

CLIMATE CHANGE AND SMALL STATES

PARLIAMENTARIAN'S TOOLKIT

A GUIDE FOR EFFECTIVE CLIMATE CHANGE ACTION

The Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA) connects, develops, promotes and supports parliamentarians and their staff to identify benchmarks of good governance and the implementation of the enduring values of the Commonwealth. The CPA collaborates with parliaments and other organisations, including the intergovernmental community, to achieve its statement of purpose. It brings parliamentarians and parliamentary staff together to exchange ideas among themselves and with experts in various fields, to identify benchmarks of good practices and new policy options they can adopt or adapt in the governance of their societies.

The CPA Small Branches is a network made up of members from over 40 Commonwealth legislatures in jurisdictions with populations of up to 500,000 people. Members discuss political problems and the operation of democratic systems in some of the world's smallest jurisdictions. The CPA works closely with Small Branches in all regions of the Commonwealth to identify their particular needs and requirements in parliamentary strengthening, development and cooperation.

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Acknowledgements

This toolkit was also helped by contributions from parliamentarians and participants at the 37th Small Branches Conference, September 2019, Kampala, Uganda and the Small Branches Workshop on Climate Change, October 2018, Nairobi, Kenya.

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ABBREVIATIONS

AIMS	Atlantic, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean and South China Sea
APPG	All Party Parliamentary Group
AOSIS	AOSIS Alliance of Small Island States
BPOA	Barbados Programme of Action
COP	Conference of the Parties
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction
EVI	Environmental Vulnerability Index
GHG	Greenhouse gas(es)
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
LDCs	Least Developed Countries
LMMA	Locally Managed Marine Area
NAPA	National Adaptation Programmes of Action
SAMOA Pathway	Pathway SIDS Accelerated Modalities of Action Pathway
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
UN	United Nations
UN-DESA	United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
UNISDR	United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction
WMO	World Meteorological Organization

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

This toolkit serves as a guide for parliamentarians within small states and territories on how to become more effective actors in addressing climate change. As those jurisdictions are at the front line of the climate change crisis, it is essential that parliamentarians are best equipped to face this urgent and complex issue.

The structure and content of this toolkit was designed in way to provide a comprehensive yet accessible introduction for parliamentarians with little or no prior knowledge on climate change. It will introduce the science behind the phenomenon, plus the range of actions that can be taken to address it. It will also detail how the work of a parliamentarian can further drive progress at both the national and international level. In recognising the constraints many small states face, the toolkit also details relevant support available, from accessing funding for climate change adaptation and mitigation, to cooperation at the international level in order to influence the climate change agenda.

Parliamentarians are invited to select relevant material from the proceeding sections of what they may find useful and to employ this new knowledge in their efforts to strengthen climate action. Readers may choose to digest the toolkit in its entirety or use each section as a standalone guide. Throughout the toolkit, links and further resources point readers to additional learning materials. Further case studies and action points provide parliamentarians with practical guidance that they can transfer directly to work in their jurisdictions.

This toolkit is suitable for parliamentarians from small states and territories that share many similar features. However, parliamentarians from small islands developing states (SIDS), who face their own particular vulnerabilities and characteristics, and where greater urgency is required to combat climate change, will find this toolkit of particular use. The toolkit is also written primarily for those small states and territories within the Commonwealth that to varying degrees follow a “Westminster style” political system. However, the information contained within may benefit all small states and territories of the world.

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CLIMATE CHANGE EXPLAINED

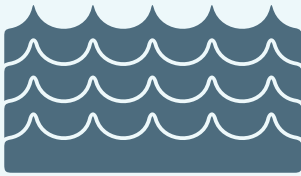
INTRODUCTION

The contemporary challenge posed by climate change is of global concern. The destructive impacts have, and will, touch all nations and populations. Yet, although climate change affects all, it does not affect all equally. Nor are the capacities to respond to the challenges in equal distribution. The small states and territories of the world are some of those most affected and at risk, in particular those under the grouping small island developing states (SIDS). These are a distinct set of small islands and low-lying coastal countries and territories, recognised by the international community as facing specific social, economic and environmental vulnerabilities. Characterised by small populations and geographic isolation, they also contend with resource constraints that affect their ability to effectively protect against such vulnerabilities. With SIDS combined population of around 65 million, contributing less than 1 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, they have, and will, suffer disproportionately from the damaging impacts of climate change.

For parliamentarians embarking on climate change action, the scale of the challenges faced may seem daunting. Resource and capacity issues faced by decision-makers in small states, which constrain their capacity to act are one prohibitive factor. In addition, parliamentarians may regard climate change as the purview of governments, with their ability to have influence limited. However, they play an important role. Through their oversight, lawmaking and representative responsibilities parliamentarians can ensure that climate change is prioritised by the executive whilst driving change directly. Parliamentarians are thus an important actor to increasing ability of small states to adapt to the impacts of climate change and becoming global leaders in reducing emissions.

WHAT IS DIFFERENT FOR SMALL STATES?

Many small states, especially SIDS, have been identified as being particularly vulnerable to climate change. With populations centred largely in coastal zones they are vulnerable to sea-level rises and extreme weather events; these environmental vulnerabilities combine with a particular set of social and economic factors to make small states some of the world's most affected by climate change.



Most small states are close to sea-level and vulnerable to sea-level rises - some are at risk of going entirely underwater



Already the most disaster-prone states, this is made worse with increased intensity of extreme weather from climate change



Small and often dispersed populations mean small domestic markets, limiting economies of scale



Over dependence on imported fossil fuels and limited progress transitioning to alternative energy

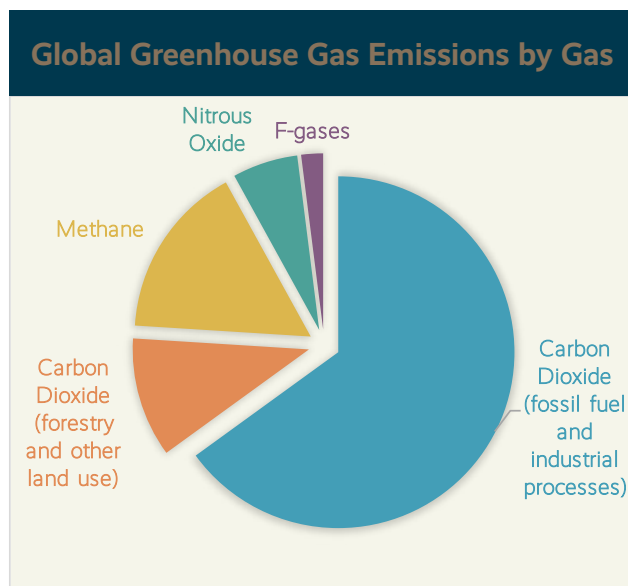


Access to and management of uncontaminated freshwater and management of land to control waste and contamination

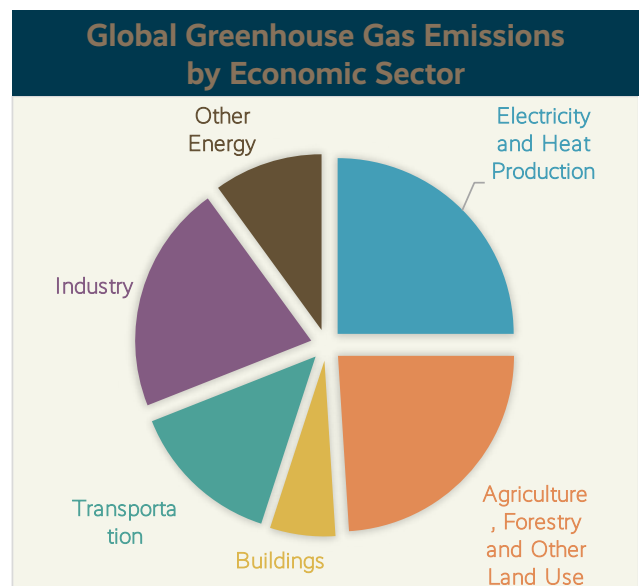
WHAT IS CLIMATE CHANGE?

Although the Earth's weather varies from day-to-day, its climate is defined as the average weather and its variation in a particular place over a period of time. Climate change therefore is a long-term shift in average weather patterns. It is in these changes to the climate, and precipitation and wind patterns, that have produced more frequent intense weather events, such as floods and tropical storms. An overwhelming majority of the scientific community agree that these changes since the early 20th century, have predominantly anthropogenic causes – i.e. through human activity.

The main cause of this change is through global warming. The Earth needs to retain some of its natural heat by trapping energy from the Sun – the process known as the “greenhouse effect”. However, the concentration of greenhouse gases in the atmosphere has increased, particularly through burning fossil fuels, raising the average surface temperature of the Earth and the oceans to a detrimental degree. The evidence shows that this increase in greenhouse gases is almost entirely due to human activity.



Based on global emissions from 2010. Details about the sources included in these estimates can be found in the Contribution of Working Group III to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.



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IMPACT ON SMALL STATES

In addition to the environmental consequences, climate change has and will cause significant challenges across a range of socio-economic areas and sectors. Because of the characteristics of many small states and territories, such as a limited resource base, remoteness from markets, geographic isolation, low-lying terrain and large coastal populations, they will experience many of these challenges to a greater degree and will be more limited in their ability to respond.

Despite the gravity of the challenges ahead, positive steps can be taken at the local, national and international level towards preventative and remedial solutions across different sectors. Parliamentarians can learn about the broad reaching effects that climate change has in their jurisdictions. This will build a knowledge base to help better scrutinise the work of the government related to climate change, or in formulating their own policy responses with the support of different stakeholders.



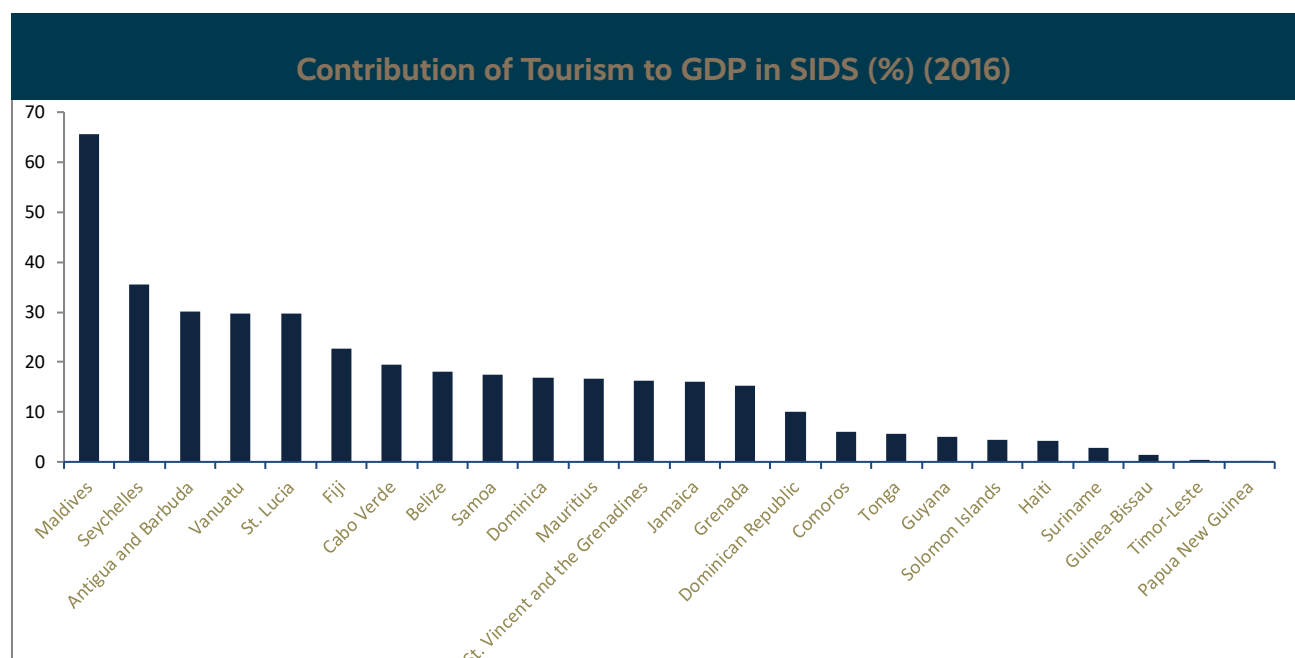
Sea-level rise: Many small states are particularly vulnerable to sea-level rises. With infrastructure and economic activities being largely located in low-lying coastal areas, the dangers and challenges are significant. As populations grow and the impacts of climate change continue, re-locating populations will become increasingly challenging. Various small states also face an existential threat if the higher projections of sea-level rises come to fruition.

Extreme weather: The climate of many small states makes them naturally prone to suffer more frequently from extreme weather events. The intensity of tropical cyclones for example, is expected to increase, with SIDS being among the most at-risk states in the world. The climate of small states, with the majority of SIDS being located in the tropics, also makes them natural targets to severe weather, which can include rapid-onset events (e.g. storms and floods) or slow-onset effects (e.g. desertification and biodiversity loss).

Fisheries and coastal ecosystems: The vast ocean spaces characterising many small states, makes the fishing industry key. In the Pacific for example, it contributes up to 10% of total GDP . As a result of climate change, changes in species locations and numbers will affect catches. This will result in reduced profits and jobs, food insecurity and conflict over new markets as marine species shift due to changes in the water temperature.

Addressing pressures on coastal ecosystems, the [Food and Agriculture Organization](#) provides a framework for fisheries management, incorporates the range of potential technical and policy solutions. However, this requires resources for implementation. Therefore, engaging and forming partnerships with a range of stakeholders at both the local and national level is crucial. Promoting local ownership through a locally managed marine area (LMMA) is also another potential tool for managing marine ecosystems in a participatory manner.

Learn more: [Locally Managed Marine Area Network](#)



Tourism: Tourism is another industry that many small states rely upon for a large portion of their revenue. Sea-level rises and storm surges place a major threat on tourist infrastructure, such as resorts which are predominantly in coastal areas and are served with little coastal protection in order to make them visually appealing to tourists.

In addition to adaptive measures to dampen the damage from climate change, small states can promote the sustainability of the tourism sector by expanding specialised tourism sectors such as eco-tourism. This would bring in new opportunities for skilled employment and advance sustainable economic development against the backdrop of climate change.

Learn more: [Tourism and the Sustainable Development Goals, UNWTO, 2017](#)

Water management: The impacts of climate change, most notably the intrusion of saltwater into freshwater aquifers, is placing an even greater burden for small states on clean water supplies, many of which are already classified as water-stressed. With economies based on industries reliant upon freshwater supplies, economic losses are also a likely outcome, severely affecting the livelihoods and well-being of citizens.

Various technical measures exist from improving wastewater facilities, to low-cost options such as artificial wetlands. Improving the use of existing resources is also critical. For this more knowledge is needed in small states through comprehensive assessments on the management of groundwater resources. Integrating the management of water and land resources, which considers the often-competing needs of both sources, has also been advocated.

Learn More: [Transboundary Aquifers and Groundwater Systems of SIDS, UNEP, 2016](#)



Migration and displacement: Although small states have a long history of migration, which is not always viewed negatively, the impacts of sea-level rise will place greater strain on coastal populations, increasing displacement and the resettlement processes. As well as the personal toll on those impacted, migration driven by climate change will also have ramifications for the social fabric of small states.

In addition to addressing the root causes of climate-induced migration, small states can include it within [National Adaptation Programmes of Action \(NAPAs\)](#) established under the UNFCCC. NAPAs provide a process to identify priority activities that respond to their urgent and immediate needs with regard to adaptation to climate change.

Learn more: [Climate Change, Migration and Displacement, ODI, 2017](#)

Food security: The increase of droughts, sea-level rise and coastal erosion from climate change will have a big impact on food security in small states including food access, utilisation and price stability.

In consideration of the limited land resources, small states could benefit from innovations in land management through an ecosystem approach, such as through intensive agricultural methods that use less land. Small states should also advocate on a global level the reassessment of damaging regulations and subsidies. For this, closer international cooperation and engaging a range of stakeholders, is required.

Learn more: [Global Action Programme on Food Security and Nutrition in SIDS, FAO, 2017](#)



APPROACHES TO CLIMATE CHANGE

When it comes to climate change action there are two broad approaches:

- ▶ **Adaptation:** defined by any action taken to adjust to climate change.
- ▶ **Mitigation:** defined as action taken to reduce, avoid or sequester greenhouse gas emissions.

ADAPTATION

Due to their vulnerability to the effects of climate change, and negligible contributions to global greenhouse gas emissions, small states' responses should largely prioritise adaptation. Identifying and implementing appropriate and effective adaptation responses is a complex issue and the vulnerability and needs across and within small states also varies.

A priority for small states is in identifying appropriate climate change adaptation actions. Good adaptation responses should fit the adaptation problems being addressed, reduce targeted vulnerabilities and manage uncertainty, all while meeting sustainable development goals and objectives. Small states have in many cases been effective at identifying and addressing their own vulnerabilities, however challenges remain. This often stems from the fact that the vulnerabilities and needs often differ within jurisdictions. Addressing climate change at the national level therefore requires identifying adaptation priorities and basing action on scientific data or other credible evidence.

Most adaptive measures in small states are undertaken by national governments, either solely or in collaboration with other actors that may include: other country governments (bilaterally), regional and intergovernmental organisations, NGOs, private sector and industry, and civil society. Another approach is ground-up adaptation, undertaken independently of national governments. Although much less frequent in small states, there are examples of actions being undertaken at the local level. Potential actors include schools, universities, local governments, church groups, local communities and home/landowners, among others.

INSIGHT: COMMUNITY-BASED ADAPTATION

One approach to ground-up climate change adaptation is Community-Based Adaptation. This approach seeks to include citizens and communities, particularly vulnerable people, in the design and implementation of projects and project activities. This can include simple, yet accessible technologies, such as storing freshwater during flooding, or more complex forms of resilience, such as reducing the vulnerability of social groups disproportionately affected by climate change. Local communities, including traditional village leadership systems can be a strong source of community cohesion and mobilisation. Their inclusion in the design and implementation stages, can also improve the sustainability and longevity of projects. Community-Based Adaptation can also complement other more common forms of adaptation, such as at the government level. It can act as small-scale/policy laboratories, generating knowledge about how to address vulnerabilities at the local level while generating broader lessons on inclusive climate change policy.

MITIGATION

Mitigation is about reducing the release of greenhouse gas emissions that are warming the planet. This is done by either reducing sources of these gases (for example the burning of fossil fuels) or enhancing “sinks” that accumulate and store these gases (such as oceans, forests, soil). Because the contribution of small states towards global emissions is negligible, investing in climate change mitigation may seem like a pointless, or even diversionary endeavour. However, pursuing mitigation strategies is important for several reasons:

- ▶ It provides the opportunity for small states to achieve other development objectives, for example, achieving energy security and reliable, resilient energy infrastructure.
- ▶ It showcases leadership in low carbon development, which has a positive effect on development overall and applies pressure for the biggest emitters to follow - especially if small states transform energy plans at a regional or inter-island level.
- ▶ It can inform investment decisions to avoid locking in higher levels of emissions in long-term infrastructure and assets.
- ▶ It provides opportunities for resilience building from the resulting economic transformation of investing in renewable energy.



There exists various mitigation strategies, such as adopting renewable energy sources like solar, wind hydro-power, or developing more sustainable transport such as electric vehicles and biofuels. The range of options fall under what the [Deep Decarbonization Pathways Project \(DDPP\)](#) labels the “four pillars” of action to reduce emissions. These are:

Reducing energy use: Decreasing the amount of energy required to run homes and fuel the economy and to produce more using less energy.

Switch to cleaner fuels: Once electricity is powered by clean energy, switch energy activities, convert to electricity and to low-emissions alternatives.

Produce cleaner electricity: Transition electricity generation away from imported fossil fuels to cleaner, locally produced low emissions sources such as solar, wind, hydro and bioenergy.

Reduce non-energy emissions and increase carbon storage: Reducing non-energy emissions like agriculture and refrigerant gases and capture and store remaining emissions through actions like restoring forests and blue-carbon ecosystems.

The potential for renewables in small states is huge. With many rich in energy sources, especially from wind, solar, tidal and geothermal, they have the potential to meet most, or all, of their domestic energy needs. Progress has been made in implementing alternative energy plans and most have set ambitious national renewable energy targets. However, with renewables comprising approximately 10% of the power sectors of SIDS much work is yet to be done. Parliamentarians can play a key role in shaping energy policy and ensuring governments meet targets and commit to renewable energy.

CASE STUDY: ENHANCED SYSTEMS PLANNING IN SAMOA

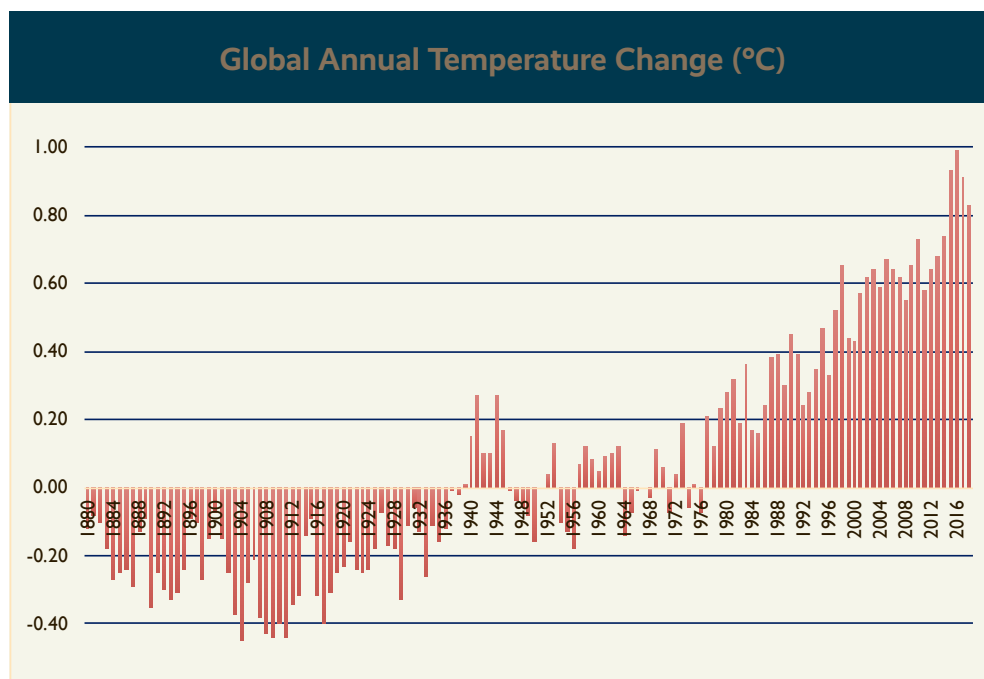
With approximately 70% of the Samoan population living within one kilometre of the coast, infrastructure, economic assets, and livelihoods are vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and natural disasters. Past cyclones and tsunamis have critically damaged the country’s transport infrastructure. Although the response to such events has been swift, systematic planning to prepare transport infrastructure has historically been lacking.

In response to its vulnerabilities and deficiencies, Samoa has implemented a number of projects to improve its approach to systems planning. This includes the construction of new roads and bridges as an alternative to high-risk coastal routes, development of a climate resilient road strategy and the design of national standards for the maintenance and construction of future climate resilient infrastructure. The measures were completed under a number of projects, most notably the Samoa Post Tsunami Reconstruction Project (PTRP) and Pilot Program for Climate Resilience (PPCR) and were helped realised through financial credit of the World Bank.

THE SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE

Whilst a community doubting the scientific research in the area of climate change exists, the robustness of the research and levels of consensus among leading scientists makes such doubt unwarranted. The [Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change \(IPCC\)](#) is the leading international body for the assessment of climate change. The work of the IPCC, including through its many reports, have influenced decision-making around climate change on a global level. Its findings rest upon rigorous yet balanced methods and for this reason is seen as the best means by which to channel scientific information into the decision-making process. Parliamentarians can therefore trust that their findings will be policy-relevant when formulating appropriate response to climate change.

The key messages from the most recent [IPCC Special Report on global warming of 1.5°C](#) (see below) - based on the latest available scientific, technical and socio-economic literature - highlights the urgent and transformative action needed to limit global warming to 1.5°C. The report also assesses the impacts and opportunities for action specifically for small states. It states that the risks of climate change are more significant than previously assessed with substantial differences between 1.5°C and 2°C of warming. Whereas limiting warming will provide more opportunities for small states to adapt, current global warming ambitions of below 2°C may still incur irreversible losses and, as temperatures rise, such opportunities will diminish.



Temperature data showing rapid warming in the past few decades, going up to 2018

INSIGHT: THE IPCC SPECIAL REPORT ON 1.5 °C WARMING

Increasing warming amplifies the exposure of small islands, low-lying coastal areas and deltas to the risks associated with sea level rise for many human and ecological systems, including increased saltwater intrusion, flooding and damage to infrastructure (*high confidence*).

Regions at disproportionately higher risk [adverse consequences with global warming of 1.5°C and beyond] include Arctic ecosystems, dryland regions, small island developing states, and Least Developed Countries...and local communities dependent on agricultural or coastal livelihoods (*high confidence*)

Many small island developing states could experience lower water stress as a result of projected changes in aridity when global warming is limited to 1.5°C, as compared to 2°C (*medium confidence*)

Adaptation is expected to be more challenging for ecosystems, food and health systems at 2°C of global warming than for 1.5°C (*medium confidence*). Some vulnerable regions, including small islands and Least Developed Countries, are projected to experience high multiple interrelated climate risks even at global warming of 1.5°C (*high confidence*).



NEXT STEPS FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

- ▶ **Endorse scientific reports:** Many parliaments have openly endorsed findings from the scientific community. The reports from the IPCC are the leading authority in providing scientific information to governments, however a number of scientific organisations including scientific societies, science academies, university departments, government agencies and intergovernmental bodies also produce research, including releasing public statements affirming the scientific consensus. Parliamentarians could use their platform to, collectively and publicly, endorse their findings and statements. With empirical data behind them this adds greater legitimacy to the case for climate action while simultaneously weakening the defence of those from the executive, or other areas of opposition, who may resist action on climate change.
- ▶ **Involve the experts:** After endorsing scientific reports, experts can be invited to further educate and brief fellow parliamentarians. Being such a complex issue, experts have a range of focuses, from data mappers to those focused on policy and can be drawn from various fields and sectors. Regional organisations such as the [Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre](#) that provide data and policy advice to states on climate change are useful repositories for accessing climate change experts at the national and regional level. The experts could be used to act as a witness to a committee, or alternatively, as members of an advisory council on a relevant all-party parliamentary group (see page 17). They could also share their knowledge awareness raising events in parliaments such as exhibitions and receptions, informing decision-makers on climate change impacts, risks and options for adaptation and mitigation.
- ▶ **Talk to constituents:** Misconceptions and lack of knowledge around climate change and its impacts can make it difficult to build support and momentum around effective action. Therefore parliamentarians can promote a range of initiatives to further educate citizens, that utilise the latest science but also convey it in a digestible way. Involving the youth for example, in the form of school visits and making sure climate change has a platform in the educational agenda could contribute to sensitising the population and building future generations that will continue and advance the agenda.

2

THE ROLE OF PARLIAMENTARIANS

Although there is considerable variation among jurisdictions, it is fair to say that all functioning legislatures in democratic settings carry out three core legislative functions in **representing** the public, **making laws** and exercising **oversight** over the executive. These essential roles put parliaments at the centre of the climate change agenda. For example, for international agreements to be effective, they must be transposed into national legislation, requiring oversight of government performance and allocation of funds. And, as conduits between decision-makers and the citizenry, parliamentarians can ensure that adaptation and mitigation strategies benefit the communities they target.

On the whole, parliaments of small states face different challenges than those of larger states, in terms of both the problems themselves and the potential solutions. The most obvious is the greater human and financial resource constraints, which limit a parliament's ability to make progress on issues requiring time, expertise and money such as climate change. Yet the context of small states brings opportunities as well constraints. For example, the absence of an effective committee system can limit scrutiny of government yet having closer links to communities puts them in a better position to hear and translate the concerns of the people.

Sub-national legislatures, overseas territories and crown dependencies may also operate with their own set of limitations insofar as their ability to influence the climate change agenda. They may for example not have the constitutional means by which to affect national legislation or represent their legislature at international climate change negotiations. As such, parliamentarians from these territories must understand their role in the climate change debate in relation to their federal parliament and their ability to provide input and oversight on action at the national and sub-national level.

FEATURES OF SMALL LEGISLATURES

Limited scope of activity: Legislatures may not meet very frequently which can limit the ability of parliamentarians to make progress on climate change. Multi-island states can also suffer from the “tyranny of distance” as those representing island constituencies are often based large distances away in the capital.

Multi-functionalism: Parliamentarians from small states often have multiple roles and assume overlapping identities. It is also likely a parliamentarian may have a ministerial portfolio within the executive giving them more power to make progress on climate change. Fulfilling different roles with potentially conflicting interests can however blur the lines of accountability.

Close social proximity: Strong family and kin influence also can have a big influence on a parliamentarian’s activities in small states. They can become effective campaigners within communities, but this can also blur the lines between the professional and personal and may increase the likelihood of forms of patronage.

Consensus: Close social proximity combined with lack of political parties, common to various small states, can create unity around common challenges, but may also stifle pluralism owing to greater pressures for conformity and fear of social ostracism.

OVERSIGHT, SCRUTINY AND ACCOUNTABILITY

A system of checks and balances on the government is fundamental to any healthy democracy. Parliament is the link that connects the citizen with the government and parliamentarians should hold the government to account on behalf of their constituents. Parliamentary oversight is also one of the means to ensuring that government policies are reaching all corners of society. It is therefore an essential feature in achieving overarching policy priorities such as climate change. Parliamentarians can identify shortcomings and encourage corrective action across a spectrum of government-led action. This includes monitoring the allocation of resources to climate and environmental programmes to ensuring governments meet their national and international climate commitments.

Every parliament should have a certain level of authority to scrutinise the work of government, however in small states the political space for oversight may be restricted due to the absence or limited capacity of relevant oversight and scrutiny mechanisms. Many small states have been innovative in countering these disadvantages. To overcome the shortage of personnel, **Tuvalu made use of members of the community to conduct oversight through Island Councils**. Innovation can also help small states turn limitations to their benefit. Although the close social proximity can stifle pluralism, it can also fulfil many of the functions that costly accountability mechanisms would normally do – i.e. by the mere fact that everyone knows what you are doing, and the consequences of poor policy can be more easily attributed to individuals.

Parliamentarians of small states can therefore work innovatively and utilise the political and procedural makeup of their legislature to hold the government to account. To do this, a range of tools and processes parliamentarians, as a group or individually, can utilise to strengthen action on climate change. It is important for parliamentarians to be aware of the tools at their disposal and to use them effectively.

NEXT STEPS FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

- ▶ **Committees:** The main objective of a parliamentary committee is to enhance the quality of government through evidence gathered in inquiries, from which appropriate conclusions and recommendations are drawn. There are various types of committees within any parliamentary system that may address climate change: a cross-departmental committee or departmental committees looking at a specific issue around climate change. Parliamentarians can also be involved in independent panels, commissions or committees that scrutinise and advise climate change and include national experts among their memberships. A parliamentarian who is a member of a committee with a remit linked to climate change should be proactive in holding hearings and regular investigations into the actions of the government.
- ▶ **Question time:** In many parliaments, parliamentarians can pose questions to government ministers or senior parliamentarians, linked to climate-related policy, for example to a Minister for the environment, development or energy. The question, which will be based on information gathered through consultation and/or research can be submitted in writing or directed orally on the chamber floor. In questions, a parliamentarian can press for information, action or clarifications regarding government policy relating to climate change.
- ▶ **Debates:** Chamber debates are excellent opportunities to raise awareness and press for action from the government on climate change. Debates can be initiated in numerous ways across jurisdictions and at different stages in the legislative process. Discussions could cover current climate change policy, proposed new laws and a range of topical or constituency issues. They could emerge from a set-piece speech from a podium or driven by interventions and opinions following a speech in the Chamber. Debates are also an important means to channel community and local level issues that stem from climate change, to the government. As well as pressurising the executive, debates are also useful ways to raise public awareness to issues such as climate change and to build more knowledge on potential allies and opponents to climate change. Small state parliamentarians should consult their Standing Orders to learn how debates are conducted in their legislature.
- ▶ **Field visits and consultations:** Convening a broad range of stakeholders at the community level is an important process in parliamentary oversight. Parliamentarians can consult either as part of a group or individually. Field visits to communities can reveal how well policies and initiatives are being implemented with insights being fed back into the monitoring and reporting process. This process can be helped by the fact that many small state parliamentarians are closer to their constituents both geographically and in terms of their work portfolio.
- ▶ **Cross-party caucuses:** Loosely formed groupings of parliamentarians from across political lines, caucuses or All-Party Parliamentary Groups (APPGs) can be organised around a specific issue such as climate change. Unless there are specific rules in place these groupings can vary in size, composition, output and by extension, influence. Although they often hold less power in comparison to formal groups such as committees, the very fact of parliamentarians organising around a particular issue can vastly increase its visibility and legitimacy, particularly when based on non-partisan grounds.

- ▶ **Oversight institutions:** The task of oversight also extends beyond Parliament. To achieve successful oversight, parliamentarians therefore must work closely with other bodies, such as audit institutions, ombudspersons and civil society, both at the national and international level. Supreme Audit Institutions and statistical agencies' independence to oversee government expenditure and policies should be guaranteed by the constitution or supreme law-making body. Such bodies also often have untapped potential to contribute useful evidence for parliamentarians towards more informed climate change policymaking. For this parliaments must be proactive to work cooperatively with them and find opportunities to combine efforts and resources.

CASE STUDY: THE UNITED KINGDOM'S INDEPENDENT CLIMATE CHANGE COMMITTEE

The Committee on Climate Change (CCC) is an independent non-governmental public body that provides independent and expert advice to the UK government on tackling and preparing for climate change. Its membership is formed from experts within various fields related to climate change. As an independent body the CCC has a duty to act impartially and objectively and avoid conflicts of interest. Among its strategic priorities the CCC advises on and monitors government progress in reducing emissions and achieving carbon budgets, conducts independent analysis and engages a wide range of organisations and individuals to share evidence and analysis.

The body was created under the Climate Change Act (2008), which serves as the UK's comprehensive and unifying basis for climate change policy and sets out a legally binding emissions target to meet by 2050. So, while the Act sets the direction, the Committee sets the milestones. Because climate change is a long-term issue requiring long-term solutions, the thorough and evidence-based approach of the committee of experts makes it well placed to ensure that the government of the day is working to meet its climate goals.

The CCC has produced a number of reports on progress made since its creation, which have included policy recommendations to address where the UK government is failing. And, when the Committee makes its recommendations, the government often listens. In May 2019, the committee said that the falling costs of low-carbon technologies now make it economically feasible for the UK to increase its climate ambition—without much extra spending. In June, the government proposed a goal of net-zero emissions by 2050, which passed through the parliament unopposed and became the country's new legally binding target. As a first-of-its-kind institution, the CCC's success has led other countries to set-up similar bodies and is a good model for further countries including small states, to follow.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- ▶ **Tools For Parliamentary Oversight, IPU, 2008:** Tools for Parliamentary Oversight examines the mechanisms and processes used in parliamentary oversight activities. It identifies and analyses the tools that are commonly found in both chamber and committee work, where detailed scrutiny of government can be carried out most effectively. The catalogue of tools developed in the guide, allows parliaments to examine and improve upon their own practices. The guide also offers a range of examples and case studies from national parliaments that may be of wider interest.
- ▶ **UK Climate Change Risk Assessment Evidence Report, Committee on Climate Change, 2017:** The UK Government is required under the 2008 Climate Change Act to publish a UK-wide Climate Change Risk Assessment (CCRA) every five years, which assesses ‘the risks for the United Kingdom from the current and predicted impacts of climate change’. For this the government asked the UK-based independent Committee on Climate Change to produce an evidence report setting out the latest evidence on the risks and opportunities to the UK from climate change. The report highlights the type of written reportage that such committees can produce, to advice and guide government-led action on climate change.



LAWMAKING AND LEGISLATION

Above all else, a parliamentarian is a lawmaker and the institution of parliament is responsible for legislating. This places parliamentarians at the centre of the climate change agenda. For any jurisdiction to make lasting progress on climate change, enshrined in the rule of law, it is through legislation. Comprehensive environmental and climate-related legislation also underpins a state's commitment to its climate change agenda.

In order to implement government policies and legislative programmes, there is a need to either introduce new legislation, or amend or repeal existing laws that in some way inhibit effective climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. There are various mechanisms to achieve legislative success of which parliamentarians can play an important role. In addition, constitutional reform can also be one of the most effective ways of enshrining climate policy in to a state's political system. The courts have also been another avenue by which to enshrine positive climate and environmental reform into law. Climate litigation has continued to expand across jurisdictions including in small states and is now viewed as an important tool to influence policy outcomes and corporate behaviour.

In small states and territories, limited human and financial resources can constrain the ability of parliamentarians to push the legislative agenda on climate change. Various smaller legislatures for example do not permit parliamentarians outside of government to propose laws. A lack of research on the legislative process across small states has prevented a comprehensive understanding of how legislating for climate change can be improved in smaller jurisdictions. This is important because of the questionable utility in the practice of transferring climate and environmental law from large to small jurisdictions. Finally, many small legislatures do not sit frequently which severely limits the time and resources that can be afforded to drafting, passing, scrutinising, amending and repealing legislation.

Considering the barriers faced by small states and the side-lined role of the legislature to the executive, it may seem impossible for parliamentarians to influence the legislative process around climate change. However, there are areas that provide an opportunity for legislative reform on climate change and importantly, for parliamentarians to play a substantive role as lawmakers.

WHAT MAKES GOOD LEGISLATION?

When it comes to what makes good climate law there is no one-size-fits-all solution. The complexity of climate policy and the variation among small states and territories, in terms of economic structure, the stage of development, exposure to climate risk, legislative culture, public opinion and political leadership, explains this. There are, however, key elements that may be considered good practice, and which can guide legislators in dealing with climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Information: Informed climate policy and legislation built on evidence, first and foremost requires data, on emissions, climate risks and the range of options that improve resilience to climate change. Greenhouse gas inventories consist of compulsory, timely and systematic reporting of greenhouse gas emissions from all sectors. Climate change risk assessments are similar data-driven tools but which can inform adaptation measures instead.

Targets: Clear targets on climate change adaptation and mitigation help to define a long-term trajectory for a legislative agenda on climate change as well as signalling genuine political intent to business and civil society. They can also be effective at countering the short-termism that democratic politics can favour, which is often at odds with effective action on climate change.

Laws and policies: Ultimately, the purpose of climate change legislation is to guide public policy. This is done, depending on the jurisdiction, either through a framework law or policy, or in a set of laws, regulations, decrees or binding plans. A legislative framework can serve as a comprehensive foundation for climate change policy, dealing with multiple aspects of climate change adaptation or mitigation in an overarching manner.

Post-legislative scrutiny: Finally, it is important to note that legislation is often just the beginning of the process in reform. The greater challenge is in the implementation of legislation. It is therefore crucial to have robust scrutiny embedded into the law in order to monitor and evaluate its progress. Institutional solutions which secure an important role for parliamentarians in the legislative process and prevent over dominance of the executive or relevant ministries provide are the best way to ensure that progressive climate-related legislation can succeed.

NEXT STEPS FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

- ▶ **Legislative scrutiny:** A typical stage for a parliamentarian to influence legislation would be after a bill has been laid. Although differing across jurisdictions, the legislative process will provide parliamentarians with different opportunities to scrutinise and ultimately influence a piece of climate-related legislation. Bills often pass different stages, or readings, which give parliamentarians varying degrees of influence to scrutinise the bill, either in the chamber or relevant committee. Pre-legislative scrutiny can also be an effective point to scrutinise climate-related legislation if a parliamentarian is on the relevant committee that examines the early draft of a bill. With climate change a cross-sectoral issue, there are abundant laws with potentially positive or negative impacts on the environment that would benefit from effective scrutiny.
- ▶ **Private bills:** Many parliaments enable backbench parliamentarians to propose legislation and can provide an opportunity for them to put their ideas to the forefront of the agenda. In reality however, such bills often have little time allocated to them in parliament and lack the required drafting support. They are also beholden to the decisions of the executive. In practice their chance of success is small. Their utility however is in bringing visibility and attention to certain issues, such as climate change and its impact on communities. Parliamentarians can build broad support behind a bill, from within the chamber and with external actors which can improve its likelihood of success. The bill, or aspects of it, may even be co-opted by the government at a later date as its own legislation – a process which parliamentarians should still regard as a win.



- ▶ **Amendments:** Virtually all major climate change legislation is formulated by the executive. In addition, parliamentarians in small states rarely have the required staff and resources to put forward large-scale bills. Therefore, reviewing existing semi-related legislation, rejecting aspects of it and proposing amendments, can be a useful alternative. Governments do not like to have their bills defeated or amended, therefore allowing them credit for the amendment lets the government save face but still succeed in having the amendment included.
- ▶ **Legislative programme:** In most states a legislative programme exists, which is generally prepared by the Cabinet Office, with input from ministries. Parliamentarians often have a chance to debate the programme at the beginning of a parliamentary session and can be a good opportunity to raise climate change and its status within the programme. In small states however this practice does not always prevail. Governments of small states should consider the inclusion of a legislative programme which would facilitate the legislative process and ensure due attention and scrutiny is afforded to climate change.
- ▶ **International agreements:** Parliamentarians also play a role in ratifying international agreements on climate change. Passing national legislation in line with international agreements often makes ratification easier, but also the reverse is true - national legislation can be helped through by the conversion of international policies and agreements. The Paris Agreement's flexible legal character, by emphasising states' role in setting their own targets and pledges, puts a greater focus on the role of national legislation - lending greater weight to this process.
- ▶ **Impact and assessment studies:** Even if there is no explicit climate change legislation put forward by the executive, parliament can take steps to make other new legislation more climate resilient by suggesting relevant impact and assessment studies, ensuring that climate change is taken into serious consideration and influences the design of new and amended legislation.
- ▶ **Engage experts and stakeholders:** Any piece of legislation or regulatory framework related to climate change can be enriched by engaging a broader range of stakeholders. Environmental scientists, engineers, NGO representatives and lawyers can all contribute expertise and guidance from their own respective field and ensure that legislation has maximum impact to all those likely to be touched by it. As climate litigation becomes more frequent, parliamentarians can work alongside NGOs, citizens and corporations who are largely the ones responsible for bringing cases against the government. Although many cases fail to succeed their growing presence will undoubtedly make both governments and corporations more conscious of climate change in their agendas.

CASE STUDY: PRIVATE MEMBER'S MOTION DRIVES ENERGY POLICY IN THE CAYMAN ISLANDS

In 2016, the Legislative Assembly of the Cayman Islands decided to revamp its draft national energy plan to include far more ambitious targets on adoption of renewable energy. This was driven by a private member's motion from independent MLA, Winston Connolly, which was unanimously backed by legislators. The motion called for the revitalisation and finalisation of the Cayman Island's energy plan, which had previously remained in draft form for several years. After the motion passed, a National Energy Policy Review Committee was assembled, which included parliamentarians, as well as representatives from energy organisations. It then became policy barely 12 months from the motion being raised.

The case highlights how legislation that has previously been drafted or conceptualised can sit dormant and even vanish due to a lack of political will. The actions of a parliamentarian alongside various allies succeeded in revitalising and improving upon a piece of legislation. The motion built momentum by gaining the support of a range of stakeholders, largely through articulating the new opportunities that would emerge from the plan, therefore overcoming potential opposition, including from influential utilities companies. The policy set the Cayman Islands on a path to a progressive energy policy, setting a positive example to other nations in addition to becoming economically better off by relying less reliant on fossil fuels.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- ▶ **The Global Climate Legislation Study:** The Climate Legislation Study covers over 850 national laws and policies directly related to climate change mitigation and adaptation. Launched in 2010, the study currently covers 99 jurisdictions, which, taken together, produce 93 per cent of global emissions. The database includes 46 of the world's top 50 emitters. The climate legislation database that underpins the study is updated regularly, is fully searchable and results are downloadable. The study also includes 99 detailed country chapters including numerous small states, latest developments, related research publications, and information about events.
- ▶ **Environmental Lawmaking and Oversight for Sustainable Development, UNEP, 2016:** The guide focuses on two key questions: how are the important functions of parliamentary lawmaking and oversight being reshaped in the post-2015 era of sustainable development; how can legislators and parliamentarians do their part to ensure that the SDGs and other commitments are achieved? The scope of the Guide includes four core activity areas: (1) environmental lawmaking for sustainable development; (2) guiding and oversight of relevant government decision-making; (3) allocation of resources for environmental assets and governance; and (4) building of collaborations, contacts and capacity spanning a wide range of constituents and stakeholders.

REPRESENTATION

As highlighted, a parliamentarian's work broadly comes under three functions. However, beyond this, there is a large degree of ambiguity as to the definition of their role. Although there are rules, standards and procedures which parliamentarians are bound to follow, in addition to different political dynamics which may determine behaviour, they also have freedom to define what type of parliamentarian they are or wish to be. This is no more evident than when the role takes parliamentarians outside the confines of parliament and as representatives of the people.

The link between parliamentarians and the citizenry should be dynamic - between representative and represented whereby the needs and concerns of citizens are listened to and parliamentarians are able to inform and educate the people of climate-related action that affects them. This often requires balancing technical and complex lawmaking processes with the need to promote constituent participation. In small states where citizens are directly affected by the challenges of climate change on a day-to-day basis, their input is crucial to formulating effective climate responses. The informal influence and authority that comes from being a parliamentarian can also be used to effect in building support for policy responses to climate change.

The reciprocal relationship between parliamentarian and the people means that listening is essential. Parliamentarians should employ a range of methods that can provide accurate and representative views of the constituents and communities they represent. This can include holding constituency surgeries, visiting door steps or distributing petitions. Likewise, parliamentarians also have the ability to educate, campaign and advocate on climate change. The large networks, allies and collaborators, both formal and informal that a parliamentarian builds up over their career can be used to raise awareness and influence policy at the local and national level.

NEXT STEPS FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

- ▶ **Communication:** Effective communication is an essential prerequisite if lawmakers are to get buy-in from citizens for climate change policies. This task may be made easier in small states where the challenges faced are more immediate, making populations more receptive to urgent action than in more developed countries where climate change can often seem like a remote problem. Climate change legislation could benefit by explicitly outlining ways in which the law will be communicated to citizens. Policy responses also have a greater likelihood of success if they are framed as mutually beneficial endeavours. Objectives that on the surface may have little relevance to climate change can be framed in a way to enhance climate resilience, for example by connecting them with tangible economic and social benefits. Climate change is an issue that goes beyond just the environment and parliamentarians should articulate effectively the far-reaching social, political and economic impacts, as well as the benefits of adaptation and mitigation efforts.
- ▶ **Working with stakeholders:** Climate change policy affects all in society. This means that the legislative process must be participatory and inclusive. Parliamentarians not only need to engage with their constituents, but the full spectrum of stakeholders who have a share in its outcomes and who could add valuable insights in the process. This includes, international organisations, private sector, multilateral donors, aid agencies and civil society organisations. Parliamentarians with their range of contacts are in a strong position to get “on the ground” knowledge of how climate change legislation, or lack thereof, is affecting them. Find out what events are initiatives happening in constituencies. Visit local schools, community centres and churches to socialise with constituents and advocate the science and necessity for urgent climate change action. Other potential agents of change in the climate change agenda of small states are also diasporas who can act as important and influential group to lobby their host country.
- ▶ **Using a platform:** As an important conduit between government, parliament and the citizenry, parliamentarians are in the enviable position to influence public opinion behind climate action through use their personal communication channels, public information campaigns, personal statements and social media. They can also encourage parliament and relevant committees to publish findings with the public and foster greater openness between the decision-makers and citizens.
- ▶ **Community leaders:** Working alongside leaders of local communities will not only help facilitate the introduction of environmental policies and initiatives, through their influence, but channel local knowledge to national level deliberations. It is also not a given that what local communities deem important coincides with that which comes out of the scientific consensus. It is the parliamentarian’s job to strike a balance, through a collaborative course of action that considers climate action that would benefit local areas with national-level policy.

- ▶ **Leading by example:** Parliamentarians can adopt climate-friendly practices in their own personal and professional life to set an example to their constituents. Promoting the use 'green' policies and practices in parliament, such as through recycling and energy use can provide the inspiration for others to follow.
- ▶ **Thinking long-term:** As discussed, effective climate change action can only succeed when viewed through a long-term trajectory. Parliamentarians should avoid short-term gains during political cycles but instead build sustainability into their approach. By doing this, parliamentarians can ensure that there are future generations who can contribute to the climate change agenda beyond the life of a parliamentary term.



CASE STUDY: JERSEY'S PARTICIPATORY APPROACH TO ITS NEW CARBON NEUTRAL STRATEGY

Whilst Jersey has recognised that its emissions are small, the island has been determined to show leadership and help chart the course to a more sustainable future. To that end, a new carbon neutral strategy which was lodged in the States Assembly, was supported by the input from a range of stakeholders from government, business, and citizens, playing a part in the development and delivery of the strategy. As a small, connected community, Jersey prioritised a participatory approach that involved a broad range of groups, including families, communities, parishes and businesses with the aim firstly to increase the likelihood of the strategy's success but also to increase a sense of empowerment across the island community.

To ensure early implementation of the carbon neutral strategy, Jersey's decision-making body, the Council of Ministers, proposed to create a Climate Emergency Fund. The fund supports new policies in a range of areas including island transport and travel, investment for electric and low-carbon vehicles and new cycling and walking infrastructure.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- ▶ **Community Protocols for Environmental Sustainability: A Guide for Policymakers, UNEP, 2013:** This guide has been written to help policymakers and other stakeholders understand what community protocols are, why they are important, and how they can support their development and recognition within formal environmental legal and policy frameworks. It is also written for all those interested in learning about community protocols, including indigenous peoples and their communities and other local communities (ILCs), non-governmental organisations (NGOs), researchers, industry, and those working in government at the local, national and international levels.
- ▶ **Community Adaptation Action Planning:** This process formulated by CARE International details a guide to the planning process for engaging community-level adaptation. The guide brings local stakeholders together in a learning process that builds adaptive capacity, while also resulting in tangible plans for communities to reduce their vulnerability to climate change over time. The community adaptation action planning approach is intuitive and practical by breaking down the process into seven steps. While local communities are at the centre of this process, a focus on the linkages between community-level activities and other levels, including local government development processes and broader systems and policies, are also present in the process.

PARTNERSHIPS, COOPERATION AND SUPPORT

As small states whose contribution to the global greenhouse gas emissions is negligible, in order to make a difference, small states should also seek to focus both on the domestic and international agenda. Importantly, small states have an important role to play in influencing progress at the international level, particularly towards those most responsible, i.e. the major powers. Parliamentarians therefore can use their platform, networks and the opportunities afforded to them to reach out beyond the confines of their legislature and, in collaboration with other stakeholders, including fellow small states and territories, be proactive on the international stage.

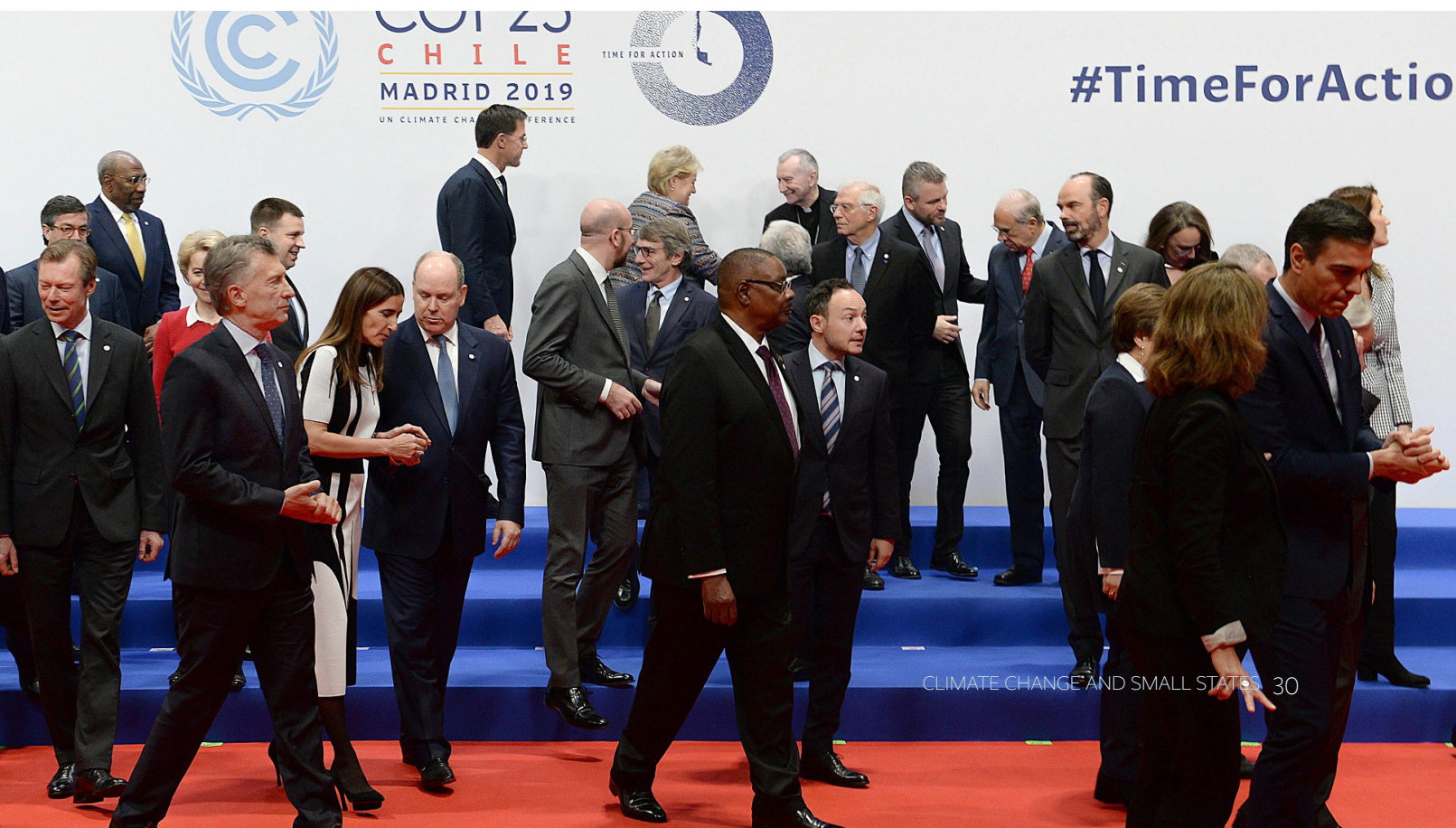
Parliamentarians can and have been important stakeholders in intergovernmental meetings and negotiations around climate change. Furthermore, parliamentarians also have a role to play in working with a range of stakeholders, including members states, investors and international organisations to access financing for climate change adaptation and mitigation. As the previous sections have highlighted, the perennial resource constraints that many small states and territories face can hinder progress on climate change, no matter how much effort or innovation is employed by their governments and parliaments. The proceeding section will outline the process and the role parliamentarians play in these two important areas – accessing financing for climate change adaptation and mitigation and working together at the international level to influence the climate change agenda.

INTERNATIONAL LEADERSHIP

In addition to working domestically, parliamentarians can also be diplomats, use their position to engage an international audience, and show leadership to other states, particularly those most responsible for global greenhouse gas emissions.

Most conventional understandings of international relations would conclude that small states have little prospect of influencing the global climate change agenda. Lacking recourse to “hard power” can potentially preclude them from exerting influence on issues that require far-reaching change. The diversity of small states is also another limiting factor that would traditionally prohibit effective collective bargaining. Yet despite this, small states have managed to show disproportionate influence on the global stage. Although much work is to be done to achieve the level of change required to meet globally agreed targets, small states have successfully formed a unified voice during the complex climate change negotiations and succeeded in seeing their concerns and priorities incorporated into legally binding conventions.

The following provides a guide for different narratives and strategies that small states can adopt in order to give them greater influence on the international stage. An effective narrative will work in parallel with an effective leadership strategy. Then, after identifying relevant allies and partners, small states can form a negotiating and lobbying framework to affect change in the international arena.



Focus on the root causes: For small states to be effective on the world stage, it is important that the narrative they pursue gets to the root causes of climate change and climate vulnerability. No small task! This involves challenging the interests of some of the world's largest and most powerful nations. One way this is done is overemphasising the need for aid and humanitarian assistance for recovery and resilience efforts in small states whilst reducing emphasis on the reasons which have compounded their vulnerability and inability to act. Therefore, small states need to work in unison to change the narrative and hold governments in high CO2 emitting countries to account.

Polluter pays principle: Another way to shift the narrative could be to argue for a “polluter pays” principle. This is the practice where high emitters bear the costs of compensating the damage to human health and the environment. The polluter pays principle can be applied through a so-called carbon price. This imposes a charge on the emission of greenhouse gases equivalent to the corresponding potential cost caused through future climate change – thus forcing emitters to internalise the cost of pollution. Cementing this concept into international norms, climate change commitments and legal frameworks would be a serious attempt to force the largest emitters towards a low carbon economy – combatting the root causes of climate change.

Moral leadership: Most countries, even the most powerful, need some form of legitimacy to have sufficient support. Despite the lack of conventional power, small states have succeeded by using leadership strategies of a moral nature – providing an alternative to mainstream discourses on climate change action, such as economic ones pushed by the United States and China. Many small states showed moral power by being among the first to ratify climate change agreements and set ambitious mitigation plans, influencing other countries to follow. Importantly small states also used morality to build coalitions among states and weaken with different discourses, positions and interests. They exploited their vulnerable position and to compensate their lack of hard power, developed discourses around concepts of “vulnerability”, “innocent victims”, climate justice, the urgency of the environmental problem and their threat to survival. They used this position on as many negotiation platforms as possible.

Focus on the process: Because of the lack of hard power, small states need to make use of all potential tools at their disposal, including placing importance on the intricacies of negotiations. For example, making use of opportune moments in the negotiating processes can bear big advantages. First-mover advantage during previous negotiations helped to ensure that issues important to small states were part of the discussion and given due consideration. In this sense, small states need to employ entrepreneurial leadership - employing skilful diplomatic tactics, such as arranging meetings and events outside of formal negotiations.

Third parties: Beyond states, engaging other allies can strengthen small states' positions. NGOs can provide not only technical information, but also legal advice. The scientific community can provide robust and credible arguments to compliment more emotional argumentation. Such partnerships can boost the strength of small states at the negotiating table and plug the expertise and resource gap.

INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION

Although the UNFCCC is the main multilateral forum on climate change, there are an increasing number of actors and avenues that provide an opportunity to drive action. Parliamentarians should be aware of this opening up of the political space and seek ways to engage with the range of stakeholders to further progress at the domestic and international level.

States: States can send trend-setting signals in key areas, but they often lack the capacity and/or the political will to implement and enforce efficient climate policies. Their actions can also have negative ripple effects, if they pursue the wrong courses of action. Small states are in a position to set examples to the rest of world about how positive policies and measures can be implemented nationwide, as well working together on the international stage to lobby the larger emitters. However greater emphasis must be placed in sharing successful case studies and impacts.

Market actors: Climate change cannot be successfully tackled without changing the behaviour of businesses and investors in key sectors such as energy, transport, agriculture and infrastructure. The Paris Agreement sent an important signal to investors, namely the long-term global commitment to shift to a net-zero carbon economy. In the short term, investors will react to more immediate policies and incentives, such as carbon taxes, as well as changing consumer preferences.

Civil society: Civil society organisations play an important role in monitoring business action and ensuring that climate change policies are accountable to the public. Although the number of NGOs and similar organisations engaged in climate change action is growing and securing more important roles at multilateral climate change conferences, they are still excluded from some negotiating sessions.

Multilateral bodies: The Paris Agreement also created momentum for climate action in other multilateral institutions and bodies previously less invested in climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. Parliamentarians will find more opportunities to work alongside such bodies, to knowledge share and pool efforts.

Sub- and non-state actors: Local governments and cities are becoming more visible actors in the climate change agenda, and many of them will continue or even step up their efforts to fight climate change. As important links between government and the citizenry parliamentarians play an important role.

Inter-parliamentary networks: As highlighted, influencing the international climate change agenda, does not always have to be the purview of the government. Parliamentarians should exploit their membership with inter-parliamentary networks, such as the Inter-Parliamentary Union and the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association to gain access to important international conferences and meetings to further their agenda in partnership with fellow parliamentarians.

NEXT STEPS FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

- ▶ **Request:** Parliamentarians can request that official national delegations taking part in international discussions and negotiations are opened for qualified parliamentary representatives, for example the Chair of the Foreign Affairs Committee.
- ▶ **Reflect and move forward:** Explore areas of future progress for future negotiations and feed back to government and national channels. This can include integrating further with other small state related coalitions such as the Climate Vulnerable Forum and High Ambitions Coalition; use results of the IPCC report (see section 1) to push for greater action and ambition; and to continue pressuring international community to follow through with implementation of Paris agreement.
- ▶ **Use parliamentary groupings:** Engage parliamentary networks and regional parliaments in order to attend sessions of the Conference of the Parties (COP) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and other climate meetings to further push for climate change action. Parliamentary meetings often take place in conjunction to such events can offer parliamentarians an opportunity to obtain first-hand information on the key issues and interact with government negotiators directly involved in the decision-making process.



CASE STUDY: AOSIS AND THE PARIS AGREEMENT

The role of the Alliance of Small Island States during climate change negotiations at the Conference to the Parties (COP) Summit which culminated in the Paris Agreement, exemplifies how the strategies and approaches discussed above lead to successful outcomes for small states in pushing their climate change agenda on the global stage.

AOSIS' primary goal was to ensure implementation of the more ambitious plan of the Paris Agreement, i.e. keeping temperature rises at 1.5°C, rather than the current agreement about a maximum temperature rise of 2°C. In addition to this more recent battle to keep global temperature rises at 1.5°C above the pre-industrial level, AOSIS has previously demanded that the liability for global warming should be distributed differently among the countries that have emitted CO₂ and thus contributed to the greenhouse effect, something akin to a carbon tax. Other issues argued for by AOSIS include, contestation over the Agreement's lack of sanctions, subsidies for new green technology, coalition formation (particularly with large countries like China) and climate refugees.

Just how successful were AOSIS? Framing their goals both through processes and outcomes, we can see that they achieved considerable and measurable success. For the former, their demands such as for a carbon tax did feature in the debate about climate policy in the UN and the group successfully brought the issue to public attention. It did not however result in any actual agreements that included this aspect. Their drive to set a legally binding temperature rise limit of 1.5C did not succeed, however, verbal promises were made to attempt this and results of the compromised were certainly influenced by AOSIS' ambitious targets.

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE CHANGE FRAMEWORK

Climate change is global in nature and impacts the viability of sustainable social and economic growth worldwide. It is not surprising then that a collection of agreements and commitments have been brought to life. This collective action together form an overarching framework coined the 'post-2015' era for the environment and sustainable development. Although addressing development more broadly, the framework also encompasses agreements specific to climate change, disaster risk reduction and financing for environmental action.

- ▶ **Sustainable Development Goals:** Adopted in September 2015, the 17 Sustainable Development Goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development represent an ambitious agenda to tackle poverty, inequality and climate change. Although expansive in scope, environmental management features in a majority of the goals, while specific reference is also made to small states. The goals also emphasise national action and the participation of all countries in taking direct responsibility for implementing the goals. With the goals not being legally binding, parliaments play an important role in ensuring national governments are working towards them.
- ▶ **Paris Agreement on Climate Change:** Emerging from the Conference of the Parties (COP) meeting in Paris, 2015, the Paris Agreement is a global agreement on climate change, unprecedented in scale and ambition. It brings all nations into a common cause for climate action, involving an action plan to limit global warming 'well below' 2°C and to strengthen the ability of countries to deal with climate change. Central to the Agreement are the requirement of "Nationally Determined Contributions" (NDCs) - national climate targets by all parties to the Agreement, in line with national objectives and priorities. The agreement requires all parties to report regularly on their emissions and implementation efforts.
- ▶ **Addis Ababa Action Agenda:** Reached at the United Nations Third International Conference on Financing for Development, in Addis Ababa in July 2015, this agreement sets out an ambitious agenda to overhaul global finance practices and generate investments for tackling a range of social, economic and environmental challenges. The agreement covers a detailed range of finance measures, including improving domestic resource mobilisation, alignment of private investment with sustainable development and a mechanism to facilitate financing for new technologies for developing countries.
- ▶ **Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction:** Adopted by UN Member States on 18 March 2015, the Sendai Framework is a 15-year, voluntary non-binding agreement which recognises that the state has the primary role to reduce disaster risk but that responsibility should be shared with other stakeholders including local government and the private sector. The framework works towards the substantial reduction of disaster risk and losses in lives, livelihoods and health and in the economic, physical, social, cultural and environmental assets of persons, businesses, communities and countries. The framework also includes practical guidance to support implementation and ensure engagement by all stakeholders.
- ▶ **Convention on Biological Diversity and Aichi Targets:** Coming into force in December 1993, the Convention on Biological Diversity is an international treaty that seeks to address threats to biodiversity and ecosystem services, including from climate change. It does this through a range of actions, such as scientific assessments, the transfer of technologies and good practices, and the involvement of a range of stakeholders, including local community leaders, NGOs and the business community. Parties to the convention agreed to The Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2021 – a ten-year framework for action by all countries to save biodiversity and enhance its benefits for the people.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- ▶ **Toolkit for UN Climate Change Negotiations, IIED, 2016:** UN climate negotiations and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) process is notoriously complex. This toolkit has thus been written to help new delegates, from the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), navigate the session. Focusing on the processes involved, it offers some practical ‘insider’ tips for getting through the negotiating days. There’s no ‘right’ way to use this toolkit. Skip from section to section or go through it from beginning to end. It is however suggested that the toolkit is used alongside its sister publication: ‘Climate negotiations terminology: the pocket guide’. The pocket guide explains and will help readers apply the specialist language of the UNFCCC negotiations.
- ▶ **Legal Response Initiative (LRI):** The international negotiations under the UNFCCC are amongst the most complex multilateral law and policy making process ever. Industrialised nations can afford huge teams of dedicated, specialist lawyers giving them an advantage over less developed countries that can’t afford the same, and are often most at threat from climate change. The Legal Response Initiative seeks to create a more level playing field between actors in the climate change negotiations. The LRI was set up in mid-2009 by lawyers from Oxfam GB and WWF-UK, and since 2009, has attended all sessions of the Conference of the Parties and intersessional meetings. The LRI works through a network of practicing lawyers and academics in different jurisdictions who give hands-on assistance during meetings, draft legal opinions or build the capacity of lawyers and negotiators from developing countries. Their lawyers prepare advice and briefing papers, which are then made available to those nations who are in need of assistance via an online database.

ACCESS TO CLIMATE FINANCE

Climate Finance refers to local, national or transnational financing—drawn from public, private and alternative sources of financing—that seeks to support mitigation and adaptation actions addressing climate change. The growth in funding options for developing countries and small states has grown dramatically over recent years. Commitments entrenched in the international climate change architecture reflect the need to plug the gap between the adaptation and mitigation action required and the financial resources available – particularly in small states. **With the World Bank projected that the costs for adapting to 2C warmer world between 2010 and 2050 would range from US\$70 billion to more than US\$100 billion per annum, this funding is urgently required.** Although funding has increased for small states, several challenges exist for small states accessing and coordinating climate finance:

- ▶ Small states can often struggle to meet the complex and bureaucratic requirements for funding. Limited digital infrastructure and access to data, also important prerequisites for robust climate finance proposal and reporting, are also prohibitive factors.
- ▶ The increase in funding channels has contributed to a disjointed landscape causing confusion. The complexity has also made it more difficult to monitor, report and verify climate finance.
- ▶ The dominant climate finance modalities disburse funds through intermediary agencies and so does not fall under the management of the national budget. Not only does this distort and complicate the budget process but also means climate funding often avoids the necessary parliamentary oversight and scrutiny.

WHERE DOES FUNDING COME FROM?

- ▶ **Green Climate Fund (GCF)**: Created by the UNFCCC in 2010, the GCF is currently the largest multilateral climate fund assisting those countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change, including SIDS in adaptation and mitigation. The Fund has a direct access process which allows funding to go directly to national and sub-national organisations rather than just through international intermediaries.
- ▶ **Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub**: The primary aim of the Hub is to help small and vulnerable countries access international sources of climate finance to meet their priority adaptation and mitigation needs and realise their sustainable development goals. The delivery mechanism for the Hub involves the placement of long-term climate finance experts in beneficiary countries and regional organisations to build capacity for enhanced access and effective use of private and public climate finance resources.
- ▶ **The Adaptation Fund (AF)**: The Adaptation Fund finances adaptation projects and programmes to communities in countries vulnerable to climate change. Created under the Kyoto Protocol, it has since 2010, committed US\$ 720 million to adaptation efforts in over 100 projects.
- ▶ **Climate Investment Funds (CIFs)**: The Climate Investment Funds provide support to countries in urgent need of resources to adapt and mitigate to climate change. Since 2008, 14 donor countries have contributed over US\$8 billion in support. These resources are then dispersed through multilateral development banks (MDBs) as grants or concessional loans.
- ▶ **Private Climate Finance**: This has been on the increase in recognition of the financing shortfall from relying solely on public money. Governments can mobilise finance from private investors from a range of mechanisms including equity, debt, grants and guarantees. These can be part of a government's funding base or to support a specific climate change initiative.

FUNDING FOR ADAPTATION

One important caveat for small states in the finance architecture is that it is heavily skewed in favour of finance for mitigation actions. This is partly because of the greater difficulty in accurately costing for adaptation measures as opposed to mitigation. The latter being much more quantifiable and thus making it a more attractive prospect for investors and providers of finance.

The provision of adaptation financing for small states has been increasing in importance on the international climate change agenda over the years. Given the high cost of adaptation and the financial constraints faced by small states, and its greater urgency over mitigation, many have pursued international adaptation financing options to meet adaptation costs and ease domestic constraints. Reflective of this, the Alliance of Small Island States also made this a pillar of their objective in international climate change negotiations, calling for 'scaled-up, new, additional, and predictable financial resources in order to adequately adapt to climate change.

NEXT STEPS FOR PARLIAMENTARIANS

- ▶ **Assess financial needs for effective action:** Small state parliamentarians can play a vital role in unlocking national and international financial, technical and human resources for climate change adaptation and mitigation. It is therefore important for parliamentarians to first assess the financial needs of their jurisdictions and to understand how to mobilise financial resources nationally and internationally.
- ▶ **Influence the State Budget:** In order to assess how much money is provided and available on a national level, parliamentarians can influence the national budget directly or indirectly, ensuring that government channels adequate funding into climate change adaptation and mitigation activities. If parliamentarians feel that this is not being done, they need to make suitable parliamentary interventions. Members may move an amendment on the budget, which even if unsuccessful, can raise attention to climate issues. Indirectly, they can work with allies inside and outside parliaments, for example through an all-party caucus or environmental organisation to make sure public funds go to appropriate climate change measures.
- ▶ **Scrutinise:** parliamentarians can use the committee system to scrutinise government expenditures, such as through the Public Accounts Committee. Further work can be conducted by the Auditor-General and Supreme Audit Institutions who can carry out audits of government-led climate change measures. These can be fed back to parliament to strengthen the scrutiny process.
- ▶ **Link adaptation to the economy:** In an environment of limited financial resources, investment in necessary adaptation measures must inevitably compete with other much-needed investments in health care, education, infrastructure and so on. For these reasons it is especially important to consider how such other investments and expenditures can be as climate-friendly as possible. Examples include integrating climate projections in the design of new infrastructure projects, such as by avoiding future flood-prone areas and investing in climate-resilient crops to meet growing food requirements. This will work favourably on the use of resources and increase the likelihood of adaptation related action in state budgets and government spending plans.
- ▶ **Understand the global finance architecture:** Once national resources are known and scrutinised, parliamentarians must also be aware of international funding mechanisms and whether the government is using them adequately. To that end, they must stay abreast of the global climate finance architecture and the concurrent enabling international commitments. On a constituency level, parliamentarians need pay close attention to the projects of local agencies in their communities and lobby for funding with the government and/or international stakeholders if the activity shows promise.

CASE STUDY: FIJI'S GREEN BOND

The first emerging market Sovereign Green Bond, it raised 100 million Fijian dollars in support of its climate change adaptation and mitigation efforts. This provides an innovative example of diversified funding for climate action. Green bonds are fixed income, liquid financial instruments that are used to finance a range of environmental projects.

The Bond was helped realised with technical assistance from the World Bank and the International Finance Corporation, a member of the World Bank Group focusing on the private sector. The green Bond followed the internationally developed Green Bond Principle. The Bond focuses primarily on investments that build resilience against the impacts of climate change. The Bond also supports Fiji's commitments to achieve 100% renewable energy and reduce its CO2 emissions in the energy sector by 30% by 2030.

FURTHER RESOURCES

- ▶ **UNDP/World Bank Climate Finance Options Platform**: The platform provides a comprehensive, web-based knowledge systems on guides, tools and funding sources around climate finance for developing countries. In-depth profiles of funding sources, examples of successful cases and a library of resources enable better-informed decision-making around climate finance.
- ▶ **ODI Climate Finance Fundamentals**: ODI Climate Finance Fundamentals is a series of short, introductory briefings on various aspects of climate finance aimed to develop a better understanding of the quantity and quality of financial flows going to developing countries, including small states.



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Published by the Commonwealth Parliamentary Association (CPA), February 2020.
Registered Charity Number 263147.

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