



NUKUORO RESIDENTS ASSOCIATION
PF Ilbestina 245
FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA

May 16, 2011 -

To: United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues

10th Session, 2011 – UN PFII – 10 - New York Headquarters

Re: Indigenous Statement for Disaster Prevention Assistance

Climate Change Threatening Indigenous Low-Lying Island People

Nukuoro Atoll, Federated States of Micronesia

PRIORITY AREAS

1. Food Security - Land Erosion, damage of food crops, damage of marine coastal and deep sea habitat, damage of local medicine plants
2. Water Security Low Rain Fall / Disappearing fresh water lenses / Water Security Project
3. Cultural Preservation - Loss of culture / Diminishing Traditional Knowledge in Youthful Generation
4. Climate Change Adaptation – High Tide rising / High tide surges / Storm Surges
 - a. Diminished Food Security / Taro Patch dying out – Solution Earth Box
5. Tsunami Preparedness / Tsunami Threat – Tsunami Shelter

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"INDIGENOUS CLIMATE ADAPTATION PLAN"

PROJECT SUMMARIES

1. Food Security – Earth Box Crop Recovery – Re-establishing food security – Disaster preparedness – Christmas 2008 high tide surges destroyed 80% of all food crops on Nukuoro. Solution - Community Earth Box, 3-10 structures, reinforced concrete, minimum dimension 40'X8' each. Family Earth Box pioneered by the NRA and presented for funding was recognized by theWorld Band Estimated Project Budget - \$162,000 Estimated Pilot Project - \$10,000
2. Sea Wall – Gabion wire baskets to prevent sand erosion – Sea walls washed away during Typhoon Jatan in 2005, Project Location Lagoon Side (West) – Estimated Project Budget - \$250,000-\$500,000 Estimated School Project \$50,000-\$100,000
3. Water catchment project – Preserve and store water securely – Human security, drinking water, crop survival, salt water spray without rain killed trees that were 30 years old or more died which out during typhoon Jatan in 2005 and again in 2008; Build enough capacity to spray trees so they can survive in the event of drought. Estimated Project Budget \$30,000-\$50,0000 (Government Area, Public Meeting Area, School Area)
4. Polynesian Cultural Preserve for Youth at Risk – Construct local youth center to facilitate traditional expression, Carving, dance, weaving, songs, and language. Estimated Budget \$100,000
5. Gabion Sea Wall / BioRock Breakwater Pilot Project
6. Typhoon/Tsunami Shelter – To protect the local population during natural disasters; no high ground to shelter from flooding on Nukuoro Atoll– Create a shelter, or multiple shelters with enough capacity to temporarily secure the average population of Nukuoro (approximately 300 men, women and children). Shelters must be elevated enough to stand above peak storm surges and magnitude 10 earthquake driven Tsunamis – approximately 25 to 30 feet from sea level. Concrete posts, slab at ground level, and slab second floor, 20,000 gal. drinking water reservoir Estimate Budget - \$80,000-\$120,000
7. Development Marketplace as top 100 best ideas to combat climate change. \$162,000

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May 23, 2011

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10th Session, 2011 – UN PFII – 10 - New York Headquarters**

**Re: Indigenous Statement for Disaster Prevention Assistance
Climate Change Threatening Indigenous Low-Lying Island People
Nukuoro Atoll, Federated States of Micronesia**

Thank you Madam Chair,

Good afternoon everyone, Brothers, Sisters,
And Fellow Indigenous People of the World.

Nukuoro Atoll is a Polynesian Outer Island
in the Federated States of Micronesia.

Our struggles are the same
as thousands of other Low - Lying Island People,
Coral Atoll Communities,
and Indigenous Cultures,

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Already being lost to "Global Climate Change".

Extreme weather now threatens our islands every day
Draughts, Tidal Waves, "King Tides", Typhoons, Tsunamis?

On low Islands,
People are beginning to starve,
Our Fresh Water and Taro Patches are gone,

We have no high ground,
We have no Tsunami Shelters,
Each day we risk being washed away.

We are sorely failing
to realize the Millenium Development Goals.
And our Culture and Home islands are disappearing.

But we wish to survive.

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We Call on the Permanent Forum of Indigenous Issues,

To urge "ALL UNITED NATIONS BODIES",

Governments,

Global Organizations, Businesses,

and Polluters!

To help Nukuoro Atoll "Combat Climate Change"

Through Direct Assistance,

Provision of Free Prior and Informed Consent,

And following our "Indigenous Climate Adaptation Program"

We can share hope by showing that

Indigenous Relations,

Solutions, and Adaptations

are often Very Effective,

Outer islands like Nukuoro, are alone in the face of widespread disaster,

And that is why we must achieve "Climate Independence"

Using "The Community Earth Box" for food and water,

Gabion Sea Walls, and "BioRock Breakwaters" to grow and protect the island

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And a Cultural Center to assist our Youth,
With your help, we can quickly adapt to Climate Change.

Outer Island People were slow to learn
that the destructive environmental changes
we are experiencing
have been caused by the carbon emissions
of the Developed Countries,
Big Businesses,
And the Energy, Timber, Mining, Oil and the Gas Industries.

Yet we know now,
being the first to feel the damaging effects of Climate Change
that these groups, in their measure, must be held responsible,
to fix the problems.

It is time to give some of the resources back,
to help Indigenous People Adapt to this new world
That "Development" and "Money" has created.

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In December of 2008, a one meter tidal wave flooded our island.

It killed nearly 80% of our fruit trees and Taro patch,
Livestock were washed away and homes were destroyed,
Nukuoro's population suffered.

Fortunately, we dug relief trenches;
this saved a small remaining area of our traditional taro patch
which has provided us for centuries with food,
and is soon to disappear.

Our Food and Water Security Will not recover,
Nor can we rely solely on traditional lifestyles
To survive in the "Era of Climate Change"

This is why we insist for "Priority Funding" for these "Urgent Need"

Host countries fail to make allocations to Indigenous Communities,
Our System Lacks the Money, Tools, and Supplies
So Aid is not provided in a timely manner.
We seek "Direct Funding, On The Local Level"

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To overcome and Adapt;
To Climate Change.

We Recommend, to the United Nations,
Member Nations, International Donor communities;
Big Business; Small Businesses; and Special Interest Groups;
To those who understand our needs,
And especially those responsible for pollution,
To provide direct assistance
to help Implement Nukuoro's "Indigenous Climate Adaptation Plan".

With increasingly high tides, severe weather,
And natural disasters
Expected in years to come,
we realize now that our people and our home
Are critically threatened by climate change.
We must do something right now
To "Prepare and Adapt"
in order for our Indigenous Culture
and our Home Island to Survive.

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We Recommend to the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues,
to bring these words to the attention
of the Office of the Secretary General,
to direct the WBG and ADB,
The PPBD, FEA, UNOPS, ODP, R,
FAO, UNDP, DESA, GEF, UNI-FEM, OHCHR, and all UN Agencies,
To Take Action by funding a series of "Pilot Infrastructure Programs"
that will directly combat and demonstrate solutions
to the threats posed by climate change.

For our Home Island, and Millions of Others.

We hereby request funding to implement
a comprehensive Climate Adaptation Program
on Nukuoro Atoll.

The Nukuoroan people are not willing to wait
for the tide to wash our home and families away.

We know we must act quickly
to preserve our island for the future

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We are ready to work together,
To work smart,
and work very hard
to realize these goals.

We must deploy and demonstrate sound methods
to combat climate change;
setting examples
which other low islands will follow.

If we do not act quickly
and work together to protect our island and Culture
from Global Climate Change,
this increasing storm will destroy our Homes, Lives, and Cultures.

We will require international rescue;
Our atoll will become uninhabitable;
Our unique culture will disappear;

And we will become climate refugees.

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Madame Chair,
Fellow Indigenous People
We all must ask ourselves,

Who will help us then?

On behalf of the Nukuoroan People,
and our home Islands
we thank you,
and humbly ask for your immediate assistance.

Yours Truly,

Bestina Benjamin

Nukuoro Residents Association
Nukuoro Atoll
Federated States of Micronesia

Thank you all!

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