

SIDS workshop - Land Governance and Climate change in Fiji

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SUMMARY

Immediately after the wrath of Tropical Cyclone Winston on the Fiji Islands there are discussions in place to enforce a “national building standard” across the nation. This is aimed at certified buildings by Structural Engineers on the type of homes built to reduce damages compared to the latest. The proposal would apply to all across the nation and to include all villages and settlements. There are no exceptions to all those buildings to be built in the towns and cities. Also to this effect all coastal villages prone to the effect of sea level rise have been identified and to be relocated to higher grounds. This is a Fiji Government initiative and the re-building of these villages is to be monitored. The Fiji Government had established a Climate Change Office that is responsible to all related issues regarding climate change and sea level rise. For the forum’s information the National Climate Change Policy for the Republic of Fiji was endorsed by Parliament on 19th January 2012. Recently the influx of people of all ages from the ravaged islands and the rural areas after TC Winston only add more problems to the rapid growth in the urban centres. Most people move into the informal settlements are susceptible to very poor housing and un-healthy living conditions.

The remedial action to these we believe is to acquire the native lands which would be very costly but with a better planned development. Also there are proposals in place to increase the capacity of infrastructure to accommodate such demands. We anticipate that the Government of the day would subsidise such land developments so that lots available are affordable to the low income earners.

Conclusions include: The need for partnership, to share and collaborate to reduce duplication in these efforts. The need for capacity and professional development including strengthening of teaching and training institutions. Need a “Leader” – to make things happen.