



UN High-Level Political Forum 2022
New Zealand General Debate Statement
18 July 2022

In 2015, Aotearoa New Zealand welcomed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in substance and ambition. We see the High-Level Political Forum as a timely opportunity for us all to take stock of where we are at, and to learn from each other.

Seven years into the implementation of the 2030 Agenda, the world continues to be confronted with the global challenges of climate change, COVID-19, and ongoing conflicts. Our response to these challenges demands collective action and underscores the need for international cooperation and solidarity. Never before have the Sustainable Development Goals been more relevant, as our resilience, globally, as a country, and individually, is tested. The 2030 Agenda provides a framework for creating resilient societies. Together, we now have eight years left to achieve this very ambitious agenda – it is time now for action, and implementation.

The 2030 Agenda is a transformational approach. Domestically, we are looking for opportunities for systems-level change that can underpin and sustain this transformation. Regionally, Aotearoa New Zealand is firmly connected culturally, linguistically, and geographically in the Pacific. We are partnering with the Pacific to meet their resilience challenges and to reach their intergenerational goals.

We have seen and heard first-hand the impact of climate change in our region. We recognise the need to support our Pacific family and neighbours who are on the front line of climate change and need our support most. As part of our commitments under the Paris Agreement, and the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, Aotearoa New Zealand has committed \$1.3 billion over four years to support countries most vulnerable to the effects of climate change. At least 50 percent of this funding will go to the Pacific and at least 50 percent to adaptation, a key priority for our region.

Turning to the five SDGs under review for 2022,

- SDG 4 – Quality Education

Aotearoa New Zealand is committed to supporting the achievement of SDG4 targets nationally, across the Pacific region and globally. We need quality equitable public education systems that provide learning opportunities for all and that enable people to discover and develop their potential, engage fully in society, be globally-connected, and lead fulfilling lives. Nationally, we have announced a 50 percent increase in equity funding (in addition to school's core funding), allocated through a new Equity Index. The index will better determine the level of funding needed for each school to address equity issues.

- SDG 5 – Gender Equality

Gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls supports better development outcomes for all, and builds more resilient and prosperous societies. Aotearoa New Zealand is proud to support progress for all women and girls in Aotearoa New Zealand and abroad, including through our National Strategy to Eliminate Family Violence and Sexual Violence, Women's Employment Action Plan, and national commitment to a 64 percent target of international development funding to gender-related programmes.

- SDG 14 – Life below water

In Aotearoa New Zealand and across the Pacific region, our economies, livelihoods, culture and well-being depend on the ocean. We are committed to supporting global action to realise SDG 14 targets. Since 2018, Aotearoa New Zealand has spent over NZ\$68.5 million on ocean priorities, and more on core funding to regional agencies that are integral in supporting Pacific Island countries to protect the ocean. 2022 is a vital year, with key opportunities in international fora to address marine pollution, protect biodiversity, and to ensure marine resources are used sustainably.

- SDG 15 – Life on Land

Biodiversity is fundamental to human well-being and a healthy planet. We must urgently preserve and protect nature and its essential services to people. Aotearoa New Zealand is advocating for the adoption of an ambitious Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework in 2022, to guide action worldwide and support achievement of SDG 15.

- SDG 17 – Partnerships for the Goals

Aotearoa New Zealand is committed to supporting sustainable development progress globally as a reliable, principled and trusted partner. As a Pacific country we are particularly invested in supporting our partners in the region on their path towards achieving the SDGs, for example through our support to statistical capacity building in the Pacific to improve monitoring of and reporting on SDG progress. We will focus our effort on strengthening the region's long-term resilience, including harnessing regional and multilateral action to support Pacific priorities.

The SDGs cannot be achieved by governments alone. We welcome the commitment and perspectives of the many individuals and groups who are actively engaged in working for a more sustainable future as envisioned by the 2030 Agenda.

With only eight years left to deliver the SDGs, we recognise that much more needs to be done. As we continue to confront the global challenges of climate change, COVID-19, and ongoing conflicts, the international community must accelerate its efforts and work more closely together to achieve our common goals.

Thank you.