

Pelenise Alofa Pilitati - *Chairperson Church Education Director's Association in Kiribati (CEDAK), Managing Director, Kauaoki Foundation Enterprise, Kiribati*

Pelenise Alofa Pilitati is a respected community leader in Kiribati, one of the Pacific nations most threatened by climate change. Pelenise lives with daily awareness of the effects of climate change. As Chairperson of the Church Education Director's Association in Kiribati (CEDAK) she is acutely aware of the impact climate change is having on the future prospects and outlook of young people. "The future of Kiribati is in our hands - we work very hard each year to support and help students to be successful. We want our children to love their country and love to serve their people. But what is the future of our children when our country is being threatened by global warming?"

Pelenise is also the Manager of Kauaoki Foundation Enterprise that specialises in Health Food and promoting health to the community. Most of Kiribati is less than 4 metres above sea level and is already suffering from erosion and salination of gardens and fresh water supplies because of tidal surges and sea level rise. Pelenise does health promotion and cooking demonstrations for the public every week - in the public square, at hospitals, community maneabas and associations. She sees this as an important part of adapting to climate change as diets change because of salination of gardens.

Pelenise is passionate about the issues, about her people and the Pacific. "Some of my friends have migrated to Australia and NZ looking for greener pastures but I refuse to migrate. I chose to return to Kiribati and to stay in the Pacific so that I could help my people. And if helping my people means speaking to all the leaders of the Pacific including Australia and NZ, then I count that my privilege. If it means talking to the whole world, I will gladly do it. If I have to shout it, I will shout the loudest."

Reverend Tafue Lusama - *Chairperson Tuvalu Climate Action Network, Program Secretary Church of Tuvalu Dept Peace and Justice, Pastor, Christian Church of Tuvalu.*

The Reverend Tafue Lusama is from Funafuti, capital of Tuvalu, the world's fourth smallest country and home to only 12,000 people. Rev Lusama is the Secretary for Peace and Justice at the Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu (Christian Church of Tuvalu), and is the Chairperson of the Climate Action Network Tuvalu. He has holds a Master of Arts in Religion, and wrote his thesis on Climate Change from a theological perspective. Tafue has been travelling around the world attending meetings, speaking and campaigning on climate change issues for several years now.

Tuvalu, a group of eight low-lying islands half-way between Australia and Hawaii, has already seen significant internal relocation of citizens as a result of climate change and could be the first nation in the world to disappear because of rising sea levels. Tuvalu has a land mass of 26 square kilometres, and the highest point is just 16 feet above sea level. Three small islets of Tuvalu have already become completely submerged in the past 20 years.

He says Pacific people will not accept losing their homelands. “Becoming climate refugees is absolutely intolerable to us. We will become homeless people, roaming the face of the globe. We will lose everything our identity is tied to.”

“I do believe people are listening, and trying to do what needs to be done. The problem now is the political will. My aim is to convince people to lobby their Government to support a coherent and realistic deal to come out of Copenhagen.”

Marstella Jack – *Former Attorney General of the Federated States of Micronesia*

Marstella Jack is the former Attorney General of the Federated States of Micronesia, and the first woman to perform that role. She is a former AusAID and Chevening Scholar, and obtained her Masters of Law from the University of Hull. She has attended Harvard University as a World Council of Women Leaders scholar and is the first and only Micronesian to have participated in the Washington DC-based Environmental Leadership Program (ELP).

She will need to draw on all of those skills and experience for her next fight, to save her homeland from literally disappearing. She is currently undertaking efforts to establish the FSM Climate Action Network, the first national node to be in the northern Pacific. Her five year old daughter is the reason her passion is reinforced in this campaign. “People are being left without homes and identities. Climate change has been and will continue to be a major threat to our environment.”

As someone who has seen the inside of many a high level international negotiation, Marstella knows the dangers of smaller countries being bullied by threats and bribes from their bigger neighbours. “Our leaders need to know that the people of the Pacific support them taking a strong stand and the Pacific Islands Forum. Our future depends on it.”

Dr. Teresia Teaiwa – *Senior Lecturer and Programme Director, Pacific Studies, Victoria University, Wellington.*

Dr. Teresia Teaiwa is of African American and Banaban/I-Kiribati heritage. She was born in Honolulu, Hawai'i, and raised in the Fiji Islands. Teresia is currently a Senior Lecturer and the Programme Director of Pacific Studies at Victoria University. She is a Member of the Board of Studies for the Stout Center for New Zealand Studies and also for Development Studies. She is an Associate of the VUW Centre for Applied Cross Cultural Research. Before moving to New Zealand, she taught history and politics for five years at the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji.

Her research is centered on: gendered dynamics of militarism in the Pacific, nationalism and regionalism in the Pacific, articulations of culture and politics, indigenous rights and democracy, feminism in the Pacific, and Pacific Studies and pedagogy. Teresia has authored and edited numerous publications and in 2007 received the Marsden Fast-Start Award for an oral history and book project titled

"What are we fighting for? Fijian women soldiers at home and abroad." She was described as one of Kiribati's "living national icons" by *The Guardian* in April 2009.

She is currently co-editor of the *International Feminist Journal of Politics*, Editorial Advisory Member of the *Pacific Ecologist* and *Fijian Studies: A Journal of Contemporary Fiji*, and Past-President of the *Pacific History Association*.

Dr Jim Salinger, *President, WMO Commission for Agricultural Meteorology and Honorary Research Fellow, University of Auckland.*

Dr. Jim Salinger is currently an Honorary Research Fellow at the School of Geography, Geology and Environmental Science at the University of Auckland. Jim has spent his career as a leading climate scientist and agricultural meteorologist at universities and government research institutes, and is now President of the World Meteorological Organization's (WMO) Commission for Agricultural Meteorology (CAgM).

He has spent over three decades leading research on climate and climate change in New Zealand and the South Pacific, including documenting climate change, seasonal climate prediction and examining the impacts of past, present and future climate on agriculture and climate-sensitive communities. He is a lead author of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Third and Fourth Assessment Reports and is Science Team Leader of the International Climate Justice Programme.

Jim has over two decades' involvement in the WMO CAgM programme, including leadership positions for the last decade. He has received numerous science communications awards. He was elected a Companion of the Royal Society of New Zealand (2001) and was a contributor to the IPCC Nobel Peace Prize award (2007).

Barry Coates – *Executive Director, Oxfam New Zealand, Chair of the Council for International Development, Vice Chair of the Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand, Executive Committee Member of the Global Campaign for Climate Action (GCCA).*

Barry Coates has served as the Executive Director of Oxfam New Zealand since 2003. He has devoted his career to poverty reduction and sustainable development and a commitment to supporting development in the Pacific.

Barry's commitment to the Pacific started in Samoa in 1978, initially as a volunteer, then subsequently in promoting small business development for the government of Samoa. After doing a Masters in Management Studies at Yale University, Barry was Head of Development Policy with the World Wildlife Fund, including attending the Earth Summit in 1992 on the British delegation. He then spent seven years as Director of the World Development Movement in the UK, including playing a leading role in international campaigns on debt, arms trade, corporate social responsibility and international trade.

Since joining Oxfam in 2003, Barry has succeeded in building strong and respectful relationships with people and local groups, particularly in the Pacific and East Asia. Barry has played a major role in Oxfam New Zealand's advocacy work, including working with Pacific civil society and governments in their efforts to secure a fair deal in trade negotiations with the European Union; and is involved in similar negotiations with Australia and New Zealand. Barry has also played a key role in raising public awareness of Fairtrade in New Zealand.

Barry is now leading Oxfam's Climate Change Campaign calling for a fair and equitable agreement to be reached by government leaders in Copenhagen in December 2009. Oxfam is part of the Global Campaign for Climate Action (GCCA), a vast network of organizations from international civil society which has the shared goal of mobilizing local citizen initiatives and unifying national public opinion to pressure governments leading up to Copenhagen.

Barry is also Chair of the Council for International Development, Vice Chair of the Fair Trade Association of Australia and New Zealand, Executive Committee Member of the GCCA, and a member of the core group of Make Poverty History Aotearoa New Zealand.