

AGENDA ITEM 12.1: Items Proposed by Members:

Endorsing the Port Vila Call to Action – Just Transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific

(Paper presented by the Government of Vanuatu)



Background Paper

Purpose of Paper

1. To introduce SPREP members to the Port Vila Call to Action for a Just Transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific.
2. Seek endorsement of the Call by Environment Ministers.
3. Seek an agreement by Ministers to request a formal agenda item on Just Transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific at the 52nd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PIFLM52) from 06 – 10 November 2023 in Rarotonga, Cook Islands.

Background

4. The Governments of Tuvalu, Vanuatu, Tonga, Fiji, Solomon Islands and Niue met in Port Vila, Vanuatu in March, 2023 and jointly issued the Port Vila Call for a Just Transition to a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific, including by:
 - Adopting a Pacific Island Forum Leaders Declaration on a global, equitable phase out of fossil fuels
 - Pursuing Pacific-tailored 100% renewable energy powered development pathways across all sectors, including energy, transport and more broadly
 - Pacific Nations joining the Beyond Oil and Gas Alliance
 - Pacific Nations endorsing the need for a Fossil Fuel Treaty and commencing deliberations on its content
 - Calling on international partners to cancel debt and provide adequate finance to enable the just transition in the Pacific
 - Codifying legal obligations relating to fossil fuels, including through supporting and participating in process such as the ICJ and ITLOS advisory opinions
5. The Pacific Environment Ministerial Meeting offers an opportunity to amplify and secure endorsement for the Port Vila Call, as part of the strategy to secure endorsements at all regional high-level meetings in 2023 in order to strengthen the call for a leaders' regional declaration for a Fossil Fuel Free Pacific at the PIF Leaders' meeting later this year.
6. International momentum for the Pacific's leadership is strong and getting stronger, thanks in large part to the credible leadership and urgency shown by Pacific Island countries to date.
7. The Port Vila Call provides a clear framework for steps needed to enable a just transition in the Pacific, and the role of the international community both in a) phasing out fossil fuels first and fastest to prevent further devastating climate impacts, and b) providing the finance and support needed to support the transition.

8. This year's Environment Ministerial represents an opportunity for the PICTs to work as a unified bloc, and increases the strength of the proposal to be included in the Pacific Island Forum Leaders meeting agenda and the likelihood of its endorsement by PIF Leaders.
9. The Port Vila Call and its tangible commitments and targets have been formally referenced in the Outcomes Documents of a) the 2nd Pacific Ministerial Dialogue on the Global Just Transition, March 2023 b) the 5th Pacific Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting held in Port Vila in May of this year, c) the 2023 Forum Economic Ministers Meeting held in August in Fiji, d) the UNFCCC High Level Ministerial Dialogue held in August in Suva, Fiji and e) the Melanesian Spearhead Group Leaders Summit in August in Port Vila, Vanuatu.
10. Ministers and senior officials from 6 countries have agreed to enable and implement the Port Vila Call to Action, and requested the PIF Secretariat to begin actioning this initiative through formal Forum processes with the view of securing a regional declaration on fossil fuels from leaders during the PIF Leaders meeting in November.
11. This ramping up of political buy-in provides momentum for increasing international support for the initiative going into crucial climate negotiations at COP28 as well as the UN Secretary Generals Climate Ambition Summit in September 2023 the 4th SIDS conference in Antigua & Barbuda in 2024.

Recommendation

12. The Meeting is invited to:
 - 1) Formally **endorse** the Port Vila Call to Action;
 - 2) **Request** PIF Leaders to endorse the Port Vila Call to Action;
 - 3) mandate SPREP to **provide** coordination and **support** to members, alongside other CROP agencies, to implement and track Call targets and commitments, and enable political pressure on Just and Equitable Transition support for all Pacific fossil-fuel dependent sectors and national economies;
 - 4) **Call** for new, additional and adequate support from development partners to implement the Port Vila Call; and
 - 5) **Request** Pacific non-State actors, including civil society and the private sector, to engage fully in meeting Port Vila Call targets and commitments

29 August, 2023

