Reducing vulnerability requires stronger political leadership, improved monitoring and evaluation, and end-user-friendly information; these will ensure that disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation considerations are mainstreamed in development plans and included in budgets, that well-designed disaster and climate risk initiatives are delivered efficiently, and that leaders make informed decisions.

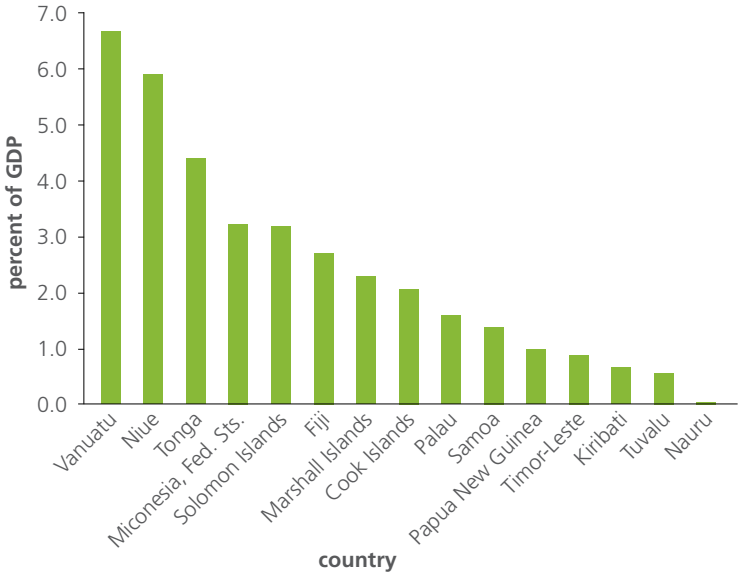
Acting Today For Tomorrow

A POLICY AND PRACTICE NOTE FOR CLIMATE- AND DISASTER-RESILIENT DEVELOPMENT IN THE PACIFIC ISLANDS REGION

Policy Brief
Guidance for Regional Organizations

Pacific island countries and territories are among the most vulnerable in the world. They combine high exposure to frequent and damaging natural hazards with low capacity to manage the resulting risks. Since 1950 extreme events have affected approximately 9.2 million people in the Pacific region: they have caused 9,811 reported deaths and damage of around US$3.2 billion. (See figure 1 for average annual economic losses in the region as a result of cyclones, earthquakes, and tsunami). Vulnerability is exacerbated by poor socioeconomic development planning, which has increased exposure and disaster losses, and by climate change, which has increased the magnitude of cyclones, droughts, and flooding. The total value of infrastructure, buildings, and cash crops considered at some level of risk in the Pacific is estimated at over **US$112 billion**. Inaction could therefore prove extremely expensive and will only grow more expensive in the future.

Figure 1. Economic losses due to tropical cyclones, earthquakes, and tsunami



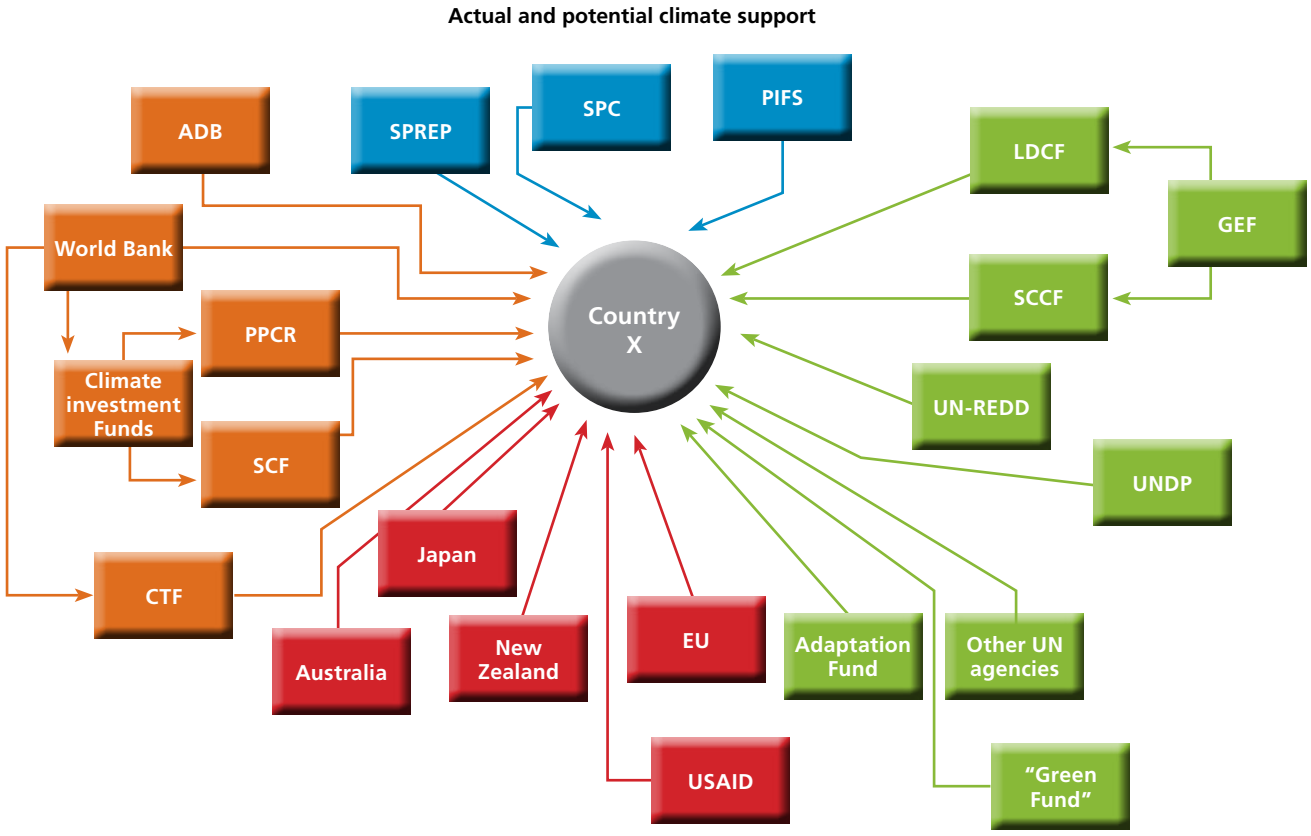
Source: World Bank, *Pacific Catastrophe Risk Assessment and Financing Initiative, Risk Assessment—Summary Report* (Washington, DC: World Bank, forthcoming).

Development that integrates risk considerations is the best solution to the problem of vulnerability in the Pacific. If this solution is not achieved, economic and human losses from extreme events will increase, slow-onset and low-intensity climate and weather events will continue to create hardships for the poor and other marginalized groups, economic growth will be slow, and progress toward Millennium Development Goals will be delayed.

A plethora of disaster, climate change, and development sector policy and planning instruments now exists, including a regional policy for disaster risk reduction (DRR), another for climate change adaptation (CCA), and a third for economic integration, development, security and governance. In the last 10 years, moreover, climate and disaster funding and support services available to Pacific island countries have grown (figure 2). But DRR, CCA, and development largely operate as three distinct communities of practice in the Pacific. Policy instruments, though well intended and the product of substantial thought and

^ **Photo: World Bank. President Tong planting mangroves, Tarawa, Kiribati.**

Figure 2. The diversity and complexity of climate funding and support sources to a typical Pacific Island Country



Source: Courtesy of Toily Kurbanov, Deputy Resident Representative, UNDP, Fiji.

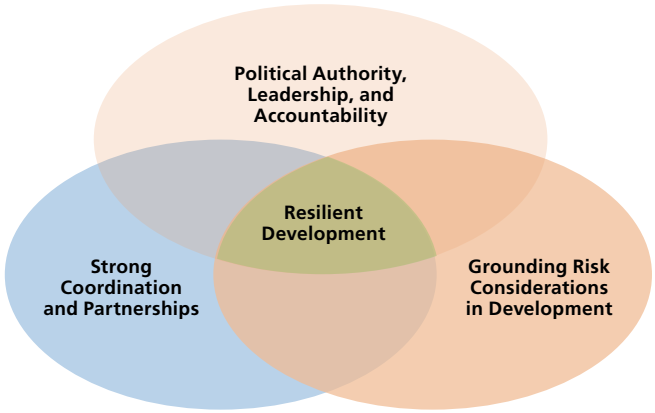
Note: Orange boxes indicate support from multilateral development banks; green boxes indicate support from other multilateral sources; red boxes indicate support from bilateral sources; and blue boxes indicate support from regional organizations. ADB = Asian Development Bank, CTF = Clean Technology Fund, EU = European Union, GEF = Global Environment Facility, ICCAI = International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative, JICA = Japanese International Cooperation Agency, LDCF = Least Developed Country Fund, MDGF = Millennium Development Goals Achievement Fund, PPCR = Pilot Programme for Climate Resilience, SCCF = Special Climate Change Fund, SCF = Strategic Climate Fund, UNDP = United Nations Development Programme, UN-REDD = United Nations Collaborative Programme on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, USAID = United States Agency for International Development .

effort, are not well coordinated, and investments are often short term and poorly integrated. The institutions responsible for supporting DRR and CCA (governments, regional organizations, and donor and development institutions) have weak partnerships, tend to be structurally rigid, and often work in isolation from the actors involved in socioeconomic development planning and implementation. Weak cooperation among the three communities (disaster risk, climate change, and development) and inadequate integration of their instruments prevent available resources from being used efficiently and from producing effective and lasting improvements.

The current arrangement is inefficient and expensive, and it fails to address the underlying causes of vulnerability or to make disaster and climate risk economy-wide and development-wide issues. But barriers to achieving climate- and disaster-resilient development can be overcome if three critical requirements are met (figure 3):

1. Risk considerations must be integrated in the formulation and implementation of social and economic development policies and plans.
2. Political authority, leadership, and accountability must be robust and effective
3. Coordination and cooperation among actors must be increased.

Figure 3. Key requirements for climate- and disaster-resilient development



Source: Authors.

Practical steps for grounding risk considerations in development:

1. Strengthen support to relevant institutions to ensure that disaster risk reduction and climate change adaptation are well coordinated at all levels.
2. Focus on outcomes rather than inputs to clarify and rationally assign the roles and responsibilities of institutions.
3. Support and encourage the mainstreaming of DRR and CCA considerations in development planning and budgetary processes.
4. Bolster monitoring and evaluation of regional programs in order to improve outcomes and impacts, and build on existing frameworks that monitor development.
5. Ensure that data are available, easy to access, serve the needs of member country end-users, and inform the selection of priority investments and development programs.

Practical steps for achieving strong political authority, leadership, and accountability:

1. Support the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, the region's preeminent political agency, to secure political leadership and accountability at the regional level.
2. Provide appropriate capacity support to leaders to ensure that they have the knowledge, skills, and awareness to make sound decisions about disaster and climate risk management.

Practical steps for promoting strong coordination and partnerships:

1. Encourage mutual trust, respect, and flexibility among all regional actors to foster good working relationships and ensure adequate resourcing and efficient sharing of knowledge and implementation capacity.
2. Optimize the comparative advantage of regional institutions by appropriately dividing labor between them (for instance, coordination responsibility could be anchored in the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, which oversees regional development, cooperation, and integration; and DRR and CCA services could be handled by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, which have the technical mandate and capacity to deliver them).
3. Improve alignment between regional institutions; doing so would enable achievement of overarching Pacific Plan objectives by integrating climate and disaster risk reduction efforts and would facilitate effective whole-of-government and regional approaches.
4. Use strong and transparent consultation and coordination mechanisms to facilitate sharing of data, good practices, and lessons learned.
5. Promote joint planning, programming, and implementation of DRR and CCA interventions in ways that make optimum use of actors' comparative advantages.

^ Photo: World Bank. Consequences of the 2012 floods in the Western Division, Viti Levu, Fiji.

Policy Brief

Acting Today For Tomorrow

This policy brief is based on a longer World Bank document, "Acting Today for Tomorrow: A Policy and Practice Note for Climate- and Disaster-Resilient Development in the Pacific Islands Region" (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2012). All relevant documentation for the brief can be found in the policy and practice note.

^ Photo: World Bank. New schools have been built in relocated communities in Samoa.

The writing team benefitted greatly from the feedback and guidance of peer reviewers and advisors from the Pacific region and from the World Bank. Special acknowledgment is due to the organizations that supported the World Bank in the dissemination of the policy and practice note, particularly the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme. We also acknowledge the financial support of the partners of the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery.

THE WORLD BANK

1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433 USA
Telephone: 202 477-1234
Facsimile: 202 477-6391
Internet: www.worldbank.org
www.worldbank.org/pi
E-mail: feedback@worldbank.org

GFDRR
Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery

1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433 USA
Telephone: 202 458-0640
Facsimile: 202 522-3227
Internet: www.gfdrr.org
E-mail: drm@worldbank.org