FOURTEENTH PACIFIC HEALTH MINISTERS MEETING

22–24 March 2022
Tuvalu, Virtual meeting
Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting
22–24 March 2022
Tuvalu, Virtual meeting
MEETING REPORT

FOURTEENTH PACIFIC HEALTH MINISTERS MEETING

Convened by:

THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH, SOCIAL WELFARE AND GENDER AFFAIRS OF TUVALU

With support from:

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION
REGIONAL OFFICE FOR THE WESTERN PACIFIC
THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY

Virtual meeting
22–24 March 2022

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NOTE

The views expressed in this report are those of the participants at the Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting and do not necessarily reflect the policies of the conveners.

This report has been prepared by the World Health Organization Regional Office for the Western Pacific for Member States in the Region and for those who participated in the Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, hosted virtually by Tuvalu from 22 to 24 March 2022.
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Keywords:

Healthy People Programs / Pacific Islands / Regional Health Planning
SUMMARY

Continuing a tradition dating back to the first meeting held at Yanuca Island in Fiji in 1995, which established the Healthy Islands vision, the biennial Pacific Health Ministers Meeting serves as an opportunity to review progress, share best practices and drive collective action to deliver better health for people across the Pacific.

The Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting was hosted by Tuvalu on 22–24 March 2022, with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pacific Community (SPC). It was held as a fully virtual event for the first time due to the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

Following a consultation process with Pacific island countries and areas (PICs), as well as partners, three topics were selected for discussion at the meeting:

- leveraging the COVID-19 pandemic to build sustainable systems and advance universal health coverage (UHC);
- accelerating action on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs); and
- putting health at the centre of the climate change discussion.

These issues were prioritized due to their importance in the Pacific context. NCDs remain the largest cause of premature mortality in PICs. The islands, populations and ecosystems of the Pacific region are on the front line of climate change and are among the planet’s most vulnerable to extreme weather events. Meanwhile, the COVID-19 crisis has underlined the critical importance of health and led to an unprecedented clamour and support for the strengthening of health systems.

Furthermore, action on NCDs, health security, and climate change, the environment and health are thematic priorities under For the Future: Towards the Healthiest and Safest Region, a vision for WHO work with Member States and partners in the Western Pacific. For the Future also advocates “taking a systems approach, with universal health coverage as the foundation” as an operational shift in WHO work with Member States. Progress on these issues is similarly essential to the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, therefore, served as an opportunity to decide on the joint action required to make the Healthy Islands vision a reality and achieve the goals set out under For the Future and the SDGs. The outcome document includes a series of commitments aimed at meeting today’s health challenges while also addressing the health challenges that will arise in future.
1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Meeting organization

The Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting was hosted by Tuvalu on 22–24 March 2022 with support from the World Health Organization (WHO) and the Pacific Community (SPC). It was held as a fully virtual event for the first time due to the ongoing coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic.

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Sixteen ministers and 19 countries and areas participated in the virtual event. In addition, representatives from 18 partner organizations attended the meeting as observers. The list of participants is available in Annex 1 and the meeting programme in Annex 2.

For the first time at these meetings, each of the three agenda items was presented by a minister who had volunteered to give more detailed input to the meeting’s Secretariat, ensuring that the papers and presentations reflected the realities and ambitions of the Pacific. Each of the three presenting ministers used the backcasting approach endorsed under For the Future to present an ideal version of the future – working backwards from that future vision to develop the steps needed to make this future a reality.

1.2 Meeting objectives

The objectives of the meeting were:

- to report on progress against the recommended actions from the Thirteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting and strengthen accountability;
- to harness ministerial leadership on the key issues required to drive further progress in delivering better health for people across the Pacific; and
- to strengthen relationships and promote collective action across Member States, WHO and partners.
2. PROCEEDINGS

2.1 Opening session

The Chairperson, the Honourable Minister of Health, Social Welfare and Gender Affairs of Tuvalu, welcomed participants to the meeting. He noted that NCDs cause 75% of premature deaths in the Pacific. He underscored the threat of climate change to the very survival of some PICs and urged health leaders to take urgent action to build resilient health systems. He also reminded participants of the continuing relevance of the Healthy Islands vision, set more than a quarter of a century ago, and urged his fellow ministers to take the lead and do what is necessary to make the vision a reality.

The WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific recognized the swift action and ongoing efforts PICs are making in response to the pandemic, based on years of preparation. He highlighted the fact that the virus will eventually reach every corner of the Region – and so must COVID-19 vaccines in order to keep all people safe. He stated, however, that vaccines alone cannot control the pandemic, and that it is important that countries continue developing systems that allow them to sustainably manage ongoing surges. The Regional Director also spoke of the need to act today to address future health challenges, agreeing with the meeting’s focus on strengthening health systems and tackling the growing burden of NCDs and the health impacts of climate change. He thanked the Pacific ministers for their input and advice, which had informed the development of For the Future, WHO’s action framework for the Western Pacific.

The SPC Deputy Director-General spoke of how the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have not been as bad as they could have been, thanks to the solidarity and resilience demonstrated by PICs, as well as the support provided by development partners. While COVID-19 has brought many challenges, he said that the pandemic has also been an opportunity for health systems, highlighting examples such as: the strengthened coordination through the Pacific COVID-19 Joint Incident Management Team, the expansion of laboratory infrastructure, the upskilling of nurses, the establishment of systems to track and certify vaccinations, and the local leadership showcased throughout the response. However, he said that while COVID-19 has been the focus over the past two years, other health challenges continue, including the NCD crisis, climate change and disasters.

During this session, additional office-bearers were also elected. French Polynesia was chosen to serve as Deputy Chairperson, Wallis and Futuna was elected as the French Rapporteur, and the Federated States of Micronesia was elected as the English Rapporteur.

2.2 Leveraging the COVID-19 pandemic to build sustainable systems and advance universal health coverage (UHC)

The Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Commonwealth Healthcare Corporation in the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands delivered the overarching presentation. Using the backcasting approach, the CEO spoke of a better future in which everyone in the Pacific can access quality health care without financial hardship, achieving the Healthy Islands vision, as well as the aims of For the Future and the SDGs. She underscored the need to take urgent action now to make this vision of the future a reality, noting that the COVID-19 pandemic has led to increased understanding of the centrality of health and its role in travel, trade, tourism, education and the economy. There is, therefore,

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1 The Healthy Islands vision is one where: children are nurtured in body and mind; environments incite learning and leisure; people work and age with dignity; ecological balance is a source of pride; and the ocean which sustains us is protected.
unprecedented support available to strengthen health systems. She highlighted examples of COVID-19 response measures that will have an impact long after the pandemic, including the expansion of laboratory capacity, the introduction of electronic immunization registries, and Fiji’s use of the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out as an opportunity to better understand and engage hard-to-reach populations.

Participants agreed that while the COVID-19 pandemic poses significant challenges to the Pacific and beyond, it has also brought increased attention, expanded partnerships, and increased political will and new levels of financial support to health. This presents the health sector with opportunities that should be harnessed for the sustainable strengthening of health systems and services and the advancement of UHC. Several additional examples were shared of COVID-19 response measures that will have long-term impact, including the revision of public health legislation and policies, the broadening of access to financial protection, the expansion of telehealth, and stronger networks and tools for risk communication and community engagement.

It was mentioned that COVID-19 has also sparked increased collaboration among various stakeholders at community, national, regional and international levels that could be retained post-pandemic to enhance participation in health-related programmes and services.

2.3 Accelerating action on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)

The Honourable Minister of Health and Medical Services of Kiribati delivered the introductory presentation. The Minister spoke of a potential future in which NCDs have been reduced by one third by 2030, which is in line with the global SDG target, and people in the Pacific are living long, healthy and productive lives, in line with the Healthy Islands vision and For the Future. The Minister noted that NCDs have long been a focus in the Pacific, including during previous Pacific Health Ministers Meetings. However, while progress has been made – which he demonstrated using indicators from the Pacific Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action (MANA) Dashboard and country examples, including Nauru’s tobacco tax – PICs are currently not on track to achieve global NCD targets. He stressed that the pandemic has brought new urgency to the need to address NCDs, as they are leaving people more vulnerable to developing severe illness or dying from COVID-19. At the same time, the pandemic and related restrictions have resulted in significant social and economic hardship, exacerbated mental health issues, and disrupted access to health services normally used to prevent, detect and manage NCDs. Accelerated action and innovative approaches will, therefore, be required to adequately address this health issue.

Having and using clear data to guide decision-making were highlighted as being part of the solution. The MANA Dashboard was described as a best practice that other parts of the world could learn from. Policies and legislation were also mentioned as being part of the solution, as these population-level interventions can and are making it easier for people to make healthier choices. The new Pacific Legislative Framework for Noncommunicable Diseases has been designed to support PICs to scale up efforts in this area. However, to accelerate progress, other new and innovative approaches are also needed.

Participants agreed that health leaders, development partners and all stakeholders need to work together to take urgent action against NCDs if PICs are to achieve global targets. The rise in NCDs in PICs was attributed to lifestyle habits such as the consumption of less healthy food and beverages, the use of tobacco and alcohol, and the lack of physical activity. The Pacific Legislative Framework was, therefore, welcomed as a tool that could be used by governments to encourage people to make better choices and take ownership of their own health.
Collaboration was also mentioned as being key to success against NCDs. This includes collaboration with actors beyond the health sector such as other government departments, community organizations and development partners. Several PICs highlighted examples of successful community engagement efforts.

2.4 Virtual visit to Tuvalu

The Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting included a virtual tour of the Princess Margaret Hospital located in Funafuti, Tuvalu’s capital, highlighting the impact of climate change on health.

The hospital is located within a few metres of the coastline, making it highly vulnerable to high winds and storm surges during tropical cyclones, with salt spray and water sometimes entering the wards. The video also highlighted concerns around the management of medical waste – if the medical waste facility is flooded, this may contaminate the environment.

The prevalence of NCDs was reported to be very high – around 11% of the total population – and rising. A senior nurse reported that she is seeing an increasing number of cases at her clinic; with people relying heavily on processed food. The hospital has now established a garden to grow vegetables to provide healthy meals for patients.

The acting Medical Superintendent also spoke of the impact of air pollution in triggering respiratory diseases, while the Environmental Health Officer spoke about how climate change is impacting the spread of disease-causing mosquitoes, leading to outbreaks of dengue fever.

2.5 Putting health at the centre of the climate change discussion

This session discussed the integral relationship between health and the environment, with the Honourable Minister of Health and Medical Services of Fiji delivering the overarching presentation. The Minister outlined a vision of the future in which PICs have the capacity to respond to the health consequences of a changing climate and have inspired others to curb emissions. He noted that the most recent reports from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have included devastating findings, particularly for small island developing states. In addition, COVID-19 has shown the need for resilient health systems that are able to face complex emergencies, whether caused by a pandemic-prone pathogen or climate-fuelled disaster.

The Minister gave an overview of some of the progress that has been made since the previous Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, including the formation of the Technical Advisory Group on Climate Change, the Environment and Health, the advocacy by Pacific leaders on the international stage, and the efforts to integrate health in national climate change adaptation plans. He also shared some examples of how Fiji and Tonga are working to increase the climate resilience and environmental sustainability of health-care facilities. He highlighted the need for ongoing incremental progress to tackle the health impacts of climate change, and that the COVID-19 pandemic represents an opportunity to build health systems that are resilient to climate change, with robust infrastructure, better access to water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and more reliable and sustainable electricity supplies.

Participants agreed on the need to ensure that health systems can continue treating patients, even in the face of a changing climate, and expressed dismay at the IPCC’s recent findings. It was also mentioned that the health sector can help other sectors gain support for their climate action, resulting in substantial
improvements to human health. However, stronger data and evidence are needed to support this advocacy and underpin decision-making.

2.6. Community perspectives on the future of health in the Pacific

This session opened with the announcement of the recipients of the Healthy Islands Awards. The meeting participants were informed that the awards were established to support and encourage the development of best practices and innovations in health in the Pacific to help make the Healthy Islands vision a reality.

This granting of this year’s Healthy Islands Awards was officiated by the WHO Regional Director for the Western Pacific who announced the winners virtually on behalf of Tuvalu, WHO and SPC. The four winners were:

- the establishment of a Wellness and NCD Alliance in partnership with the Ministry of Health and Medical Services in Solomon Islands;
- the expansion of U Corona Volunteer’s project on fermented breadfruit in the Federated States of Micronesia;
- the 10 000 toes campaign in Fiji; and
- Care Groups in Papua New Guinea.

Next, Tuvalu hosted a panel discussion involving representatives from local community groups to hear their perspectives on the three main agenda items. The panellists highlighted the importance of health authorities working with communities when implementing health programmes for greater reach and impact. This includes the greater involvement of community leaders, civil society and youth organizations in the planning, implementation and monitoring of such programmes. The panellists also reiterated the need to raise awareness of healthy and nutritious diets and to advocate for healthy physical routines to address the root causes of NCDs in communities.

2.7 Closing session

Participants thanked the Government of Tuvalu for hosting the Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, especially during the pandemic, and Tonga for offering to host the next meeting.

They also agreed to the draft outcomes of the Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting as presented by the Permanent Secretary of Health of Tuvalu on behalf of the drafting group.

In their closing remarks, the SPC Deputy Director-General and the WHO Regional Director urged participants to utilize the support received during the pandemic to strengthen health systems and to take urgent action against NCDs and the health impacts of climate change for a healthier future. Both speakers called for continuous collaboration and knowledge sharing to address the health challenges that occur in the region.

The Chairperson then thanked his fellow ministers for their active participation during the three days and encouraged them to continue working together towards a better, healthier future for people in the Pacific.
3. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The delegates endorsed the draft outcome document including all the commitments for action (Annex 3).
ANNEXES

Annex 1. List of participants, observers and members of the Secretariat

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## Annex 2. Meeting programme

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time*</th>
<th>Tuesday 22 March</th>
<th>Wednesday 23 March</th>
<th>Thursday 24 March</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11:00–12:00</td>
<td></td>
<td>Closed session – Heads of delegation only</td>
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<td>12:00–12:45</td>
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<tr>
<td>12:45–13:45</td>
<td>Opening</td>
<td>Session 2: Accelerating action on noncommunicable diseases</td>
<td>Session 3 continues</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Brief greeting</td>
<td>- Presentation</td>
<td>- Further plenary discussion (if needed)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Opening prayer</td>
<td>- Plenary discussion</td>
<td>Community perspectives on the future of health in the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
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<td>- Welcome address by Chairperson</td>
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<td>- Healthy Islands Awards</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Opening remarks by WHO Regional Director</td>
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<td>- Panel</td>
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<td>- Opening remarks by SPC Deputy Director-General</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Election of additional office bearers (Deputy Chairperson, rapporteurs)</td>
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<td>- Siva Tuvalu performance</td>
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<td>- Group photo</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Session 3 continues</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Session 1: Leveraging the COVID-19 pandemic to build sustainable systems and advance universal health coverage</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Presentation</td>
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<td>Community perspectives on the future of health in the Pacific</td>
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<tr>
<td>13:45–14:15</td>
<td>Mobility/coffee break</td>
<td>Mobility/coffee break</td>
<td>Drafting group on outcome document</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14:15–15:45</td>
<td>Quick poll of participants</td>
<td>Virtual visit to Tuvalu</td>
<td>Ministers’ decision on meeting outcomes</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Virtual poll on the future of health in the Pacific</td>
<td>- Pre-recorded video</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Session 1 continues</td>
<td>- Live Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>- Plenary discussion</td>
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<td>Session 3: Putting health at the centre of the climate change discussion</td>
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<tr>
<td>16:00–17:00</td>
<td>Drafting group on outcome document</td>
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<td>Closing session</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17:00–18:00</td>
<td>Virtual press conference</td>
<td>Drafting group on outcome document</td>
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*Funafuti time

NOTE: Different colours refer to the different Zoom links
Annex 3. Outcomes of the Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting

We, the Ministers of Health of Pacific island countries and areas (PICs) at this Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, reasserted our commitment to the Healthy Islands vision, noting that the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has further underscored its continued relevance and importance.

We, the Pacific Health Ministers, recognized that the Healthy Islands vision is reinforced by the World Health Organization’s action framework for the broader Western Pacific Region, For the Future: Towards the Healthiest and Safest Region, and that the realization of the Healthy Islands vision will be essential for the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

We, the Pacific Health Ministers, therefore underlined the need for expedited and collective action to make this vision a reality, noting that, even in the midst of the pandemic, PICs and our partners have an opportunity to create a better, greener and healthier future for the millions of people who call the Pacific home.

Leveraging the COVID-19 pandemic to build sustainable systems and advance universal health coverage (UHC)

We, the Pacific Health Ministers at this Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, acknowledged that the COVID-19 pandemic has highlighted the critical importance of strong health systems, and emphasized that now is a once-in-a-lifetime moment to strengthen systems and promote innovative actions to ensure that everyone across the Pacific can access life-saving health services during the pandemic and long into the future.

We, the Pacific Health Ministers committed:

- To strengthen integrated service delivery across the different levels of health care, including outreach, referral pathways and overseas medical referrals. Where possible, we will explore opportunities to strengthen primary health care services with a renewed focus on telehealth, nutrition, noncommunicable disease control, supportive supervision and community engagement.
- To review and revise public health legislation and governance structures to enable effective, whole-of-government and whole-of-society responses to future health emergencies and pandemics.
- To prioritize the collation and analysis of country data for the UHC Service Coverage Index and to use this regular monitoring and analysis to inform annual workplans and budgets.
- To contribute to subregional mechanisms for cooperation, knowledge exchange and resource sharing, such as:
  - The ongoing work on the subregional platform for the regulation of medical products, plus support for efficient medical products supply chain management (implementation of the commitment made during the Thirteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting).
  - The ongoing work on the subregional Quality Improvement Programme for Nursing and other identified health-care specialist workforces including visiting specialists, with a focus on education and regulation (implementation of the commitment made during the Twelfth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting).
  - The development of a Public Health Laboratory Network across the Pacific, including the ability to undertake whole genome sequencing.
- To work with key stakeholders, including those beyond the health sector, to identify at least one COVID-19 response intervention per country that could be invested in and harnessed to facilitate sustainable health systems strengthening, for example, laboratories, digital health, health workforce and community engagement.
Accelerating action on noncommunicable diseases (NCDs)

We, the Pacific Health Ministers at this Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, highlighted the need for accelerated action on NCDs.

We noted that while NCDs are leaving people more vulnerable to COVID-19, the continuing rise in the prevalence of NCDs can be characterized as a “slow-burn pandemic” that, as the No. 1 cause of premature mortality in the Pacific, is already claiming too many lives and, without urgent action, will claim far too many more in future.

We, the Pacific Health Ministers, endorsed the Pacific Legislative Framework for Noncommunicable Diseases as a key piece of guidance that will assist PICs in making it easier for their citizens to make healthier choices.

We, the Pacific Health Ministers committed:

• To lead our teams to monitor progress using the Pacific Monitoring Alliance for NCD Action (MANA) Dashboard indicators and the Pacific Legislative Framework, and to use the assessments to advocate for national action to ensure countries can more effectively progress towards the SDGs and global NCD targets.
• To invest in additional resources to ensure effective prevention and early detection and management of NCDs, especially at the primary health care level, and to maximize the impact of available resources by employing innovative approaches, promoting vaccinations, fostering good nutrition and harnessing cross-cutting issues to strengthen decentralized NCD service delivery.
• To promote a life-course approach including an emphasis on healthy ageing and ensure that all NCD interventions effectively address the needs of indigenous populations, youths, older people and those living in outer/remote islands.
• To support the regional endorsement of the Pacific Legislative Framework at high levels from political leaders, such as by Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, and consider more opportunities for Pacific-level actions and national utilization.
• To take active steps to ensure engagement of non-health sectors and civil society in national NCD leadership, governance and implementation in order to address the root causes of NCDs in a coordinated whole-of-government, whole-of-society and health-in-all-policies approach.

Putting health at the centre of the climate change discussion

We, the Pacific Health Ministers at this Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, expressed concern at recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) and the picture the Panel paints of the devastating future impacts of climate change.

We acknowledged that the health sector has a leadership role to play in inspiring the collective action required to counter the rising climate crisis and in ensuring that health systems have the capacity to respond to its health impacts.

We, the Pacific Health Ministers, committed:

• To proactively advocate on the national and international stage for intersectoral and international action to address the health impacts of climate change, highlighting the special needs of the Pacific. We will do this by:
• Directing ministry staff to prioritize the gathering of data and evidence on the health impacts of climate change and the health co-benefits of action taken by colleagues outside the health sector.
• Engaging colleagues working in other sectors to help them gain support for action that addresses climate change, while also benefitting health.
• Supporting the inclusion of health priorities (including those related to nutrition and essential services such as water and sanitation) in national adaptation plans and by developing or revising health national adaptation plans (H-NAPs) or equivalent plans.
• Driving specific agenda items on the health impact of climate change at meetings of the IPCC Conference of the Parties and other global climate change forums.
• Achieving incremental progress on an annual basis through mainstreaming climate change interventions in all our work to tackle this existential challenge to the health of the people of the Pacific.

To harness the resources available during the pandemic to ensure that health-care systems are not only better able to protect communities from the threat of COVID-19, but also have a reduced environmental impact and can continue serving patients in the face of a changing climate. As part of this, we will:
• Conduct climate change and health vulnerability and adaptation assessments.
• Commit to achieving the following proposed targets in the next five years:
  ▪ 100% of health-care facilities have access to basic WASH and medical waste management;
  ▪ 100% of health-care facilities have access to electricity; and
  ▪ health infrastructure has been assessed and strengthened and the capacity of the health workforce built to withstand climate shocks and other health emergencies, including pandemics.

Support requested from development partners

We, the Pacific Health Ministers at this Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, request the continued support of our partners in joint efforts to deliver better health for people across the Pacific now and in future. We invite partners to assist us with the following:

• To support PICs in adopting and implementing sustained, future-oriented action informed by country data analysis that is used to prioritize workplans and budgets. Ensure that partner resources deployed for the COVID-19 response result in long-term systems strengthening and explore equitable financing options for better-targeted results on UHC. Wherever possible, put plans in place for a transition to full country ownership.
• To ensure that support provided is in full partnership with Pacific governments and is on plan, on budget and on system to improve transparency and accountability in order to reduce systematic fragmentation and the potential for overlaps and gaps, and to support the transition to full country ownership.
• To facilitate cross-country sharing of best practices in harnessing COVID-19 response measures for sustainable and long-term impact.
• To support the strengthening or establishment of subregional mechanisms for cooperation, knowledge exchange and resource sharing, such as:
  ▪ The subregional platform for regulation of medical products (implementation of the commitment made during the Thirteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting).
  ▪ The subregional Quality Improvement Programme for Nursing and other identified health-care specialist workforces, including visiting specialists, with a focus on education and regulation (implementation of the commitment made during the Twelfth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting).
  ▪ A specialized public health laboratory network with the ability to undertake whole genome sequencing.
A network or platform for making referral pathways between outer and main islands and overseas medical referrals an effective, efficient and equitable part of national health systems, including through the use of telehealth/telemedicine networks.

- To support PICs with the scaling up of NCD actions and monitoring the progress of implementation through the MANA Dashboard and other agreed reporting mechanisms and utilize this information to encourage actions in annual health workplans, as well as increasing engagement from non-health partners.
- To explore opportunities to maximize available resources to enhance NCD prevention and management services, and to implement innovative interventions using advanced technology and creative communication to enhance behaviour change.
- To strengthen efforts to improve civil society engagement, regional coordination, international collaboration and networking opportunities for PICs.
- To support the regional endorsement and the implementation of the *Pacific Legislative Framework for Noncommunicable Diseases* at the national level.
- To support the efforts of countries to develop or strengthen plans and to access sustainable financing including the Green Climate Fund to address the health impacts of climate change, focusing on developmental effectiveness and identifying opportunities to optimize available resources to tackle both COVID-19 and climate change simultaneously.
- To support efforts of Pacific leaders to inspire those beyond the health sector to play their part in addressing the health impacts of climate change, including through the development of communications and advocacy tools.
- To produce and share regional guidance on climate resilient and environmentally sustainable health-care facilities, and support countries in its implementation.
- To monitor the health and nutrition impacts of climate change and gather and share evidence to inform decision-making, guide advocacy, drive action, and track the impacts and successes of interventions.
- To facilitate cross-country sharing of ideas and best practices, including through the digital arm of the climate change, environment and health platform.

**Pacific Health Ministers Meetings**

We, the Pacific Health Ministers at this Fourteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting, recommend that the revised terms of reference for the Pacific Health Ministers Meeting be reviewed by Pacific Heads of Health at their next meeting and then submitted to Pacific Health Ministers for their endorsement.

We acknowledge the offer of Tonga to host the Fifteenth Pacific Health Ministers Meeting.