



*Responding to Climate Change in Partnership
with our Pacific Island Neighbours*

Patrons: Mrs Bonita Mabo and Most Rev Bishop Peter Ingham

6th July 2018

Re: Submission into Australian Broadcasting in the Asia Pacific

This submission is being lodged on behalf of the Pacific Calling Partnership (PCP), an initiative of the Edmund Rice Centre for Justice and Community Education. PCP works in partnership with organisations and governments in vulnerable Pacific Island countries to find a global solution towards a sustainable future in the face of climate change. The United Nations has said that the low-lying islands of the Pacific are facing an existential threat from rising sea levels. PCP works to ensure that Pacific Island voices are heard more clearly and more effectively both within the Australian community and in the broader global community.

Our work has made us deeply aware of the difficulties that people living in Pacific Island nations have in accessing international news, commentary and up to date climate science. The ABC would be well positioned to support our Pacific Island neighbours if the ABC had more resources, greater funding and was able to use Australian shortwave technology.

The strength and effectiveness of PCP in gaining international attention for climate justice for low-lying Pacific Islands is due in no small part to the partnerships we have developed. The identification of needs, campaigning, education, mentoring and advocacy have arisen primarily from the relationships we have built with government, community and church leaders in Kiribati and Tuvalu and other Pacific Island Nations. These relationships would be greatly enhanced by a revamped and modernised ABC. The ABC itself needs to be able to build strong partnerships and collaborative relationships with Pacific journalists and communities.

In many parts of the Pacific climate change is predicted to bring more extreme weather events such as bigger storms, more fierce cyclones, longer droughts and more heat waves. Given more resources, the ABC could contribute much more to emergency and disaster response. Climate change is also going to increasingly mean that Australians and the world need to hear the voices and stories coming from the Pacific. The ABC could provide quality debate, information and awareness of all aspects of the causes of climate change, its effects on our neighbours, and the need for adaptation.

The small number of migrants from Kiribati and Tuvalu who live in Australia find it difficult to keep links with their homelands apart from using face book. While face book has provided important communication links, it is not enough, and it needs to be supplemented by more formal media connections.

We believe that in the face of climate change, there is an urgent need for a revamped ABC international service that reaches the most isolated and vulnerable Pacific Islands.

Yours sincerely

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