



Dr Dean Rex at COP26 – Photo Credit SPREP



Niue National Statement
Dr. Dean Rex, Special Envoy to Niue
Government of Niue
COP 26 High Level Segment
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Glasgow, UK

Excellencies.

Distinguished guests.

Delegates.

Fellow small island developing states and especially Niue's Pacific family...a warm fakaalofa lahi atu to you all.

It is my distinct privilege to convey this message to you, on behalf of my Premier, the Honourable Dalton Tagelagi and the people of Niue.

Niue extends its gratitude to the United Kingdom, to the city of Glasgow and its welcoming people. To the Rt Hon Alok Sharma, President of COP26, we commend you and your team on the enormous effort in hosting this conference and we commit our full support for a successful outcome.

Mr President.

19 years ago, Niue's premier addressed the World Summit on Sustainable Development. He said "history and our children would judge us" and at

COP26 my friends, the message is the same. History and our children will judge us – that we are failing. As a global family we should have made much more progress by now, so that no country should have to come to another COP and say that line again.

For decades we have heard promises of ambition and yet time after time there is no action, only targets and failed promises.

We must achieve success here, not just for us but for our children and their children.

Mr President.

This covid-19 pandemic and the subsequent economic crisis has seen the world take bold action in dealing with it.

Central banks mobilised trillions to combat the crisis.

Covid-19 vaccines were produced in record time.

Let us now apply that bold, decisive action to fighting climate change.

Mr President.

In Paris in 2015, we all agreed to pursue efforts to limit global warming to less than 1.5 degrees celcius. (HAND SIGNAL 1.5).

The recent IPCC report shows that we are failing, we are heading for 2.7 degrees.

The UN Secretary General said the report was a “code red for humanity”.

Code Red!

COP26 must finalise the Paris Agreement.

Mr President.

In recent years, Niue has experienced an increase in frequency and severity of tropical cyclones. We have suffered huge economic and non-economic loss.

To mitigate for these threats, vulnerable infrastructure has had to be relocated at great cost.

Loss and damage must be addressed using not just insurance facilities, with exorbitant premiums we cannot afford, but other creative financial instruments.

Mr President.

Niue’s carbon emissions are almost zero and yet we have made bold commitments in our Nationally Determined Contributions.

Currently, solar energy provides 38% of our national power grid and our target is 80% by 2025.

What we do is tiny in the global scheme. What we need, is a bolder commitment to reducing emissions by the world’s largest polluters.

Fossil fuel subsidies must be phased out and redirected to adaptation and mitigation efforts.

Niue calls upon the G20 nations and big business for greater commitments in their NDCs to meet the necessary ambition and to keep 1.5 alive.

Mr President.

Many of us have faced significant challenges in accessing climate finance. The process needs to be simpler and quicker to ensure climate programmes are not scuttled before they get off the ground.

We call on you to support the pathways that work for developing countries and invest in sustainable finance mechanisms that take into consideration our absorptive capacity and will build our capability incrementally.

We need a clear path forward to operationalize the Global Goal on Adaptation (GGA). A path that is sufficiently flexible to reflect the unique contexts of individual LDCs and SIDS, that supports locally appropriate implementation and does not increase the reporting burden.

This clear roadmap for the GGA needs to be set as an outcome for COP26.

Mr President.

Niue shares the Blue Ocean Continent. Our ocean is a vital heirloom that connects us to our ancestors and a precious legacy we wish to hand to our future generations.

To this end, Niue has made a large contribution to the Ocean Climate Nexus.

We have designated 40% ie. 127000 sq km of our sovereign waters, as a Marine Protected Area, the global ask is 30%.

This has mitigation, adaptation, and resilience benefits for Niue and will be reflected in our updated NDCs.

Mr President.

COP26 cannot be remembered as just another COP, it must be remembered as the COP that put humanity back on track towards keeping the 1.5 degree target alive.

In the end, you are free to choose but we all are not free from the consequences of your choices.

Thank you for listening.

Ki a monuina.