



Dialogue on Science and Science Policy for the Sustainable Development Goals in the Pacific Small Island Developing States

29 and 30 March 2017

Tanoa Tusitala Hotel, Apia, Samoa

Introductory Remarks: Sir Peter Gluckman

Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of New Zealand and Chair of the International Network for Government Science Advice (INGSA)

Prime Minister, Ministers, ADG Flavia Schlegel, Dr Colin Tukuitonga, distinguished guests

Afio mai, susū mai, maliu mai

I am honoured to be here as the Chief Science Advisor to the Prime Minister of New Zealand but primarily as Chair of INGSA. INGSA is an autonomous component of the International Council of Science, ICSU.

There is not a policy challenge that does not have a scientific and evidentiary dimension – be it in disaster management or seeking to enhance social, environmental and economic health. The Sustainable Development Goals recognise this and much work has gone on to identify both the science and technology that needs to be developed and importantly applied. SDG 16 however has another dimension – it focuses on the institutions that are needed for progress to be made. Amongst those institutions is the need for systems that allow evidence and science to be effectively applied into policy making at both national and international levels.

INGSA was founded in 2014 following a meeting attended by 44 countries in Auckland and now is a network encompassing more than 75 countries. INGSA has five major functions.

The first is to provide a policy forum and opportunity for science advice practitioners of many types, from individual science advisors to those working in NGOs and regulators, academics, academy

heads and policy makers, to network. It does so through both major conferences – the last attracted over 600 attendees in Brussels - and through regional networks. We have an African chapter based in Pretoria and soon will have a Latin America chapter based in Montevideo and an Asian Chapter based in Kuala Lumpur. The African Chapter is now a very vibrant group encompassing more than 20 countries and undertaking its own activities.

The second is capacity building. This is done through workshops using case based teaching techniques and master classes. Some are regionally based and some are thematically based. These encompass both the developed and the developing world. In the last year we have conducted workshops in South Africa, Senegal and Jordan. And in the next few weeks we have workshops in Berlin, Copenhagen, Buenos Aires, Malaysia, Bratislava and Nigeria. We have worked with Foreign Ministries to build their understanding of the role of science in their activities. INGSA has a MOU with UNESCO to partner in this activity and Dr Schlegel who is here is on its governing board.

The third is to promote research into this complex interface and build relationships between academics interested in this domain.

The fourth is to link to other agencies and organisations with common interests including UNESCO and ICSU, IAP and others.

The fifth that is emerging is to be a source of input to international agencies – for example we have been engaged and will be engaged in the SDG programme through the TFM and STI forum in May this year.

When Flavia and I were reviewing the activities of INGSA we recognised that the issues of the SIDS were in many ways distinct and that capacity and capability building would be very different for countries that face the challenges of size and isolation. And that is the origin of this dialogue. We want to hear from you, to explore how bodies such as ours, can assist the most vulnerable countries to develop human, environmental and economic resilience through better application of evidence. I took this to proposal to the NZ MFAT and there was instantaneous support from the IDG and that is how we come to be here. I look forward to two days of learning much from you.

Fa'afetai tele