

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF PACIFIC ISLAND PARTICIPANTS
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Former Prime Minister of Japan and President of the Japan Water Forum
Mr. RYUTARO HASHIMOTO
Dr. KIM HAK SU – Executive Secretary UNESCAP
Dr. GEERT van der LINDEN – Vice President ADB
H.E. Mr. WANG SHUCHENG – Minister of Water Resources, Republic of China
H.E. Mr. Ir. DJOKO KIRMANTO – Minister of Works, Republic of Indonesia

Mr/Madame Chair

I have the honour to speak on behalf of the Pacific Island participants attending the 4th World Water Forum including representatives from Samoa, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Guam and especially my own country, the Republic of Palau.

Pacific Island Countries have vulnerable environments and many are faced with difficult social and economic challenges in the pursuit of sustainable development.

Mr/Madame Chair

Like other small island countries we have uniquely fragile water resources due to our small size, lack of natural storage and competing land use and are prone to natural and anthropogenic hazards, including droughts, cyclones, typhoons and urban pollution.

In the lead-up to the 3rd World Water Forum held in Kyoto 2003, the Pacific Island Countries have developed the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management which has been endorsed by 18 countries of which 16 at Heads of State level.

The Pacific sub-region worked extremely hard with its counterparts from the Caribbean and Indian Ocean to provide a meaningful contribution to the Water in Small Island Countries session in Kyoto facilitated by the Asian Development Bank and SOPAC.

The session resulted in a joint Small Island Countries statement and a list of agreed priority actions as well as a Joint Programme for Action on Water and Climate.

These outcomes assisted in the development and eventually the financing, of regional programmes that address a number of these priorities for small island countries such as Water Governance, Water Safety, the Hydrological Cycle Observing System and Integrated Water Resources Management.

The Pacific Partnership Initiative on Sustainable Water Management has been set up as a main outcome of the Kyoto preparations and the World Summit on Sustainable Development, and aims to facilitate the implementation of actions in the Pacific on a national, regional and international level through enhanced collaboration.

Mr/Madame Chair

The Pacific Regional Action Plan not only provided a coordinated and agreed approach but has significantly driven water up the national and regional agendas. This has been seen to varying degrees in the initiatives taken by countries on water resources management and the increased political support given by governments since 2003.

Much progress has been made in the area of water governance at national level including the development of water policies and strategies through consultative processes in a number of countries.

For example, **Fiji** has created an interim National Water Committee and drafted a cross-sectoral water policy;

Papua New Guinea has held national consultations are developing a multi-sectoral water policy and national action plan and have established a National Water Association;

Samoa has developed two national water policies and a draft water sector plan following comprehensive consultation with all key stakeholders.

while;

Following **Palau's** active participation in the 3rd World Water Forum, we have joined other Pacific Island Countries to implement local and national actions on sustainable water management.

Control development being the policy of the current Administration, emphasis is put on sustainable management of our limited water, land and fragile marine resources. Perhaps we may be the first in the Pacific to enact a law i.e. Protected Area Network (PAN), which constitutes an action plan that requires national and state governments as well as NGOs, to work together to protect the environment while allowing for sustainable development. Of course water resources are to be protected under this initiative.

Mr/Madame Chair

The Pacific Island Countries and territories whilst recording significant progress since the 3rd World Water Forum acknowledge there are critical areas and issues which continue to impede progress on sustainable water management and achieving the MDG targets on water and sanitation.

The Japan Water Forum invited the Pacific Island Countries to participate in the Asia-Pacific regional preparations for the 4th World Water Forum. This dialogue allowed us to reflect on the strategic developments over the past 3 years and provided an excellent opportunity to review the implementation of the Portfolio of Water Actions and in particular the Pacific Regional Action Plan.

The Pacific sub-region welcomes the establishment of the Asia-Pacific Water Forum that will advance progress in our endeavour through continued partnership and collaboration. We thank H.E. Mr. Ryutaro Hashimoto for taking the lead in this important initiative and we look forward to our continued engagement with our Asian counterparts.

Thank you, Mr/ Madame Chair.

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