

The Rising Ocean: The Pacific Islands and Global Climate Change

Symposium

University of Bergen (UiB) in collaboration with the Bergen International Festival (FiB)

Friday 29 May 2015, 09:30-16:00

Studentsenteret (The Campus Centre), Parkveien 1

Global climate change and its effects worldwide are the most significant challenge of our time. Perhaps nowhere else are the effects of global warming and sea level rise as acute as in the Pacific Islands region, where four states consisting entirely of low-lying islands face the prospect of losing their sovereign land to sea level rise, and where extreme weather, coastal inundation, coral bleaching and ocean acidification threaten food security in most other island nations. Quite simply, the island nations of the tropical Pacific contribute the least to global warming, but are set to suffer the most from its effects, as seen by what takes place in the region already. The ecological, economic, political and social challenges faced by Pacific Islanders in the age of climate change and sea level rise require new approaches that combine the perspectives of climate science, international law and Pacific studies with the experiences learned and solutions proposed by islanders themselves. New forms of dialogue between policy makers in north and south must also be developed to address these urgent matters.

At the University of Bergen, climate change is a long-term research focus, as exemplified by the large-scale, eminent Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research and by research activities in a wide range of other disciplines such as the anthropologically-oriented Bergen Pacific Studies group. The Bjerknes Centre and Bergen Pacific Studies are co-organizers of this major symposium on 29 May 2015, scheduled to coincide with the European premiere later in the day of the new Pacific drama 'Moana: The Rising of the Sea', performed by 29 dancers and singers from the University of the South Pacific, and produced by the EU-funded ECOPAS climate change project coordinated by the University of Bergen. In the 'Moana' performance, the ensemble of Pacific Islanders demonstrates, through forceful visual and emotional messages, how they themselves see their lives as tropical islanders threatened by global climate change. 'Moana' is brought to The Bergen International Festival with the University of Bergen as a major sponsor.

The 'Rising Ocean' symposium will address the particular challenges faced by the islanders and nations of the Pacific through presentations by climate scientists, law specialists, Pacific studies scholars, prominent policy-makers and artists from the Pacific and Norway, and representatives of governments and research policy in Norway and the European Union. Culminating in an emotionally charged stage performance on climate change by Pacific Islanders themselves, the day is envisaged as opening up for new forms of dialogue that generate entirely fresh perspectives for action.

Dialogue between speakers, panellists, the audience and the public at large will be promoted through an interface for posing questions to the panel online.

PROGRAMME

09:30 Arrival, coffee/tea

10:00 Opening:

- Pacific dance by the **Oceania Dance Theatre**, introduced by choreographer **Peter Rockford Espiritu**.
- Welcome by Professor **Dag Rune Olsen**, Rector, UiB
- Remarks by Professor **Jarl Giske**, Vice-Dean of the Faculty of Mathematics and Natural Sciences, and Professor **Knut Helland**, Dean of the Faculty of Social Sciences.
- Introduction by symposium co-chairs: Professor **Tor Eldevik** (Deputy Director of the Bjerknes Centre, UiB) and Professor **Edvard Hviding** (Director, Bergen Pacific Studies and Coordinator of the ECOPAS Project, UiB)

10:30 Professor **Elisabeth Holland**, University of the South Pacific

10:45 Professor **Axel Timmermann**, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

11:00 Professor **Noel Keenlyside**, Bjerknes Centre, University of Bergen

11:15 Coffee and tea break

11:30 Dr. **Ellen Viste**, Bjerknes Centre, University of Bergen

11:45 Assoc. Prof. **Are Olsen**, Bjerknes Centre, University of Bergen

12:00 Professor **Joeli Veitayaki**, University of the South Pacific

12:15 Professor **Maxine Burkett**, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

12:30 Mr. **Fe'iloaitau Kaho Tevi**, Pacific Islands Development Forum and IUCN Oceania 12:45

LUNCH: buffet with food and beverages in open space outside auditorium

13:30 Poetry reading by **Frode Grytten**, musical accompaniment by **Pedro Carmona Alvarez**

14.00 Panel discussion, chaired by Assoc. Prof. **Kikki Kleiven**, University of Bergen:

Professor **Vilsoni Hereniko**, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Professor **Elisabeth Holland**, University of the South Pacific

Professor **Edvard Hviding**, University of Bergen

Professor **Eystein Jansen**, Bjerknes Centre, University of Bergen

Dr. **Philippe Keraudren**, Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission

Professor **Diana Looser**, Stanford University

Ms. **Tammy Tabe**, University of Bergen

Mr. **Fe'iloaitau Kaho Tevi**, IUCN Oceania and Pacific Islands Development Forum

- 15:30 Responses to questions from the audience and the public. Concluding discussion.
- 16:00 Closing: Song by Pasifika Voices, conducted by **Tuilagi Igelese Ete**.
- 5 minutes' walk to Peer Gynt Hall
- 16:30 Reception in foyer of Peer Gynt Hall: food and beverages, speeches, Pacific welcome ceremony
- 18:00 Performance of 'Moana: The Rising of the Sea' (European Premiere)
- 20:30 European Premiere Celebration, foyer of Peer Gynt Hall.

SPEAKERS AND PANELISTS

Professor **Maxine Burkett**, School of Law, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Professor **Tor Eldevik**, Geophysical Institute and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, University of Bergen

Professor **Vilsoni Hereniko**, Academy of Creative Arts, University of Hawai'i, Writer & Producer of 'Moana: The Rising of the Sea'

Professor **Elisabeth Holland**, Director, PACE-SD and Global Climate Change Alliance, University of the South Pacific

Professor **Edvard Hviding**, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen, Executive Producer of 'Moana: The Rising of the Sea'

Professor **Eystein Jansen**, Department of Earth Science and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, University of Bergen

Professor **Noel Keenlyside**, Geophysical Institute and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, University of Bergen

Dr. **Philippe Keraudren**, Acting Head of Unit B6 'Reflective Societies', Directorate-General for Research and Innovation, European Commission

Assoc. Prof. **Kikki Kleiven**, Department of Earth Science and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, University of Bergen

Professor **Diana Looser**, Department of Theater & Performance Studies, Stanford University

Professor **Are Olsen**, Geophysical Institute and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, University of Bergen

Ms. **Tammy Tabe**, PhD candidate, Department of Social Anthropology, University of Bergen

Mr. **Fe'iloakitau Kaho Tevi**, IUCN Regional Office for Oceania, and Pacific Islands Development Forum

Professor **Axel Timmermann**, School of Ocean and Earth Science and Technology, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

Dr. **Ellen Viste**, Geophysical Institute and Bjerknes Centre for Climate Research, University of Bergen

Professor **Joeli Veitayaki**, School of Marine Studies, University of the South Pacific

ARTISTS: Mr. **Pedro Carmona Alvarez**, Mr. **Peter Rockford Espiritu**, **Tuilagi Igelese Ete**, Mr. **Frode Grytten**