



**MERCY**  
INTERNATIONAL  
ASSOCIATION

# WATER AND EXTRACTIVISM

*Our stories, our communities, our resources*



## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY SISTER IN ARGENTINA

***"The deep economic crisis with huge foreign debt makes the IMF impose adjustment policies and causes more extractivism in Argentina. The government wants more agro-industrial monocultures, mega-mining and fracking using water basins for these extractive activities, leaving the populations with much less access to water in quantity and quality. There is a lot of resistance from the communities, but those who defend their territory and water are being prosecuted..."***

***I am participating in my region in the resistance against mega-mining and fracking, which are advancing without social consensus, and I educate about ecology and extractivism in a radio program. We also want to present an anti-megmining bill in this province of Río Negro."***

***Mercy Sister in Argentina***

## ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATION

***Actualize climate finance commitments, agree to robust accounting standards and concrete ways to enhance predictability of funds from the higher income to lower income countries. Recognize that the climate emergency is fuelling the accumulation of debt in lower income countries. Mercy Global Action has signed onto No Climate Justice without Debt Justice***

# **CENTERING PRAYER**

*by Virginia Fjfield, Mercy Associate*

Creator of all this is, we give thanks for the beauty you put in every facet of your creation. You made every stone, plant, creature and human perfect and whole and placed the sun, moon and stars as a part of the Sacred Hoop. You cause the clouds to rise over the earth and show us the power of your creation.

Help us to see with the eyes of children, the strength and beauty of all my relations, and help us to never become unable to stand in awe of all your hand has touched.

May we all come to understand that all creation is a living extension of your perfect love, and that it is our responsibility to care for your handiwork with humility, and gratitude.

Help us to slow down long enough to witness the beauty and power of all you have created.

May we once again have our breath stop as we see the magnificence of creation.

## **QUICK FACT**

[The fracking] process poses risks of air pollution, damage to crops and livestock, earthquakes, deforestation, significant greenhouse emissions, noise pollution, property damage and devaluation of homes, higher traffic accident rates and localized inflation as temporary workers drive up prices. (pg 10, A guide to rights- based advocacy)

## **FURTHER RESOURCES**

**WOMIN**

**WATER AND SANITATION A  
PEOPLES GUIDE TO SDG 6**

**BURNING DOWN OUR COMMON  
HOME**

**A GUIDE TO RIGHTS- BASED  
ADVOCACY**

**MINI SERIES ON EXTRACTIVE  
INDUSTRIES**

**BEGINNING CONVERSATIONS ON  
EXTRACTIVISM**





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# CLIMATE CHANGE EDUCATION

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## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY PARTNER IN THE USA

*"Education of those who do not experience the direct effects of climate change and water is critical in tackling the disproportionate impact of these issues on the earth, women, and those in poverty.*

*Classrooms are a place where our privilege, individual blindness, and apathy can be challenged, awareness can be raised, and our resources can be mobilized to build a just and more equitable planet for all life."*

*Mercy Partner in the USA*



## ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATION

*Ensure that young people, particularly girls and young women, are meaningfully included in the development, review, implementation and monitoring of all climate policies*

# PRAYER

Gracious God, Creator of All

We raise our hearts in grateful praise for all the beauty that surrounds us.

May we learn to respect all as a sacred gift and do what we can to repair the damage we have caused through our consumerism, greed and carelessness.

Grant us an ecological conversion so that we can leave our next generation with a future full of hope where there is enough for all.

We ask this in the name of Jesus.

Amen.

## QUICK FACTS

The world is home to 1.8 billion young people between the ages of 10 to 24 — the largest generation of youth in history. Young people are increasingly aware of the challenges and risks presented by the climate crisis and of the opportunity to achieve sustainable development brought by a solution to climate change. ([UN](#), [Youth in Action](#))



## FURTHER RESOURCES

[LAUDATO SI'](#)

[WATER AND SANITATION A PEOPLE'S GUIDE TO SDG 6](#)

[CLIMATE CHANGE YOUTH GUIDE TO ACTION](#)

[CLIMATE JUSTICE - MARY ROBINSON](#)

[GLOBAL RULES, LOCAL SOLUTIONS](#)

[FRANCISCANS INTERNATIONAL, HUMAN RIGHTS, SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE POLICIES: CONNECTING THE DOTS](#)

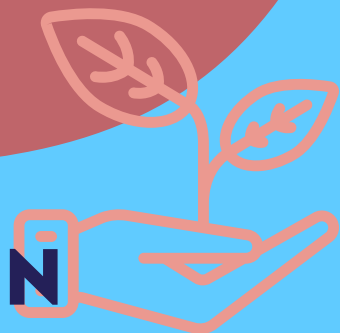


## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY SISTER IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

*In Papua New Guinea, "unsystematic agriculture destroys waterways underground as well as flowing rivers and creeks. Water is polluted and lost into the ground. It is the women and girls who are affected the most. Though we have a lot of water, about 60% of the population have no clean water. Many children die of diarrhea due to lack of sanitation and clean water. Education on the importance of water is very little as people are not aware of the damages or shortages of water."*

*Mercy Sister in Papua New Guinea*

## ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATION



*Recognize the human right to water and address unjust systems that limit access to, the protection of, and preservation of sufficient, safe, acceptable, physically accessible and affordable water and sanitation which enable people to maintain their well-being.*

# A PRAYER FOR OUR EARTH

All-powerful God, you are present in the whole universe and in the smallest of your creatures. You embrace with your tenderness all that exists. Pour out upon us the power of your love, that we may protect life and beauty. Fill us with peace, that we may live as brothers and sisters, harming no one. O God of the poor, help us to rescue the abandoned and forgotten of this earth, so precious in your eyes. Bring healing to our lives, that we may protect the world and not prey on it, that we may sow beauty, not pollution and destruction. Touch the hearts of those who look only for gain at the expense of the poor and the earth. Teach us to discover the worth of each thing, to be filled with awe and contemplation, to recognize that we are profoundly united with every creature as we journey towards your infinite light. We thank you for being with us each day. Encourage us, we pray, in our struggle for justice, love and peace.'

Pope Francis, *Laudato Si* 246

## QUICK FACTS

The PNG Government's WASH Policy 2015 - 2030 indicates that 89 per cent of people in urban areas and 33 percent in rural areas have access to safe water while 57 percent of urban dwellers and only 13 percent of the rural population have access to basic sanitation. (UNICEF)

## FURTHER RESOURCES

[DEGRADATION OF EARTH AND WATERWAYS - THERESIA TINA 2021](#)

[LAUDATO SI'](#)

[AQUA FONS VITAE '](#)

[COMPANION GUIDE ON WOMEN AND WATER](#)

[WOMEN'S EARTH AND CLIMATE ACTION NETWORK INTERNATIONAL PUBLICATION OF "WOMEN'S CLIMATE ACTION AGENDA"](#)





# TOXIC POLLUTION

*Our stories, our communities, our resources*



## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY PARTNER IN CAMBODIA

***In Cambodia, chemicals for agriculture "affect the quality of water/life." The "improper storage of chemical waste" due to "lack of education" means that "people don't know which chemicals are harmful to health and people don't know how to separate toxic materials (batteries)--particularly in rural areas --so these affect water sources. Explosive remains of the war – TNT inside mines also affect water; Factory waste goes into water sources; Improper dumping of plastics and rubber – significant change from 20 years ago; Drought in places that used to flood – affect animals and plant life"***

***Mercy Partner in Cambodia***

## ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATION

***Place people over profit. We oppose misuse of resources that damage the environment, including large scale extraction, deforestation and exploitation of the land and its people.***



# PRAYER

Creator God

Please forgive us...as we mix waters and chemicals and fracture the earth. Please forgive us ...as poisonous water leaches into aquifers... Please forgive us...as creation groans in pain and agony...

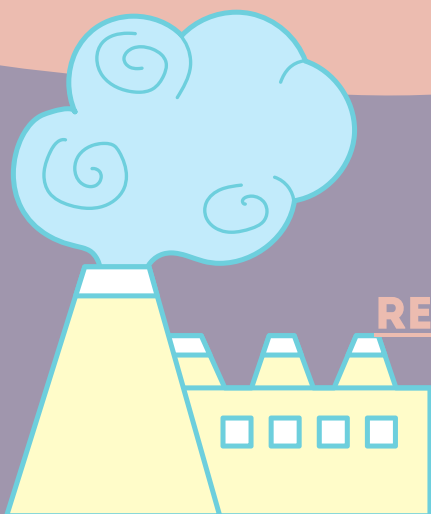
Creator God

Please forgive us...as we throw that straw on the ground... Please forgive us ...as we ignore the plastic bag blowing around... Please forgive us ...as we watch in horror of the giant plastic island gyres growing out to sea Please forgive us...as we say how did this come to be?

Thank you, God, ...for collaboration. For providing us with the capacity to see anew creation in all forms...me and you. Thank you for tree planting days and slow-food days. Thank you for beach clean-up days and clean stream days Thank you for giving me voice to air my concern to councilors on lack of action Thank you for marches and, rallies and community days Thank you, God, ...for enabling me to action.

## QUICK FACTS

More than 3 million people in Cambodia lack access to safe water, and 5 million lack access to improved sanitation. With approximately 77 percent of Cambodians living in rural areas, poor access to safe water and sanitation disproportionately affects its rural communities. (Water.org)



## FURTHER RESOURCES

[SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON TOXIC POLLUTION THEMATIC REPORTS](#)

[A GUIDE TO RIGHTS-BASED ADVOCACY](#)

[LAUDATO SI'](#)

[MOVING TOWARDS RESILIENCE: A STUDY OF CLIMATE CHANGE, ADAPTION AND MIGRATION](#)

[REMOVING BARRIERS TO JUSTICE: HOW A TREATY ON BUSINESS AND HUMAN RIGHTS COULD IMPROVE ACCESS TO REMEDY FOR VICTIMS"](#)





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## CLIMATE CHANGE & WATER

*Our stories, our communities, our resources*



### EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY SISTER IN AUSTRALIA

*"The Australian continent, because of its characteristics, faces growing challenges from the intersection between climate change and water. We anticipate - and this is confirmed by the recent scientific reports - more frequent and extreme droughts, bushfires, tropical cyclones and flooding. There is no reference in the Paris Climate Agreement to fossil fuels, but continuing fossil fuel extraction is causing huge issues for First Nations peoples in a couple of highly contentious contexts where new fracking and coal mining projects are threatening water sources with extreme depletion and which have sacred significance to local Aboriginal communities."*

*Mercy Sister in Australia*

## ADVOCACY

## RECOMMENDATION

*Reject false solutions that displace real solutions to the climate justice and agree on a robust, fair and cohesive set of implementation guidelines to solidify the Paris regime and a roadmap to finalize outstanding issues that contain solutions that are human rights-based and gender-just*

# PRAYER

For the times we ignore Climate Change and its effects  
For the Times we live wastefully  
For the times we do not think wider than ourselves  
For the times we make choices that impact the well-being of others  
For the times we do not appreciate the beauty and wonders of Earth  
For the Times we do not appreciate the giftedness of all life

Help us to change  
Help us to change  
Help us to change  
Help us to change  
Help us to change  
Help us to change

We are grateful for the gift of Earth  
We are grateful for the ability of Earth to nourish our bodies and souls  
We are grateful for the diversity of life on earth  
We are grateful for both the silence and the sounds of nature

We give thanks  
We give thanks  
We give thanks  
We give thanks

## QUICK FACTS

Australia is experiencing higher temperatures, more extreme droughts, fire seasons, floods and more extreme weather due to climate change. Rising sea levels add to the intensity of high-sea-level events and threaten housing and infrastructure. The number of days that break heat records has doubled in the past 50 years.  
(Australian Museum)



## FURTHER RESOURCES

IPCC REPORT

UNHCR KEY CONCEPTS ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER DISPLACEMENT

SIERRA CLUB "WOMEN ON THE MOVE IN A CHANGING CLIMATE"

CLIMATE CHANGE AND INDIGENOUS PERCEPTIONS

DISASTER DISPLACEMENT FOLLOW UP TO THE NANSSEN INITIATIVE

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL REPORT



**MERCY**  
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# PRIVATIZATION OF WATER

*Our stories, our communities, our resources*



## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY ASSOCIATE IN IRELAND

*The commodification and privatization of water has challenged us as a human community to consider how thoughtfully we advocate for the needs of our neighbor. Is water a basic human right? If so, how do we ensure access to clean, safe water for all? It is evident that our resource of fresh water is depleting and so we are challenged to consider the actuality of providing this resource. These questions and conversations might be easily answered on a human level (are you really prepared to deny someone a cup of water?), but they grow in complexity at the corporate and governmental levels. We see these water justice becoming reality in many of our communities. In Michigan (USA), we watch as community residents in one neighborhood suffer from lead poisoned water, while just a few miles away Nestle bottles millions of litres of fresh water from their lakes for profit. Those same lakes could be a resource for neighboring First Nations communities in Ontario (Canada). The longer we as a human community support the commodification and privatization of water, the more complex this problem becomes. It is a government's responsibility to protect its people and ensure viability for all life within its borders. And so, it is a government's responsibility to act swiftly to secure safe, clean water for all - our future is dependent on it.*

*Mercy Associate in Ireland*

## ADVOCACY

## RECOMMENDATION

*Prevent the commodification and privatization of water, increase public financing for water and sanitation services and empower local communities to protect watersheds (SDG 6 and 12).*

# PRAYER

Water blessing (Indigenous grandmothers) Prepare a bowl of clean water or stand beside a body of water. Pray for the water in apology (for polluting and disrespect). Then offer prayers of love, gratitude and respect. Raise both of your hands towards the water—your energy will be projected from your heart into the water through your hands. Your whole intention should be that the vibrations, which now fill the water, will spread to the waters all over our Mother Earth. You may also add your own prayer over the water, meditation, chanting, music, songs, dancing, and so on intending the same purpose. Pour a little bit of the water on their hand, with a loving thought, sprinkle the water away from you (as in spreading Seeds), then drink the water, with a feeling of gratitude. We thank all those who join us as we pray for the life of water for our future generations.”

## QUICK FACTS

Water privatization increases the price of water. For example, in Guayaquil, Ecuador, water prices increased by 180 percent after privatization. (Leo Heller, Report to the UN Secretary General)



## FURTHER RESOURCES

[WATER AND JUSTICE GUIDE](#)

[WATER AND WOMEN COMPANION GUIDE](#)

[LAUDATO SI'](#)

[BRIDGET CRISP RSM \(AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND\):  
'DEGRADATION OF THE EARTH:  
THE IMPACT ON THE PLANET SEEN THROUGH  
THE WORKS OF MERCY'](#)

[SPECIAL RAPPORTEUR ON THE HUMAN RIGHT  
TO WATER AND SANITATION'](#)



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# CLIMATE CHANGE

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## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY SISTER IN NEW ZEALAND

*"In" and "of" are two little words with very different implications. As an Aotearoa New Zealander I am "of" Oceania, "of" the Pacific not just "in" Oceania, "in" the Pacific. The island nations of this region are least responsible for climate change but most affected by lack of fresh water and rising seas. On 4 October, the Feast of St. Francis of Assisi, I participated in the online launch of the Caritas State of the Environment for Oceania 2021. This had been preceded by Caritas Oceania's online talanoa (28 September) at which stories were shared from the grassroots and coastal edges on environmental change in Tonga, Samoa, Papua New Guinea, Fiji, Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand. Each year, Caritas assesses the impact on communities of five key environmental signals: extreme weather; coastal erosion, coastal flooding and sea level rise; access to safe food and weather; offshore mining and drilling; and climate finance for the most vulnerable. I was deeply moved as I listened to the voices and experiences of indigenous peoples. "*

*Mercy Sister in New Zealand*

## ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATION

*Support efforts, including finance, technology and capacity-building, in order to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, at all levels, including the community, national, regional and international levels*

# WATER SCRIPTURE REFERENCES

The earth was a formless void and darkness was over the face of the deep. And the Spirit of God was hovering over the waters. Genesis 1:2

He leads me beside still waters. He restores my soul. Psalm 23

You visit the earth and water it; you greatly enrich it... Psalm 65:9

With joy you will draw water from the wells of salvation. Isaiah 12:3

I will pour water on the thirsty land, and streams on the dry ground. Isaiah 44:3

Come, everyone who thirsts, come to the waters! Isaiah 55:1

Moses stretched out his hand over the sea. The Lord drove the sea back by a strong east wind all night, and turned the sea into dry land; and the waters were divided. The Israelites went into the sea on dry ground, the waters forming a wall for them on their right and on their left. Exodus 14:21-2

And whoever gives one of these little ones even a cup of cold water in the name of a disciple—truly, I tell you, none of these will lose their reward. Matthew 10:42

Jesus laid aside his outer garments, and taking a towel, tied it around his waist. Then he poured water into a basin and began to wash the disciples' feet and to wipe them with the towel that was wrapped around him.

John 13:5

And let everyone who is thirsty come. Let anyone who wishes take the water of life as a gift. Revelation 22:1

## QUICK FACTS

Four out of five of Caritas State of the Environment for Oceania's indicators (extreme weather, coastal erosion, access to safe food and water, offshore mining, and climate finance for the most vulnerable) have moved to the "severe" level. (Caritas State of the Environment Report 2021)



## FURTHER RESOURCES

[CARITAS STATE OF THE ENVIRONMENT FOR OCEANIA 2021](#)

[WATER & OCEAN REFLECTION SERIES](#)

[BUILDING RESILIENCE TO CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTERS IN THE PACIFIC](#)

[AMELIA MAIAFU - TONGA EXPERIENCE](#)



# CLIMATE CHANGE

*Our stories, our communities, our resources*



## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY SISTER IN KENYA

"I'd like to relate women's issue of sanitary health and its impact on water and climate change (sanitary materials used yearly, its inability to decompose, what we could avail to women for use that is environmentally friendly. How all these pads affect our water sources and the Earth in general.

Ways to clean water to make it accessible to populations in poverty stricken areas. Better harvesting of rainwater to help in agriculture - reduce poverty....there may be no direct benefit for those with the power to decide where resources are directed though!

When governments 'sell the land off' by borrowing big and the poor citizens have to live with this burden. Risking the running of the country by the 'lenders'."

*Mercy Sister in Kenya*

## ADVOCACY

## RECOMMENDATION

*Incorporate local and indigenous knowledge, in particular the expertise of women and girls, taking into account their human rights, responsibilities, and ensuring conservation benefits are just and inclusive*



# PRAYER

Loving Creator of water on which all life depends, we thank you for the showers which water and soften the earth, bringing forth springs, streams, rivers, lakes and oceans and all that comes to life within and beside them

We thank you for the running water in our taps. And we pray for our brothers and sisters in countries where water is in short supply... where women and young girls walk miles seeking water and the earth is unforgiving and barren.

Forgive us when we waste the precious gift of water and when we take it for granted. We thank you for clean water. And we pray for those whose water is contaminated and brings sickness and death. Forgive us for allowing this to happen!

Thank you for the rain and for rainbows, sign of hope, promise and love. And we promise to speak and act for the common good— to reaffirm the human right to safe drinking water and sanitation and to safeguard our natural resources... for our children and for future generations.

Amen

## QUICK FACTS

"Climate change exacerbates women's distinct health needs" ([Climate Change and Women's Health: A Scoping Review](#))

## FURTHER RESOURCES

[GENDER EQUALITY AND THE RIGHTS TO WATER AND SANITATION](#)

[WATER, WOMEN AND WISDOM GUIDE](#)

[MAKING EVERY DROP COUNT - AN AGENDA FOR WATER ACTION](#)

[GENDER EQUALITY AND THE 2030 AGENDA](#)





# EXTRACTIVISM

*Our stories, our communities, our resources*



## EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: INDIGENOUS MERCY PARTNER IN AUSTRALIA

"Our right to life, the right to food, and the right to health, directly rely on the survival of our baseline food source and water. Wangan and Jagalingou people, while occupying and living off the land, are faced with being forced into food insecurity by Adani's massive destructive mine and the harmful effect it is having on the wildlife and groundwater.

Our right to self-determination, which includes the right to freely pursue economic, social, and cultural development, is under threat from Adani's destructive impact on the climate. What's more, free, prior, and informed consent, which must be secured before any action is taken that will adversely affect Indigenous peoples, has never been granted.

We know first-hand that the construction, development, and operation of Adani's coal mine is already having disastrous effects, and will only exacerbate existing socio-economic, political, and cultural inequalities, and exact disproportionate effects on members of our community living in the area.

## ADVOCACY RECOMMENDATION

*Incorporate local and indigenous knowledge, in particular the expertise of women and girls, taking into account their human rights, responsibilities, and ensuring conservation benefits are just and inclusive*

# **PRAYER**

Thank you, Lord, for all that you have given us. Thank you for the beauty of the universe that you created: the trees, the sky, the mountains, the rain. All things hold beauty in themselves and all are related and touch each universe of the earth. You created the rhythm and pattern of the universe in a harmony of movement, sight, and sound. Help us to appreciate your creation and to live with our eyes, ears, and hearts open to your message.

Amen.

## **QUICK FACT**

The scale of this mine means it would have devastating impacts on our native title, ancestral lands and waters, our totemic plants and animals, and our environmental and cultural heritage. It would pollute and drain billions of litres of groundwater, and obliterate important springs systems

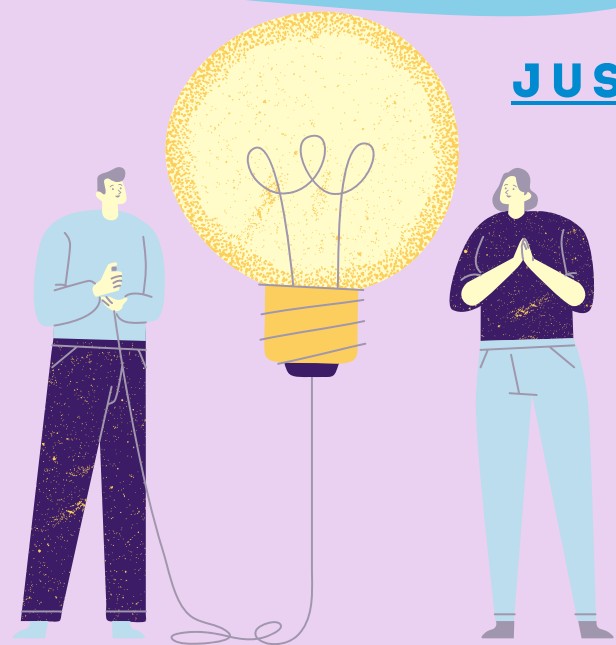
## **FURTHER RESOURCES**

**A RIGHTS BASED LITMUS TEST**

**JUST RESPONSE CLIMATE CHANGE**

**JUST RESPONSE AMAZON**

**SOLUTIONS FROM THE FRONTLINES  
AND THE PROTECTION AND DEFENSE  
OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND NATURE**





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## CLIMATE CHANGE AND RESILIENCE

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### EXPERIENCE SPOTLIGHT: MERCY SISTER IN SAMOA

All participants from the Mercy Asia Pacific Gathering shared the reality of climate change in their own countries. We all felt a call to collaborate with each other and the whole Earth community as co-custodians.

We visited a coastal region which had been affected by the devastating Tsunami of 29 October, 2009, causing 189 deaths. In the village of Saleapaga, three survivors shared their stories. The stories relayed the shock and horror of seeing the ocean coming toward them in such a destructive way. There was no time to act. People tried to reach higher ground but found themselves suddenly uplifted by the water. Lucky, most of the children were at school and so were up in the hills at the time. But the outcome was devastating.

Many local people [are] responding to the risk of climate change. many spoke of the importance of indigenous knowledge and experience. There is a need to recognise indigenous people as the experts. One group planted Mangroves at the seashore to enable more stability to the coastline in the future. I was struck by the obvious relationship the people had with the sea. In Apia, the airstrip we landed on was surrounded by the ocean. It occurred to me that even a small rise in sea level would sink this airstrip'

## ADVOCACY

## RECOMMENDATION

*Support efforts, including finance, technology and capacity-building, in order to avert, minimize and address displacement related to the adverse impacts of climate change, at all levels, namely the community, national, regional and international levels;*

# PRAYER

Creator God,  
breath and source of life,  
in love you called the world into being  
and in grace you made us and call us your children.  
We stand in awe of the wonder of your creation:  
its beauty and wildness;  
complexity and power;  
resilience and fragility.

God of love, we pray for those people, communities and nations already suffering the devastating effects of climate change; and we pray for the diversity of life on earth, so much of it already threatened by our actions.

(Read full prayer here)

## QUICK FACT

Healthy ecosystems are foundations for sustainable development and adaptation and resilience to climate change. Pacific environments also support globally significant levels of biodiversity that form part of our critical ecosystems (SPREP)



## FURTHER RESOURCES

PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE  
CENTRE (PCCC)

TALANOA DIALOGUE PLATFORM

IPCC REPORT 2018

CLIMATE CHANGE CONNECTIONS - WEDO.

CLIMATE CHANGE ADVOCACY  
FRAMEWORK POSITION