

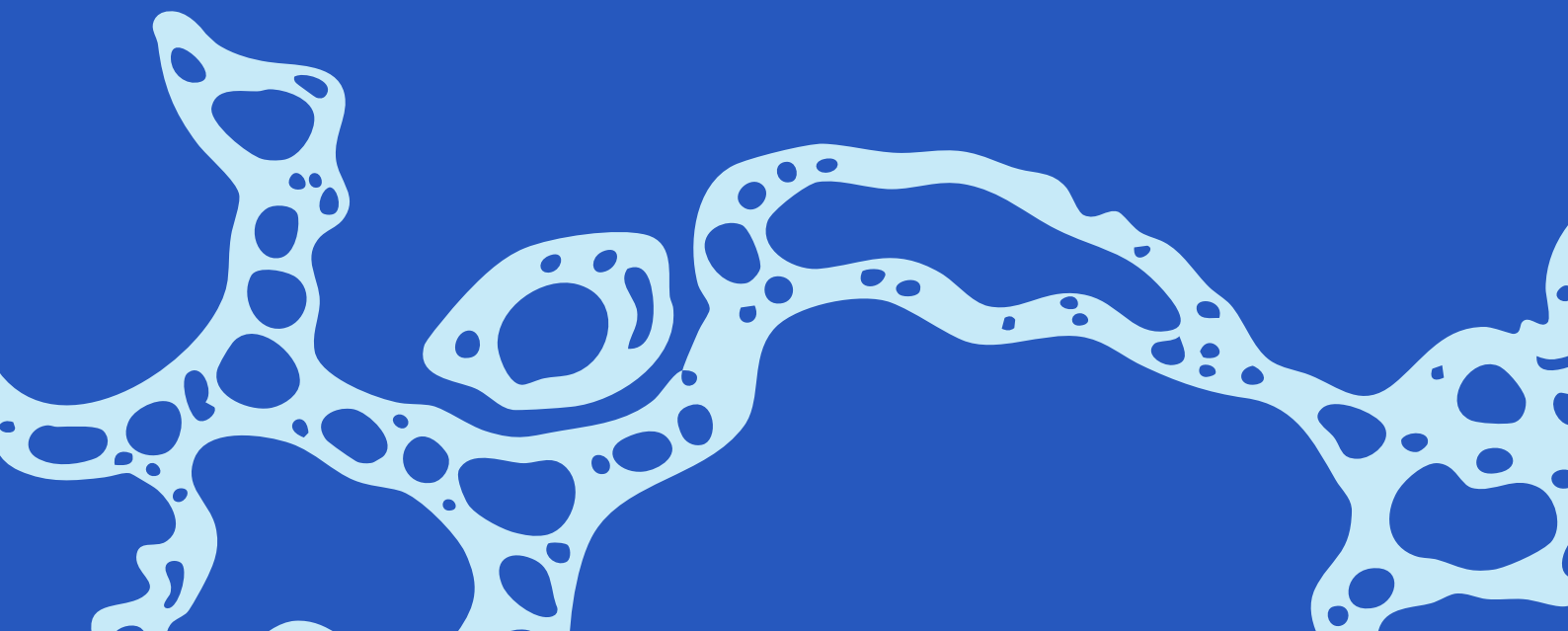


Alliance For Future
Generations

Saltwater in Our Blood: Talanoa Outcomes & Key Messages

— **Litiana Lagibalavu**

Pacific Climate & Health Talanoa
Narewa Village, Nadi, Fiji
8 October 2026



Recognition and Commitment

We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the lands and waters across the region, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples in Australia, Māori in Aotearoa, and the Indigenous peoples of the Pacific. We recognise their enduring sovereignty, deep cultural knowledge, and continuing connection to place. We commit to listening, learning, and working in ways that honour and reflect Indigenous ways of being and knowing in our shared pursuit of health equity.

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Saltwater in Our Blood:

Talanoa Outcomes & Key Messages



Message 1:

We Are Not Just Vulnerable — We Are the Experts in the Room

“Our peoples are often described as vulnerable to climate change. But we are not only vulnerable peoples. We are also peoples who carry knowledge, practices, cultures and solutions that have been passed down through generations.”

— Daniel Hama, President of the National Youth Council of Kanaky

“All the experts in climate are in this room and they have brown faces... The mana and prestige sits in the Pacific, not elsewhere, we are not the people who should be holding their hand out.”

— Dr. Ihirangi (Ihi) Heke, Māori Indigenous Scholar (Aotearoa)

The ask:

Recognise Pacific peoples — Indigenous peoples, youth, women, and communities — as rights-holders, knowledge holders, and decision-makers. Shift the narrative from Pacific victimhood to agency. Partners must move from extracting our data to equitable co-production of knowledge, recognising that Traditional Knowledge and climate science offer complementary strengths.

Message 2:

Health Is Not Just About Disease — It Is About Water, Food, Land, Belonging and Future

“Health is not only about being free from disease. Health is also about having clean water. Having safe food. Having a safe place to live. Having somewhere for our children to play. Having a sense of belonging. And being able to imagine a future in the place we call home.”

— Daniel Hama, President of the National Youth Council of Kanaky

“Climate and mental health with fishermen, stigma attached to mental health issues. As a community we need to have solidarity.”

— John Itaka, community representative (Kiribati)

The ask:

Climate-health policy must address the social, cultural, and environmental determinants of health — not just clinical services. Water security, food sovereignty, safe housing, and cultural connection are health infrastructure. Furthermore, mental health and psychosocial support must be funded, culturally grounded and destigmatised, particularly for men and those whose livelihoods depend on the ocean.

Message 3:

Loss of Place Is Loss of Memory, Identity and Health

“When climate change destroys that tree, dries up the river that feeds it, or damages the land around it, we do not lose only a tree. We lose a part of our memory. We weaken a chain of transmission. We put at risk the connection between generations.”

— Daniel Hama, President of the National Youth Council of Kanaky

“When we lose these places, we also lose the spaces where generations of memories were made.”

— Aselu O’Brien, Pacific Climate Warriors (Tuvalu)

“Relationship to space, mountain to sea and beyond the horizon. Ancestors, identity... Cultural memory, sacred places, country, cultural transmission.”

— Senator Hugues Vhemavhe, Former President of the Kanaky Customary Senate

The ask:

Non-economic loss and damage must not be monetised. Land, language, burial grounds, ceremonial spaces, totemic species, and the relationships that sustain them cannot be priced. Recognise this as a condition of justice and provide adequate, accessible, and additional finance without using valuation as a reason to withhold support. Relocation must remain a last resort.

Message 4:

Climate Action Must Be Gender-Responsive — and That Means SRHR

“When a cyclone or flood hits and a pregnant woman cannot reach a health facility, that is a climate-health issue. When a girl in an evacuation centre does not have menstrual products, clean water, sanitation or privacy, that is a climate-health issue. When women lose access to contraception, HIV and STI services, maternal healthcare or other essential reproductive health services, that is a climate-health issue. And when women and girls face increased risks of gender-based violence during displacement, that is also a climate-health and protection issue.”

— Alanieta Atama, Fiji Women’s Rights Movement / AFG Fiji

“Stillbirths in increased numbers. Pregnancy related stress, smaller birthweights... Looking to Pacific leadership to see what the Caribbean can learn and reciprocate.”

— Dr. Georgiana Gordon-Strachan, Director, CAIHR (Jamaica)

The ask:

Sexual and reproductive health and rights (SRHR) must be carried in the operative text of climate policy. Continuity of SRHR services during and after disasters and in relocation settings must be guaranteed as a right — never as a courtesy extended after the crisis. Fund research into the impacts of extreme heat on maternal and neonatal health.

Message 5:

Disability and Heat: A Matter of Life and Death

“Bodies not adapting to heat, temperature regulation is disturbed. Not sweating when needed. Sugar affecting ability to sweat... Albinism in the Pacific no ability to cope with extreme heat, no melanin to protect the skin... Infrastructure does not meet people with a disability across ramps, mobility, early warning systems that exclude deaf people.”

— Sainimili Tawake, CEO, Pacific Disability Forum

The ask:

Disability inclusion must be a standard, not a courtesy. Extreme heat is not just an inconvenience; for people with disabilities, those with albinism, and those with underlying NCDs, it is life-threatening. Climate adaptation and early warning systems must be fully accessible, and heat-health action plans must explicitly protect people with disabilities.

Message 6:

Move from Promises to Delivery — Finance, Implementation, Accountability

“We have talked for years. Pacific leaders have spoken. Pacific communities have spoken. Young people have spoken. And now, as we continue to fight to keep 1.5 alive, we need to move from promises to delivery. From commitments to implementation. From words to action. We need to walk the talk.”

— Aselu O’Brien, Pacific Climate Warriors (Tuvalu)

The ask:

Predictable, long-term, locally accessible finance behind Pacific-led climate-health priorities. A dedicated health quota in climate finance to prevent budget dilution. Grant-based loss and damage, not loans. Simplified access for community-led health projects. Transparent tracking of allocations and disbursements so funds reach the grassroots, not just national capitals.

Message 7:

Youth Are Not Just the Future — We Are the Present

“We are not asking only to be protected. We are asking to be heard. We are asking to be included in decision-making. And we are asking for our relationship with the land, the ocean, and all living things to be recognised and respected.”

— Daniel Hama, President of the National Youth Council of Kanaky

“Promoting women to places of decision... Nothing about [us] without us.”

— Senator Hugues Vhemavhe, Former President of the Kanaky Customary Senate

The ask:

Institutionalised youth and women’s participation with decision-making power, resources, and influence from the outset. Youth as co-authors of NDCs and NAPs. Funded, accredited places on national delegations. Formal report-back mechanisms after COP31. A regional knowledge repository and mentorship model so each cohort inherits briefings, positions, and relationships.

Message 8:

Protect and Invest in Pacific Traditional Knowledge and Traditional Medicine

“In our communities, our ceremonial and gathering spaces are places where generations come together, where the words and wisdom of our elders are passed on to young people, and where our culture continues to live.”

— Daniel Hama, President of the National Youth Council of Kanaky

“If you want knowledge then you may want to consider how you share with the people who have the knowledge... Extraction of data and information that has not been written down has become precious, but we need to discern who has access to it.”

— Dr. Ihirangi (Ihi) Heke, Māori Indigenous Scholar (Aotearoa)

The ask:

Support Pacific ownership and equitable co-production of Traditional and scientific knowledge. Protect traditional medicinal knowledge and include holistic Indigenous health paradigms in mitigation and adaptation plans. Traditional knowledge is not training data. Knowledge taken without consent is theft.

Message 9:

The Ocean Is Not a Border — It Is Our Life

“For us, the land is not property. The ocean is not a border. Nature is not simply a resource. It is our life.”

— Daniel Hama, President of the National Youth Council of Kanaky

“The passport is in our blood... We can’t be dragged as a second canoe behind the big canoe.”

— Barbara Iubai, Climate Collective Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait)

“Saltwater is in our blood. So when we protect our ocean, we are protecting our health.”

— Aselu O’Brien, Pacific Climate Warriors (Tuvalu)

The ask:

Establish oceans as a dedicated and recurring negotiating stream under the UNFCCC. Reject deep-sea mining. End the Pacific as a sacrifice zone. Decarbonise international shipping with a levy whose revenue is allocated in significant part to island States. Recognise the ocean-climate-health nexus.

Message 10:

Name Colonialism, Patriarchy and Militarisation as Drivers of Vulnerability

“Structure of COP is excluding us from our kin, the political borders... Old people, babies and sick people have to endure heat that is rising.”

— Barbara Iubai, Climate Collective Zenadth Kes (Torres Strait)

“Colonialism, patriarchy and militarisation are drivers of climate vulnerability in Oceania, and a response designed without naming them will not reach the people carrying the heaviest burden.”

— RCOY-Oceania 2026

The ask:

Recognise in regional and multilateral climate spaces that colonialism, patriarchy, and militarisation are structural drivers of climate vulnerability. Monitor and report on the health effects of militarisation, including nuclear testing, contamination, and waste dumping. Mandate treatment and support for affected communities and their descendants.

Message 11:

The Law Is on Our Side — Demand a Reckoning, Not Just Reform

“The UNFCCC was never designed to deliver climate justice. It was designed to manage a political problem while preserving the status quo... We are now in a position to demand something unprecedented: not just reform, but a reckoning with the foundational inequities that have shaped global climate governance from the start.”

— Litiana Lagibalavu, AFG Co-focal Point and CAHA Pacific Partnerships Coordinator,
Synthesis of Talanoa reflections

The ask:

Operationalise the 2025 ICJ Advisory Opinion. States are legally bound to prevent significant harm to the climate system. A failure to regulate fossil fuels, provide adequate finance, and uphold human rights is an internationally wrongful act. The Pacific must use the ICJAO, UNCLOS, and the Paris Agreement to hold major emitters legally accountable and force a structural reckoning in the UNFCCC process.



"We reject a future in which the Pacific is remembered for what the world allowed to disappear. We claim instead a future shaped by ourselves, not as passive victims of climate change, but as active agents of justice, custodians of our lands and ocean, and leaders of the transformation the world urgently needs."

-The Funafuti Call for Climate Justice

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