



# Fact sheet:

## The role of adaptation in the Pacific

### The terms defined

**Mitigation** aims to avoid the unmanageable impacts of climate change<sup>1</sup>

**Adaptation** aims manage the unavoidable<sup>1</sup>

### References

<sup>1</sup> Laukkonen, J. Blanco, P.K. Lenhart, J. Keiner, M. Cavric, B. & Kinuthis-Njenga, C. 2009, 'Combining climate change adaptation and mitigation measures at the local level', *Habitat International*, vol. 33, pp. 287-292.

### The issue

There is already unequivocal evidence that climate change is taking effect. To be effective, the response to climate change must be twofold: to mitigate and to adapt.

The main objective of mitigation strategies is to reduce or avoid the impacts of climate change. This requires a global response. The accumulation of CO<sub>2</sub> and other GHGs is not regionally specific. With the lack of ambitious mitigation strategies at the global level, local communities must fear the worst.

In the Pacific there are constant threats to the day-to-day way of life. As sea levels gradually rise, crop fields and fresh water sources become inundated. The higher frequency of tropical storms creates ongoing issues of storm surges, damage to infrastructure, displacement of homes and families and loss of life.

### The solution

Adaptation measures allow regionally or locally specific areas to manage the unavoidable impacts of climate change. By predicting the future impacts, a community can adapt to a more resilient way of life.

For example, a coastal community may anticipate that extreme storm events become more frequent and more severe. By adapting the infrastructure and land use accordingly, this community can have less economic and social

impacts as a result of climate change.

Regulations and requirements such as building standards, storm water drainage capacity, coastal setbacks and alternative water supply are key aspects in community adaptation. The difficulty for these communities is funding.

### Next Steps

At the moment the Pacific are immobilised by the lack of policy, the lack of funding and the lack of action. Project Survival Pacific hopes to assist Pacific Island nations with effective adaptation strategies, targeting governments on boosting funding to where it's needed and lobbying the community to take action.

We plan to assist the Pacific to build a self sustaining Pacific that utilises existing technology, designated funding and a whole lot of creativity to protect the culture and lifestyle of our Pacific Island neighbours.