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16 Climate ‘securitising’ by the Pacific

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Climate change has evolved to take the central role in security discourse and policies in the Pacific region. Addressing climate change has been approached from development and its sectors. Nevertheless, there is a growing recognition of the work Pacific leaders and states have made in progressing policies that address not only climate change and security, but especially the nexus of climate security. This onus on climate security is best encapsulated in the Pacific Islands Forum’s (PIF’s) Boe Declaration on Regional Security, which states ‘climate change remains the single greatest threat to the livelihoods, security and wellbeing of the peoples of the Pacific’ (PIF 2018).

This chapter explores how climate change has become linked to security as ‘the single greatest threat’ to the Pacific Islands. Its elevation to a top security priority reflects the multidimensional impacts of climate change, and its effect on society and states. Climate change is no longer limited to the discourses and policies around adaptation that focus on vulnerability and resilience, or mitigation actions to transition to low carbon futures; for the Pacific region and states, climate change impacts have political and security effects. As I will show in this chapter, climate change has been ‘securitised’ by Pacific Island states and regional organisations in order to elevate their advocacy in the multilateral forums. In doing so, they have broadened the focus, scope and actors involved in security to be comprehensive. Furthermore, through the securitisation of climate change, amid geopolitical competition by external and larger states, the Pacific region and states have attracted global attention and resources.

In order to examine the context of climate change and security in the Pacific, and the actors and cooperatives involved, this chapter utilises the securitisation theory by the Copenhagen School (Buzan et al. 1998). It offers an opportunity to trace how climate change has been securitised through speech acts in the Pacific, through national statements and policies, and through regional bodies and international entities. Securitisation theory is the discursive understanding of speech acts (including rhetoric and policies) that socially construct a threat, how it has been understood by audiences and the exceptional actions that are taken by actors in response to the threat. By following the process of securitisation, we not only understand threats and consequences to international politics; at the same time we are able to trace and map climate security cooperation in the Pacific. Security

threats are subjective and politicised, rather than neutral or objective (Buzan et al. 1998). Divergent views and interests influence the way security policies are shaped and created. This approach designates that key actors in security will construct 'existential threats' in what they say, and the policies they draw up in response. This chapter incorporates textual analysis of literature, current research, projects and policies that use or link climate change and security in the Pacific. Furthermore, it draws from global *talanoa* (Carter 2015, 2018, 2020a, 2020b) through multi-sited ethnography and *talanoa*¹ with climate change and security communities in the Pacific.

The climate security nexus is often seen from the hard security perspective as how climate change can be incorporated into their roles and capabilities – or, in the development sector as how climate change discourse is increasingly incorporated into its framework and programs. While both these processes are occurring in the Pacific, the latter is more dominant and the key focus here. This chapter will explore how the discourse on security in the Pacific has incorporated climate change as a pillar, ultimately broadening security framing. The securitisation of climate change is explored at three levels: at national level within national security strategies and nationally determined contributions; regionally through the Blue Pacific concept and Boe Declaration; and internationally in climate advocacy and climate diplomacy within the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and United Nations Security Council.

Security, climate change and climate security

Security discourse on the Pacific has primarily viewed the region as a geographical object over which great powers compete as part of their external power strategies (Fry 2019; Wallis 2015; Wallis and Powles 2018). This security framing is a legacy of the colonial period, particularly when island communities were colonised in World War I and World War II. Pacific Islands became embroiled in a conflict that was not of their making. Anxiety about great-power rivalry persisted even into the Cold War period, and has repeated during the twenty-first century as tensions between the United States and China continue to escalate. Even during times of internal tensions in Papua New Guinea (PNG) and Solomon Islands in the late 1990s, Australia and New Zealand led regional interventions, concerned about potential regional instability. However, external powers failed to acknowledge how security is viewed and driven from within the Pacific (Ratuva 2019).

Over the years, climate change impacts have come to play an integral role in security thinking and action in the Pacific. From the scientific community, to policy documents, to experiences of local communities – there is consensus that climate change impacts are a lived reality in the Pacific. The sixth IPCC assessment report shows that climate change will be catastrophic and will affect the region in various ways from increasing temperature, sea level rise, coastal erosion and saltwater intrusion to increased intensity of extreme weather events like flooding and drought (IPCC 2023). Higher sea levels will bear considerable impacts to coastal

livelihoods and tourism from more frequent and intense cyclones. The extreme impact of natural disasters and slow-onset events have disrupted and will continue to disrupt economic, social, political and security systems and processes. The linking of climate impacts to security involves viewing the former as ‘threat multipliers’ that exacerbate existing challenges, with the potential to destabilise regional and national systems (Barnett and Adger 2007; Huntjens and Nachbar 2015; McDonald 2013; Oels 2012; Scheffran et al. 2012). Examples might include increased drought, floods or hurricanes leading to increased migration, which in turn generates conflict between different cultural groups over scarce resources.

While climate change does not cause violent conflict in and of itself, it can through its interaction with social, political and economic factors have negative impacts on peace and security (UNDPPA 2020). The pathways through which these risks manifest is contextual and determined by the interaction between climatic hazards, exposure and, most importantly, the vulnerability and coping capacity of states and societies.

In making this link between climate change destabilising regional and national political and security systems in the Pacific, recent studies have highlighted the multifaceted effect. From forced migration and displacement; to diminishing of food and water resources; degradation of ocean and land resources; and vulnerability undermining economic viability, health and livelihoods (CSEN 2021), this literature shows the daunting climate fragility risks that will be faced by Pacific Island states to include increased crime and violent conflict over fishing rights.

The worsening impacts of climate change on societies has spurred the creation of a new framework and agenda for security, driven by Pacific Islanders themselves, academics and international non-government organisations concerned with the existential threat that climate change poses to Pacific states (Fry and Tarte 2015). This has generated significantly more attention and has the potential to extract more resources, from larger states. However, the dilemma is that while this attention can bring resources, there is also the increased possibility of regional conflict, which also poses a considerable threat to livelihoods (Petersen 1998). Climate security framings have begun to intertwine as Pacific states have used the renewed geopolitical interest from great powers to push their climate agenda.

The increasing discussions around how climate change policy and action are connected with security and politics has led to an agenda of climate security. It is important to make clear that while there has been increased attention on climate security in the Pacific by states, regional organisations and research, there is no consensus on a definition of climate security. However, for purposes of this chapter, the concept of climate security is defined here as the *broad range of policy actions and attention aimed at addressing the strategic/security and political impacts of climate change*. There is a range of perspectives articulating the need to conceive and approach climate change as a security issue. As these perspectives grow, so do the ways in which this link has been conceptualised. Some focus on the threat that climate change poses to long-term human health and wellbeing; others emphasise the threat posed to the nation-state in terms of concerns over sovereignty and territorial integrity.

National level

The emergence of the nexus on climate change and security is now evident in priorities and policies at the national level. Across the Pacific, national development plans have been the main blueprints for how governments operated and set priorities since the 1990s. Both climate change and security sector priorities were incorporated into these national development plans. In the past few decades, climate change has either become a key sector or been mainstreamed into adaptation sectors like finance, environment, infrastructure and economy. These climate-development priorities were once enshrined in national adaptation plans. However, the recent policy incarnation of these climate-development priorities are detailed in nationally determined contributions (NDCs).

Under the UNFCCC Paris Agreement of 2015, all countries must have NDCs that outline their efforts to reduce emissions and adapt to the impacts of climate change. Within their national statements, Pacific states have linked climate change impacts to their national security. In examining the NDCs of the 14 Pacific countries, in almost every report security language or narratives were used to stress climate change impacts and how they exacerbate existing conditions. The NDCs included one or more references to 'conflict', 'peace', 'security', 'stability' and/or 'war' (UNDP 2020: 7). For example, Republic of Marshall Islands, Nauru and Tuvalu acknowledge climate change as a security or national security issue in their preambles, setting the context for the scope of their NDCs (UNDP 2020). The potential impacts of unabated climate change on political stability are thus noted. They articulate the effects of coastal erosion not only in terms of economic development and infrastructure investments, but also as having the potential to 'severely undermine national security' (UNDP 2020: 10). Within the NDCs studied, the most cited references in order of frequency are conflict as an obstacle to climate action, climate change as a security or national security issue and climate change exacerbating extant conflicts and insecurity, with more than a dozen mentions for each theme. Around half as many references are made to co-benefits of adaptation and mitigation for preventing conflict and sustaining peace, and measures to address climate and security subregional or regional cross-border impacts. These differences also imply varying responses, an example of the urgency and existentiality of the threat (UNDP 2020).

While NDCs detail how countries are contributing to stabilising and reducing greenhouse gas emissions, for many states in the Pacific their NDCs are documents that specifically link climate change as a threat to national security. A key recurrent theme stated in these policy documents is rising sea levels. The Government of Kiribati (n.d.) notes that sea level rise, apart from causing inundation and salinisation of groundwater resources, could also result in an 'increase in conflict and stress due to loss of property and land, and forced migration'. Closely related to this is the existential threat posed by climate change articulated by Nauru and Tonga. Solomon Islands also states that 'climate change threatens the very existence of the people and the nation' and that 'adaptation is not an option – but rather a matter of survival' (Solomon Islands Government 2021). While national security is the most commonly mentioned in NDCs, it is not the only security narrative

observed. Tuvalu notes the link between cultural and socioeconomic vulnerabilities and national security, and Niue emphasises the threat of climate change to social stability and Niuean culture. Broader references to energy, food and water security were also noted in NDC documentation.

Beyond securitising language in NDCs, the recent trend of countries developing their national security policies in the region has seen climate impacts incorporated in the thinking and planning of security practitioners. Under the direction of the Boe Declaration, PNG, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Cook Islands and Palau have all developed national security strategies or policies, while Fiji is working on a draft. Nevertheless, all Pacific countries identify climate change and various climate-induced impacts (such as natural disasters) as security threats.

The earliest national security policy in the region, that of PNG, substantiates climate change as inclusive of the nexus between security and development: ‘security enhances development, whilst development entails comprehensive security’ (PNG Government 2013: 4). Climate change is prioritised as a ‘level one threat’ to the stability of the state due to the effects of changing weather patterns. Given the paucity of resources, PNG is vulnerable and will be affected by major disasters and natural calamities when they occur.

Likewise, Vanuatu’s national security strategy (Government of Vanuatu 2019) seeks to anticipate threats, protect the nation and build resilience. It acknowledges that the overall security of Vanuatu is intimately linked to economic stability, resource efficiency, good governance and social cohesion. Vanuatu has identified ten ‘pillars’ covering security challenges and capabilities, which capture the work of the country to meet its national security objectives, and determine what further action is needed. Climate change is the fourth of these pillars. It seeks to strengthen capacity for natural-disaster preparedness, response, recovery and climate change adaptation; to strengthen collaboration with local and international partners on climate-change resilience and natural disaster management; to pursue funding from international sources for climate change adaptation and mitigation; and to advocate regionally and globally on climate change. The country has identified the need to develop a framework to support people displaced by natural disasters and measures to deal with major man-made disasters, particularly involving ocean vessels and aircraft, as well as oil spills.

The Samoan national security policy has identified four key security issues: border security, natural disasters and climate change, cyber security and human security. Samoa’s vulnerability to natural disasters and to climate change more generally make it a top national security threat (Government of Samoa 2018). To address this threat, the government has prioritised resilience and natural disasters in the government’s reform agenda; continues to provide strong regional and global leadership on climate change; pursues funding from international sources for climate change adaptation and mitigation; and requires that climate and disaster resilience be mainstreamed and integrated into strategic planning by government agencies and sectors (Government of Samoa 2018: 11).

These security framings in Pacific country NDCs and the climate consciousness in national security policies has opened up spaces for dialogue and the need for

discussion on the security dimensions of climate change not only at the national level, but also within local communities. Ongoing research in these spaces follows how Pacific governments individually conduct national climate risk assessments, or collectively ascertain regional climate risks. While differing geography and demography of countries means these climate security risks will be different, there is also a need to incorporate social, political and cultural contexts. Unpacking these varied contexts across the region will inform peace building and conflict/tension prevention measures from climate stressors. Moreover, NDCs and national security policies are new and underdeveloped. States have started to revisit the roles of security providers in the midst of catastrophic climate impacts – for example, Samoa re-evaluating its need for a coastguard or the role of the police maritime division. Climate change and security at the national level are broadening conversations, responsibilities, and roles of government and society.

Regional level

The work and prioritisation at the national level can also be traced to the work in the region. The Pacific region has a complex yet loose arrangement in its regional architecture – especially when it comes to security. It is, in fact, at the regional level through the work of regional organisations and United Nations multicountry agencies that the work on climate security is breaking ground. Pacific states and the region have embraced and prioritised the challenge of climate change since the 1980s. The region has embedded and mainstreamed policies of climate resilience: mitigation, adaptation, finance and more recently disaster risk reduction. However, in recent times, global discussion and attention around securitisation and militarisation of climate change, as well as questions around geopolitics and geostrategic manoeuvring in the Pacific, have led to a renewed emphasis in acknowledging the nexus between climate change and security – and, more importantly, in policies around climate security.

In 2017, PIF leaders determined a vision of the Blue Pacific: ‘a new narrative for Pacific Regionalism and how the Forum engages with the world . . . for inspired leadership . . . and a long-term commitment to the benefits of acting together as one Blue Continent’ (PIF 2017). At the heart of this call by the then Samoan prime minister, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, is for member states to embrace the forum’s strategic role at the centre of contemporary global geopolitics:

this new narrative . . . has the potential to define a Blue Pacific economy, ensures a sustainable, secure, resilient and peaceful Blue Pacific as well as strengthens Blue Pacific Diplomacy to protect the value of our Ocean and peoples.

(PIF 2017)

The securitisation of climate change is underscored in the Boe Declaration, as mentioned at the start of this chapter. This vision for regional security and foreign policy is reflected throughout the Boe Declaration, which highlights four shared regional

security priorities: human (including humanitarian assistance, rights and health), environmental and resource, transnational, and cybersecurity. What ensued was a reconfiguration of regional security architecture and governance systems, with a broadened security agenda that was not limited to traditional military security. PIF leaders have mandated states, and the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific, to explore and find policy solutions on the impact and implications of climate change on political and security systems in the Pacific. There is some diversity in the ways actors have linked the two concepts – some emphasise long-term risks to livelihoods, while others focus on traditional concerns about sovereignty and territorial integrity. However, the core point remains that climate change represents an existential threat that has the potential to catalyse conflict.

The Boe Declaration also encourages member states to actively design and implement their security and foreign policy to this vision. In 2019 and 2022 at the PIF Leaders Meetings, member states affirmed that Pacific Island states are under climate crisis or climate emergency. Furthermore, the Republic of the Marshall Islands and Vanuatu have proclaimed that their states are experiencing national climate emergencies. Moreover, former Fijian Prime Minister Frank Bainimarama has been vocal in his criticisms of the United States and China, as well as regional powers such as Australia and New Zealand, in labelling these the ‘climate wars’. Pacific leaders have established that if partners want to engage with Pacific Island states on traditional security issues, they must first sign up to more ambitious climate action and engage in comprehensive security:

14 cyclones have struck Fiji since 2016. More than 40 of our communities are at risk of being erased by the rising seas. The banks of our 45 rivers are breaking on a near-monthly basis under the strain of persistently record-breaking rains . . . the climate war [is] upon us.

The climate war will not be won with guns, ammo, and artillery. It will be won with seawalls, resilient infrastructure, and cutting-edge technology. It will be won with knowledge – knowledge of building practices, disaster management, and mitigative measures we can take to cushion the blow of storms and other severe weather.

(Government of Fiji 2022)

However, the Boe Declaration and subsequent Boe Action Plan – carried out by the Forum Officials Sub-Committee on Regional Security – is only one instrument involved in this task (see also Tarte, this volume). Both the PIF and the Pacific Islands Development Forum in their respective 2019 Kanaiki II and Nadi declarations affirmed the narrative of a climate crisis in the Pacific region. These regional and national speeches and actions reinforce the countless statements by Pacific leaders in global forums, and activism by local non-government organisations.

In this shared expanded vision of security, Pacific leaders have emphasised the need to uphold the values of inclusivity, respect, consensus and cultural norms. The latter represents the need to understand context in the Pacific – that cultural diversity is understood and incorporated into solutions – rather than a ‘one size

fits all' approach. From this starting point, leaders have argued that the inclusion of women, children and those with disability needs particular attention. In doing so they have further emphasised that current debates around climate change and security in the Pacific are not just state-centric and military-centric; rather, they are about human development, livelihoods, and the wellbeing of peoples, communities and states.

In the past two years the broader regional security architecture, including the larger states of the Pacific Rim, has attempted to respond to these challenges. The South Pacific Defence Ministers' Meeting as well as the Joint Heads of Pacific Security meetings have initiated dialogue not only around defence, but with police, immigration and customs and their roles in dealing with climate-related disaster responses.

This agenda setting is in line with recent announcements of security white paper prioritisation of climate change by security forces of Australia, New Zealand, France and the United States. In 2022, in order to better coordinate their resources in the Pacific, Australia, Japan, New Zealand, the United Kingdom and the United States established Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP) to coordinate and deepen cooperation, including to the climate crisis (The White House 2022). The focus, logic and narrative used in the PBP clearly point to the priorities set by the Pacific states through the Blue Pacific identity and articulated in the 2050 Strategy for the Blue Pacific Continent. The PBP has clearly taken on board the narrative of climate change for both development and climate as a security priority. China is also increasing its climate aid in the Pacific (Zhang 2020). In response to recent volcanic eruptions and tsunamis in Tonga, for example, the Chinese navy delivered humanitarian aid (Greene 2022). The point is that great powers are increasingly aware that if they want to work with the region to pursue their own security goals, they are going to have to do more to ensure the climate security of Pacific states.

International level

Pacific Island states individually, and through regional mechanisms, have led advocacy of climate change at the international level for more than 30 years. The main way they have pursued this agenda is via the United Nations (UN) and UNFCCC (Carter 2015, 2020a, 2020b). Pacific states have called for action, on the basis that they are 'frontline states' or 'canaries in the coalmine' who will suffer the disproportionate effects of global warming despite bearing negligible responsibility for its creation. These speech acts of existential threat for Pacific states are securitising speech acts – not only in climate negotiations, but they also bring attention to Pacific states. Pacific Island countries and territories are part of a global coalition, the Alliance of Small Island States, a group of more than 44 small island developing states brought together by their shared island identity and vulnerability to impacts of climate change, which has strategically collaborated with non-state partners to pressure great powers and greenhouse gas polluters to cut emissions and increase climate finance (Carter 2020b).

The Pacific climate agenda has been especially prominent at the UN and at the annual UNFCCC Conference of the Parties (COP) meetings and was especially crucial in the negotiation of the Paris Agreement (Carter 2020a). For Pacific states, examples include Tuvalu's advocacy on Loss and Damage at COP21 in Paris and the role of the Marshall Islands in establishing the 'High Ambition Coalition', which was pivotal in the formation of the 2015 Paris Agreement (Carter 2020a, 2020b). In 2017, Fiji co-chaired with Germany COP23, known as the 'Island COP', that raised specific issues and concerns of small island states like loss and damage and oceans (Carter 2017). In all cases, Pacific Small Island Developing States (PSIDS) are seen as key proponents of radical action on mitigation and adaptation. However, security or the links between security and climate change are not discussed within the UNFCCC.

Pacific states, both individually and through regional coalitions, have been pursuing climate change in the international forum of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC). The UNSC, which has primary responsibility for maintaining international peace and security, first discussed climate change in an open debate in 2007 (UNSC 2007). This was an agenda pioneered and promoted by Pacific countries, and through a new grouping at the UN – the PSIDS – to raise climate change as a security issue (Manoa 2021; UNSC 2007). Led by PNG in 2007, PSIDS led the open debate on the topic of energy, security and climate. According to Manoa (2021):

dissatisfied with the lack of action on climate change, the PSIDS became active in pushing for the recognition of the linkages between climate change and security. In taking this path, the PSIDS were innovating to draw attention, and action, to their fight for survival.

The PSIDS group further raised the issue in the UN General Assembly for the UN Secretary-General to produce a report on climate change and its possible implications on security (UNGA 2009b). Since then, speech acts securitising climate change have been included in UNSC debates in 2011, 2013, 2015 and 2017, and statements by the president of the UNSC at 'Arria formula' meetings on climate change.² Consecutively in 2018, 2019, 2020 and 2021, the UNSC assumed high-level open debates about the impact of climate-related disasters on security, and through exceptional actions established a Special Representative on Climate and Security, included climate change as a foreign and security policy issue, and created an Informal Expert Group (CSEN 2021).

The 2009 UN Secretary-General special report would serve to become the marching orders for the UN system to recognise climate change as a 'threat multiplier' with its potential security implications (UNGA 2009a). The report identified five mechanisms through which climate change could affect security:

- vulnerability – threats to food security and human health and increased exposure to extreme events
- development – slowing down or reversal of development
- coping and security – migration, competition over natural resources

- statelessness – implications for rights, security and sovereignty
- international conflict – implications for international cooperation.

It is important to note that this 2009 UN report has set the work agenda on climate change and security for the UN agencies and all its manifestations. The five core areas identified in the report have set the priorities of the UN Development Programme, International Organisation for Migration, UN Human Rights Commission, UN Women, UN International Labour Organization and UN Economic and Social Commission on Asia and the Pacific – to name a few to instigate programming in the Pacific on climate and security. Since 2009, there has been a growth industry of UN agencies working with Pacific regional intergovernmental organisations, NGOs and governments working on programs on climate displacement and mobility, climate relocation and climate security.

Outside the UNSC, the international climate change regime through the international scientific body of the IPCC has recognised the linkage and reality of security and climate change. The Sixth Assessment Report of the IPCC agreed that in the coming years human security will be progressively threatened as the climate changes (IPCC 2023). Furthermore, as indicated earlier, the scientific consensus on the climate projections for the Pacific is catastrophic.

Crucially, although the UNFCCC has yet to incorporate security in its agenda, various agendas such as adaptation and loss and damage are in line with the international impetus. Loss and damage refers to situations where adaptation measures are no longer sufficient to allow a society to adapt to climate impacts. This is pertinent, for example, in the case of low coral atoll communities and states where sea level rise will see the permanent loss of land – both as economic asset or non-economic (cultural practices on the land) losses. Although the issue of loss and damage did not receive consensus to be included in the 1992 UNFCCC treaty when it was first suggested by Vanuatu, it would be instated in 2013 under the leadership of Nauru as a mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol. However, it was Tuvalu that argued and strategically cornered the United States to accept the issue of loss and damage in the Paris Agreement in the famous COP21 negotiations (Carter 2018). The inclusion of loss and damage in the Paris Agreement has meant it has become a fixture in the agenda as well as allowing debates and policies on the insecurities of societies from permanent loss of resources.

Pacific states have increasingly sought to securitise climate change by emphasising that it constitutes a threat multiplier that will lead to conflict. The securitisation of the issue at the regional and international levels reflects Pacific ambitions to increase pressure on mitigation efforts. Pacific states have had some success – the climate-security nexus is reflected in numerous international discussions in the UNSC, in side events at the UNFCCC, and in the attention of organisations like the World Bank and the Commonwealth. But it has met resistance, especially from larger (carbon emitting) states concerned that it might lead to the UN dispatching 'green helmets' who might impinge on their sovereignty. Despite this resistance, the successes of the PSIDS in advocating for their agenda has seen them increasingly demand climate action as a condition of more conventional or traditional

security agreements. Thus, over recent years the two security framings of climate change and security, which have thus far been distinct, have begun to merge.

Conclusion

This chapter explored how climate change has been securitised in the Pacific, and how states and organisations in the Pacific have securitised climate change and elevated the climate-security nexus at all levels – state, regional and international. By exploring policy documents, projects and through global *talanoa* about climate change and security, climate change has been securitised by Pacific Island states and regional organisations in order to elevate their advocacy in multiple forums. In doing so, they have broadened the focus, scope and actors involved in security to be comprehensive. Furthermore, through the securitisation of climate change, amid geopolitical competition by external and larger states, the Pacific region and states have attracted attention and resources – a resultant agenda on climate security is being developed from the Pacific.

Therefore, securitisation can be used for the agency and empowerment of Pacific states (Ratuva 2019). While climate security is not exactly defined, there is a general understanding that climate change impacts have an effect on political and security systems. The science from the IPCC highlights that in rising sea levels, changes in weather patterns and more extreme weather events, climate change is creating severe disruption in all our communities.

This attention on climate security in part stems from the leadership of Pacific states at the international level through the UNFCCC and UNSC. At the same time, there is leadership at the national level through national security policies and nationally determined contributions. However, it is through the regional level that, under the Blue Pacific vision, Pacific leaders and states are pursuing their definition of security – one that is deeper and broader, to use the securitisation-theory framing – which includes both traditional and human security. In this broad definition of security, the impacts of climate change are not only prioritised, but they also diffuse into other policy areas, including geopolitics.

Notes

- 1 *Talanoa* is many things. It is a form of dialogue – an informal conversation; it is also used by others in free-flowing empathetic dialogue; for others it is a method of attaining information for research; and others view it as methodology. For this research *talanoa* is a method: empathetic and free-flowing dialogues with leaders – climate and security practitioners – involved in negotiations, as they happen.
- 2 An Arria formula meeting is an informal meeting convened at the initiative of a member or members of the United Nations Security Council. Due to their informal nature, these meetings often have no record or outcome.

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