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PACIFIC YOUTHS TO TOUR JAPAN UNDER NEW PROJECT

(left - right): Pro Chancellor & Chair of Council, Mr Ikbal Jannif, Ambassador of Japan to Fiji, H.E. Mr Eiichi Oshima, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra and the Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration & Regional Campuses), Dr Esther Williams at the launch of the Kizuna project.

The University of the South Pacific in partnership with the Government of Japan launched a new project aimed at further promoting people-to-people exchange and better mutual understanding between Japanese and Pacific youths.

The new initiative called the Kizuna project was launched at the Multi-Purpose Theatre located at the University's Laucala Campus in Suva.

Kizuna which means '*Bonds of Friendship*' is a unique project designed to help build connections between the youths of Japan and the youths of 14 Pacific Island Countries (PICs). Under this project, high school and university students from around the region will be provided with fully-funded two-week study tours to Japan.

The project which was launched on 6 July 2012, was announced by the Government of Japan at the sixth Pacific Islands Leaders Meeting in Okinawa, Japan in May earlier this year.

During the launch, His Excellency Mr Eiichi Oshima, Ambassador of Japan to Fiji, said that those participating in the project will get first-hand experience of Japan's culture and environment through several exchange events to schools and local communities.

Participants will also get to visit the disaster-affected areas by the Great East Japan Earthquake that occurred last year, he continued.

"It is hoped that this project will lead to building closer ties between Pacific youths and the people of Japan," the Ambassador highlighted.

H.E. Mr Eiichi Oshima said that the Government and people of Japan look forward to welcoming Pacific youths in their country and is confident that such an experience in Japan would furnish the youths in many senses.

He acknowledged USP as the "perfect organisation to manage this project, with excellent management and coordination with its campuses, as well as its satellite communication tools for distance learning."

While USP and Japan have enjoyed excellent relationship and cooperation over the decades, the Ambassador stated that the project marks the beginning of yet a new type of cooperation between USP and Japan, which directly concerns the development of youths in the region.

USP will play a critical role in the project through the selection of 322 participants from 14 PICs out of which 11 are the University's member countries.

These 14 PICs include Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Each country group consisting of 22 students and one adult supervisor will travel to Japan at different times from late August to November 2012.

In his remarks, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra said that the significance of this project is to foster a deep and meaningful relationship between the PICs and Japan.

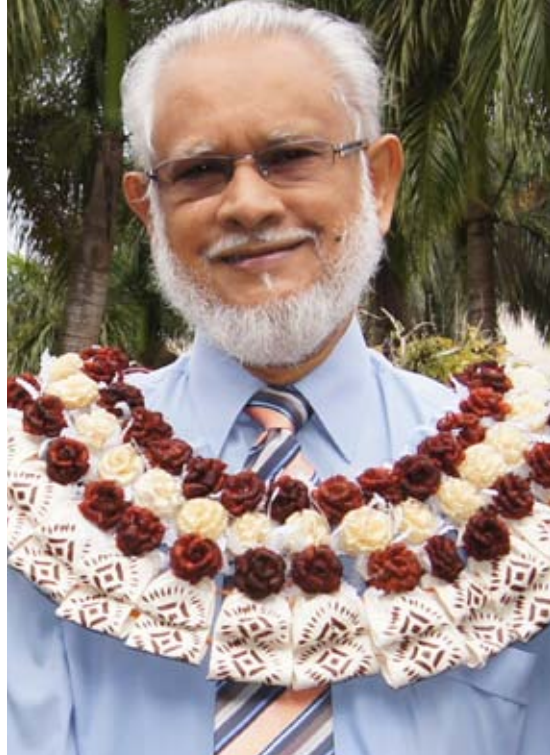
Professor Chandra described the funding of over F\$5.5million for the project by the Japanese Government, as a substantial contribution to the youths of the region.

"The Kizuna project is another example of the extensive and long-standing assistance to the Pacific and to USP by the Government and the people of Japan," he stated.

Professor Chandra explained that the USP campus directors will be assisting with the selection of students from their respective countries as well as assistance will be provided by the University's Pacific Centre for Sustainable Development and Environment In-Country Coordinators based in FSM, Palau and PNG.

The launch was attended by representatives from government, donor partners, diplomatic missions and secondary schools.

For more information: www.usp.ac.fj/kizuna/



NEW PRO-CHANCELLOR

The University of the South Pacific accorded a formal welcome to the new Pro-Chancellor of the University, Mr. Ikbāl Jannif at its Laucala Campus in Suva on 13 July 2012.

Mr. Jannif's appointment as the new Pro-Chancellor and Chair of the USP Council was made at the recent 74th USP Council Meeting which was held in Vanuatu on 16 - 17 May 2012.

Mr. Jannif, who has served as the Deputy Chair of Council since 2007 and Chair of the University's Audit and Risk Committee, takes over from the former Pro-Chancellor and Chair of Council, Honourable Fiamē N. Mata'afa, Minister for Justice, Samoa.

In welcoming the new Pro-Chancellor, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra, said that the University was delighted with Mr. Jannif's appointment.

"Today's occasion is to welcome Mr. Jannif formally and also for him to meet the members of the senior management team as well as a range of other senior staff members," he added.

The Vice-Chancellor said that Mr Jannif brings considerable understanding of the University because he has been the longest-serving member of the USP Council.

"We are confident that under your stewardship of the Council, the University will go forward very much in transforming itself from a good to an excellent university," Professor Chandra continued.

He assured the Pro-Chancellor that the management takes the role of governance seriously and will be fully supportive of the Council and its committees playing their role in directing the future of the University and monitoring the work that management does.

In thanking the Vice-Chancellor and his staff for the welcome, Mr. Jannif emphasized the importance of teamwork.

Addressing the members of the senior management team, Mr. Jannif said that sometimes there is so much emphasis on being "senior", that people forget that they are also a "team".

"If you cannot work as a team then you will not succeed. The challenge before us is how we operate as a team," he said.

The new Pro-Chancellor reiterated the importance of USP and added that the University is here to serve the region.

"Council expects the University to work closely with national tertiary institutions in the region," he said.

Mr. Jannif looks forward to working with the Vice-Chancellor and his staff in moving the University forward in better serving the region.



USP LAUNCHES NEW PUBLISHING ARM

The Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra gives his address at the launch of the USP Press. Also in picture, Deputy Vice-Chancellor (Administration and Regional Campuses), Dr Esther Williams (closest to camera), Managing Editor of the Press, Mr Jonathan Griffiths and Director of OCACPS, Professor Vilisoni Hereniko (far right).

The new publishing arm of the University of the South Pacific - USP Press - was launched with the release of five new books at the Laucala Campus in Suva on 19 July, 2012.

Two of the books - *Ancestry* by Albert Wendt and *Mystery Islands* by Tom Koppel were winners of the USP Press Prizes awarded last year following an international competition.

USP Press which is housed at the University's Oceania Centre for Arts, Culture and Pacific Studies (OCACPS), was formed this year to provide a publishing outlet for authors throughout the Pacific region and to create a publishing base for academic research undertaken at the University.

Speaking at the launch, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra said he was pleased with the efforts made towards the establishment of the USP Press.

He added that the University felt the need to create a genuine press that would provide a vehicle through which creative and rigorous research and views on public policy would be shared with the rest of the Pacific.

Professor Chandra elaborated that in the new USP Strategic Plan, the University has a very ambitious agenda to support the region in dealing with the major problems in a very focused manner which will synergise the efforts occurring across the University.

The Vice-Chancellor added that he is hoping that the USP Press will be a mechanism for supporting these aspirations and will become a much more active part of the academic community.

As the reputation of the University and its press depends on the rigor of the quality assurance system, Professor Chandra said he was pleased that USP Press had been setup with a framework that involves rigorous reviews of manuscripts.

In launching the University's publishing arm, Professor Chandra wished the USP Press a very bright future.

USP Press actively seeks partnerships with other institutions and publishers in a strategy to extend its reach and provide opportunities for content to be published on a broad cross section of topics.

The Managing Editor of the Press, Jonathan Griffiths, believes these relationships will enable USP Press to build a publishing network throughout the world.

"As well as to take advantage of USP's regional structure to source content, USP Press will look to increase its visibility and distribution reach by encouraging these partnerships," he said at the launch.

One of the USP Press launch titles is a full colour coffee table book called *Hidden Treasures*, highlighting key works and artists from the gallery's collection.

Professor Vilisoni Hereniko, Director of OCACPS, who was instrumental in the formation of USP Press, sees the book as a way to promote the work of local and regional artists.

"This handsome book contains some of the most beautiful paintings by contemporary artists living in Oceania today. We at the Oceania Centre are pleased to be able to publish and make available to the general public the best of these hidden treasures. This book is a 'must-have' for anyone interested in contemporary Oceanian art."

As well as producing printed books, USP Press will also offer a digital catalogue which will enable books to be distributed around the world in various digital formats, a strategy considered key to the success of the USP Press, according to Mr Griffiths.

"By offering books digitally we can publish significantly more content as the costs of production and distribution are reduced. The visibility and viability of any contemporary publisher is enhanced through digital publishing, but for a university publisher the benefits are even greater due to the large amount of valuable content that may otherwise remain unpublished or not distributed due to the economic restrictions."

"Creating a digital outlet for our content is vital to the growth, success, and credibility of USP Press," he continued.

The launch was well attended by members of the USP community, dignitaries, media representatives and invited guests.



REGIONAL GATHERING BRINGS TOGETHER PACIFIC LEADERS

(Front row:) The Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Honourable Willy Telavi (4th from left), the President of the Republic of Marshall Islands, H.E. Mr Christopher Loake (4th from left), the President of the Republic of Fiji, H.E. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau (5th from left) and the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra (2nd from right) with the conference participants.

A regional conference hosted by the University of the South Pacific has brought together four key leaders of Pacific Island states that have been instrumental in advocating for climate change issues in the Pacific at the global level.

The conference on Local Governments for Climate Change, which opened on 16 July, saw the heads of state from the Marshall Islands, Kiribati, Tuvalu and Fiji address participants over the course of the conference.

Held at the Multi-Purpose Theatre at the University's Laucala Campus in Suva, the three-day conference enabled practitioners, leading scholars and policy-makers in the field of local government and decentralization to share their experiences, research, ideas and knowledge on the present local government trend and culture in response to climate change.

In welcoming the delegates to the conference, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra said that most people attending the conference would share the view that climate change is a major problem facing Pacific Island Countries (PICs).

"For some countries, it poses an existential threat, while for all our countries, climate change will have significant negative consequences that will require substantial funding and determined and co-operative efforts to cope with successfully," he added.

Professor Chandra pointed out that the conference is a timely one as it follows up from the Rio+20 meeting which was held in Brazil in June this year.

During the opening of the conference, the President of the Republic of Fiji, His Excellency Ratu Epeli Nailatikau reiterated to those present that "climate change is upon us."

"Our island nations represent the warmer region of the globe and would significantly feel the brunt of climate change," he stated.

He said that Fiji was witnessing the first-ever sea level rise in the villages of Rewa and Bau.

While climate change continues to be a key development issue for small island states, the President believes that effective response requires a strong applied-science base.

"It will also require additional resources for investments in adaptive and mitigative action, and support for local governments, communities and sectors of the economy to shift to alternative forms of income generation."

Highlighting the work undertaken by the Government of Fiji in the area of climate change mitigation, H.E. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau said, following the launch of Fiji's first National Climate Change Policy this year, the country is now working towards strengthening its laws and policies to address this global phenomenon.

"Fiji is currently undergoing policy and institutional

reform that involves the updating of existing legislation and policies. The focus of the reform is to ensure sustainable economic and social development and thereby improve the livelihoods of all communities including local government in Fiji," he continued.

According to the President, one of the challenges faced by PICs is the need for effective coordination of all climate change related activities by all stakeholders, including the civil society.

"This is the reason why a conference like this one is critical for us in our efforts to synergise our commitments towards addressing the adverse impacts of climate change both at national and regional levels."

H.E. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau reminded participants that local governments often have the most direct relevance to the daily lives of people.

"For many people in the rural areas and outer islands, the word 'government' is instinctively a reference to local government rather than central government," he explained.

The conference was made possible with major funding from the European Union Global Climate Change Alliance (EU GCCA) project that is being administered by the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) at USP.

SYMPOSIUM LOOKS AT BANKING AND FINANCE IN FIJI

Banks, stock markets and the financial sector generally have been shown to importantly matter for a country's growth and development. Policies, frameworks, structures, practices and regulations concerning growth and development challenges were discussed in detail during a recent symposium on Banking and Finance in Fiji: Fostering Growth and Development.

The symposium, which was held on 2 July 2012, brought about extensive debates and discussions on the current structures and practices of banking and finance in Fiji and suggestions for further improvement.

Held at the University of the South Pacific's Laucala Campus in Suva, the symposium was jointly organised by the Oceania Development Network (ODN), South Pacific Studies Group of

the Griffith University in Australia and USP's School of Accounting and Finance.

In welcoming the participants, Professor Biman Prasad, Professor of Economics at USP and ODN Chair advocated the need for a better interface with researchers and policy makers.

He acknowledged the excellent research on Pacific undertaken by scholars from the Pacific working in institutions in Australia and New Zealand and called for greater collaboration between USP researchers and those in other institutions.

Professor Prasad also acknowledged the presence of senior Reserve Bank of Fiji officials, government representatives including the Permanent Secretary of Finance, Mr Filimoni Waqabaca and representatives of commercial banks and others from the statutory organisations and the private

sector.

During the symposium, papers were presented by John Vaught from the IMF, Dr Parmendra Sharma from Griffith University and Mr Neelesh Goundar from the School of Economics at USP and currently a PhD student in Economics at the Griffith University.

The respondents included Mr Esala Masitabua, Chief Manager Financial Institutions from the Reserve Bank of Fiji, Mr Ravendran Achari, Chief Financial Officer, Pacific Central Region from ANZ and Mr G.P. Mukherji, Chief Manager of the Bank of Baroda.

Other areas for research have been identified during the symposium and these will be pursued in a collaborative manner.



Members of the University Grants Committee.

UNIVERSITY GRANTS COMMITTEE HOLDS TRIENNIAL MEETING

The University Grants Committee (UGC) of the University of the South Pacific had its triennial meeting for 2013-2015 at the Laucala Campus in Suva from 16 - 20 July 2012.

The UGC met to discuss the University's Triennial Submission 2013-2015 and had the opportunity to consult a number of stakeholders including Fiji's Honourable Prime Minister and Minister of Finance, Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, Fiji's Honourable Minister of Education, Filipe Bole, the Vice-Chancellor and the senior management team, student representatives, staff unions, development partners, and campus directors.

During the discussions, UGC congratulated USP for its achievements to date and was pleased that the University is on track to achieve the objectives of the current Strategic Plan by the end of this year.

UGC also commended the University for the bold aspirations for the new triennium recognizing the University's desire of moving to an institution of

excellence. It agreed that tertiary participation is pivotal to member governments' social and economic development.

UGC was also mindful that being "bold" means more resources and elevated risks therefore it encouraged the University to strike a balance between relevance, quality and financial viability to ensure the long-term sustainability of USP.

UGC also noted that the University is the most successful regional institution in terms of its longstanding positive impact on all member countries and acknowledged the very important role that USP plays in fostering regional solidarity.

In terms of USP's recurrent funding for the new triennium, UGC commended the University for being mindful of the financial constraints faced by member governments. UGC accepted the University's proposal to keep member government contributions at the 2012 level of F\$47,946,462 for each of the three years of the triennium 2013-

2015. UGC noted that although the contributions of member governments remain constant, this represents a significant and continuing decline in real terms.

UGC made a number of commendations on the University's work. Its final report will be submitted to Fiji's Prime Minister and Minister of Finance and the Chair of the USP Regional Ministers of Finance. The report will also be considered by the USP Regional Ministers of Finance.

UGC Triennial Meeting was well attended by the Chair, H.E. Winston Thompson (Fiji), the two external members representing the Australian and New Zealand Governments, (a Vice-Chancellor and a Pro Vice-Chancellor), Permanent Secretaries of Finance (or representatives) from Cook Islands, Fiji, Nauru, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu plus observers from the Government of Japan.



USP FORMALIZES PARTNERSHIP WITH GERMAN UNIVERSITY

The Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra with Professor Dr Elfriede Hermann from the Georg-August-Universität at the signing ceremony.

The University of the South Pacific (USP) and Georg-August-Universität from Göttingen, Germany agreed to strengthen their links after signing a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to formalize arrangements for further academic cooperation.

The signing took place at the USP Laucala Campus in Suva on 19 July, 2012.

Under the agreement, both universities will participate in faculty and student exchange activities over the next three years.

The collaboration will benefit students through the exchange programme which will provide them with a cross-cultural learning experience. The two institutions will exchange up to two students per academic year.

Speaking at the signing, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra said USP was pleased to partner with Georg-August-Universität as it was a well established university that has been in existence for over 200 years.

Georg-August-Universität or commonly known as Göttingen University was founded in 1737. It is an internationally renowned research university with a strong focus in research-led teaching.

"You bring to this partnership research excellence that should help us," the Vice-Chancellor told Professor Dr Elfriede Hermann from the Georg-August-Universität.

Professor Chandra said he hopes that the collaboration would be an "instrument" through which the relationship between USP and Germany can be strengthened.

In her remarks, Professor Dr Hermann said that amongst other benefits, the collaboration would provide USP students with the opportunity to come and study other subjects at the Göttingen University.

"We hope that we can also strengthen our partnership in terms of research and we are very confident that this relationship will be very productive in the future," she added.

Professor Dr Hermann stressed that as a regional institute, USP reaches out throughout the region and Göttingen University is happy to liaise with USP to draw more attention to Pacific Island Countries.

Professor Dr Hermann has taken the documents back with her to Germany for it to be countersigned by the heads of Georg-August-Universität.

SUCCESSFUL GRADUATION CEREMONY FOR THE REPUBLIC OF MARSHALL ISLANDS CAMPUS

(left - right): The Director of the USP RMI Campus, Dr Irene Taafaki, the University Chancellor and Governor-General of the Solomon Islands, Sir Frank Ofagioro Kabui, President of RMI, His Excellency, Mr Christopher Loeak and the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra at the Graduation ceremony for the USP RMI Campus.



The University of the South Pacific had a very successful Graduation ceremony at its Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) campus on 28 June 2012.

Fifty two students received their certificates, diplomas and degrees from the University Chancellor, Sir Frank Ofagioro Kabui, who is also the Governor-General of the Solomon Islands.

The ceremony was attended by the Chancellor and his wife Lady Grace Delight Kabui, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra and the Secretary to the USP Council, Mrs Lily Vesikula as well as the Director of the RMI campus, Dr Irene Taafaki and staff of the campus.

His Excellency, the President of RMI, Mr Christopher Loeak, the Minister of Education, Dr Hilda Heine, cabinet ministers, senior officials and members of the judiciary and excellencies and members of the diplomatic corps also joined to make the Graduation ceremony a memorable one.

About five hundred people attended the ceremony, which was broadcast live both on radio and television.

A highlight of the Graduation ceremony was that 70 percent of the qualifications gained were at the postgraduate level. In particular, there was satisfaction with the large number of MBA and MEd graduates.

Other highlights include:

- 52 students graduated with 78 academic qualifications;
- 70% of the qualifications earned were at the postgraduate level;
- 19 students earned Masters level qualification - 12 MBAs, 5 MEd's and 1 with MA and 1 MSc;
- The majority of all graduates are Marshallese citizens (65%);
- 10 graduates are from other member countries, all of whom have been serving in the Marshall Islands for many years; and
- 5 graduates are from non-member countries including three post-graduate students from the United States.

In his address, H.E. President Loeak expressed his strong support for USP and was very pleased with the quality of USP graduates. He mentioned in particular USP's leadership role in the provision of high quality higher

education throughout the region.

"I begin by thanking the University of the South Pacific for its leadership in higher education in the region. Managing the needs of 14 campuses in 12 island states of differing cultures and resources, and offering back in return quality education, is a feat that never ceases to astonish many of us. Our most sincere gratitude and appreciation", said President Loeak.

The President also reiterated that he and his government were firmly committed to bringing into fruition the long-held dream of a new campus in RMI.

"The time has come for concrete commitment in clear and specific terms. This administration has pledged to set aside \$500,000 in the next budget as seed money to launch a concerted effort to establish the campus. We will begin to delineate a clear timetable that outlines the progressive stages of implementation," declared the President.

The President also praised the RMI Campus Director, Dr Taafaki, her staff and the staff of the RMI-USP Education Project.

"We are talking about just a small group of educators, managing always on a shoe string budget every year. Yet, they turn out highly successful, products, like we have here today," continued the President.

Professor Chandra presented a report on the University, reminding the students about the importance of ethics, innovation, teamwork, perseverance, and commitment to their country and the region.

He also thanked the President and the government for its support for the University, and the clear steps now being taken to realize the dream of the new campus.

The Vice-Chancellor emphasized the importance of USP to the future of countries in the region as they progress in a world dominated by knowledge, technology and competition.

The graduating student representative, Mr Carlos Dominic, spoke of the quality of the programme he had gone through, and the value of USP education. He asked the government to expedite the development of the new campus, and wished his fellow students well in their future.

The Graduation ceremony was followed by a dinner in honor of the Chancellor and Lady Grace by the MBA graduates.

GROUND-BREAKING CEREMONY FOR NEW REGIONAL CAMPUS

Plans by the University of the South Pacific to build a new campus in the Republic of Marshall Islands (RMI) received a major boost after the ground-breaking ceremony for its new campus was held on 29 June, 2012.

The President of RMI, His Excellency Christopher Loeak, and the University Chancellor, Sir Frank Ofagioro Kabui who is also the Governor-General of the Solomon Islands inaugurated the ceremonial breaking of the ground for the new campus.

The land lease for the new campus had been finalised previously but progress was not possible because of reliance on development assistance and changing development priorities.

Following the announcement made by the President at the RMI campus Graduation ceremony, at which he pledged an initial grant of US\$500,000 in the new budget, the ground-breaking ceremony was an indication of the time-lined implementation of this decision.

The RMI Minister of Education, the Chair of the RMI Campus Advisory Committee and a member of Council, Dr Hilda Heine said that the ceremony was a testimony of the Government's support for and commitment to USP.

She added that the development of human resources was a central tenet of the new Government's policy, and the initiative would considerably add to the human resource development of the RMI.

Speaking at the ceremony, the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra said that the occasion was the realisation of a dream that the previous RMI Presidents had initiated and worked on, and on which the University was doing considerable work.

He indicated that USP provides high quality human resources for the RMI, and that the new campus will ensure an even better quality student experience.

The Vice-Chancellor spoke about the importance of Pacific islanders believing more in themselves, and stressed that high quality education was the very foundation of this confidence and success.

As an example, Professor Chandra pointed out how Singapore, a very small country, has forged ahead in its development, well ahead of the larger countries with many more resources.

"It did this because it had a grand vision, determination, and perseverance. There is no reason why small Pacific Island Countries like RMI cannot achieve great success in the future - provided high quality higher education is given priority," he explained.

Professor Chandra assured the President and the RMI Government that the University would work very closely with the Government to have an effective implementation plan for the campus.



left): The President of the Republic of Marshall Islands, H.E. Mr Christopher Loeak gives his keynote address at the conference. The Prime Minister of Tuvalu, Honourable Willy Telavi (left), the President of the Republic of Marshall Islands, H.E. Mr Christopher Loeak (centre) and the President of the Republic of Fiji, H.E. Ratu Epeli Nailatikau (right).

MARSHALL ISLANDS PRESIDENT LEADS TALKS ON CLIMATE CHANGE

We must work together to ensure that the international community hears our collective voice, and plea for survival. The existence of our Pacific is on the line.

These comments were made by the President of the Republic of Marshall Islands, His Excellency Mr Christopher Loeak in his keynote address at the regional conference on Local Governments for Climate Change.

The three-day conference, which was held at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, brought together leading minds in the region including a number of Pacific Island leaders who have been instrumental in advocating for climate change issues in the Pacific at the global level.

As one of only four countries in the world that are completely made up of low-lying atolls, Marshall Islands feels the urgency of climate impacts and the need for immediate global actions, H.E. Mr Christopher Loeak shared with the conference participants.

He recommended the possibility of Pacific Island states venturing together by forging knowledge partnerships between and among them.

"I see much value in the members of a Fijian village council, for example, visiting us in the Marshall Islands and sharing with us their knowledge on how they are adapting to climate change and managing sustainable development, and vice-

versa. I strongly believe that we can learn a lot from each other."

The President told participants that island countries stand to lose if they do not come together to address the imminent threats of climate change and the unsustainable global direction.

Although there are limited capacities and resources to single-handedly address climate change and sustainable development issues, the President said his country has taken steps in developing locally-tailored processes to engage communities and local governments to build their resilience.

This involves looking to past traditional knowledge and understanding the current and future vulnerabilities to build adaptive capacities of communities, he explained.

An example of this, the President pointed out was the steps taken by the Marshall Islands to include their inter-agency Coastal Management Advisory Council to work with local governments and communities on over a dozen atolls under the goals of the Micronesia Challenge to conserve 30 percent of reefs and 20 percent of forest resources.

H.E. Mr Christopher Loeak stated that the unique vulnerabilities of Pacific states have worsened over the last two decades due to increased exposure

to external shocks, sea level rise, natural disasters, and fuel, food, and financial crises.

"These problems are made worse by the lack of incoming support, and the failure to direct support towards actual projects on the ground. Support needs to more directly address each country's self-determined priorities, particularly when it comes to the most vulnerable island states," he added.

The President emphasised that adaptation and survival will require local governments to network and forge partnerships with traditional leaders, churches, landowners, national agencies, businesses, educators and citizen groups.

For this to happen, H.E. Mr Christopher Loeak said that local governments need to work as equal partners with others in a common process of problem solving and decision-making.

"Perhaps it is time for us to empower our local governments and communities to take a greater role in building their resilience and charting their own destiny," he continued.

He concluded by stating that the process of sustainable development and climate change adaptation should be seen as a dignified process in which people want to participate not only for economic or political purposes but also for their own development.

ACADEMIC PROVIDES INCENTIVE FOR ECONOMICS STUDENTS

Dr T.K. Jayaraman, an academic from the University of the South Pacific has provided the University with an endowment funding to reward outstanding students studying advanced Monetary Economics at the post-graduate level.

Dr Jayaraman who is based with the University's School of Economics in the Faculty of Business and Economics has provided a grant of F\$10,000 to establish the T.K. Jayaraman Monetary Economics Endowment.

The interest from the endowment will be used to award a yearly prize of F\$250 to the top ranking student taking the EC410 (Monetary Economics) course at USP.

The endowment, which was initiated nearly a year ago, was formally signed by the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra and Dr Jayaraman at the Laucala Campus on 10 July, 2012.

Upon signing the agreement, Professor Chandra thanked Dr Jayaraman for his contribution to the University.

The Vice-Chancellor said that he was pleased with the generous arrangement made by Dr Jayaraman, who has been a long-serving academic to allow the University to reward top performing students in the area of Monetary Economics.

"The University is very pleased that you (Dr Jayaraman) have extended this personal contribution to rewarding excellence as a member of our staff and it is testimony to your passion for the work that monetary economics represents in the development of our member countries," he continued.



The Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra with Dr T.K. Jayaraman after signing an agreement to establish the T.K. Jayaraman Monetary Economics Endowment

The endowment is seen by Dr Jayaraman as part of giving back to USP and the community and to encourage University staff to provide all support and resources.

"This particular prize will be an incentive for encouraging more interest in the subject with a view of improving the policy making skills of future graduates," Dr Jayaraman explained.

He acknowledged the support provided by Professor Chandra and other colleagues at USP for supporting the endowment.

KIRIBATI HEAD OF STATE VISITS USP

The President of Kiribati, His Excellency Mr Anote Tong paid a visit to the University of the South Pacific in Suva on 18 July 2012.

The President was visiting the Laucala Campus to take part in the Regional Conference on Local Governments for Climate Change where he presented a keynote address on Kiribati, the Pacific and Climate Change. The session was well attended by local and visiting academics, members of the public and school children.

During his visit, the President met with the Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra.

In welcoming H.E. Mr Anote Tong to the University, Professor Chandra congratulated the President for winning the election for another term earlier in the year. This, he said was a demonstration of the strong support that the President enjoys in Kiribati.

Professor Chandra expressed his gratitude to the President and that of his Cabinet for supporting the University's request for an Asian Development Bank loan to construct a new campus in Kiribati. He was confident that under President Tong's leadership over the next four years, developments in education plans and infrastructure would move forward as planned.

The Vice-Chancellor also expressed his confidence that President Tong's continued efforts to fight the effects of global warming and climate change on Kiribati, and his call for all to take a moral responsibility in this fight to ensure the well being of all, including all i-Kiribati, was commendable.

Professor Chandra thanked the President for the warm hospitality extended to him during his recent visit to Kiribati in June 2012. He noted the major developments that have taken place in Kiribati and other planned developments which will be underway soon.



The Vice-Chancellor and President of USP, Professor Rajesh Chandra (right) with the President of Kiribati, His Excellency Mr Anote Tong.

The new developments led by the University include the construction of a new campus, training of untrained teachers project, open schooling programmes, and an expanded vocational, continuing and community education section.

In expressing his appreciation for the Kiribati Government's support to the University, Professor Chandra said he looks forward to the continued strengthened relationship and friendship between the University and Kiribati.

As a founding member of the University, Kiribati and the University have maintained close relationships and cooperation in education over the years.

Professor Chandra highlighted the deep friendship and close bonds between USP and the people of Kiribati especially with USP alumni now forming a major and outstanding group of young and qualified people, many of whom hold important positions in Kiribati.

In response, H.E. Anote Tong expressed his

gratitude and that of his Government on the role USP has and is playing in providing further education and in skilling the people of Kiribati.

With education being the key in building a strong and viable nation, the President has placed considerable emphasis on education as this will form the core of his Government's development strategy.

He stated that an educated population will be needed to strengthen development in seabed mining, renewable energy, environment and sustainable development, fisheries, ICT, policy and planning, medical care and hygiene, clean energy, law of the sea, infrastructure, and vocational training.

H.E. Anote Tong added that as long as their budget permits, the Kiribati Government will continue to provide scholarships and establish specialized training for students.

He looks to USP to provide specialist training in some of these areas and called for assistance in seabed mining, policy analysis, management, economics, and vocational studies. He also called on USP to establish a team of academics, professionals and expertise to be able to respond to problems and find solutions to those challenges facing our small island states in the Pacific.

President Tong emphasized the importance of establishing some form of endowment to assist students with fees and scholarships to attend USP, and called on the University to look at various options for such a plan.

"This effort will strengthen partnership between the University and Kiribati and other member countries," he continued.

The President thanked Professor Chandra for his leadership of the University and his commitment to the development of the regional campuses and the region.

He looks forward to working with the University on the development of the new campus in Kiribati.

STAFF PROFILE | ZOHER JANIF - PROGRAMME OFFICER



What is the length of time you've been employed at USP?

Almost a year

What is your home country?

Fiji

How do you usually begin your working day?

I am usually early to work so I use this time to go through my emails and read news articles online. Then I go over the work I did the day

before to check if I have done everything which I was allocated. Finally, I make a quick to-do list for the day, and also update items from the previous day. This just makes it so easy to keep track of the work that I am doing and the deadlines and also ensures I do not miss out anything.

What is the best part of your current work?

The best part is being with an organization that represents 12 Pacific Island Countries and deals with issues which actually help in its sustainable development. At USP, I also get to work with people from all over the world with different diversity and this is a truly amazing experience.

What is your best practical remedy for work and life stress?

I find socializing and spending time with friends is the best way to get rid of stress, because it lightens and refreshes me.

What is the most unusual/ unexpected event that has ever happened to you?

I was unexpectedly invited to dinner by my girlfriend's dad! (It went pretty well).

Apart from this I also have some tragic experiences when it comes to e-mailing. I have done some fumbles in the past by sending emails to 'wrong people'. Especially when emailing friends. It just happens so unexpectedly.

What is the best advice you've ever been given, or have given to students at USP?

To students - You may not realize this, but this is probably one of the most important phase of your life. So grab hold of all the opportunities and learning experiences that USP has to offer.

This is very important not only academically but also for personal development.

Who inspires you and why?

My mum is my inspiration. She is my rock and I am very proud of what she has done for me. After the passing away of my dad when I was very young, she ensured that I received the best of everything including education.

What have been your main career highlights?

Through my previous work experience, I was part of an amazing team which helped Fiji participate at the Shanghai World Expo in 2010 and promoting my country at this event which attracted approximately 70 million people was very satisfying.

Apart from this, USP has provided me with a lot of opportunities as well, where I continue to work with international institutions aimed towards sustainably developing the region.

What books are you reading at the moment, and why?

I was never a reading person to be honest. But I have some interest in international politics and international affairs so I do read some journals online every now and then.

What are some challenges you think are faced by young people in the Pacific?

Access to Quality Education! This I believe is one of the major obstacles that our people particularly youths face in the region.

What are your hopes for the Pacific in 2012 and beyond?

My hope is for the Pacific to be able to access quality and affordable education, respectable employment and a healthy, sustainable lifestyle



Regional participants of the Crop Modelling training held at USP with Dr Upendra Singh (4th from left) from IFDC.

A group of agricultural researchers from the Pacific recently participated in the first-ever regional training on the use of a crop modelling software which has been used to help farmers globally.

The Decision Support System for Agro-Technology Transfer, or DSSAT as it is known, is a crop simulation software that contains 28 crop models which includes plants such as rice, cassava, taro, sugarcane, potato and maize.

"Basically what you are doing is growing a crop on the computer," said Dr Upendra Singh, a soil scientist from the International Fertiliser Development Centre (IFDC), who was invited to conduct the five-day training.

"So you provide all the information that is similar, if not identical, to what you are providing if you were growing a crop out in the fields, soil type, weather and crop management techniques and it will see how well the variety of your crop will grow under those conditions," he elaborated.

The training, which was organised by the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) at the University of the South Pacific, was held on 19 - 23 June, 2012.

Dr Singh explained that by using this software it will reduce the amount of time spent out in the field for instance when trying out a new variety of taro. He added that what could possibly take three months in the field takes milliseconds on the computer by using DSSAT.

The training was attended by 25 participants from several research centres such as the Korinivia and Sigatoka Agriculture Research Stations in Fiji, the Sugar Research Centre in Lautoka, as well as researchers from USP's Alafua Campus in Samoa, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Fiji National

CROP MODELLING SOFTWARE TO PROMOTE FOOD SECURITY

University and regional climate change research students from USP, who are currently using the DSSAT model for their Master of Science research work.

Facilitators also included PACE-SD's research fellows in Climate Change, Mr Viliamu Iese and Dr Morgan Wairiu, who have incorporated the use of DSSAT in their research at the Centre, and initiated this collaboration to introduce the model to other researchers in the region.

"It is a tool that assists communities in making decisions on which crop they should plant and how to maximize profit for food security and economic growth amongst the many uncertainties that affect the agriculture industry," said Mr Iese.

DSSAT has been used in over 100 countries by researchers, educators, consultants, growers, and policy and decision makers for more than 30 years, and is finally seeing a resurgence in the Pacific after a failed attempt 20 years ago, which according to Dr Singh, was mainly due to lack of funding and skilled trainers.

"So there is a revival now with several different groups that are interested in DSSAT modelling, and the resurgence of modelling has also come about due to environmental concerns, particularly climate variability and change as modelling is one of the tools that allow us to see what the impacts of climate change are, and the changes we are expecting in our crop production that will threaten our food security."

Dr Singh said the model was applicable to industries such as sugarcane farming that were currently under threat from low yield and plummeting market prices.

"So DSSAT is very important when you start dealing with crop diversification, for instance sugar is an issue now. Should we grow something else in some of the sugar cane areas? What will be the most profitable crop to grow there, you may think of a profitable crop as saffron for instance, which is very expensive. But, will it grow in Fiji? Before you make a million dollar investment you need to check it out using available tools like crop models."

The training was a part of the AusAID Future Climate Leaders Project (FCLP) and also supported by US Department of State Award.

FCLP Coordinator, Mr Sumeet Naidu said the initiative was part of the project's objective to promote research and education in the Pacific, which would enable the region to better adapt to the impacts of climate change.

USP PROGRAMMES RECEIVE INTERNATIONAL RECOGNITION

The graduate programmes offered by the University of the South Pacific have been recently included in the Eduniversal Ranking of the Best Masters and Master of Business Administration (MBA) programmes worldwide in 2011.

Five Masters programmes from FBE including the MBA programme of the University were ranked in the Top 200 for the Best Masters in 30 majors over nine geographic regions.

Over the last 18 months, Eduniversal, an international ranking agency specializing in higher education, conducted its first investigation of a total of 12 000 Masters programmes in the 1 000 Best Business Schools in nine regions.

The rankings were based on the following criteria:

- Reputation of the programme;
- Salary of the first employment of the graduates; and
- Satisfaction of the students.

The satisfaction of the students was a unique aspect of the ranking, as nearly 100 000 graduates answered the Eduniversal Masters survey and evaluated their programmes of study. The rankings provide students, human resource professionals, and academic officers with a global panorama of the best educational opportunities anywhere in the world

Ms Marie-José Sueiro, International Partnership Director, Eduniversal, congratulated USP on its academic achievement.

"We strongly believe that the field of global higher education will benefit from our collaboration in providing complete and reliable information," she added.

The following programs of FBE have received Eduniversal rankings and stars:

- **MBA - Top 200 Best Masters in MBA Full Time;**
Three stars with 15th rank in the Oceania region out of 20.
- **Master of Commerce in Accounting - Top 200 Best Masters in Accounting and Auditing;**
Three stars with 14th rank in the Oceania region out of 30
- **Master of Commerce in Management and Public Administration - Top 200 Best Masters in Public Administration / Management;**
Three stars with 6th rank in the Oceania region out of 10
- **Master of Commerce in Economics - Top 200 Best Masters in Economics;**
Three stars with 8th rank in the Oceania region out of 20
- **Master of Arts in Tourism Studies - Top 100 Best Masters in Tourism and Hospitality Management;**
Two stars with 85th rank in the Oceania region out of 100