

STATEMENT BY THE MINISTER OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTER MANAGEMENT, AND CONSERVATION – HON. JOHN MOFFAT FUGUI MP - AT THE TWELFTH SPECIAL SESSION OF THE GOVERNING COINCIL FOR THE GLOBAL MINISTERIAL ENVIRONMENT FORUM – UNEP HEADQUARTERS, UNITED NATIONS COMPLEX, GIGIRI, NAIROBI, KENYA, 20th - 22nd FEBRUARY 2012.

MADAM PRESIDENT:

Allow me, first, to confer our “vote of thanks” to the UNEP for organizing and making the necessary arrangements to attend this meeting. On a similar note, I extend our gratitude to the Government and People of Kenya for facilitating travel arrangements and for the hospitality extended to my delegation.

MADAM PRESIDENT:

In celebrating UNEP’s fortieth anniversary, I take this opportunity to congratulate the organization (UNEP) for the excellent Leadership, Vision, and Mission exemplified on the African continent and, in particular, Kenya. **MADAM PRESIDENT**, the world over, UNEP is placed in the good books for work well done. UNEP’s Leadership and Stellar Record on environmental issues, and Climate Change, is much admired. Because of this, governments have established Ministries or Departments to address these very issues of global concern.

On behalf of the people and government of Solomon Islands, I confer our accolades and congratulations to the leadership and staff of UNEP. You have achieved a great job! You have made historical strides! We will continue to follow the examples you have set. Indeed, you have placed a high bar few of us would even begin to emulate.

MADAM PRESIDENT:

As we look forward to **Rio + 20**, I am glad to say that Solomon Islands continues to make the necessary preparations. Shortly, we will launch our Climate Change

Policy. This will, **MADAM PRESIDENT**, serve as a framework for and a matrix to address environmental issues such as Sustainability, Green Economy, Blue Economy, Sustainable Governance, Livelihoods, Ecosystem Services, and issues indigenous and endemic to our **own environments**. This policy is needed, **MADAM PRESIDENT**, to tidy up these issues. It will also serve as a framework to institute the necessary legal framework to regulate environmental agendas and climate change issues in the country.

MADAM PRESIDENT:

For such undertakings, Solomon Islands continues to depend on its traditional development partners and aid donors for assistance. Often, our development partners and donors have the Expertise, Experience, and Funding needed to adequately address these issues. **MADAM PRESIDENT**, for a long time, Taiwan has been a faithful partner in assisting Solomon Islands address these issues. Unfortunately, **MADAM PRESIDENT**, Taiwan is not a member of UNEP. For this reason, I would request member countries of UNEP to support Taiwan's BID to be made a member of UNEP. For Solomon Islands, **MADAM PRESIDENT**, this will help us effectively and efficiently address these critical issues of global dimensions. It is time, **MADAM PRESIDENT**, we afford such recognition for and membership to the Republic of China.

MADAM PRESIDENT:

I would like to briefly touch on the Green Economy and the Blue Economy. The emphasis on the Green Economy as an alternative model to the historical Eurocentric economic model is of great importance. Instead of placing emphasis on icons such as GDP and GNP, Green Economy shifts the development lens and accents concepts such as: Natural Ecosystem Services, Biodiversity, Livelihoods, and Sustainable Governance.

For Solomon Islands - as member of the SIDS - it is important that we make a distinction between the Green Economy and the Blue Economy. While we recognize that the two models are interdependent and work synergistically, I must accent the need to make the necessary distinctions. First, the western practice of universalizing both the language used and the practices applied often mean that most SIDSs would be disadvantaged, if not, impoverished, if the

necessary distinctions are not made! Second, the prevalence of the ocean (compared to land mass) for small island states – including Solomon Islands – would compel SIDS leaders to privilege what they have in abundance – the ocean. This is important so that tools and discourses used in western, industrialized countries are not used indiscriminately for small island states. And since research in and the science of oceans are still a growth areasd – open with unlimited possibilities – small island states should ensure the ocean (in terms of the Blue Economy) is given all the attention and privilege it rightly deserves.

MADAM PRESIDENT:

In view of the above, of late, the Melanesian Spearhead Group (MSG) Environment Ministers had met in Fiji to put in place frameworks to address environment and climate change issues. The meeting discussed issues with specific relevance to their respectively countries. This is done in anticipation of addressing similar issues pertinent to Melanesian states in the corridors of the upcoming **Rio + 20** meeting in Brazil, in June.

In that meeting, leaders have also realized that in the Melanesian countries, language is one of the natural resources (or natural capital) we have in abundance. In articulating concepts and models for the Green Economy and the Blue Economy, the MSG countries would do well if they use these languages to explain and expound on the ideas and experiences these societies have vis-à-vis their environmental agendas and Climate Change issues. **MADAM PRESIDENT**, along with languages, the leaders have recognized the need to establish Melanesian Regional Institutions to address common environment and climate change issues. The Melanesian Spearhead Group ministers have done just this.

MADAM PRESIDENT:

Allow me to thank you for the opportunity to listen to our Country Statement. And I look forward to meeting with you in Rio, in June.

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- Green Economy and Blue Economy
- Preparation for Rio + 20 later in the year.
- The government is about to launch its Climate Change Policy

*Handling of global environment matters need new strategies to contain emerging issues.

* We need a new way the planet is managed. UNEP need more support from international, political and delivery structures if real progress is to be made. Governance, food security, and water scarcity are evolving and metamorphising as accelerating environmental change.

*One of the foremost challenges is aligning governance to the challenges of global sustainability.

* A new form of governance that has inclusive representativeness, accountability and effectiveness to attain sustainability through greater participation and transparency.

*New form of governance could include public-private community partnerships to alliances between environmentalists and other civil society groups. This needs new and innovativew approaches starting from 'inside-out.'

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*Agree with President Kibaki the suggestion to transform UNEP into a specialized UN Agency. This will give UNEP greater legitimacy on environmental issues. (MSG could endorse this along with the African Union). Green Growth as a national priority to guide bits future development in achieving environmental resilience.

*Achieving Green development and reversing environmental degradation requires strong institution. Without institutional reforms in environmental governance, sustainability will remain weak.

*All UNEP's activities in Kenya is aimed at supporting the government in its effort to create and sustain an enabling environment for the promotion of good governance and the improvement of the quality of life of the people of Kenya.

*Gaps in such an approach include lack of authoritative voice to guide environmental policy, high degree of financial fragmentation, and a lack of coherence in the governance and administration of multilateral environmental issues.

*By 2030, without change in the way land is managed, over 20 per cent of terrestrial habitats such as forest in developing countries could be converted to cropland aggravating loss of vital ecosystems and biodiversity.

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