



UPDATE COMMUNICATION ON THE MARSHALL ISLANDS PARIS AGREEMENT NDC

in accordance with UNFCCC decision 1/CP.21, § 24-25 and Articles 3 and 4 of the Paris Agreement

30 December 2020

Endorsed by:

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David Kabua
President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands

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Christopher J. Loeak
Minister-in-Assistance to the President & Minister of Environment
Chair of the Tile Til Eo Committee

Nationally Determined Contribution Update:

Introduction

Like so many communities and territories, even the planet itself, placed in peril by today's global climate emergency, the Republic of the Marshall Islands' (RMI) future relies on the full and effective implementation of the Paris Agreement. The Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) under the Agreement, spelling out how each nation contributes to it, have thereby become the most important public documents for the future of the world and the survival of our human civilization as we know it.

RMI, as an extremely low-elevation coral atoll nation, is most acutely and chronically vulnerable to the dangers of rising seas and other impacts that are accelerating with climate change, constituting a real, existential risk should the global average temperature exceed 1.5 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. According to UNEP, staying on track to avoid that level of warming requires global emissions to be reduced by over 7% each year from now to 2030. For itself, RMI's emissions of greenhouse gases (GHG) represent <0.00001% of the global total...

RMI has been fighting at home and abroad for its survival, as a member of the Coalition of Atoll Nations on climate change, a past Chair and current Troika member of the Climate Vulnerable Forum and the Vulnerable Twenty Group of Ministers of Finance, and as founder and convener of the High Ambition Coalition. Having hosted the first intergovernmental summit of world leaders to be held entirely online, with the 22 November 2018 CVF Virtual Summit, which launched the "Jumemmej Declaration", for "vigilance" in Marshallese, calling the world to go "on watch" until threats to RMI's existence are removed, RMI led appeals for all nations to prioritize delivery of enhanced, updated NDCs by 2020 to safeguard those most vulnerable, fundamental human rights, people everywhere, fragile ecosystems and the planet's natural wealth, the global commons.

RMI continues to lead and prioritize action on all elements of the Paris Agreement, including mitigation, adaptation, loss and damage, and finance. RMI is proud to Co-chair the InsuResilience Global Partnership launched at UNFCCC COP23 as a joint G7, G20 and V20 initiative, which works to progress towards and beyond the InsuResilience Partnership Vision 2025. Our RMI Electricity Roadmap provides the basis for ambitious renewables deployment and other measures to meet RMI's 2018 NDC and 2050 Climate Strategy targets, and also outlines how to reach those targets faster, provided significant international support and strong political leadership. RMI is also proud to be the first Micronesian nation to ever be represented on the UN Human Rights Council and has pledged to work in this role to advance efforts to address climate change and human rights concerns, which RMI will also pursue at home through NDC implementation. RMI is also committed towards improving our understanding and responses to averting, minimizing and addressing loss and damage associated with the adverse effects of climate change for RMI and for RMI communities residing in any nation. RMI also plans to submit its Adaptation Communication by December 31, 2020 and complete our National Adaptation Plan ahead of COP-26.

RMI deposited its second, enhanced NDC in November 2018 and this update provides sectoral enhancements as related to our updated NDC, with RMI making every effort to reflect the highest possible ambition despite the extraordinary limitations of our present and future circumstances. RMI also stands by its 2050 "Til Til Eo" long-term low greenhouse gas emission, climate-resilient development strategy under the Paris Agreement for RMI to achieve its objectives of net zero emissions by 2050 and 100% renewable energy and towards which this document constitutes a critical further step.

If RMI is capable of providing additional NDC updates, amidst the economic crisis wrought by the ramifications of the COVID-19 pandemic, any nation is. For the sake of the children and future generations of RMI, and of the most vulnerable across the globe, we call on all nations to fulfill the promises of the Paris Agreement in this 5th year anniversary of the adoption of the landmark accord. RMI therein strongly urges Parties to update their NDCs by the 31st of December 2020, the 2020

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timeframe pursuant to UNFCCC decision 1/CP.21, § 24-25, and set at midnight of 31 December due to the COVID-19 pandemic and UNFCCC COP26's postponement, as advised to all parties by the UNFCCC secretariat in August 2020. UNFCCC decisions 1/CP.24 and 1/CP.25 each also reinforced the earlier 1/CP.21 call in these respects.

RMI expresses sincere thanks to all international and regional partners that have and continue to support RMI national climate action. International support remains critical for realizing our updated NDC.

Transport Overview

Transportation and mobility are cross-cutting issues central to the sustainable development of the Marshall Islands (RMI) and the broader Pacific region. The importance of sustainable transport for Pacific countries cannot be understated. Transport is essential for connectivity for many communities and for the most vulnerable, sea transport is the only physical connector, vital for trade and economic development.

This update focuses on RMI's efforts to reduce emissions from the domestic shipping sector in order to help RMI achieve its economy-wide NDC target under the Paris Agreement of reducing emissions at least 45% below 2010 levels by 2030.

The transport sector (land and sea combined) in RMI is considered to contribute approximately 12% to total GHG emissions, making it the third largest emitter, behind the electricity sector (54%) and waste (23%).

RMI was the only country to explicitly include domestic shipping in its first NDC with a sectoral goal to reduce domestic transport emissions (including domestic shipping) by 16% in 2025 and 27% in 2030.

Sectoral Enhancement to Updated NDC

As a member of the Pacific Blue Partnership for Shipping, RMI is committed to reducing GHG emissions from domestic shipping 40% below 2010 levels by 2030 and full decarbonization of the sector by 2050. RMI is pleased to formally communicate this sectoral enhancement to our updated NDC to the UNFCCC. RMI also encourages other Pacific countries to adopt this target.

Implementation

RMI has already developed, with the assistance of the Micronesian Center for Sustainable Transport (MCST), a Framework outlining a whole of country strategy to achieve its transport-wide target of reducing total domestic transport GHG emissions 27% below 2010 levels by 2030 and transitioning RMI to a low carbon transport future. This Framework takes a whole-of-sector approach focusing on maritime, air, and land transport, noting the importance of workstreams focused on data, policy, economic analysis, and financing mechanisms. Most notably, securing better data will help RMI establish baselines, develop informed policies, and monitor progress towards net zero GHG emissions.

In addition, as outlined in RMI's *Tile Til Eo 2050 Climate Strategy*, there are a number of interventions that RMI can pursue in the short to medium-term to achieve a low-carbon pathway for domestic sea transportation, including changes to ship design, operations, fuel, and docking facilities.

Considering RMI's status as the second largest flag registry in the world, successful adoption of nascent low- or zero-carbon sea transport technologies at home could have ripple effects across the international shipping sector at large. RMI is proud to support efforts for ambitious decarbonization action in the International Maritime Organization (IMO), including through the introduction of a market-based measure to put a price on carbon.

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RMI and the Pacific Islands cannot decarbonize the shipping industry alone. Therefore, RMI calls on all Parties to the Paris Agreement to analyze their domestic shipping emissions, accurately account for them in the submission of updated NDCs, and develop decarbonization plans for the sector.

Including accurate domestic shipping information in NDCs is an urgent task given that the 2020 Fourth IMO GHG Study found domestic shipping emissions to have been highly underestimated as compared to previous reports (30% of total shipping emissions, which is twice the amount previously estimated). Such an increase bears more responsibility to national jurisdictions, and thereby potential for GHG emission reductions.

National NDC Reference Documents

- [Tile Til Eo RMI 2050 Climate Strategy \(September 2018\)](#)
 - [RMI Electricity Roadmap \(December 2018\)](#)

Annexes

- I. [RMI's second NDC \(November 2018\)](#)
- II. RMI NDC Partnership Country Engagement Update Report (June/July 2020)