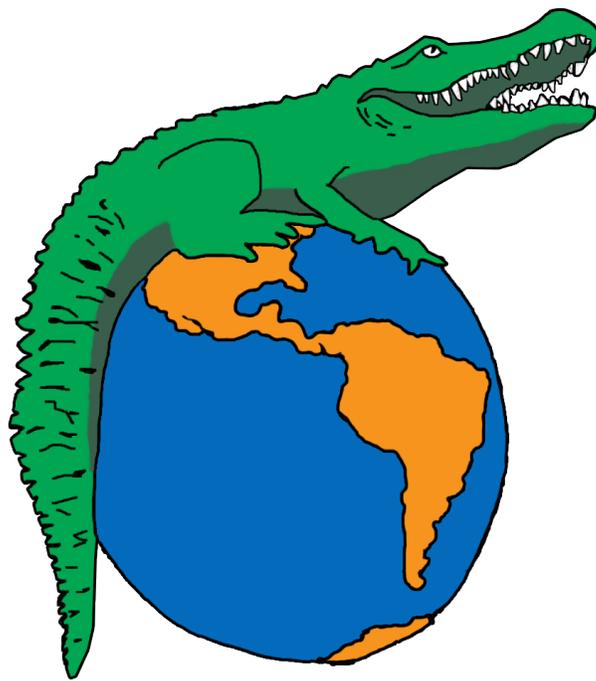


GatorMUN XVI

Background Guide



Alliance of Small Island States

Dear Delegates,

Welcome to GatorMUN XVI, and welcome to the Alliance of Small Island States. My name is Fotini Sisois and I am a second year Public Relations and Economics Major here at the University of Florida. I currently serve as the Secretary on our Model United Nations Executive Board, and frequently travel to various conferences with the team. Outside of MUN and school, I love going to the gym, reading biographies about our nation's current and past leaders, and taking my dog on walks. I am so excited to see these topics come to life in committee!

The first topic is Sustainable Development After Disasters. For this, I really want each of you to step outside of the box, but still within AOSIS's capabilities, to find means for sustainable development in such underdeveloped areas. Keep in mind the disasters that these small island states are prone to suffer from, and also the organizations outside of AOSIS that may be able to provide funds. Sustainable development may seem straightforward or like there is only one way to solve the problem, but that is not at all true. I have given you a few pieces to the puzzle (i.e. who needs help, and what they need help with), and now I leave it up to you to find the last piece: the exact ways for development that will allow these island states to flourish without fear of being demolished by disaster. Finally, I would also like you to bear in mind what has been done in the past, and decide why it worked or why it did not work. This will help you to eliminate unsuitable ideas, and will also allow you to pinpoint things to note in your plans.

The second topic is Methods to Combat Climate Change and Sea Level Rise. Just like with the first topic, I would like each of you to come up with solutions that would not be considered ordinary. Consider what has been done in the past, enhance what worked and avoid what did not work. Also, think more about preventative measures and systems that could be implemented to reduce the risk of climate change and sea level rise. As always, keep in mind the resources and amount of control available to AOSIS.

Delegates will be required to submit position papers that detail their Member States' positions on the topics as well as provide potential solutions. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me at gatormun@gmail.com. I am eager to see what the committee accomplishes during each session.

Sincerely,
Fotini Sisois

Rules of Procedure

Quorum

A majority of voting members answering to the roll at each session shall constitute a quorum for that session. This means that half plus one of all voting members are present. Quorum will be assumed consistent unless questioned through a Point of Order. Delegates may request to be noted as “Present” or “Present and Voting.”

Motion to Open Debate

This opens the floor for debate, allowing other points or motions.

Motion to Set the Agenda

This motion determines the order in which the topics of a committee will be debated. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass.

Motion to Open the Speaker’s List

Opening the Speaker’s List requires a simple majority to pass. A delegate may only be present on the Speaker’s List once, but may re-enter after he/she has spoken. If the Speaker’s List expires, debate then closes.

Motion to Set Speaking Time

Speaking Time must be indicated by this motion from the floor before any members of the body may speak on the Speaker’s List. This motion must also accompany any motion for a Moderated Caucus. In a Motion to Set Speaking Time for the formal Speaker’s List, a delegate may also specify a number of questions or comments to automatically affix to the Speaking Time. These designated questions or comments may also have Speaking Time or Response Time (in the case of a question) limits, but these are not required. The Director may rule any Motion to Set Speaking Time dilatory. This motion requires a simple majority. Any delegate may make this motion between formal speakers in an effort to change the Speaking Time.

Motion to Close the Speaker’s List

The Speaker’s List may be closed upon a motion from the floor. Permission to speak will be accorded to one speaker for and one speaker against, and a two-thirds majority is required for the motion to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of a Moderated Caucus

This motion must include three specifications:

- a. Length of the Caucus
- b. Speaking time, and
- c. Reason for the Caucus.

During a moderated caucus, delegates will be called on to speak by the Committee Director. Delegates will raise their placards to be recognized. Delegates must maintain the same degree of decorum throughout a Moderated Caucus as in formal debate. This motion requires a simple majority to pass.

Motion to Suspend the Rules for the Purpose of an Unmoderated Caucus

This motion must include the length of the Caucus. During an unmoderated caucus, delegates may get up from their seats and talk amongst themselves. This motion requires a simple majority to pass. The length of an unmoderated caucus should never exceed twenty minutes.

Motion to Suspend the Meeting

This motion is in order if there is a scheduled break in debate to be observed. (ie. Lunch!) This motion requires a simple majority vote. The Committee Director may refuse to entertain this motion at their discretion.

Motion to Adjourn the Meeting

This motion is in order at the end of the last committee session. It signifies the closing of the committee until next year's conference.

Motion to Table the Topic

If a delegate believes that the flow of debate has become stagnant, he/she may make this motion. To Table the Topic is to halt debate on the present Topic, save the speakers' list and all draft resolutions, and move on to the next Topic on the Agenda. The delegate making this motion may also choose to specify a previously tabled Topic. This motion requires a two-thirds vote to pass. The Topic may be returned to at any time by tabling the present Topic and adding the phrase "for the purpose of returning to Tabled Topic ____," to this motion. If no Topics have been previously tabled, debate must follow the established Agenda. This motion is to be used sparingly.

Points of Order

Points of Order will only be recognized for the following items:

- a) To recognize errors in voting, tabulation, or procedure,
- b) To question relevance of debate to the current Topic or
- c) To question a quorum.

A Point of Order may interrupt a speaker if necessary and it is to be used sparingly.

Points of Inquiry

When there is no discussion on the floor, a delegate may direct a question to the Committee Director. Any question directed to another delegate may only be asked immediately after the delegate has finished speaking on a substantive matter. A delegate that declines to respond to a question after a formal speech forfeits any further questioning time. The question must conform to the following format:

Delegate from Country A raises placard to be recognized by the Committee Director.

Committee Director: "To what point do you rise?"

Country A: "Point of Inquiry."

Committee Director: "State your Point."

Country A: "Will the delegate from Country B (who must have just concluded a substantive speech) yield to a question?"

Committee Director: "Will the Delegate Yield?"

Country B: "I will" or "I will not" (if not, return to the next business item)

Country A asks their question (it must not be a rhetorical question.)

Country B may choose to respond or to decline.

If the Delegate from Country B does not yield to or chooses not to answer a question from Country A, then he/she yields all remaining questioning time to the Committee Director.

Points of Personal Privilege

Points of personal privilege are used to request information or clarification and conduct all other business of the body except Motions or Points specifically mentioned in the Rules of Procedure.

Please note: The Director may refuse to recognize Points of Order, Points of Inquiry or Points of Personal Privilege if the Committee Director believes the decorum and restraint inherent in the exercise has been violated, or if the point is deemed dilatory in nature.

Rights of Reply

At the Committee Director's discretion, any member nation or observer may be granted a Right of Reply to answer serious insults directed at the dignity of the delegate present. The Director has the ABSOLUTE AUTHORITY to accept or reject Rights of Reply, and the decision IS NOT SUBJECT TO APPEAL. Delegates who feel they are being treated unfairly may take their complaint to any member of the Secretariat.

Working Papers and Draft Resolutions

Once a Working Paper has been submitted, approved, distributed, and formally introduced to the body, it can and will be referred to as a "Draft Resolution." In order for a Working Paper to be submitted to the Committee Director, it must be in correct format and bear the names of a combination of a number of Sponsors and Signatories necessary to introduce, as determined by the Committee Director.

Sponsors are the writers of the Working Paper, and agree with it in its entirety. They should be able to vote 'yes' for the paper during voting procedure. Signatories are those delegates interested in bringing the Working Paper to the floor for debate, but do not necessarily agree with its contents.

A delegate can motion to discuss the working paper during a moderated caucus or unmoderated caucus. A delegate can also motion for an author's panel, which is essentially a moderated caucus moderated by the authors. It is the chair's discretion on the maximum amount of authors allowed on the author's panel.

Friendly Amendments

Friendly Amendments are any changes to a formally introduced Directive that *all* Sponsors agree to in writing. The Committee Director must approve the Friendly Amendment and confirm each Sponsor's agreement both verbally and in writing.

Unfriendly Amendments

Unfriendly Amendments are any substantive changes to a formally introduced Directive that are not agreed to by all of the Sponsors of the Directive. In order to introduce an Unfriendly Amendment, the Unfriendly Amendment must have the number equivalent to 1/3 of Quorum confirmed signatories. The Committee Director has the authority to discern between substantive and nonsubstantive Unfriendly amendment proposals.

Plagiarism

GatorMUN maintains a zero-tolerance policy in regards to plagiarism. Delegates found to have used the ideas of others without properly citing those individuals, organizations, or documents will have their credentials revoked for the duration of the GatorMUN conference. This is a very serious offense.

Motion to Close Debate and Voting Procedures

A motion to close debate may only pass with a two-thirds majority. Once this motion passes, and the committee enters Voting Procedure, no occupants of the committee room may exit the Committee Room, and no individual may enter the Committee Room from the outside. A member of the Dias will secure all doors. No talking, passing notes, or communicating of any kind will be tolerated during voting procedures.

Once moving into voting procedures chair can only accept these motions:

- A point of order to correct an error in procedure
- An appeal of the decision of the chair
- A motion for division
- A motion for roll call vote
- A motion for adoption by acclamation

Each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon in the order which they were introduced. Any Proposed Unfriendly Amendments to each Draft Resolution will be read to the body and voted upon before the main body of the Draft Resolution as a whole is put to a vote. The Committee will adopt Directives and Unfriendly Amendments to Directives if these documents pass with a simple majority. Specialized committees should refer to their background guides or Committee Directors for information concerning specific voting procedures. Unless otherwise specified by the Secretariat, each Committee may pass as many resolutions as it agrees are necessary to efficiently address the Topic.

Delegates who requested to be noted as “Present and Voting” are unable to abstain during voting procedure. Abstentions will not be counted in the tallying of a majority. For example, 5 yes votes, 4 no votes, and 7 abstentions means that the Directive passes.

Roll Call Voting

A counted placard vote will be considered sufficient unless any delegate to the committee motions for a Roll Call Vote. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the committee must comply. All delegates must vote: “For,” “Against,” “Abstain,” or “Pass.”

During a Roll Call vote, any delegate who answers, “Pass,” reserves his/her vote until the Committee Director has exhausted the Roll. However, once the Committee Director returns to “Passing” Delegates, they must vote: “For” or “Against.”

Voting with Rights

During a Roll Call vote delegates may vote “For with Rights” or “Against with Rights.” Delegates will be granted 30 seconds to explain their reasons for voting for or against a draft resolution. This time will come after the tabulation of votes.

Delegates should use this option sparingly. It is meant for delegates who feel that their vote may seem off policy, despite it being correct. The acceptance of rights is up to the director’s discretion. If a speaker goes off topic during their allotted time the director will rule their speech dilatory and move to the next in order.

Accepting by Acclamation

This motion may be stated when the Committee Director asks for points or motions. If a Roll Call Vote is requested, the motion to Accept by Acclamation is voided. If a delegate believes a Directive will pass without opposition, he or she may move to accept the Directive by acclamation. The motion passes unless a single delegate shows opposition. An abstention is not considered opposition. Should the motion fail, the committee will move directly into a Roll Call Vote.

Committee History

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) was established in 1990 with the intent of providing an arena where Small Island Developing States (SIDS) can have one collective voice to address global warming. AOSIS is primarily comprised of small islands and low-lying coastal countries that face multiple environmental challenges and that are vulnerable to the adverse effects of global climate change. Today, 28 years after its creation, AOSIS consists of 39 Member States and 5 Observer States from all around the world. This represents one-fifth of the United Nations' voting membership and establishes AOSIS's role as "the moral conscience of the climate change and sustainable development negotiations." This committee serves primarily as an ad-hoc lobby and strong negotiating voice for each of its member states within the United Nations system.

It is important to note that AOSIS functions primarily on the basis of consultation and consensus. This means that the committee discusses issues amongst themselves and must come to a consensus in order to pass a resolution. This committee has no regular, budget nor a secretariat, and operates merely out of the current chairman's mission to the United Nations. AOSIS as a whole has two ongoing goals. First, to combat climate change, and second, to resist any and all economic, social, and environmental challenges and threats. This committee works tirelessly to protect the people living in small island states from the many dangers that they are faced with. Often times, the concerns of these areas are overlooked due to their lack of funds or resources at all, which is why AOSIS was founded to begin with.

Since its foundation, AOSIS has been involved in multiple initiatives that have helped the committee come closer to reaching its goals each time. The first was in 1994 when AOSIS contributed the majority of the text for the first draft of the Kyoto Protocol negotiations. The Kyoto Protocol was a treaty that aimed to extend the 1992 United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, which required state parties to reduce greenhouse gas emissions based on the notion that global warming exists and that it was most likely man-made carbon dioxide emissions that caused it. Also in 1994, The United Nations held the UN Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of SIDS in Barbados, where, as part of the resolution, the committee developed the Barbados Programme of Action, which "reaffirmed the principles and commitments to sustainable development embodied in Agenda 21 and translated these into specific policies, actions, and measures to be taken at the national, regional and international levels."¹ Additionally, member states such as Tuvalu and the Maldives have publicly advocated for the global temperature rise to be limited to 1.5 degrees Celsius. AOSIS was also heavily involved in the drafting of the Paris Agreement, which includes "recognition for pursuing a temperature goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels, a strengthened mechanism for loss and damage, and the provision for scaled up and simplified access to climate finance for Small Island Developing States."² For the Paris Agreement, AOSIS played an instrumental role in assembling a unified voice amongst multiple intense negotiations. Without the committee's efforts, neither the 1.5-degree limit nor the acknowledgment of a need for a mechanism for loss and damage would have been included in the Agreement's final draft. Finally, the Alliance of Small Island States recognizes that the issues of Climate Change and Sustainable Development are both not only so important, but also closely related in scope, which is why, in 2017, the committee proposed a Climate Change and Sustainable Development Nexus, which intended to create a collaborative initiative that combats both sustainable development and climate change

simultaneously. In fact, on March 24th, 2017, the United Nations held its first ever high-level conference to discuss this Climate Change and Sustainable Development Nexus.

1 "BPOA (1994) - Barbados Programme of Action," Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/conferences/bpoa1994>.

2 David Sheppard, "Paris Agreement on Climate Change: Onwards and Upwards," Huffington Post, 28 December 2016, https://www.huffingtonpost.com/david-sheppard/paris-agreement-on-climate-change-onwards-and-upwards_b_8886144.html.

After 28 years of fighting for the rights of these Small Island Developing States, specifically with regard to their safety against environmental, social and economic threats and climate change, AOSIS has definitely come a long way. With that said, there is still much work to be done, especially now as climate change and sustainable development are more pressing issues than ever before.

Topic I: Sustainable Development After Disasters

Introduction

Sustainable development is defined by the World Commission on Environment and Development as “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.” It is a process that focuses upon the Earth’s finite resources, most commonly wind power and solar power. Sustainable Development requires a balance between maintaining the social needs of inhabitants in a specific area and preserving the environment while ensuring that the area is not pressured with more than it can endure.

Especially in the regions of importance to AOSIS, a low supply of resources such as money, food, and solid infrastructure often prevents the opportunity for development or any advancement at all. Also, it is projected that by the year 2100, our Earth will be home to approximately ten billion people. These factors are exactly the reasons why placing a greater emphasis on sustainable development now is so vital. It is extremely important to ensure that, in the future, as our society grows, infrastructure and other developments are strong enough to withstand any possible changes. Sustainable development that is intended to prevent serious damage caused by a disaster to severely affect a region also involves a concept known as Disaster Risk Reduction (DRR). DRR plays a vital role in social and economic development, especially if the development is to be sustainable for the future. When disaster strikes, whether it is a natural disaster such as a tsunami or an earthquake or it is a manmade disaster such as war, it is very likely for things such as buildings, pipelines, and electricity to be completely wiped out. This risk is exponentially higher not only for islands but also for small states that are struggling to find the means to keep their citizens alive to begin with; these characteristics describe the majority of AOSIS member states. It is vital for any sustainable development plan to consider not only relief after disasters but also preventative measures to reduce the severity of the aftermath.

The main issues that this specific topic will focus on include developing a solid infrastructure that will withstand catastrophe, attaining the necessary resources and support to achieve sustainable development, and prioritizing between competing interests.

History

In 1992, community leaders from all over the world met in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil to establish a plan that would bring the goal of sustainable development to life. During this conference, which was known as the Rio Earth Summit, the participants founded Agenda 21, which had, “specific action plans to realize sustainable development at national, regional and international levels.”³ Then, in 2002, the advancements made at the Earth Summit were echoed by the efforts made during the World Summit on Sustainable Development in Johannesburg, South Africa, which approved the Johannesburg Plan of Implementation. This Plan of Implementation mirrored the impact made by Agenda 21, but allowed for a more focused approach with a solid path and quantifiable and attainable goals.

The Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 was the first settlement of the post-2015 sustainable development agenda. The Framework was designed to last 15 years and includes a voluntary

3 “Sustainable Development,” General Assembly of the United Nations, accessed 11 October 2018, <http://www.un.org/en/ga/president/65/issues/sustdev.shtml>.

and non-binding membership. The intent of this document was to acknowledge the fact that the State is primarily responsible for reducing disaster risk, while also recognizing that any accountability would also be shared with the other stakeholders. The Sendai Framework outlines four Priorities for Action. These four priorities include: 1.) Understanding disaster risk, 2.) Strengthening disaster risk governance to manage disaster risk, 3.) Investing in disaster risk reduction for resilience, and 4.) Enhancing disaster preparedness for effective response and to “Build Back Better” in recovery, rehabilitation, and reconstruction.⁴

The previously mentioned Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA), which was drafted, in part, by AOSIS, included 14 points, all of which address specific areas of priority, as well as actions necessary and particular challenges that SIDS usually encounter. The top priorities of this programme were climate change and sea-level rise, natural and environmental disasters and management of wastes. The Commission on Sustainable Development was responsible for ensuring that all of the efforts of the BPOA were done in a way that would ensure sustainability and long-term success. It was established in 1994 by the United Nations General Assembly and was very effective in targeting precisely which aspects of society were at risk and formulating a plan aimed at improving them. Additionally, “The comprehensive structure of the BPOA elaborates principles and sets out specific strategies at national, regional and international levels over the short, medium and long terms in support of the sustainable development of SIDS.”⁵ The main focus of each of these goals was to allow for not only development but also economic prosperity for the long term.

Key Issues

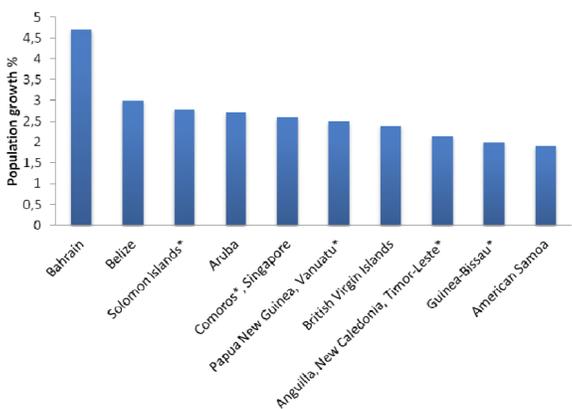
While sustainable development after disasters is necessary in order to protect not only the infrastructure and buildings that make up a society but also all of the lives that reside within these areas, there are issues that make development plans difficult to implement.

The first major issue is ensuring that the plans for sustainable development are elaborate enough to remain functional even through future developments, while also strong enough to withstand even the most severe disaster. This can be difficult, especially in Small Island Developing States (SIDS), which are the most prone to disaster and have the least available resources. It is also important to keep in mind development methods that will protect agriculture and crops. The people of SIDS have very little to live off of, and most of the time, their crops are not only their livelihood but also their primary source of nutrition. This is why protecting agriculture is imperative. It is oftentimes very difficult to pinpoint exactly what will work for each specific situation, and it usually ends up emulating a long and painful game of trial and error. With that in mind, it is always best to have the specific needs of the target region in focus in order to eliminate multiple inappropriate methods. It is also beneficial to consider what is available to each specific region based on its socioeconomic status, its location, the types of disasters it is prone to based on its location, its population size and the amount of outside support available. Small Islands usually have very little of these things, which is why formulating a sustainable plan for development can be a bit of an issue. It is also very difficult to model a development system that has proven to be successful in different regions, because no two places, no two societies, no two populations are exactly the same. It is extremely rare to find a sustainable development plan that will work perfectly for more areas than the one it was originally designed to fit. But with this said, precedents can also be beneficial in eliminating failed methods, or implementing methods from similar regions and altering them slightly. However, once a plan has been formulated, more issues arise.

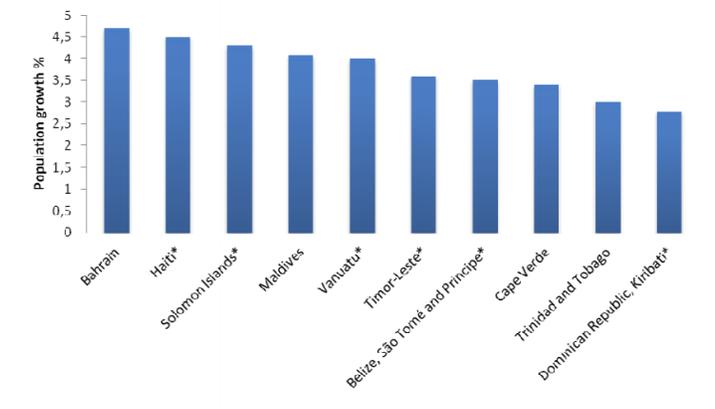
4 “Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction,” United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://www.unisdr.org/we/coordinate/sendai-framework>.

5 “BPOA (1994) - Barbados Programme of Action,” Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/conferences/bpoa1994>.

SIDS with the highest annual population growth (1990-2010)



SIDS with the highest urban population growth rate (1990-2010)



Based on the above charts, it is evident that in the 20 SIDS where data was available, growth rates have shown to be exponential, and it is projected that they continue in similar patterns in the future.⁶ Creating a plan that will account for this major growth in each of these islands is imperative. Many of AOSIS's member-states simply do not have the infrastructure or space to sustain a rapidly growing number of inhabitants. This growth also signals more resources required to not only provide enough food and water but also to ensure that these areas can adapt to such changes without the infrastructure and design of the land being compromised.

The second major issue is attaining the necessary resources and support to achieve sustainable development. This chart,⁷ while it is lacking data from 28 islands, still clearly depicts which areas need the most help, and how desperately they are suffering.⁸ Just over half of Haiti's population is living on under \$1.25 per day; meanwhile, there are other islands such as Jamaica, Maldives, and Seychelles, where not even 2% of their people suffer as badly as the majority of Haiti's people, but there are still substantial levels of poverty.

SIDS with the highest share of population living under \$1.25 a day	
Haiti*	54.90%
Guinea-Bissau*	48.80%
Comoros*	46.10%
Timor-Leste*	37.40%
Papua New Guinea	35.80%
Average	26.5%
Dominican Republic	4.30%
Trinidad and Tobago	4.20%
Jamaica	<2.0%
Maldives	<2.0%
Seychelles	<2.0%

The reason for these differences is a natural disaster. Jamaica's last catastrophic natural disaster occurred in 1988 when Hurricane Gilbert struck, and due to tourism and major outside aid, the island was able to bounce back, but Haiti had a more recent devastation. In January of 2010, a 7.3 magnitude earthquake struck Haiti and completely annihilated their civilization, as they knew it. Over 230,000 people died from this tragedy and an additional 300,000 were injured. Before the earthquake struck, Haiti was the poorest country in the Western Hemisphere, but its economy was slowly growing. It was very dependant on agriculture and on exports. By 2009 the island had earned \$424 from exports alone and they were projected to only get stronger. However, once the earthquake hit, Haiti's Gross Domestic Product shrunk by just over 5%, and it incurred almost \$9 billion in damages. The earthquake wiped out more than 100,000 homes. Fortunately

6 "Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Statistics," United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States, accessed 11 October 2018
 7 "Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Statistics," United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States, accessed 11 October 2018
 8 "Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Statistics," United Nations Office of the High Representative for the Least Developed Countries, Landlocked Developing Countries and the Small Island Developing States, accessed 11 October 2018

for Haiti though, the motivation from outside sources to help with disaster relief was impeccable. Billions of individuals donated humble amounts via credit card or traveled with mission teams to help in any way they could, and numerous Non-governmental organizations also stepped up to provide aid. For example, Oxfam International raised emergency funds to support rehabilitation and relief. They also made a commitment to assist Haiti both in the short-term and long-term efforts. The International Committee of the Red Cross was also a major contributor in relief efforts post-earthquake. They provided supplies, hundreds of personnel and established field hospitals. Food for the Poor helped by providing over 7,000 tons of food and other medical supplies to the people of Haiti. These great donors were just three of the hundreds of aids that Haiti received after this incredible devastation. Additionally, not only did the efforts from these organizations focus on immediate and emergency relief, but they also ensured that any redevelopment attempts be sustainable in case another disaster were to strike. Surely enough, just when Haiti was starting to grow once again, two massive hurricanes struck in 2011. But, largely because of the focus on sustainability in 2010, the damages weren't as detrimental, and Haiti was able to rejuvenate its economy and its land by the year 2014, when the GDP, at a record-breaking \$18.3 billion, had finally grown 2.3%.⁹

This case study about Haiti reveals the importance not only of sustainable development post-disaster, but also of outside aid, especially in impoverished areas like Haiti. It took much more effort to repair the damages made in 2010 than it did in 2011. This is not so much because of the severity of the first disaster compared to the second, since both were extremely catastrophic, and more because of the value of the relief initiatives made after the earthquake. This shows how imperative preventative measures toward sustainable development before disaster strikes are.

It is very likely that small islands have multiple different weaknesses that need attention when deciding on a development plan. It is also unreasonable to assume that one plan can fix each and every one of those weaknesses at once, which is where the third key issue comes in.

The third main issue is prioritizing between competing interests. Deciding which aspects of development to focus on depends primarily on the region of focus. For example, on an impoverished island like Haiti, a plan for development may not so much focus on elaborate infrastructure or wireless systems and Internet and more on methods to protecting agriculture and the economy in the case of disaster. But with that said, larger, more developed countries such as the United States with very advanced infrastructure and less dependence on agriculture would focus more on protecting and sustaining the buildings, roadwork, and power supplies that it has worked so hard on and spent so much money to establish. Having to make these difficult tradeoffs often causes major arguments between the decision makers in different societies. It is understandable for community leaders to want to take care of all issues at once but it is important to remember that resources are finite and that prioritizing the most important aspects of each individual society. Another example of this involves trade-offs between protecting the environment and boosting the economy. It may not always be the top priority for a nation to boost its economy, especially if agriculture is more valuable to its people.

Regional Context

The Member-states of AOSIS are divided into five major regions: The Caribbean, Africa, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, and the Pacific. Each region has handled the issue of sustainable development in the way that is most suitable for each specific region.

Caribbean

The Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) has provided immense contribution to “advancing the equitable and sustainable development of the sub-region over the past 70

⁹ Kimberly Amadeo, “Haiti Earthquake Facts, Its Damage, and Effects on the Economy,” The Balance, 29 June 2018, <https://www.thebalance.com/haiti-earthquake-facts-damage-effects-on-economy-3305660>.

years.”¹⁰ Additionally, the Caribbean places extensive focus on sustainable development within tourism, since tourism is this region’s main source of revenue. A document titled the Mauritius Strategy outlines development plans in the Caribbean that emphasize institutional architecture for governance in the region, inclusion of all mechanisms, from international to regional, and the cooperation of multiple organizations such as United Nations agencies and other international institutions. The islands of Caribbean have also placed great emphasis on incorporating human rights, and sensitivity to all socioeconomic levels in development plans.¹¹

Africa

African heads of state launched the New Partnership For Africa’s Development (NEPAD) in 2001, which has, “aimed at providing a framework for sustainable development to be shared by all Africa’s people, emphasizing the role of partnerships among African countries themselves and between them and the international community, and proposed a shared and common vision to eradicate poverty through sustained economic growth and sustainable development.”¹² The objectives of NEPAD as outlined by its leaders are to: Eradicate poverty, Promote sustainable growth and development, Foster integration of Africa in the world economy, and Accelerate the empowerment of women.¹³

The Indian Ocean

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, along with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) are responsible for the majority of the development efforts in this region. The Suva Declaration on Sustainable Human Development in the Pacific was hosted by the UNDP in 1994, and was when Pacific Islands leaders, “Reaffirmed that on account of the growing complexity of the issues involved, Pacific island countries are faced with new and unique challenges, foremost of which is how to realign policies, plans, and programmes for a more effective response to current human development problems and constraints; and Emphasized that the pursuit of human well-being means maintaining the Pacific quality of life which ensures economic, social and spiritual well-being irrespective of age, gender, racial origin, creed and place of abode (UNDP, 1994a:2).”¹⁴

The Mediterranean

Similar to the Caribbean, the Mediterranean focuses on Sustainable Tourism Development due to the high demand for tourism in these areas. The Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025 (MSSD 2016-2025) was established in 2016 with the intention of securing a sustainable future for the nations of the Mediterranean. “ It aims to harmonize the interactions between socio-economic and environmental goals, adapt international commitments to fit regional conditions, guide national strategies for sustainable development, and stimulate regional cooperation between stakeholders in the implementation of sustainable development.”¹⁵

10 “Caribbean ministers celebrate ECLAC 70th anniversary with focus on holistic approach to development,” Caribbean News Now, 30 April 2018, <https://www.caribbeannewsnow.com/2018/04/30/caribbean-ministers-celebrate-eclac-70th-anniversary-with-focus-on-holistic-approach-to-development/>.

11 Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC), “Caribbean Forum: Shaping a Sustainable Development Agenda to Address the Caribbean Reality in the Twenty-first Century,” United Nations Regional Commissions, 4 March 2013, <http://www.regionalcommissions.org/eclacforum2015.pdf>.

12 “Africa,” Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/topics/africa>.

13 “New Partnership for Africa’s Development (NEPAD),” Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, accessed 11 October 2018, <http://www.un.org/en/africa/osaa/peace/nepad.shtml>.

14 Rajesh Chandra, “Planning for Sustainable Development in the Pacific Islands,” Global Development Research Center, accessed 11 October 2018, <http://www.gdrc.org/oceans/rajesh.html>.

15 UNEP/MAP, “Mediterranean Strategy for Sustainable Development 2016-2025,” Plan Bleu, 2016, http://planbleu.org/sites/default/files/publications/mssd_2016-2025_final.pdf.

The Pacific

Pacific Islanders are extremely dependent on biological resources and healthy ecosystems. Fishing and agriculture remain the focus of their economies. These aspects should be the center of focus for any development plans in this region. Similar to the islands in the Caribbean, the Pacific Islands primarily depend on the BPoA: The Blueprint and the Mauritius Strategy as the main outline for sustainable development in this region. They depend on the support that this strategy provides to poor and underdeveloped regions, as well as on the emphasis it places on human rights.

Questions to Consider

How much control over Sustainable development do individual member states currently possess? How much control should they have?

Who usually provides funds for sustainable development, especially in impoverished areas such as those a part of AOSIS? Who should provide these funds?

How can sustainable development help boost a country's economy?

How can individual citizens become involved in the efforts towards sustainable development?

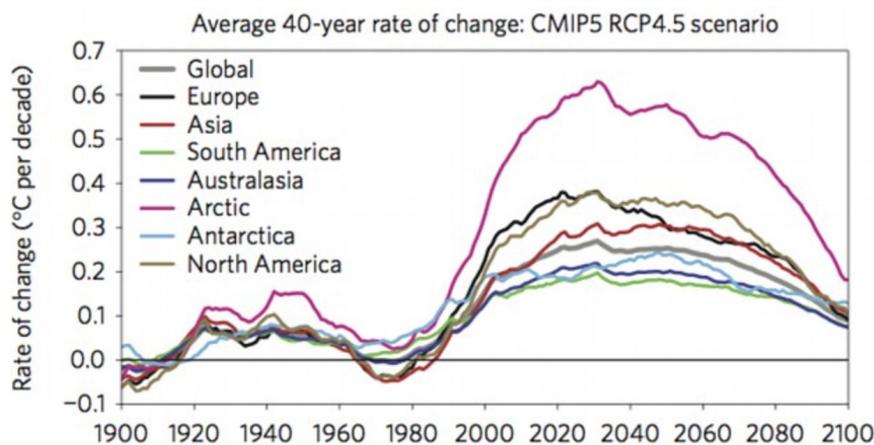
How can each region's specific priorities be combined to complement each other in one consolidated sustainable development plan? Is this possible?

Topic II: Methods to Combat Climate Change and Sea Level Rise

Introduction

Climate change is defined by Oxford Dictionaries as, “A change in global or regional climate patterns, in particular a change apparent from the mid to late 20th century onwards and attributed largely to the increased levels of atmospheric carbon dioxide produced by the use of fossil fuels.”¹⁶ Correspondingly, sea level rise is a result of climate change and is defined as an increase in the volume of water in the oceans, which ultimately causes the sea level to rise.

There are both natural and human-influenced causes of climate change. The natural causes are typically things such as slight changes in Earth’s orbit, the amount of energy provided by the Sun, and even things such as changes in the oceans or volcanic eruptions. While these natural factors do, in fact, cause not only specific areas’ climates to change, but also the Earth’s as a whole, this is a necessary and expected change that does not usually impose much harm on an environment. Climate change can, however, become dangerous when the man-made causes are included. It has been proven that since the 1900s a major cause of climate change has been greenhouse gases, which result from the burning of fuels such as coal, oil, and gas.¹⁷ The issue is that when these fuels are burnt, heat-trapping greenhouse gasses, carbon dioxide being one of them, are incorporated into the air that we breathe. The graph below illustrates the projected rate of climate change over 40 years starting in 1900 and ending in the year 2100. It is evident, based on this chart, that climate change is present and active on Earth and that it has no intentions of stopping any time soon.^{18,19}



With climate change rates being estimated to have such a drastic effect on our Planet, it can be easily assumed that sea level rise will show a similar trend. National Geographic explains that, “over the past

¹⁶ “Climate change,” Oxford University Press, accessed 11 October 2015, https://en.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/climate_change.

¹⁷ “Climate Change Indicators: Greenhouse Gases,” United States Environmental Protection Agency, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://www.epa.gov/climate-indicators/greenhouse-gases>.

¹⁸ Ellie Zolfagharifard, “Global warming is happening FASTER: Climate change is ‘set to speed up to rates not seen for 1,000 years’, warn scientists,” Daily Mail, 9 March 2015, <https://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2986735/Global-warming-happening-FASTER-Climate-change-set-speed-rates-not-seen-1000-years-warn-scientists.html>.

¹⁹ Steven J. Smith, James Edmonds, Corrine A. Hartin, Anupriya Mundra, & Katherine Calvin, “Near-term acceleration in the rate of temperature change,” Nature Climate Change, 9 March 2015, <https://www.pdf-archive.com/2015/03/11/nclimate2552/nclimate2552.pdf>.

century, the Global Mean Sea Level (GMSL) has risen by 4 to 8 inches (10 to 20 centimeters). However, the annual rate of rise over the past 20 years has been 0.13 inches (3.2 millimeters) a year, roughly twice the average speed of the preceding 80 years.”²⁰

These trends involve dangerous implications for the Earth in general, but especially for the member-states of AOSIS. The main issues that climate change and sea level rise pose for Small Island States include a suffering economy and society, fewer clean water sources, and damaged agriculture and endangered fish species, which reduces the amount of available food and jobs.

History

Climate change and sea level rise affect most areas around the world, but some of these areas have the resources, the infrastructure and the geographic location to be only minimally affected by it. Low-lying areas with a poor socioeconomic status, much like all of the member-states of AOSIS, face an extremely elevated risk of suffering from much more serious consequences from climate change and sea level rise. In fact, past occurrences have proven that the member-states of AOSIS, as well as any nation under similar socioeconomic and geographic circumstances must take serious action to combat these issues in order to prevent further devastation. Therefore, the leadership of AOSIS, as well as other branches of the United Nations have made immense efforts to combat Climate Change and Sea Level Rise.

In 2009, AOSIS held a high-level summit in New York City to discuss its initiative to fight climate change. During this summit, AOSIS had the opportunity to adopt the AOSIS Climate Change Declaration. This Declaration emphasizes the urgency of climate change and sea level rise. As stated in the declaration, “climate change poses the most serious threat to our survival and viability, and, that it undermines our efforts to achieve sustainable development goals and threatens our very existence.”²¹

Later that same year, many world leaders, including members of AOSIS, met in Copenhagen for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) COP-15, where they planned to highlight the importance of taking action toward combating climate change, not only for the sake of AOSIS members but also for everyone globally. The objectives of the UNFCCC document include: 1.) Stabilize Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 2.) Obtain commitment for a financial contribution from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and 3.) To encourage and help member nations to implement environmental initiatives that will reduce emissions.²² Also during the UNFCCC COP-15, a document known as the Copenhagen Accord was drafted. The basic terms of this Resolution include, “an aspirational goal of limiting global temperature increase to 2 degrees Celsius; a process for countries to enter their specific mitigation pledges by January 31, 2010; broad terms for the reporting and verification of countries’ actions; a commitment by developed countries for \$30 billion in 2010-2012 to help developing countries; and a goal for mobilizing \$100 billion a year in public and private finance by 2020. The accord also called for the establishment of a new Green Climate Fund.”²³

Then, in 2015, more progress was made toward combating Climate Change during the landmark UNFCCC COP-21 in Paris, France. During this conference, over 200 nations came together to adopt the Paris

20 “Sea Level Rise,” National Geographic, 13 January 2017, <https://www.nationalgeographic.com/environment/global-warming/sea-level-rise/>.

21 “Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Declaration on Climate Change 2009,” Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/1566AOSISSummitDeclarationSept21FINAL.pdf>.

22 United Nations Environment Programme, “Climate Change in the Caribbean and the Challenge of Adaptation,” UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, October 2008, http://www.pnuma.org/deat1/pdf/Climate_Change_in_the_Caribbean_Final_LOW20oct.pdf

23 “15th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change,” Center for Climate and Energy Solutions, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://www.c2es.org/content/cop-15-copenhagen/>.

Agreement. “The Paris Agreement builds upon the convention and – for the first time – brings all nations into a common cause to undertake ambitious efforts to combat climate change and adapt to its effects, with enhanced support to assist developing countries to do so. As such, it charts a new course in the global climate effort.”²⁴ The Agreement’s central aim was to proactively fight the threat of Climate Change by keeping the global temperature rise under 2 degrees Celsius. This Agreement was different from others that had been adopted before it because it calls for the complete cooperation from every participant, and also uses unconventional methods, such as requiring a regular report from each party regarding its emissions and its implementation efforts, to attack the issue of climate change.

Key Issues

While climate change and sea level rise are issues by themselves, their existence in a particular area poses multiple other dilemmas that many nations lack resources and infrastructure to overcome.

The first of these issues is the fact that most of the time, the devastation caused by climate change destroys the infrastructure and economies of small islands. These areas do not have very much to begin with, and it is oftentimes impossible for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to recover from any damages brought on to their society that is not even fully developed. Tourism plays an outstanding role in providing revenue for the majority of the member-states of AOSIS, and these islands have become tourist destinations partly because of their climate. Also, beach erosion, coral bleaching and other degradation challenges have very negatively impacted the destination attractiveness in many locations such as Martinique, Barbados and Bonaire.²⁵ If this climate changes, the number of tourists visiting these islands will decrease and furthermore, so will revenue. In addition to that, sea level rise presents SIDS, especially those that lay very close to sea level, with a high risk of flooding and therefore losing the little infrastructure that has been developed. The rapidly increasing rate of climate change has caused many people that live in very poor, underdeveloped, low-lying and extremely vulnerable island states to have to move to bigger islands, closer to a mainland in order to save themselves from possibly losing everything. “Estimates have indicated that between 665,000 and 1.7 million people in the Pacific alone could be displaced or forced to migrate by 2050 because of the effects of climate change associated with rising sea levels.”²⁶ While it is a smart move for these individuals to find a safer place to live, this hurts both the island that they are leaving and the island they are going to. When multiple people leave an island because of climate change, there is now much less economic activity, fewer people buying produce from markets, and few people in general to stimulate the economy. However, when all or most of these people occupy the same general area and these places now become overpopulated, it is very likely, especially in these small island states, that the present infrastructure is not strong enough to withstand such crowding. Additionally, all of these people must eat and drink water, which makes finding enough of these resources to fulfill so many bodies extremely difficult. Overcrowding areas that are already struggling to sustain natives place a lot of burden on an economy and on that society in general.

Studying a member-state such as Kiribati provides the perfect opportunity to better understand the consequences of Climate Change and Sea Level Rise. Kiribati is a very poor and very low-lying conglomeration of 33 islands (only 21 inhabited) that takes up a total of 313 square miles of land. All of the islands are atolls, which are naturally low rising and have a high ratio of coastline to land area. This makes them extremely vulnerable to storm surges and rising sea levels. The majority of Kiribati’s 112,000 inhabitants live on the atoll of Tarawa, near the capital. This atoll is only 9.8 feet above sea level and is in

24 “What is the Paris Agreement?” United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://unfccc.int/process-and-meetings/the-paris-agreement/what-is-the-paris-agreement>.

25 Rafat Ali, “The Impact of Climate Change on Small Island Nations and Their Tourism Future,” Skift, 1 April 2014, <https://skift.com/2014/04/01/the-impact-of-climate-change-on-small-island-nations-their-tourism-future/>.

26 Lydia Tomkiw, “Kiribati Climate Change Relocation Refugee Crisis? Sinking Low-Lying Island Nations In Pacific, Indian Oceans Seeking Solutions Before It’s Too Late,” International Business Times, 11 October 2015, <https://www.ibtimes.com/kiribati-climate-change-relocation-refugee-crisis-sinking-low-lying-island-nations-2127526>.

extreme danger of being severely affected by Climate Change and Sea Level Rise. The country faces many challenges from Climate Change already, including sea level rise, eroded beaches and contaminated water sources. Temperatures in Kiribati are only continuing to rise, which only increases the amount of danger that this island and its citizens have to face. As temperatures rise, even by a little, coral reefs become more likely to suffer from coral bleaching, which occurs when rising temperatures or increased ultraviolet light puts the coral into trauma and kills the algae that lives on it and gives it its color. The coral then turns white, starves, has stunted growth and eventually dies. Without coral, atolls, especially those of Kiribati, cannot sustain themselves. If nothing is done to stop or even slow the rate of Climate Change and Sea Level Rise, the island of Kiribati is expected to be completely unlivable even before it has drowned. Not only that, but Kiribati's total land area is estimated to shrink if heat-trapping greenhouse gas emissions the damage caused by storms will further increase, as will the threat posed to freshwater reserves there. The people of Kiribati are at great risk of losing their homes, heritage and even their country. The nation's sovereignty is also at risk due to climate change. Sea level rise has eaten away at the island's shores, bringing it closer and closer to completely disappearing each day.²⁷ Because of all of these dangers, many people have already fled for refuge, and there are more who are prepared to follow suit. While these people are rightfully concerned for their safety, abandoning Kiribati hurts the already weak economy even more. If action isn't taken to quickly and proactively reduce the rate of climate change and sea level rise, Kiribati could be facing the severe threat of extinction.²⁸

Another issue is that climate change leads to fewer clean water sources. First and foremost, as temperatures continue to rise, more and more of our planet's glaciers are melting. Glaciers have been considered a very large source of freshwater, and if they melt more rapidly than we need them to, they won't be able to provide any water in the future. Additionally, warmer climates tend to provoke precipitation in the form of rain as opposed to snow, and while both provide the same amount of water, snowfall typically collects on mountaintops and is released into reservoirs at a very slow pace as it melts.²⁹ Rain, on the other hand, does not have the capability of being preserved for as long. Aside from rain not having the capability to be preserved like snow can, it also causes increased acidification in oceans. This acidification kills much of the species that live in these oceans, and the effects of this will be discussed shortly. In sum, Climate Change has major effects on all water sources, and puts people's health in great danger.

The third issue caused by climate change and sea level rise is a reduced amount of available jobs due to damaged agriculture endangered fish species. As mentioned in the above paragraph, Climate Change causes increased acidification in oceans. This is obviously harmful to these species but is also harmful to the residents of the small island states that live near these oceans and depend on the fish and other marine animals for food and income. In addition to this, a change in climate alters the way crops grow in certain areas, and sometimes causes the growth of certain crops to no longer be successful in the area's new and constantly changing climate. This is especially unfortunate for people in small islands who not only depend on agriculture as their main source of nourishment, but also as their main source of income. These small islands do not have elaborate technology or strong infrastructure and only a portion of them have any tourism at all as sources of income; they live a simple life that is primarily centered around exporting goods such as agriculture and seafood, and also selling it locally to the people of the island.

27 Justin Worland, "Meet the President Trying to Save His Island Nation From Climate Change," 9 October 2015, <http://time.com/4058851/kiribati-climate-change/>.

28 "Republic of Kiribati," Union of Concerned Scientists, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://www.climatehotmap.org/global-warming-locations/republic-of-kiribati.html>.

29 "The Impact of Climate Change on Water Resources," GRACE Communications Foundation, accessed 11 October 2018, <http://www.gracelinks.org/2380/the-impact-of-climate-change-on-water-resources>.

Caribbean

The islands of the Caribbean are the most tourism-dependent of all of the member-states of AOSIS, and have also been severely affected by climate change. Because of climate change, the Caribbean Islands have experienced more frequent hurricanes and tropical storms, a rise in average temperatures, an increase in Sea level, and extinction of native animals.³⁰ To try and relieve some of the pain caused by these disasters, organizations such as Build Better Jamaica and UNFCCC in Rio in 1992 have made immense efforts in controlling the effects of Climate Change. The objectives of Build Better Jamaica include: 1.) To develop more sustainable construction techniques using energy efficient, yet intense weather-resistant materials, 2.) To build stronger infrastructure in order to improve the assessment of climate change related risks, and 3.) Increase awareness and public knowledge on the risks of Climate Change.³¹ The objectives of the UNFCCC document include: 1.) Stabilize Greenhouse Gas Emissions, 2.) Obtain commitment for a financial contribution from the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and 3.) To encourage and help member nations to implement environmental initiatives that will reduce emissions.³²

Africa

African islands have a naturally hot climate that is sensitive to change, which makes them more vulnerable to climate change than any other islands. While Africa accounts for only 4% of greenhouse gas emissions and the continent itself has barely done anything at all to cause climate change, they are still in extreme danger because of climate change. In 2015, the African Progress Report was published to outline five key steps, which are essential to achieving Climate Justice in Africa. The five steps include: 1.) Phase out fossil fuel subsidies, 2.) Clean up climate finance, 3.) Drive Africa's low-carbon energy transition, 4.) Leave no one behind, and 5.) Adopt new models of planned urbanization.³³

Indian Ocean

The islands around the Indian Ocean, just like every other member-state of AOSIS, are greatly affected by climate change. But, these islands typically have even weaker economies than the rest, weaker infrastructure and fewer resources. Therefore these members have done little to combat climate change and sea level rise. One state near the Indian Ocean that is really suffering is the Maldives. The Maldives, unlike most islands near it, is very dependent on tourism, and very popular for its beautiful beaches and great weather. Sea level rise has begun to degrade these famous beaches, while an increase in the overall temperature there has made it less desirable to tourists.

The Mediterranean

The Mediterranean is one of the most vulnerable areas to climate change and the reason for this is simple: it is one of the most heavily polluted areas in the world. Thousands of tons of toxic waste are pumped directly into the sea each year.³⁴ Additionally, the Mediterranean is a large trading hub where many ships pass through each day while transporting goods to places around the sea. Because of this, the ocean is full of gas and other harmful chemicals that ultimately hurt the environment and lead to an increase in CO2 emissions, which lead to a more rapid rate of Climate Change. Islands of the Mediterranean are also heavily dependent

30 "Climate Change and the Caribbean - What Do We Need to Know?" YardEdge, 17 June 2013, <https://www.yardedge.net/environment/climate-change-and-the-caribbean-what-do-we-need-to-know>.

31 "Build Better Jamaica," Institute for Sustainable Development, accessed 11 October 2018, <https://buildbetterja.com/>.

32 United Nations Environment Programme, "Climate Change in the Caribbean and the Challenge of Adaptation," UNEP Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, October 2008, http://www.pnuma.org/deat1/pdf/Climate_Change_in_the_Caribbean_Final_LOW20oct.pdf

33 Caroline Kende-Robb, "5 steps to save Africa from climate change," World Economic Forum, 8 December 2015, <https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2015/12/5-steps-to-save-africa-from-climate-change/>.

34 Greenpeace International, "The Mediterranean and Climate Change's Impacts," Coastal Care, 19 June 2011, <http://coastalcare.org/2011/06/other-threats-in-the-mediterranean/>.

on tourism, so therefore, it is vital that the effects of Climate Change be controlled in order for it to maintain its level of attraction to tourists. As of now, not much at all has been done to help the Mediterranean specifically in regard to climate change, but the area is definitely reaping the benefits of documents such as the Paris Agreement. The solutions for minimizing the effects of Climate Change in the Mediterranean, however, are simple. Emphasis on prohibiting pollution should become bigger a priority worldwide, and in addition to this, methods should be implemented to keep individuals accountable for their actions, especially in regard to our planet.

The Pacific

The Pacific is yet another area that has been deeply burdened by the effects of climate change. Tuvalu, for example, is battling with the possibility of complete destruction if the rate of climate change changes even slightly. The islands in the Pacific were involved in spearheading the impact made by monumental documents such as UNFCCC COP-15 and the Paris Agreement. Much more needs to be done in this area to ensure that further demolition does not occur.

Questions to Consider

What are possible organizations that would be willing to fund a mechanism that would control sea level rise?

What can be done to ensure that both underdeveloped and slightly more developed member-states receive the same attention?

Exactly how much of what has caused climate change is man made? And how can this be prevented from causing any more damage?

What role does the Sun play in Climate Change? Is there anything that can be done to soften its interference on the Earth?

How can we ensure that the methods put in place are sustainable enough to allow the member-states to fight off climate change far into the future?

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