



Government of Samoa

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

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Faamolemole faatuatusi uma mai fesootaiga
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Samoa Statement

The 5th Session of the United Nations Environment Assembly – UNEA5

Theme:

“Strengthening Actions for Nature to Achieve the Sustainable Development Goals”
22-23 February 2021, Virtual Online Meeting Platform

Samoa would like to thank the President of UNEA and the Secretariat for organizing this important meeting of the 5th United Nations Environment Assembly despite the challenges with the COVID-19 pandemic.

We are confronting key global challenges of our lifetime brought about by the significant loss of biodiversity, climate change and the COVID-19 pandemic. We believe, this calls for a reset of global, regional and national priorities, a greater need for mutual solidarity through a common and shared purpose and bold steps towards enhancing our resilience using nature based solutions, by way of building back better.

Samoa as part of the Blue Pacific Continent and the group of large ocean states is committed to better ocean management. Samoa launched its Samoa Ocean Strategy 2020-2030 providing an overarching framework to strengthen the coordination of interventions across relevant sectors for improved management of our ocean and marine resources. An important voluntary commitment made by Samoa at the 2017 Ocean Conference.

Samoa has also recently approved its updated National Climate Change Policy 2020 – 2030 providing a much needed framework to guide our whole of government response to address climate change impacts and challenges. Our communities are very much involved and part of our efforts to combat climate change through the implementation of Community Integrated Management Plans. Another important voluntary commitment made by Samoa at the 2017 Ocean Conference.

Samoa calls for support for an international treaty on marine plastic and joins the global community in particular our Pacific Islands region in calling for effective regulations to ban ‘single use’ shopping bags, plastics and straws in our fight against marine pollution. Samoa is pleased to note that come 1st March 2021 the importation and use of Styrofoam cups and plates in Samoa will be banned throughout.

Samoa has planted more than 3 million trees in a concerted nation-wide effort and demonstrated commitment to global efforts to reduce greenhouse gases in the atmosphere. Samoa is also on track to meeting its current NDC target of generating 100% of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2025. Approximately 50% of generated electricity is produced from four (4) renewable

energy sources which are - wind, solar, hydro and the recently launched Biomass Gasification Plant. Samoa is currently working on its enhanced and ambitious NDC which will include sectors such as the transport, tourism, forestry and oceans (mangroves and seagrass).

The COVID 19 pandemic has slowed down our efforts towards implementing the SDGs and in some cases, reversed hard-fought progress towards sustainable development. Ensuring that we are on track in implementing the 2030 Agenda and its SDGs will be key to our efforts to build back better and respond to the current pandemic. We must also make sure that this is not used as an excuse to defer ambitious actions to address the impacts of climate change. The environmental dimension of sustainable development remains a crucial part in meeting the promise of the SDGs