



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT
MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS

For immediate release, 22 September 2019
New York City, USA

**15 world leaders commit to delivering new Paris targets by early 2020
and to achieving net zero global emissions by 2050 on eve of UN Summit**

Fifteen world leaders, led by the Republic of the Marshall Islands, today released the statement “*Uniting Behind the Science to Step Up Ambition by 2020*” on the eve of the UN Secretary-General’s Climate Action Summit.

The statement demonstrates the commitment of its signatories to update their emissions reduction targets by the first quarter of 2020, and by the end of next year to produce long-term strategies aimed at achieving net zero global emissions by 2050.

All of the current signatories are members of the High Ambition Coalition (HAC) led by the Marshall Islands, which was instrumental in securing the Paris Agreement and remains the central political forum for coordinating progressive international action on climate change.

The statement is signed by the Heads of Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Belize, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Fiji, Grenada, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Principality of Monaco, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Kingdom of Norway, Saint Lucia, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Swiss Confederation, and the Republic of Vanuatu. It remains open for signature by other countries, including beyond the High Ambition Coalition.

The President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Dr. Hilda C. Heine, will highlight the statement during her keynote speech to the opening of the Climate Action Summit tomorrow. During that speech, President Heine will also announce her Government’s decision to seek the approval of Parliament to declare a national climate crisis, including on the basis of the special circumstances the Marshall Islands faces as one of only four low-lying coral atoll nations in the world. In anticipation of that, the Marshall Islands today convened a meeting of the Coalition of Atoll Nations on Climate Change (CAN-CC) to discuss additional ways to mobilize global attention on the special circumstances faced by atoll nations.

Last year, the Marshall Islands became the first country in the world to submit a new and enhanced Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) under the Paris Agreement, and was also the first island nation to produce a 2050 Strategy to reach net zero emissions. It is also currently developing a landmark National Adaptation Plan.

“On the heels of Friday’s global climate strikes, this statement is the biggest political signal yet that world leaders are responding to the need to urgently increase global climate ambition. For the first time, a group of countries is saying they will follow the Marshall Islands’ lead and unequivocally increase their Paris targets by next year and also put in place plans to achieve net zero global emissions by 2050.”

“As Greta Thunberg and other youth leaders have told us, the time for hope is over and the time for action is now. My country stands to lose more than most, which is why our Government intends to also seek the approval of our Parliament to declare a national climate crisis, highlighting the special circumstances we face as a low-lying coral atoll nation.” — President Hilda C. Heine

Media contact

Yone Wase
Office of the President
yonewase@gmail.com

Uniting Behind the Science to Step up Ambition by 2020

Press Statement, 22 September 2019

We, the Heads of Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, Belize, the Republic of Costa Rica, the Kingdom of Denmark, the Republic of Fiji, Grenada, the Grand Duchy of Luxembourg, the Principality of Monaco, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Kingdom of Norway, Saint Lucia, the Kingdom of Sweden, the Swiss Confederation, and the Republic of Vanuatu:

Alarmed by the latest findings from the IPCC concerning the severe, multiple and inter-related risks posed by climate change to human, land, ocean and terrestrial ecosystems, and convinced that limiting global warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius is fundamental to minimizing and averting these risks.

Determined to respond to the UN Secretary-General's call to Member States for "concrete, realistic plans to enhance their nationally determined contributions by 2020, in line with reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 45 per cent over the next decade, and to net zero emissions by 2050."¹

Reiterate our full commitment to unite behind the science and take the actions needed to achieve the Paris Agreement goals, to restore and ensure the health of the global oceans, and look forward to supporting the implementation of the initiatives to be announced at the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit based on the nine tracks for action.

Resolve to communicate by the first quarter of 2020 in line with the best available science, new and updated NDCs for 2030 that represent the highest possible ambition, as well as, by 2020, long-term low greenhouse gas emission development strategies aimed at achieving net zero global emissions by 2050, and applaud the leadership demonstrated by those countries that have already done so.

Declare our support for an ambitious and successful replenishment of the Green Climate Fund, and further progress on simplifying access procedures, as a critical contributor to strengthened action on climate change in developing countries.

Call on all governments and non-Party stakeholders to maintain the momentum on climate ambition from the UN Secretary-General's Climate Action Summit through to COP25 in December 2019, and to join in the effort to accelerate and strengthen action on climate change by 2020.

The statement remains open for signature by any country via HAC@HighAmbitionCoalition.org

¹ Direct quote from <https://www.un.org/en/climatechange/un-climate-summit-2019.shtml>