

inside:

Civil society priorities for the Third
International Conference on SIDS

Why SIDS2014 is so important
for SIDS and their young people

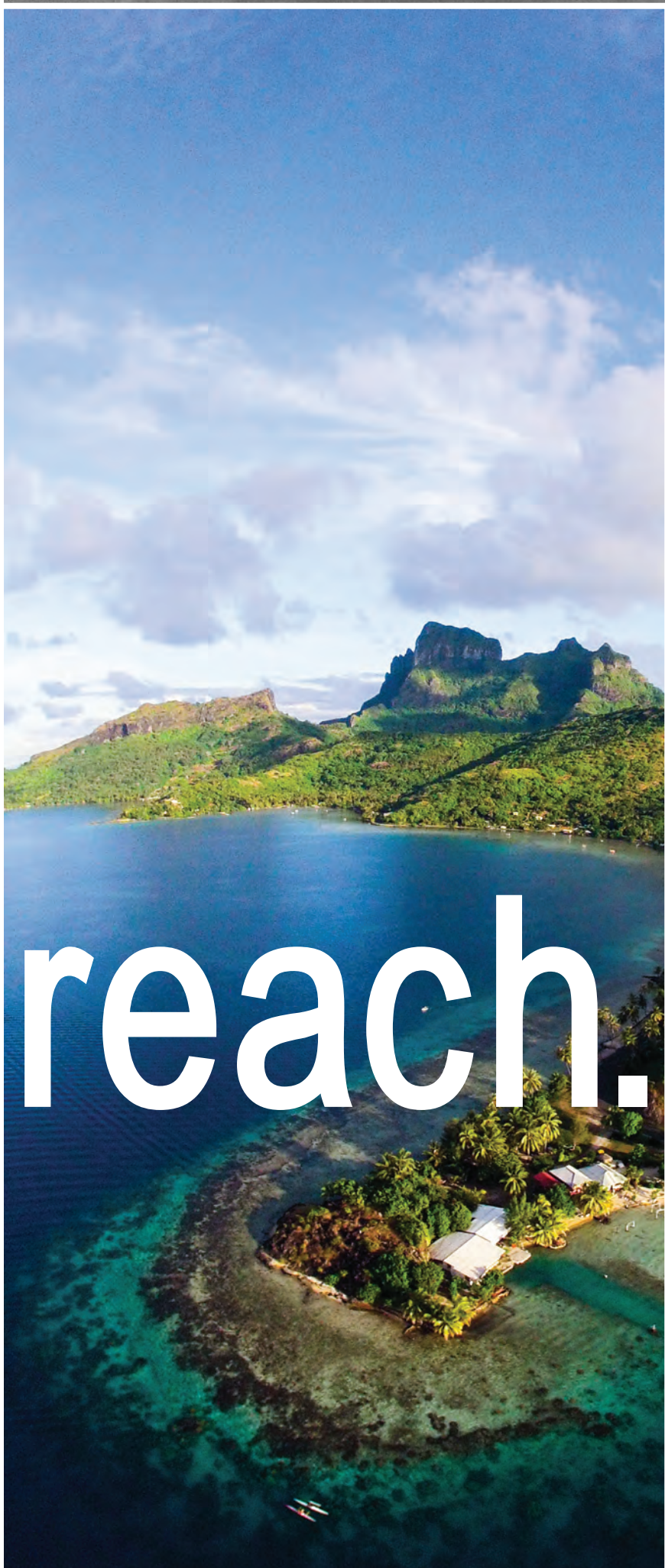
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About Stakeholder Forum

Stakeholder Forum is an international organisation working to advance sustainable development and promote democracy at a global level. Our work aims to enhance open, accountable and participatory international decision-making on sustainable development through enhancing the involvement of stakeholders in intergovernmental processes. For more information, visit: www.stakeholderforum.org

Outreach is a multi-stakeholder publication on climate change and sustainable development. It is the longest continually produced stakeholder magazine in the sustainable development arena, published at various international meetings on the environment; including the UNCSD meetings (since 1997), UNEP Governing Council, UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) and World Water Week. Published as a daily edition, in both print and web form, Outreach provides a vehicle for critical analysis on key thematic topics in the sustainability arena, as well as a voice of regional and local governments, women, indigenous peoples, trade unions, industry, youth and NGOs. To fully ensure a multi-stakeholder perspective, we aim to engage a wide range of stakeholders for article contributions and project funding.

If you are interested in contributing to Outreach, please contact the team (acutter@stakeholderforum.org or ifenn@stakeholderforum.org)

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Strong women strong world: Looking at inner resources

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Small Island Developing States (SIDS) have unique vulnerabilities and particular needs. SIDS face social and environmental challenges such as rapid rural to urban migration, loss of languages and culture through emigration, geographical susceptibility to environmental dangers, biodiversity loss, and, strikingly, gender inequities.

The Millennium Development Goals revealed that when factors indicate that a state's women and girls are strong and well, all other indicators follow suit. When the women and girls of a state are not well, everything and everyone suffers. This affirms that women are central agents of change. The conclusions of the recent United Nations (UN) Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) also acknowledge this relationship between sustainable development and the human rights of women and girls.

For almost 30 years, the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, as a non-governmental organisation (NGO), has contributed to the work of the UN by offering a spiritual perspective on issues of global concern. In relation to women and girls, the Brahma Kumaris supports a discussion that is intentionally inclusive and grounded in an ethical framework, paving the way for holistic interventions, and addressing the root causes that prevent the advancement of gender equality. Such a process would acknowledge the great inner resources that women offer in their communities.

In sustainable development we often talk about 'resources'. In developing partnerships – the focus of this SIDS conference – something to consider is how we can best share and exchange the resources that we have. Such exchange is often the work of women, as they are more frequently in situations of cooperation, collaboration and relationship. If we break the word 'resource' down into its two syllables, we can see this common term in a new way. The original Latin definition for the prefix 're' is 'again', or 'back', and the word 'source' is a person, place or thing from which something originates. It seems that we are now obliged to 'go back to' fundamentals and explore all possible sources, both internal and external that will provide us with the means to support sustainable development and partnerships for the benefit of SIDS.

Scientific evidence regarding sustainable development tells us that we are running out of external resources due to planetary boundaries. However, in our inner worlds

there are no set boundaries. The resources of our inner worlds are unlimited. Therefore it seems reasonable, if not necessary, that along with our technical expertise and external resources, we begin developing an ethical expertise and exploring our inner resources, particularly those of women and girls. We know that inner resources include values, virtues, principles, strengths and personal powers that help us live our lives in a more effective and enjoyable way. However, the range, depth and potential of these strengths are possibly more extensive than most people realise, and therefore remain underdeveloped. Like any resource, they can only be fully and effectively utilised when we know exactly what is available.

Although most people draw on their inner resources daily to some degree, without being consciously recognised, nurtured and utilised, inner resources often remain buried deep within the uncharted territory of the individual.



pic: Australian Government, Department of Foreign Affairs and Change

When people take time to reflect on their inner resources, during deliberations such as this, it can often pave the way for new attitudes, a heightened awareness, more empathy, greater dexterity when making decisions and, at the most fundamental level, a change in attitude. When this occurs, we see the world with a vision of the whole, we draw on the proficiencies of people, including women, and our actions and choices are then influenced accordingly. When we see the world in a new way, we can no longer take the same action we would have taken before.

With a focus on both the inner and outer worlds, we may become better skilled at thinking holistically and strengthening attitudes that empower women, and acting accordingly. We may see that some of our deeper attitudes are counterproductive to the things we wish to achieve for SIDS. We may alter the conversation. Gender equity can only benefit from such an endeavour

Pre-Conference Activities and Parallel Events Calendar

| DATE | TIME | VENUE | TITLE | ORGANISERS |
|----------------------|-------------|---|--|---|
| THURSDAY 28th AUGUST | 09:00–17:30 | Pacific Jewel Cruise Ship | Workshop on Ocean Acidification (Day 1) | New Zealand and United States, supported by the Secretariat of the South-Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) |
| | 11:00–12:30 | TATTE Convention centre | The Future We Want...Voices of Pacific Youth | Samoa National Youth Council |
| | 13:00–14:30 | TATTE Convention centre | Applying the 5W 1H to Youth and Alcohol | Samoa National Youth Council |
| FRIDAY 29th AUGUST | 08:30–20:30 | TATTE Convention centre | Major Groups and other Stakeholders Forum | UNDESA/DSD |
| | 09:00–17:00 | Pacific Jewel cruise ship | Workshop on Ocean Acidification (Day 2) | New Zealand and United States, supported by the Secretariat of the South-Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP) |
| | 09:30–11:30 | Tooa Salamasina Hall | SIDS Connectivity | ITU, Pacific Countries |
| | 13:00–14:30 | Tooa Salamasina Hall | Disaster Risk Reduction & Climate Change | ITU |
| SATURDAY 30th AUGUST | 17:00–19:30 | SPREP Campus Vailima | Large Marine protected areas | SPREP and Waitt Foundation |
| | 07:30–18:30 | Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Conference Centre | Private Sector Forum (Day 1) | UN-OHRLLS, the Government of Samoa and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce |
| | 09:00–18:00 | To'oa Salamasina Hall, Ministry of Women, Community, and Social Development | Renewable Energy Forum | New Zealand and IRENA |
| | 09:30–14:00 | The GEF Small Grants Programme | Adapting to climate change through sustainable water resource and watershed management in Matafaa village | Matafaa village field trip |
| | 10:00–11:20 | MNRE Conference room 1-3, TATTE Building Level 3 | Electric Vehicles a Low Greenhouse Gas Emission in the Land Transport Sector and can Be used as electricity grid stability | Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment - Samoa |
| | 11:30–13:00 | MNRE Conference room 1-3, TATTE Building Level 3 | Biogas Digester Technology a tool for sustainable development of SIDS | Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment - Samoa |
| SUNDAY 31st AUGUST | 15:00–17:00 | SPREP Campus Vailima | Climate-Resilient Islands Partnership | Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre (CCCCC); Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); Commonwealth Secretariat |
| | 12:00–16:00 | Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Conference Centre | Private Sector Forum (Day 2) | UN-OHRLLS, the Government of Samoa and the Samoa Chamber of Commerce |

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