Common Seas



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The Plastic-Climate Nexus for SIDS:

A call for coordinated global action to address the combined impacts of plastic pollution and climate change in Small Island Developing States

With forewords by Hon. Ralph Regenvanu, Vanuatu and Dr Sivendra Michael, Fiji

Foreword

In July 2025, the International Court of Justice confirmed what the people of Vanuatu have long known: climate change is an existential threat, and every state has a legal duty to act on it. This May, the United Nations General Assembly affirmed that finding. For a small island nation that carried this question to the world's highest court, it was a profound moment.

But "existential" is not a word to be spoken and then set aside. If the world accepts that this crisis threatens survival, it must accept everything that follows from it, and that means confronting the parts of the crisis it would rather leave out of the conversation. Plastic is one of them.

Plastic has long been treated as a waste problem: something to collect, recycle or clean from beaches. That framing is too small. The plastic pollution and climate crisis are inseparable. Plastic is born from fossil fuels and carries the climate crisis with it at every stage of its life. Its impact on the health of our planet, its people and its ecology, lasts hundreds of years.

On our islands, those converging effects cannot be clearer, nor untangled from those of a warming world.

They meet in the same flooded streets, on the same damaged reefs, in the same communities struggling to stay above rising pollution and sea levels. To address one while ignoring the other is not climate action. It is half a response to a whole crisis.

There is a second misunderstanding this report sets out to correct. Small Island Developing States are too often treated as a footnote in global climate efforts: places to be pitied or protected, a moral appendix to the "real" negotiations. That view is not only unjust. It is wrong.

Our nations are custodians of vast stretches of the world's ocean, the planet's greatest carbon sink and the source of food and livelihoods for billions. What happens in our waters does not stay there. When island ecosystems fail, the world loses defences it cannot replace. When island nations lead, the world gains solutions tested where the stakes are highest. We are not on the edge of this crisis. We are at its centre, and we are central to its solution.

COP31 and INC-5.4 will test whether the world understands this. One has opened the door to zero waste as climate action; the other, after years of stalled talks, will decide whether a plastics treaty can finally deliver. Two processes, two separate rooms. But the ocean does not keep the two crises apart, and island nations cannot live with the gap between them.

In the first, governments must recognise plastic as part of the climate crisis. In the second, they must ensure the treaty accounts for climate risk, or it will fail the countries that need it most. In both, finance must follow the reality on the ground, not the boundaries of the negotiating agenda.

This report sets out how to do that. Recognise the plastic-climate nexus. Unlock finance for integrated action. Listen to the science. None of this is a concession to small states. It is an investment in the ocean, in the climate and in the future we all share.

The Court has spoken. The General Assembly has affirmed it. No state is above its obligations. In both rooms, the world must show that when it called this crisis existential, it meant it.



Hon. Ralph Regenvanu
Minister for Climate Change, Meteorological and Hydrometeorological Services, Environment, Energy, Disaster Management, and Geological Hazards, Republic of Vanuatu

Foreword

For Fiji and other Pacific Small Island Developing States, climate change and plastic pollution are serious threats already affecting our communities, livelihoods and natural environment. Our islands are ground zero for their combined impacts. Rising seas, stronger cyclones, coastal erosion and changing rainfall patterns are placing increasing pressure on our communities. Plastic pollution compounds these impacts, damaging the same ecosystems and livelihoods already struggling to adapt to the impact of climate change. Together, these crises pose an urgent and existential threat to the future of our islands.

In Fiji, our relationship with the natural environment is deeply rooted in the vanua. It reflects the connection between our land, people, culture and our responsibility to future generations. The degradation of our rivers, reefs and coastlines affects these connections and threatens our identity, livelihoods and way of life.

Pacific SIDS face particular challenges with plastic pollution. Most of us are net importers of plastics and packaged goods, and due to the size of our markets, we have limited influence over how these products are manufactured and packaged. At the same time, ocean currents carry plastic pollution from other countries into our waters and onto our shores. Domestic measures can help control what enters our markets, but they cannot stop pollution arriving from beyond our borders. This is why national efforts must be backed by ambitious international action.

Despite these challenges, SIDS have shown considerable leadership. Pacific countries were among the first to introduce bans on problematic and avoidable plastic products. Fiji has taken important steps through restrictions on plastic bags and polystyrene products, legislative reforms and the development of a national circular plastics transition. We are advancing product stewardship and container deposit regulations to strengthen producer responsibility and resource recovery. These efforts place greater emphasis on preventing plastic pollution at its source while improving the management of waste already generated.

The link with climate change makes this work even more urgent. Plastics generate greenhouse gas emissions throughout their lifecycle, from fossil fuel extraction and manufacturing through to disposal. Cyclones damage waste infrastructure and leave behind huge volumes of debris that our limited landfills cannot absorb, and disaster relief often brings a new wave of single-use packaging. Where waste has nowhere to go, it is too often burned in the open, releasing emissions and toxic smoke into our communities. On low-lying atolls with little land for landfills, rising seas and storm surges are eroding coastal dumpsites and washing their contents back into the ocean. Plastic pollution in turn weakens the reefs and mangroves that protect our coastlines from those same storms. Our response must therefore combine prevention, reuse and safer alternatives with investment in climate-resilient waste systems. Traditional knowledge, science and innovation all have an important role in this transition.

At the global plastics treaty negotiations, Fiji and our fellow Pacific SIDS have consistently called for an ambitious and legally binding agreement addressing the full lifecycle of plastics. This includes measures to reduce plastic production, eliminate problematic products and chemicals of concern, improve transparency and product design, and address existing marine plastic pollution. We have also been clear that the special circumstances of SIDS must be recognised through substantive treaty provisions and adequate means of implementation.

Ambition must be matched by implementation. SIDS need adequate, predictable, timely and accessible finance, alongside technology transfer and capacity-building. Support for coordinated climate and plastics action must be new and additional, without diverting resources from existing climate commitments or dedicated plastics treaty financing. Ultimately, the success of this support must be measured by the results they deliver for our communities.

We must also recognise the people working on the frontlines of these challenges. The experiences of Fiji's Collection Pillars of Recycling, reflected in this report, remind us that those who recover our waste also face serious climate risks. They must help shape the transition, with support for safer working conditions, improved resilience and secure livelihoods. Their protection and wellbeing belong at the centre of our environmental response.

I welcome this report and its call for greater recognition of the plastic-climate nexus, improved access to finance and SIDS-led research and data sovereignty. These are opportunities to strengthen alignment across two important global processes while respecting their distinct mandates.



The Pacific has shown that small island nations can lead on global environmental challenges. We must now turn ambition into meaningful action that protects our people, our vanua and our ocean for generations to come.

Dr Sivendra Michael
Fiji's Permanent Secretary for Environment and Climate Change

Two global crises, one island reality

Small Island Developing States are on the frontlines of two interconnected global crises: climate change and plastic pollution. In SIDS across the globe, their combined impacts critically compound environmental, economic and social risks.

Without urgent action, global plastic pollution is projected to more than double by 2040, while rising plastic-related greenhouse gas emissions threaten to undermine global efforts to limit warming, with the most vulnerable bearing the brunt of these impacts.[1]

Plastic pollution adds pressure to reefs, mangroves, fisheries, beaches and coastal communities already affected by warming seas, extreme events, sea-level rise and other climate impacts. SIDS, more than any other group of countries, depend on healthy marine ecosystems for livelihoods, food security, cultural identity and resilience to climate change. The degradation of these ecosystems therefore has far-reaching consequences for island communities, economies and long-term resilience.

These pressures converge on the same ecosystems, livelihoods and communities, while drawing on the same limited financial, technical and institutional resources. SIDS' structural constraints, including geographic remoteness, small markets, import dependence, limited land and high transport costs further constrain their capacity to respond.

SIDS face disproportionate impacts with global implications

SIDS contribute less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions and have limited influence over global plastics production and consumption patterns. Despite having little control over the drivers of these compounding risks, they bear disproportionate impacts, while their capacity to respond is further constrained by structural and resource limitations.

This is exacerbated by inadequate finance. SIDS collectively require approximately US$12 billion annually for climate adaptation, yet received just US$2 billion per year in international public adaptation finance in 2021-2022. Without sufficient support, SIDS face growing risks to critical infrastructure, coastal ecosystems, livelihoods and economic resilience.

The implications of the plastic-climate nexus extend far beyond just SIDS themselves. As stewards of approximately 19% of the world's ocean Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ), SIDS play a vital role in safeguarding global ocean health, biodiversity and climate resilience. Strengthening their capacity and leadership, alongside building a more coordinated international response, is therefore not only a matter of equity, but a shared global priority.

3rd highest emitter

The plastics lifecycle accounts for 4-5% of global GHG emissions.[17] This would equate to the 3rd highest emitting country in the world by 2040[1]

<1%

SIDS contribute less than 1% of global GHG emissions, yet face disproportionate impacts from climate change[2]

USD 10 billion

SIDS face an annual adaptation finance gap of USD 10 billion[3]

⅕

SIDS collectively manage nearly a fifth of the world's EEZ, making their stewardship essential to global ocean health, marine biodiversity and climate resilience[4]

Despite challenges, SIDS are leading the way

The plastic–climate nexus is not a new agenda for SIDS.

Across international climate and plastics treaty processes, SIDS have consistently called for the same foundational measures: ambitious global commitments, recognition of their special circumstances, accessible finance, implementation support and action to address existing environmental harm.

Currently lacking however, is a joined-up international response. SIDS' shared priorities provide a foundation for more coordinated action. This does not mean merging two distinct processes or weakening dedicated action through either. It means ensuring that climate and plastics policies and financing work together where their impacts intersect.

SIDS already see the connection in their daily lives, and are demonstrating leadership on climate action, ocean protection and plastic pollution. International cooperation must reflect that connection and enable that leadership to address the global drivers of both crises, rather than transferring responsibility to governments and communities of island nations to manage impacts at the domestic level.

Our call to the international community

The global response to plastic pollution and climate change must reflect the realities and priorities of SIDS. Through relevant processes, governments and international partners must strengthen complementary action, unlock accessible finance, and support island-led solutions.

1 Recognise the plastic-climate nexus.

Acknowledge how climate change and plastic pollution compound risks to SIDS' ecosystems, infrastructure, livelihoods and resilience within relevant UNFCCC outcomes and ensure climate-related risks inform plastics treaty provisions on pollution prevention and remediation, and national implementation.

2 Unlock finance for integrated action.

Prioritise accessible, predictable and grant-based support for integrated interventions, and additional finance to address the adaptation gap, with simplified procedures that avoid further administrative and debt burdens for SIDS.

3 Advance a SIDS-led research agenda.

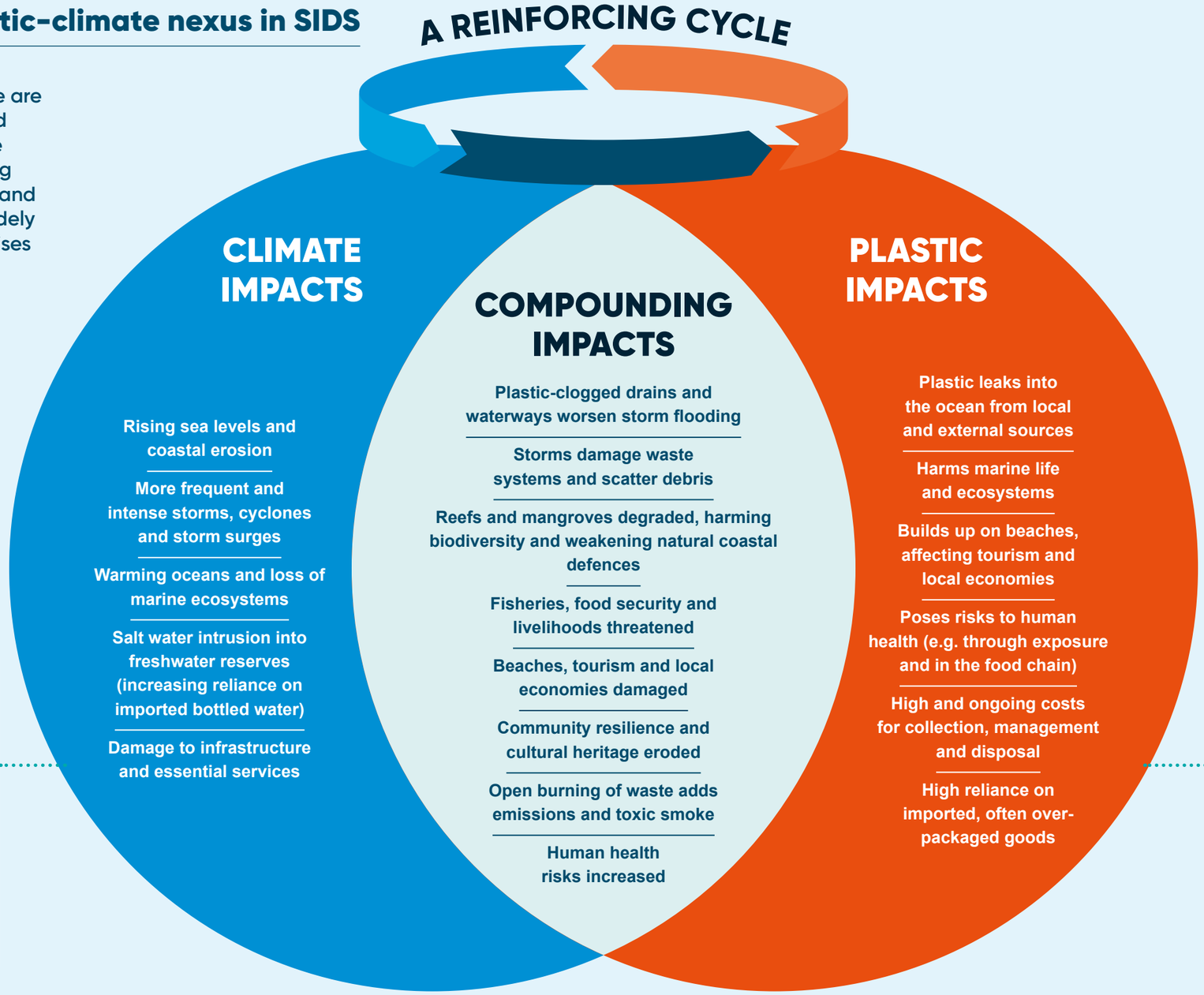
Address knowledge and data gaps on opportunities for coordination across international climate and plastics governance frameworks, including transboundary impacts, finance, technology and capacity needs, and shared vulnerabilities across island jurisdictions. Ground research in SIDS' priorities, island-specific evidence, local and traditional knowledge, and regional expertise to support SIDS data sovereignty.

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Understanding the plastic-climate nexus in SIDS

Plastic pollution and climate change are widely recognised as interconnected environmental crises that each pose significant threats. The compounding challenges these create for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) are less widely acknowledged. Addressing these crises in isolation risks overlooking their interactions and cumulative consequences, in countries with already constrained resources.



Climate impacts mobilise plastic waste from terrestrial environments, damage waste management infrastructure and increase the leakage of plastics into marine ecosystems.[18] Rising temperatures and increased exposure to ultraviolet radiation may also accelerate the weathering and fragmentation of plastic debris, contributing to the formation of microplastics.[19]

The **plastics lifecycle** accounts for an estimated 4-5% of global GHG emissions.17 This would equate to the 3rd highest emitting country in the world by 2040.[1]

The governance and capacity challenge in SIDS: The same structural constraints limit the ability of islands to respond to both crises – and make the impacts more severe

- Limited financial resources and high debt burdens
- Small markets and limited economies of scale
- Limited market power
- Remoteness and high transport costs
- Limited land and geographic constraints
- Constraints in institutional capacity, technology and infrastructure

Two global crises, one island reality

This intersection, or 'nexus', between the two crises exists for all countries.

However, SIDS face particularly acute and disproportionate impacts due to their geographic, environmental and socioeconomic realities.

SIDS contribute less than 1% of global greenhouse gas emissions[5] and have limited influence over upstream plastic production and the products entering their markets. As highlighted by UNEP, SIDS face an order of climate-related risk that no comparably exposed coastal geography shares.[6] These vulnerabilities are compounded by plastic pollution, which places additional pressure on already fragile ecosystems, infrastructure and economies.

The combined impacts of these crises are particularly evident across three interconnected dimensions: ecosystem degradation, socioeconomic vulnerability and infrastructure resilience.

Coral reefs, mangroves and other marine ecosystems face cumulative pressures from ocean warming, acidification, extreme weather events and plastic contamination, threatening biodiversity, ecosystem health and the essential services they provide. Globally, mangroves provide more than US$65 billion in annual flood protection benefits,[8] while coral reef-related tourism generates an estimated US$36 billion annually.[7] For SIDS, whose economies and livelihoods are closely tied to healthy coastal ecosystems, including coral reefs and mangroves, their degradation can have far-reaching consequences for fisheries, tourism, food security and coastal protection.[9]

At the same time, rising sea levels, storm surges and increasingly intense extreme weather events threaten already vulnerable infrastructure, including waste management systems. Damage to these systems can increase the leakage of plastics into coastal and marine environments, causing a vicious cycle further exacerbating ecosystem degradation and creating additional risks to human health and local economies. Case studies from the Caribbean and Pacific Oceans, presented on the following page, illustrate how these interconnected pressures manifest across different SIDS contexts and compound existing environmental, socioeconomic and infrastructure vulnerabilities.

For SIDS, these interconnected pressures are amplified by structural constraints, including limited financial resources, geographic remoteness and limited institutional and technical capacity. These constraints reduce their ability to respond to either crisis, particularly as both require funding, infrastructure and skilled personnel from the same limited pool of resources.

Recognising the plastic-climate nexus can help identify opportunities for more coordinated action, enabling SIDS to address compounding risks, make more effective use of limited resources and pursue interventions that deliver benefits across both environmental priorities. However, meaningful progress also requires systemic change at the global level to address the underlying drivers of both crises, rather than placing the burden on SIDS alone. This does not mean treating plastic pollution primarily as a climate issue or vice versa, or merging separate international processes, but rather strengthening complementary responses while maintaining dedicated action on the distinct drivers and impacts of each crisis.

"In my community in Barbados, the intersection between climate change and plastic pollution is all-encompassing. In recent years we have been hit by intensifying storms that bring flooding, which is made worse by drains blocked mainly by discarded single-use plastics. I have witnessed the devastating impacts on my community: damaged roads and homes, and the loss of lives and livelihoods. So for me, climate change and plastic pollution present a starkly vivid and undeniable connection."

Stacey Alvarez de la Campa, Founder and President,
Climate Rights & Justice International



Pictured (right) students in Barbados undertake a litter pick of a local beach, demonstrating the scale of the challenge that waste management alone cannot solve.

CASE STUDY

When the crisis reaches home: ten years of climate and plastic vulnerability for Fiji's Collection Pillars of Recycling

"There is no shame in the work I am involved in, as I am doing this for my children."



A CPR working at Vunato dumpsite in Lautoka, Fiji.
Image provided by Pacific Recycling Foundation.

These were the words of a 35-year-old Collection Pillar of Recycling (CPR) and mother of five whom the Pacific Recycling Foundation (PRF) met during its 2023 mapping exercise of Fiji's informal waste collection sector. CPRs are individuals who recover recyclable materials from the waste stream, helping to prevent these materials from reaching dumpsites and the natural environment.

Following the devastation caused by Tropical Cyclone Winston in 2016, the assistance the interviewee received was insufficient to rebuild her home. She turned to the dumpsite, collecting timber, roofing iron and tarpaulins to help reconstruct it.

Ten years later, the form of the disaster had changed, but the underlying vulnerability remained. In April 2026, severe rainfall and flooding associated with Tropical Cyclone Vaianu affected a community living near the Vunato dumpsite in Lautoka. Floodwater entered homes and carried plastic and other rubbish accumulated in drains and surrounding disposal areas through the community.

Unaisi Tinaicakau, a 50-year-old female CPR, was among those affected. She estimated that more than 40 homes across the wider community were flooded, with some families forced to evacuate or relocate temporarily after their homes, food supplies and personal belongings were damaged.

The two experiences, separated by a decade, reveal the deeply human connection between the plastic and climate crises. Following Tropical Cyclone Winston, discarded materials became a means of rebuilding and survival. During the Vunato floods, poorly contained plastic and other waste became an additional hazard moving through homes and the surrounding community.

For CPRs, an extreme weather event is therefore not a single crisis. It is a crisis layered onto vulnerabilities that already exist. People who are already among the most vulnerable within the waste management system can become even more exposed when climate-related disasters strike.

For Pacific SIDS, policies, programmes and financing addressing the plastic and climate crises must remain grounded in the realities of affected communities. Environmental resilience cannot be achieved while the people helping to build it remain among the most exposed.

Contributed by: Pacific Recycling Foundation

Key takeaway:

Addressing the plastic and climate crises is not only about managing environmental risks, but also about protecting the people whose livelihoods and living conditions place them at the intersection of both crises. Policies, programmes and financing must recognise the contributions of informal waste recovery workers while addressing the inequalities that leave them disproportionately exposed. Environmental resilience cannot be achieved while the people helping to build it remain among the most vulnerable.

[1] ***Terminology notes:*** *The Pacific Recycling Foundation uses the term Collection Pillars of Recycling (CPRs) for individuals previously referred to as informal waste pickers. The term was adopted to challenge the stigma associated with waste picking, recognise their essential contribution to waste management and recycling, and affirm their dignity, rights and inclusion within the recycling system.*

CASE STUDY

When the floodwaters rise: how plastic pollution compounds Trinidad and Tobago's climate vulnerability

In October 2018, Trinidad experienced severe flooding after two days of heavy rain. According to the Meteorological Services, an entire month's rainfall fell within these two days, and it was estimated that approximately 80% of the country was affected by flooding. Roads were blocked, homes and farms were damaged, and many people were stranded or in need of shelter. The immediate cause was persistent rainfall associated with the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone, which has been attributed in part to climate change impacts in the Caribbean region.



Flooding in Trinidad in autumn 2018.
Image provided by Unite Caribbean Group.

At the time, I was Chief Executive Officer of the Trinidad and Tobago Solid Waste Management Company Limited. One of the difficult operational challenges was managing the waste arriving during and after the floods. Because of the overwhelming volumes of waste generated, we had to close the Guanapo Landfill and establish temporary disposal sites so that waste could still be collected and managed. The disruption showed how quickly a disaster can put pressure on essential waste services, just when communities need them most.

Plastic pollution added another layer to this risk. Plastic bottles and other litter can block drains, culverts and waterways, reducing their ability to carry away stormwater. Shortly before the floods, drainage officials in Tobago reported finding large numbers of plastic bottles in detention ponds and warned that pollution contributed to flooding. Plastic pollution did not cause the floods, but it certainly worsened the impacts.

The experience brought the plastic–climate connection into sharp focus: extreme rainfall can overwhelm a country, while plastic pollution can obstruct drainage and complicate the response. Keeping waste out of waterways and ensuring disposal systems can keep operating during emergencies was a skill that quickly had to be learnt but is now necessary given the increased weather impacts that we experience throughout the Caribbean region due to the impacts of climate change.

Key takeaway:

Integrating plastic pollution prevention and resilient waste management systems into climate adaptation and disaster preparedness is critical to protecting infrastructure, maintaining essential services and reducing disaster risk.

Contributed By: Ronald Roach, Director Climate Resilience, Environment, Water and Waste, Unite Caribbean Group



Plastic pollution in waterways in Trinidad and Tobago.
Image provided by Unite Caribbean.

Building on SIDS' existing priorities

The plastic-climate nexus is not new for SIDS.

Across international climate and plastics negotiations, SIDS and their negotiating coalitions have consistently called for ambitious global action, recognition of their special circumstances, mechanisms to address environmental harm, and equitable access to finance and technology. While specific proposals vary across countries and negotiating groups, these priorities reveal important areas of convergence.

Keep the ambition

- **Climate:** Championed the 1.5°C goal and maintained this as an absolute red line for survival in negotiations.[10 11]
- **Plastics:** Continue to advocate for a full-lifecycle approach, with global rules governing plastic production, product redesign, and waste management. [10 11]

Recognise SIDS' special circumstances

- **Climate:** Recognise and take tangible action based on the unique, existential vulnerabilities and special circumstances of SIDS.[12]
- **Plastics:** Called for SIDS' special circumstances to be reflected in the Treaty text.[12]

Prioritise a remediation mechanism

- **Climate:** Advocated for the "Loss and Damage fund" to provide financial assistance to countries on the frontlines of climate devastation.[13 14]
- **Plastics:** Pushed for clear polluter pays obligations and a dedicated international coordination platform to clean up existing marine plastic pollution. [13 14]

Increase accessibility of funding mechanisms for SIDS

- **Climate:** Declared access to climate finance for SIDS a priority for negotiations.[14 15]
- **Plastics:** Emphasised the importance of equitable access to necessary financing and technology transfer without placing an unfair economic burden on SIDS.[14 15]

These areas of convergence demonstrate how SIDS already acknowledge the disproportionate and compounding environmental, economic and social burdens from climate change and plastic pollution. Their calls for stronger international commitments recognise that national action alone cannot address pollution and emissions originating largely beyond their borders. Equally, their demands highlight the resource and capacity constraints that can hinder responses to interconnected environmental risks.

Together, these positions provide a foundation for greater coordination between the two processes, without diminishing the need for ambitious, dedicated action on either climate change or plastic pollution.

Addressing the plastic-climate nexus for SIDS

Building on these priorities, governments and partners can address the plastic–climate nexus for SIDS through coordinated action across the UNFCCC and global plastics treaty processes to:

1. Recognise the plastic-climate nexus.

Acknowledge how climate change and plastic pollution compound risks to SIDS' ecosystems, infrastructure, livelihoods and resilience within relevant UNFCCC outcomes and ensure climate-related risks inform plastics treaty provisions on pollution prevention and remediation, and national implementation.

These interconnected risks should be reflected in relevant UNFCCC COP outcomes and, where appropriate, integrated into SIDS' nationally determined contributions (NDCs), national adaptation plans (NAPs) and other country-led strategies. Global plastics treaty provisions should account for climate-related risks, supported by dedicated financial, technical and capacity-building to help SIDS address these overlapping challenges.

2. Unlock finance for integrated action.

Prioritise accessible, predictable and grant-based support for integrated interventions, and additional finance to address the adaptation gap, with simplified procedures that avoid further administrative and debt burdens for SIDS.

Coordination between mechanisms such as the Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF) and future plastics treaty financing arrangements could support integrated interventions in SIDS. Examples include programmes combining plastic leakage prevention and improved waste collection with climate-resilient infrastructure, supported through dedicated grants or expanded eligibility criteria. Innovative mechanisms, such as a fee on primary plastic polymer production, already supported by some SIDS,[16] could help finance legacy plastic pollution remediation while ensuring upstream producers contribute in line with the polluter pays principle.

3. Advance a SIDS-led research agenda.

Address knowledge and data gaps on opportunities for coordination across international climate and plastics governance frameworks, including transboundary impacts, finance, technology and capacity needs, and shared vulnerabilities across island jurisdictions. Ground research in SIDS' priorities, island-specific evidence, local and traditional knowledge, and regional expertise to support SIDS data sovereignty.

Priority research could examine how plastic production and consumption beyond SIDS' borders contribute to both crises, and the finance, technology and capacity needed for integrated responses. Extending research to other island jurisdictions, including comparisons to overseas territories and autonomous regions, could help identify shared vulnerabilities and solutions.



Image: © iStock (Paulo Costa)

UNEP's recent Limiting Overshoot report makes it clear that the world is entering an era of 1.5°C exceedance.[6]

Plastic production and use are projected to nearly triple by 2060 under current policies, with major climate implications. Without further action, GHG emissions across the plastics lifecycle could consume 42% of the remaining global carbon budget for limiting warming to 1.5°C by 2040, significantly undermining efforts to meet the Paris Agreement's climate goals.[1]

While further mitigation would still be required to align with the Paris Agreement, these projections underscore the significant potential of integrated action on plastics and climate change. For SIDS, facing existential threats from both crises, the benefits could be life-defining. Because these nations play a vital role in protecting the ocean, a critical regulator of the global climate, the benefits could extend far beyond their shores. This must therefore be a call for greater urgency – not resignation.

International cooperation is essential to complement and enable SIDS' leadership, including by addressing the upstream drivers of plastic pollution and ensuring that global financial and technical systems are responsive to SIDS' priorities and circumstances, particularly in climate finance. Further research is also needed to identify integrated responses that tackle the drivers and interactions of both crises across the full plastics lifecycle, strengthen climate resilience, and provide the finance, technology and capacity SIDS need to develop locally appropriate, climate-resilient circular systems.

Governments and partners must now translate this opportunity into action by recognising the plastic-climate nexus, unlocking finance for integrated action, and advancing a SIDS-led research agenda. This will ensure that SIDS have the resources and support needed to protect communities, ecosystems and livelihoods while contributing to global climate resilience and efforts to tackle plastic pollution.

To endorse these calls to action, find out more at www.commonseas.com/our-work/plastic-climate-nexus-sids/

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About Common Seas

Common Seas creates systemic change to stop plastic pollution, connecting policy with education and practical action.

We partner with governments, businesses, communities and young people, to turn solutions into lasting impact. Our programmes focus on:

- Generating and sharing evidence to drive stronger protections from harm and motivate change.
- Supporting governments and key stakeholders to develop and implement effective policies and practical solutions.
- Empowering children and young people through education to build knowledge, inspire action and drive long-term behaviour change.

We work particularly in coastal locations and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) where the challenge is greatest, supporting a just transition to a future freed from plastic pollution.

Through our partnerships with SIDS governments, we recognise the interconnected challenges of plastic pollution and climate change, and the importance of ensuring that island nations' priorities and perspectives shape international responses.

Common Seas convened this paper in collaboration with SIDS partners to highlight these interconnected challenges, amplify island-led perspectives and identify opportunities for more coordinated international action that responds to SIDS' needs and priorities

To endorse this paper or find out more, please visit: www.commonseas.com

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