

**Address of the FAO Director- General at
The Third International Conference on Small Island
Developing States (SIDS)**

Apia, Samoa, 1-4 September 2014

Your Excellencies Heads of State and Government

Honourable Ministers

Distinguished Guests,

Ladies and Gentlemen

1. Let me begin by thanking the Government of Samoa for hosting the Third International Conference on Small Island Developing States. It is an honor to be in Apia once again.
2. The SIDS have made many strides since the first Earth Summit held in Rio de Janeiro 1992, and the international SIDS Conferences of 1994 held in Barbados and Mauritius in 2005.
3. And yet, sustainable development remains a special challenge for the SIDS as acknowledged by the Rio+20 outcome document.
4. Overcoming these challenges is what brings us together here.
5. This Conference takes place at a fitting time.
6. Climate change is happening before our eyes.
7. Rising sea level, air and sea surface temperatures, and changing rainfall patterns are affecting countries worldwide. But there is no doubt that the SIDS are more vulnerable.
8. Climate change conditions development in your countries. It affects your food security, your livelihoods, and your economy.
9. For Small Island Developing States, overcoming climate change is more than a simple challenge. It is a question of survival.

10. However, survival is not our only goal, we strive for sustainable development.
11. There is a lot that can and needs to be done nationally. Improving the use and management of natural resources, exploring opportunities sustainably, strengthening local food production and consumption circuits and building resilience.
12. FAO works with individual countries and groups of Small Island Developing States to help you tackle these issues.
13. These are not isolated efforts, but are part of the strategic framework that guides FAO action, defined by our Members, including: food security, sustainability, improving markets and resilience.
14. In the Caribbean, for example, we are supporting the development and implementation of resilience-building and disaster risk reduction plans.
15. In the Pacific region, we are part of the food security and sustainable livelihoods program. ,
16. Through the FAO global Blue Growth Initiative, we are assisting Small Island Developing States sustainably use your aquatic resources.
17. The SIDS are among the most affected by climate change, however, they are not the ones that cause it.
18. So overcoming climate change needs global commitment and action. This is a shared responsibility.
19. In three weeks the Climate Summit will take place. And we are now defining what the post-2015 development agenda will be.
20. FAO will continue to work with you to ensure that the challenges you face are reflected in the sustainable development goals we commit to.
21. I would also like to mention that SIDS face a multiple burden of malnutrition, ranging from undernourishment to obesity.
22. In fact, according to the WHO, nine out of the 10 countries with highest female obesity rates are Small Island Developing States.

23. Ensuring adequate nutrition is a challenge not only for SIDS, but also for the entire world. So I would like to take this opportunity to invite you to participate in the Second International Conference on Nutrition, that will be co-organized by FAO and WHO in Rome, from November 19-21.

Ladies and gentlemen,

24. Let me end by saying that, we need to act locally and globally to reach sustainable development. FAO is with you in both of these levels.

25. We have sharpened our priorities to better respond to your needs.

26. We are bringing together all our technical capacity so that we can give you more comprehensive support.

27. We are strengthening our global presence to be closer you.

28. We are focusing on delivering concrete results because we want to give a significant contribution to your development goals.

29. And we are doing this with you – governments, international and regional organizations, and non-state actors.

30. You can count on FAO's full support to implement the SIDS agenda. Working together in strong and effective partnerships.

31. Thank you for your attention.

