



PACIFIC SYMPOSIUM ON LOSS AND DAMAGE

Understanding Non-Economic Losses: Data, policy and capacity for action

Co-Organized by United Nations, CROP agencies and the Santiago Network

DATES

28-29 September 2026

LOCATION

Tanoa International Hotel,
Nadi, Fiji

HELD AS PART OF

Pacific Climate Week

Concept Note and Programme

Background and rationale

Small island developing States of the Pacific are among the most exposed to and impacted by the negative consequences of climate change. Among other things, their reality is characterized by sea-level rise, ocean warming and acidification, changing rainfall patterns, and more frequent and severe cyclones. The impact is seen in coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion, flooding, food security, and critical infrastructure. The socio-economic and environmental toll is growing, and climate risks with it.

Beyond economic costs, Pacific communities are increasingly highlighting non-economic losses as a critical dimension of climate impacts. These include the loss of cultural heritage, indigenous knowledge systems, identity, sense of place, and spiritual connections to land and ocean. Human mobility, specifically displacement and potential relocation, is another critical concern, particularly as it is deeply connected with territory, traditions, languages, and identity.

Loss and damage has therefore become a priority for the Pacific. Regionally, inter-governmental entities, like the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Pacific Community (SPC), are supporting countries through awareness, capacity-building and technical assistance projects such as SPREP's Loss and Damage Capacity and Capability Project, Building our Loss and Damage Response (BOLD Project), and the Danish-funded project through SPC. Countries are pursuing action regionally and nationally on measuring loss and damage, including NEL, revising policy frameworks, and exploring options for financing.

SYMPOSIUM FOCUS

This two-day symposium will convene subnational, national, regional and international policymakers, practitioners, experts and community representatives. Emphasis will be placed on the latest science on loss and

damage in the region, alongside practical and locally grounded approaches to addressing NELs. It will also seek to strengthen enabling conditions, particularly data, policy coherence, finance, institutional and human capacity development, and methodological tools and standards, to support effective responses in the region.

Target audience

GOVERNMENT Pacific government representatives	REGIONAL CROP agencies
SCIENCE Scientists and researchers, including IPCC authors and academic institutions	PARTNERS UN, international and regional organizations; bilateral and multilateral donors supporting loss and damage and NEL
COMMUNITIES Civil society, Indigenous Peoples and local community leaders	WIDER NETWORK Other non-state stakeholders

Objectives

The symposium will:

- Foster knowledge exchange on evidence, tools, and approaches for understanding and addressing NELs, particularly in the Pacific.
- Explore existing and emerging methodologies and practices to measure, monitor, and value NELs in Pacific SIDS.
- Identify ways to strengthen and sustain enabling conditions, particularly data, policy coherence, and institutional capacity, for integrating NELs into national strategies and international processes, with a view to laying the groundwork for improved access to finance and capacity-building over time.
- Contribute to the growing body of evidence and outputs on loss and damage for the Pacific, bringing greater attention to the issues and concerns and supporting more targeted action.

Expected outcomes

The symposium is expected to result in:

- **Shared understanding** of NEL dimensions, challenges, and implications for countries, communities, and ecosystems.
- **Practical demonstrations** of tools and methodologies through interactive breakout sessions.
- **Enhanced collaboration** across UN agencies, academia, civil society, and local communities, centring Global South perspectives in support of developing countries.

Pathways for use

Where appropriate, the symposium will provide substantive inputs for:

- The Pacific report on loss and damage.
- Targeted support from regional and international organizations.
- Country and regional reports, including transparency reporting under the UNFCCC and Paris Agreement and reporting under other multilateral frameworks (the Sendai Framework, Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and UN Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD), among others).

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

DAY 1 | 28 SEPTEMBER 2026*Evidence | methods | learning by doing | regional and country practice*

TIME (GMT+12)	SESSION	FOCUS
08:00–09:00	REGISTRATION	
09:00–09:30	OPENING SESSION <i>Welcome remarks & Keynotes</i>	
09:30–10:30	SCENE SETTING SESSION Understanding Non-Economic Losses (NELs) in a Changing Climate	Overview of the loss and damage landscape in the Pacific region; positioning the symposium at global and regional levels. Presentation on the first Pacific Symposium on loss and damage in 2025 in Savusavu (SPC) and the regional, national and community loss and damage dialogues and other initiatives on loss and damage in eight Pacific countries (SPREP) as well as the recent NELs consultation with representative from the Pacific Regional Gathering of the LCIPP (Aug 2026).
10:30–11:00	Group Photo and Morning Tea Break	
11:00–12:00	THEMATIC SESSION 1 Evidence on NELs - Measuring what matters and what can be measured	Approaches to NELs: Presentation of emerging and existing frameworks for assessing and responding to NELs; discussion of baselines, data standards, and implications for assessing and addressing NELs.
WORLD CAFÉ - EXPLORING NELS THROUGH THEMATIC DISCUSSIONS		
12:00–13:30	SESSION 1 Biodiversity and ecosystem services & Culture, heritage and identity	
13:30–14:30	Lunch Break	
14:30–16:00	SESSION 2 Health and wellbeing & Territory and Human Mobility	
Working Tea break		
16:00–17:00	BREAKOUT SESSIONS - WRAP UP	Discussion and wrap-up of breakouts. Synthesis of overall observations on progress, gaps and recommendations for

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME

DAY 2 | 29 SEPTEMBER 2026*Policy and governance | community perspectives | enabling action | finance and capacity*

TIME (GMT+12)	SESSION	FOCUS
09:00-10:00	THEMATIC SESSION 2 Experience and perspectives on implementation from national to local levels	Lessons from applied NEL assessments; usability of tools and guidance, how evidence informs decision-making; voices from community level and across sectors and stakeholders; gender-responsive and inclusive approaches; and ensuring genuinely locally led implementation
10:00-11:00	THEMATIC SESSION 3 Policy and Governance Pathways for NELs	NDCs, L&D Frameworks, NAPs, DRR strategies, national response plans, SDGs, and displacement-sensitive planning; discussion of institutional arrangements, legal and regulatory options, and coordination across ministries and governance levels.
11:00-11:30	Tea Break	
11:30-12:30	THEMATIC SESSION 4 From Recognition to Action: Advocacy on Non-Economic Losses through National and International Processes	Experience from country and agency level in advocating for the importance of addressing NEL in national and international/multilateral processes.
12:30-13:30	Lunch Break	
13:30 – 15:00	THEMATIC SESSION 5 Finance and capacity development as enablers of averting, minimizing and addressing NELs	Status and perspectives from loss and damage bodies and institutions on NELs. Short pitches from finance institutions on available funding instruments related to NELs for the Pacific region.
15:00- 15:15	Coffee Break	
15:15-16:30	BREAKOUT SESSION - Synthesis and way forward <i>Synthesis of key messages, recommendations, next steps, and opportunities for continued collaboration.</i>	
16:30-17:00	CLOSING PLENARY	

CO-ORGANIZERS AND CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS

