

Climate negotiator warns world 'out of time' to save islands

September 7 2018, by Patrick Galey



Amjad Abdulla of the Small Island States said time had "already run out" for some countries on climate change

Island nations like Fiji and the Maldives are almost at the "point of no return" because of rising sea levels, a leading climate negotiator warned

Friday.

As well as losing land and infrastructure to encroaching oceans as the planet heats up, many [islands](#) are also facing extreme flooding and damage from tropical storms, warned Amjad Abdulla, head negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

With experts from across the planet locked in key talks in Bangkok aimed at breathing life into the Paris Agreement on [climate change](#), Abdulla said time had "already run out" for some countries.

"Our islands are at risk. We are doing more than our fair share with our limited resources," he told AFP on the sidelines of the six-day conference.

"What we are saying to the international community is that we do not have adequate financial, technological or human capacity in terms of alleviating the issue of climate change—we need international cooperation so we can all survive on our islands."

The 2015 Paris deal—which must be adopted by signatory nations by December—aims to limit global temperature rises to "well below" two degrees Celsius and to less than 1.5 degrees if possible.

The most persistent sticking points in negotiations revolve around money.

The Paris Agreement has promised \$100 billion annually from 2020 to poor nations already coping with the effects of climate change.



The existence of island nations like the Maldives is at risk from rising sea levels

Developing countries favour outright grants from public sources, demand visibility on how donor nations intend to scale up this largesse, and object to under-investment in adapting to climate impacts.

Rich countries want more private capital in the mix and prefer projects with profit potential.

Although responsible for only a tiny percentage of global greenhouse gas emissions, the very existence of island nations are under threat from rising sea levels.

"We are very behind. If the world had adequately addressed the issue we wouldn't still be negotiating and people would have been able to adapt and have a happier, more prosperous lifestyle," Abdulla said.

"We are on the front line. But this is a global issue and it can be only addressed at the global level."

'Traumatic' changes

Island nations want a better idea of what sort of funding they can expect from richer states to help develop renewable technology and build up local defences against the rising seas.

They also want commitments to help with the unique "loss and damage" derived from [sea level](#) rises and other impacts including storms and salt water intrusion.

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