

# **The 3<sup>rd</sup> Pacific Water and Wastewater Ministers Forum**

## **8 August 2017, Apia Samoa**

### **Communiqué**

1. The Third Pacific Water and Wastewater Ministers Forum was held in Apia, Samoa on 8 August 2017, and was attended by Deputy Prime Minister of Cook Islands, Ministers of State from Kiribati, Niue, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Tokelau, Tonga and Vanuatu. American Samoa, New Caledonia, Republic of Palau, and Tuvalu were represented by Permanent Secretaries of Water Utilities or Chairman of the Board Directors of Government Utilities.
2. Ministers and government representatives expressed their deep appreciation to the Government and people of Samoa through the Chairman, the Hon Minister of Works, Transport and Infrastructure for the excellent arrangements made for hosting the 2017 Water Ministers Forum and for the kind hospitality extended to them during their stay in Apia.

#### **Concept Paper**

3. Ministers and government representatives noted the Concept Paper prepared for the Forum and acknowledged the importance of a strategic level focus for the Forum in progressing regional and collective action for SDG6.

#### **Forum Secretariat Presentation on SDG 2030, SAMOA Pathway & Pacific Regionalism**

4. Ministers and government representatives acknowledged and expressed deep appreciation to the representative of the Forum Secretariat for the comprehensive and informative presentation on the current status of the Pacific water and wastewater sector in relation to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), SAMOA Pathway and the Framework for Pacific Regionalism.
5. Ministers and government representatives took account of the stark reality presented in respect of the data and statistics on the state of water and sanitation in the Pacific reflecting the direct impact on public health and resolved to commit to improving on the status quo over the next decade and half.

## Country Statements

6. Ministers and government representatives shared experiences on specific concerns and challenges faced by their respective countries in respect of water and wastewater concerns, and how they are addressing these.
7. Ministers and government representatives re-affirmed their commitment to the sustainable social and economic development of Pacific Island nations and communities through effective and efficient provision of water and sanitation services.
8. Ministers and government representatives commended all efforts by all partners to improve services but nonetheless acknowledged the magnitude of responsibility required to advance further. A call for stronger partnerships and open dialogue amongst all alliances and network of people, governments, civil society, private sector and communities at large, all working together to achieve a future for present and future generations was recognized.
9. Ministers and government representatives recognized the critical impact of climate change on water resources of Pacific nations and the extensive nature of its impact on all sectors. Amid climate variability, growing populations, and rapid development and urbanisation, the need to meet basic water and sanitation needs becomes that more critical especially in our much smaller island countries.
10. Ministers and government representatives expressed appreciation to PWWA and its development partners for debuting a programme for young professionals in the water and wastewater sectors in this year's conference. It was recognized that building the capacity of the young leaders in the sector is very critical to respond to the future needs of Pacific countries in the sector.
11. Ministers and government representatives recognized and commended the progress made by all member countries to improve our people's access to safe water and sanitation services. Members noted and reiterated previous commitments to prioritize actions to address the following critical challenges:
  - (i) Investing in capacity and capability development so we can sustainably deliver safe, affordable and accessible water for our citizens, now and in the future ;
  - (ii) In particular, investing in the development of our young professionals, the strength of today and leaders of tomorrow;

- (iii) Mitigating climate change and disaster risks and building resilience in our water and sanitation systems;
- (iv) Ensuring that the unique contributions of women, persons with disabilities, youth and other vulnerable groups are valued and addressed effectively in the water and sanitation sector;
- (v) Increase focus on community awareness and engagement, that while all have a right to water, proper management practices and conservation measures should be encouraged and somewhat enforced.
- (vi) To continue best practices and to continue to apply necessary reforms in the management of utilities in a changing environment with limited resources.

PWWA Secretariat

8 August 2017