

Small Islands Dialogue on Water and Climate

Parallel Session for Priority Theme on Water–Related Disaster Management

Asia-Pacific Water Summit

Beppu City, Oita Prefecture, Japan, 4 December 2007, Tuesday, 9:00–10:30

[Session Summary]



The session on Water and Climate called attention to the vulnerability and particular needs of small island countries to effectively manage their water sector under a highly variable and changing climate. *As was stated in the Mauritius Small Island Developing States declaration stated: "the access to safe drinking water, the provision of sanitation and the promotion of hygiene are the foundations of human dignity, public health and economic and social development and are among the priorities for SIDS".*

A dialogue was held between Leaders of small island States and their partner organizations to discuss and share the innovations and opportunities for effective implementation that have been adopted to address the vulnerability of their water resources and the challenges that they face to provide safe drinking water and basic sanitation to their communities.

One of the main discussion points included the need to change the paradigm for dealing with the vulnerability of small island States from disaster response to disaster risk reduction and disaster management.

The best approach to achieve the MDG targets of halving the proportion of people without access to safe drinking water and basic sanitation by 2015 and to manage the impacts of climate change on water is through Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM).

Climate Adaptation, Disaster Risk Reduction and Water Safety Planning need to be mainstreamed into IWRM linked to National development plans and strategies.

The regional adopted strategy, the Pacific Regional Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management, and its associated partnership initiative, provide a holistic framework for increased and coordinated international support aiming to support small island countries' roadmaps on water and sanitation.

The Pacific Alliance for Sustainability (PAS) established through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the establishment of a global Adaptation Fund to be decided on in Bali later this month, will be two useful mechanisms to assist achieving the MDG targets on water and sanitation.