

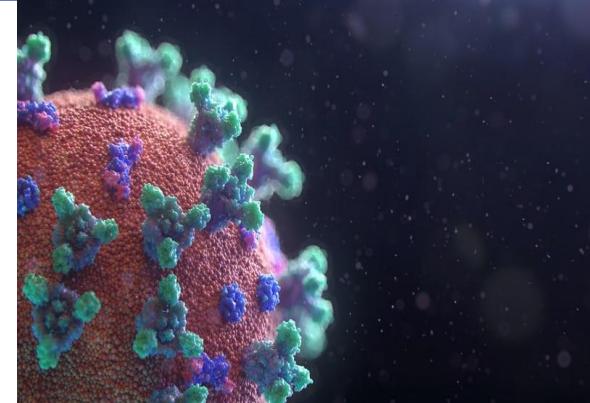


# COVID-19 and climate change: Impacts, risks, and responses for SIDS

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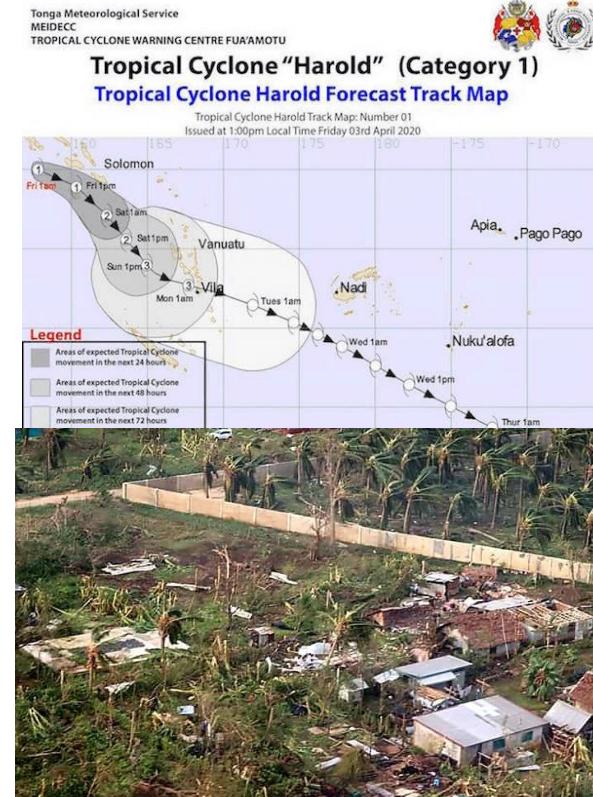
# COVID-19 in the Pacific

- Rapid and early shutdown = direct health impacts minimal
  - Cases: French Polynesia (60), New Caledonia (21) Fiji (18), PNG (9)
  - Globally, two-thirds of countries with no COVID-19 cases are from our region
- Deep and sustained economic impact
  - Near decimation of tourism sector in many countries
    - Tourism accounts or 87% of GDP in Cook Islands and Niue and Vanuatu over 40% of GDP; Fiji 35% of employment



# Impacts on Climate Action in SIDS

- Economic implications
  - for national budgets and internal resources for climate change
  - Increased vulnerability of communities to climate change
- Dealing with compounding crises
  - Cyclone Harold hit the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Fiji and Tonga in April 2020
    - The risk of disease transmission rises as people pack into emergency shelters
    - Disaster response hampered - travel restrictions, contamination fears and development partners' domestic priorities



# Impacts on Climate Action in SIDS

- The erosion of capacity
  - Competing priorities and multiple hats in PSIDS
    - E.g. Government staff have CCA and DRR responsibilities
    - Reduced recruitment, training opportunities
- Impacts on efficiency and effectiveness
  - Communication with donors, colleagues and external experts more difficult over prolonged period
  - Delays in implementation
    - Travel to outer-islands still difficult; events postponed, external consultants not available
- Climate negotiations – delays (e.g. COP26) and competing priorities

# Climate action priorities: Assess, update and plan

- Update vulnerability assessments and make best use of existing data
- Map feedback loops and understand the impact of COVID-19 on climate change action at systems level
  - E.g. How does Covid-19 impact on community level vulnerability, natural resource exploitation, or food security?
- Better knowledge enables smarter deployment of existing resources and to seek additional funding



# Assess, update and plan

- An opportunity for prepare and complete proposals
- Climate-proof economic stimulus packages
  - Can relatively easily incorporate resilience-building activities
- Shovel-ready projects will be important in recovery
  - But need to consider climate change not just employment and economics



# Reflect, review and recover

- Disruptive change = opportunity to reflect and do things differently
- “*Things will never be the same again*” - can crisis trigger transformative action?
  - Pacific needs to explore radical solutions to reshape economies and energy systems
    - Or fall into ‘quick and dirty’ short-termism?
- Green COVID-19 recovery strategies with clear plans for prompt implementation are required



# Climate Analytics blogs on COVID-19 and Climate Change



- [\*COVID-19 another shock for vulnerable countries facing multiple crises\*](#) (by Manjeet Dhakal)
- [\*Facing Covid and climate, Pacific island capacity stretched\*](#) (by Paddy Pringle)
- [\*Coronavirus underscores small islands' climate vulnerability\*](#) (by Adelle Thomas)
- [\*Responding to a global crisis - the coronavirus pandemic and the climate emergency\*](#) (by Carl-Friedrich Schleussner, Matthew Gidden, Kim Coetze)