

Personal details removed for proactive release.

Thank you for your email of 26 June 2025 in which you request the following under the Official Information Act 1982 (OIA):

*"Pursuant to the Official Information Act 1982, I am writing to request information regarding the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (MFAT) work on the Climate Mobility Action Plan and related research in the Pacific, specifically for the years 2024 and 2025 (or since the current government was formed)*

*I am interested in any documents, reports, briefings or updates pertaining to:*

- The Climate Mobility Action Plan, including its progress, implementation, or any revisions made during 2024.*
- An update on the research that MFAT has commissioned or undertaken in the Pacific related to climate mobility, which was due back in 2024*
- Any updates/ briefings from the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility also."*

On 3 July 2025, we contacted you to discuss a refinement to your request. On the same day you agreed to refine the scope of your request to be for:

*"Information regarding the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade's (MFAT) work on the Climate Mobility Action Plan and related research in the Pacific, specifically for the years 2024 and 2025 (or since the current government was formed)*

*I am interested in any documents, reports, briefings or updates pertaining to:*

- The Climate Mobility Action Plan, including its progress, implementation, or any revisions made during 2024.*
- Any updates/ briefings from the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility."*

Please see the following table for the list of enclosed documents in scope of your request:

#	Title	Date
1.	Input to brief for MFAT Permanent Representative Geneva, Deborah Geels, meeting with Amy Pope, IOM,	May 2025
2.	Background brief on climate mobility for Berlin Post attendance at Berlin Climate Mobility Forum June 2025	June 2025
3.	Background briefing for MSD's Pacific Reference Group - for presentation by MFAT	27 June 2025
4.	DSPDG Bilateral Brief: Meeting with Amy Pope, Director General IOM	25 August 2025
5.	Briefing on Climate Mobility for DS EMA Taha MacPherson for dialogue with German Parliamentarians,	February 2024
6.	Paper to Te Hurumanu: Climate Mobility, August 2024	August 2024
7.	Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility	9 August 2024
8.	Climate mobility – update and next steps	6 September 2024

Some information is withheld under the following sections of the OIA:

- 6(a): to avoid prejudicing the security or defence of New Zealand or the international relations of the New Zealand Government;
- 9(2)(a): to protect individuals' privacy;
- 9(2)(f)(iv): to protect the confidentiality of advice tendered by Ministers of the Crown and officials; and
- 9(2)(g)(i): to protect the free and frank expression of opinions by departments.

Where the information has been withheld under section 9 of the OIA, no public interest in releasing the information has been identified that would override the reasons for withholding it.

Please note that it is our policy to proactively release our responses to official information requests where possible. Therefore, our response to your request (with your personal information removed) may be published on the Ministry website:

[www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/](http://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/about-us/contact-us/official-information-act-responses/)

If you have any questions about this decision, you can contact us by email at: [DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz](mailto:DM-ESD@mfat.govt.nz). You have the right to seek an investigation and review by the Ombudsman of this decision by contacting [www.ombudsman.parliament.nz](http://www.ombudsman.parliament.nz) or freephone 0800 802 602.

Nāku noa, nā

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a series of loops and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Owen Thornber  
for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

## Input to brief for MFAT Permanent Representative Geneva, Deborah Geels, meeting with Amy Pope, IOM, May 2025

Amy Pope has been Director General of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) since 2023, previously holding the role of Deputy Director General for Management and Reform. Before joining IOM, DG Pope served as the Senior Adviser on Migration to US President Biden and Deputy Homeland Security Adviser to President Obama. Ms Pope has also occupied positions at the US Department of Justice and US Senate.



### Discussion points

New Zealand funds IOM and partners to deliver a regional programme supporting Pacific dialogue, capacity and capability to respond to climate mobility challenges. You may wish to:

- commend the IOM on the progress of the regional programme to put in place technical and capacity support for six countries to enable them to progress their priorities in this area. This includes support to develop guidelines on the relocation of communities at risk of displacement due to climate change in PNG and Niue.
- ask Ms Pope about the IOM's pilot programme in Fiji, Philippines and Indonesia to develop a risk index and predictive model that will improve quantification, understanding and forecasting of potential future challenges linked to climate change and migration, including climate-induced displacement.

### Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS)

The **MFAT-funded PCCMHS programme** supports regional dialogue and capability to strengthen the Pacific's ability to respond to climate mobility challenges. **IOM** is the lead implementing agency, working in partnership with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), together with Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD). Funding from MFAT totalled NZ\$1.1m for phase one, and the current value of phase two is NZ\$10.5m. Phase 2 of the PCCMHS will continue until early 2026.

As part of PCCMHS, IOM is providing **bilateral support** to PNG, Tuvalu, Tonga, RMI, Niue and Palau, including technical advice, research and capacity building to support country-led development and implementation of national climate mobility (and related) policies.

With IOM support:

- **Tuvalu** is undertaking community awareness raising of the impacts of climate change and mobility options. It is also receiving support to draft a climate mobility framework or guideline.
- **Niue** is developing planned relocation guidelines to support an application for GCF funding for planned relocations (process to confirm and scope up is underway).
- **Tonga** is developing and implementing a national sustainable spatial management framework and, which will include plans to protect vulnerable areas, identify areas for relocation, and promote adaptive land use practices.

- **PNG** is developing planned relocation guidelines, including setting up a interdepartmental working group, risk and hazard mapping, raising public awareness, and national and community consultations.
- **Palau** is integrating mobility into its National Adaptation Plan, including community consultation and community awareness raising/education.
- **Republic of Marshall Islands** is developing a climate mobility whitepaper, including community consultation and mapping of relevant sectoral policies and identify opportunities to mainstream climate mobility. RMI is also planning for training/capability development for government officials and community leaders.

PCCMHS is also supporting development of an **Implementation Plan** for the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility. The Framework was endorsed by Pacific Island Forum Leaders in 2023 and is a global first that aims to provide practical guidance to governments planning for and managing climate mobility, while also respecting Members' national laws and policies. It includes a range of commitments (within the limits of national sovereignty), including to regional collaboration on cross-border and internal planned relocation and displacement as well as migration pathways in the context of climate change, without committing countries to domestic legislative or policy change.

#### **Other NZ Climate Mobility initiatives**

New Zealand has been actively supporting Pacific-led efforts to address issues related to climate induced people movement in the Pacific, including by supporting regional dialogue, as well as funding for technical assistance to Governments developing climate mobility policies. New Zealand has also contributed to the **Fiji Relocation Trust Fund** to implement planned relocation of Fijian communities affected by climate change (with an additional NZ\$3.6m announced by the Prime Minister in June 2024), and funding for an international non-government organisation to deliver peacebuilding activities within communities affected by climate change in rural and urban areas of Fiji and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea.

MFAT also funded **research on climate mobility** that showed climate impacts are already an important factor in decisions to move internally and across borders, alongside social and economic considerations, which remain the primary driver. It reinforced the strong desire of Pacific peoples to stay in homelands tied to identity, family and culture, with more support needed for adaptation at the community level to enable this. It identified the key drivers of climate mobility-related decisions included local population pressures, land and marine tenure, and water and food insecurity intersecting at the household level. It also demonstrated the importance of circular migration, such as labour mobility, as contributing to connecting between communities across borders, supporting Pacific resilience to the impacts of climate change.

#### **Other relevant IOM work in the Pacific**

IOM has been keeping us informed of a new initiative on displacement due to climate change that is being piloted in Fiji, Philippines, and Indonesia with funding from Europe (ECHO) and led out by IOM Bangkok, in partnership with IOM Pacific.



The approach includes development of a data tool operationalised through a matching fund to prevent displacement where risk (such as livelihood insecurity, food insecurity, water insecurity, inadequate housing, conflict) is assessed as high. It is a form of Anticipatory Action, but looking at more holistic and long term displacement risk. It includes:

- **A new Risk Index for Climate Displacement (RICD):** a risk index and predictive model that will improve quantification, understanding and forecasting of potential future challenges linked to climate change and migration, including climate-induced displacement, that will help governments, communities, and partners to increase the resilience of populations most likely to be impacted by climate-induced displacement and working towards averting or addressing loss and damage.
- **A new Climate Catalytic Fund (CCF):** an innovative financing tool that utilises blended finance to support governments, local private sector, and civil society in the design and implementation of projects that address the gaps highlighted by the RICD. The CCF builds on the foundation of anticipatory action while taking both a short- and long-term view, ranging from preparedness to resilience and prevention. During the pilot phase, CCF will function as a matching funds mechanism, where project developers must mobilise matching funds at least at a 1:1 ratio.

Released under the Official Information Act

# Background brief on climate mobility for Berlin Post attendance at Berlin Climate Mobility Forum June 2025

This brief provides background information for Post attendance at the Berlin Climate Mobility Forum from 16 to 17 June 2025, organized by the Global Centre for Climate Mobility with the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

## Key points

- Climate change is expected to increasingly drive movement within and from the Pacific. It is in New Zealand's interests to mitigate the security risks presented by the intensifying adverse impacts of natural disasters and environmental degradation that can lead to severe water and food insecurity, increased competition for scarce resources and consequent conflict and displacement, including across borders.
- For New Zealand, the focus of its climate mobility work is in the Pacific, in line with its broader strategic focus, and in line with evidence of the disproportionate impact of climate change on small island and developing nations.
- Understanding and responding to climate mobility is a priority for New Zealand and the Pacific, as acknowledged in 2023 by Pacific Island Forum Leaders. New Zealand supports the Pacific Regional Climate Mobility Framework, endorsed by Leaders, as a guide for Pacific government action on climate mobility.
- New Zealand supports the desire of the people of Pacific Island Countries and Territories to have the choice to stay in their homes and communities, grounded in their culture and traditions, acknowledging that where movement becomes necessary, a planned and inclusive approach is crucial.
- New Zealand has been actively supporting Pacific-led efforts to address issues related to climate induced people movement in the Pacific, including by supporting regional dialogue, funding for technical assistance to Governments developing climate mobility policies (such as guidelines for the planned relocation of communities), and commissioning actionable research.

## Background

### The Regional Framework on Climate Mobility articulates Pacific priorities

1. Understanding and responding to climate mobility is a priority for Pacific Leaders and is gaining increasing international attention. At their November 2023 meeting, Pacific Island Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility - a global first that aims to provide practical guidance to governments planning for and managing climate mobility, while also respecting Members' national laws and policies<sup>1</sup>. It considers the challenges and potential solutions across a range of types of climate mobility: staying in place ('immobility'); planned relocation; migration and displacement.
2. It includes a range of commitments (within the limits of national sovereignty), including to regional collaboration on cross-border and internal planned relocation

<sup>1</sup> Pacific Regional Framework On Climate Mobility <https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Pacific%20Regional%20Framework%20on%20Climate%20Mobility.pdf>

and displacement as well as migration pathways in the context of climate change, without committing countries to domestic legislative or policy change.

3. One important next step is the development of an implementation plan of the Framework to translate the high-level regional commitments into collective regional actions. New Zealand is an active participant in the Joint Working Group, Co-Chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu, which is overseeing development of the Plan.

#### **MFAT funds a regional climate mobility programme**

4. New Zealand funds the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS), which supported the development of the Regional Framework, and is facilitating development of the Implementation Plan.
5. The programme plays a key role to support regional dialogue and develop capability to strengthen the Pacific's ability to respond to climate mobility challenges. The programme has developed training for government officials, programme officers, and community leaders to foster stronger, proactive management of climate mobility at national and regional levels. It is also developing guidance for governments on best practice planned relocation of communities impacted by climate change.
6. The programme is providing bilateral support to six countries, including technical advice, research and capacity building to support country-led development and implementation of national climate mobility (and related) policies. With PCCMHS support:
  - **Tuvalu** is undertaking community awareness raising of the impacts of climate change and mobility options. It is also receiving support to draft a climate mobility framework or guideline.
  - **Niue** is undertaking community consultations to finalise a draft policy on planned relocation.
  - **Tonga** is developing and implementing a national sustainable spatial management framework, which will include plans to protect vulnerable areas, identify areas for relocation, and promote adaptive land use practices.
  - **PNG** is developing planned relocation guidelines, including setting up an interdepartmental working group, risk and hazard mapping, raising public awareness, and national and community consultations.
  - **Palau** is integrating mobility into its National Adaptation Plan, including community consultation and community awareness raising/education.
  - **Republic of Marshall Islands** is developing a climate mobility whitepaper, including community consultation and mapping of relevant sectoral policies and identify opportunities to mainstream climate mobility. RMI is also planning for training/capability development for government officials and community leaders.
7. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is the lead implementing agency, working in partnership with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), together with Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD). Funding from MFAT totalled NZ\$1.1m for phase one, and Phase 2 (continuing to early 2026) is valued at NZ\$10.5m.



### Bilateral support to the Government of Fiji

8. New Zealand has been supporting Fiji's efforts to plan, fund and implement the relocation of communities vulnerable to extreme weather events, flooding, coastal erosion and other impacts of climate change.
9. MFAT provided funded the German Development Agency, GIZ, to provide technical advice to the Fiji Government to establish key operational, social, and financial safeguarding measures, such as Standard Operating Procedures and financial guidelines. These were key inputs to the development and operationalisation of the Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund in 2021 - the world's first national Trust Fund to be linked to a government legislated, community-driven process for the planned relocation of communities affected by climate change.
10. Successive NZ governments have made cash contributions to the Fund itself, starting with 2 million Fijian Dollars in 2023, which made NZ the Fund's first international donor. This was bolstered by Prime Minister Christopher Luxon in June 2024 when he travelled to Fiji to meet with the Honourable Prime Minister Rabuka and committed a further 5 million Fijian Dollars to the Fund.
11. This funding will enable the relocation of the Nabavatu [Nam-bah-VAH-too] Village, the first community identified for priority relocation through the Fund. The people of Nabavatu Village have been living in emergency tents for over three years, with associated negative health, education, economic and psychosocial impacts.

### Climate mobility research

12. The Ministry commissioned research by Auckland and Waikato Universities and Mana Pacific consultants to better understand climate mobility trends and the impact on communities in the Pacific. The goal was to produce 'actionable knowledge' for policy makers, both in Pacific Island countries and in New Zealand. Family and community case studies, digital stories, and thematic briefs have been produced following field research in Pacific communities in 9 countries as well as New Zealand.
13. Some key insights from the research include:
  - Climate impacts are already an important factor in decisions to move, alongside social and economic considerations.
  - The **key drivers** of mobility-related decisions identified were local population pressures, land and marine tenure, and water and food insecurity.
  - It is reasonable to expect mobility **will increase**, should the localised impacts of climate change continue to undermine food and water security at the household and community levels.
  - Movement is more likely be **circular** (back and forth between locations), **within borders**, and at the **family or community scale** over an extended period of time in the coming two or three decades rather than all at once at a community or island scale.
  - **Family situated across national borders** play an important role providing information for family considering relocating, remittances that allow 'staying in place', support and accommodation that facilitates circular mobility for employment and education and are often the first responders in post-disaster settings.

## Background briefing for MSD's Pacific Reference Group - for presentation by MFAT 27 June 2025

This brief provides background information for the Pacific Reference Group on developments related to climate-induced human mobility in the Pacific, including regional collaboration, MFAT-funded activities, and findings from recent research. We provide below some key questions that MFAT would be grateful to hear the Group's thoughts on.

### Key points

- Climate change is expected to increasingly drive movement within and from the Pacific. It is in New Zealand's interests to mitigate the security risks presented by the intensifying adverse impacts of natural disasters and environmental degradation that can lead to severe water and food insecurity, increased competition for scarce resources and consequent conflict and displacement, including across borders.
- For New Zealand, the focus of its climate mobility work is in the Pacific, in line with its broader strategic focus, and in line with evidence of the disproportionate impact of climate change on small island and developing nations.
- Understanding and responding to climate mobility is a priority for New Zealand and the Pacific, as acknowledged in 2023 by Pacific Island Forum Leaders. New Zealand supports the Pacific Regional Climate Mobility Framework, endorsed by Leaders, as a guide for Pacific government action on climate mobility.
- New Zealand supports the desire of the people of Pacific Island Countries and Territories to have the choice to stay in their homes and communities, grounded in their culture and traditions, acknowledging that where movement becomes necessary, a planned and inclusive approach is crucial.
- New Zealand has been actively supporting Pacific-led efforts to address issues related to climate induced people movement in the Pacific, including by supporting regional dialogue, funding for technical assistance to Governments developing climate mobility policies (such as guidelines for the planned relocation of communities), and commissioning actionable research.

### Questions for discussion with the Pacific Reference Group

- What do you understand are the views and concerns of Pacific communities in New Zealand on the impacts of climate change?
- What is the role for Pacific community organisations to support resilience to climate change both in New Zealand and in the Pacific?
- How should MSD take into account the impact of climate change for their support to Pacific communities in New Zealand?

## Background

### The Regional Framework on Climate Mobility articulates Pacific priorities

1. Understanding and responding to climate mobility is a priority for Pacific Leaders and is gaining increasing international attention. At their November 2023 meeting, Pacific Island Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility - a global first that aims to provide practical guidance to governments planning for and managing climate mobility, while also respecting Members' national laws and policies<sup>1</sup>. It considers the challenges and potential solutions across a range of types of climate mobility: staying in place ('immobility'); planned relocation; migration and displacement.
2. It includes a range of commitments (within the limits of national sovereignty), including to regional collaboration on cross-border and internal planned relocation and displacement as well as migration pathways in the context of climate change, without committing countries to domestic legislative or policy change.
3. One important next step is the development of an implementation plan of the Framework to translate the high-level regional commitments into collective regional actions. New Zealand is an active participant in the Joint Working Group, Co-Chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu, which is overseeing development of the Plan.

### Climate mobility research

4. The Ministry commissioned research by Auckland and Waikato Universities and Mana Pacific consultants to better understand climate mobility trends and the impact on communities in the Pacific. The goal was to produce 'actionable knowledge' for policy makers, both in Pacific Island countries and in New Zealand. Family and community case studies, digital stories, and thematic briefs have been produced following field research in Pacific communities in 9 countries as well as New Zealand.
5. A synthesis report summarising key insights and policy implications across the research has been published on the MFAT website.<sup>2</sup> Some key insights from the research include:
  - Climate impacts are already an important factor in decisions to move, alongside social and economic considerations.
  - **Family situated across national borders** play an important role providing information for family considering relocating, remittances that allow 'staying in place', support and accommodation that facilitates circular mobility for employment and education and are often the first responders in post-disaster settings.
  - The **key drivers** of mobility-related decisions identified were local population pressures, land and marine tenure, and water and food insecurity.

<sup>1</sup> Pacific Regional Framework On Climate Mobility <https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Pacific%20Regional%20Framework%20on%20Climate%20Mobility.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> Pacific Peoples And Climate-Related (Im)Mobility: A Synthesis Report on Scale, Pattern and Impact, Now and in the Future, June 2024. <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/new-research-examines-climate-impact-on-people-mobility-in-the-pacific>



- It is reasonable to expect mobility **will increase**, should the localised impacts of climate change continue to undermine food and water security at the household and community levels.
- Movement is more likely be **circular** (back and forth between locations), **within borders**, and at the **family or community scale** over an extended period of time in the coming two or three decades rather than **all** at once at a community or island scale.

6. Appendix 1 provides further insights from the research.

#### **MFAT funds a regional climate mobility programme**

7. New Zealand funds the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS), which supported the development of the Regional Framework, and is facilitating development of the Implementation Plan.
8. The programme plays a key role to support regional dialogue and develop capability to strengthen the Pacific's ability to respond to climate mobility challenges. The programme has developed training for government officials, programme officers, and community leaders to foster stronger, proactive management of climate mobility at national and regional levels. It is also developing guidance for governments on best practice planned relocation of communities impacted by climate change when movement is the last resort.
9. The programme is providing bilateral support to six countries, including technical advice, research and capacity building to support country-led development and implementation of national climate mobility (and related) policies. With PCCMHS support:
  - **Tuvalu** is undertaking community awareness raising of the impacts of climate change and mobility options. It is also receiving support to draft a climate mobility national action plan as well as a migration information package.
  - **Niue** is undertaking community consultations to finalise a draft policy on planned relocation. It is also developing a Niue cultural bridging course, bringing back young Niuean's to reconnect and in the future hopefully fill gaps in human resource in country that will support resilience to climate change.
  - **Tonga** is developing and implementing a national sustainable spatial management framework, which will include plans to protect vulnerable areas, identify areas for relocation, and promote adaptive land use practices.
  - **PNG** is developing planned relocation guidelines, including setting up an interdepartmental working group, risk and hazard mapping, raising public awareness, and national and community consultations.
  - **Palau** is integrating mobility into its National Adaptation Plan, including community consultation and community awareness raising/education.
  - **Republic of Marshall Islands** is developing a climate mobility whitepaper, including community consultation and mapping of relevant sectoral policies and identify opportunities to mainstream climate mobility. RMI is also planning for training/capability development for government officials and community leaders.
10. The International Organisation for Migration (IOM) is the lead implementing agency, working in partnership with United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), International Labour Organization



(ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), together with Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD). Funding from MFAT totalled NZ\$1.1m for phase one, and Phase 2 (continuing to early 2026) is valued at NZ\$10.5m.

#### **Bilateral support to the Government of Fiji**

11. New Zealand has been supporting Fiji's efforts to plan, fund and implement the last-resort relocation of communities vulnerable to extreme weather events, flooding, coastal erosion and other impacts of climate change.
12. MFAT provided funded the German Development Agency, GIZ, to provide technical advice to the Fiji Government to establish key operational, social, and financial safeguarding measures, such as Standard Operating Procedures and financial guidelines. These were key inputs to the development and operationalisation of the Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund in 2021 - the world's first national Trust Fund to be linked to a government legislated, community-driven process for the planned relocation of communities affected by climate change.
13. Successive NZ governments have made cash contributions to the Fund itself, starting with 2 million Fijian Dollars in 2023, which made NZ the Fund's first international donor. This was bolstered by Prime Minister Christopher Luxon in June 2024 when he travelled to Fiji to meet with the Honourable Prime Minister Rabuka and committed a further 5 million Fijian Dollars to the Fund.
14. This funding will enable the relocation of the Nabavatu [Nam-bah-VAH-too] Village, the first community identified for priority relocation through the Fund. The people of Nabavatu Village have been living in emergency tents for over three years, with associated negative health, education, economic and psychosocial impacts.

## Appendix 1: further insights from climate mobility research

- The University of Auckland, University of Waikato and Mana Pacific Consultants<sup>3</sup> conducted the research, producing family and community case studies, digital stories, and thematic briefs, informed by field research in the Cook Islands, Niue, Kiribati, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga and New Zealand.

### Future patterns of climate mobility

- A key finding from the research is that climate change-related (im)mobility is already a **present reality**, making it a current policy issue rather than a future one. The research demonstrates that concern about the current and anticipated impacts of climate change are beginning to influence decisions at the individual, family, household, and community levels about whether, who, when, and where to move away from their 'place'. While climate change is often not the sole context for these decisions, it is becoming an increasingly important factor alongside more typical considerations of socio-economic betterment.
- The clear implication of the research is that, as Pacific peoples continue to experience environmental changes in such a warming world, their lived experiences will increasingly factor climate change into household and community decision-making processes. It is reasonable to expect that should the localised impacts of such climate change undermine food and water security at the household and community levels these impacts **will increasingly feature in decision-making**, including a decision to move some or all family members to another location.

### Many communities show a steadfast commitment to their ancestral territories, preferring to stay in place and adapt

- The **desire to stay in homelands is strong** and tied to the importance of place and home for identity, family and wellbeing and peace. Moving abroad was associated with stress, costs and pressures, and new sets of challenges (including further climate impacts).
- The preservation of **cultural heritage**, respect for **traditional decision-making** processes, and support for community cohesion are essential in supporting the resilience of Pacific peoples against the backdrop of increasing climate change.
- Communities will innovate **traditional knowledge and practice** to meet changing environmental conditions impacting their site or sites of settlement, as they have done in the past.
- Communities need direct support to address the impacts of climate change through their everyday actions. This support for **community-based adaptation** should be a focus of policy. Engaging with existing community structures, where mobility-related discussions already occur, is essential. Empowering community leaders through improved access to relevant and up-to-date information in an accessible form should be a policy goal.

<sup>3</sup> University of Waikato: <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/research/research-enterprise/research-at-waikato/pacific-climate-change-mobility-research-tonga-and-samoa/> , University of Auckland: <https://www.pacific-climate-research.auckland.ac.nz/> , Mana Pacific Consultants: <https://www.manapacific.co.nz/rising-stories/overview>

- **Women** play an important role in disaster preparation, response, and recovery. The roles women play in decision-making, social connectivity, and cultural preservation highlight the necessity of their active involvement in preparing for future mobility due to climate change.

**There are three key drivers of climate mobility, which are interdependent and localised**

- The key factors that determine whether people came, went, where they chose to go, and for how long, were predominantly **local factors**. It is the intersection of localised **population pressure, land and marine tenure, and food/water insecurity** which has and will continue to shape the scale and pattern of future (im)mobility arising in the context of climate change.
- Climate is a factor in increasing **tensions and conflicts**. Land and marine boundary issues are the most common source of conflict and tension related to climate change impacts, with tensions resulting from people staying in place and facing localised population pressure and resource scarcity, as well as resulting from relocation to areas when there are impacts on others in that area.
- **Population** momentum (e.g. whether populations are young, aging, growing or decreasing), rather than international migration, is likely to remain the dominant demographic process driving change in the Pacific's population at the regional scale for most of the next 30 years at least.

**Strong transnational communities support climate resilience**

- Population movement has spurred the development of an increasing number of **transnationally distributed Pacific communities**. Family situated across national borders play an important role in shaping current patterns of (im)mobility within the region.
- Diaspora communities play a **critical role** providing information for family considering relocation, sending remittances home that **allow 'staying in place'**, providing support and accommodation to family that facilitates circular mobility for employment and education, and are often the first responders in post-disaster settings, including returning home temporarily to help rebuild or clean up a family house. Diaspora members do face 'burdens of obligation', including housing and accommodating families and doing their best to keep their culture alive in a new context.
- Communities employ a '**go to stay' approach**, whereby some members of the community go to pursue economic or educational opportunities, thus enabling others in the community to stay. Some practice 'dual focus mobility', involving an extended time spent overseas earning money to fund purchase of land and construction of houses on higher ground or another island when they return, as well as allowing for the education of their children.
- As transnationalism becomes more prevalent in the context of climate change and other factors, there will be greater utility in policies that **facilitate settlement** of Pacific migrants while also supporting their connections to their home countries, which supports resilience of the community as a whole.
- There is a need to **deepen engagement across national jurisdictions** and institutional arrangements that support and engage with the Pacific diaspora in a more coherent manner. The research has highlighted the recent establishment of a



**Diaspora Relations Unit in Samoa**, which is still in its relative infancy. The establishment of an administrative body dedicated to diaspora engagement is significant and warrants consideration by other Pacific governments.

- **Remittances** from diaspora to family at home are often the most direct form of climate change adaptation funding and need to be recognised as such. However, it should be noted that their current importance reflects the insufficiency of other support to families for adaptation purposes.

### **Domestic policy implications**

- There are opportunities for **domestic policy** to support strong transnational communities and diaspora connections, with support for circular migration, that contribute to Pacific resilience to the impacts of climate change. More focussed and deliberative discussion between domestic agencies and with Māori and other stakeholders in New Zealand is required in the long term to begin to scope out the complex sets of risks and opportunities in a future of higher climate mobility for the region. The report highlights a number of areas of domestic policy that should consider the emerging trends of climate mobility.
- **Immigration:** policy must recognise climate as an increased driver of mobility and consider how the fundamentally circular nature of Pacific migration is enabled and supported in migration policy settings.
- **Housing:** climate mobility may place pressure on households and the stock and need for housing appropriate for multi-generational and transnational families.
- **Employment and economic inequality:** Efforts to strengthen the wellbeing and capacities of populations in New Zealand to receive and support the integration of family in the future will play an important part in successful transnationalism.
- **Health:** domestic health policy needs to take into account the 'dual exposure' of Pacific families to disasters at home and in New Zealand, and the stressors and trauma of loss of resettlement, loss and disconnection with home and family on Pacific health and well-being.
- **Education:** Efforts to support higher education for Pacific young people in New Zealand will support their ability to shoulder future family responsibilities to host and support family in home islands in a future of increased mobility.
- **Social development:** Support for Pacific families must recognise the burdens and costs, both tangible/financial and intangible/emotional of their role as the primary support for the displaced. Portability arrangements of financial assistance should reflect the reality of Pacific peoples as transnationally distributed families.
- Support for **Pacific community services**, initiatives, plans, and spaces/centres to help family settlement in New Zealand, and to support connections to home communities, culture and traditions, builds resilience in transnational communities.
- Existing and emerging **partnerships between Māori and Pacific led** organisations could be valuable assets for improving future Pacific mobility outcomes in Aotearoa.
- **Data:** a more fine-grained presentation of census data on birthplace and ethnicity in the published census tables would support a greater understanding of trends of numbers and characteristics of migrant groups over time.



## DSPDG Bilateral Brief: Meeting with Amy Pope, Director General IOM

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**Time and date:** Sunday 25 August 2024



Amy Pope has been Director General of the International Organisation for Migration (IOM) since 2023, previously holding the role of Deputy Director General for Management and Reform. Before joining IOM, DG Pope served as the Senior Adviser on Migration to US President Biden and Deputy Homeland Security Adviser to President Obama. Ms Pope has also occupied positions at the US Department of Justice and US Senate.

### Key objectives

- Connect with IOM on climate mobility and labour mobility, as a key partner in the Pacific in these areas.

### Discussion points

- **Note** the unique relationship New Zealand has as a Pacific country, particularly given migration from the Pacific has forged New Zealand's modern history.
- **Enquire** about IOM's work in the Pacific region, and the DG's views on what should be the priority going forward.

### *Climate Mobility*

- **Commend** IOM for its key role as an implementing partner of the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS).
- **Inform** the DG of recently published MFAT-funded research on climate mobility to better understand climate mobility trends and their impact on communities in the Pacific.

### *Labour Mobility*

- **Thank** the DG for IOM's interest in contributing to Pacific labour mobility outcomes, through partnering with the PACER Plus Implementation Unit and PIF Secretariat on regional initiatives.
- **Register** that New Zealand's main interest is in ensuring that all regional initiatives are co-ordinated, complementary, and non-duplicative.
- **Note** that New Zealand has heard concerns from some Pacific partners around 'brain drain' and other impacts of labour mobility.
- **Register** New Zealand's commitment to working with Pacific countries and Australia to ensure sustainable worker flows and that Pacific labour mobility schemes continue to benefit Pacific partners. We are in the process of lifting our development support to help partners maximise the benefits and mitigate the negative impacts of labour mobility.

## Background

### Climate Mobility

Pacific Island Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility - a global first that aims to provide practical guidance to governments planning for and managing climate mobility, while also respecting Members' national laws and policies<sup>1</sup>. It includes a range of commitments (within the limits of national sovereignty), including to regional collaboration on cross-border and internal planned relocation and displacement as well as migration pathways in the context of climate change, without committing countries to domestic legislative or policy change.

The MFAT-funded PCCMHS programme supported development of the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, which was agreed by Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Leaders in November 2023. Implementing partners include IOM, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), International Labour Organization (ILO), Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), together with Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS) and the Platform on Disaster Displacement (PDD).

PCCMHS is now supporting development of an Implementation Plan for the Framework and is also providing bilateral support to PNG, Tuvalu, Tonga, RMI, and Palau, including technical advice, research, and capacity building to support country-led development and implementation of national climate mobility (and related) policies. Funding from MFAT totalled NZ\$1.1m for phase one, and the current value of phase two is NZ\$10.5m. Phase 2 of the PCCMHS will continue until early 2026.

As part of the 2018 Climate Mobility Action Plan, MFAT funded research on climate mobility showed that climate impacts are already a key factor in decisions to move internally and across borders, alongside social and economic considerations, which remain the primary driver. It reinforced the strong desire of Pacific peoples to stay in homelands tied to identity, family, and culture, with more support needed for adaptation at the community level to enable this. It identified the key drivers of climate mobility-related decisions included local population pressures, land and marine tenure, and water and food insecurity intersecting at the household level. It also demonstrated the importance of circular migration, such as labour mobility, as contributing to connecting between communities across borders, supporting Pacific resilience to the impacts of climate change.

### Labour Mobility

The Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme is New Zealand's primary vehicle for delivering labour mobility opportunities to the Pacific. It is a critical component of many of New

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<sup>1</sup> Pacific Regional Framework On Climate Mobility <https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Pacific%20Regional%20Framework%20on%20Climate%20Mobility.pdf>

Zealand's bilateral relationships, s6(a)

supports a stronger and more resilient Pacific.

New Zealand has heard the concerns from Pacific partners around 'brain drain' issues and other potential negative impacts of labour mobility. s6(a)

Pacific partners can decide on their level of participation in the RSE Scheme, including implementing a country cap and limiting participation eligibility.

New Zealand's approach to labour mobility is underpinned by principles that emphasise aligning labour mobility opportunities to Pacific countries' own development aspirations; enhanced skills and training; circular opportunities; prioritising worker well-being; maximising the benefits and mitigating negative impacts on communities; and collective regional responsibility. To that end, we will be investing NZ\$30.1 million in our labour mobility development support programmes over the next five years to enable partners to maximise the benefits of their labour mobility participation more effectively.

Labour mobility is also a focus for the region. New Zealand engages on regional labour mobility issues primarily through the Arrangement on Labour Mobility (ALM), a non-binding agreement that was signed in 2017 alongside PACER Plus. The ALM established the Pacific Labour Mobility Annual Meeting (PLMAM), which is the pre-eminent regional forum for considering labour mobility issues, including for non-PACER signatories such as Fiji and Papua New Guinea.

The IOM has worked alongside the PACER Plus Implementation Unit (PPIU) on a number of Pacific labour mobility initiatives and forms part of the Advisory Group to the ALM review process. It has co-sponsored several regional workshops, including on 'Sustainable Reintegration,' 'Negotiating Bilateral Migration Agreements' and 'Good Governance and Decent Work Standards.' The IOM is also collaborating with the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat on the development of 'Regional Labour Mobility Principles' and its 'Assessment of the Socio-economic Impacts of Human Mobility in the Region.' New Zealand's main interest is in ensuring the various regional work programmes are co-ordinated, complementary, and non-duplicative, s6(a)

and Forum Leaders calls for a collaborative and inclusive approach.

DEVPP and PACREG  
August 2024



## Briefing on Climate Mobility for DS EMA Taha MacPherson for dialogue with German Parliamentarians, February 2024

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### Key messages

- The Pacific is already experiencing harsh impacts of climate change. Sea level rise is a well-known challenge in the Pacific, but lack of fresh water and more frequent severe weather events are the most widespread climate-related pressures on households and communities.
- Climate change has already caused some Pacific people to leave their homes, in most cases moving to other areas within their own country. We use the term 'climate mobility' to refer to this issue, an umbrella term for situations where climate change and environmental factors are a driver for people moving, which includes more specific kinds of mobility like planned relocation, displacement and migration.
- For New Zealand, the focus of Climate Mobility is in the Pacific, in line with its broader strategic focus, and in line with evidence of the disproportionate impact of climate change on small island and developing nations.
- New Zealand recognises the desire of the people of Pacific Island Countries and Territories to have the choice to stay in their homes and communities, grounded in their culture and traditions, and acknowledging that where movement becomes necessary a planned and inclusive approach is crucial.
- Planning, preparing and responding to Climate Mobility should be led by the Pacific countries and communities impacted, in ways that are inclusive and rights-based. This includes protection of culture, identity, and traditional family structures and ways of living.
- Taking pre-emptive development and diplomatic action to support Pacific-led Climate Mobility planning and resilience helps avert future humanitarian crisis caused by significant unplanned or irregular migration, and mitigates related security risks to the Pacific and New Zealand.

### *Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility*

- An important development in the regional context of climate mobility is Pacific Islands Forum' Leaders' endorsement of the Framework in November 2023.
- We were very pleased to have this endorsed at the Leaders' meeting as New Zealand has been a long-time supporter of this Framework's development.
- It is intended to be a high level guide for Pacific governments in addressing the complex and wide ranging issue of climate mobility.
- It will also support existing regional responses, such as the 2021 Pacific Islands Forum Leaders' Declaration on Preserving Maritime Zones in the Face of Climate Change-Related Sea-Level-Rise.



- It considers the challenges and potential solutions across a range of types of climate mobility: staying in place ('immobility'); planned relocation; migration and displacement. It includes a set of four guiding principles, as well as clear indication that the Framework will be implemented in line with the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent.

#### *New Zealand investment*

- A focus of our investment in climate action in the Pacific is on supporting adaptation, to help Pacific peoples remain in their communities. Our specific climate mobility investments also help to prepare people for relocation and migration, where this becomes necessary.
- New Zealand investment includes<sup>1</sup>:
  - Our support for the Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security (PCCMHS) programme delivered by a group of UN agencies and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, and led by the International Organization for Migration (IOM). This regional programme is focused on protecting and empowering communities to deal with migration, displacement and planned relocation that can result from climate change and disaster.
  - The commissioning of a multi-year research programme, to better understand climate migration trends and the impact on communities in the Pacific and Aotearoa New Zealand. This research will support evidence-based responses to Pacific climate mobility.
  - Support for the Fiji Relocation Trust Fund, including to establish Standard Operating Procedures.
  - Work by Conciliation Resources (a global peace-building NGO) to work with Pacific communities to prevent and manage conflicts that could arise from displacement and relocation (based in Fiji but also expanding into Solomon Islands and Papua New Guinea).
- Further detail on each of these can be provided if desired.

*Development, People and Planet Division*  
*February 2024*

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<sup>1</sup> New Zealand's support for the Pacific response to climate mobility is provided through the International Development Cooperation programme. Specifically it is funded through the Climate Change Programme, which delivers half of the NZD 300 million climate finance commitment made by the New Zealand government for 2019–2022.

## Paper to Te Hurumanu: Climate Mobility, August 2024

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1. This paper updates Te Hurumanu on a programme of work on climate mobility<sup>1</sup>, including insights from new research funded by MFAT, and seeks advice on an approach to next steps on the issue (both domestically and through foreign policy).

The prospect of climate induced mobility is a growing issue for the Pacific

2. Climate mobility is a priority for Pacific Leaders and is gaining increasing international attention. At their November 2023 meeting, Pacific Island Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility (the Framework) - a global first that aims to provide practical guidance to governments planning for and managing climate mobility, while also respecting Members' national laws and policies.
3. The Framework includes a range of commitments (within the limits of national sovereignty), including to regional collaboration on cross-border and internal planned relocation and displacement as well as migration pathways in the context of climate change, without committing countries to domestic legislative or policy change.

New Zealand has been supporting a Pacific-led response

4. As part of the Pacific Reset, the Climate Mobility Action Plan (agreed by Cabinet in 2018) set out early, calibrated and transparent action New Zealand could take on climate related displacement and mobility in the Pacific. The action was underpinned by core values of the importance of retaining the Pacific's social and cultural identity and the desire of Pacific peoples to continue to live in their own countries, where possible, and respect and support for Pacific Island countries' sovereignty and the right to self-determination.
5. Officials have made good progress on the five areas for early action identified under the Action Plan. Key developments include:
  - **Action 1: Utilise IDC funding to avert and delay climate-related displacement and prepare for Pacific climate:** funding activities included contributing to the Fiji Relocation Trust Fund to implement planned relocation of Fijian communities affected by climate change (with an additional NZ\$3.6m announced by the Prime Minister in June 2024), and funding for an international non-government organisation to deliver peacebuilding activities within communities affected by climate change in rural and urban areas of Fiji and the Autonomous Region of Bougainville, Papua New Guinea.
  - **Action 2: Facilitate regional dialogue and explore a regional approach:** Supporting the successful development of the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, endorsed by PIF Leaders in November 2023; MFAT's funding to the UN-agency led Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security

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<sup>1</sup> Climate mobility is an umbrella term for situations where climate change and environmental factors are a driver for people moving. It covers a range of scenarios such as the relocation of a community within a country (e.g. moving a village inland in response to natural hazards such as flooding or sea-level rise), an individual's temporary move for economic reasons (e.g. via labour mobility schemes), and also permanent migration within the Pacific. Climate (im)mobility is a broader term that also includes situations where people are staying in place.

Programme (PCCMHS) supported regional dialogue to develop the Framework. The Programme is now working to provide national level policy and implementation support to the governments of Papua New Guinea, Palau, Tuvalu, Tonga, and Republic of the Marshall Islands.

- **Action 3: strengthening international language and frameworks through multilateral action:** To drive forward multilateral cooperation, MFAT has co-facilitated preparations for a High Level Meeting of the United Nations General Assembly on addressing the threats of sea-level rise, to be held on 25 September 2024.
- **Action 4: Championing development of international law:** MFAT was closely involved in developing with Pacific partners two landmark PIF Leaders Declarations issued in 2021 and 2023 that declared the maritime zones, and statehood and sovereignty, of Forum Members would continue despite climate change-related sea-level rise. These have received international attention and support.
- **Action 5: commissioning robust research to understand the likely scale and impact of future Pacific climate mobility:** As part of the Action Plan, MFAT commissioned research by Auckland and Waikato Universities and Mana Pacific consultants to better understand climate mobility trends and the impact on communities in the Pacific. A synthesis report summarising key insights and policy implications across the research has been published on the MFAT website.<sup>2</sup>

MFAT-funded research on climate mobility has been published, providing an evidence base for next steps

6. Research commissioned under Action 5 has found that climate impacts are already an important factor in decisions to move internally and across borders, alongside social and economic considerations. Climate mobility is a present reality rather than a future concern. The key drivers of climate mobility-related decisions include local population pressures, land and marine tenure, and water and food insecurity intersecting at the household level.
7. The research shows that Pacific climate mobility is more likely be circular (back and forth between locations), within borders and at the individual or family scale over an extended period of time in the coming two or three decades rather than all at once at a community or island scale.
8. It concludes that it is reasonable to expect mobility will increase, should the localised impacts of climate change continue to undermine food and water security at the household and community levels. There are opportunities for domestic policy to support strong transnational families and communities, with prospects for circular migration, that contribute to Pacific resilience to the impacts of climate change.
9. See **Appendix 1** for further insights from the research.

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<sup>2</sup> Pacific Peoples And Climate-Related (Im)Mobility: A Synthesis Report on Scale, Pattern and Impact, Now and in the Future, June 2024. <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/new-research-examines-climate-impact-on-people-mobility-in-the-pacific>



The research includes a focus on Māori perspectives and Te Tiriti

10. The first section of report synthesising the research, written by Professor Sandy Morrison, focuses on 'Pacific climate mobility through the lens of Te Ao Māori and obligations under Te Tiriti o Waitangi'. The section explores Māori experiences of mobility, Māori and Pacific relationships in the context of mobility, and implications for Māori of potential increased mobility. It draws on insights from Prof Morrison's interviews with six prominent Māori on future Pacific climate mobility, possible implications, risks and opportunities - summarised in her report 'Six Korero'<sup>3</sup>.
11. The synthesis report highlights potential for more focussed and deliberative *taiao* with Māori and other stakeholders in New Zealand to scope the complex set of risks and opportunities in a future of potential higher climate mobility. The report's policy implications section highlights the following key points:
  - **Connections to place and land** are connections that are spiritual and physical for both groups. Marae or meeting spaces within tribal boundaries stand as testament to the importance of place including being places of commune, places of identity, places of support and places of resilience. In a climate mobility context, marae could play a critical supporting role in the initial and ongoing response as well as possible longer term integration support. The marae as a place where *tikanga* Māori is practised can also provide a place where innovative ideas and opportunities to further both group's aspirations can be tested.
  - **Existing Māori-led or Māori-Pacific led organisations and partnerships** could be valuable assets for improving future Pacific mobility outcomes in Aotearoa. Given that the research indicates that climate (im)mobility in the next two to three decades will likely be occurring at a family level, engagement between Māori and Pacific peoples is more likely to be where personal lives, interests and values intersect. Future policy development could consider how, at a community level, Māori social service provision could be extended to include and provide information for Pacific families.
  - Should larger-scale mobility arise *mana whenua* must be consulted on **land-related decision-making**, and options should be tested with Māori ahead of time on agreed frameworks that will be necessary under different circumstances. Policies should be sensitive to the historical relationship between Māori and Pacific peoples. **Future planning** for Pacific climate mobility should engage Māori from the start and be equally led by Māori, Pacific peoples and the Crown in the spirit of inclusion with discussion and decision-making based on Māori and Pacific values.
  - Decision-making should also include space for **bilateral discussions** between Māori and Pacific as the sharing of needs, aspirations and lessons learned can push thinking and the imagination to the boundaries of what is possible so that all risks and opportunities can be explored and tested. There are opportunities for Māori and

<sup>3</sup> Morrison, S., Vaoletti, T. and Vaoletti, L. (2023) *Six kōrero. Ka mate kainga tahi, kia ora kainga rua, ka mate kainga rua, ka ora kainga toru*. University of Waikato.  
<https://www.waikato.ac.nz/assets/Uploads/Research/Research-Enterprise-Waikato/Research-at-Waikato/Updated-PDFs/Six-Korero.pdf>



Pacific people to share knowledge, lessons and experiences in relation to different climate mobility scenarios.

We are reporting to the Minister of Foreign Affairs seeking his direction on next steps

12. In 2018, Cabinet directed officials to provide advice in 2024 on a longer-term New Zealand approach to Pacific climate migration that might also involve consideration of immigration options. We are preparing a submission for the Minister of Foreign Affairs seeking his direction on this.
13. Noting that MFAT does not have the remit to develop domestic policy responses, MFAT has begun engagement with domestic agencies on the research. The research findings support an approach to incorporate (or mainstream) climate mobility as a driver of mobility into broader domestic policy and work programmes, including immigration policy development.
14. Possible areas that could be identified as part of further work are:
  - s9(2)(g)(i)

15. Given that climate mobility sits at the nexus of foreign and domestic policy, we are seeking views from Te Hurumanu on:
  - what should MFAT prioritise in its support for the Pacific region?
  - what would good engagement between Māori and Pacific on this issue look like?
  - what should MFAT's role be in this engagement, noting that some engagement is more likely to be undertaken by domestic agencies on domestic policy?

## Appendix 1: further insights from climate mobility research

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- The University of Auckland, University of Waikato and Mana Pacific Consultants<sup>4</sup> conducted the research, producing family and community case studies, digital stories, and thematic briefs, informed by field research in the Cook Islands, Niue, Kiribati, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga and New Zealand. A synthesis report summarising key insights and policy implications across the research has been published on the MFAT website.<sup>5</sup>

### Future patterns of climate mobility

- A key finding from the research is that climate change-related (im)mobility is already a **present reality**, making it a current policy issue rather than a future one. The research demonstrates that concern about the current and anticipated impacts of climate change are beginning to influence decisions at the individual, family, household, and community levels about whether, who, when, and where to move away from their 'place'. While climate change is often not the sole context for these decisions, it is becoming an increasingly important factor alongside more typical considerations of socio-economic betterment.
- The clear implication of the research is that, as Pacific peoples continue to experience environmental changes in such a warming world, their lived experiences will increasingly factor climate change into household and community decision-making processes. It is reasonable to expect that should the localised impacts of such climate change undermine food and water security at the household and community levels these impacts **will increasingly feature in decision-making**, including a decision to move some or all family members to another location.

### Many communities show a steadfast commitment to their ancestral territories, preferring to stay in place and adapt

- The **desire to stay in homelands is strong** and tied to the importance of place and home for identity, family and wellbeing and peace. Moving abroad was associated with stress, costs and pressures, and new sets of challenges (including further climate impacts).
- Communities demonstrate determination to adapt and persevere in the face of climate change through everyday collective adaptive action.
- The preservation of **cultural heritage**, respect for **traditional decision-making** processes, and support for community cohesion are essential in supporting the resilience of Pacific peoples against the backdrop of increasing climate change.

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<sup>4</sup> University of Waikato: <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/research/research-enterprise/research-at-waikato/pacific-climate-change-mobility-research-tonga-and-samoa/>, University of Auckland: <https://www.pacific-climate-research.auckland.ac.nz/>, Mana Pacific Consultants: <https://www.manapacific.co.nz/rising-stories/overview>

<sup>5</sup> Pacific Peoples And Climate-Related (Im)Mobility: A Synthesis Report on Scale, Pattern and Impact, Now and in the Future, June 2024. <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/new-research-examines-climate-impact-on-people-mobility-in-the-pacific>

- Communities will innovate **traditional knowledge and practice** to meet changing environmental conditions impacting their site or sites of settlement, as they have done in the past.
- Communities need direct support to address the impacts of climate change through their everyday actions. This support for **community-based everyday action** should be a focus of policy. Engaging with existing community structures, where mobility-related discussions already occur, is essential. Empowering community leaders through improved access to relevant and up-to-date information in an accessible form should be a policy goal.
- **Women** play an important role in disaster preparation, response, and recovery. The roles women play in decision-making, social connectivity, and cultural preservation highlight the necessity of their active involvement in preparing for future mobility due to climate change.

**There are three key drivers of climate mobility, which are interdependent and localised**

- The key factors that determine whether people came, went, where they chose to go, and for how long, were predominantly **local factors**. It is the intersection of localised **population pressure, land and marine tenure, and food/water insecurity** which has and will continue to shape the scale and pattern of future (im)mobility arising in the context of climate change.
- Climate is a factor in increasing **tensions and conflicts**. Land and marine boundary issues are the most common source of conflict and tension related to climate change impacts, with tensions resulting from people staying in place and facing localised population pressure and resource scarcity, as well as resulting from relocation to areas when there are impacts on others in that area.

**Strong transnational communities support climate resilience**

- Population movement has spurred the development of an increasing number of **transnationally distributed Pacific communities**. Family situated across national borders play an important role in shaping current patterns of (im)mobility within the region.
- Diaspora communities play a **critical role** providing information for family considering relocation, sending remittances home that allow 'staying in place', providing support and accommodation to family that facilitates circular mobility for employment and education, and are often the first responders in post-disaster settings, including returning home temporarily to help rebuild or clean up a family house. Diaspora members do face 'burdens of obligation', including housing and accommodating families and doing their best to keep their culture alive in a new context.
- Communities employ a '**go to stay**' approach, whereby some members of the community go to pursue economic or educational opportunities, thus enabling others in the community to stay. Some practice 'dual focus mobility', involving an extended time spent overseas earning money to fund purchase of land and



construction of houses on higher ground or another island when they return, as well as allowing for the education of their children.

- As transnationalism becomes more prevalent in the context of climate change and other factors, there will be greater utility in policies that **facilitate settlement** of Pacific migrants while also supporting their connections to their home countries, which supports resilience of the community as a whole.
- There is a need to **deepen engagement across national jurisdictions** and institutional arrangements that support and engage with the Pacific diaspora in a more coherent manner. The research has highlighted the recent establishment of a **Diaspora Relations Unit in Samoa**, which is still in its relative infancy. The establishment of an administrative body dedicated to diaspora engagement is significant and warrants consideration by other Pacific governments.
- **Remittances** from diaspora to family at home are often the most direct form of climate change adaptation funding and need to be recognised as such. However, it should be noted that their current importance reflects the insufficiency of other support to families for adaptation purposes.

### Domestic policy implications

- There are opportunities for **domestic policy** to support strong transnational communities and diaspora connections, with support for circular migration, that contribute to Pacific resilience to the impacts of climate change. More focussed and deliberative discussion between domestic agencies and with Māori and other stakeholders in New Zealand is required in the long term to begin to scope out the complex sets of risks and opportunities in a future of higher climate mobility for the region. The report highlights a number of areas of domestic policy that should consider the emerging trends of climate mobility.
- **Immigration:** policy must recognise climate as an increased driver of mobility and consider how the fundamentally circular nature of Pacific migration is enabled and supported in migration policy settings.
- **Housing:** climate mobility may place pressure on households and the stock and need for housing appropriate for multi-generational and transnational families.
- **Employment and economic inequality:** Efforts to strengthen the wellbeing and capacities of populations in New Zealand to receive and support the integration of family in the future will play an important part in successful transnationalism.
- **Health:** domestic health policy needs to take into account the 'dual exposure' of Pacific families to disasters at home and in New Zealand, and the stressors and trauma of loss of resettlement, loss and disconnection with home and family on Pacific health and well-being.
- **Education:** Efforts to support higher education for Pacific young people in New Zealand will support their ability to shoulder future family responsibilities to host and support family in home islands in a future of increased mobility.



- **Social development:** Support for Pacific families must recognise the burdens and costs, both tangible/financial and intangible/emotional of their role as the primary support for the displaced. Portability arrangements of financial assistance should reflect the reality of Pacific peoples as transnationally distributed families.
- Support for **Pacific community services**, initiatives, plans, and spaces/centres to help family settlement in New Zealand, and to support connections to home communities, culture and traditions, builds resilience in transnational communities.
- **Data:** a more fine-grained presentation of census data on birthplace and ethnicity in the published census tables would support a greater understanding of trends of numbers and characteristics of migrant groups over time.

### **Movement and population across five clusters of countries in the Pacific**

- Population momentum, rather than international migration, is likely to remain the dominant demographic process driving change in the Pacific's population at the regional scale for most of the next 30 years at least. Rather than the traditional three subregions the report proposes reference to five clusters based on contemporary and historical demographics and connections, to better acknowledge the variable transnational dimensions for analysing the impacts of climate change.
- **Western Pacific (PNG, Sols, Vanuatu):** Western Pacific is the fastest growing and most youthful population, but have limited opportunities to move and low numbers of extended family overseas to rely on to move, meaning movement will likely be within countries/internal. Youth are more mobile, whereas older people are more likely to stay in place, predominantly in rural settings. Australia's Pacific Engagement Visa will lead to increased transnational communities and movement but will have a limited impact on national level responses to climate change given the growing populations in these countries.
- **Central Pacific (Fiji, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Nauru):** These countries have more options for mobility and significant diaspora and flows of remittances from overseas kin, but small transnational populations proportionate to overall populations at home (with the exception of Tuvalu). They face declining fertility, but population is more driven by migration than other clusters. Fiji is an increasingly important economic hub and the major destination for intra-Pacific migrants seeking employment, education and residence in the region. Fiji has long established i-Kiribati and Tuvaluan communities, including as a result of phosphate mining on Nauru and Banaba, Kiribati, leading to relocation of Banabans to Fiji in the 1940s. Increased access to migration opportunities for the small populations of Kiribati and Tuvalu could lead to significant declines in population, so would need to be carefully calibrated with these implications in mind.
- **Eastern Pacific (Realm countries: Cook Islands, Niue, Tokelau. Plus Samoa, Tonga and American Samoa).** Have strong connections, and large transnational populations in New Zealand and the west coast of USA. Declining fertility and a loss of people to Pacific rim means an ageing population, with only a slight growth predicted. 60% of Polynesians live elsewhere (in New Zealand, Australia or the

USA), so a transnational, rather than national frame of reference is required when considering impacts of climate change.

- **Northern Pacific (Guam, FSM, RMI, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau):** strong connections to USA, including a large American military presence in Guam. Experience in migration of labour from Asia, and net losses of indigenous populations to the USA. Low fertility and ageing population. Very little transnational population in New Zealand or Australia.
- **French territories (French Polynesia, New Caledonia, Wallis and Fortuna):** status as collectivities of France, with French citizenship and sizeable non-indigenous populations. Overseas populations are mostly in the other French Pacific territories, with very small numbers in New Zealand.

## Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility

Contribution to Briefing for Pacific Island Forum Foreign Ministers' Meeting (FFMM) in Suva on 9 August 2024.

### New Zealand's position

- New Zealand supports the Pacific Regional Climate Mobility Framework as a guide for Pacific government action and will engage on development of an implementation plan through the Joint Working Group on Climate Mobility.

### Background

1. The **Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility** was endorsed by PIF Leaders in November 2023. It is a high-level guide for addressing the complex issue of climate mobility. The Framework considers challenges and solutions across a range of climate mobility: staying in place; planned relocation; migration and displacement. s9(2)(g)(i)
2. In endorsing the Framework, the Leaders tasked the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat to oversee its **implementation**. The next step is the development of an implementation plan of the Framework to translate the high-level commitments into collective regional actions. Regional consultation on the Implementation Plan is planned for September/October 2024, with a final implementation plan to be submitted through FSRS to PIF Leaders for their endorsement in 2025.
3. New Zealand will continue to be an active participant in the **Joint Working Group**, co-chaired by Fiji and Tuvalu, that oversaw the drafting of the Regional Framework. The Joint Working Group will continue to play a critical role in consolidating views from across the region and stakeholders in the development of the implementation plan. The Group consists of Forum Members, regional Pacific agencies, UN agencies and inter-governmental agencies.
4. New Zealand funds the **Pacific Climate Change Migration and Human Security Programme (PCCMHS)**, which supported the development of the Regional Framework and continues to facilitate regional dialogue and capability to strengthen the Pacific's ability to respond to climate mobility challenges.
5. Prime Minister Luxon announced a NZ\$3.6 million contribution to **Fiji's Climate Relocation of Communities Trust Fund** in June 2024. This is the second contribution to the Fund from New Zealand. The fund is supporting the planned relocation of Fijian communities affected by climate change.



28 August 2024

Minister of Foreign Affairs

For action by 6 September 2024

## Climate mobility – update and next steps

BRIEFING Decision Submission

**PURPOSE** To update you on progress on the 2018 Climate Mobility Action Plan and seek your direction on a Cabinet report back.

## Recommended referrals

Minister for Pacific Peoples	For information by	11 September 2024
Minister of Immigration	For information by	11 September 2024
Minister for Social Development and Employment	For information by	11 September 2024
Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs	For information by	11 September 2024
Minister for Māori Development	For information by	11 September 2024
Minister of Climate Change	For information by	11 September 2024
Minister for the Environment	For information by	11 September 2024

## Contact details

NAME	ROLE	DIVISION	WORK PHONE
Karen Murray	Divisional Manager	Development (People and Planet)	s9(2)(a)
Ali Carlin	Unit Manager	Development (People and Planet)	

## Minister's Office to complete

<input type="checkbox"/> Approved	<input type="checkbox"/> Noted	<input type="checkbox"/> Referred
<input type="checkbox"/> Needs amendment	<input type="checkbox"/> Declined	<input type="checkbox"/> Withdrawn
<input type="checkbox"/> Overtaken by events	<input type="checkbox"/> See Minister's notes	

**Comments**



## Climate mobility – update and next steps

### Key points

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- This paper updates you on progress towards the five actions of the **Climate Mobility Action Plan** agreed by Cabinet in 2018 as part of the Pacific Reset and seeks your direction on next steps, including on the 2018 Cabinet direction that officials report back to Cabinet at end-2024 on a longer-term New Zealand approach to climate migration.
- The Ministry has delivered against the five areas of the Action Plan including:
  1. *utilising International Development Cooperation (IDC) funding to avert and delay climate-related displacement and prepare for Pacific climate change* – for example, contributing to the Fiji Relocation Trust Fund to implement planned relocation of communities affected by climate change;
  2. *facilitating regional dialogue and explore a regional approach* – an IDC-funded programme supported development of the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility, which was agreed by Pacific Island Forum (PIF) Leaders in November 2023;
  3. *strengthening international language and frameworks through multilateral action* – New Zealand co-facilitated the preparatory process for a United Nations (UN) High-level Meeting on addressing sea-level rise that will be held on 25 September during the UN General Assembly High-Level week;
  4. *championing development of international law* – New Zealand worked closely with Pacific partners to develop two landmark PIF Leaders' Declarations issued in 2021 and 2023 that declared the maritime zones, statehood and sovereignty of PIF Members would continue despite climate change-related sea-level rise;
  5. *commissioning robust research to understand the likely scale and impact of future Pacific climate mobility* – a substantial programme of IDC-funded research on climate mobility was undertaken and published in July 2024, providing an evidence base for next steps.
- The research found that climate impacts are already an important factor in decisions to move internally and across borders, alongside social and economic considerations. Climate mobility is a present reality rather than a future concern.
- The research findings support an approach that incorporates climate change as one driver of mobility into broader domestic policy and work programmes. It found that Pacific climate mobility is more likely be within borders, circular (back and forth between locations), and at the individual or family scale over an extended period of time in the coming two or three decades, rather than all at once at a community or island scale.
- **We seek your direction** on whether a report back to Cabinet as originally directed is still desired, and if so, the scope of the advice requested. A Cabinet Paper could:
  - **report back** in more detail on progress on the 2018 Action Plan, including findings of the research commissioned on climate mobility;
  - **identify opportunities** for existing agency work programmes to take into account climate as a driver of mobility, or to respond to issues highlighted by the research.



## Climate mobility – update and next steps

Phillip Taula

for Secretary of Foreign Affairs and Trade

### Recommendations

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It is recommended that you:

- |   |  |                 |
|---|--|-----------------|
| 1 | <b>Note</b> progress of the actions in the 2018 Climate Mobility Action Plan including findings of the IDC-funded climate mobility research.   | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 2 | <b>Agree</b> that officials prepare a Cabinet Paper on climate mobility as originally directed in 2018.  | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 3 | <b>Agree</b> that the Cabinet Paper:   |                 |
|   | 3.1 <b>reports back</b> on progress on the 2018 Action Plan, including findings of research commissioned on climate mobility;  | <b>Yes / No</b> |
|   | 3.2 <b>identifies opportunities</b> for next steps within existing agency work programmes to take into account climate as a driver of mobility, or to respond to issues highlighted by the research.   | <b>Yes / No</b> |
| 4 | <b>Refer</b> a copy of this submission for information to the Minister for Pacific Peoples, the Minister of Immigration, the Minister for Social Development, the Associate Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister for Māori Development, the Minister of Climate Change, and the Minister for the Environment. | <b>Yes / No</b> |

Rt Hon Winston Peters  
Minister of Foreign Affairs

Date:        /        /

## Climate mobility – update and next steps Report

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1. In 2018, as part of the Pacific Reset, the Climate Mobility Action Plan set out early, calibrated and transparent action New Zealand could take on climate-related displacement and mobility in the Pacific [ENV-18-MIN-0013]. Cabinet directed officials to provide advice in 2024 on a longer-term New Zealand approach to Pacific climate migration that might also involve consideration of immigration options. Cabinet agreed that 'immigration options, including any humanitarian visa category, be considered as part of a longer-term approach, once the scale and potential impact of Pacific climate migration is clearer.'
2. This paper provides an update on key activities/actions to implement the 2018 Climate Mobility Action Plan. We also seek your direction on whether a report back to Cabinet as originally planned is still desired, and if so, the scope of the report back.

The prospect of climate induced mobility is a growing issue for the Pacific

3. Climate mobility is a priority for Pacific Leaders and is gaining increasing international attention. At their November 2023 meeting, Pacific Island Forum Leaders endorsed the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility - a global first that aims to provide practical guidance to governments planning for and managing climate mobility, while also respecting Members' national laws and policies<sup>1</sup>. It includes a range of commitments (within the limits of national sovereignty), including to regional collaboration on cross-border and internal planned relocation and displacement as well as migration pathways in the context of climate change, without committing countries to domestic legislative or policy change.
4. Migration in the context of climate change has also been highlighted as a growing issue by way of its inclusion as a key component of the Australia-Tuvalu Falepili Union.

New Zealand has undertaken a range of actions to deliver on the Action Plan, including:

5. *Utilising International Development Cooperation (IDC) funding to avert and delay climate-related displacement and prepare for Pacific climate change* – for example, contributing to the Fiji Relocation Trust Fund to implement planned relocation of communities affected by climate change; supporting approaches to prevent and manage conflicts emerging as a result of climate-change related displacement and relocations in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Bougainville; and providing targeted support for Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu, Tonga, the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and Palau for development and implementation of national climate mobility policies, including through engagement with communities and civil society organisations.
6. *Facilitating regional dialogue and exploring regional approaches* – an IDC-funded programme supported development of the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility with the Ministry playing a key role in facilitating its development. The focus is now on facilitating development of an implementation approach for the Framework.
7. *Championing the development of international law and strengthening international language and frameworks through multilateral action* – New Zealand worked closely with Pacific partners to develop two landmark Forum Leaders' Declarations issued in 2021 and 2023

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<sup>1</sup> Pacific Regional Framework On Climate Mobility <https://forumsec.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/Pacific%20Regional%20Framework%20on%20Climate%20Mobility.pdf>



## Climate mobility – update and next steps

that declared the maritime zones, statehood and sovereignty of Forum Members would continue despite climate change-related sea-level rise. Most recently, New Zealand co-facilitated preparation for a High-Level Meeting addressing the existential threats posed by sea-level rise to be held during United Nations (UN) General Assembly in September. New Zealand has used its leadership, which has been recognised by both the UN Secretary-General and the President of the General Assembly, to amplify Pacific interests and positions.

8. New Zealand's contribution on these matters demonstrates that we stand with Pacific partners.<sup>s6(a)</sup>

## IDC-funded research on climate mobility has been published, providing an evidence base for next steps

9. As part of the Action Plan, the Ministry commissioned research by Auckland and Waikato Universities and Mana Pacific consultants to better understand climate mobility trends and the impact on communities in the Pacific.
10. The research shows that climate impacts are already an important factor in decisions to move internally and across borders, alongside social and economic considerations, which remain the primary driver. Climate mobility is a present reality rather than a future concern. The key drivers of climate mobility-related decisions include local population pressures, land and marine tenure, and water and food insecurity intersecting at the household level.
11. It concludes that it is reasonable to expect mobility will increase, should the localised impacts of climate change continue to undermine food and water security at the household and community levels. This will inevitably increase pressure on Pacific rim countries to free up opportunities for short-term and long-term circulation of Pacific peoples. Changes to destination country immigration settings would lead to an immediate and significant response based on interest levels in existing schemes. However, the research reinforced the strong desire of Pacific peoples to stay in homelands tied to identity, family and culture, with more support needed for adaptation at the community level to enable this.
12. The research also suggests that movement is more likely be circular (back and forth between locations) rather than permanent; within borders rather than external; and at the individual and family scale over an extended period in the coming two or three decades rather than at a community or island scale.
13. The report proposes analysis of impacts and trends for five clusters of countries based on contemporary and historical demographics and connections. The largest population growth in the Pacific will occur in the Western Pacific countries of Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, which have young and rural populations, but movement is more likely to be internal for these countries.
14. The research suggests there are opportunities for domestic policy to support strong transnational families and communities, with prospects for circular migration, that contribute to Pacific resilience to the impacts of climate change. It also suggests that more focussed and deliberate discussion between domestic agencies and with Māori and other stakeholders in New Zealand is required in the long term to begin to scope out the complex sets of risks and opportunities in a future of higher climate mobility for the region.
15. See **Appendix 1** for further insights from the research.



## Climate mobility – update and next steps

We are seeking your direction on a report back requested by Cabinet

16. In 2018 Cabinet directed officials to report back to Cabinet in 2024 on progress against the Action Plan. We seek your direction on whether a report back to Cabinet as originally planned is still desired, and if so, the scope of the advice requested.
17. A report to Cabinet is an opportunity to consolidate next steps and demonstrate our commitment to the Pacific Regional Framework on Climate Mobility. It is also an opportunity to ensure that work programmes and policy take into account climate as a driver for mobility.
18. We consider a Cabinet paper could be used to do one or both of the following:
  - **report back** in more detail on progress of the 2018 Action Plan, including findings of research commissioned on climate mobility;
  - **identify opportunities** for next steps within existing agency work programmes to take into account climate as a driver of mobility, or to respond to issues highlighted by the research.
19. Areas for next steps for the Ministry on climate mobility could include:
  - s9(2)(f)(iv)

20. Noting that the Ministry does not have the remit to develop domestic policy responses, these points are based on early engagement with domestic agencies. The Ministry would work with agencies to draft a Cabinet paper for your consideration. Key agencies include: Ministry of Business, Innovation and Employment, Ministry for Pacific Peoples, Ministry for Social Development, Te Puni Kōkiri, and Ministry for the Environment.

## Climate mobility – update and next steps

### Next steps

21. If you agree to proceed with a Cabinet report back as described above, we will engage with relevant agencies on areas for Cabinet attention and report to you in November 2024 with a draft Cabinet paper for your feedback and a timeline for consultation on the Cabinet paper.
22. **Resourcing:** The Cabinet Paper process can be supported within the Ministry's current staffing levels. Any resourcing implications for next steps would be considered more fully as part of the Cabinet Paper process.

Released under the Official Information Act

## Climate mobility – update and next steps

### Appendix 1: Further climate mobility research findings and policy implications

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The research produced family and community case studies, digital stories, and thematic papers, informed by field research in the Cook Islands, Niue, Kiribati, Tokelau, Tuvalu, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Samoa, Tonga and New Zealand.<sup>2</sup> A synthesis report summarising insights and policy implications across the research has been published on the Ministry website.<sup>3</sup>

Key findings from the research include:

- Climate change-related mobility is already a **present reality**, making it a current policy issue rather than a future one. As Pacific peoples continue to experience environmental changes due to climate change, these will **increasingly factor** into household and community decision-making processes.
- Changes in **immigration policy** in the main destination countries within the region as well as on the Pacific rim will impact the scale and pattern of population movement.

#### Circular migration and transnational communities

- The daily **circulation** of people from and back to the place of residence associated with their everyday lives in villages and towns within Pacific countries, rather than migration from one location to another, remains the dominant form of movement.
- Given the strong attachment to place, the research does not support a finding that there will be a desire to relocate internationally at large scale and is unlikely to involve complete abandonment of particular localities.
- Circular population movement has spurred the development of an increasing number of **transnationally distributed Pacific communities**. Family situated across national borders play an important role in shaping current patterns of (im)mobility within the region.
- Pacific communities sometimes employ a **'go to stay' approach**, whereby some members of the community go to pursue economic or educational opportunities, thus enabling others in the community to stay.
- **Diaspora** send remittances home that allow 'staying in place', provide support and accommodation to family that facilitates circular mobility for employment and education, and are often the first responders in post-disaster settings, including returning home temporarily to help rebuild or clean up a family house.

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<sup>2</sup> University of Waikato: <https://www.waikato.ac.nz/research/research-enterprise/research-at-waikato/pacific-climate-change-mobility-research-tonga-and-samoa/>, University of Auckland: <https://www.pacific-climate-research.auckland.ac.nz/>, Mana Pacific Consultants: <https://www.manapacific.co.nz/rising-stories/overview>

<sup>3</sup> Pacific Peoples And Climate-Related (Im)Mobility: A Synthesis Report on Scale, Pattern and Impact, Now and in the Future, June 2024. <https://www.mfat.govt.nz/en/media-and-resources/new-research-examines-climate-impact-on-people-mobility-in-the-pacific>



## Climate mobility – update and next steps

**There are three key drivers of climate mobility, which are interdependent and localised**

- The key factors that determine whether people came, went, where they chose to go, and for how long, were predominantly the **local** factors of **population pressure, land and marine tenure, and food/water insecurity**.
- Climate is a factor in increasing **tensions and conflicts**. Land and marine boundary issues are the most common source of conflict and tension related to climate change impacts, with tensions resulting from people staying in place and facing localised population pressure and resource scarcity, as well as resulting from relocation to areas when there are impacts on others in that area.
- The **desire to stay in homelands is strong** and tied to the importance of place and home for identity, family and wellbeing. Moving abroad is associated with stress, costs and pressures, and new sets of challenges (including further climate impacts).

### Domestic policy implications

There are opportunities for domestic policy to support strong transnational communities and diaspora connections, with support for circular migration, that contribute to Pacific resilience to the impacts of climate change.

- **Immigration:** policy must recognise climate as an increased driver of mobility and consider how the fundamentally circular nature of Pacific migration is enabled and supported in migration policy settings.
- **Social development:** Support for Pacific families must recognise the burdens and costs, both tangible/financial and intangible/emotional of their role as the primary support for the displaced. Portability arrangements of financial assistance should reflect the reality of Pacific peoples as transnationally distributed families.
- Support for **Pacific community services**, initiatives, plans, and spaces/centres to help family settlement in New Zealand, and to support connections to home communities, culture and traditions, builds resilience in transnational communities.
- **Health:** domestic health policy needs to take into account the 'dual exposure' of Pacific families to disasters at home and in New Zealand, and the stressors and trauma of resettlement, loss and disconnection with home and family on health and well-being.
- **Education:** Efforts to support higher education for Pacific young people in New Zealand will support their ability to shoulder future family responsibilities to host and support family in home islands in a future of increased mobility.

### Implications for Māori

- There is potential for more focussed and deliberative talanoa with Māori and other stakeholders in New Zealand to scope the complex set of risks and opportunities in a future of higher climate mobility for the region and for New Zealand, including in relation to land and Māori/Pacific partnership. Future planning for Pacific climate mobility should engage Māori from the start and be equally led by Māori, Pacific peoples and the Crown in the spirit of inclusion and based on Māori and Pacific values.