

## Official Keynote Address for the Seventh Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-7)

*Director General, SPREP*



### Opening Salutations:

- **Pastor Thomson Aki**, Vice Chairman of the Vanuatu Christian Council
- **Honorable John Dahmasing Salong**, Minister responsible for the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology, Geo-Hazards, Environment, Energy, and Disaster Management
- **Mr Cyrille Honore**, Director, Disaster Risk Reduction, Multi-Hazards Early Warning System (MHEWS) Office and Public Weather Services.
- **Mr. Misaeli Funaki**, Chairman of the PMC and Director of the Fiji Meteorological Services
- **Mr. David Hiba**, Acting President of the WMO Regional Association V and Director of the Solomon Islands Meteorological Service
- **Directors**, Heads, and Senior Officials from National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs), National Disaster Management Offices (NDMOs), and other government entities

- Development Partners
- United Nations and CROP agencies
- Private Sector representatives, led by Varysian
- Ladies and Gentlemen, with a special mention to the women leaders in meteorology and hydrology who were trained last week by CREWS and are with us today.

**Greetings:** Halo and good morning to all.

It is a great honor to address you on this important occasion, the Seventh Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-7). I would like to begin by extending my heartfelt gratitude to the **Honorable Minister John Dahmasing Salong** and the Government of Vanuatu for hosting this important meeting and for their unwavering support in advancing meteorological services across the Pacific.

I would also like to specifically acknowledge the efforts of **Acting Director General Abraham Nasak, Acting Director Fred Jockley**, and the members of the local organizing committee for their dedicated work in making this meeting a success.

**Welcoming Remarks:** I take this opportunity to welcome the new members of the PMC who are joining us for the first time—our colleagues from the **Cook Islands, Tonga, Vanuatu, and Tokelau**.

I also extend a warm welcome to Varysian and the private sector representatives who have joined us for the third time. Their continued partnership is vital to strengthening the NMHSs across the region. I encourage all of you to explore new avenues of collaboration and innovation throughout this meeting.

I also wish to warmly welcome those attending this meeting for the first time.

**Reflections and Significance of PMC-7:** This Seventh Pacific Meteorological Council meeting is significant for several reasons. We are once again convening in Vanuatu, which holds historical importance for our meteorological community.

Just over thirty years ago, in **1993**, the region's meteorological leaders met here in Port Vila for the first time, laying the groundwork for what

would later become the Regional Meteorological Services Directors (RMSD) Meeting.

Over the years, Vanuatu has consistently been at the forefront of climate vulnerability, facing numerous tropical cyclones, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis, and earthquakes.

The discussions in 1993 centered on how our meteorological services could work together to understand and mitigate the impacts of climate change.

That initial meeting led to the formation of the **Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC)** in 2011 in the Marshall Islands, and it has since grown in scope and importance. What started with just four agenda items in 1993 and about 50 participants has now expanded to over 20 agenda items with almost 200 participants, demonstrating how far we've come in addressing the complex challenges faced by our region.

**Progress Since PMC-6:** It has been only 12 months since our last meeting in Nadi, Fiji, where we convened as PMC-6 and also held the 3rd Pacific Ministerial Meeting on Meteorology.

I am pleased to report that we have made substantial progress. The Pacific Meteorological Council's sixth meeting laid the foundation for various initiatives, particularly the **Weather Ready Pacific (WRP)** program. The WRP manager has been recruited with key positions also being recruited. There is also increased funding support particularly from the Governments of New Zealand, the United Kingdom, and Japan. These commitments will compliment the first investment by the Government of Australia.

The progress we've achieved is a testament to the collaborative efforts of our region's meteorological services and the ongoing support of our development partners. I want to extend our deepest gratitude to the many partners who have been integral to the success of our strategic initiatives and welcome the new partners that have joined, renewed, or plan to renew their support.

This meeting also follows two significant regional events—the **53rd Pacific Island Forum Leaders Meeting and the 4th SPREP Executive Board Meeting**—where **climate change continues to remain the region's key priority**

30 years ago, the journey for more cooperation and cohesion started, and today the progress made by the PMC and expert panels as well as the support towards the **Weather Ready Pacific program** is a testament to those that had the foresight and wisdom to drive the success of the work we see here today.

That said, there is still more work to be done – every single partner and relevant entity is needed, so I look to you, Donors, CROP Agencies, UN Agencies and Technical and Development partners for your continued support. .

SPREP remains committed to enhancing its support to this community, which will be discussed under Agenda 17.1 and during the closed session under Agenda 17.2.

**Looking Ahead:** Thirty years after our first gathering here in Vanuatu, we are once again looking to your collective leadership and guidance as a Council as we chart the path forward, particularly with the implementation of the Weather Ready Pacific program and enhancing coordination across the region.

**Acknowledgements:** For every PMC, the secretariat undertakes the task of fundraising for this meeting.

The convening of PMC-7 has been possible thanks to the strong partnerships that include the Government of Vanuatu, the VanKIRAP project, SPREP, the Asian Development Bank, the Government of Ireland, Climate Risk Early Warning Systems (CREWS), World Meteorological Organization (WMO), Government of Australia through the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade, Government of New Zealand, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), and Varysian.

On Friday, members of this council will have an important task to meet and make important decisions on the Weather Ready Pacific at its first Steering Committee meeting.

**Closing:** You have a full week ahead of you, with many critical discussions on the future of meteorological services in the Pacific. I wish you fruitful and productive deliberations over the coming days.

Tankio Tumas.