

FOREWORD

Kia Ora, Ni Sa Bula Vinaka, Fakaalofa Lahi Atu, Kia Orana, Mauri, Ia Orana, Taloha Ni, Mālō e Lelei, Fakatalofa atu, Kam na mauri, Kaselehlie, Halo Olgeta, Noa'ia, Aloha mai e, Talofa lava and Warm Pacific Greetings.

Thirty years ago, concerns about climate change were only nascent. Yet, the impacts of rising sea levels in the Pacific region were already visible. Saltwater was seeping into the "pulaka" (taro) pits where the staple food was grown and into the freshwater wells. Seawalls were being constructed to reduce erosion. Bikenibeau Paeniu, then Prime Minister of Tuvalu, told of the challenges he faced and the disbelief he encountered when raising the issues of climate change and rising sea level with the President of the United States of America, at the United Nations and in other international fora.

Thirty years on, the science of anthropomorphic climate change is well established, the impacts are clear, and the solutions generally accepted, though some are still in denial. The voices of small island states have been listened to at the United Nations and the Paris Agreement, within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, was adopted in 2015 and signed in 2016. The central aim of the Agreement is to strengthen the global response to the threat of climate change by keeping a global temperature rise this century well below two degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels and to pursue efforts to limit the temperature increase even further to 1.5 degrees Celsius.

The growth in understanding of the causes and impact of climate change has come from the work of a wide range of scientists, activists, politicians, academics and concerned citizens. Governments, regional and international institutions, indigenous communities, universities and other civil society actors, including faith-based organisations, have sponsored meetings, conferences and publications dealing with the causes of greenhouse gas emissions and strategies for mitigation and adaptation.

In the region, the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) with Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington and other partners have led a series of conferences on climate change with a Pacific Island focus.

This publication, *In the Eye of the Storm – Reflections from the Second Climate Change Conference*, edited by Professors Alberto Costi and James Renwick, is the product of our second biennial Pacific Climate Change Conference held in Wellington in 2018. A diverse range of experts have addressed the current state of the Pacific, researching and writing chapters on: the physical science of climate change; impacts and adaptation; mitigation techniques; politics and security; international cooperation; domestic and international legal issues; economics and business; communication through the arts and media; and matters of faith and spirituality. We trust you will find the content presented here interesting, informative and a spur to action.

The theme for our third biennial conference is "Blue Pacific, Climate Action for Climate Resilience". It is organised jointly by National University of Samoa, SPREP and Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington and will be held online from 27 to 30 October 2020. The conference will explore the science, the impacts, the solutions and the enablers and expand the Pacific

conversation on how island countries are responding to the challenges of the Paris Agreement and the impacts of climate change felt by people in the Pacific.

Ia manuia.

Hon Luamanuvao Dame Winnie Laban, DNZM
Associate Professor and Assistant Vice-Chancellor (Pasifika)
Te Herenga Waka—Victoria University of Wellington

Leota Kosi Latu
Director-General
SPREP

*Wellington and Apia
15 October 2020*