport and renewable energy are part of the 10 priority areas PIDF was committed to undertake to enable green-blue Pacific economies and are at core of the work programme of PIDF.
9. The track record of this region in addressing sustainable transport is unfortunately dismal and is a huge gap in the development agenda for most Pacific island countries and territories.
10. The Pacific is the most dependent region in the world on imported fossil fuel.
11. As a region more than 70% of that fuel is burnt for transport use. Electricity uses less than 20%.
12. In the current investment profile in renewable energy for the Pacific region, most if not all investment in energy is dedicated to renewable energy for electricity.
13. More than \$US500 million dollars is currently allocated by donors for Renewable Energy (RE) for electricity. ADB has just announced another \$228 million for this purpose.
14. But, as yet, there is no investment in supporting Pacific countries and communities to transition to low carbon sea transport futures.
15. We can readily understand providing reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity to all Pacific peoples is a critical priority.
16. But why is electricity our only priority for RE if the data shows that 70% of the imported fossil fuel is consumed by the transport sector, in particular sea transport?
17. So why does this imbalance exist?
18. There are many reasons but it is becoming clear that much of the reasoning can be traced to poor analysis and advice from experts and consultants from outside the region.
19. While the ocean is central to us here in the Pacific, for most of the world the ocean is something out there, across the beach, beyond the horizon.
20. As we know today, our ocean and our peoples are facing enormous challenges, many of them unprecedented in our history, as a result of climate change and the pressure on our fragile environment and eco-systems.

21. Meeting such challenges means finding solutions that are appropriate, affordable and achievable by our own communities and tailor-made to our own environment and our special requirements.
22. The Pacific people once awed the world with our ability to sail and navigate at will on renewable energy powered sustainable ships across the world's largest ocean. Sea transport remains the lifeline of many of our communities. But today we are almost entirely dependent on old, unsuitable, outdated, second hand fuel hungry ships many of them well past their use-by date.
23. So why shouldn't we reinvest in those traditional more sustainable and more environment friendly sea transport.
24. Finding such solutions will require bold, transformative and adaptive leadership to support the shift towards green-blue Pacific economies.
25. Leaders must champion green growth by thinking 'outside of the box', drawing on traditional practices and building on existing mechanisms.
26. It is our hope that these two conferences, and the networks of international cutting edge knowledge of partners associated with them, can provide us with the tools, research findings and innovation needed for us to begin to make the transition to green growth.
27. Pursuing green growth is central to the establishment and purpose of PIDF.
28. Last month, I presented to the 2<sup>nd</sup> PIDF Summit the case for the need for Pacific economies to transition to green growth, economic growth that respect the sustainability of the environment and its social implications on societies.
29. I will now like to provide some insight on the work of the PIDF.

## **SLIDE 2**

30. The theme for the 2<sup>nd</sup> PIDF summit is "*Green Growth in the Pacific: Building Resilient Futures and Sustainable Partnerships*". And central to that theme was the urgent need for the Pacific to transition to green economies.
31. A Pacific that asserts a distinctive Pacific model of "green growth in blue economies" that is aligned to sustainable development principles and practices.

**SLIDE 3**

32. At the inaugural PIDF summit, leaders of governments, private sector and civil society agreed on the “10 Things” that must be done to achieve green-blue Pacific economies. These “10 Things” are now at the foundation of the PIDF work programme. These are on the slide and include h) “sustainable transport” and j) “renewable energy”.
33. All the “10 Things” have direct correlations to the issues we will be discussing in these two conferences this week.

**SLIDE 4**

34. The vision for PIDF is for “a united, distinctive and sustainable Pacific society”.
35. The mission of the PIDF is “enabling green-blue Pacific economies through inclusive strategies, multi-stakeholder governance, and genuine partnerships.
36. This builds on the unique characteristics of PIDF of inclusivity, multi-stakeholder participation and genuine partnerships and is the intended overall impact of the work of the PIDF.

**SLIDE 5**

37. In order to achieve the mission, the work program of the PIDF will support the development of ‘regional and national frameworks implementing effective transformation of unsustainable development practices through the use of innovative tools such as green-blue economy, adaptive leadership, and genuine partnerships for Pacific communities’
38. This focuses on the transformation of unsustainable development practices, utilising innovative approaches, leadership and partnerships that bring about tangible changes to Pacific communities.
39. It also emphasises the importance of the implementation of national frameworks to promote sustainable development and the need for these to be aligned and integrated with regional approaches.

**SLIDE 6**

40. Ultimately, we want to shift away from a development approach (or paradigm) that places excessive priority to economic development, that can compromise social development opportunities, lead to inequity and degrade natural capital.

**SLIDE 7**

41. A shift towards a more balanced sustainable development that supports a united, distinctive and sustainable Pacific society through green-blue economies.
42. This will, of course, be possible through the collective efforts of all stakeholders and partners.

**SLIDE 8**

43. Where does PIDF fit into this. We hope that the PIDF can provide a convergence point where existing and new approaches to green-blue economies are integrated and strengthened.
44. In this context, working with national mechanisms and ensuring integration with national planning processes and sectoral development plans will be critical.
45. Important initiatives on green growth are already gaining momentum.
46. Fiji held its national green growth summit in Suva last month.
47. Papua New Guinea and Tonga are also making progress in the implementation of nationally appropriate green growth approaches.
48. We also acknowledge the leadership of the MSG Leaders in their Declaration of commitment to Green Growth and the development of the MDG Green Growth Framework.
49. PIDF will work with these national and sub-regional approaches and focus attention on creating an enabling environment for green-blue economies that engages communities and creates the incentives for private sector leadership in greening economies.
50. This week's conferences are demonstrative of the commitment of partners such as USP, IUCN and many others to work with PIDF to 'walk the talk' on the development of a distinctive Pacific model of "green growth in blue economies".

**SLIDE 9**

51. In conclusion, there is no doubt that climate change must be the greatest threat to the security of our ocean and people.

52. The Pacific must seriously address its heavy reliance on imported fossil fuel and I hope that at the end of the week we are able to provide some solutions to the critical issue of sustainable sea transport and wise investments in renewable energy.
53. These conferences are held at a critical time, when the global community is in the process of articulating the post 2015 development agenda that will replace the MDGs.
54. In the first week of September will be the Global conference on SIDS in Samoa. It provides us an opportunity to negotiate with the UN agencies and the wider international community a new agenda for addressing the crippling issues of imported fossil fuel dependency and adapting to climate change.
55. So my suggestion is that we use the opportunity presented by these conferences this week not only to learn what technology and barriers exist but also to plan and discuss how we can provide solutions to take together to Samoa. And I hope this will be part of the outcome of these conferences.
56. Again, I thank USP and partners for hosting these important conferences and the invitation.
57. Vinaka

**END**