Climate Change and Conflict in the Pacific Workshop:
Prevention, Management and the Enhancement of Community Resilience

Summary Report on the Workshop held in Tokyo
11-13 September 2019

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Introduction

From 11-13 September 2019, a group of 40 academics, practitioners and policy makers met in Tokyo to attend the *Climate Change and Conflict in the Pacific: Prevention, Management and the Enhancement of Community Resilience Workshop*, convened by the Toda Peace Institute. The aims of the workshop were to facilitate dialogue between three groups of experts from Japan, Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and the 'international' community', and to generate shared analysis of challenges and, wherever possible, joint or coordinated practical responses.

Following a similar meeting in 2018 Auckland, New Zealand, the purpose of the 2019 workshop was to build linkages and pursue regional dialogue, this time bringing Japanese voices into the conversation. In doing so, it was expected that the network that has emerged since 2018 would be strengthened and expanded, taking the work on climate change, conflict, peace and security another important step further.

Structure of the Workshop

The meeting was structured to have a 'triangular' format. First, contributors working in the international realm presented their analyses to scholars and practitioners from PICs and Japan. Second, Pacific Islanders presented their local and regional research findings, and their practice-based approaches, to the international and Japanese experts. In a third step, Japanese presenters outlined the state of the debate in Japan for the benefit of the Pacific Islanders and international experts.

Issues addressed included water, land and food security; conflict-sensitive adaptation; climate change-induced migration; the significance of traditional knowledge; and the cultural dimension of climate change adaptation and its importance within the climate change-security/conflict nexus.

This report draws together the main challenges and perspectives that emerged from the workshop, with illustrative case study examples. The report concludes with a summary of the discussion on the Responsibility to Prepare.

Climate Change and the Pacific

The Pacific is different from other world regions, in its complexity as a 'blue' continent; the ocean plays a decisive role in the life of people.

For Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia, climate change is not an issue for the future: it's an existential crisis now. PICs are seen as being on the 'frontline' of climate change, and Pacific societies are the 'canary in the coalmine'. Some experts consider that warming has passed the point of no return, hence adaptation is now becoming more and more important.

However, the Pacific is hardly discussed in the discourse on climate change, security, conflict and peace. Although there are statements from PICs leaders saying that climate change poses a serious security threat to PICs (for example, in the Pacific Island Forum's Boe Declaration of September 2018[1]) and calling for more attention to the climate change–security nexus, the Pacific has not really played a role in the respective debates. Small island states are often represented as vulnerable, but Pacific island societies are in fact resilient, and, based on this resilience and its sources, Pacific Islanders make valuable contributions to those debates.

Similarly, it is striking that climate change hotspots (such as PICs) do not (or hardly) figure in the international research. Moreover, this research also ignores the potential linkages between climate change and peaceful adaptation, in other words, climate change not as a

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[1] See https://www.forumsec.org/boe-declaration-on-regional-security/

cause of conflict, but as a cause of cooperation. There is an opportunity for further research in this area.

Key Challenges

Security and Conflict

At the international level, the climate change – security link is well established in the political realm: the UN (Security Council and General Assembly) addresses climate change and security, individual states incorporate the climate change – security nexus into their national security strategies, and various policy-oriented think tanks in the US and Europe work on the topic. This work tends to be more normative than analytical and, therefore, has to be seen against the background of 'security' as a raison d'etre of states and the international system of states, hence the frequent securitisation of the climate change discourse.

Is this securitisation move positive or negative from the standpoint of peace and climate change policies? There are some potential positives, for example, giving climate change greater political weight by making it a security issue and an issue of 'high politics', and consequently mobilising resources, attention, and funding. But there are also some potential negatives. In the extreme, this could mean the militarisation of climate change policies: providing military institutions with new and additional legitimacy and resources, and legitimising the use of military means to 'solve' climate change-related problems, such as building barriers against 'climate refugees'. There is also a real danger that the climate change issue will be marginalised in the Pacific due to the intensifying geo-political rivalry in the region (USA – China – Japan).

The climate change-security link can be framed in terms of national security, and international security (still the dominant discourse). But it can also be framed in a different way (human security, community security, ecological security) so that it is more conducive to the needs and aspirations of people(s) in the Pacific.

It is important to ask whose security is talked about, who the providers of security are and how security is provided, and to differentiate between threats, risks and the notion of complexity. Whereas security threats can be traced to intentions and capabilities, security risks emerge from—unintended—effects of complex factors, and climate change has to be seen not in terms of climate threats, but in this risk-complexity context. This means to move beyond framing climate change as a threat to national security—which opens the door to military responses—to an integrated and expanded concept of security, which demands more holistic analyses and responses.

Such an understanding of the climate-security nexus allows us to also address implications of climate change with regard to human security challenges or health-related crises. But of course, there remain more conventional risks to security which come with the effects of climate change. Competition over scarce resources is a case in point (for example, disputes over land). These can lead to violence under conditions of weak governance. It is important, however, that the debate not only focuses on violent conflict at the state and inter-state level, but also considers everyday violence (such as domestic violence) and intra- and inter-group

violent conflicts which in general remain under the radar of climate change – conflict research. To adequately capture these types of climate change-induced violence requires fine-grained ethnographic research. Identifying climate change as a 'threat multiplier' (as has been widely accepted in the international discourse) is important, but it is too abstract and generic. It has to be translated into a climate change – conflict analysis framework which can guide such granular research.

Migration

Displacement in the Pacific is widespread, not only due to climate change, but also due to mining and logging and, historically, nuclear testing, forced labour, political upheaval and other violence. There are different types of climate change migration today: it can be voluntary or forced, local, internal within a state, or cross-boundary, even global. Internationally, climate change migrants are not only seen as victims, but also as 'threats' to the security and wealth of target countries in the Global North, which may produce militarised nationalistic responses, for example, fortification of one's own borders against migrant 'waves'.

Research in general tends to see migration as an adaptation strategy, yet there are few studies of relocation as (forced) displacement. More research on this could be sensitive and possibly hurtful depending on how it is carried out, but is needed to assist in understanding future challenges.

While migration, as a means of adaptation, was and is a 'normal' feature of human existence and of societies world-wide and through history, there are also 'trapped populations' – people who do not have the resources and capacities to move. Those most affected by climate change often have already been marginalised, through (neo-)colonial exploitation for example. They are often willing, but unable to move. In the Pacific, in situ adaptation is no longer possible in certain places. Hence people do not have a choice but will have to migrate. This can generate conflict.

The relationships between the recipients and newcomers in the climate-migration context, and the traditional indigenous land tenure systems, can be a major obstacle for relocation and a source of conflict, but on other occasions they can also provide relocatees access to land, for example, if there are kinship ties between recipient communities and newcomers. Climate change may provide incentives for cooperation. The land problem, however, is further aggravated when outside investors view land as something to be commercialised and therefore denounce indigenous tenure to be impractical and demand changes; this puts further pressure on land.

A specific case study shed light on the climate change – mobility problematique. A study of the motivations of students from the Marshall Islands to emigrate to the United States shows that the main reasons given were 'education' and 'jobs', while reasons that could be attributed to climate change—sea level rise, extreme weather—hardly figured. But those who live in the US cited climate change and its effects as a major reason for not wanting to return home.

It should be noted that findings on the climate change – migration link are inconclusive; there are large numbers of studies that do not find empirical evidence for the hypothetical climate change – migration – conflict connection, and one has to be aware that linkages are extremely context-specific.

Economic Challenges

PICs strive for economic development in the conventional sense of the term; on the other hand, they want to stem climate change and demand decisive action on climate change. Examples of the contradictions inherent in this stance were discussed with regard to two specific industries: fisheries and tourism.

Climate change is already changing the movement of fish stocks, maritime boundaries and coastlines. The changes to fisheries because of the changes in movement of fish stocks, such as tuna, are of critical importance for PICs. Conflicts over fisheries (legal and illegal) are a real and increasing danger. There is also conflict potential in changes to maritime boundaries due to climate change-induced changes of coastlines, and changes of Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZs).

The dilemma is also apparent in the Pacific tourism industry. Several PICs are highly dependent on international tourism for their economic development, but this form of tourism contributes to the causes of climate change (for example, long distance international flights).

There are some specific problems for PICs: their dependence on external finances for climate change action (although Pacific people are sceptical of climate change funds as they can be funds diverted from other programmes) and the restrictions on immigration implemented by the countries in the Global North which are the main sources of global warming.

It was also noted that there is ambiguity with regard to the discourses on resilience, agency, victimhood and vulnerability. On the one hand, Pacific Islanders refuse to be presented merely as weak and passive victims of climate change, and rightly so. They insist on their resilience, capacities, and traditional knowledge. On the other hand, however, they are actually victims of the policies and economies of the big Greenhouse Gas (GHG) emitters in the Global North, and their islands and societies are particularly vulnerable. Hence one should not let these emitters off the hook, but insist on their responsibilities and make clear that Pacific Islanders—despite their resilience and agency—cannot address the challenges on their own. This is why the governments of PICs sometimes present their peoples as victims in, for example, international negotiations, not least to get access to funding. That is clearly a political agenda and strategy. Hence there is ambiguity in the discourse.

The Ontological Dimension: Identity, Culture, Spiritual, Psychological and Emotional Effects of Climate Change

There is a need to pursue a holistic, integrative and inclusive approach to climate change adaptation, not only talking about fragile states and fragile political situations, but also 'emotional fragility', including spiritual, psychological and emotional dimensions. This means not being side-tracked by a singular focus on security of human beings, but rather

focusing on the entirety and integrity of creation. The nature-human divide which is so deeply ingrained in Western thinking and the anthropocentric approach to climate change must be overcome, by adopting a relational perspective.

In Pacific (and other) communities, life is essentially relational, including multi-faceted relationships not only within and between communities, but also the land; these relations are defined by the people themselves using kinship and spirituality. Relocation, and the need to adapt to other communities' and to other people's land, includes the danger of conflict; it can lead to a situation of "winners and losers".

A key question is how people will live when what they are intrinsically related to—their community and land—has been destroyed; when communities are forced to relocate, the aim has to be to provide space for people to maintain their own cultural identities, 'singing the songs of the Lord in a foreign land'.

The issue of those who will not or cannot leave their homes was also considered with respect to emotional, psychological and physical health. The "destruction of our temples" includes land and identity. Rootedness to place of birth, impact of displacement and loss of connection with ancestors, all need to be considered in climate change relocation. To address these challenges, the Pacific Council of Churches (PCC) is developing a theological framework for climate change migration/forced relocation, addressing the needs of those who have to leave their homes, those who will receive the displaced, and those who cannot leave.

Different Views: 'Weaving the Mat'

Science, Research and Indigenous Traditional Knowledge

The Pacific metaphor of 'weaving the mat' was used to acknowledge and bring together both Western 'hard' science and knowledge, and indigenous traditional knowledge. It was acknowledged that there can be a tension between certain religious narratives and scientific findings, which can lead to differing interpretations of the cause and outcome of climate change.

Research can catalyse and magnify stories of the Pacific islands, but it can also mute peoples' voices. The politics of knowledge production—who is allowed/permitted to speak and who are the listeners—is also a serious issue. In academia for example, the 'Anglo-American realm' remains dominant. It is not always easy to get Pacific writing published in the competitive environment of climate change scholarship. However, it is necessary to include all voices.

There is a need to reflect on the concepts used, and who constructs them. Why not use indigenous concepts? The use of non-indigenous concepts often undermines Pacific voices. Research can also become a threat to Pacific hospitality, with societies refusing access to Western researchers. History shows that stories and knowledge have been stolen by outside researchers. Westerners should not tell Pacific stories on behalf of Pacific people. Nor should Pacific Islanders be forced to tell their stories in a Western format, rather than, for

example, through dance and song which is where and how stories are shared. One solution is to find new spaces and channels for advocacy such as social media, blogs, film and theatre.

Gender is an example of an alienating issue as women are often not consulted. The other issue is that of agency as there are a multiplicity of challenges. Some do not have the capability or are unable to take on responsibility. There should be space for all levels of engagement. All have a role to play.

Finally, there is a problem of sampling bias in climate change – conflict research. This research can be extremely selective, focusing on regions and cases which are relatively easy to access for international researchers and/or which have a history of violent conflict anyway; this focus on conflict regions might bias results. Africa and the MENA region are clearly over-represented in this research, while other world regions are under-represented, in particular Oceania and South America.

Pacific and International Perspectives (Including NGOs and Donor Agencies)

Aid and Projects

External aid has contributed to the erosion of the resilience of Pacific people(s). More thorough reflection on the effects of aid is therefore needed, not only in the context of development assistance in general, but also and particularly in the context of climate change adaptation and—potential—conflict.

There is the problem of 'backdraft', defined as the conflict-prone effects of well-intentioned climate change adaptation measures. To avoid this, projects have to be planned and implemented taking into account a conflict-sensitivity lens. There is a need to improve predictive capacities, coordination and integration of the activities of various actors, including youth, at various political levels.

Capacity building as a concept also needs to be examined and assessed. Just because societies are small does not mean they are lacking in capacity. Pacific Islanders have a lot of capacity. What they lack is funds. Ask what capacity exists before projects are decided.

How can international organisations successfully engage with Pacific perspectives and move beyond discourses such as "partnering" that tend to mask colonial and post-colonial relationships? It is important to resist the centralisation of resources to adapt and to maintain ongoing resilience. Outside aid intervention often is a source of conflict in itself. The main instrument of intervention today is 'the project'. And many PICs governments are complicit with an imposed international agenda. Thus, the state is often a major driver of conflict. There is a need to shift the unit of analysis, not to the state, but to relations between state institutions and communities.

To enable all sides to deal with ongoing drivers of conflict, the following recommendations were made:

1. Expand the time frames of international projects enabling more opportunity for dialogue and long-term relationship building.

2. Pay attention to Pacific perspectives and consider the relationships between state and communities, to understand where power really lies. Conflict analysis, well-being, peace and justice should emerge from people's own definitions of these concepts.

3. Work with in situ adaptation, in existing community structures. Some western aid workers feel uncomfortable engaging with these community structures and work largely with churches, which can be effective as churches are influential actors on the ground, but it is important that legitimate leadership and networks in communities are always involved and that power relationships are reflected and engaged with.

Actions of Pacific Neighbours

New Zealand is pursuing an active and ambitious climate change policy, with a target of becoming carbon-neutral by 2035.   As a Pacific neighbour, the focus of preventive action has to be in the context of social impacts that prevent the emergence of negative security implications. There are key implications of climate change for New Zealand Defence, particularly in the field of search and rescue, humanitarian assistance and disaster relief in New Zealand's area of responsibility in the Pacific. The Western Pacific Ocean is rising at about three times the global average leading to obvious climate security implications.

Australia is trying to balance an economy heavily reliant on fossil fuels with a desire to play a pro-active role in multilateral responses to climate change. Australia's climate change policy has a focus on PICs and is heavily engaged in climate and disaster resilience improvement, and the support for infrastructure in PICs. The Australian commitment of 500 million AUD over the next five years to climate change measures in PICs goes some of the way towards Australia supporting its Pacific neighbours in their climate change policy efforts.

Similarly, the EU is well aware of the climate change – security nexus and is focusing attention on sustainable development, including climate change policies and adaptation, and conflict prevention. It prioritises climate action both in the EU and in overseas cooperation. With regard to the latter, climate change financing is a key component and is being mainstreamed in EU foreign policy. Another focus is on early warning and early action. The EU's understanding of the climate change – security nexus comprises both state security and human security.

Japan has not focused much awareness on the climate change – peace – security nexus. There is not a lot of interest in the topic of climate security among people and politicians in Japan and that discourse is almost non-existent. However, the topic may be addressed using other terminology through four categories of the climate security discourse:

a) Long term irreversible planetary changes.

b) Short term abrupt climate change risks.

c) Climate change as a cause of violence and conflict.

d) Military-related issues.

In fact, the first two categories figure prominently in debates in Japan, using terminology such as 'risks of climate change', 'comprehensive security' (including, for example, energy security or human security), adaptation and disaster management. By contrast, with regard to the other two categories, there is almost no debate on these topics. This is likely to change because of future effects of climate change. In the 2019 G20 Osaka Summit Declaration there is 'no sense of emergency' regarding the climate change issue, no new political momentum on this issue generated, and there are no references to the climate change concerns of Small Island Developing States (SIDS). This disappointing outcome is mirrored by Japanese policies in the climate change field: continuation of coal-fired power generation, no ambitious targets nor measures to accelerate introduction of renewable energy, or carbon pricing. In the future the Japanese government will have to do much more, with regard to support for SIDS in the Pacific.

It was suggested that Japanese attitudes to climate change are largely shaped by the experience of frequent natural disasters (in particular earthquakes) which leads to a 'we just have to live with it' mentality. Moreover, Japan has very well-established early warning and response mechanisms for natural disasters, and these mechanisms include local community participation and local traditional knowledge. This can be a model for PICs.

Eco-relationality

The issue of climate change and conflict is not confined to the physical material realm; the spiritual has to be included too. The concept of eco-relationality is all-inclusive (in contrast to the 'Eurocentric one-truth strand' and the compartmentalisation of issues, which was and is a colonial tool of domination). What is needed is to move beyond a narrow understanding of the link between ecology and security. An eco-relational approach challenges the divide between 'nature' and 'human society'; it overcomes the anthropocentric framing of climate change and instead operates from the understanding of universal eco-relational interconnectedness.

A Pacific eco-relational approach to climate change is grounded in Pacific ontology and epistemology. It challenges the presentation of Pacific islands people as 'victims'; instead it focuses on resilience flowing from the interconnectedness of people and the environment. It is difficult to capture this eco-relationality in Western rational terms; difficulties also emerge if one operates in the abstract terminology of the Western climate change discourse. Local people in Pacific societies cannot engage with such forms of abstract discourse which too often become political tactics, emphasising 'vulnerability' and locking countries into loans. What is needed now in the Pacific—and globally—is a 'Climate Theology of Hope". There was a view that 'side-lining God' can be a reason for the failure of many secular climate adaptation projects, in particular in the Pacific.

Case Studies

Case studies illustrate many of the points made during presentations and discussions.

Relocation from Carterets to Bougainville

Planned relocation of approximately 3,000 people from the small Carteret Islands atoll (1.2 metres above sea level) to the main island of Bougainville is underway, with islanders destined for four different areas of this island in Papua New Guinea. The Tulele Peisa project (Sailing the Waves on our Own in the local language), considered by some to be the world's first long-term climate change resettlement, is beginning to demonstrate a move towards sustainable lives. The process is taking time because a proportion of elderly are unprepared to move and because of difficulties in acquiring resettlement land on Bougainville. Careful, staged planning for relocation of the majority means that the last of the families will have moved by 2027 (if everything goes to plan). Those who have been in Bougainville for a decade have already planted 15,000 cocoa trees and, although there has been assistance from partners such as DFAT, MFAT, the EU and JICA, an important part of sustainable living is the sourcing of markets for products, as well as the development of cocoa nurseries. The situation is becoming more urgent with the availability of suitable land a significant issue. Getting access to land can only be achieved through negotiations grounded in local custom.

Pacific Council of Churches (PCC)

The PCC has been working with the first of the Fijian villages to be relocated due to rising sea levels (Vunidogoloa on Vanua Levu), and with affected communities after Cyclone Winston in 2016. Currently the PCC is working with another relocation village, Narikoso. The PCC provided pastoral care and support, and the villages also have built upon traditional kinship relationships with people in the new areas and have successfully relocated. Understanding land ownership and relationships makes relocation a much smoother process, although it should always be seen as a last resort. Temporary relocation caused by disasters has also to be taken into account. Coordination of government activities and civil society and church activities is key. Relocations must be community-driven, not donor driven and led.

Climate Change Adaptation in Tuvalu

Indigenous knowledge plays a role in climate change adaptation in Tuvalu. The atolls and islands are very small, and there is limited land. Conservation laws have been in place for some years but issues such as inundation, the presence of men only in decision making meetings, poaching, decreasing fish stocks, and lack of awareness, are placing more stress on atolls already being regularly inundated. Research and the role of NGOs was outlined with examples given of new mangrove planting practices and community gardening. A way forward is through the weaving of traditional conservation practices and modern Locally Managed Marine Areas.

A Complex Case in Fiji

The village of Naviavia in the province of Cakaudrove on Vanua Levu, Fiji, is home to 500 ethnic Solomon Islanders, now Fijian citizens, who live on land owned by the Anglican church. These Solomon Islanders are married (largely) to indigenous Fijian women, but they do not have land rights. There is no paperwork to demonstrate the status of the Solomon Islanders. Their situation will become more precarious with the purchase of land by the Government of Kiribati, in order to grow food for Kiribati (and perhaps even resettle I-Kiribati in the future). The big question is what will happen if/when Kiribati starts actually to use the land? Issues of identity linked to land, conflicts over land, displaced sovereignty and changing identities are key here. Can identities be maintained under conditions of relocation? How does this case fit with conversations around open borders for climate change migration? The Pacific Centre for Peacebuilding (PCP) is working with the community, doing conflict analysis, holding community/stakeholder dialogues with government and all the parties involved, such as churches and neighbouring communities.

Local Field Research in Lake Chad

Commissioned by the G7, a two-year pilot study on the Lake Chad situation was conducted to elaborate and test a climate change – conflict analysis framework. It turned out that what is needed is a very granular contextual approach. This can only be done by local field researchers familiar with the situation on the ground. Hence not only scientific quantitative data were used, but more than 200 qualitative interviews were conducted with, for example, representatives of local level government, women, and youth. Three specific risk factors were identified:

 a) Climate change undermines people's livelihoods (in this context it is not so much the absolute lack of water, for example, that matters, but the uncertainty of water supply), and this leads people to search for 'alternative' livelihoods, from sex work to terrorism.

b) Resource stress can lead to conflict.

c) Heavy-handed military responses to the climate change-related security risks can become a risk in themselves. For example, banning fishing in certain areas can undermine people's adaptive capacities which in turn can lead people to pursue 'alternative' livelihoods, for instance by joining terrorist groups.

The relevance of this approach is to address climate change-related security risks by building social cohesion in communities; to enable access to basic services; create a sense of belonging and resilience through job creation, and to engage in dialogue with affected people.

Pacific Environmental Community

The Pacific Environmental Community (PEC) Fund, an initiative which emerged from PALM 5 in 2009 (Pacific Leaders Meeting) in Japan, was a joint initiative of the Japanese government and the private sector in Japan. The PEC Fund of 66 million USD was provided to the PIF Secretariat for solar power projects, seawater desalinisation projects and similar undertakings at the community level. It came to an end in 2018 and all 16 funded projects were successfully completed. At the moment there are no plans for a follow-up initiative.

But in principle PEC can be seen as a model for climate change adaptation support through external actors in the Pacific.

Responsibility to Prepare and Anticipatory Governance

The concept of 'Responsibility to Prepare' is based on six pillars:

1. Strengthening capacity and knowledge,
2. Strengthening regional coordination,
3. Advancing food security,
4. Water security,
5. Renewable energy transition, and
6. Advocating for stronger political support for the regional climate and security agenda*.*

The following lessons for the Pacific region can be drawn from the Caribbean experience with the 'Responsibility to Prepare': align and strengthen existing institutions; weave into existing plans and strategies; cultivate expert groups; and decompartmentalise actors and institutions. The major challenge is how to build political will for the development of a prevention agenda in the climate – security context.

The 'wicked problem' of climate change adaptation necessitates anticipatory governance as a new form of governance. One should not strive for 'ultimate solutions', but engage in continuous processes of governance with foresight, engagement and integration and reflection. This anticipatory governance approach can encourage governments and communities to 'think the unthinkable' and create opportunities which can and should also become of importance for PICs and their climate change policies.

Conclusion

The doubly 'triangular' format of the workshop, bringing together participants from the Pacific, Japan and international experts, and bringing together researchers, policymakers and practitioners, posed particular challenges to the discussions. But it also offered opportunities for cross-cultural dialogue: dialogue between people from culturally different regions, and dialogue across the different societal spheres of academia, politics, and civil society. This made the workshop special. Moreover, there have been many meetings held with peace and justice organisations, communities, churches and academics also dealing with the issues discussed at the workshop (and there will no doubt be more in the future). It is rare, however, to have dialogue between groups with such varying levels of vulnerability, security and resilience. This gave rise to the conclusion that climate change does not affect everyone in the same way. It also became clear that the voices of the vulnerable, for example those having to leave their homes due to the effects of climate change, need to be more prominent., and so do the voices of the young people and the women. What does this mean for those living within the Pacific, for those who are neighbours, for those who are vulnerable and for those in a position of affluence and privilege? A way forward is needed that is non-paternalistic and provides for those in the Pacific who face the current or imminent impacts of climate change.

The workshop allowed for open and frank discussions of this challenge, presenting a broad spectrum of approaches to the issue of climate change, conflict, and security, ranging from the perspective of a representative of a Ministry of Defence on the one hand, to the perspective of a Pacific theologian building a case for eco-relationality, on the other. It turned out that these approaches are not necessarily mutually exclusive because there are many linkages and commonalities. Those have to be identified and built upon in order to find entry points for mutual support and cooperation. Building bridges or weaving mats figured prominently in the workshop debates as metaphors for the challenges at hand.

This also applies to another theme which turned out to be of particular importance in the course of workshop deliberations: how to engage with the dominant climate – security discourse? On the one hand the negative aspects and dangers of this discourse were laid bare (securitisation and militarisation). On the other hand, one has to take into account that Pacific leaders, for example in the Boe Declaration, use exactly the 'security' terminology when addressing climate change – but they expand the concept of security in the direction of human security. So there is a danger that the climate security talk can open doors for the militarisation of the issue and the legitimising of military responses, but it can also be framed in a different way (human security, community security) so that it is conducive to satisfying the needs and aspirations of people(s) in the Pacific. Some in the workshop even went an important step further, arguing that the concept of human security still falls short of coping with the actual challenges: in the light of the unprecedented dangers of climate change, a focus on human security as the security of human beings and human societies in isolation, as separated from the non-human 'rest' of the world will not suffice; rather, this anthropocentric way of seeing the reification of a divide between human society on the one hand and 'nature' on the other is in itself a cause of today's climate change emergency, and it has to be overcome by an eco-relational holistic way of thinking and acting.

In this context, what emerged as major themes of the workshop were the centrality of listening to and working with partners on their terms. Traditional knowledge is key for community-based security. There is a great need to facilitate communications across cultural differences. This also applies to the differences between academia and politics. The challenge facing academics and policy makers is to link research findings to policy practice.

To summarise: What is needed is dialogue across difference: difference between 'the West' and 'the rest', difference between academia and politics, difference between research and practice, between different worldviews and epistemologies. We need bridge-building and bridge-builders, not least with regard to the international discourse on the climate change – conflict – security nexus and local situations in the Pacific. The Tokyo workshop contributed to such bridge-building.

Appendix

Toda Pacific Declaration on Climate Change, Conflict and Peace

The Auckland workshop in 2018 decided to elaborate a Declaration on the topic of climate change, peace and conflict in the Pacific as an instrument to raise greater awareness at the international level over the challenges faced in the Pacific in the climate change-conflict-peace-security context, to identify specific Pacific needs and ways to address these challenges, putting the region on the map of the international discourse and demonstrating what the region can contribute to this discourse.

What followed was a lengthy and comprehensive process of drafting and discussing the text of such a Declaration, involving participants of the Auckland workshop, members of the Steering Committee, which had been established at the Auckland workshop, and other academics. A draft text was put on the Toda Peace Institute website, inviting public comments. This triggered another round of discussions and changes. Finally, on 29 July 2019, the 'Toda Pacific Declaration on Climate Change, Conflict and Peace' was published on the Toda website for endorsements. At the time of the Tokyo workshop the Declaration had got more than 1800 endorsements, and currently (May 2020) the number stands at over 8200*.*

The Declaration builds on the debates of the Auckland workshop, making a case for policy-relevant research and evidence-based policy advice when dealing with climate change-related security issues and conflicts, for example, with regard to migration, forced displacement and planned relocation. These types of climate change-related human mobility are a pressing issue in many PICs already today. They are particularly concerning because of the special land/people connection of Pacific communities. People often are torn between the desire to stay put and the need to migrate or plan for resettlement for cases when islands become uninhabitable. Migration in the Pacific context is particularly conflict-prone. There are conflicts between settlers and destination communities, or conflicts in the informal settlements of urban centres in the Pacific. Toda has published several Policy Briefs on this topic[2].

But the Declaration is not only of interest because of the climate change related issues that were identified as conflict-prone or already contributing to violent conflict in the Pacific region such as resource scarcity, food insecurity and in particular climate change-induced migration, but also with regard to how conflict-sensitive and peace-supporting climate change policies should look. It opts for the inclusion of "dimensions of the climate change – conflict nexus which so far have been widely ignored or underestimated, such as cultural and spiritual aspects, gender, traditional customary law and knowledge, together with contemporary indigenous knowledge and indigenous ways of climate change adaptation, of conflict transformation and peacebuilding"[3]. It stresses the importance of "weaving

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[2] See Policy Briefs by Christiane Fröhlich and Silja Klepp (Number 29, 2018), Volker Boege and Ursula Rakova (Number 33, 2019), Kate Higgins and Josiah Maesua (Number 36, 2019), and John Campbell (Number 37, 2019) at https://toda.org/policy-briefs-and-resources/policy-briefs-list.html

[3] All direct quotes in the Appendix are from the Toda Pacific Declaration on Climate Change, Conflict and Peace', https://toda.org/pacific-declaration.html

together traditional ecological knowledge with climate science" and of "overcoming human-centred approaches, which separate people from nature, nurturing the concept of relationality which will deepen connections between people and other living beings and the material and immaterial worlds". Moreover, the Declaration's approach is highly dialogical, stressing the importance of linkages and relations and relationality, using terms like 'building bridges', 'supporting bridging institutions', 'regional dialogue' and 'weaving together'. This approach also figured prominently in the Tokyo workshop. We therefore document the Declaration here:

The Toda Pacific Declaration on Climate Change, Conflict and Peace

Explanatory Note
In 2018, the Toda Peace Institute and the National Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies (University of Otago, New Zealand) conducted a workshop on "Climate Change and Conflict in the Pacific: Prevention, Management and the Enhancement of Community Resilience" in Auckland, New Zealand.[1]
This 'Toda Pacific Declaration on Climate Change, Conflict and Peace' flows from the debates and findings of that workshop.

Preamble
Recognising that the Pacific is a climate change hotspot, with Pacific Islands Countries (PICs) being particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change,
Recognising that terrestrial and marine ecosystems, and the livelihoods of communities are under threat from climate change, including threats to: culture, food, land, water and health, which are intensifying under these pressures,
Recognising that the impacts of climate change are resulting in internal (within a nation) and international migration, seen in the increasing frequency of relocations of entire communities across the Pacific,
Recognising that climate change induced pressures, combined with existing vulnerabilities, can lead to conflict, and even violent conduct of conflict, thus threatening peace, human security and stability, both within countries and at the regional level,
Concerned that in the international debate surrounding the climate change–security nexus, PICs have attracted less attention than other parts of the world, despite the vulnerability of the region to the conflict-prone effects of climate change,
Convinced that there is an urgent need in the region for policy-relevant research, and evidence-based policy advice, on the issue of climate change, conflict and peace so as to foster the elaboration and implementation of policies and strategies,
We declare the following:

Findings, Principles and Guidelines
1. Climate change adaptation and mitigation responses require integrated foundations, based on dynamic and adaptive co-management approaches that bring together the best contemporary and traditional modes.

   These include the following dimensions:

1. Integrating the knowledge and activities of stakeholders from different societal spheres such as: communities, government institutions (e.g. national and sub-national governments), traditional customary representatives (e.g. chiefs, elders and other cultural and wisdom custodians), religious faith communities (e.g. churches), as well as civil society agencies (e.g. NGOs),

2. Building the wide variety of significant cultural and spiritual contexts of the Pacific into climate adaptation responses,

3. Weaving together traditional ecological knowledge with climate science,

4. Linking the international climate legal regime with state and traditional customary laws,

5. Building linkages between all levels of climate change governance, from the local to the international,

6. Supporting bridging institutions which have the capacity to bring together stakeholders from various governance levels, societal spheres, localities, and with different worldviews. Such bridging institutions can be civil society organisations, in particular in PICs the churches and other religious communities and institutions, educational institutions and/or networks of leaders who are familiar with both the 'modern' and the 'traditional' worlds.

2. There is a real risk that climate change-related conflicts may escalate across the Pacific. These will include conflicts over land and scarce natural resources, conflicts due to climate-induced displacement, conflicts in the aftermath of extreme climatic events (such as cyclones and floods), as well as conflicts arising from inadequate environmental governance or poorly designed and implemented climate change policies and adaptation and mitigation measures. The impacts of climate change, combined with pre-existing vulnerabilities and other factors, such as population pressures and rapid urbanisation, multiply the likelihood of conflict and even of violent conflict escalation, as well as an increase of everyday violence, in particular gender-based violence. Therefore climate change adaptation responses require conflict prevention and conflict-sensitive approaches that prioritise local contexts and the maintenance of peace.

    This encompasses:

1. Identifying and mitigating key local, national and international vulnerabilities which, when combined with the effects of climate change, threaten the peace and security of societies and communities, from threats to the sovereignty of states to everyday violence (particularly against women and children),

2. Prioritising research which pays attention to the complexity of integrated human (economic, social, political and cultural) and natural systems,

3. Including dimensions of the climate change–conflict nexus which so far have been widely ignored or underestimated, such as cultural and spiritual aspects, gender, traditional customary law and knowledge, together with contemporary indigenous knowledge and

indigenous ways of climate change adaptation, of conflict transformation and peacebuilding,

4. Paying attention to the (unintentional) conflict-prone effects of mitigation and adaptation measures, e.g. reforestation projects that lead to the displacement of communities,

5. Developing context-specific conflict analysis and training tools, and organising comparative learning exchanges,

6. Documenting cases of climate-related conflicts to identify lessons learned for conflict prevention and resolution, e.g. conflicts resulting from climate change–induced forced relocation of communities, or violence against women which may increase due to resource scarcity,

7. Focusing on regional dialogue as crucial to the development of conflict-sensitive climate change adaptation responses.

3. The effects of climate change may require the resettlement of communities (e.g. relocating villages and infrastructure to higher grounds). These processes need conflict sensitive planning, involving affected communities from the onset.

   This involves:

1. Acknowledging the inseparable connection of Pacific people(s) to the land (vanua, fenua, fanua, 'aina, whenua, enua, fonua, te aba ...) which is fundamentally, culturally and spiritually, linked to identity. Therefore the loss of land means a loss of cultural identity. This worldview needs to be incorporated in responses to climate change challenges,

2. Respecting the desire of people to stay and adapt their home territory to the effects of climate change whenever possible, as well as the need to plan for relocation when there are no other options,

3. Integrating the needs, interests and expectations of both resettlement and destination communities, as well as other social groups and stakeholders,

4. Ensuring that both resettling and destination communities are meaningfully included, and participate fully, in each stage of the resettlement process, based on ongoing dialogue with all parties.

4. There are dimensions that are central to Pacific peoples' lives and cultures which are not usually addressed in climate discourse. These include: emotions, spiritual connections, traditional laws, knowledge and practices, faith, gender, relationality and the more-than-human world. These aspects are highly relevant for conflict prevention and the maintenance of peace.

   An approach that is sensitive to these dimensions encompasses:

1. Including differing worldviews in responses to climate change,

2. Highlighting the injustices inherent in the impacts of climate change pertaining to communities and nature across PICs, acknowledging that PICs' contribution to greenhouse gas emissions is negligible, while they at the same time bear the brunt of the negative effects of climate change,

3. Overcoming human-centred approaches, which separate people from nature,

4. Nurturing the concept of relationality which will deepen connections between people and other living beings and the material and immaterial worlds,

5. Nurturing cross-cultural dialogue through engaging and sharing Pacific worldviews, knowledge systems and spirituality, and integrating 'Western' and Pacific ways of thinking,

6. Acknowledging the rights of future generations to a viable and peaceful planet,

7. Acknowledging the rights of nature through the protection of sustainable eco-systems, which in turn support a viable and peaceful planet,

8. Focusing on education, including traditional and local knowledge, as crucial for conflict-sensitive adaptation responses,

9. Recognising the roles and responsibilities of churches and religious communities as influential civil society organisations across the Pacific and their (actual and potential) leadership role with regard to climate change and conflict,

10. Strengthening international climate law to ensure its enforceability and capacity to protect vulnerable states such as PICs,

11. Looking at ways in which civil society actors (including religious institutions) can reinforce and help realise national and regional political efforts to respond to the negative impacts of climate change, and

12. Holding to account those actors who are responsible for the greenhouse gas emissions that cause immense problems and hardships for the people in PICs, demanding the substantial lowering of emissions and the setting and achieving of meaningful targets for the reduction of such emissions.

The Authors

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Toda Peace Institute

The **Toda Peace Institute** is an independent, nonpartisan institute committed to advancing a more just and peaceful world through policy-oriented peace research and practice. The Institute commissions evidence-based research, convenes multi-track and multi-disciplinary problem-solving workshops and seminars, and promotes dialogue across ethnic, cultural, religious and political divides. It catalyses practical, policy-oriented conversations between theoretical experts, practitioners, policymakers and civil society leaders in order to discern innovative and creative solutions to the major problems confronting the world in the twenty-first century (see www.toda.org for more information).

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