

- POLYNESIAN LEADERS GROUP-
POLYNESIA AGAINST CLIMATE THREATS
(P.A.C.T.)

Papeete, 28 June 2016



MARRAKECH COP22|CMP12
UN CLIMATE CHANGE CONFERENCE 2016

POLYNESIAN LEADERS GROUP
TE MOANA O HIVA
DECLARATION ON THE OCEAN

We are the people of the largest ocean of the world, Te Moana o Hiva.

*For us, the “People of the Canoe”, protecting our Ocean
means being resilient to the adverse effects of climate change
and remaining steadfast to our Polynesian identity.*

Our Ocean is us, our cultural identity. It unites us rather than divides us.

Our Ocean is the cornerstone of our social cohesion. It is our living space, our motherland and through it our shared history and love for the Polynesian people of today and tomorrow are expressed: TE AROHA.

Our Ocean is a biodiversity treasure, a showcase for Nature, which we are happy to share with the rest of the world and for which we urge respect and protection.

Our Ocean is the foundation of our economy. Tourism, fishing, aquaculture and sea mining and energy resources are the drivers of our development and our growth prospects.

Earth health depends on Ocean health

The “Because the Ocean” Declaration adopted at COP21 underscores the fact that:

*“The Ocean sustains life on Earth and our collective well-being.
It produces half the oxygen every human being breathes.
It also absorbs 25% of all the CO2 emitted by human activities.
It captures approximately 90% of the anthropogenic heat added to the global system,
and it receives nearly all the water from melting ice”;*

- As stewards of the Ocean, we, the Polynesian Leaders Group, congratulate the French presidency of COP21 and the international community for successfully adopting the historic Paris Climate Agreement.

We are grateful to the President of the French Republic who has acknowledged the role played by the Taputapuātea P.A.C.T. on the outcome of the Agreement, by declaring on the very steps of the marae in February 2016:

“It was also here that the outcome of COP21, the Conference on Climate, was settled after all. We all call it the Paris Conference. But maybe we should reconsider such name and also call it the Marae Taputapuātea Conference, because this was the place where that famous declaration was made (...). All the Polynesian Leaders gathered here, on this vast platform, in order to call upon the world to make a commitment for the planet. Because it is also here where you suffer from global warming, it is here where sea level rise is a threat. It is actually here where everything started but also here where everything can be destroyed if we do not do anything”.

- We, the Polynesian Leaders Group, welcome the importance and time dedicated to the Ocean on 2, 3 and 4 December 2015 in Paris during the “Ocean for Climate Days” at COP21. We wish to express our immense satisfaction at the acceptance in April 2016 in Nairobi for the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) to provide a special report on the “climate change’s impacts distinctively dealing with oceans and polar icecaps” and also on the “ramifications of a 1.5 degree Celsius increase in global temperatures and the efforts to be made by nations to avoid exceeding this threshold”.
- We, the Polynesian Leaders Group, reaffirm in the strongest terms the spirit of our Declaration on climate change and coral reefs in February 2012 and of Article 176 of the Earth Summit 2012 (RIO+20) resolution.
- We, the Polynesian Leaders Group, being aware “**that, as it stands at the moment, the Paris Agreement will, at the very least, have the current level of impact on oceans multiplied by two**”, are committed to ensuring that the Global Ocean shall be part of the Paris Agreement implementation framework, the Agenda of Actions and the development of operational tools within the framework of the Paris-Lima Plan and then the Paris-Marrakech Plan negotiations to be concluded at COP22.
- We, the Polynesian Leaders Group, urge all Parties and non-state actors to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) that will be attending the 22nd Session of the Conference of Parties (COP22) in Marrakech in November 2016, to acknowledge and support the above position. As such, we call upon all Parties to the UNFCCC to:

Considering the Ocean is a source of life whose protection is critical for effective, long term climate change adaptation

1. Effectively “ensure the integrity of all ecosystems, including oceans, and the protection of biodiversity, recognized by some cultures as Mother Earth, and noting the importance for some of the concept of “climate justice”, when taking action to address climate change” as requested in the Taputapuātea PACT and as prescribed in the preamble of the Paris Agreement.

We therefore urge for stronger commitment to ocean governance and management as articulated in various international instruments, including the UNESCO Convention for the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, the United Nations Convention on Law of the Sea, the Samoa Pathway and SDG 14 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Agenda 2030.

2. Understand that the Pacific Ocean – Te Moana o Hiva – is critical in sustaining our people livelihoods, in protecting marine biodiversity and regulating climate and that, through the wise use of its vast resources, it is central to our sustainable economic development.
3. Encourage and support research and development, to better identify and assess opportunities in particular in terms of technological innovations, economics, food, pharmaceuticals, energy and mining of our economic zones in the spirit of Articles 10 and 11 of the Paris Agreement concerning technology development and capacity building.

In this respect, we are following with much interest the negotiations currently being held at the United Nations on biodiversity beyond areas of national jurisdiction and we emphasise the requirement to take into consideration the needs, rights and concerns of our peoples in these discussions.

4. Acknowledge that, in addition to forests, the Global Ocean is a carbon sink, explicitly extending to oceans the scope of application of Article 5 of the Paris Agreement and by calling upon Parties to “take action to conserve and enhance, as appropriate, sinks and reservoirs of greenhouse gases as referred to in Article 4, paragraph 1(d) of the Convention” (UNFCCC).
5. Strengthen and ensure the implementation of international law specific to high seas in order to stop the plundering of resource in areas adjacent to our EEZs.
6. Recognise the benefits gained by International fisheries through the implementation of Managed Marine Areas in our EEZs through “reserve” effects on migratory species. The protection of stocks present in our waters must be encouraged and economically offset at the same level as potential fishing agreements would allow. In this regard, we remind Article (7-9-e) of the Paris Agreement calling for the implementation of steps “building the resilience of socioeconomic and ecological systems, including through economic diversification and sustainable management of natural resources.”

7. Combat ocean degradation initiated by other anthropogenic pressures such as shoreline destruction, resource overexploitation, massive pollution from plastics and micro and nanoparticles accumulation, spread of invasive species and global acidification caused by CO₂ absorption.

Considering the damaging effects of climate change on oceans and communities

8. Acknowledge that mechanisms to address loss and damage are essential to enhance the resilience of oceans to climate change given the damage it may cause. We ask to *"improve and enhance"* the Warsaw International Mechanism as formulated in Article 8-2 of the Paris Agreement.
9. Acknowledge that climate change is a major environment-related security challenge and incorporate in defence strategies emergency assistance to communities that are victims of climate disorders and the permanent protection of their vital resources, as underscored on the occasion of the "Defence and Climate Change" international seminar held on 7 and 8 June 2016 in Tahiti, under the French presidency of COP21.

Considering the ocean as a vector for mitigating climate change impacts and for innovation in adaptation.

10. Effectively provide the Pacific islands with the technical and financial resources to decrease their energy dependence by prioritising investment for energy savings, energy efficiency and the production of renewable marine energies. Such effort towards ecological and energy transition meets the requirements of Article 2-1.(b) of the Paris Agreement which aims to increase *"the ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change and foster climate resilience and low greenhouse gas emissions development, in a manner that does not threaten food production"*.

Considering the effective application of the Paris Climate Agreement

11. Enhance the capacity and ability of PLG member countries so that they can effectively implement adaption and mitigation actions, in particular through technology development, dissemination and deployment, access to climate finance, support for relevant aspects of education, training and public awareness and the transparent, timely and accurate communication of information, as provided for in Article 11-1 of the Paris Agreement.
12. Set up a "Blue Ocean Fund" within the framework of the Green Climate Fund funded in proportion to the emissions of countries whose carbon we absorb.

13. Recognise the particular situation of autonomous territories not eligible to financial instruments, technology transfer mechanisms and capacity building as provided for in the Paris Climate Agreement by:

- Making Polynesian autonomous territories eligible on the same basis as associate and independent countries to the Green Climate Fund;
- Allowing Parties to UNFCCC, on behalf of their autonomous territories, to deposit a specific contribution to reducing greenhouse gas emissions;
- Applying to autonomous territories the principle of differentiation, to reflect equity and the principle of common but differentiated responsibilities and respective capabilities of the Parties.

Climate is changing. The situation is serious. It is now time for action.


ADOPTED IN PAPEETE ON 28 JUNE 2016



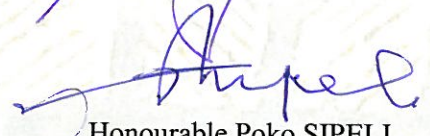
Honourable Edouard FRITCH
President of **French Polynesia**



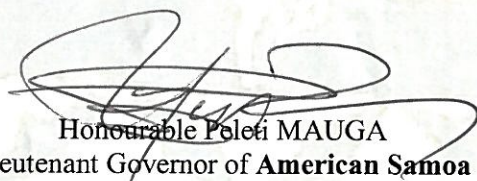
Honourable Alikai Faipule Afega GAUALOFA
Ulu-o-**Tokelau**




Honourable Teariki HEATHER
Deputy Prime Minister of the **Cook Islands**



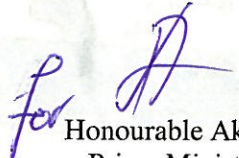
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