



**Permanent Mission of the Federated States of Micronesia to the UN**

300 East 42 Street, Suite 1600  
New York, N.Y. 10017

e-mail: fsmun@fsmgov.org

Telephone: (212) 697-8370

Facsimile: (212) 697-8295

<http://www.fsmgov.org/>

---

**United Nations Conference on the Midterm Comprehensive Review of the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Decade for Action, “Water for Sustainable Development”, 2018–2028**

**Statement by Jeem S. Lippwe  
Permanent Representative**

**New York, 22 March 2023**

**Check against delivery**

Presidents,  
Distinguished representatives,

The distinguished representatives of Samoa, on behalf of the Alliance of Small Islands States (AOSIS), Fiji, on behalf of the Pacific Island Forum (PIF) and Tuvalu on behalf of the Pacific SIDS, have spoken on behalf of their memberships, respectively, including the Federated States of Micronesia on the very important subject of “Water for Sustainable Development.” I would like to add the following, in my national capacity.

Presidents,

Micronesia occupies some of the smallest habitable land areas on Earth, which are scattered across 2.6 million square kilometer of the Pacific Ocean. The physical characteristics of our islands and our daily lives are heavily affected by the prevailing climate, making us one of the most vulnerable. When the intensity of tropical storms increases, as seen in recent years, we have nowhere to go. When months of complete drought come, and the unprecedented king tides flood our islands, we are faced with a persistent problem: access to clean water.

So I am not in unfamiliar territory in speaking here today, Mr. President, to call for continuing attention to the serious plight of my island county and the small island developing States brought on by some of the most destructive storms and unprecedented king tides many of us are experiencing now. The adverse impacts of climate change, including sea-level rise, are the most serious environmental threats to the Pacific.

Plainly put, our recent experience has shown that the weather and climate are getting worse. As the adverse impacts of climate change worsen so is the availability and quality of water on our islands. Both our low-lying outer islands and the coastal areas on our few high volcanic islands are constantly threatened by the shortage of quality water. We have faced numerous

droughts recently that dried up the river beds and streams which are crucial to the quality of life in the high islands and the rainwater that is so crucial to the lives in the low-lying outer islands. The changing weather patterns caused by climate change have brought frequent and intense storms leading to floods and landslides. These natural disasters have destroyed lives and livelihoods, eroded soils, destroyed crops, damaged homes, and displaced our people. Sea-level rise has ushered in king tides that have left lasting damage to the quality of water resources.

Scientists have warned that the climate crisis is increasingly more immediate than previously thought. The just published IPCC Sixth Assessment Synthesis Report with its deeply alarming messages warns us once more of unacceptable dangerous and irreversible consequences. And who are the most affected? – It does not take a scientist to inform that it's the small island developing States!

And it is fair to say here, Mr. President, that while our people are all affected, the water issue affects the most vulnerable such as women, girls, and children, particularly those among them who bear the traditional tasks of preparing food, draw water from our wells, bathe the young and water the plot of family gardens.

Water is a shared public good; Micronesia is committed to and has heeded the call of Sustainable Development Goal 6 to strengthen our leadership actions and provide potable water to our people. But we need help in the form of partnerships as well as sustainable financing. We also need capacity building to scale up local driven water access projects. We thank our partners who have supported us in this regard.

On our own, Micronesia has taken the initiative in developing a National Water and Wastewater Policy and National and Wastewater Master Plan and State Action Plans. The Water Security issues will be centralized under the National Government's Department of Resources and Development. We understand that our quality of life is intrinsic to the integrity of the natural environment. That is why we have highlighted the need to protect the water cycle as evident in our National Voluntary Review.

The Federated States of Micronesia is seeking support to meet the basic water needs of its citizens, including through the following actions:

- Implementing broad-scale, sustainable, and energy-efficient water security initiatives for both the main and outer island atolls;
- Continuing to support the achievement of the goals of the Micronesia Challenge; and SDG 6;
- Undertaking community socio-economic assessments and water access feasibility studies;
- Conducting complete and updated hydrological surveys of ground and surface waters;
- Increasing funding and capacity for monitoring and enforcement of clean water;

- Establishing and maintaining a database system for storing water quality data around the nation;
- Developing policies and procedures for local communities, particularly women, in water and sanitation management;
- Developing and implementing a national-level public education program on water and septic/sewer systems;
- Leverage nature-based solutions for water access adaptation projects with a focus on water conservation;
- Exploration and development of water infrastructure that supports mountain water-related ecosystems.

I will end on this sad note. Our plans and our efforts would be all for naught if we keep ignoring the findings and do not heed the repeated alarms by the IPCC regarding the climate crisis. The solutions are there to take and this decade is critical if we are to save our planet – phase out fossil fuels, reduce emissions and keep the goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius alive.

Thank you, Presidents.