

**AT HOME OR ABROAD:
TUVALUANS SHAPING A TUVALUAN FUTURE**

by

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Abstract

If development is to be sustainable, it is vital to plan and act with all possible futures in mind and for communities to be engaged and empowered so that development meets local needs. Throughout the international development community, there have been regular calls for people to act locally, but think globally. Yet, as challenges become more complex, it is no longer enough to simply *think* globally. Where possible futures involve losing one's land and country, people need to be able to participate in making a better future for themselves, their families and their communities beyond their own borders.

Tuvalu is a country that faces multiple possible futures that may have severe impacts on its people, including the possibility of forced migration. As a country with many development needs, Tuvalu has created *Te Kakeega II: National Strategies for Sustainable Development – 2005–2015*, which acknowledges the need for participation and cross-sectoral collaboration. This thesis examines the mechanisms that exist to engage Tuvaluans in their development. It reviews whether Tuvaluans actually participate in these processes and whether there are any barriers to participation. It also investigates to what extent the mechanisms for participation are helping Tuvalu confront the contemporary and complex issue of climate change.

People who are forced to migrate because of changes in their environment have no rights under international law and thus risk becoming disempowered. If Tuvaluans are forced to migrate because of climate change, they risk losing any gains they have made at home. Unlike many forced migration situations, Tuvaluans have time to participate in the preparations for such a future. To what extent are they enabled and empowered to do this? How, and who, do they think should prepare for this possible future?

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Glossary of Tuvaluan Terms

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Alik</i> | Chief |
| <i>Ekalesia</i> | Church |
| <i>Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu</i> | Church of Tuvalu |
| <i>Fafine</i> | Women |
| <i>Fakai</i> | Village |
| <i>Fakalavelave</i> | Cultural obligation to give |
| <i>Fakalofo</i> | Somebody to be pitied |
| <i>Fakanofonofoga o fenua</i> | Traditional structures |
| <i>Fale i fona</i> | Parliament |
| <i>Falekaupule / Fonopule / Kau aliki</i> | Council of elders |
| <i>Fatele</i> | Traditional dance |
| <i>Feitu</i> | Side (of settlement) |
| <i>Fono o matai</i> | Council of the heads of landholding families |
| <i>Kaiga</i> | Family |
| <i>Kaufakatasi / Aofiaaga / Partisi</i> | Participation |
| <i>Kaupule</i> | Local government |
| <i>Lima malos</i> / <i>Tagata lima malos</i> | The strong armed men |
| <i>Logo</i> | Knowledge/Skills passed amongst the community |
| <i>Loto fenua</i> | Community-hearted |
| <i>Malae</i> | Communal courtyard or village green |
| <i>Malo</i> | (Central) government |
| <i>Manaepa / Abiga</i> | Meeting house |
| <i>Matai</i> | Head of landholding family |

| | |
|--|---|
| <i>Mataniu</i> | Landholding families |
| <i>Muna</i> | Family 'trade' or specialisation |
| <i>Palagi</i> | A person of European or Caucasian ethnicity. A non-Tuvaluan |
| <i>Pulaka</i> | A form of taro |
| <i>Pule o kaupule</i> | Head of the <i>kaupule</i> |
| <i>Sui matai</i> | Sub- <i>matai</i> |
| <i>Talavou</i> | Youth |
| <i>Tagata</i> | Men |
| <i>Tagata fenua</i> | People of the land |
| <i>Tamaliki</i> | Children |
| <i>Tao aliki</i> | Assistance chief |
| <i>Te 'gana maasani</i> | The common language |
| <i>Te Kakeega</i> | Climbing; progressive development |
| <i>Te pule (o te fale)</i> | The head (of the house) |
| <i>Te Pusi mo ti Ali</i> | The Eel and the Flounder (Tuvaluan creation story) |
| <i>Te sina (o fenua)/Taupulega</i> | (Male) elders (of the land) |
| <i>Tuu mo aganu</i> | Traditions and practices |
| <i>Tuu mo iloga</i> | Traditions and heritage/identity |
| <i>Ulu aliki / Pule fenua / Tupu / Ulu fenua</i> | High chief |
| <i>Vaka</i> | Canoe |

Abbreviations

| | |
|---------|--|
| ACP | African, Caribbean and Pacific States |
| ADB | Asia Development Bank |
| AOSIS | Alliance of Small Island States |
| CBO | Community-based Organisation |
| CCEMA | Climate Change, Environment and Migration Alliance |
| CEDAW | Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women (1993) |
| CIVICUS | World Alliance for Citizen Participation |
| CROP | Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific |
| DID | Department for International Development |
| EEU | European Economic Union |
| EKT | Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu |
| FAO | Food and Agriculture Organisation |
| FSPI | Foundation of the People of the South Pacific International |
| GDP | Gross Domestic Profit |
| ILO | International Labour Organisation |
| INGO | International Non-Governmental Organisation |
| IOM | International Organisation for Migration |
| IPCC | International Panel on Climate Change |
| LDC | Least Developed Country |
| MDGs | Millennium Development Goals |
| MIRAB | Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureaucracy |
| MNREAL | Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment, Agriculture and Lands |
| MP | Members of Parliament |
| NAPA | National Adaptation Programme of Action |
| NBCL | Nimmo-Bell and Company Ltd |
| NGO | Non-Governmental Organisation |
| NZ | Aotearoa New Zealand |
| NZAID | New Zealand's International Aid and Development Agency |

| | |
|--------|---|
| NZMFAT | New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade |
| OECD | Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development |
| PCS | Pacific Community Secretariat |
| PIANGO | Pacific Islands Association of Non-Governmental Organisations |
| PIF | Pacific Islands Forum |
| PIFACC | Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change |
| PIFS | Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat |
| PM | Prime Minister |
| PRNGO | Pacific Regional Non-Government Organisation |
| RNZI | Radio New Zealand International |
| RSE | Recognised Seasonal Employer scheme |
| SI | Solomon Islands |
| SIDS | Small Island Developing States |
| SOPAC | Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission |
| SPBEA | South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment |
| SPC | South Pacific Commission (now Secretariat of the Pacific Community) |
| SPREP | South Pacific Regional Environment Programme |
| TANGO | Tuvaluan Association of Non-Governmental Organisations |
| TuCAN | Tuvaluan Climate Change Network |
| UK | United Kingdom |
| UN | United Nations |
| UNDP | United Nations Development Programme |
| UNIMPP | United Nations International Migration Policy Programme |
| UNPF | United Nations Population Fund |
| UNSD | United Nations Statistical Division |
| USA | United States of America |
| WWF | World Wildlife Fund |
| XNA | Xinhua News Agency |

Shaping the Future

1.1 *Thesis context and rationale*

The communities of Tuvalu have been described as the country's greatest asset – Tuvaluans are interconnected, and by pulling together they increase Tuvalu's resilience as a nation. According to the scientific world, Tuvalu now faces some plausible but challenging futures in the face of climate change, including the possibility of forced migration. So, it is now more than ever, that the strengths of Tuvaluan communities need to be galvanised.

On the international stage, Tuvaluan representatives are vocal about the possible consequences climate change may have on their country, highlighting the need for international assistance and action. Tuvaluans are often portrayed in the international media as the victims of a pending disaster created at the hands of the industrialised world rather than as a group of resilient island communities. However, do these pictures of Tuvalu correspond with the picture that Tuvaluans have of their circumstances? What futures do Tuvaluans believe they might face? How do they think they should prepare for such futures, and who should prepare? Without answering these questions, there is a risk that solutions will be dictated to the people of Tuvalu that do not meet their needs, adhere to Tuvaluan world views, or utilise the resources that Tuvaluans themselves possess.

To build on the strengths inherent in Tuvaluan communities, it is important to understand the views of those in the communities. This thesis aims to reflect some of the peoples' perceptions of their situation by gathering their voices to answer some of the following interrelated questions. How do Tuvaluans engage in their communities and in decision-making that affects their lives? What factors do Tuvaluans consider are important in shaping their participation and their futures? What role does sharing information and different knowledges – scientific, local and theological – play in how decisions are made? In light of the climate change threat, what possible futures do Tuvaluans face – at home and abroad – and to what extent are Tuvaluans empowered to shape their own futures and build on their interconnectedness and community responsiveness? And finally, how empowered are individuals and communities in Tuvalu to formulate their own responses to the threat of being forced to migrate beyond their own borders, and what factors need to be considered if such a future is to be planned for? Importantly, this thesis offers a platform for the views of Tuvaluans to be heard and is not a critique of these voices.

Early on in the research process three topics of exploration, or starting points, were identified

as important to this thesis: participation, climate change and migration. Throughout this thesis, these topics have then been interwoven with a number of cross-cutting themes identified by participants: the role of land, people and social structures, economy, and quality of life.

This thesis does not stand alone as it is one lens into the challenges and opportunities faced by Tuvalu. It builds on the earlier work of others from the Tuvaluan government, the non-profit sector, and academia. It also offers a contribution to the international school of forced migration, which has only recently begun to question which actors should participate in planning for forced migration situations.

1.2 *Situating the thesis within development studies*

Development studies is a young field of academic study – it is concerned with improving people's lives. As a branch of the social sciences, development studies takes account of social, environmental and economic transformation and the human capacity to manage this process. It heeds cross-cutting concerns of gender, environment, culture, class, and conflict (VUW, 2007).

This thesis focuses on Tuvaluans improving Tuvaluan lives. It draws its theoretical base from multiple disciplines, taking a holistic view and extracting learnings from a plethora of sources including the sciences, economics, theology and the arts. These assumptions are:

1. That the contemporary world faces challenges to development that transcend borders.
2. That people should be empowered to participate in and direct their own development as far is practically possible, and that this can be done by adopting a strengths-based approach to development.
3. That 'development' should be undertaken with a view to responding to an array of uncertain futures.

1.2.1 Transcending borders

'Development' is often talked about as a process that occurs within state boundaries. Statistics regularly compare the development of one state with others, enforcing the idea of state sovereignty and disregarding the more global approach to development of 'one people, one planet'.¹ However, in contemporary times no state is totally independent from the international community (Camilleri, 2004) – state development is linked to the development of other nations. The economic, political, social, environmental and religious dynamics of a global world

¹ For example, the Human Development Index (see <http://hdr.undp.org/en/>).

cross state borders without regard to manmade boundaries. Through technology, travel and trade, individuals now have as much of a role to play on the international stage as governments. Individuals and communities create networks which are a powerful asset in the response to the complex challenges the people of the world collectively face. Yet, to benefit from these networks it is important to understand how local communities relate to that global complexity.

The local...is not a mere segment into which the world can be subdivided, but a 'complex totality', capable of autonomous behaviour. It is a world in itself, endowed with its own identity which distinguishes it from the environment and from other systems...the system evolves and expresses itself by way of a relational dynamic involving multiple actors *which act collectively, as well as individually*. (Conti, 2003, p. 11)

Although Tuvalu may appear to be isolated from the rest of the world, this thesis will explore to what extent Tuvalu's future challenges and solutions are interwoven with the people and bodies which lie outside its geographical borders.

1.2.2 Strengths-based development

This thesis is grounded in the assumption that inquiry into the strengths, hopes, values and dreams of a nation and its people can in itself be transformational. This research draws on two Appreciate Inquiry philosophies: first, the premise of social constructionism (an understanding that our reality is created through our language and dialogue with others); and second, the premise that positive image leads to positive action:

The intention is to discover and build upon the strength and vitality of human systems as experienced and reported by their members. (Randolph, 2006, p. 1081)

Unlike much of the media concerning Tuvalu, this thesis does not cast Tuvalu and Tuvaluans as 'victims'. The nation of Tuvalu, the people, and the communities within, have withstood various shocks and threats to their way of life in the past (eg blackbirders and hurricanes). Thus, the "communities are not simply victims with needs, but survivors with capacities" (World Bank, 2000, p. 4).²

This thesis documents the extent to which the international community and Tuvaluan governance system provides a context that is conducive to supporting Tuvaluans to work from a strengths-base, respecting their values, cultural norms and beliefs, as well as assisting them to

² Although the World Bank was talking about communities recovering from conflict when saying this, it is equally applicable to any community that has recovered, or is recovering, from shock or adversity.

prepare for uncertain futures.

1.2.3 Preparing for uncertain futures: strategic thinking

It is tempting to think of the future as a foreign land about which we know little; the implication being that the future will happen and, when we get there, we will just have to cope with the changes as best we can. (Coyle, 2004, p. 48)

Although nobody can predict with any certainty what will happen in the future, it is possible to identify a plausible range of futures and develop an array of strategies to help ensure an individual, community or nation is well placed to respond to whichever future transpires.

Thinking about the future is just one aspect of thinking or planning strategically. Strategic thinking is an untidy process that occurs on an ongoing basis, but based on an overall direction set down by strategic planning (Haines, 2007). Liedtka (1998) identifies five characteristics of strategic thinking, which guide this thesis: systems perspective, hypothesis driven, intelligent opportunism, thinking in time, as well as intent focused and intent driven. These are explained below with assistance from other strategic thinking theorists and reference to how they apply to this thesis.

1. *Systems perspective or holistic view* – understanding the broader context in which actions will take place. This thesis attempts to situate itself within a global context, but also within a context that is culturally and historically relevant for Tuvaluans. It is argued that when there is a public interest goal at stake, the public's value base is an important departure point for strategic thinking. To be successful, values and world views underpinning a project or programme should be intertwined into the thinking process (Paton, 2007).
2. *Hypothesis driven*,³ or as described by Charharbaghi (2007), *a balance between creative and critical (or knowledge-based) thinking*. This thesis is knowledge-based, but it seeks to identify where there is scope for more creative thinking if all stakeholders are engaged.
3. *Intelligent opportunism*, or put more simply, *the balance between emergent and deliberate strategies* (Mintzberg, 1996) – achieving a balance between developing and using a well-articulated strategy, and remaining open to new opportunities that may lead to better outcomes in an ever-changing environment. Within this thesis, this balance is particularly relevant to discussions around the role of the state versus communities, families and individuals.

³ Liedtka (1998) describes hypothesising as a creative and critical process that avoids the analytical-intuitive dichotomy by repeatedly asking “What if..?” (hypothesis generation), followed by the question “If...then?” (hypothesis testing).

4. *Thinking in time*, which according to Neustadt and May (1986) means (1) drawing on the predictive value of past; (2) recognising that what presently matters for the future are the departures from the past; and (3) constantly oscillating between the present, future and past to expedite, limit, guide, counter or accept learnings. A strengths-based approach enables people to carry forward positive aspects of the known past into unknown futures, giving confidence and comfort on the journey. Each chapter of this thesis includes a discussion on aspects of Tuvalu's past, present and possible futures.
5. *Intent focused and intent driven* – this includes producing a sense of direction, a sense of discovery,⁴ and a sense of destiny, which in turn provides a focal point to marshal the energy of individuals involved (Hamel & Prahalad, 1994). This thesis highlights that without a mutual sense of understanding and direction, it is difficult to marshal the energy of members of Tuvaluan communities.

Although this analysis of the characteristics of strategic thinking may appear to be a long way from the daily realities of Tuvaluan life, one of these characteristics is particularly pertinent – a systems perspective or holistic view. A Pacific world view does not separate the various aspects of life, but instead sees life as an integrated, holistic whole (Fairbairn-Dunlop, 2004). Such a view of the world is crucial when confronting complex problems. Multiple perspectives help to paint the holistic picture, in particular when local views are set alongside global realities and the active participation of all key stakeholders is ensured (Liedtka, 1998).

The development community now recognizes that it needs greater understanding of community institutions, networks, norms and values to enable people to capture the benefits of development and build their capacity to help themselves. (World Bank, 2000, p. 2)

The dominant neo-liberal system places more value on the individual than the collective (Peters & Marshall, 1996). Nevertheless, over the last decades there has been increased focus on the importance of collaboration; the role of the community; and concepts such as community development, participatory development and participatory democracy. All of these ideas reinforce the notion that strong, joined-up communities are more resilient and better placed to solve the complex problems that the future presents.

When communities confront complex challenges, the solutions to overcoming these challenges may not be immediately apparent.

⁴ Sometimes, this may mean discovering that the best strategy is that which has already been adopted. Taken from Charharbaghi's discussion on the duality of conformist innovation and deviant innovation (Charharbaghi, 2007).

Strategic thinking assumes a future only the shape of which can be predicted, and in which local intelligence is essential. Thus, formulation and implementation are now interactive rather than sequential and discrete. (Liedtka, 1998, p. 32)

Mintzberg (1996, p. 103) explains how “strategies can form as well as be formulated”. He claims that purely deliberate strategies may prevent the learning which is necessary when tackling multifaceted issues, while emergent strategies can cultivate learning and opportunism. One way to achieve a balance between deliberate and emergent strategies is for broad guidelines or an ‘umbrella strategy’ to be set (often by those in leadership positions), leaving specifics to those with more in-depth knowledge of local conditions.

Mintzberg (1996) argues that as long as people have the capacity to learn and the resources to support that capacity, strategies will form. Therefore, this thesis inquires into context within which Tuvaluans can participate in forming strategies, asking whether the conditions are right, and who is fostering these conditions and providing frameworks for Tuvaluans to think strategically.

1.3 Situating the thesis within the Pacific

Although this thesis focuses on Tuvalu, it sits within the Pacific school of thought and its findings are significant beyond Tuvaluan borders. Pacific nations are tied to Tuvalu through a common ocean and airspace, and through “chants, genealogies, stories, landscapes and names [that] suggest centuries of interdependence and networking exchanges among our Pacific peoples” (Nabobo-Baba, 2004, p. 17).

The Pacific Ocean binds us all together. The name of the Ocean is *te Moana Nui a Kiva* and she is woman. She reminds us that we are all of the Pacific...It is in all of our interests to have a...relationship of collaboration and support. (Laban, 2006)

The Pacific Plan (Pacific Island Forum Secretariat (PIFS), 2007) is a recent attempt to strengthen Pacific regionalism⁵ (see chapter three). Hughes, a prominent economist and recognised expert on Pacific regionalism, says that:

Regionalism involves cooperation among countries to identify region-wide issues, develop region-wide policies in response, mobilise resources on a regional basis and execute relevant activities in a coordinated manner across large parts of the region, with appropriate degrees of integration. (Hughes, 2005, p. 8)

⁵ It includes working together to prevent, mitigate and adapt to natural disasters, pollution and climate variability and change and sea level rise.

Regionalism comes in various forms – regional cooperation; regional provision of public goods; regional integration (PIFS, 2007). Improving Pacific regionalism involves recognising some of the constraints on the region,⁶ as well as recognising and building on the strengths of the Pacific, including the adaptability of its people, the resilience of its communities, and its history of interconnectedness.

1.4 Thesis outline

This chapter provides a context and rationale for this thesis, and explains how this thesis will be structured. Chapter two presents the research framework, while chapter three helps position the thesis within the appropriate cultural, social, historical and temporal context of Tuvalu, highlighting the cross-cutting themes mentioned at 1.1.

This thesis does not have a dedicated literature review chapter. Instead, chapters four to six provide in-depth analyses of the three topics of exploration identified as important to this thesis – participation, climate change, and migration. Each of these chapters begins with a review of the literature before outlining, analysing and commenting on findings from this research.

Chapter four explores the concept of ‘participation’, the multiple mechanisms through which Tuvaluans participate in their own development, and some of the factors influencing participation including tradition and beliefs, geographical distribution, infrastructure as well as resource and information availability. Although it finds that community participation is a strength of Tuvaluan society, this chapter identifies areas of weakness in the participation mechanisms where research participants expressed a desire for change.

As Tuvalu is considered to be one of the 100 most vulnerable nations to the climate change, chapter five examines how climate change may impact on participation within Tuvaluan borders, and to what extent participation by Tuvaluans forms part of Tuvalu’s response to climate change.

Chapter six then examines how Tuvaluans can be empowered to shape possible futures beyond Tuvaluan borders, whether because of climatically forced migration or voluntary migration (the

⁶ For instance, isolation and economic marginality; widely differing country sizes, capabilities and economic circumstances; separation by long distances, different cultures and historical experiences; fragile physical environments; overweighting of population and land resources; a shortage of experienced bureaucrats, planners and managers; generally weak government systems and capacity to deliver on policies; dependence on foreign aid; and a strong engagement and regional influence from Australia and Aotearoa New Zealand (NZ) – this can be viewed as both a strength and a weakness (Hughes, 2005).

line between the two may be blurred). It includes a comparative analysis of two case studies of Tuvaluan migration (set out in full in Appendix 1) – one which was community-led, and another which was individual/family-led. Chapter six discusses how forced migration could weaken Tuvaluan communities and their participation mechanisms, but how this could be averted if plans are drawn up in advance with Tuvaluans and their diaspora.

Finally, chapter seven concludes this thesis by drawing together the findings of each chapter to present suggestions on how it might be possible to build on the strength of Tuvaluan communities, and better empower Tuvaluans to shape their own futures and the future of their nation, whether this is at home or abroad.

A Research Framework

2.1 *Introduction*

This chapter presents the research framework for this thesis. It first discusses researching in the Pacific and positions the author in relation to the research. This is followed by an outline of the research's conceptual design, methodology and sample size. It concludes by discussing the collection and analysis of the data, as well as the importance and limitations of the research.

The underlying assumption in this thesis is that Tuvaluans should be empowered to direct their own futures in as far as it is possible within the legal, cultural, social, physical and economic boundaries in which they live. For this reason, the research framework, as outlined below, attempts to honour the principles of participation within its own capacity and time constraints.

2.2 *Researching in the Pacific*

The history of research from many indigenous perspectives is so deeply embedded in colonization that it has been regarded as a tool only of colonization and not as a potential tool for self-determination and development. (Smith, 2004, p. 4)

Before stepping into the Pacific to undertake research, it is important to reflect on the role research has played in the Pacific and who have predominantly been the researchers.

Pacific peoples have been the focus of much research and writing that have not highlighted or captured our abilities to reconnect, relate to one another and benefit from our relationships. This is an aspect of Pacific cultures that has been silenced in a major way by both research and research writers. (Nabobo-Baba, 2004, p. 18)

Such observations have led to people questioning the legitimacy of non-Pacific researchers in the Pacific. Scheyvens and Storey (2003) argue that although there are questions about the legitimacy of Western researchers, there is also potential value in cross-cultural research, in particular, as the world becomes more interdependent and the emerging complex development issues need to be better understood. They see value in the diversity of perspectives coming from both researchers from the developing countries themselves ('the insiders') and those in the 'developed' world ('the outsiders').

The NZ Tertiary Education Commission on Pacific Research provides guidance on researching in the Pacific (Figure 1 overleaf). I have overlaid the 'participatory' research epistemology

Figure 1: Characteristics of Pacific research

(Source: Tertiary Education Commission, 2003, p. 4)

Within the framework of the generic guidelines, Pacific research is broadly characterised as follows...Pacific research will demonstrate some, or all, of the following characteristics, and should show a clear relationship with Pacific values, knowledge bases and a Pacific group or community.

Paradigm

Pacific research:

- is informed by and embedded within the continuum of Pacific world views, knowledge, practices and values
- is conducted in accordance with Pacific ethical standards, values and aspirations, such as responsiveness and reciprocity
- involves research processes and practices that are consistent with Pacific values, standards and expectations
- includes methods, analysis and measurements that recognise Pacific philosophy, spirituality and experience
- includes data derived from the broad range of Pacific knowledge and experience.

Participation

Pacific research:

- involves the active participation of Pacific people (as researchers, advisors and /or stakeholders)
- demonstrates that Pacific people are more than just subjects of research.
- demonstrates communal contact, that is, it recognises and validates the relationships between the researcher and the 'researched'
- engages the Pacific community in the initial stages of the research.

Contribution

Pacific research:

- has a demonstrable impact on Pacific communities
- contributes to and enhances the Pacific knowledge base in all subject areas
- contributes to a greater understanding of Pacific cultures, experiences and world views
- is relevant and responsive to the needs of Pacific peoples
- protects Pacific knowledge
- contributes to Pacific knowledge, spirituality, development and advancement
- is responsive to changing Pacific contexts.

Capacity and capability

Pacific research:

- Builds the capacity and capability of Pacific researchers
- Enhances the capacity of relevant Pacific communities to access and use the research

Research that falls within the broad ambit of Pacific research, as outlined above, may be undertaken by Pacific and non-Pacific people.

which underpins my research (discussed below) with these characteristics. However, the constraints of postgraduate study limited the extent to which it was possible to demonstrate all of the characteristics listed, in particular the elements relating to building capacity and capability. Attempts were made, however, to ensure that this research was undertaken in a respectful manner that captured the views of Tuvaluans.

2.3 Positioning myself in relation to the research

Fieldwork in the Third World⁷ can give rise to a plethora of ethical dilemmas, many of which relate to power gradients between the researcher and the researched. Combined with this are complex issues of knowledge generation, ownership and exploitation. (Scheyvens, Nowak, & Scheyvens, 2003, p. 139)

Research should not just be for the researchers. Gegeo (2001) suggests that research should be from a *communitarian perspective* – both applied and carried out for the good of the community, as well as grounded in Indigenous epistemologies. This research has been undertaken to explore Tuvaluans' realities, and how they envisage their futures unfolding, so their views can inform local and international debate in a timely, but helpful, manner. Knowledge gained from this research will be returned to Tuvalu to be used by the people who provided it.

In qualitative research, the researcher is the instrument rather than the researcher using an external instrument such as a survey (Patton, 2002). Research credibility rests on the skills and competence of the researcher. It has not been possible to fully ground this research in Tuvaluan epistemologies. However, John Lofland (in Patton, 2002) has said that people-orientated inquiry requires the researcher to get *close enough* to the people to personally understand in depth the details of what goes on. They must aim to capture what actually takes place and what people actually say (the perceived facts). Due to time constraints, I cannot claim that I have developed a complete understanding of Tuvaluan culture, however, by staying in the homes of Tuvaluans, participating and observing daily rituals and community events; having in-depth conversations (both formal and informal) with local people; and by attempting to be an *active* listener, I hope to have gained enough understanding to be able to faithfully represent their views in this thesis.

My own construct of reality is shaped by my upbringing and experiences. As a *palagi*,⁸ born and

⁷ Note, the researcher prefers to use the term “developing countries” rather than “Third World”, which recognising that even that term is problematic.

⁸ A person of European or Caucasian ethnicity.

raised in NZ, I am both an ‘outsider’ and a ‘stranger’ to Tuvalu. Although I have lived within other communities in the ‘developing world’, this was my first time to spend any length of time in a Pacific country other than NZ. Over the six weeks I spent in Tuvalu, the few days I spent on Kioa Island (Fiji) and with the Tuvaluan diaspora in Auckland, I have, at best, sensitised myself to the Tuvaluan world view.

Post-modern ethical models contend that researcher objectivity is a false reality – researchers are not simply apolitical, neutral observers. Recognising that my personal world view and experiences mean that I cannot play a passive role in the conceptualisation of this research, and with a desire to create a transparent relationship with the reader, where appropriate I write in the first person. Although this has traditionally been absent from academic writing in the social sciences, I am in agreement with the argument put forward by Miller et al. that “progressive qualitative research requires a liberation of voice” (cited in Holliday, 2002, p. 129).

My status as an ‘outsider’, may have limited what people were willing to share with me. However, it can also be argued that there are some advantages to being an ‘outsider’ in that people may have been willing to share things with me that they may not feel comfortable sharing with fellow Tuvaluans who live within their tight-knit communities.

I used a number of strategies to minimise power gradients, including working with local co-researchers and interpreters; travelling to the research participants and (where possible) interviewing them in spaces in which, and at a time when, they were comfortable; and encouraging participants to ask me questions about myself and my research. I also respected Tuvaluan community structures, and sought permission from relevant people and authorities before undertaking any research. Finally, I directly quote research participants in this thesis to give them a clear voice, rather than adopting their views as my own.

Finally, I hope that the methods I have chosen to conduct this research – including working with local people to conduct the research and gathering information through in-depth interviews and workshops – will make this research accessible to even those who do not possess, what Patton (2002) calls ‘technical expertise’. I also hope that the process of undertaking this research may have generated some further useful discussion amongst the Tuvaluan people themselves.

2.4 Conceptual design

Although quantitative data has been used during this research (eg migration statistics), the primary research is predominantly qualitative as it aims to increase the depth of understanding

around the lives of Tuvaluans – young and old, male and female – as well as their processes and mechanisms for community participation.

Qualitative inquiry is highly appropriate for studying process because (1) depicting process requires detailed descriptions of how people engage with each other, (2) the experience of process typically varies for different people so their experiences need to be captured in their own words, (3) process is fluid and dynamic so it can't be fairly summarized on a single rating scale at one point in time, and (4) participant's perceptions are a key process consideration. (Patton, 2002, p. 159)

Qualitative research tends to generate theory rather than test it. It “seeks to understand the world through interacting with, empathizing with and interpreting actions and perceptions of its actors” (Brockington & Sullivan, 2003, p. 57). The researcher simply provides a framework in which the different views of participants can be channelled (Patton, 2002). Qualitative methods tend to reduce generalisability as they allow for nuances in society to be brought to the surface – this can be challenging for the researcher, however, as responses will not be systematic or standardised. In this thesis, the findings are, at best, indicative of the Tuvaluan views as only a limited number of people were able to participate in interviews or workshops due to time and capacity constraints. An attempt was made to try and canvass a wide range of Tuvaluan perspectives, but as will be detailed below, it is anticipated that the research will not capture all perspectives equally.

2.5 A participatory ethos

The ontological and epistemological assumptions⁹ underpinning this thesis are that reality is subjective and will only ever be partially known. It has, therefore, been important to recognise the value in the existing knowledge and experience of the research participants, and focus on the participants' voices.

The topic of this thesis is embedded within the notion of participatory development. True participatory development involves those who have traditionally been ‘the researched’ or ‘the beneficiaries’ in development, becoming participants in all stages of their development – from problem definition through to decision-making and action. ‘Participatory development’ is explored in depth in chapter four, but for the purposes of explaining methodology, general principles of ‘participation’ are outlined here.

⁹ ‘Ontology’ refers to the “nature of reality” (Walsh, 2005, p. 90), while ‘epistemology’ refers to “the nature of knowledge” (Walsh, 2005, p. 90).

Participatory approaches to research are about working *with* people rather than working *on* them (Kesby, Kindon, & Pain, 2004) – recognising that participants have the ability to take an active role in controlling or designing research. These approaches are about creating data and knowledge to empower people to bring about positive change in their lives.

As this thesis is centred on participatory principles, it was essential that participation also infused the methodology. Although a post-graduate thesis is in the first instance about demonstrating the *researcher's* skills and ability to work independently (Walsh, 2005), my aim was to simultaneously focus on the research participants and the value of the process and knowledge created.

Kesby, Kindon and Pain (2004) describe a 'gold standard' of participation, but signal that an inability to achieve this does not make projects 'sub-standard'. They claim that any attempts to incorporate participation, whether it is during project design, data collection, analysis, write up, dissemination or actioning change (or through reciprocity), can bring considerable benefits to the project and participants.

Where possible, this research has incorporated participation, in particular during project design, data collection, analysis, dissemination and reciprocity. For example, I received invaluable advice from Tuvaluans on what angle of research would be most helpful to Tuvaluans, as well as the best way to approach people and encourage their participation. I ensured that I was accessible to participants by working out of the office of the Department of Community Affairs. I also attempted to ensure a wide range of people could effectively participate in the research through interviews or workshops by using interpreters and co-researchers where appropriate; by reshaping the research and techniques used in accordance with feedback; and by undertaking to report back to participants on the outcomes of the research. Finally, where possible, I made my skills (eg editing skills) available to those who were assisting me (and I continue to be grateful to those who allowed me to help as I am sure I gained as much from the process as I was able to contribute).

2.6 Flexibility

When researching in Tuvalu it is important to be flexible. For instance, boat travel between Tuvaluan islands can be very intermittent and unpredictable, and researchers travelling to outer islands may not be able to organise interviews and workshops in advance.¹⁰ Knowing that I

¹⁰ In my case, this proved to be true as boat trips were delayed by either one week, or were cancelled.

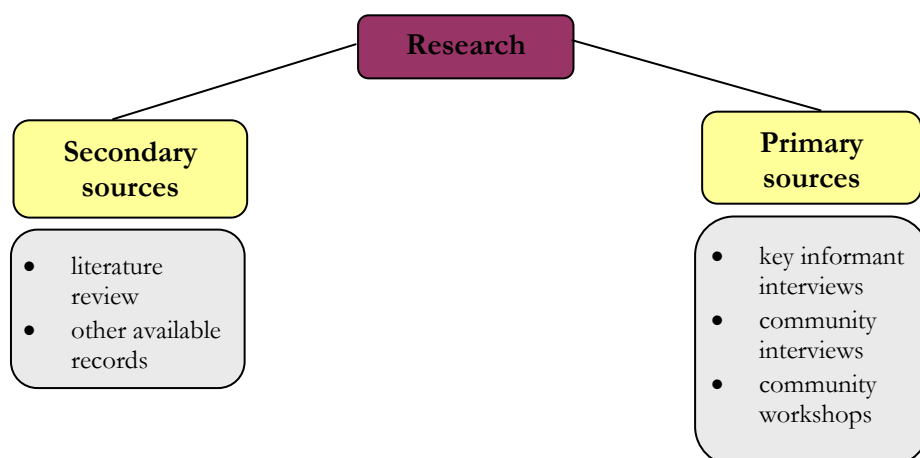
would develop a better understanding of the situation and the culturally acceptable norms once I arrived in Tuvalu, I used an ‘emergent design flexibility’ design strategy. Patton (2002) describes this as an openness to adapting inquiry as understanding and/or situations change, and avoiding rigid designs that eliminate responsiveness and the possibility of pursuing new and emerging paths of discovery.

For me, adopting this design strategy highlighted a tension that can exist between rigorous western-style (or *palagi*-style) university research practices, and the Pacific realities and practices. Initially adopting emergent design flexibility appeared to contradict the requirements of the University ethics approval process, which required me to have undertaken detailed planning before departing for Tuvalu. For the best part, I managed this tension by working caveats into the ethics proposal, and by ensuring that the research proposal was sufficiently broad. The main inconsistencies remained in relation to information sheets and consent forms (see Appendix 2). The approved information sheets and consent forms did not capture the correct tenor that the research took on once I had been in Tuvalu for a few weeks. (The differences were explained to participants before they took part in the research.) More importantly, on one of the outer islands (Vaitupu), events led to a situation where I did not have access to enough copies of information sheets and consent forms. In this situation, I communicated the information to participants and gained their consent orally.

2.7 Research methods

As mentioned above, this research is mainly qualitative, aiming to capture and communicate the experiences and understanding of Tuvaluans in relation to participation, climate change and migration. It draws from both primary and secondary sources as outlined in Figure 2.

Figure 2: Research methods used



First, I undertook a thorough *literature review* in order to minimise research duplication. I also drew on *available records*, such as those held by the Tuvaluan Departments of Statistics and Community Affairs, as well as the Tuvaluan library. However, I note that the United Nations (UN, 2002) observed the challenges of having reliable data on the Pacific Islands, including in Tuvalu, where limited analysis has led to a degree of speculation in reports. As a result, I deliberately gathered information from key informants to fill perceived gaps.

As will be discussed, the primary data collection targeted a selection of urban and outer island Tuvaluan communities, as well as individuals from NZ and Kioa Island (Fiji) communities of Tuvaluan origin. The methods used were a combination of key informant interviews, community interviews and workshops, and observations.

The *key informant interviews* were used to obtain specialised knowledge (Mikkelsen, 1995). They generated descriptive information; provided shortcuts to more comprehensive data; helped interpret available data, generated practical suggestions; and helped me to understand the motivations and attitudes that direct people's actions and behaviour.

The *community interviews* and *community workshops* were used to obtain representative information and grassroots perceptions of life from Tuvaluans. The choice of when to use interviews or workshops was guided by local advice, time constraints and access to resources.

The interviews were semi-structured, loosely based on a basic interview guide (see Appendix 3).¹¹ The aim was for the interviews to remain fairly conversational and situational. It was possible within the interviews to explore topics in which each participant appeared more knowledgeable or had more experience. The obvious weakness was that this led to substantially different responses, reducing response comparability.

The community workshops covered similar material as the community interviews,¹² however, they were facilitated in such a way to enable more hands-on participation and discussion amongst participants, enabling them also to begin the analysis of the information they generated. For example, they included an activity whereby participants could discuss and rank

¹¹ The interview guide was created following a literature search from NZ. It was piloted with a Tuvaluan based in NZ as well as another in Tuvalu. It was reviewed twice following each of these interviews, also incorporating information learnt from a further literature research, key informant interviews undertaken in Tuvalu and guidance from local professionals.

¹² As they were conducted near the end of the research period in Tuvalu, the workshop designs were informed by the literature research, key informant interviews, a number of the community interviews, and guidance from local professionals. The style of the research was modified depending on the group characteristics.

drivers for migration according to how common they were, and another where they could rank and explain Tuvaluan mechanisms for participation in order of relevance to their daily lives. These were practical exercises, and participants could pick up and physically move either the drivers or participation mechanisms while explaining their reasoning to myself and others in the group. The weakness of the workshops (compared to interviews) was that it was not possible to do in-depth explorations of individual participants' knowledge.

The final research technique was *participant observation*, in particular, of how Tuvaluans participate in daily life. This also included observing part of an extended planning training workshop conducted for planners and secretaries from the outer islands, and aspects of a meeting at an outer island *manaepa/abiga* (meeting house) in Funafuti. I also sought to observe differences between the outer islands visited (Vaitupu and Nukufetau), the Tuvaluan capital Funafuti, Kioa Island (Fiji) and diaspora in NZ. Informal conversations played an important role in helping to build my understanding of what I observed. Where appropriate, I documented this data through descriptive journal entries.

Triangulation of research methods and data assists in making research results more robust. In this study, the three main sources of information – key informants through interviews and literature reviews; community participants through interviews and workshops; and personal observation – offer a means of 'between method' triangulation. Furthermore, the repetition of interviews and workshops with multiple participants assisted to create 'within-method' triangulation.

The research was undertaken in accordance with the following schedule.

Table 1: Research schedule

| Dates | Action |
|-------------------------------|--|
| September 2007 – January 2008 | Preliminary work – including initial planning and scoping, seeking approval to undertake research in Tuvalu, and funding applications. |
| January 2008 – June 2008 | Literature review, applying for ethics approval, developing methodology in consultation with other stakeholders, preparing for field research, beginning to gather secondary data. |
| July 2008 – mid-August 2008 | Fieldwork in Tuvalu and Kioa Island (Fiji) - gathering primary and secondary data. |
| August 2008 – January 2009 | Fieldwork with NZ-based Tuvaluan community, thesis write-up in Wellington, NZ. |

2.8 Sample

2.8.1 Community interviews and workshops

There were a total of 100 community participants, which can be divided into the following three groups. Tuvaluans living in:

- *Tuvaluan islands of:*
 - *Funafuti*¹³ – the capital and the most urban community
 - *the outer islands of Vaitupu and Nukufetau.*¹⁴ Vaitupu was chosen for two reasons – it is the base for the high school,¹⁵ and is the island that purchased and settled Kioa Island in Fiji, which forms a case study for this research. The choice of Nukufetau from amongst the smaller islands was highly influenced by the availability of boat travel during my stay in Tuvalu. Due to time and capacity constraints it was not possible to visit all Tuvaluan outer islands, however, community interviews and workshops took place with people from each of the islands as many individuals were either residing outside their island, or visiting another island (in particular, in Funafuti).
- *NZ, with a focus principally on Auckland.* This was chosen as both a case study of individual/family-driven migration leading to the forming a Tuvaluan community, and as the largest Tuvaluan population outside of Tuvalu.
- *Fiji, with a focus principally on Kioa Island.* This is included because it is an example of Tuvaluans from Vaitupu relocating as a community, and maintaining links back to Tuvalu many decades later.

Tables 2 and 3 provide more detail on the place of residence and islands of origin for community participants.

¹³ 46.98% of the population (Census 2002).

¹⁴ 16.64% and 6.13% of the population respectively (Census 2002).

¹⁵ In order to include high school students in my research. Motufoua is the only public high school in Tuvalu – it is a boarding school.

Table 2: Total community participants by place of residence

| Place of residence | Number of participants |
|----------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tuvaluan islands: | |
| - Funafuti | 28 |
| - Nukufetau | 7 |
| - Vaitupu | 29 |
| - Motufoua High School (Vaitupu) | 16 |
| NZ, principally Auckland | 14 |
| Fiji, principally Kioa Island | 6 |
| | 100 |

Table 3: Total community participants by island of origin (self defined)

| Island of origin | Number of participants |
|---------------------------------|------------------------|
| Tuvaluan islands: | |
| - Nukulaelae | 8 |
| - Nukufetau | 15 |
| - Vaitupu ¹⁶ | 39 |
| - Nui | 6 |
| - Funafuti | 11 |
| - Nanumea | 10 |
| - Niutao | 5 |
| - Nanumaga | 5 |
| Kioa Island, Fiji ¹⁶ | 1 |
| | 100 |

The community participants were made up of males and females aged from those attending high school through to the elderly (see Table 4 and 5).

Table 4: Community participants by age group

| Age groups | Number of participants |
|---|------------------------|
| Motufoua High — School participants | 16 |
| Other ‘youth’ participants (49 years old and below) ¹⁷ | 60 |
| Older participants (50 years old and above) | 24 |
| | 100 |

¹⁶ The island of origin for many Kioans is Vaitupu.

¹⁷ What constitutes ‘youth’ (*talavon*) in Tuvalu is not clear cut – it depends on the reason that they are being classified and on which island. Documented youth age ranges include references to those aged 15 to 52 years (Esela, 2005; Nanuea, 2004). Yet, during interviews, many people considered that people were part of the youthful *lima malos*i (the strong-armed men) until they were 49 years old (at 50 men could then speak in the *manaepa/ahiga*). Others explained that a young woman is no longer considered youth once she is married, but a young man continues to be youth until he no longer participates in youth-type activities. In contrast, under the 2005–2010 National Youth Policy (Government of Tuvalu, 2005) youth are defined as young men and women aged 15–34 years, but this relates mostly to government policy. In this research where there were notable differences in responses between ‘young’ youth and ‘older’ youth this has been identified

Table 5: Community participants by sex

| Sex | Number of participants |
|------------|-------------------------------|
| Females | 49 |
| Males | 51 |
| | 100 |

The split between community participants who participated in interviews compared to workshops is outlined in Table 6.

Table 6: Community participants by research method

| Method | Number of participants |
|---|-------------------------------|
| Community interview (individual or group) | 53 |
| Community workshop | 47 |
| | 100 |

Although I purposefully chose the categories of people that I hoped would take part in this research, the choice of actual participants was guided by local advisors and based on convenience sampling. Local advisors also guided my choice of when to use interviews or workshops having given consideration to how participants would respond to a female in her thirties. Time and resource constraints also influenced which research method was used, resulting in workshops being conducted with: Motufoua High School students in Vaitupu (males/females separately); Vaitupu youth (males/females separately); women from across the different islands living in Funafuti;¹⁸ and youth from across the different islands living in Funafuti. Workshops were organised with assistance from the Motufoua High School principal, the Vaitupuan Pastor, the Department of Youth Affairs, and the National Women's Council, as well as local interpreters.

Following local advice, community interviews were predominantly carried out with older participants and older 'youth' male participants. Interviews were also conducted with all participants living in Kioa Island, New Zealand, Nukufetau and women on Vaitupu (as there was no time to conduct workshops), as well as those who belonged to religions other than the Ekalesia Kelisiano Tuvalu (EKT).¹⁹

¹⁸ Except Nanumaga and Niutao who were invited but could not make it.

¹⁹ The Church of Tuvalu. 97% of the population belong to the EKT. Interviews were conducted with people outside of the EKT to see if there was a relationship between community participation and religious affiliation (as was suggested by some earlier participants).

2.8.2 Key informant interviews

There were 20 key informant interviews in total from both Tuvalu and abroad, comprising:

- 11 people from government organisations
- five people from non-governmental organisations
- four additional individuals identified throughout the research process as having specific knowledge on an aspect of this research.

Seventeen of these key informant interviews took place in Tuvalu.

2.9 *Data collection*

I personally conducted the majority of the interviews and all the workshops. However, a co-researcher²⁰ was recruited to carry out some of the interviews in Funafuti, in particular, with the older participants. Before commencing interviews and workshops, all participants were given information about the research. Community participants were assured they would not be identified in the research, while key informants could choose whether they wished to be identified. Interviews were undertaken in either the homes or offices of the participants, and workshops were conducted in local meeting spaces. Meals and snacks were prepared for, and shared with, workshop participants as appropriate.

Perhaps one weakness in the data collection was the need to work through language intermediaries. Although English is an official language in Tuvalu, Tuvaluan is the mother-tongue. For this reason many of the interviews and workshops required the help of local people acting as interpreters or guides, assisting in the choice of participants.²¹ The use of language intermediaries can add an extra layer of complexity to data collection as they inevitably present constructions of their own identity during interpretations. Furthermore, there is often no way to directly translate from one language into the other.²² Nevertheless, a positive aspect of working with local residents as interpreters and co-researchers was that I was able to gather the views of participants who may have been difficult for me to access working alone. The interpreters and co-researchers were also able to provide me with context when it

²⁰ The co-researcher was local resident with a post-graduate university education. I provided her with an interview guide and some guidance on interview style and the information that I was hoping to obtain.

²¹ This may have slightly skewed the sample, but it was unavoidable.

²² Language incorporates values, beliefs and social realities. It is not just a tool or technical label for conveying concepts as it carries accumulated and particular cultural, social, and political meanings that cannot simply be read off through the translation (Temple & Edwards, 2002).

was required to understand what was being described.

2.10 Proposed analysis of the data

The analysis of the data began long before the research was complete, assisted by the participants in the workshops and many of the latter interviews (in line with emergent research techniques discussed above). For instance, after many of the initial interviews, and based on the literature search, it was possible to identify a wide range of mechanisms that existed for participation. Later participants were then able to examine the avenues that had been previously identified, and discuss the relevance that each had in their own lives. Key informants also played an important role in assisting with analysis and interpretation of the information obtained.

Throughout this research, I have worked with participants having regard to two separate analysis strategies: a ‘holistic perspective’ and ‘context sensitivity’. According to Patton (2002) these require the study of the whole complex system, focusing on interdependencies and system dynamics to create something bigger than the sum of its parts (a *gestalt* approach), while also placing the findings within the appropriate social, historical and temporal context.

2.11 Importance and limitations of the research

This research presents ‘Tuvaluans’ perspectives of their futures within a debate that is often captured by professionals and the media. It highlights the importance of existing Tuvaluan mechanisms for participation and where these can be built upon to further empower Tuvaluan communities. It looks at the challenges Tuvalu faces in relation to climate change through the eyes of the Tuvaluan people, and how their own global networks are an important part of any solution beyond their shores.

This thesis also offers a fresh perspective to the schools of forced migration and participatory development. As there is a growing awareness of the development-migration nexus, this thesis proposes that, regardless of notions of state sovereignty, it is time for potential migrants (especially forced migrants) to be part of preparing for a future beyond their own borders.

Research limitations include, first, the fact it is only a small study. Although the views of a wide range of people were sought, it does not canvass the opinions of all Tuvaluans, or even a fully representative sample from across each of the islands. Second, data was collected in a cross-cultural context through language intermediaries. Third, the data was collected over a very limited time period. This meant it was difficult to develop sufficient rapport with people; some key informants were not available during that time; and it was difficult to follow up with people

from a distance (as I am based in Wellington, NZ).

2.12 Summary

This chapter provides a research framework for this thesis. It highlights that this research is qualitative, and utilises a variety of research methods. It was undertaken in line with participatory principles, guided also by the NZ Tertiary Education Commission principles for Pacific research. This chapter outlines both the strengths and the weaknesses of the research framework used, and sets the scene for considering the findings and recommendations of this research. Chapter three now positions this thesis within the social, cultural, historical and temporal context of contemporary Tuvalu.

Tuvalu as a Pacific Nation, Regional and Global Actor

3.1 Introduction

When exploring complex issues, it is important to have a broad understanding of the context in which events take place. This chapter aims to position this thesis within the appropriate cultural, social, historical and temporal context of contemporary Tuvalu.

It begins by providing a basic introduction to Tuvalu and its creation. It then focuses on key themes highlighted throughout the research process and literature reviews: the role of land; people and social structures; the economy; and quality of life. Finally, it sheds light on the role of planning in Tuvaluan society, and Tuvalu's placement within the Pacific region and the world.

3.2 Tuvalu in brief

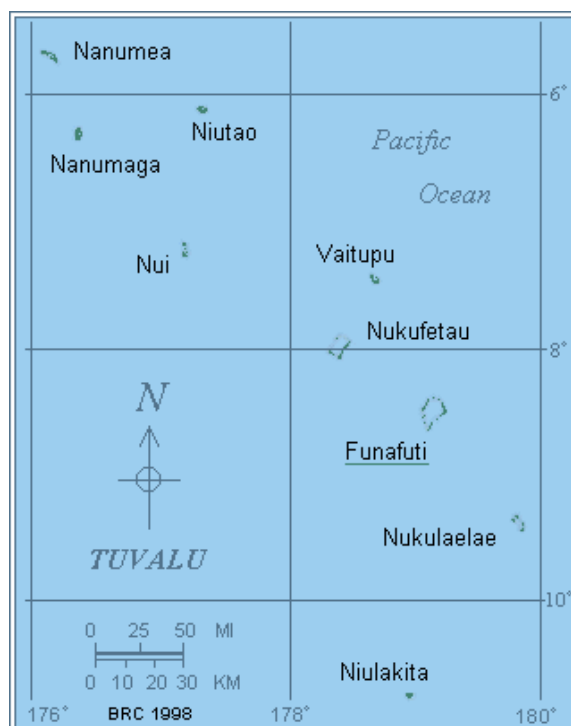
Tuvalu is one of 22 island states in the South Pacific, however, the only other low-lying atolls are Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Tokelau and the Tuamotus in French Polynesia. Tuvalu is the second smallest country in the region in both land size and population. It also has the third smallest population in the world and the fourth smallest landmass.

The name 'Tuvalu' means 'group of eight' (Faaniu, Ielemia, Isako et al., 1976) and reflects the eight core islands that make up Tuvalu: Nanumea, Niutao, Nanumaga, Nui, Vaitupu, Nukufetau, Nukulaelae and Funafuti (the capital as well as the centre for government administration and trade). As the southern most island, Niulakita, has not had a permanent population of its own, it was not taken into account when naming Tuvalu (see Figure 3).

Tuvalu lies west of the international dateline and 1000 kilometres north of Fiji in the central Pacific. Together the islands total 26

Figure 3: Map of Tuvalu

Source: www.tuvaluaislands.com/maps/maps.html



square kilometres in land area over a chain 676 kilometres long on the outer western edge of Polynesia. Each outer island is fairly isolated from other islands, and is only connected by intermittent boats which, over a number days, visit two or three islands per trip.

The last census was in 2002, however, the Survey for the Elderly, Disabled and Employment undertaken by the Tuvaluan Department of Community Affairs in 2007 put the population at 9,398 (Manuella & Esela, 2008), a large percentage of whom were under 25 years old. The population is estimated to rise to between 15,300 to 18,400 by 2026 (MNREAL, 2007).²³

3.3 Historical creation of the Tuvaluan nation

The way of life of the people of Tuvalu has developed over time and will continue to develop. Much has changed since the first settlers arrived, yet much remains the same. Tuvalu is still Tuvalu; Tuvaluans are still Tuvaluans. The life of the present populations is different in many ways from that of our ancestors, yet the two are closely connected. For the kind of life people have at one time is the product of much that has gone before. (Kofe in Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 102)

The ancestors of the Tuvaluan people are believed to have arrived on the islands about 2000 years ago. Not all of the Tuvaluan islands experienced the same patterns of migration. Many came from Samoa (possibly through Tokelau), Tonga, Uvea (Wallis), Kiribati and possibly New Caledonia (Faaniu et al., 1976). The variation in migratory patterns is reflected through variations in language and pre-Christian belief systems.

Under the leadership of chiefs, known as *aliki*, traditional Tuvaluan society continued for hundreds of years before it underwent significant changes with the arrival of European traders in the 1820s, the blackbirders,²⁴ the *palagi* and Samoan missionaries from the 1860s (Faaniu et al., 1976), and the American military personnel in World War II.

Tuvaluans reportedly quickly embraced Christianity and it was observed that religion continues to play an important role in contemporary life. Currently, 97% of the population belong to the EKT. There are also a variety of other Christian religions, Bahá'í, and Islam on the islands. From the 1860s, pastors began to fulfil roles traditionally filled by the *aliki*, whose authority dwindled away gradually over time. Tuvalu then came under British jurisdiction in 1877 as the Ellice Islands, together with Kiribati (the Gilbert Islands). In 1892, Tuvalu became a British

²³ Based on 2002 census population of 9,359, with an average population growth of 0.6% (PIFS, 2004).

²⁴ 'Blackbirding' refers to recruitment by trickery or kidnapping. Tuvaluans were targeted to work in Peruvian plantations and hotels (Resture, 1999).

colony. Following this, Tuvalu was home to the American military during the World War II when the United States of America (USA) sought to hold back the Japanese advance. Then in 1975, following over-whelming support for separation from Kiribati in accordance with a referendum, the country became an independent constitutional monarchy. On 1 October 1978 it became the 38th member of the Commonwealth (Faaniu et al., 1976).

Nowadays, Tuvalu is a constitutional monarchy with the British sovereign as Head of State. The Sovereign is represented by a Tuvaluan citizen as Governor-General. Their system of central governance is a unicameral parliamentary system based on the Westminster model. The introduction of the 1997 Falekaupule Act has assisted Tuvalu to revive its traditional structures on each island (discussed in detail at 4.3.2) and integrate them with introduced colonial structures. However, discussions with local Tuvaluans, as well as Tuvaluan planners and *kaupule* (local government representatives), reveal that the erosion of traditional structures that occurred during colonial times continues to take a toll, in particular in the outer islands where suspicion is often cast over any development initiatives driven out of the central government.

3.4 *The role of land*

In Pacific philosophy, place (or land) is supremely important. It determines who people are, how they interact with the environment and with each other. It forms the ethical basis upon which community and people's thoughts and actions are guided. Place and by extension land, are where people stand up, where they can speak and act, where they are truly at home. (Huffer & Rakuita, date unknown)

Due to the role land plays in shaping communities, engagement, and development, the role of land is the first of the cross-cutting themes that was revealed during the research process, and which will be discussed here.

Tuvaluans, as part of their tradition, have stories about the creation of their islands, including the well known story of *te Pusi mo to Ali* (the Eel and the Flounder). These stories contrast greatly to geological theories by Charles Darwin, verified by modern science, which explain the formation of the three types of islands that exist in Tuvalu: atolls, table reef islands and composite islands.²⁵

²⁵ Darwin theorised that the islands were built on slowly subsiding volcanic rocks. As dead coral sunk, new coral deposits were added onto the pile. When a further volcanic movement occurred, the coral pushed up to form three types of islands (Faaniu et al., 1976): atolls (islands of coral that surround a lagoon); table reef islands (coral islands, similar to atolls, but without a lagoon) and composite islands (carbonate islands where both carbonate and non-carbonate rocks are exposed at the surface, ie coral and volcanic rock).

Table 7 identifies the form of each Tuvaluan island.

Table 7: Area and population distribution in Tuvalu as at 2002

(Table derived from 2002 Census data, MNREAL, 2007 and Knapman, Ponton & Hunt, 2002)

| Island | Island Type | Land Area (km ²) | Percentage of Population | Population Density (people per km ²) |
|----------------|-------------|------------------------------|--------------------------|--|
| Nanumea | Atoll | 3.87 | 6.94% | 172 |
| Nanumaga | Table-reef | 2.78 | 6.16% | 212 |
| Niutao | Table-reef | 2.53 | 6.93% | 262 |
| Nui | Atoll | 2.83 | 5.73% | 194 |
| Vaitupu | Composite | 5.60 | 16.64% | 284 |
| Nukufetau | Atoll | 2.99 | 6.13% | 196 |
| Funafuti | Atoll | 2.79 | 46.98% | 1,610 |
| Nukulaelae | Atoll | 1.82 | 4.11% | 216 |
| Niulakita | Table-reef | 0.42 | 0.37% | 83 |
| Totals: | | 25.63 | 100.00% | |

The UN (2002) describes Tuvalu's atolls as "among the planet's harshest environments". Tuvalu's soil is poor and there is not much diversity in flora and fauna. The land only supports coconut palms, pandanus, *pulaka*²⁶ and a small amount of vegetables and fruit. However, Tuvaluans have learnt to use their few resources to meet all of their dietary needs. It is argued that Tuvaluans were self-sufficient with their subsistence living until European traders introduced a cash economy (Niuatui, 1991) — money and imported commodities have grown increasingly important since this time. In a Niutao dancing song they sing "*Te ale i luga, te ala i lalo, te ala i tona fetapakiga*" (the way above, the way below, the way to the meeting house). This teaches that Tuvaluans must know how to get coconuts and plant *pulaka* in order to sleep well, as these are the two components of the traditional nutritional system (G. Koch, 2000). Rain water is the main source of fresh water, supplemented by underground water and a recently introduced desalination system. Tuvalu's temperatures range from 26.0 to 32.0° Celsius. There is high humidity and an average annual rainfall of 2875mm. Droughts of over three months can impact on the northern islands, while cyclones hit the south (MNREAL, 2007).

Tuvalu's population is not evenly spread across the islands. Although Vaitupians form the greatest percentage of the population, as

²⁶ *Pulaka* is a form of taro grown in pits.

Table 7 shows, the largest percentage of the population resides in the capital, Funafuti – the island with the fourth smallest landmass. This is due to internal migration for reasons such as work, health and education (detailed in chapter six). Funafuti's population density is also much greater than other islands, putting intense pressure on the land.²⁷

In Tuvalu, land is a family affair. According to custom, family land areas are passed on through generations — with the exception of land that has been gifted, adopted, exchanged or left to somebody else under a will. Traditionally, each family or clan lives and eats together within their inherited land area. In 1976, Laloni Samuelu wrote:

Despite the economic problems of the world Tuvaluans believe that they are secure in their land and the sea that surrounds them. They strongly believe that God the Creator will provide them with all the necessities of life. (Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 39)

Although, there is a reluctance to part with land, Tuvaluan custom does allow for the setting aside of communal land to support and maintain people in need (Faaniu et al., 1976). Lease land is also used for community benefit, for example, in Funafuti the government leases land from the *tagata fenua* for government buildings and the runway, which is used for social gathering, sport, and sleeping at night.

The importance of land to the Tuvaluan people is demonstrated through the use of the word *fakalofa* to describe people without land. For Tuvaluans, *fakalofa* are people who are to be pitied (Booij, 2006). For instance, this term is sometimes used for the squatters from the outer islands who migrate to Funafuti looking for opportunities (eg employment). As they are not from Funafuti, they must negotiate with *tagata fenua* – Funafuti people who may be friends or family – to build temporary accommodation on what is normally the least inhabitable land (Amasone, 2005; Manuella, 2002).

As with many nations within the Pacific, entitlement to land is linked to dignity and an ability to live a decent life (Huffer & Rakuita, date unknown). Traditionally, land and *pulaka* pits secured status within Tuvaluan communities, especially in the rural areas. Manuella (1997) describes (in relation to the effect of urbanisation) how community cultural identity is eroded once land and villages are taken away as indigenous people feel cultural and spiritual attachments to it. Custom directs that if a family or clan is away from their home island for some time, they will still be entitled to inherited lands – however, this custom (as with some

²⁷ Other island population sizes by island of origin: Nanumea, 16.7%; Niutao, 15.5%; Nukufetau, 12.3%; Nanumaga, 11.4%; Funafuti, 10.7%; Nui, 8.9%; Nukulaelae, 4.9%; Niulakita, 0.02%; Other, 1.47%.

others) has been limited on some islands in more recent times (Pasefika, 1988).

The arrival of Europeans and Christianity changed Tuvaluan land ownership considerably. For instance, in Nukufetau, the first pastor (Elekana) ordered chiefs and landowners to redistribute their land in order to have a more equitable distribution (Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 36). Also, in the 1930s, reports show that Donald Kennedy²⁸ began registering lands in the names of individual owners rather than the traditional family ownership (Faaniu et al., 1976, pp. 53–54). In 1976, Laloni Samuelu commented that:

Tuvaluans value their land above any other of their possessions...money, which, enabled the *palagi* to put a price on anything, could not buy Tuvaluan land. (Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 35).

Reports show that there are now cases where land has been sold, especially where a family is emigrating. Government leases are also a key source of income for many Tuvaluans (in particular on Funafuti) and during the Second World War, an American military base was established on Funafuti, not only causing people to move temporarily from their land, but also creating permanent changes to the island when land was moved to build an airstrip.

3.5 People and social structures

3.5.1 The role of family

Family (*kaiga*) also plays an extremely important role in Tuvaluan life – participants considered it to be the foundation for strong communities.

In Tuvalu the family structure and networking support system is the main contributor to welfare assistance, youth education, and support for the elderly, the disadvantaged and the vulnerable people. (Esela, 2005, p. 17)

The ‘family’ in Tuvalu includes the extended family and kinship group. Households may comprise members of the wider family. In the 2002 census there was an average of six people per household. In *Nanumea Report*, Chambers (1975) looked at households in the island of Nanumea, finding that the most applicable definition was “a group of people usually sharing the same house (or houses) and eating from ‘the same pot’”. In addition, she noted that household composition was characterised by constant change. Events such as funerals increased numbers in some households while depleting others. As part of the culture of reciprocity within the family, it was not unusual for some people to temporarily move to the

²⁸ Founder and headmaster of the Government School located in Vaitupu as well as a former administrator of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

relatives homes if work was to be done. This characteristic of constant change within households has continued to be present in Tuvaluan life. For instance, those living in the capital Funafuti often house relatives from the outer islands for extended visits, for reasons such as medical care or university study.

Within the family, there is a division of labour and each person has a clear role to play. The house is headed by *te pule o te fale* (or simply *te pule*), which is normally a male. *Te pule* is the main decision-maker. Traditionally, the men also undertake tasks such as fishing, toddy²⁹ cutting, taro plantation, house building, copra³⁰ production, repair work, collecting food stuffs, animal tending, and communal work. The boys help with toddy cutting, reef fishing, animal tending, and taro tending with their fathers.

The role of women was traditionally to look after children (especially when very young), food preparation, fetching water, housekeeping, weaving mats and baskets, tending animals, church and community activities. The girls help with tasks such as cooking and yard cleaning (Government of Tuvalu, 1996).

There are indications that in recent times, the difference between the roles of men and women are becoming less defined both within the family and the wider community. This is discussed further in chapter four, where family is examined as one of the key avenues for participation.

3.5.2 Identity, culture, religion and community

Tuvalu is recognised as being a society with certain characteristics: strong commitments to cultural traditions, family, community, religion, and living in a manner that is closely linked to the marine environment and the ocean (Booij, 2006; Ielemia, 2007; Knapman, Ponton, & Hunt, 2002).

“Tuu mo iloga [traditions and heritage/identity]³¹ revolves around the environment. Tuvaluans live by the land and the sea. All the skills are handed down. They are skills that have been developed through the years for wellbeing.” (Reverend Tafue Lusama during an interview)

Manuella (1997, p. 27), a Tuvaluan, highlights that identity is “a description of a person by way of his/her spirituality, body and mind which enables the person to describe who and what he

²⁹ ‘Toddy’ refers to the sap of the coconut palm.

³⁰ ‘Copra’ is the dried meat of the coconut from which oil is extracted.

³¹ Most Tuvaluans refer to *tuu mo aganu* (traditions and practices), however, the Department of Cultural Affairs is more concerned with the more holistic phrase *tuu mo iloga* (traditions and heritage/identities). Both terms will be used throughout this thesis.

or she is”. ‘Identity’ relates very closely to the concept of ‘culture’, which is a collective structure. Linnekin and Poyer (1990) claim that shared identity comes from sharing food, water, land, spirits, knowledge, work and social activities. From this, culture is created, which in turn creates bonds between individuals, giving people a sense of belonging.

Manuella (1997) notes that culture influences our attitudes, our thinking, experiences and behaviour. It is a process that may change over time. She concludes that “cultural identity is the relation of an individual person with a community through the attachment of his/her spirituality, body and mind to the culture of a particular community. Cultural identity defines an individual as well as the community” (Manuella, 1997, p. 27).

Although many social scientists generalise about cultural practice and identity throughout the Pacific, there are many distinct variations. Linnekin and Poyer (1990, p. 6) claim that an Oceanic theory of cultural identity “privileges environment, behaviour, and situational flexibility over descent, innate characteristics, and unchanging boundaries”.

Pita (1999, p. 9) undertook research into civil society in Tuvalu, in which participants concluded that “a good society is where people live together in harmony leading a peaceful life and sharing a common culture. It is one where there must be partnership between men and women, and has respect for tradition, religion and its leaders”. Niuatui (1991) calls the communal life the ‘Tuvaluan way’, which gives a spirit of togetherness and sharing. Reciprocity plays a big part in life as relatives, friends and neighbours help each other. In 1876, Captain Henry Pease of the ship *Planter* pronounced Tuvaluans to be “the most quiet, peaceable, friendly and affectionate toward one another, and the most strongly attached to children and hospitable to strangers, of any people I have ever met” (in McQuarrie, 1988). According to the UN (2002, p. vii) “social behaviour, determined by custom and tradition, is generally considered by Tuvaluans as being as important as law”.

Most Tuvaluans have a strong sense of duty towards their communities. To turn up to events in the *manaepa/abiga*³² and participate in the spirit of the event is to be *loto fenua* (community hearted) (A Chambers, 1984). Traditionally, Tuvaluans practice a system of *salaga*, in which

³² A *manaepa* is a traditional island meeting house. The word *manaepa* is adapted from the i-Kiribati word *manaeba*. It is also known as the *abiga*, an indigenous word used in Nanumaga and Nanumea abbreviated from *te abiga o muna*, ‘the house of words’ (A Chambers, 1984). Therefore, this is a place where people gather to hear the ideas of their island’s leaders. It is central to communities in Tuvalu, as it hosts many other activities including festivals, *fatele* (traditional dance), meetings and games. The layout of the *abiga* is particularly important during formal events, when the *aliki* (chiefs) and *sina* (elders) take their seats at the central posts of the building, with others seated behind.

each family contributes to the community by having a ‘trade’ (or *muna*) and performing certain social tasks from building a house and fishing, to herbal remedies, massage therapy, magical skills, carpentry, and canoe construction. This trade is then passed down through the family so that skills and specialties are not lost. The less substantial knowledge, *logo*, is also passed down, but it may pass outside one’s family (A Chambers, 1984).

Chambers (1975) highlights the strength of Tuvaluan society as the community connectedness. This is characterised by: social control mechanisms that minimise friction among individuals; island pride and pseudo-competition, which encourages people to maintain and improve facilities; the competent individuals (who have a wide range of both traditional and western skills); and adaptability.

While Tuvalu was still part of the British Colony, the people demonstrated how important it was for them to have a voice and separate identity. They demanded increased representation in the predominantly I-Kiribati government. Later when independence was on the agenda, Tuvaluans clearly indicated that they did not want to be part of an independent nation with Kiribati (despite the fact that the conditions for separation were not good). They thought that the Tuvalu cultural identity would be lost as Kiribati had a much bigger population and that “with the departure of the British they would be left to the mercy of the I-Kiribati” (Isala in Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 160).

Tuvalu’s pride as a nation was then demonstrated as they ‘beat’ Kiribati to independence, “prov[ing] Tuvalu’s worth as a separate country” (Isala in Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 170).

Becoming independent is an important achievement for any country. It is a formal, public sign that the new nation is equal in dignity, if not in power or wealth, to any other nation on earth, and that the human worth of its citizens is equal to that of any other people. (Sapiago in Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 178)

This new identity was of a nation as a whole. However, within that nation lie the distinct identities of each of the islands, for example, their own linguistic dialects.³³ The island communities are an obvious strength in Tuvalu, especially in how they garner the active participation of nearly everybody in community activities.

³³ Each island has its own linguistic dialect, but these can be divided into three areas of linguistic difference (Resture, 1999). The first area contains the islands of Nanumea, Niutao and Nanumaga. The second is the island of Nui where the inhabitants speak a language that is fundamentally derived from I-Kiribati. The third linguistic group comprises Vaitupu, Nukufetau, Funafuti and Nukulaelae islands. For historic reasons, the dialects of Funafuti and Vaitupu nowadays constitute *te 'gana maasani* (the common language) and is, therefore, spoken throughout.

The people of Tuvalu are identified in society through their island of origin. An individual's social status is identified through their paternal and maternal kinship linkage. No matter where a Tuvaluan lives today, whether it is on Funafuti or overseas it is the land and home of their ancestors that determine and [sic] who they are and give them their identity. (Esela, 2005, p. 14)

You only need to spend a short time in Tuvalu to recognise the role that the church (in particular, the EKT) plays in creating and maintaining culture. As mentioned above, with arrival of the Samoan missionaries, the *aliki* gave over much of their authority to the Pastors. Even until this day, Pastors and their wives play special roles within the *manaepa/abiga* during traditional cultural events. For example, the Pastor may be given the role of 'adjudicator' during a *fatele* (traditional dance) rivalry. This close relationship between the EKT and culture has come under some pressure in recent times as alternative religions have entered Tuvalu (see Case study 1). Some research participants felt that those who changed religion were turning their backs on culture and community. However, those who had made the change indicated during interviews that this is not the case.

In Tuvalu, a great deal of importance is placed on the maintenance of culture. It is a core need of Tuvaluans which includes the maintenance of the language through which culture is passed (in dance, songs, myths and legends). Tuvalu's rich cultural heritage is reflected in its music – there are songs to commemorate every occasion in life.³⁴ It is part of Tuvalu's oral tradition, whereby most news travels through both formal and informal oral

Case study 1: The link between culture and religion

During the period of 2006-2008 there has been a dispute between the Nanumaga *Falekaupule* and an employee working at the local cooperative who was also a member of the Brethren Church (rather than the EKT). The Ministry of Home Affairs (MNREAL, 2007) reports that:

"Nanumaga is currently overwhelmed with conflicts of religious dispute between the newly formed Brethren church faction of the island and the Falekaupule on issues of traditional obligations the island have been supporting the Pastor's voluntary religious service on the island. One of the many services is the provision of the "pi" which requires landowners to contribute weekly to the Falekaupule. The traditional standard procedures requires of this provision normally set in proportionate to a scale of one pi to two acres of land. This contribution is provided weekly to the Pastor by the Falekaupule. It is with this obligation that the followers of the Brethren church disagreed with the Falekaupule to practise as it does not conform to their new church doctrines.

The action of the followers is termed as disobedience by the Falekaupule. The Falekaupule feels that the followers are challenging its cultural and traditional capacity and this leaves no choice but to punish the disobedience. It was in June 2006 that the Falekaupule decided to impose punishment on the followers by terminating their employment appointments under the Kaupule civil services."

This ultimately resulted in the closure of the cooperative for two weeks in January 2008.

³⁴ German-born Gerd Koch (or Ketu as he is known in parts of Tuvalu) has written down and preserved many of Tuvalu's music and songs (G.Koch, 2000).

communication.

Niuatui (1991) claims that traditional knowledge should be maintained at all costs. This includes *writing it down* and not keeping it a secret (as it has been traditionally).

Tuvaluans must sustain their cultural identity or their ‘inner beings’ their ‘invisible needs’ and their values. (Niuatui, 1991, p. 41)

Activities which may assist in maintaining knowledge include some of the books, publications and video clips of Tuvaluan life and culture that have been created. Examples include anthropological and historical documentations of life in Tuvalu,³⁵ as well as representations of Tuvaluan life and culture through photographs, film and music.³⁶

It is also the role of the elderly to ensure the survival of culture as they teach cultural and traditional values, norms and knowledge to the younger generations (Esela, 2005). One *aliki* who participated in this research reflected how the role of maintaining culture is becoming more challenging as modern Western values filter into Tuvalu. Such changes have been observed in UN reports (2002), which comment that globalisation presents challenges to Tuvalu and other Pacific Island countries when protecting cultural values. McMurray (2005) and others have documented some of the problems that are encountered by Pacific youth who are bombarded with Western media, culture and values.

Driven by what they see in glossy foreign magazines and videos, young people are now caught up in imitating behaviours contrary to tradition. The problem however, is that such lifestyle is not easily attainable within small islands with scarce natural resources and limited economic opportunities. In addition, with limited opportunities for higher education, a large proportion of the young people do not have the necessary skills to be able to cope with the challenges of the modern world. (EKT, 2003)

Nanuea (2004) observes that people are tending to eat more imported foods and some of the traditional skills in processing foods are no longer practiced. Moreover, in 1997 Manuella highlighted how traditional skills such as fishing and planting have lost value as new modern

³⁵ For example, Anne and Keith Chambers’ books, writings and photos of Nanumea (see <http://www.nanumea.net/Writings.html>); the book *Tuvalu: A History* (Faaniu et al., 1976), which is being largely reproduced on <http://www.janeresture.com>; and Kennedy’s (1931) field notes that document detailed aspects of Vaitupuan *tuu mo aganu/iloga*, from fishing practices to diets, games, medical practices, traditional religion and folklore.

³⁶ For example McQuarrie’s (1988) book of photographs produced for Tuvalu, the components of which are sky and sea, the land, and people; music and songs that have been written down and preserved (G.Koch, 2000); and a variety of amateur video clips posted on the website YouTube – from Tuvaluan wedding preparation, to *fatele*, the anointing of an *ulu aliki* (high chief), events in the *abiga* and gift presentations.

skills have been taught and encouraged by the Tuvaluan Department of Fisheries and Agriculture. Some people claim that the Western-style education is at fault as it has led to traditional knowledge being viewed as backward and less recognised by young Tuvaluans (Manuella, 1997). However, the threat to Tuvaluan culture may be much broader than this. In 1975, Chambers commented that:

The Nanumean social code, with its basis in kin and neighbourhood allegiances, and with its emphasis on actions rather than motivations, eminently suits its culturally homogeneous and numerically small population...If this changes, so that either a 'generation gap' or economic classes develop, the present social system will probably no longer be adequate. Development which strives to persuade individuals to bank their money instead of sharing it, to sell their fish rather than giving it to relatives and neighbours, to profit through privately owned businesses from the needs of other Nanumeans, or to value personal efficiency over integrity, undermines an established and well-functioning social system and may, in the long term, destroy more than it produces.

Although the comments suggest a dim future for Tuvaluan culture, my research (and that of McMurray) showed that many youth do see traditional culture as an important source of identity. One young female participant explained how she enjoyed going to her island women's group as it was her main source of information about *tuu mo aganu*. McMurray (2005) interviewed a Tuvaluan pastor who indicated that one of the most important things for young people to learn is how to manage the two cultures simultaneously, taking the best from both worlds.

The Tuvaluan Government is aware of the importance of trying to manage the two cultures. Although Tuvalu's legal system has been based on the British system, its Constitution explicitly states that all laws are to be relevant to the customs and traditions of the Tuvaluan people, and that the Government's overriding aim is to provide an environment to enable Tuvaluans to live a full and happy life. The government established a Department of Cultural Affairs in 2001, which is trying to put a spotlight on *tuu mo iloga* and its important link with identity. One project that had been initiated is the collection and archiving of cultural and traditional knowledge from the islands to ensure it is not lost.³⁷

Further insights into community life and culture are given in chapter four.

³⁷ This would be even more valuable if there were to be forced migration.

3.6 *The economy*

Tuvalu has two parallel economies operating – a semi-subsistence economy in the outer islands (largely agriculture and fisheries); and a cash economy based on Funafuti (reliant on its market and employees from the public sector). In the 2002 census, 21.1% of the resident population aged 15 years and over were engaged in subsistence activities, while 18.1% listed ‘remittances’ as their main source of income (although others also received remittances as a complementary source of income). Of those in paid employment, 29% were working in government, 30% in semi-government occupations, 28% in the private sector, and the final 3% in the non-profit sector.

Tuvalu has experienced growth in gross domestic product per capita in recent years (from US\$800 in 2000 to US\$1,600 in 2007).³⁸ Tuvalu’s main sources of income include revenue fishing licence sales; revenues from the DotTV domain;³⁹ small quantities of exports made up of copra, stamps and handicrafts; remittances from seafarers, countrymen temporarily or permanently overseas; and foreign cash aid.⁴⁰ Aid is also provided in the form of technical assistance, training, equipment and other expenditure met directly by the foreign governments.

Trust funds have also begun to play a key role in the lives of Tuvaluans. The innovative Tuvaluan Trust Fund was established in 1987 to assist the Government to achieve greater financial autonomy and to aid in Tuvalu’s development.⁴¹ It is used to balance the Tuvaluan budget and provides financial security. The rules of when money can be drawn down are linked to the market value (versus the maintained value) of the fund (Field, 2004). The success of this fund led to the establishment of the Falekaupule Trust Fund in 1999 to enable community development in the outer islands. These funds have been complemented by ad hoc trust funds at island, village and family or group levels, which provide an asset base for future developments.

³⁸ www.indexmundi.com.

³⁹ The domain suffix .tv was allocated to Tuvalu by the Internet Assigned Numbers Authority. A USA-based company *Verisign*, now has contractual rights to market it for 15 years during which time the Tuvaluan government receives annual payments.

⁴⁰ Multilateral and bilateral aid comes from Australia, Canada, Japan, NZ, United Kingdom (UK), Taiwan, South Korea, Republic of China, USA, European Economic Union (EEU), UN Development Programme (UNDP) and other UN agencies.

⁴¹ Its members are the governments of Tuvalu, Australia, NZ, and the UK.

3.7 *Quality of life*

Since independence, life in Tuvalu has changed, however, this section outlines two different approaches to gauging quality of life – global measures and Tuvaluan perceptions.

Standards of health and education have improved, and ‘modern’ technologies such as telephones, computers and DVDs are now a part of the life of many Tuvaluans. Other technologies, such as the internet, are restricted to a few islands, and mobile phone technology is currently being re-introduced into Tuvalu. Nevertheless, in 2008, it was observed that Tuvalu is in danger of missing the following Millennium Development Goal targets (Government of Tuvalu & UNDP, 2008):

- Target 1 — reducing the proportion of people living on less than a dollar a day by half
- Target 3 — ensuring that all boys and girls complete a full course of primary schooling
- Target 6 — reducing the maternal mortality ratio by three quarters.

Tuvaluan officials have investigated levels of ‘poverty’ within Tuvalu.⁴² According to the Relative Poverty Line Method, there are more people on the outer islands below the poverty line than in Funafuti (12% compared to 3%).⁴³ Yet, some research participants argue that this does not reflect the true situation in Tuvalu. There is interest in seeing measures of ‘development’ being used that value the non-monetary assets such as social capital (measures such as the Genuine Progress Indicator).

Many research participants did not consider that ‘poverty’ actually exists in Tuvalu – the land and the sea gives them their basic needs and *tuu mo aganu* gives them social protection. As an outsider, I observed that this was particularly the case on the outer islands where money plays less of a role.

[The] physical needs for Tuvaluans are: land for growing food and trees; for supporting

⁴² The Central Statistics Division (2006) applied a variety of methods to the Tuvalu situation:

- the Absolute Poverty Line Method (Basic Needs Poverty Line) – the monetary value in which a household must consume or have income in order to meet basic needs. It requires analysis of the relationship between nutrition/calorie intake and income/consumption.
- the Relative Poverty Line Method – measuring those in income and expenditure deciles 1— poor or 2—vulnerable
- an examination of household characteristics.

The research concluded that the Relative Method is best for Tuvalu, even though the Absolute Method is the more internationally accepted method.

⁴³ According to the UNDP, Tuvalu does not have the necessary data available to have received a Human Development Index rating in the 2007/2008 report.

domestic animals; and for dwellings and communal places. Clean air is needed to support humans and the animal, bird and plant life on which they depend. Clean fresh water is essential for drinking and domestic purposes. Equally important is the need for unpolluted sea water and for uncontaminated fish. A canoe is also a need for fishing and as a means of transport....Above all, culture and religion or faith are also needs which may be referred to as 'felt needs'. Security and participation are in the same category. It can be argued that culture is the only "possession" Tuvaluans have, for it is their language, traditional knowledge and rituals that keep Tuvaluans bonded together and recognised by other nations. (Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 181)

The Central Statistics Division (2006) claims that a sense of shared disadvantage is beginning to enter Tuvaluan society. Such disadvantage is predominantly linked to poverty of opportunity rather than hunger or destitution.

Nevertheless, with high inward migration into Funafuti there is increased population density which is visibly putting pressure on island resources. There are new squatter settlements that are experiencing hardship due to poor living conditions such as poor toilet facilities and no water tanks. A participatory hardship study supported by the Asian Development Bank (ADB, 2003) showed that other people experiencing hardship include those without a regular source of income, people with large families, abandoned elders, mentally challenged and physically handicapped people, orphans, women with alcoholic spouses, widows and single mothers without regular income, and elderly childless couples.

According to the Central Statistics Division (2006) the causes of hardship appear to be:

- limited access to quality basic services
- limited opportunities to earn money
- overcrowding of households and overpopulation in communities
- a deteriorating social support system and culture
- too many familial, church, community, and island contributions, which draining household income
- idleness and a 'dependency attitude'.

They are becoming more dependent on the market to support them daily. Living on the market is the symbol, which proves that the people are losing their identity as Tuvaluans. Not only are they separated from the land, but also the concept of communal living and sharing is fading due to the cash-reliant kind of life-style they are forced to adopt. (Niatui, 1991)

Despite these challenges, Enele Sapoago's words from 1976 still seem to run true:

Change may not be as dramatic as it was in the days when beings such as the Eel and the Flounder and Tefolaha were engaged in their creative work. But the Tuvaluans of the present, no less than those of the past, accept the challenge of providing as well as they can for those who are to come. Our history contains a message of hope. (Faaniu et al., 1976, p. 181)

3.8 Planning for a better future

The Trust Funds mentioned in 3.6 are among many examples of innovative planning at all levels of Tuvaluan society. Others include examples from:

- families (early planning within families for diverse income streams in the future; establishing family trust funds to fulfil future family needs)
- farmers (eg planning the growth and usage of their *pulaka* crops which take from five to fifteen years to mature; storing germinating nuts to get them through tough times)
- island communities (eg putting together savings for future community development during the employment boom created by World War II; the purchase of Kioa Island in Fiji to cease an opportunity to improve the future for Vaitupuans (see Appendix 1)
- the state (eg setting the high-level *Te Kakeega II: National Strategy for Sustainable Development*;⁴⁴ instigating the Tuvaluan Trust Fund to balance the Tuvaluan budget and provides some financial security).

Most research participants value in thinking and acting with a view to the future – especially as global issues begin to penetrate Tuvalu and impact on their lives.

“We must face the challenges in the world, we are not in heaven.” (male participant)

Nevertheless, this research revealed a sense amongst some people (both within government and the citizenry) that Tuvaluans do not have the skills, knowledge and capacity to be able to plan for their own futures, especially when the future appears to be so complex. They were critical of Tuvaluans' ability (or desire) to plan for long-term futures, stating that Tuvaluan's only considered their short-term or daily needs as part of a subsistence lifestyle.⁴⁵ The ADB

⁴⁴ *Te Kakeega* means climbing or progressive development.

⁴⁵ A difference between the tendency of young men and women to think and plan for individual futures was observed during the separate youth workshops conducted on the outer islands. Young men, who felt more secure in the current subsistence lifestyle and decision-making processes appeared less willing to think about the future than their female counterparts, many of whom had thought about futures beyond Tuvaluan shores.

(2002) also considered that 'Tuvaluan policy-making lacks direction and coordination. One reason for belief may stem from failed attempts to use Western planning processes on outer islands, which have led some people to conclude that Tuvaluans do not have the skills, knowledge and capacity to plan. This may also be the lingering effect of the power relations created during the colonial period, enforced by the often unintentional practices and beliefs of some donors and development partners. As Chambers (1975, p. 157) stated when writing about the Nanumean community:

What they do have (though few Tuvaluan people realise this) is the most essential planning ingredient of all: wisdom based on an intimate knowledge of the actual conditions that can benefit from change and those that cannot.

The innovative examples of home-grown planning listed above indicate that Tuvaluans have a capacity to plan. In order to fulfil this capacity, however, Tuvaluans require a desire to plan better, a belief in their ability to plan, opportunities to participate in planning, and more resources to support planning and capacity building in this area. Planning processes must meet not only the needs of the international development community, but the needs and world views of Tuvaluans themselves.⁴⁶

Tuvalu's reliance on external funding can impede the implementation of plans. For example, although the Tuvaluan National Adaptation Programme of Action (for Climate Change) (NAPA) was completed in May 2007 with the first milestones to be completed within one year, the Department for the Environment reported in July 2008 that the slow processing of applications to the Global Environment Facility fund meant that implementation was delayed. Disaster Coordinator and Assistant Secretary to the Prime Minister, Sumeo Silo, commented that such examples mean that many outer islanders are now tired of planning and consultation, and want to see concrete action on the ground.

3.9 *Tuvalu in the Pacific*

Tuvalu has close relationships with other countries in the Pacific. Tuvaluan migration within the Pacific is considerable, in particular, temporary employment-related or study-related migration. Most Tuvaluans have extensive personal networks throughout the Pacific region. These are discussed further in chapter six.

⁴⁶ Niuatui (1991, p. ii) wrote that "development needs to be of the kind which empowers Tuvaluans, gives security, self-reliance, self-esteem and respect". He concludes that western "sustainable development" concepts cannot be applied in Tuvalu, it can only be achieved by applying traditional knowledge and skills with appropriate Western knowledge and technology on a small scale.

Historically, there has been a high degree of cooperation in the Pacific region (Lusama, 2004). Formal governmental cooperation is coordinated through the Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) – a high level advisory body made up of the regions primary intergovernmental organisation heads (some of these organisations are discussed below).

Tuvalu is a member of the Pacific Islands Forum (PIF), which is an intergovernmental organisation concerned with harmonising regional positions on various political and policy issues. Its decisions are implemented by the PIFS. In October 2005, a Pacific Plan was endorsed by Forum Leaders at their PIF meeting in Port Moresby. This document forms the basis of ongoing strengthening of regional cooperation and integration efforts for the benefit of the people of the Pacific. It gives shape to the vision articulated by the Pacific Islands leaders in 2004:

Leaders believe the Pacific region can, should and will be a region of peace, harmony, security and economic prosperity, so that all of its people can lead free and worthwhile lives. We treasure the diversity of the Pacific and seek a future in which its cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed. We seek a Pacific region that is respected for the quality of its governance, the sustainable management of its resources, the full observance of democratic values and for its defence and promotion of human rights. We seek partnerships with our neighbours and beyond to develop our knowledge, to improve our communications and to ensure a sustainable economic existence for all.

Tuvalu is also a member of the South Pacific Commission (SPC), now known as the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. This is a regional intergovernmental organisation whose membership includes both nations and territories. It has a Pacific Community Secretariat, which aims to develop the technical, professional, scientific, research, planning and management capability of Pacific Island people. It also directly provides information and advice, to enable Pacific Island states to make informed decisions about their future development and wellbeing. Other Pacific organisations of which Tuvalu is a member include the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), South Pacific Board for Educational Assessment (SPBEA), South Pacific Tourism Council, and the University of the South Pacific.

The Pacific non-profit sector is also coordinated. Tuvaluan organisations are connected through their own umbrella organisation – the Tuvaluan Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (TANGO) – to regional organisations such as the Pacific Island Association of Non-Governmental Organisations (PIANGO) and the Foundation of the Peoples of the South

Pacific International (FSPI).

3.10 *Tuvalu in the world*

Tuvaluans have travelled throughout the world, especially the seafarers (see chapter six for details). Tuvalu's only full embassies are its permanent mission to the UN in New York, and its High Commission in Fiji. It also has honorary consulates in Australia, Belgium, Germany, Japan, South Korea, NZ, Singapore, Switzerland, Taiwan and the UK. In recent years Tuvalu's diplomatic connections have flourished, as outlined below.

Tuvalu's profile in the world has expanded greatly since it became a member of the UN in 2000. Tuvalu is also a member of Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), which is a coalition of small island and low-lying coastal countries that share similar development challenges and concerns about the environment, especially their vulnerability to the adverse effects of global climate change. It functions primarily as an ad hoc lobby and negotiating voice for small island developing states (SIDS) within the UN system.⁴⁷

In 2000, Tuvalu became a member of the Commonwealth with voting rights. Tuvalu is also a member of a number of political and economic groups, and is party to numerous human rights and environmental agreements.

Tuvalu is an associate of the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies. Its people also have connections into civil society organisation globally, which are discussed in chapter four.

3.11 *Summary*

When thinking strategically, it is important to take a systems perspective or holistic view. Therefore, this chapter has positioned this thesis within the social, historical and temporal context of contemporary Tuvalu. It has focused on a number of themes that arose during the research process: the role of land; people and social structures; the economy; and quality of life. These themes will be picked up throughout the thesis, as well as other themes alluded to within this chapter, such as planning, the limitations of oral communication, leadership and the overarching theme of participation. Chapter four will now delve further into the concept of participation and how participation occurs within Tuvalu.

⁴⁷ A Tuvaluan, Enele Sopoaga, has been in the role of Acting Chair or Vice-Chair for AOSIS since 2005.

4

Exploring Participation in Tuvalu

4.1 Introduction

People should be able to participate in the development of themselves, their lives, their environment.⁴⁸ Participatory processes should be fair and just, and should be designed with the people in mind.

This thesis is, in the first instance, concerned about whether the Tuvaluan people are involved in the decision-making and implementation of the plans that impact upon them. This chapter will first canvass some of the literature on civic participation. It will then outline the situation in Tuvalu today, capturing the views of Tuvaluans as to the extent to which they participate in their development and how this could be strengthened in the future.

4.2 Participation: Theory

4.2.1 Dēmokratia

On the grandest scale, when we talk about people having ownership of their own development, we are alluding to the origin Greek concept of *dēmokratia* stemming from *demos* (people) and *kratos* (rule). Despite contemporary rhetoric, this does not necessarily imply the commonly espoused processes, procedures and institutions of ‘representative democracy’. In fact in recent times talk of and moves towards culturally appropriate forms of ‘participatory democracy’ have intensified. Krieger (1993, p. 220) describes participatory democracy as “a system of decision-making about public affairs in which citizens are directly involved”.

Most references to democracy relate to people participating in national or local government decision-making. Within the political process a desire to broaden public participation has led to increased decentralisation and the devolution of responsibilities and authority from central to local governance bodies. Recently, the relationship between democratic practices and development has been centre stage for the international development community. Although some donor countries have previously advocated for their own models of democracy (and some continue to do so), there is now recognition that donors must respect and work to

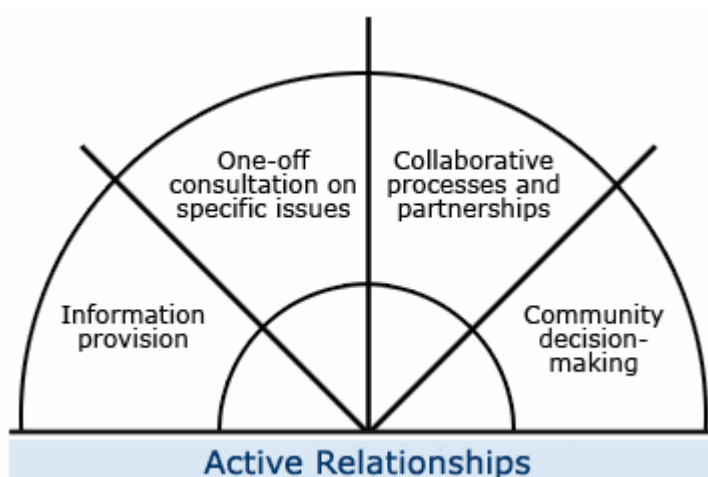
⁴⁸ This is akin to the Food and Agriculture Organisation (FAO) of the UN (1989) definition of ‘participation’ referred to at 4.4.1.

strengthen their partner country's systems and processes, rather than undermine them.⁴⁹

Not all participation is the same. Levels of participation and local control are best explained by looking at a continuum such as that used by the NZ Office for the Community and Voluntary Sector (2003) (see Figure 4). The further to the right of the continuum, the greater the control of the local people. Yet, even 'information provision' on the left is vital for effective civic participation. When dealing with complex problems, people can be prevented from participating effectively if they do not have access to enough information to inform their action or decisions.

Figure 4: Spectrum of public participation

(Source: OCVS, 2003)



Where a process should sit along this spectrum of participation will depend on what is possible or appropriate in the circumstances. This includes consideration about the subject matter, the resources and time available to have a broad participatory process, and how realistic it is to involve multiple parties.

Despite increasing interconnectedness between nations, formal avenues for individual and community participation in global issues and decision-making are still scarce. Global public policy networks are such an example; however, they are few and far between.⁵⁰ Other examples include allowing non-governmental organisations (NGOs) to have seats on previously purely governmental bodies. For example, the Pacific Island Non-Governmental Organisation

⁴⁹ For example, see the *Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness* (OECD, 2005).

⁵⁰ Like other participatory mechanisms they are criticised for being slow moving and creating diluted decisions in order to achieve broad-based agreement (World Bank, 2000).

(PIANGO) was given a seat at the Pacific Island Forum Secretariat in 2007.⁵¹

There is international recognition that one nation's domestic policies can affect another nation's development⁵² (eg immigration policies in NZ impact on Tuvalu's development). However, it appears to be uncommon for consultation on those domestic policies to actively include foreign individuals and communities. Enabling participation in such situations would go beyond simply ensuring domestic policies do not undermine international development policies (as is the premise underlying most of the discussion around 'policy coherence for development'), to identifying solutions that are 'win-win' for the people of both nations. It is a natural extension of the logic that people's participation in their own domestic policy is essential to producing well thought out and durable solutions. If this is the case, then people's participation is also essential for creating 'win-win' solutions in situations where another nation's policies directly impact on them.⁵³

4.2.2 Strong civil societies

At a local level, the literature is concerned with creating strong civil societies. Although the literature struggles to come up with a commonly accepted definition of 'civil society', Edwards (2004) concludes that civil society is:

- a goal to aim for;
- a means to achieve the goal; and
- a framework for engaging with each other about ends and means.

Civil society encompasses all of the institutions, networks and avenues of participation created by people to further their own goals. Hann (1996, p. 22) emphasises that the term should be broad enough to include "all diverse ideas and moralities that inspire cohesion and trust in human communities".

People's participation in their communities has many positive spin-offs. It improves wellbeing,

⁵¹ However, where only one or two seats are made available to 'civil society', there may be questions about the extent to which those organisations 'represent' all aspects of civil society.

⁵² For instance, the 2008 Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) *Ministerial Declaration on Policy Coherence for Development*.

⁵³ Facilitating such participation comes with its own set of problems of course. Some of these could be overcome through the use of technology, in line with the 2008 OECD *Seoul Declaration for the Future of the Internet Economy*. Countries that have signed up to this Declaration share a vision of activities supported through information and communication technologies that enable "new forms of civic engagement and participation that promote diversity of opinions and enhance transparency, accountability, privacy and trust."

strengthens the social fabric of the community by creating social capital, and builds resilience against shocks and disasters.⁵⁴

[S]ocial capital is central to people's ability to chart their own future within their communities – and to the global community's ability to harness the forces of globalisation. Helping people build social capital is, in turn, central to poverty reduction. (World Bank, 2000, p. 5)

The social relationships and networks people create in their lives need not be limited to the locality in which they reside. Through migration (temporary and permanent), work, trade, and connection through the internet, even fairly isolated communities can now be part of a global, interdependent network. Through this network previously unanticipated partnerships can emerge to address local, national and trans-national issues. The World Bank (2000) encourages public agencies to foster these internal and external networks so that communities are ready to respond to opportunities and risks – in particular, those that governments cannot contend with alone. However, the World Bank also cautions fostering external connections that could undermine indigenous efforts, organisations and self-reliance.

4.2.3 Participatory development

On a local, but more formalised project/programme-specific basis the talk is not only on 'strengthening civil society' but of making development 'participatory'. In the late 1970s, there was disenchantment within some international development circles with the failure of traditional methods of research and development to achieve results. The missing ingredient was deemed to be the experiences of people at the grassroots. Thus, participatory development as we know it today was born.⁵⁵

Participatory development is grounded in the assumption that all people are capable of making unique contributions, but that many people cannot fulfil this potential due to powerlessness, vulnerability or poverty (Mompoti & Prinsen, 2003; Rowlands, 2003). When undertaken well, those who have conventionally been treated as 'beneficiaries' become participants in all stages of development — from problem definition through to decision-making and action. Participatory development is often regarded as both:

⁵⁴ Strong communities are particularly important in times of disaster. Local people are the first line of defence. They know what they need and may be able to draw from previous experiences. They are also best placed to provide a sense of connection amongst those in their communities (Brennan, 2005).

⁵⁵ It brought together a number of participatory practices and theories including agroecosystems analysis from Africa and India; applied anthropology theories; Paulo Friere's consciousness-raising action research in Brazil; and the emphasis many Southern non-governmental organisations were placing on self-sufficiency and empowerment (McGee, 2002).

- a means – participation for instrumental purposes; and
- an end – participation for transformative purposes (empowering and building the capacity and knowledge of individuals involved).

Experience has shown that conventional, externally-funded and -led development interventions fail to sustain adequate levels of activity once external funding is withdrawn. Yet, where local people participate they gain a sense of ownership over the project or programme and are more likely to sustain activity.

The plethora of research available shows that a process which is participatory is likely to reduce friction; promote agreement, cooperation and equality between stakeholders; and encourage effective use of local resources and skills. Ultimately, participation is likely to decrease recurrent costs and increase participant cost recovery (R. Chambers, 2006; Karl, 2000; Kumar, 2002; McGee, 2002).

4.3 Participation in Tuvalu: Past to present

Tuvalu has always had systems to engage its people in island activities and planning. These systems have modified over time in response to changing circumstances. The second half of this chapter explores participation mechanisms that now exist in Tuvaluan society (drawn predominantly from the literature research and key informant interviews). It then summarises the responses of community participants on how they relate to the participation mechanisms, and where they are looking for change.

4.3.1 Overview

The government of Tuvalu knows that as a small nation with a small resource base, the involvement of the Tuvaluan people in their own development is essential. The former Minister of Finance commented that:

One of the important resources that we have is our men and women. If Government is committed to helping people...can we make our contribution to assist government by making more and better use of our own resources?...we have to question ourselves as to what contributions we can make for our own families, island communities, and particularly for the government of Tuvalu, without always thinking that our personal needs should be taken up by government. (in Pita, 1999)

Tuvalu has been described as a nation with strong democratic values (Knapman et al., 2002; UN, 2002) due to its open legislative debate, strong tradition of participation in decision-making through the communal meeting house system, and growing involvement of NGOs.

The literature search and interviews with key informants identified numerous mechanisms available to Tuvaluans who wished to participate in their own national and community development and decision-making. These mechanisms varied from private to public; from local and national to regional and international; and from avenues that enabled personal expression and sharing of ideas, to those that facilitated practical assistance in the implementation of development projects. Some mechanisms originated from *tuu mo aganu*, while others had been introduced through outside influences. Each of these avenues for participation are discussed in more detail below, arranged according to origin. Section 4.4 then outlines what research participants had to say about their participation in each mechanism.

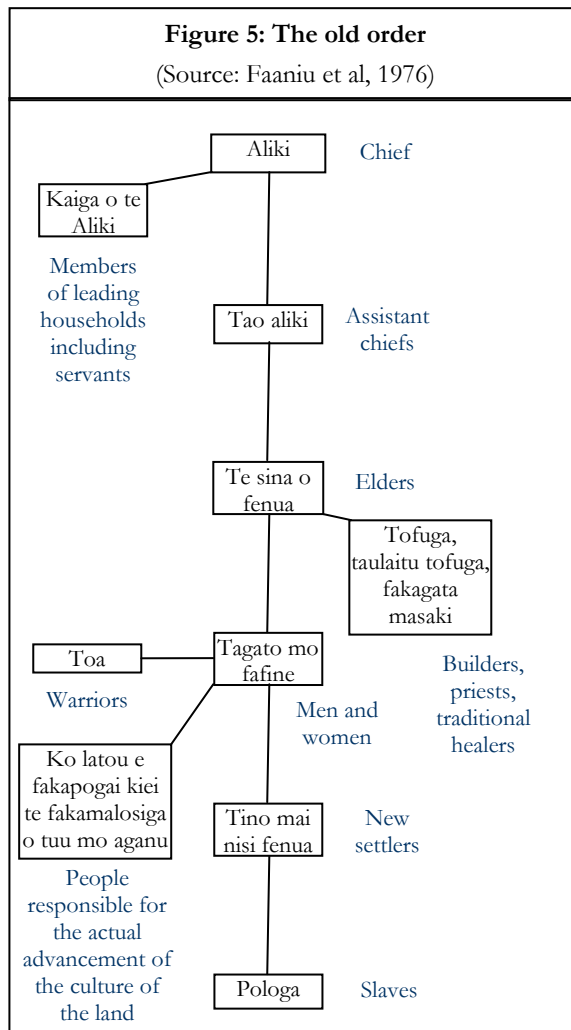
4.3.2 Participation mechanisms with traditional origins

Family (*kaiga*)

As discussed in chapter three, family plays a central role in Tuvalu. Family members come together for daily evening devotion, especially on the outer islands. This is also a time for the family to catch up and discuss matters. It is in the family where everybody learns to divide up tasks, generally under the direction of *te pule* (the head). In most families, the decision-making process commonly involves the adults only (especially the males), and the final decision is left up to the father.⁵⁶ When it comes to daily duties or implementing decisions, all family members in Tuvalu have a role. The traditional roles outlined in chapter three still largely shape the familial lives of those on the outer islands, however, in the capital, Funafuti, the division of duties has changed somewhat. The main reasons are that:

- not all families have access to land for *pulaka* pits and coconut trees for toddy (they are not *tagata fenua*)
- the cash economy plays a large part in life on Funafuti and diet is more influenced by what can be bought at the store rather than what is grown or caught
- many more people (male and female) are in paid employment and there is less time for activities such as fishing and weaving
- as women become income earners their role within the family has altered (eg some women reported that the men in their households help prepare meals if the women are working).

⁵⁶ Traditionally a newly married woman will move in with her husband's family. The oldest male in the household will normally retain the role of *te pule*. However, a widowed woman who is the eldest in the home may become *te pule*, at times handing over responsibilities to her eldest son.



Traditional island governance structures (*fakanofonofoga o fenua*)

Traditional island governance structures remain prominent in Tuvalu. The traditional assembly on each island is known as the *Falekaupule* (council of elders)⁵⁷ headed by an *ulu aliki* (high chief)⁵⁸ and other *aliki* (chiefs). Figure 5 sets out the structure of the old order as modelled by Faaniu et al. (1976).⁵⁹ It was composed in line with the *tuu mo aganu* of each island. The *tao aliki* (assistant chiefs) and other (male) elders (*te sina o fenua*)⁶⁰ have additional roles in counselling the *aliki*, traditionally around matters such as food supply, land protection and conflict resolution. Decision-making is deliberative and generally consensual. The *aliki* were recognised as the paramount leaders within traditional Tuvaluan society. They were the

men from chiefly families considered to be worthy of the title (by being hard working, knowledgeable, considerate and loving) (Lusama, 2004). Historically, the *aliki* were considered to represent a supreme being and were therefore obeyed without question (Faaniu et al., 1976).

The *Falekaupule* have always worked in the interests of their islands. Their responsibilities traditionally related to maintaining culture and making decisions regarding the wellbeing of people of the island. When decisions required activities to be undertaken, *tao aliki* were administrators, and the voluntary work and fundraising groups of the women (*fafine*) and men (*tagata*)⁶¹, were (and continue to be) the implementers.⁶²

⁵⁷ Also known as the *Fonopule*.

⁵⁸ Also known as a *tupu*, *ulu fenua*, or *pule fenua*.

⁵⁹ Variations on this exist in Lusama, 2004.

⁶⁰ Also known as *taupulega* (counsellors).

⁶¹ Also known as the *tagata lima malosi* (the strong-armed men) or simply the *lima malosi*.

Other traditional avenues for civic participation include the villages (*te fakai*)/sides of the settlement (*te feitu*), which tend to be divided by the church, meeting house (*manaepa/ahiga*), and central communal courtyard or village green (*te malae*). Research participants indicated that nowadays membership to a *fakai/feitu* is mostly symbolic. Through good-natured competition these groupings provide a way to organise gift exchanges, games, fundraising, and some communal projects.

As mentioned in chapter three, the *aliki* and *Falekaupule* lost much of their authority during the colonial period as the Church became more powerful and as a British system of government was introduced that included a system of elected island councils (see Case study 2).⁶³ It is reported that this was damaging for Tuvaluan communities. Chambers (1984) observed that it altered the socio-political face of society and much of the underlying structure on which the community was built. During the colonial period, the main duties that surviving *Falekaupule* had were only in relation to the maintenance of *tuu mo aganu* on their islands.

Case study 2: Undermining traditional systems during the colonial period

“...in this meeting called by the [Nanumea] Island Council, there had been heated discussion about the future of Nanumea’s twelve member Council of Chiefs, Kau Aliko [Falekaupule], and before we were finished those assembled had voted to abolish this group.

The motion to abolish the Kau Aliko had apparently been discussed privately for some time and had now come formally from people living on the islet of Lakena...those who supported the move argued that the Council of Chiefs had outlived its usefulness and that its continued existence constituted a second “boss” (pule) in addition to the Island Council, and a second set of laws to be obeyed. Those against the motion pointed out that the chiefs had served Nanumea well from the beginning of Nanumean society, had always worked for the good of the island and without pay, and had done no wrong to justify being sacked...What seemed odd, though, was that no one appeared to regard this move as a momentous one, worthy of some final parting eulogy. It was accepted, I felt, too matter-of-factly.” (Chambers, 1984, pp. 105—106 writing about a meeting in 1974).

Following this abolition a Committee for Tradition and Custom were elected. Over the next years the *Kau Aliko* was to return and operate as an intermediary. In 1979, it was re-established with a role to enforce compliance with customary law dealing with feasts, newcomers and communal lands.

Independence came in 1978, but it was in the 1990s that decentralisation and increased civic participation entered onto the agenda as a means of developing the outer islands and re-

⁶² The *fafine* groups and the youth (*talavou*) groups also worked together a lot in community development projects to fulfil their own needs. For example, the *fafine* would set targets amongst its members as to how many mats each household should have and would support its members to achieve those targets.

⁶³ The island council system was the first to introduce women into the leadership structure (Paeniu, 2008b)

empowering the *Falekaupule* (supporting their role in modern government).⁶⁴

By 1996...there were still widespread elements of “colonial hangover” inhibiting the development process in many quarters. At local government level island communities had a mentality of waiting upon the Government to provide for them and a ‘dependence syndrome’ prevailed amongst the people. The traditional custom of working together as a community...was diminishing, and the cash economy was becoming the norm in the lives of many people, who increasingly adopted an attitude of “no pay, no work” whereas under traditional leadership they were happy to work as volunteers. (Paeniu, 2008b, p. 9)

A local government reform process led to introduction of the 1997 Falekaupule Act (the Act, effective 1999) and the accompanying Falekaupule Trust Fund.⁶⁵ The Act aimed to heal some of the ‘wounds’ of the colonial period, and bring together the traditional structures with the structures of a modern state introduced during colonisation.⁶⁶ The ‘return to traditional leadership’ was seen as important for many reasons, including:

- the peoples’ respect and allegiance to the *aliki* and *sina*, and their willingness to undertake communal work at the direction of the *Falekaupule*
- the traditional leaders’ roles in enforcing traditional rules (eg no drinking alcohol) and, therefore, maintaining peace
- it would lead to consensus decisions, and polite, respectful deliberation, rather than divisive political debate witnessed in Parliament (Paeniu, 2008b).

The Act provides for both a *Falekaupule* established in line with the *tuu mo aganu* of each island⁶⁷ and a *Kaupule* (local government council) to run each island’s affairs (see 4.3.3 for more details on *Kaupule*.) The relationship between the *Falekaupule* and the central government is mediated through the *Kaupule* as demonstrated in Figure 6.

⁶⁴ It was also hoped that by developing the outer islands, rapid internal migration towards the employment opportunities on the capital Funafuti would be reversed.

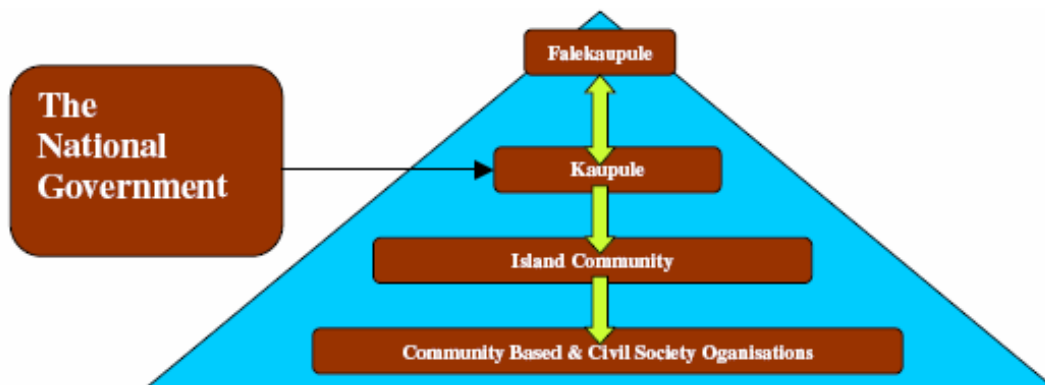
⁶⁵ The Falekaupule Act gives island councils responsibility for managing their own finances from a budget allocated by central government. The Falekaupule Trust Fund, with initial capital of A\$12m (in two tranches over 1999 and 2000) was established in 1999 for this purpose.

⁶⁶ This is consistent with current moves in the region to improve governance processes by harmonising traditional and modern values and structures (PIFS, 2007).

⁶⁷ The *tuu mo aganu* has not traditionally been written down, although on some islands this is changing. For example, the *aliki* in Vaitupu have written the *Te Fakavae Ote Afu O Alikai Vaitupu*, which documents their traditional practices.

Figure 6: National government's relationship with traditional structures

(Source: MNREAL, 2007)



Under the Act, the *Falekaupule* are seen as the primary social institutions and sovereign powers on the islands. On top of their roles to maintain culture, they have responsibilities to:

- prepare and implement development plans and programmes in consultation with the community, government agencies, NGOs and other development partners
- coordinate and monitor all programmes and projects implemented within its area of authority
- seek technical advice on policy and project development
- mobilise people for development projects
- ensure proper management and use of their physical and natural resources.

This very progressive Act has attempted to incorporate modern leadership principles such as participation and consultation, devolution, transparency, accountability, gender-sensitivity, people-centredness, and team work (Paeniu, 2008b).

Particularly of relevance to this chapter are the means for which participation is provided for in the Act. There is participation through:

- representation in the *Kaupule* and *Falekaupule*, including another layer to the *Falekaupule taupulega* to allow for participation by men and women aged between 18 and 59 years. In practice, on some islands this is limited to men only, while on others, the membership comprises of the *matui* (heads of the landholding households), which are only sometimes represented by women (Paeniu, 2008b)
- direct participation in decision-making through a quarterly Falekaupule Assembly for all men and women aged over 18 years

- direct participation in decision implementation through traditional groups (eg *fafine*) or by assisting the *Kaupule* (eg youth who are employed on a rotational basis to fix roads in their area).

Many of the desired outcomes of the Act have begun to be achieved. For instance the Ministry of Home Affairs and Rural Development (MHARD, 2008b) observes that training on the Act has made local governments more responsive and transparent; there is notable improvement in project implementation and spending capabilities; there has been “extensive participation” in development planning (including from women and children); there is a commitment to upskilling; and local government’s have demonstrated their new empowered status by demanding new regulations to help them fulfil duties.

However, it was widely acknowledged by both key informants and other research participants that there is still a way to go until the Act (and all its provisions for participation, consultation and gender-sensitivity) are fully realised.

4.3.3 Introduced participation mechanisms

Local government (*Kaupule*)

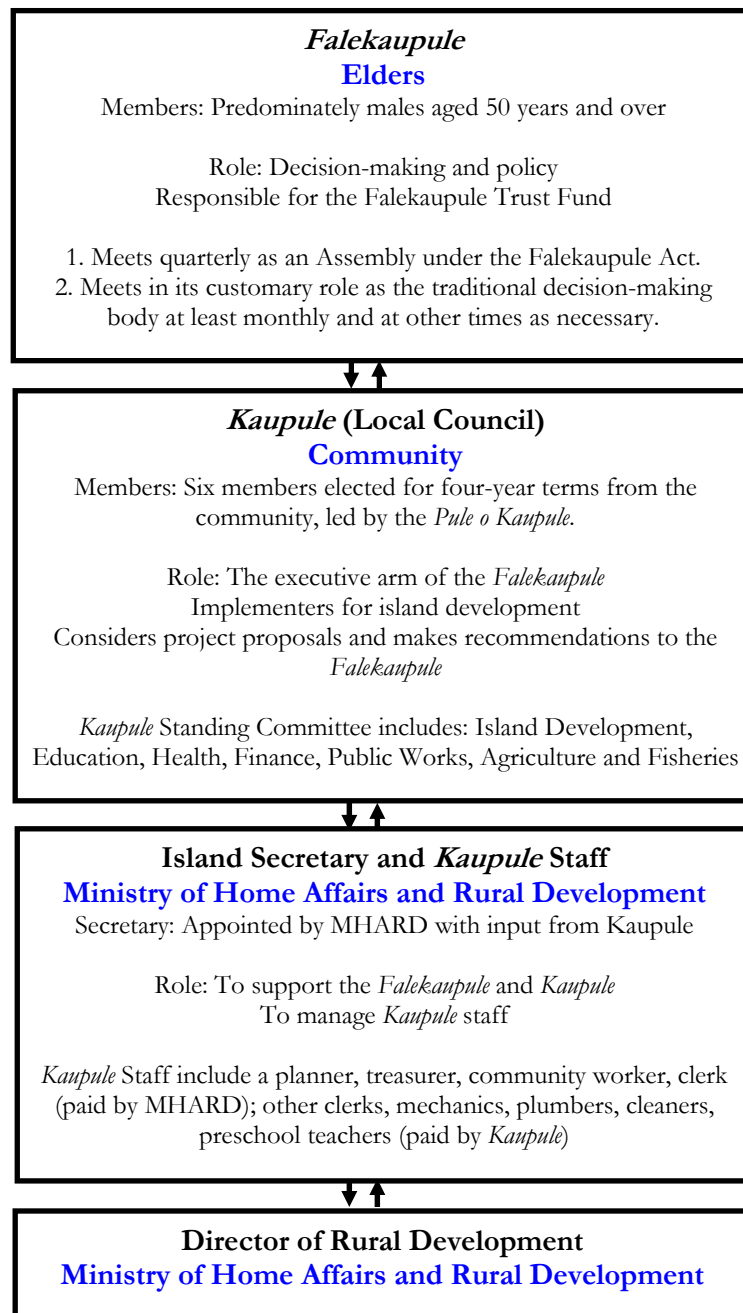
When missionaries arrived in Tuvalu, they established local authorities under each *manaepa/ahiga*, known as *Kaupule* (White, 1965). This system was retained during colonial times, although a native magistrate was also appointed for each island. Nowadays, *Kaupule* are provided for under the Act. They are made up of the six elected councillors and local government staff. All men and women aged 18 years or over are entitled to register and vote for the councillors. From there, the *Falekaupule* elects one to be the *Pule o Kaupule*.⁶⁸ In effect, the *Kaupule* are the agents or executive arm of the *Falekaupule*. They are the link between the island communities and the outside world, whether that be the central government, NGOs or other parties. Their responsibilities range from education, to trade, agriculture and fisheries, disaster and public order (see Figure 7).

It is the *Kaupule* Secretaries and Planners who are responsible for leading the development of island plans – they have been described as the information-gathering and debating arena for community development (Fairbairn-Dunlop et al., 2004). The island plans are then put before the *Falekaupule* for final approval. Although this is a requirement of the Act, most islands have not developed such plans.

⁶⁸ The person who presides over the *Kaupule* and acts as a chief executive.

Figure 7: Relationship between the *Falekaupule*, *Kaupule* and the Government

(Figure adapted from Fairbairn-Dunlop et al, 2004)



Central Government (*Malo*)

The central government is located in Funafuti, although some island *Kaupule* and school staff are public servants. The current system is inherited from the colonial period. At the executive level of government there are fifteen Members of Parliament (MPs)⁶⁹ who are elected for four-year terms under universal suffrage, and are expected to act as island spokespersons within

⁶⁹ The seven islands with the largest populations have two MPs (Niulakita comes under Niutao). The smallest island, Nukulaelae, has one.



Picture 1: The central government building in Funafuti

national government affairs. The Cabinet consists of the Prime Minister who chooses up to five Ministers from the MPs. The Speaker, who presides over the Parliament (*fale i fonono*) is appointed by the Cabinet. Finally, the Governor-General is appointed by the Queen of England on the advice of the Prime Minister (in consultation with Parliament). The biannual Parliamentary sessions last for a number of days, are open air and are

broadcast over the radio.

There are no official political parties in Tuvalu: MPs tend to align with either Tuvalu's first Prime Minister (Sir Toaripi Lauti), or the Prime Minister from 1981—1989 (Dr. Tomasi Puapua). Although it has been stated that MPs maintain very close links to their constituencies (NZMFAT, 2008c), the Pacific Foundation for the Advancement of Women (2003) has said that the majority of Tuvaluans have difficulty relating to the state, and do not have a good understanding of the mechanism and functions of government; their responsibilities as citizens; the role of leaders; and the law, the legal system and their rights. The lack of communications mechanisms in Tuvalu appears to play a large part in making Tuvaluans feel distant from government (see discussion on communication in 4.6).

The Tuvaluan government has some strong examples of participatory development processes. The largest public participation exercise since Tuvalu's separation was the development of *Te Kakeega II: National Strategy for Sustainable Development — 2005—2015*, which is framed around the Millennium Development Goals, the national sustainable development goals in Tuvalu's *Malefutuga Declaration*, sector plans, and other multilateral environmental agreements. Over 250 people including MPs, *aliki*, officials, NGO representatives and women and youth representatives from across Tuvalu gave their views so that the government could ensure a sense of public ownership over the plan. This plan now provides an umbrella strategy for all development in Tuvalu, and even guides Tuvalu's donors. It includes acknowledgement of the need for participation and cross-sectoral collaboration in Tuvalu's development.

Church (*Ekalasia*)

Currently 97% of the population belong to the EKT. Over the last century the EKT has

merged into the traditional governance systems discussed in 4.3.2 (People of Nanumea, 2004). Although it indirectly influences decision-making (Pita, 1999) by shaping the underpinning value structure, an EKT representative indicated that there were some incidents where the EKT felt excluded from major planning processes. In recent times, conscious effort has been put into bringing all the relevant parties together in planning processes. For example, the Tuvalu Climate Action Network (TuCAN) has brought together the EKT, TANGO, an NGO called Island Care, the Tuvalu Media Corporation, the Red Cross and the Environment Department to address the complex issues surrounding climate change in Tuvalu.

As well as being involved in decision-making, the EKT plays an important role in inspiring development activity in the community. Groupings of men, women or children within the EKT and other religious institutions exist. Involvement includes participation in religious activities, caring for the Pastor and his wife, and Church-led island development activities.

Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and community-based organisations (CBOs)

Tuvaluans also get involved in their communities through NGOs/CBOs, which have either sprung up from within Tuvaluan communities or are branches of overseas organisations. NGOs/CBOs form around specific identities and purposes and are island-based, national, and/or international in reach. They are a combination of more ‘modern’ structures and traditional structures (eg see section 4.3.2). During an interview, Annie Homasi (TANGO Coordinator) explained that “people bring their traditional values into the groups – non-profits sit well with traditional values”.

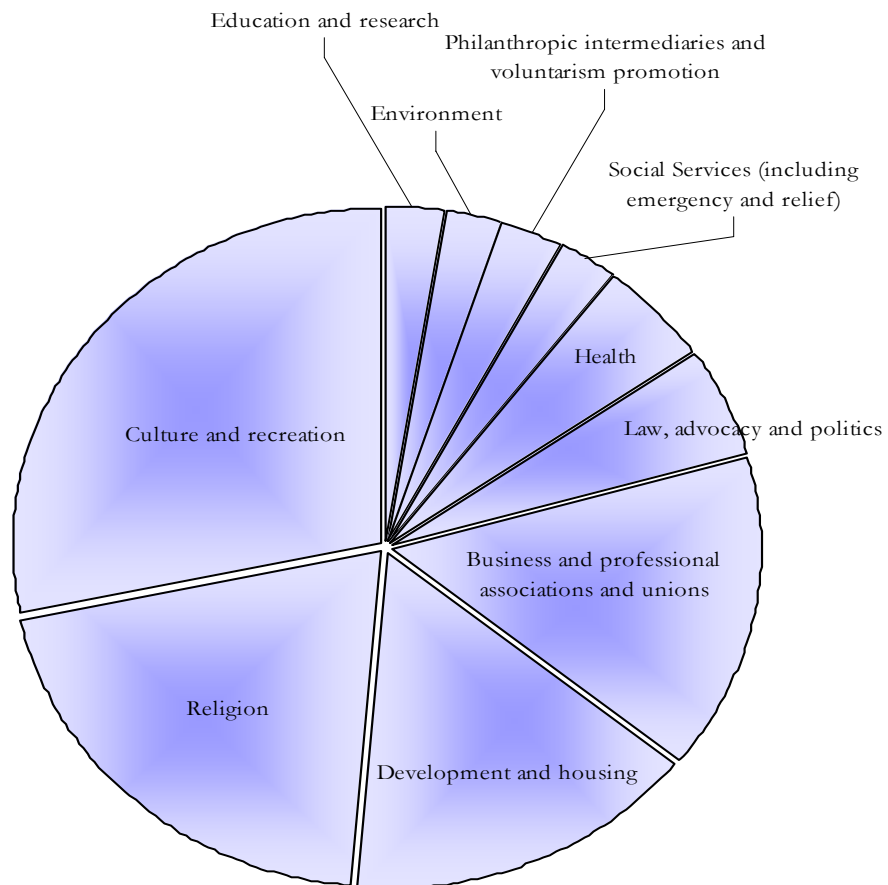
In 2007, legislation was introduced that enables NGOs/CBOs to register in Tuvalu. Registration is said to bring benefits for funding and governance. This formal recognition of NGOs/CBOs supports the observation that these organisations now have an increasingly important role in Tuvaluan society, including as a civil society voice to the outside world.

From the men and women of the community, sprouts other active groups like Church women’s groups, boy’s brigade, girl’s brigade, volunteers, boy scouts, girl guides and women’s groups. From observations, the majority of these groups are women and teenagers who provide important community and social services and actively promote better living conditions. (Pita, 1999, p. 4)

During an interview, Homasi explained that through its membership with PIANGO and FSPI “TANGO is the peoples’ voice at the regional level”.

It is not known exactly how many NGOs/CBOs exist in Tuvalu, however, TANGO reports that there has been a 100% increase in the number of members of TANGO over the last 5–6 years. As at July 2008, TANGO had 48 members, some of which were umbrella groups.⁷⁰ Figure 8 shows the range of TANGO's member organisations arranged according to the International Classification of Non-Profit Organisations (UNSD, 2003).⁷¹

Figure 8: Range of non-profit and community-based organisations with TANGO membership



The majority of these organisations can be classified as culture and recreation, religion, development and housing, as well as business and professional associations and unions.

As indicated in the case study of Tuvaluan diaspora communities (see Appendix 1), when Tuvaluans settle abroad, they also tend to establish NGOs/CBOs. These organisations tend to either represent individual Tuvaluan islands (eg Funafuti or Vaitupu), or the nation as a whole. Conversations with diaspora communities revealed that at times these organisations are

⁷⁰ This does not represent all NGOs/CBOs in Tuvalu. For example, the Lima Malosi Association of Vaitupu (reported in "Lima Malosi celebrate 21st Birthday", October 27, 2006) is not included.

⁷¹ Data retrieved from TANGO. The activities of eight organisations were unable to be identified and have not been included here.

instigated by the Church, but in other instances they form because of a desire to maintain culture and connection or to develop their communities. Thus, it is likely that a proportional classification of these organisations would be similar to those based in Tuvalu.

From outside of Tuvalu, international NGOs (INGOs) appear to also play a major role in Tuvaluan development activities, yet from within Tuvalu it was observed that their presence is less obvious. This is possibly because most INGOs operate through TANGO or another Tuvaluan NGO or government agency. Important roles that the INGOs seem to play are in communicating beyond Tuvaluan borders about Tuvaluan issues and providing technical advice. For example, Alofa Tuvalu is a French-based NGO running the *Small is Beautiful* project. This involves practical projects in Tuvalu, alongside an international communications campaign making Tuvalu an environmental showcase for the rest of the world. Alofa Tuvalu has a network of overseas specialists, but it works through memorandums of understanding with local project stakeholders. Although it has over 300 Tuvaluan members, it can be argued that its biggest *visible* presence is outside of Tuvalu.

Online forums

A more recent avenue for civic participation is through online discussion forums. Online forums generally relate to ‘communities of interest’, rather than the ‘communities of place’ that have been so central to Tuvaluan life (see 4.3.2). Some forums have been established specifically for Tuvaluans, such as a forum called *Te Manaepa* and some island-specific Yahoo groups.⁷² These forums have great potential to engage a wide variety of Tuvaluans within Tuvalu and abroad, enabling Tuvaluans to draw on the skills and expertise of their diaspora. One middle-age participant who had helped establish one of these forums had hoped that the ideas of women and youth could be heard online and then taken into the real *manaepa* or *abiga* through the male representatives.

Regional and international governmental bodies

A number of regional and international governmental bodies also influence Tuvaluan development. These include PIFS, SPC, the UN, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and nation states such as Australia and NZ. These bodies tend to work through the central government and *Kaupule*. At times this means that Tuvaluan people are recruited to help implement projects.

⁷² Even though there are island groupings on the internet, these are still essential communities of interest rather than of place, ie those people who have an interest in that island.

Recently, these bodies have begun to integrate the civil society voice into their work,⁷³ for instance, consultation with Tuvaluans on the Pacific Plan (see chapter three) in 2005 (PIFS, 2005). It is reported that a national seminar was held in Funafuti with over 50 representatives from a cross section of the community: government, TANGO, CBOs, the Chamber of Commerce, MPs, media and the private sector. Reports are not clear, however, on the extent to which views expressed during this seminar were carried forward into intergovernmental planning, or were relayed back to communities.

Another means of civil society gaining a voice within the Pacific Plan processes is through PIANGO being named as the Pacific Regional Non-State Actor which has consultative status on forum processes. However, the limitations of this avenue of civic participation are two-fold: 1) Tuvaluan citizens are three-steps removed from PIANGO⁷⁴ and therefore, true representation becomes an issue; 2) although PIANGO has consultative status it has been denied accreditation to forum meetings at times, including preparatory meetings in the lead up to the Pacific Islands 39th Leaders Summit (PRNGO, 2008).

Although some Pacific NGOs do have consultative status with the UN, PIANGO is not one of them. It appears that the Tuvaluan civil society voice is instead heard through non-Pacific civil society organisations such as the World Alliance for Citizen Participation, (CIVICUS, of which TANGO is a member and which does have consultative status), INGOs that have bases in Tuvalu (eg the International Red Cross), and through participating as part of Tuvaluan government-led delegations abroad.

One area that Tuvaluans do not currently have a say, but which does impact upon them, is in relation to the domestic policies of other countries, such as NZ and Australia. As mentioned above, there have been moves to ensure that domestic policies are at least consistent with foreign aid policies in countries such as NZ (see Case study 3), although this does not constitute participation in planning.

⁷³ Under the Pacific Plan, one of the 2006–2008 priorities was to build stronger partnerships with national and regional stakeholders, and development partners. This was to possibly include an annual outcomes-oriented process with representatives from the business sector, academia, media and civil society organisations, to provide feedback to leaders and a platform for wider debate on Pacific regionalism and the longer term direction of the Pacific Plan. This was to be measured by an increasing number of Pacific Plan initiatives involving Non-State Actors in Forum countries and Pacific Territories.

⁷⁴ They are members of CBOs/NGOs, which are members of TANGO, which are members of PIANGO.

Case study 3: Recognised Seasonal Employer Scheme

In 2007, NZ introduced a temporary immigration policy that took into account its own labour needs, and development needs of Pacific states – the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) Scheme. The policy recognises that increased access to seasonal labour opportunities has potential development benefits for Pacific peoples. The initial policy was not designed with any participation of prospective workers and there have been problems. However, subsequent improvements to the scheme will take into account feedback from all parties involved, including NZ-based employers, Pacific governments and some workers themselves.

4.4 Participation in the eyes of Tuvaluans

4.4.1 What is participation?

The concept of participation was discussed during community interviews, and was brainstormed during some of the workshops. This definition offered by the FAO (1989) seemed to be an appropriate fit with local understanding:

Participation is involvement in people's development of themselves, their lives, their environment.

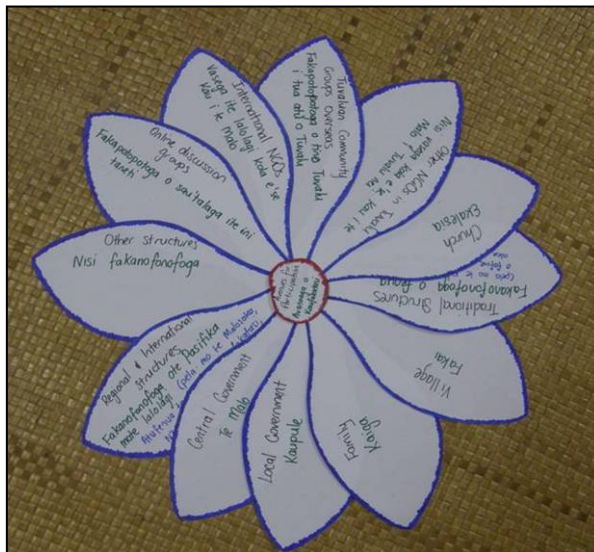
Research participants, both young and old, emphasised that participation (*kaufakatasi, aofiaaga, or partisi*) was about being involved in the whole development process, especially the implementation stage. In a women's workshop, participants observed that in the early part of a development process there was value in bringing together the ideas of a wide mix of people to produce a strong result, while in the implementation stage the value of bringing people together was in sharing the workload. In both instances, it was clear that 'participating' was linked to the idea of communal ownership of the results. Research participants expressed a great desire to get involved in their communities and to own their own problems and solutions. As discussed in chapter three, community ownership is very important for those living the 'Tuvaluan way'. It is described more fully through Case study 4. One participant reflected that the reason the Tuvaluan ancestors decided to stay together on one islet (rather than spreading

Case study 4: The importance of community participation and ownership

In 1947, the people of Vaitupu purchased Kioa Island (Fiji) with the assistance of a *palagi*, Don Kennedy. Kennedy moved to Kioa and was invited to be an advisor to the settler community. Unfortunately, his presence created factions within the community and he was eventually asked to leave. Among the reasons given by the Vaitupuan settlers (and present day Kioans) was that Kennedy was making plans for the development of the island. Although he had some good ideas, many felt that he consulted only with those close to him and who spoke English, but not with the rest of the islanders. This, combined with the fact that Kennedy financed the developments personally, meant that his presence was seen as 'risky'. The settlers felt that Kennedy might be able to make individual claims to the land and developments in the future, and that they would not belong to the community.

More information on Kioa Island is contained in chapter six and Appendix 3.

over all the islets of her island atoll) was to enable people to share and help each other.

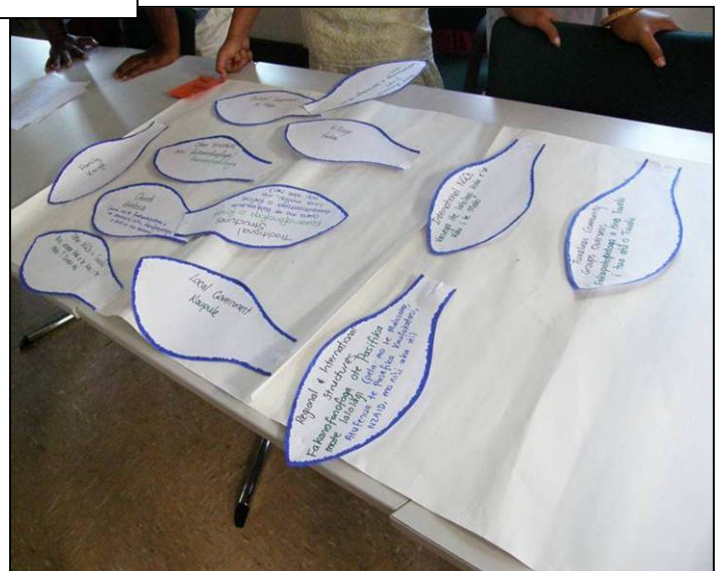


Picture 2: A 'flower' representing the core avenues and institutions for participation in public life

4.4.2 How do Tuvaluans participate?

The participation mechanisms outlined in 4.3 were presented to participants in interviews and workshops in Tuvalu for discussion (see Pictures 2 and 3). Participants were asked to reflect on which had the most relevance in their daily lives; how they were involved in these; and what changes they had seen or would like to see in how these mechanisms functioned in their society.

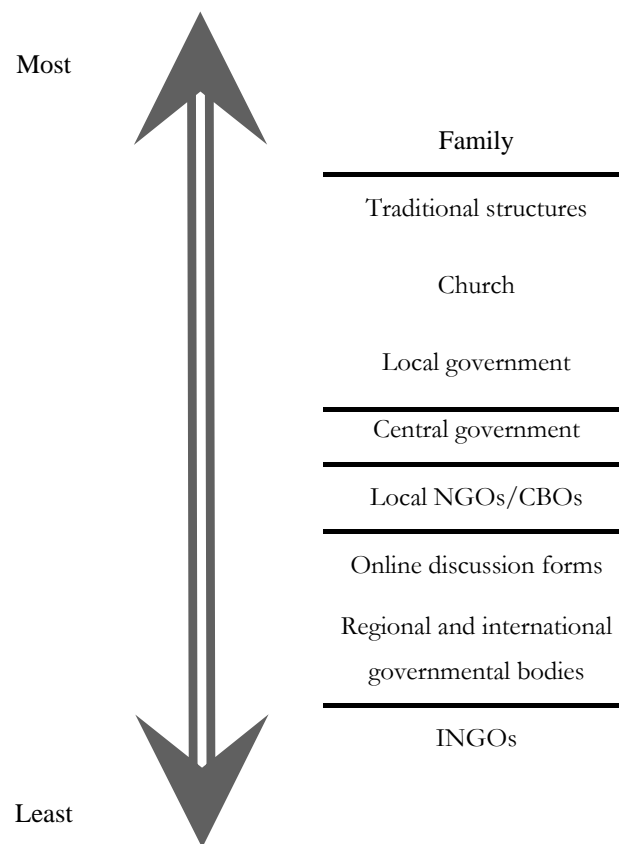
It was found that the extent to which people identified the various avenues, networks and institutions as having relevance in their lives depended on their age, sex, location, occupation and interests. However, there were some distinct categories into which these mechanisms could be grouped (Figure 9 overleaf). As seen, the most relevant participation channels appeared to be those that are geographically close and historically significant to Tuvaluans. Their comments and explanations follow.



Picture 3: Participants discussing and arranging the 'flower petals' in order of relevance to their lives

Family

Research participants highlighted that 'participation' begins in the family. The family is also the place where the young learn skills and their obligations to the wider community. Although the traditional system of dividing up tasks amongst families is not as prevalent in contemporary Tuvaluan society as it once was (especially within Funafuti), research participants provided examples of where, in the spirit of keeping with tradition, particular tasks within the *manaepa* communities were the domain of certain families.

Figure 9: Relevance of participation mechanisms to Tuvaluan-based participants

Traditional structures and the Church

The traditional structures continued to play a central role in the lives of the majority of research participants, especially those who live on outer islands. Some commented that the current *aliki* and *sina* have had a lot of change to deal with, and that they have been disadvantaged in dealing with this change for reasons such as:

- having grown up during a time when the *Falekaupule*'s powers and responsibilities were restricted by the colonial powers and therefore, not having role models who had the full array of decision-making powers (ie re-learning, re-making their place)
- facing more complex problems than those faced by previous generations
- not having access to the level of education younger generations have access to.

Participants described how those from the outer islands who lived in Funafuti continued to gather with others from their island in their own Funafuti-based *manaepa/abiga*, and to have their own *fafine* and *lima malosi* committees. These groupings do not have legal standing under the Act, but they contribute to decision-making back in their home islands by first conducting

the conversation about an issue in their Funafuti-based *manaepa/ahiga*, and then sending a delegation to the outer islands to participate in *Falekaupule* meetings there. They felt they added unique value because they are the more formally educated population in paid employment in Funafuti.⁷⁵

A few research participants said they chose not to participate through traditional structures. One reason given was they did not feel they were currently in a position to offer much to their communities. This sentiment was also reflected by recent Tuvaluan migrants to NZ who felt they needed to establish themselves before becoming involved in local Tuvaluan communities.

With respect to the relationship between the EKT and the traditional structures, a few research participants belonging to the EKT considered that a rejection of the EKT was a rejection of the basic values of Tuvaluan society. Those participants that did not belong to EKT deny this; some even questioned the role that the EKT plays nowadays in the traditional governance systems which existed before the Church came to Tuvalu.

Numerous participants spoke about the growing role of money in Tuvaluan life, and how it has become an additional means for families and individuals to contribute to their communities. For example, in addition to the formally established Falekaupule Trust Fund, many islands have established separate trust funds into which families contribute annually. During informal conversations many people indicated they had found the community responsibilities particularly burdensome with the rising need for money. The needs of the community were so great that they were struggling to meet their own family's needs — some reported taking out loans. For this reason, some people withdrew from participating in community activities, or were looking to migrate to escape what they saw as a burden. Others continued to participate, but felt that the community looked down on them for not making monetary contributions. A young female participant, however, commented that “although being involved in the community is a burden, you find peace when you help”.

It was observed that the interplay between the Falekaupule Act and the traditional roles of the *Falekaupule* was poorly understood by most research participants, despite the Act having been in force for nearly ten years. The extent to which the Act is implemented on each island appeared to largely depend on that island's *tuu mo aganu*, and to what extent the Act was known about, understood and respected by the *aliki* and the people. A broad range of people were

⁷⁵ Participants who were living on outer islands that were not their home island did not have the opportunity to participate in this way, but this was accepted out of respect for tradition.

involved in consultation for the Act's development; however, a large proportion of participants had either not heard of the Act, did not know what it is trying to achieve, or did not understand the systems and structures it established. There were other participants in positions of influence who did know and understand the Act but did not think it was consistent with *tuu mo aganu*. They indicated that where there are inconsistencies between *tuu mo aganu* (as explained by the *Falekaupule*) and the legislation, they believed *tuu mo aganu* would (or should) prevail.⁷⁶

Local government

Many research participants described a fairly regular level of involvement in the implementation of *Kaupule* projects (often paid), especially on outer islands where fewer people are in paid employment. It is particularly the *fafine* and the *lima malosi* who are involved, in line with their traditional responsibilities as implementers. These projects range from building fences and fixing roads, 'Ship to Shore' projects,⁷⁷ and preparing food for events.

Central government

Participants on the outer islands generally understood that the central government had an influence on their daily lives, but felt very distant from it and not at all involved in decision-making or implementation. Some participants indicated that they would like to receive more news of what is going on inside government, especially those participants who were working, and could not listen to the scheduled radio programmes.

On the other hand, those who worked for the government (Tuvalu's biggest employer) felt that they participated in the development of their country through their work. Most of these participants were based in Funafuti. During interviews and workshops, those people who were (or had been) employed by the government were more likely to be actively participating at all levels of Tuvaluan society. For example, senior officials were observed leading NGO projects after working hours. This may be because they have higher levels of formal education, and their employment helps build their experience and skills leading to advancement within the community. On the whole, these people appeared much more satisfied with their levels of participation, and their sense of connection with Tuvaluan decision-making.

⁷⁶ This would be completely contrary to the understanding held by outside donors.

⁷⁷ The 'Ship to Shore' projects aim to improve the safety and efficiency of shipping passengers and goods between ship and shore in the outer islands, taking into account social and environmental issues.

NGOs/CBOs

Over half the research participants reported no or very little involvement with any NGOs/CBOs, except for groups linked to religious institutions or traditional structures. This was particularly so on the outer islands. Those on the outer islands who did report involvement, generally only recalled participating in “a workshop or two”. One male participant who belonged to a professional association commented that he would like to see the role of NGOs in Tuvalu grow, as he believes they offer useful mechanisms for capacity and capability building.

The lack of connection many Tuvaluans feel to NGOs/CBOs sets a challenge for TANGO if it claims to be “the peoples’ voice at the regional level”. However, this weakness in representation may be mitigated by the fact that those involved in NGOs/CBOs are also involved in so many other spheres in Tuvaluan life.

International actors

Nearly all participants indicated they had not been involved with any INGO activities. Most were only vaguely aware of the role INGOs played in Tuvalu. Furthermore, most participants reported have nothing to do with regional and international governmental bodies. (The involvement of those organisations in Tuvalu tends to be mediated through the government or NGOs.) Where involvement did exist, it was normally through implementing donor project (eg the *lima malos* assisted to construct a fish farm in Vaitupu, which was a Taiwanese project).

Diaspora communities

Despite most Tuvaluans having family and friends living outside Tuvalu (see chapter six), they reported that there is little interaction between diaspora community organisations and those in Tuvalu. Exceptions to this rule were where there were visits or ‘exchanges’ (eg a youth choir exchange); ad hoc fundraising requests; or exchanges of goods (eg goods purchased in NZ were sent to Tuvalu in exchange for Tuvaluan mats). These exchanges appeared to be infrequent, and were more likely to occur between families. That said, a number of research participants indicated that they felt there was real potential in developing cross-national relationships between Tuvaluan and diaspora NGOs/CBOs in order to foster skills exchanges and development in Tuvalu, as well as maintain Tuvaluan culture beyond Tuvaluan borders. A number of participants also noted that one role that Tuvaluan diaspora could play in their newly adopted countries was in relation to engaging with governments to ensure Tuvaluan needs are taken into consideration in foreign policy that impacted upon them.

Online forums

The pool of research participants who knew about, and had used, online forums was small. The determining factors were access to the internet,⁷⁸ and age – the older generations were not as comfortable with technology. The research participants who reported having used online forums most were predominantly males in the 30–40 year-old age bracket (both in the Tuvalu and NZ samples). Older people had not participated in these forums, and some of the younger people who had logged in felt that it would be inappropriate (due to *tuu mo aganu*) for them to put ideas forward. Young people, however, were more likely to post video clips on YouTube regarding Tuvalu, or be present on social networking sites.

4.4.3 Women and youth

My research supported reports of changes in the roles women and children play within families, and that these changes reflect wider trends across Tuvaluan society. In contemporary families, the role of women in decision-making seems to be growing. During interviews, many couples were described as being joint decision-makers. One female research participant stated that:

Although many people say it is gender imbalanced, it is actually the women in the family who make a lot of decisions. The family all joins together in making it work – that is the subsistence way of life. The men do the physical jobs and the women do the household tasks, but everyone in the family participates in decision-making, such as deciding how much money to give to the Pastor. It's only when it comes to the extended family that it changes.

A male research participant also observed that:

The roles of men and women within families are changing. All this is happening because of things such as the introduction of CEDAW [the 1993 Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women]. Originally I saw this as a threat, but this is before I understood it properly. I learnt about CEDAW by attending two workshops – I think they need to do more.

It was observed that there is great respect for tradition in Tuvalu, especially on the outer islands. Many participants were cautious when speaking about the changing role of women, as they did not wish to offend tradition. Although some perceived the expanding role of women as a threat to tradition, most women, and a great number of men, saw it as a positive development. They believed the change has been brought about by women being educated

⁷⁸ Currently Funafuti has full access and Vaitupu has limited access through Motofoua High School. Other islands are yet to gain internet access.

abroad more and entering into the paid workforce (and thus being income earners). Another factor seems to be the number of men working as seafarers or abroad. Women are, therefore, required to make more decisions (especially when they do not have a means of regular communication with the men abroad) and take on other daily responsibilities that would traditionally be in the realm of men.

Female participants considered that there had previously been a gender bias within government and the Church, but that this was changing. For example, there had recently been a female MP;⁷⁹ more women had roles as the heads of government departments, and are more women were *employed* ‘as implementers’ (compared to undertaking this as unpaid labour). Also within the Church, women were becoming lay pastors and deacons (but not Pastors).

Female participants did not only see changes in the involvement of women in traditionally male spheres of community life, they also recognised that *fafine* groups were changing and becoming more sophisticated. For example, whereas previously the *fafine* groups would set fundraising targets for each woman individually, now they do more structured group fundraising. They attributed this development to exposure to outside ideas and education.

My research again supported reports that the role young people play within families is also changing. In its initial report to the Committee on the Rights of the Child, the Tuvaluan Government (2006) claimed that children’s participation in household decision-making meetings was not usually valued as there was an understanding that “adults know best”. Yet, in interviews a number of older participants indicated that they did consult children or younger household members on many decisions. During workshops, a number of youth also indicated that they were able to make some decisions about what they wished to do in their lives, but for others, decisions were still left to parents.

Young male participants tended to be happy with their levels of participation and involvement in family and community decision-making. It was generally the young females who desired change and who wished to express their ideas more.

What was evident was the tide of concern expressed by participants who were parents and grandparents who did not know what to think of the changes apparent within their youth. Some perceived these changes as a lack of respect for tradition and their elders.

“Within the *kaiga*, children have changed their behaviours. They are now more disobedient.

⁷⁹ Although this was not the case in 2008.

The education has broadened their minds — there is now less discipline in the school (less stick). The children also have more access to videos and TV. This is both good and bad. Some children use the knowledge against their parents, some use it positively. There is more education available to *tamaliki* than their parents. This can lead to kids looking down on their parents. It is hard to know if the young ones are telling the truth [when they put ideas forward] or if they are making it up just because they have more education.” (male participant)

One factor that female and youth participants felt effected how they engaged in their communities, is the growth of the monetary economy and paid employment. Although the *fafine* and *lima malosi* groups are still very active as ‘implementers’ (see Case study 5), those who are in paid employment found it difficult to participate because activities are usually undertaken during working hours. One participant commented that in the future, *fafine* and *lima malosi* meetings and activities may need to be reduced or the timing may need to be changed to allow for those in paid employment.

Case study 5: *Fafine* as ‘implementers’

“Our women’s group meets once a month unless something comes up. We fundraise to develop the community — to give to families of those in the committee (for example, the goal might be about toilets, so we concentrate on getting toilets for one family at a time). Most women do join the womens group, but sometimes not many people actually attend meetings because they are working during the day. Those working are excused from attending. The fafine have their own concerns to deal with, but if the Falekaupule asks for something, we do it.” (female participant)

As reported, women and educated youth based in Funafuti seemed more likely to be involved in CBOs/NGOs, while the men were more involved in traditional structures. This was consistent with the reports that within NGOs (especially those that are branches of INGOs), there are more opportunities for women than in traditional institutions or government, and that it is common for women to be leading NGOs/CBOs in Tuvalu. Similarly for youth based in Funafuti, NGOs/CBOs offered employment opportunities and the prospect of gaining new skills and experience.

Although the Falekaupule Act allows for participation of all men and women aged over 18 years in quarterly Falekaupule Assemblies, conversations indicated that actual practice is different and depends on the *tuu mo aganu* of each island.⁸⁰ For example, female and youth participants described the following:

- not attending quarterly Assemblies and not knowing that under the law they could.

⁸⁰ Fairbairn-Dunlop et al. (2004) reached similar conclusions.

- quarterly Assemblies only being held by the *Kaupule* on their island (not the *Falekaupule*).
- age thresholds on their island being 40 rather than 18 years old.

Most participants wished to improve the participation mechanisms and processes available to give all Tuvaluans more of a say in their future.

“If everybody opens up and shares opinions in a respectful way, then [my island] will develop quickly.” (female participant)

Yet, there was a strong sense that the opening up of participatory mechanisms and processes need to be respectful of the lessons embedded in *tuu mo aganu*, ie they need to understand the reasons their ancestors had developed the system in that way to see if that reason was still relevant in contemporary Tuvalu.⁸¹

4.5 A formal response to community participation

The desire of Tuvaluans to participate in their own development is recognised by Tuvaluan NGOs, government and donors. For example, a training needs analysis undertaken on behalf of NZAID⁸² and the Government of Tuvalu, found Tuvaluans desired more avenues into participating in decision-making. They wished to learn skills for informed and effective participation, and to have opportunities to practice those skills (Fairbairn-Dunlop et al., 2004).

It has also been formally recognised that there are some of the weaknesses in existing mechanisms and processes for participation. First, challenges associated with implementing the Act are listed in various reports (including Fairbairn-Dunlop et al., 2004; Seluka, 2007) include:

- governance, in particular a need to promote and ensure an inclusive approach to decision-making as a pre-requisite to effective decentralisation
- integration of traditional governance mechanisms and ideals into ‘modern’ systems of local governance
- enhancing the capacity and understanding of the *Falekaupule*, the *Kaupule*, and the communities of the Act, as well as responsibilities and practices envisaged within it.⁸³

⁸¹ This is similar to the concept of ‘thinking in time’ discussed in chapter one, as it recognises that what presently matters for the future are departures from the past.

⁸² New Zealand’s International Aid and Development Agency.

⁸³ Some training and communications exercises have been undertaken in the past, however, it is clear that more is needed, involving people from all parts of the community, for the system to be fully understood.

Second, in 2002 the UN saw a benefit in working more with NGOs/CBOs, but it felt that they needed to improve financial accountability and general management to be effective in supporting and delivering UN activities on a larger scale.

Third, the Government of Tuvalu and UNDP (2008, p. 2) have stated that:

Although decentralisation and participatory decision-making are being discussed, mechanisms to encourage full and real participation by women and minority groups are largely lacking...As in various [Pacific Island countries], the value of broad-based civic education programmes is increasingly recognized.

One of the priorities for immediate implementation in the Pacific Plan relates to supporting participatory democracy, consultative decision-making, and electoral processes (PIFS, 2007). The UNDP has also made one of its 2008–2012 priorities in the region to strengthen parliaments and improve participatory democracy (Government of Tuvalu & UNDP, 2008). These statements tie in nicely to efforts by TANGO and MHARD to begin jointly improving the servicing of local communities and implementing good governance principles throughout.

A large focus is being placed on education and capacity-building amongst decision-makers, development workers and citizens in Tuvalu. For instance, a UNDP Preparatory Assistance Project for Tuvalu consists of not only an induction workshop for MPs, and a legislative needs assessment, capacity assessment and strategies, but also exploring a civic education programme to develop community capacity to enable citizens to participate and manage their own affairs at the individual and institutional levels (Government of Tuvalu & UNDP, 2008).

TANGO also looks to build member capacity-building. Although discussions with staff from TANGO and other NGOs/CBOs showed an understanding of the principles and practice of participatory development techniques, TuCAN ran a train-the-trainers workshop in August 2008 to build understanding of the techniques of participatory development amongst both government and NGO workers as they relate to climate change issues.

4.6 Comment

The future of Tuvaluans shaping their futures in Tuvalu is strong, but should not be taken for granted, especially as the growth of the monetary economy is impacting on participation. As the external influences of the region and the world push in on Tuvalu, its people may also need to find a stronger voice beyond their own borders. This may come through formal consultation delegated to their government, the NGOs they belong to, the online forums they participate in, or even their families and communities living abroad.

The structures established under the *Falekaupule* Act recognise the historical and geographical significance that the *Falekaupule* has for Tuvaluans, and the role it plays in fostering active civic participation. However, both my own research and that of Fairbairn-Dunlop et al. reveal confusion between the legislative and the traditional roles of the *Falekaupule*. Moreover, many people who are aware of the Act find it difficult to understand and lacking specificity. This appears to create unnecessary debate and conflict between the *Falekaupule*, *Kaupule*, and the government, which is delaying the decentralisation process. This delay has caused frustration amongst some of those in the various institutions involved, which needs to be managed.

Although the *Kaupule* are charged with the responsibility of leading local planning processes with island communities, these plans have not been forthcoming. Planning training has been provided for staff by MHARD,⁸⁴ however, during informal conversations staff indicated that the (Western) planning tools they learnt do not align with how local Tuvaluans think. Therefore, planning exercises with island communities are unsuccessful. Even on Nanumea where a plan was created (People of Nanumea, 2004), it was not enacted. Key informants suggested that this was due to a lack of capacity and capability on the island, but it also appears to relate to the lack of clarity about the links between, and roles of, the *Falekaupule* and *Kaupule*.

As an outsider, I observed a unique anomaly of the system in Tuvalu, which could lead to tensions in the future. Within Funafuti there are many people who were born on other islands and who have migrated for reasons such as employment, education or to be near health facilities. Many have had children on Funafuti, some of whom have never visited the island of their parents – their island. The parents and their children are not indigenous to Funafuti, and therefore, do not partake in the Funafuti decision-making processes even though the outcomes of these processes affect them.⁸⁵ However, as new generations of non-indigenous people are born on Funafuti who do not have a close connection to their home island, tensions may arise if they wish to participate in local decision-making.⁸⁶ Currently, this does not appear to be causing problems, but it may in the future.

A sense of ownership of central government processes and activities also appears to be lacking amongst Tuvaluans. My research revealed that those who worked for government had a much

⁸⁴ New training was being provided in July 2008 when I was in Tuvalu, The outcome of which is not known.

⁸⁵ Currently, each island has its own *manaepa/abiga* on the Funafuti atoll in which they carry out most of their cultural events and through which they provide input into the *Falekaupule* on their home island.

⁸⁶ This also applies to people who go and live on islands other than their own, although in most instances it appears that they can still participate in the implementation of decisions.

better understanding of government processes, which facilitated their engagement. Building this understanding within the rest of the population through education is therefore a priority.

Although both the government and NGOs wish to focus on education and building capacity, there are underlying matters that cannot be ignored if these activities are to be successful. Two factors that appear to limit civic participation are the travel distance between islands and the limited means of communication and information sharing available in Tuvalu. As indicated above, access to information is an essential element of a participatory democracy. Informal conversations amongst Tuvaluans play an important role in distributing information, yet, telephone communication is limited and inter-island communication is mostly by small boats or radio-phone. Information is also shared through Church and *Falekaupule* meetings, and through participation in other groups or national days (eg for disaster management). The Tuvaluan radio station is recognised as the best way to get broader coverage of issues, however, it only operates twice a day for one hour and some islands that do not receive good radio coverage. The following chapters will demonstrate that these oral forms of communication may no longer be adequate when dealing with contemporary complex problems. There is no newspaper from which Tuvaluans can get information and there is no Tuvaluan television (although some people receive Pacific Sky). Although the website www.tuvaluislands.com does contain some news, only Funafuti and Vaitupu have access to the internet and that access is limited. Other newsletters, such as that put out by TANGO, also have limited reach. If the internet was to become more widely available in Tuvalu, this may be an inexpensive mechanism through which Tuvaluans at home or abroad could have more access to information and news from Tuvalu to inform their participation and actions.

As outlined in 4.4.3, of greatest concern to most research participants is the extent to which women and youth should, or should not, participate in decision-making, as their traditional role was mostly in regards to implementation. The findings of my research relating to females and youth are similar but not entirely consistent with research undertaken by Nimmo-Bell & Company Ltd (NBCL). In 2003, a small number of women on each island was asked whether they felt that they were adequately involved in community decision-making (NBCL, 2003).⁸⁷ Figure 11 shows that responses varied greatly between islands (whereas in this study responses were more consistent amongst all female participants). However, in both studies those who wanted greater involvement wished it to be in the *Falekaupule*, *Kaupule* and in their families.

⁸⁷ In total 142 women participated. Participant numbers on each island varied from 8 to 23. The low numbers and variability in the size of the workshops means that the results are indicative at best.

Figure 11: The extent to which Tuvaluan women feel they are adequately involved in community decisions

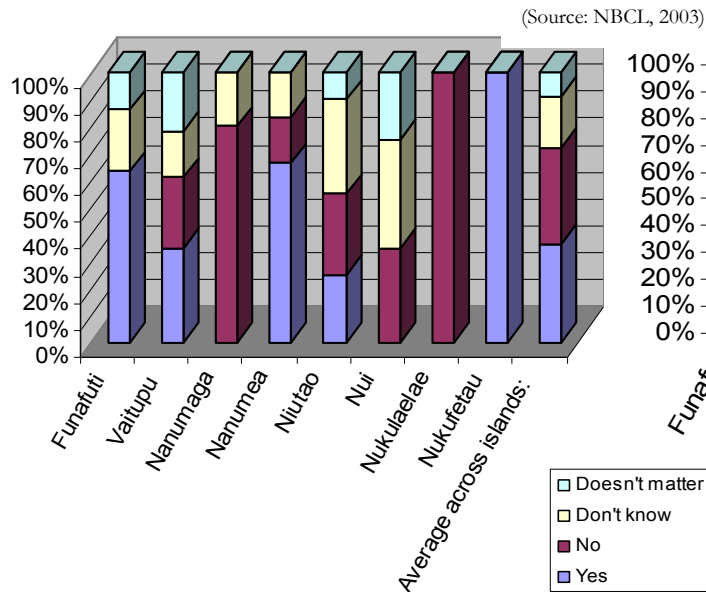
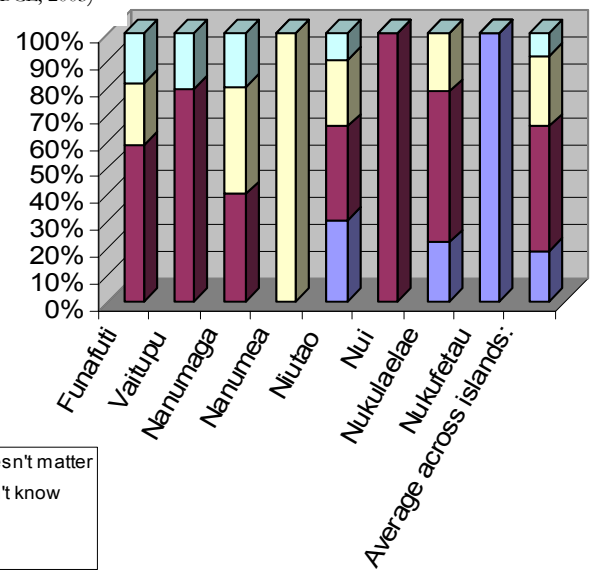


Figure 10: The extent to which Tuvaluan youth feel they are adequately involved in community decisions



Youth responses were varied in both studies. Figure 10 presents NBCL's results for youth. Those youth that sought more involvement wished to participate more in *Falekaupule* decision-making (either through a representative or regular consultation), family decision-making, and running special programmes for celebrations, sports and voluntary community work.

Improvements to participation mechanisms and processes need to respect the *tuu mo aganu/iloga* that has guided Tuvaluans safely thus far. For example, it was observed that some Tuvaluan males consider CEDAW and the 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child to be a threat to Tuvaluan development. Workshops on these conventions appear to have been effective in assisting Tuvaluans to reconcile the values contained within these treaties with *tuu mo aganu/iloga* (however, the reach of these workshops appears to be insufficient).

4.7 Summary

The future of Tuvaluan participation is positive – it has great historical traditional of civic participation to maintain and build on. The research findings reveal a desire to grow Tuvalu's already communal and participatory way of life to meet the challenges of contemporary Tuvalu as it collides with the rest of the world. There are leaders within Tuvaluan society who are striving to ensure that all Tuvaluans have adequate opportunities to participate in shaping their futures and to contribute to the growth of their communities. The following chapter will examine participation in the context of how Tuvalu is addressing the contemporary and complex issue of climate change, as well as how climate change may impact on participation within Tuvaluan borders.

A Tuvaluan Future Affected by Climate Change

5.1 Introduction

Climate change cannot be ignored when considering the possible futures Tuvalu could face. Although the existence and the possible consequences of climate change are uncertain, some scientists predict the costs to Tuvalu may be enormous — to the extent that some foresee a future where the atoll islands are no longer inhabitable. This chapter examines participation in the context of how Tuvalu is addressing the contemporary and complex issue of climate change, as well as how climate change may impact on participation within Tuvaluan borders.

The chapter begins with an overview of climate change and the impact this may have on Tuvalu, including on the socio-cultural aspects of Tuvaluan life. It then canvasses Tuvaluans' responses to climate change, and planning for climate change. In contrasting this with Tuvalu's 'formal' responses, it identifies some uniquely Tuvaluan challenges to engendering participation in climate-smart development⁸⁸ and capitalising on Tuvalu's community connectedness.

5.2 Theoretical overview of climate change

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) uses the term 'climate change' to refer to "a change in the state of the climate that can be identified (eg using statistical tests) by changes in the mean and/or the variability of its properties, and that persists for an extended period, typically decades or longer. It refers to any change in climate over time, whether due to natural variability or as a result of human activity."⁸⁹ Claims are that increases in greenhouse gases⁹⁰ have upset the balance of the naturally occurring gases in the earth's atmosphere. The consequence is that more heat from the sun is trapped in the atmosphere, changing life as we know it on earth. In its fourth assessment report, the IPCC concluded that the warming of the climate system is unequivocal, and that it is very likely that most of the observed temperature increases since the mid-20th century are due to the increase in greenhouse gas concentrations produced by human activity (IPCC, 2007). There are still scientists, however, that disagree with

⁸⁸ 'Climate-smart development' is development that takes climate change into account.

⁸⁹ This contrasts with Article 1 of the 1994 *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) which defines climate change as "a change of climate *which is attributed directly or indirectly to human activity* that alters the composition of the global atmosphere and which is in addition to natural climate variability observed over comparable time periods" [emphasis added].

⁹⁰ Such as carbon dioxide, methane, nitrous oxide and halocarbons.

either one or both of these claims.

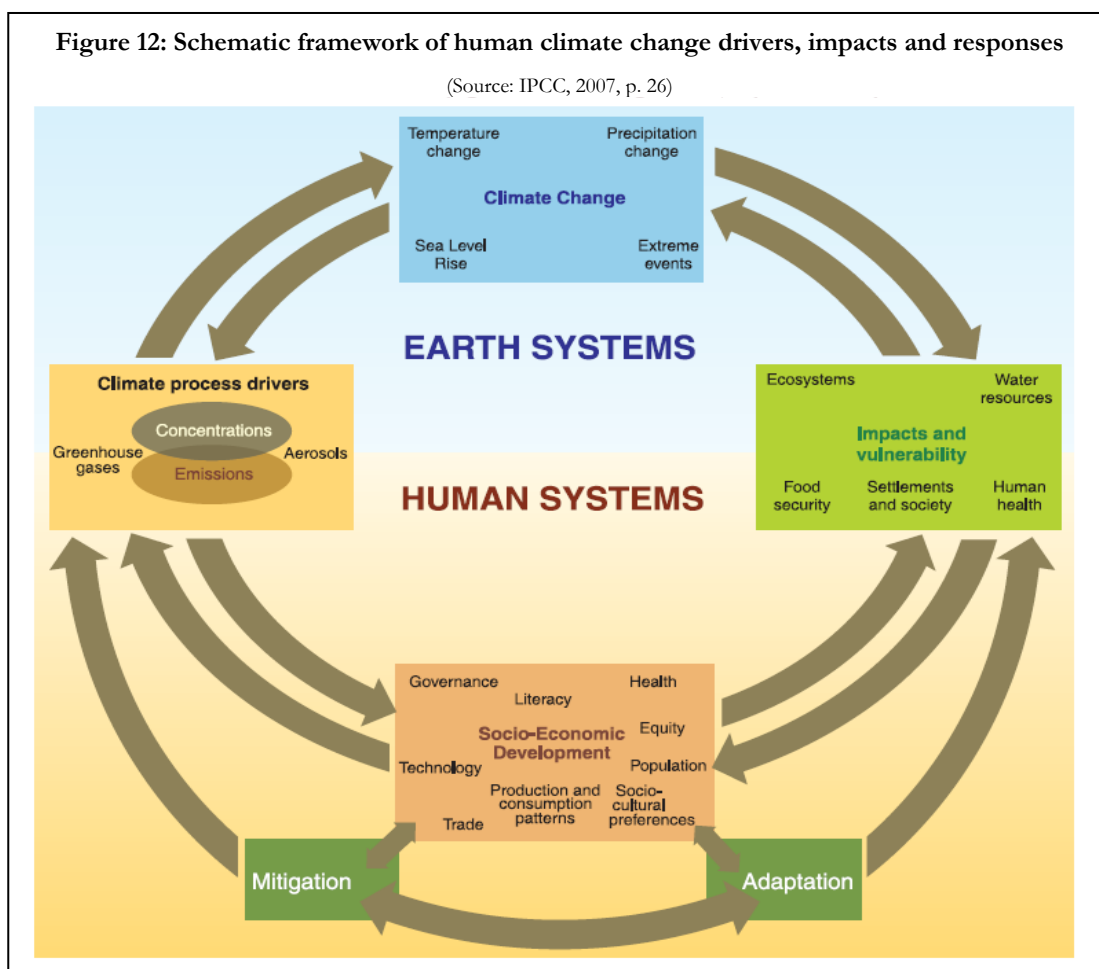
The purpose of this thesis is not to argue whether or not climate change is real, or whether it is the result of human activity. Instead it accepts that there is enough evidence to suggest that climate change presents a plausible range of futures for which all people on earth must prepare.⁹¹ Emphasis should be on “a plausible range” because the effects of climate change cannot be predicted with any certainty. Globally, scientists are doing their best to project what may happen, but they are dealing with something humans have not experienced during their time on earth. An additional uncertainty exists — that is, how the human race will respond by mitigating and adapting, and whether it can avert any grand-scale catastrophe.

Climate change is not simply about changes in the earth’s environment as is often reported. Apffel-Marglin (1996, p. 2) observed that climate change will cause “loss of environmental integrity, loss of a diversity not only of plant and animal species but of human ways of doing and knowing”. As the earth provides the foundation for human societies, environmental changes will impact on all aspects of human life, including socio-cultural and governance aspects, as modelled in Figure 12. Climate change is inextricably linked to development and may exaggerate existing economic, social and migratory challenges faced by the world. For example, Brown (2007, p. 22) states that “over the short term, climate change forced migration will make the MDGs harder to achieve. Over the long term, it is foreseeable that large scale climate change migration could roll back some of the progress that has been made so far.”

The effects of climate change are not expected to be felt equally — vulnerability can be determined by looking at factors such as exposure, sensitivity, and peoples’ capacities to respond. For this reason, it is reported that a disproportionate amount of the impact is likely to be felt by the poorer countries and communities first, including the Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and SIDS (Huq & Ayers, 2008). Gender and cultural differences may also affect vulnerability. Nevertheless, the human security⁹² of *all* groups is likely to be impacted upon as “global processes intertwine the fates of people across the globe...” (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2007, p. 6). Thus, one group’s vulnerability is likely to impact on the vulnerability of other groups. For instance, if one group is forced to migrate into the territory of another, the

⁹¹ This approach is often called the ‘precautionary principle’. It implies that there is a responsibility to intervene and protect the public or environment from exposure to a serious harm where science has shown there to be a plausible risk.

⁹² The term ‘human security’ relates to the wellbeing of individuals (including freedom from fear and wants). It includes the following securities: food, livelihood, environment, physical, health and energy (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2007).



receiving group will need to share space and resources.

In some ways global challenges like poverty and climate change can be seen as great dividers – exposing the degrees of separation between people who can afford to cope and people who cannot. But equally, they can bring distant communities together, united against a common threat. (Department for International Development (DID), 2008, p. 2)

5.3 The global and regional response

There have been a number of global and regional responses to the potential effects of climate change that are relevant to Tuvalu. These responses establish global commitments to emissions reductions and climate change adaptation, and technical and financial support for developing countries to plan and implement plans. Most importantly for this thesis, the need to engage civil society and for the world's citizens to take responsibility for the problems and solutions is noted.

The first major intergovernmental response was the *UN Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC) in 1994. It set out steps for information gathering and sharing; launching national strategies for mitigation and adaptation; and intergovernmental cooperation, including

establishing financial mechanisms.⁹³ In 1997, a Protocol attached to the UNFCCC was adopted in Kyoto, Japan which (among other things) set binding targets for many industrialised countries for reducing emissions and set up mechanisms such as emissions trading,⁹⁴ the clean development mechanism,⁹⁵ and joint implementation.⁹⁶ This Kyoto Protocol entered into force in 2005. The UNFCCC and Protocol emphasise that the climate system is a shared resource, and for this reason, to date 192 states have ratified the convention, and 182 have ratified the Kyoto Protocol.⁹⁷

Although only states can be party to the UNFCCC and Protocol, the input from non-state actors has been important. Observers such as intergovernmental and non-governmental bodies have attended and spoken at UNFCCC meetings. Moreover, one of the UNFCCC commitments is for all State parties to “promote and cooperate in education, training and public awareness related to climate change and encourage the widest participation in this process, including that of non-governmental organizations” (Articles 3 and 6).

Tuvalu has also been discussing climate change at the Commonwealth level. It was not until 2007 that the Commonwealth adopted a Climate Change Action Plan. This Plan pledges support for the UNFCCC and to strengthen the UNFCCC in 2012. It also calls for improved funding mechanisms, and recognises that “effective action will only be possible with the willing support of the Commonwealth population as a whole, *including women and young people*” [emphasis added].

At a regional level, Tuvalu has signed up to the Pacific Plan. Its regional priorities include:

- the development and implementation of National Sustainable Development Strategies by 2008
- policies and plans for the mitigation and management of natural disasters

⁹³ Different expectations were placed on developed and developing nations.

⁹⁴ International emissions trading allows countries that have emission units to spare — emissions permitted to them but not “used” — to sell this excess capacity to countries that are over their targets.

⁹⁵ The Clean Development Mechanism allows a country with an emission-reduction or emission — limitation commitment under the Kyoto Protocol to implement an emission-reduction project in developing countries. Such projects can earn saleable certified emission reduction credits, which can be counted towards meeting Kyoto targets.

⁹⁶ Joint implementation allows a country with an emission reduction or limitation commitment under the Kyoto Protocol to earn emission reduction units from an emission-reduction or emission removal project by another Party, which can be counted towards meeting its Kyoto target.

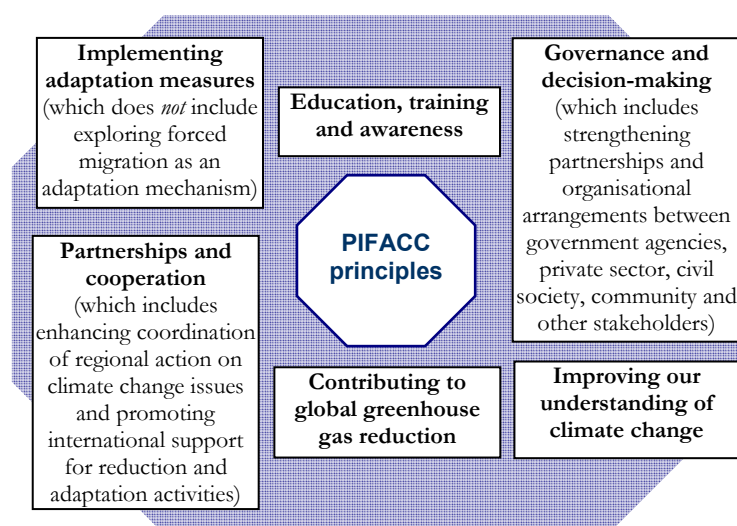
⁹⁷ Tuvalu ratified the UNFCCC in 1993 (before the convention came into force) and the Kyoto Protocol in 1998.

- continuing the development of adaptation and mitigation efforts linked to the *Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change* (PIFACC) 2006-2015 (see the PIFACC principles in Figure 13) and the *Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management: Framework for Action 2006—2015*.⁹⁸

Activities include actions to improve public awareness, build capacity and improve governance, risk and vulnerability assessments. The Plan also notes that should a genuine need arise, there should be consideration of measures *to address population dislocation*.

Figure 13: *Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change*

The PIFACC intends to promote links with more specific regional, national and sectoral instruments, but not supersede them. Its goal is to “ensure Pacific island people build their capacity to be resilient to the risks and impacts of climate change with the key objective to deliver on the expected outcomes.” It has six ‘principles’ or areas of work:



In 2006, the Australian Labor Party released a policy discussion paper in which it outlined an even more elaborate proposal for a regional response to climate change. This included establishing a Pacific Climate Centre and Pacific Climate Change Alliance, as well as providing assistance for mitigation, adaptation and emergency efforts (including intra-country evacuations, an international coalition to accept environmental refugees; and preservation of cultural heritage). It is yet to be seen whether this will come into fruition now that the Labor Party has come into power.

⁹⁸ Under which countries develop their own National Action Plans for Disaster Risk Management.

Conventions, declarations and plans at global and regional levels are a good starting point, but they are empty visions if they have no application on the ground. Therefore, the following sections explore the significance of climate change for Tuvalu; grassroots and official Tuvaluan responses to climate change; and what this means for Tuvaluans participating in a climate change-affected future.

5.4 *Tuvalu and climate change*

TUVALU AND GLOBAL WARMING

(Source: Resture, 1999)

I hear the waves on our island shore
They sound much louder than they did before
A rising swell flecked with foam
Threatens the existence of our island home.

A strong wind blows in from a distant place
The palm trees bend like never before
Our crops are lost to the rising sea
And water covers our humble floor.

Our people are leaving for a distant shore
And soon Tuvalu may be no more
Holding on to the things they know are true
Tuvalu my Tuvalu, I cry for you.

And as our people are forced to roam
To another land to call their home
And as you go to that place so new
Take a little piece of Tuvalu with you.

Tuvalu culture is rare and unique
And holds a message we all should seek
Hold our culture way up high
And our beloved Tuvalu will never die.

Tuvalu is listed as both an LDC and a SIDS, which is why Huq & Ayers (2008) consider it is amongst the “100 nations most vulnerable to climate change”. As noted, Tuvalu has limited economic resources, investment and institutional capacity, as well as a high dependence on natural resources. Its highest elevation is 4–5 metres above sea level, but as most of the nation is at less than one metre, it is highly susceptible to sea level rise. Its southern islands may also be hit by more frequent natural disasters. Scientific projections of climate change impact on Tuvalu are well documented in many reports,⁹⁹ articles and documentaries:

Tuvalu has come to epitomize the approaching environmental catastrophe of worldwide climate change and sea-level rise...Tuvalu's iconic role as “poster child” for encroaching global

⁹⁹ In particular, Tuvalu's National Adaptation Programme of Action (MNREAL, 2007).

disaster is well established...(A. Chambers & K. Chambers, 2007, p. 294–295)

Table 8 and Figures 14 and 15 below show Tuvalu's vulnerabilities to both climate events (sudden dramatic hazards) and climate processes (slow-onset changes), some of which have already been observed. It includes potential socio-cultural impacts, such as changes in community-mindedness.

Table 8: Tuvaluan vulnerabilities to climate change
(Information sourced from MNREAL, 2007 & other sources referenced)

| Vulnerability | Comment |
|---|---|
| Direct | |
| Coastal and sand-dune erosion | Figure 14 & Figure 15 overleaf demonstrate how susceptible all Tuvaluan islands are to erosion. It is particularly a problem for families whose land is experiencing the most erosion. If coastlines shift, so will the Exclusive Economic Zone of Tuvalu. This could lead to state border disputes (Soderblom, 2008). |
| Flooding, inundation and saltwater incursion | Caused by sea level rise, marginally higher king tides and saltwater rising through the porous coral and contaminating soil, plants and aquifers. Hunter (2002) analysed two data sets ¹⁰⁰ covering the years 1978-2001 inclusive, and indicated a rise of $0.8 \pm 1.9\text{mm/year}$ relative to land in Funafuti. He claimed there is a 68% probability of the rate of rise being between $-1.1 - 2.7\text{mm/year}$. One islet has already been inundated. ¹⁰¹ |
| Increasing frequency of natural disasters such as cyclones, storms and surges | Most likely to occur in southern islands. In 1997, a damage assessment team estimated that approximately 6.7% of Tuvalu's total land mass had been washed away by Cyclones Gavin and Hina (NZMFAT, 2008c). However, storms can also build island protection. For instance, in 1972 Cyclone Bebe built a large coral rubble wall around Tuvalu (Kelman, 2007). |
| Increasing number of low rainfall days / prolonged droughts / high extreme temperatures and evaporation | Most likely to occur in northern islands. |
| Sea surface temperature changes / increased levels of carbon dioxide in water | Warmer temperatures and carbon dioxide levels affect the coral reefs which provide an environment for subsistence fishing. |
| Indirect | |
| Food and job insecurity | 1. Destruction of <i>pulaka</i> crops and lower yields of coconuts, bananas and breadfruits. 2. Decreasing fisheries population (impacting on fisheries employment and licensing revenues.) |
| Undermining socio-cultural aspects of Tuvaluan life | Natural food insecurity will lead to increased demand for imported food supplies and money. As outlined in chapters three and four, the increased demand for imported food supplies and money is impacting on the socio-cultural aspects of Tuvaluan society such as community-mindedness. |

¹⁰⁰ University of Hawaii Sea Level Centre and Australian National Tidal Facility.

¹⁰¹ Connell (2003a) has argued that flooding and erosion has actually been caused by road construction between islands, sealing the airport runway, removing vegetation, reclaiming land, constructing a sea wall, mining for sand and construction in areas previously considered too hazardous.

| Vulnerability | Comment |
|--|--|
| Water insecurity | Less rain and threats to Tuvalu's aquifer, exacerbated by an increasing population. |
| Increasing vector and waterborne diseases, and pests | Impacting on people and on terrestrial crops. |
| Damage to individual and community assets | From cyclones, storms and surges. |
| Damage to trees | From cyclones, storms and surges. This then makes the country even more vulnerable to the effects of climate change. |

Figure 14: The general cross-section of table reef islands showing sites of erosion

(Source: MNREAL, 2007)

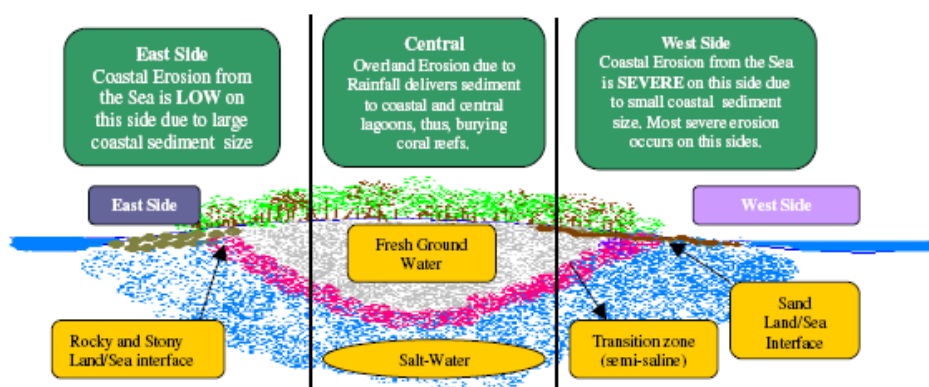
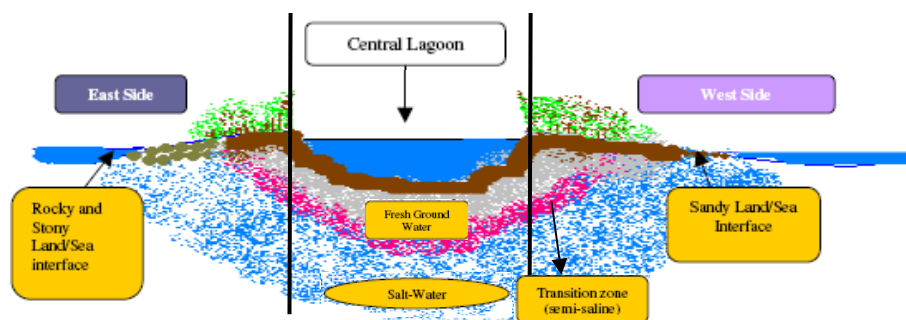


Figure 15: The general cross-section of an atoll island showing sites of erosion

Note — erosion similar to table reef islands, plus erosion from the lagoon side

(Adapted from MNREAL, 2007)



International commentators have picked up on scientific estimates that Tuvalu will be uninhabitable in the next 50–100 years:

Given predictions of total submergence in 50 years, mitigation does not seem like a practical solution at this point. Nonetheless, the people of Tuvalu have still to live on their islands as long as practically possible. (Stewart, 2005)

Migration is often reported to be a last resort adaptation strategy, and for some Tuvaluans, the threat of forced migration is a human security issue – a threat to their fundamental human rights of nationality and statehood.

The identity of a people is strongly linked to the environment. If you move a people you lose a people...Can there be compensation for the loss of a country, its history, its culture, its way of life? How do we put a price on that? Who will pay it?...Memory is all that the Tuvaluans will have left of their homeland. (Lusama, EKT in Martyn, 2007, p. 23)

This quote highlights some very significant issues for Tuvalu – the threat to their intangible assets: their *tuu mo aganu/iloga*.

As discussed above, not all people have an equal voice in addressing matters relating to climate change (O'Brien & Leichenko, 2007). Despite becoming the climate change 'poster child', a number of Tuvaluan Prime Ministers have emphasised that their country's voice in the climate change debate "is small, rarely heard, and heeded to not at all" (cited in Sopoanga, 2004, p. 11). There is a clear risk that those with 'larger voices' and influence (eg Australia or NZ) will prescribe (or heavily recommend) solutions for Tuvalu. Such an approach discounts the fact that how Tuvaluans respond to the drivers and consequences of climate change is influenced by their worldviews. Externally imposed solutions may not capture their worldviews adequately, nor emphasise their freedoms and capabilities. It is crucial that Tuvalu is proactive in preparing options for mitigating and adapting to climate change, including adaptation options related to community relocation if necessary.

Although Tuvalu's voice may be small, the government, some NGOs and INGOs, foreign media and academics have gone to great efforts to expose Tuvalu's vulnerabilities in order to get the external assistance Tuvalu requires to address, and foster global support for, their plight. They also remind the world that "we are all Tuvalu", ie we are all exposed to the threats of climate change. The risk of portraying Tuvalu as vulnerable is that vulnerability can be interpreted as helplessness. "Such a portrayal could not be further from the truth" (South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Government of Japan, & Japanese Environmental Cooperation Center (JECC), 1996, p. 111). The World Bank (2000) has proposed that 'poor' people¹⁰² have always lived with risk and shocks, and have always devised mechanisms to reduce risk and cope with shock. Portraying Tuvalu as vulnerable also risks a counter reaction from the international community – an unwillingness to fund in-country adaptation activities if it is deemed too late (Lazrus, 2008).

Tuvalu's 'community orientation' is a coping mechanism, which gives Tuvalu a natural ability to respond in emergency situations. For example, when interviewed, Tuvalu's Disaster

¹⁰² Refer to discussion on poverty in Tuvalu in chapter three.

Coordinator said that Tuvaluans are generally quick to react in emergencies. They work together and support each other. He explained how recently a plane raised a practice May Day call. The news quickly spread and individuals responded by going in their boats to assist. He contributed the quick response to the fact all Tuvaluans feel responsible for looking after others. The value of community as a coping mechanism is supported by Tuvaluan research on coastal vulnerability and resilience (SPREP et al., 1996). When examining resilience, *society* and *culture* were identified amongst Tuvalu's strengths (supporting arguments made in previous chapters).

[The] Tuvaluan cultural system is community oriented, which is ideal for dealing with external stresses. Its vulnerability and resilience are -2 and +2 respectively,¹⁰³ a reflection of the importance of this system. Even with no management it is expected that the vulnerability would not change whereas with optimal management the resilience would increase to +3. (SPREP et al., 1996, p. 108)¹⁰⁴

The discussion in 5.5 will show that this natural resilience may need to be activated within Tuvaluan communities through a common understanding of the external stresses faced.

Another coping mechanism Tuvaluans have developed is the creation of geographically diverse income streams (see chapter six). Although incomes in Tuvalu are low, the networks that Tuvaluans have into the global community through their seamen and diaspora, provide a layer of resilience that should be strengthened, not ignored.

5.5 The peoples' response

Although much of the recent media coverage of Tuvalu leaves viewers with a sense that all Tuvaluans are crying in desperation for help — casting them as victims — this research finds that this is far from the reality. As this section will reveal, that sense of urgency and fear does not really exist amongst grassroots Tuvaluans.

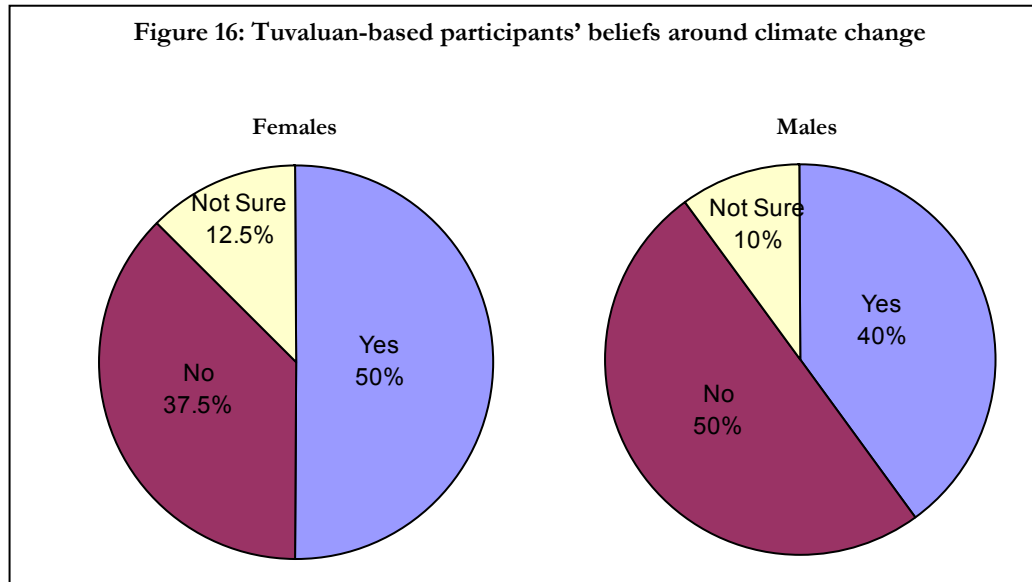
5.5.1 Beliefs

It was found that, despite scientific predictions, many Tuvaluans do not believe in climate

¹⁰³ Vulnerability is scored -3 to 0 and resilience is scored 0 to +3. The net impact is the difference between the two scores.

¹⁰⁴ However, it was noted that in the years preceding the report these factors may have reduced due to high population mobility and the rising cash economy.

change. Although the sample is only indicative of Tuvaluan sentiment,¹⁰⁵ of the Tuvaluan-based community research participants, 45% said they believed in climate change, while 55% said that they were either unsure or did not believe in climate change at all. Figure 16 shows the variation in opinion between female and male participants.



It was found that the younger the research participant, the more likely they were to indicate a belief in climate change. That said, nearly 40% of participants under 30 years of age indicated they *did not* believe. There were no discernible differences between responses given by different age groups on Funafuti or in the outer islands. In contrast, all Tuvaluans interviewed in NZ stated that they believed in climate change.

When probing for understanding of climate change, replies indicated that for many Tuvaluan-based research participants climate change was synonymous with sea level rise, although sea level rise is only one possible consequence scientists have identified (despite efforts in Tuvalu to educate the population on climate change). This perception seemed to greatly influence whether or not participants said they believed in climate change.

It was found that for many research participants the scientist's stories of sea level rise were interpreted as stories of a great flood. Yet a significant number did not believe that a great flood could come because of how they interpreted the end of the flood narrative in the Bible (see Genesis 6—9). In this narrative, God flooded the world to put an end to the wickedness of mankind. God also instructed Noah to build an Ark for one pair of every animal species on

¹⁰⁵ See chapter two. This thesis is predominantly qualitative. I have tried to ensure that I have spoken with a wide range of Tuvaluans, but they were not chosen to fully represent the social make-up of Tuvaluan society, nor was the sample large enough to accurately reflect the whole of Tuvaluan society.

earth. God made a covenant to never again destroy all living beings and the earth by a flood. The deep religious beliefs of many Tuvaluans, therefore, conflict with scientific predictions.

At the same time, not all participants interpret the Bible (as far as it relates to climate change) in the same way. Many NZ-based participants, and a few in Tuvalu, indicated that they do believe in climate change and that their beliefs are supported by the Bible. They pointed to where God sent warnings to Noah, and drew parallels with the situation today, stating that now God is sending warnings to Tuvalu through the scientists, the researchers, and the media that are visiting Tuvalu. Others explained that it was God who made the promise to Noah and that he is not breaking his promise as it is humans that have created the problem. Still others point to prophecies in the Bible which state that before Jesus returns, islands will be moved from their place (eg Revelations 7—14).

This paradox between how the Bible is interpreted and what scientists predict has been considered in detail by Pastors, such as Reverends Tafue Lusama and Teatu Fusi. Both offer interpretations that bridge the scientific and theological knowledges. Lusama (2004) finds a role for the Church to intervene in what he considers to be in ecological destruction and social injustices brought on by the global economic system. Fusi (2005) points out that the possibility of forced migration is painful, but that Tuvaluans need to cope with it. He is also quick to state that the blame is not just with the big countries of the world “because the people of Tuvalu have also failed to look after their only home” (Fusi, 2005, p. 17). Fusi calls for Tuvaluans to renew their relationship with God and adopt a new way of life by revisiting how they see God, others and the environment.

Not all of the research participants who stated they did not believe in climate change said this was because of God’s covenant. Some simply said they believed that God created Tuvalu for Tuvaluans to live in and would not therefore take it away – Tuvalu is where they belong and they should live there “no matter what the problems are” (female participant). This view is supported by Tuvalu’s continued response to the devastating hurricane in 1972 (Case study 6).

A small proportion of participants sided with

Case study 6 : The 1972 Hurricane

Resture (1999) explains that although there have been various hurricanes to hit Tuvalu during the last two centuries, for those living in 20th century Tuvalu a hurricane in 1972 was the first they had experienced. The devastation was immense and has remained in Tuvalu’s memory:

“It was for that very reason that it has become one of the most important festivals. It connects specifically with the people’s Christian belief in God’s continuing love and care. They believed that their survival was because of their faith and trust in God....The island could have been totally destroyed together with all life on it. The people believed that God chose not to destroy them, that God cared for them. The hurricane festival which is commemorated each year is thus an occasion of Thanksgiving in honour of the Almighty God for His love and care during the hours of the ordeal.”

the few scientists who do not agree with climate change theories, and explained any environmental changes they had witnessed by natural evolutionary processes. Interestingly, there were also a number of young sceptics who have learnt about climate change in school for a number of years, but who have not lived long enough to witness any environmental change themselves as these changes occur so slowly.

Of those who did believe in climate change, some were clearly not too concerned about their futures: “I believe in climate change, but there is no need to worry – there is plenty more time” (male participant).¹⁰⁶ In contrast, others explained that “we [Tuvaluans] must face the challenges in the world, we are not in heaven” (male participant).

Only a few participants living in Tuvalu showed the kind of fear that is prominent in many of the films and articles such as Pollock’s 2005 film *Tuvalu: That Sinking Feeling*, or Gallic et al. & Horner’s 2007 film *The Disappearing of Tuvalu: Trouble in Paradise*. The concern appeared to be much greater amongst diaspora living in NZ, and for some, it was one of the reasons that they decided to leave Tuvalu or not return.¹⁰⁷ Nevertheless, on numerous occasions participants expressed a quiet confidence that they could adjust to anything. This is supported by observations of how flexible Tuvaluans are in their daily lives – ready to respond to changing circumstances. An example of this adaptability was given by one participant who claimed that this was the reason why Tuvaluan seamen were so successful. “They are reliable. They can adjust. They are a peaceful people. Because of the need for unity of community, people accept what comes” (male participant). Whether or not fear exists, it is undeniable that those that do believe in climate change have an understandably deep sadness at the prospect of being forced from their land.

5.5.2 Planning for a future affected by climate change

Tuvaluans’ stated beliefs about climate change did not correlate to whether or not they thought it was a priority to plan for climate change adaptation – but they seemed to affect *who* they thought should plan for climate change. When asked about planning for climate change, responses varied:

“When anybody talks about climate change in the *Falekaupule* I close my ears. I do not want to talk about it.” (male participant)

¹⁰⁶ As Tuvaluan island communities are small, once a decision is made to do something it can often be organised quickly. This contrasts greatly with how quickly the international community operates – it can take years to reach initial agreements, and then practical detail needs to be worked out.

¹⁰⁷ Drivers for migration are discussed in detail in chapter six.

“Government is just wasting time planning for climate change. We should just wait and if the time comes, it might be our time.” (female participant)

“Tuvalu should only be planning to adapt life within Tuvalu. Future generations can plan for migration if that becomes necessary.” (female participant)

“Even if climate change is not happening, it is in Tuvalu’s interests to market itself as a victim of climate change, as this may bring in the tourists.” (male participant)

The majority, however, said that planning and preparation for both in-country and out-of-country adaptation measures should be underway now.

Numerous participants appeared internally conflicted – they did not wish to openly state a belief in climate change, but they did believe enough to say that Tuvalu’s leaders should be planning for climate change. On deeper inquiry, those people who lived with this tension separated it from their own daily lives by stating that it was the government’s responsibility to take such things into account and look after the population.

In contrast, most research participants who believe in climate change saw a role for all Tuvaluans to be involved (especially when it came to deciding options for migration):

“All levels of society have a role to play. For example, the government has to deal with other governments, but each family or island has to do its own preparation. I think that as the government doesn't have much money, individuals should plan slowly. By doing that, they will be secure and confident in themselves (rather than relying on government).” (male participant)

“Tuvalu needs to plan for future generations. The government needs to take a lead with organisations like TANGO and the *Falekaupules*. They need to plan NOW. They know about the possible consequences, so they should plan. All the adaptation measures may slow things down, but what is the government doing about the possibility of migration? They need to involve the people...They should inform the people of the options...I don’t think it will cause panic if explained properly. The diaspora can also provide services for Tuvaluans — help family to get jobs overseas. They can also advocate to nation states — help politically.” (female participant)

“Any decisions around migrating should come from the grassroots – not top-down.” (female participant)

“If government makes people aware, people can do their part and those overseas can contribute.” (female participant)

“The Tuvaluan community in NZ has a role to play. We understand the needs of our people more than anyone else.” (female participant living in NZ)

It was not clear to what extent Tuvaluans had discussed or responded to climate change at individual and family levels. Individual adaptation practices included installing more water tanks and planting *pulaka* in pots, but these adaptations appeared to be driven by the visible changes and physical need, rather than in response to *the idea* of climate change. Some participants had prepared by having family members migrate to create a base abroad.¹⁰⁸ Others thought improving education and learning English would give them resilience for whichever future eventuated. Although most parents were concerned about their children having an academic education, other participants noted that Tuvalu really needs more people training in vocational occupations¹⁰⁹ as this would be of benefit both within Tuvalu and abroad where there is a shortage of tradespeople.

One way a select few Tuvaluans are participating in the global climate change debate is through posting blogs and videos online. For instance, quick searches of the highly used YouTube website during the research period revealed an increasing amount of video content from Tuvaluans (and others) highlighting the impact of climate change on their nation.

5.6 Formal responses to change in Tuvalu

In contrast to the sentiment expressed by many Tuvaluans, reports indicate that the official Tuvaluan response to the threat of climate change in Tuvalu appears to be both substantial and multi-sectoral. The government and some civil society players (Tuvaluans and non-Tuvaluans) are concerned about the implications of climate change and are keen to galvanise global action to minimise the impact of climate change globally, as well as gain support for adaptation measures within Tuvalu. These players have been active on the international stage raising matters relating to climate change and how science says it will impact on Tuvaluan life. On numerous occasions they have appealed to the international community to unreservedly support the Kyoto Protocol with the hope that if the world works together now, then Tuvaluans will never need to leave Tuvaluan shores. The EKT has also shown leadership on the global stage. For example, speaking at the Pacific Conference of Churches and encouraging the Churches to get behind addressing climate change injustices.

Tuvalu's use of scarce funds to obtain UN and Commonwealth seats was partly to draw attention to the effect of climate change on Tuvalu (Booij, 2006). The Tuvaluan government acknowledges that it shares responsibility for protecting its own environment, but it often

¹⁰⁸ There may have also been other drivers for this migration. See chapter six.

¹⁰⁹ Also see D. Manuella, D (2006).

reminds the international community that the impacts of climate change are caused by emissions from other countries. Tuvalu's representatives continue to call on the UN to help protect their human and state security. They have clearly stated resettlement is not their preferred option as it risks destroying their culture and nation (Ielemia, 2007).

Climate-smart development, and disaster management planning in (and for) Tuvalu is not new, but has intensified in recent years. Most programmes have involved international partnerships in some way, be it through funding or through skills and knowledge support. Earlier programmes included:

- the Pacific Disaster Preparedness Program (led by TANGO and FSPI, 2003—2004)
- the Reducing Vulnerability of Pacific ACP (African, Caribbean and Pacific) States, which established an online information system (led by SOPAC in conjunction with the Tuvaluan Lands and Survey, and the Information Communication Technology Departments 2003—2006)
- the Food Insecurity Vulnerability Project (led by the Department of Agriculture)
- the Ozone Depleting Substances Project (led by SOPAC, 2003—2006) to phase out ozone depleting substances in the region.

The reports and key informant responses from this research indicated a desire to ensure scientific knowledge of mitigating and adapting to climate change is combined with and respects local environmental and agricultural knowledge. This is consistent with participatory approaches to development (see chapter four), as is the notable degree of public participation sought in many of the initiatives. For example, in the most recent project to develop Tuvalu's national adaptation programmes of action (NAPA),¹¹⁰ it was recognised that:

Since climate change will [sic] directly impacts Tuvaluan communities, families and individuals, it is important that different stakeholders at every level of society is [sic] engaged as part of the NAPA preparation process in the selection of adaptation measures and ranking of project activities. (MNREAL, 2007, p. 6)

Tuvalu's NAPA was prepared initially under the Tuvaluan Office of the Prime Minister, but then completed under the Ministry of Natural Resources and the Environment. The NAPA team was multidisciplinary, consisting of government, NGO, Church and civil society representatives. It is in line with *Te Kakeega II: National Strategy for Sustainable Development* —

¹¹⁰ NAPAs were identified as a priority for LDCs by the UNFCCC.

2005–2015,¹¹¹ and proposes new coastal, agricultural, water, health, fisheries and disaster projects. Those leading the NAPA planning exercise (using a *Falekaupule*-type consensus approach) ensured participation by the *Falekaupule* and *Kaupule* as well as some local community representatives (NGOs, men, women and youth) in the planning workshop.¹¹²

Awareness programmes and workshops on climate change have been run in Tuvalu with some success, but as the previous section reveals, there is still much to do. As mentioned in 4.3, a newly established national multi-sectoral network – TuCAN¹¹³ – is conscious of the need to reach grassroots Tuvaluans and member organisations seek to do so by working together. For instance, as discussed in chapter four, TuCAN held a train-the-trainers session with government and NGO trainees. Trainees are to become community facilitators who will undertake vulnerability and capacity assessment on outer islands using a participatory development approach.

Another opportunity for all Tuvaluans to participate is through a Japanese NGO Tuvalu Overview. Its project *Build a Future with 10,000 Tuvaluans* aims to draw international attention to Tuvalu in order to attract funding for development and adaptation activities. Tuvalu Overview is taking photos of all Tuvaluan residents in order to give climate change a human face through books and exhibitions worldwide. This project also has the potential to preserve a snapshot of Tuvalu and its culture. Ironically, many people photographed may not themselves believe in climate change.

Other INGOs are involved in climate change work within Tuvalu – although they tend to work alongside organisations such as TANGO and/or the government. For instance, WWF South Pacific has just begun work to support the involvement of Tuvalu and the Cook Islands in international climate change negotiations (WWF Pacific, 2008). It is working with local organisations and the government on a programme that includes elements of raising climate change awareness nationally; climate education and information-sharing activities; and enhanced participation in international climate policy by both government and civil society stakeholders. Similarly, Alofa Tuvalu (see 4.3) is assisting both with local climate change Tuvaluan projects (eg studying onsite solutions to environment problems), and on global awareness (by positioning Tuvalu as a microcosm of threat from which global lessons can be

¹¹¹ Which, as mentioned in the previous chapter is in line with MDGs.

¹¹² The report does not state how these people were chosen.

¹¹³ A cross-sectoral network including EKT, TANGO, Island Care, Tuvalu Media Corporation, Department of the Environment and the Red Cross.

learnt) and it works through Tuvaluan government and NGO partners.

Opportunities, therefore, exist for Tuvaluans to engage with local and international climate-smart development initiatives. However, the discussion below asks whether Tuvaluans want to participate, and whether they have the tools they require.

5.7 Discussion

The core challenges for Tuvalu in preparing for the possible futures presented by climate change appear to be two-fold:

- 1) Tuvalu needs to activate its strong community spirit and resource
- 2) Tuvalu needs to tap into international expertise and resources.

5.7.1 Strong community spirit

The first challenge relates to galvanising Tuvalu's greatest resource – its communities – around climate change planning and project implementation. The commitment and input from a nation's citizens to address climate change are particularly essential in a country like Tuvalu where resources are so scarce. As discussed in 5.4, one of Tuvalu's indirect vulnerabilities to climate change relates to the socio-cultural impact it may have, for instance undermining community mindedness due to increased demand for, and attention given, to money and imported supplies by individuals and their families. A focus on maintaining and engaging communities is, therefore, even more of a priority. Despite efforts to use participatory approaches to planning, the Tuvaluan government has not fully activated Tuvalu's strong community spirit around the issue of climate change. This research suggests at least three inter-related reasons for this.

First, the conflict between the Christian beliefs of many Tuvaluans and the scientific evidence makes it difficult for many Tuvaluans to buy into planning and implementing projects related to climate change, and to 'lead the charge' from within their families (the core unit in Tuvalu). There are those within the Church who have the ability to help the community to bridge this gap (and the Church has begun to show leadership in this area) but need to be able to adequately communicate this throughout the country.

The second constraint is the limited means of communicating (both within the islands and between the islands), which confines Tuvaluans' access to knowledge of what is going on, and the extent to which people can effectively participate in their own development (see discussion in chapter four). The knowledge and understanding of climate change and Tuvalu's

mitigation/adaptation plans varied greatly amongst research participants. It can be assumed that if the population was well informed and there had been open conversations about scientific predictions versus biblical interpretations, Tuvalu would be in a better position to take advantage of its major strength – its community connectedness and resilience – as more people, families and communities would be in a position to push for informed action. Projects proposed in Tuvalu's NAPA, and in the WWF South Pacific work programme do include education and communication components, but unless the means for communication are improved, these activities may only have a limited audience.

The third and related challenge is that much of the information of climate change originates from outside of Tuvalu. As outlined in chapter four, participants identified their families, traditional structures, local government and the Church as being the mechanisms that are most relevant to their daily lives. Yet it is the institutions that they felt more distant from that are driving the dominant climate change initiatives. This mismatch is most likely due to the fact that the source of information about climate change comes from outside of Tuvalu and is filtering through those bodies that have greater connection to the outside world. However, unleashing the power of Tuvaluan communities will involve ensuring there is local knowledge of, and ownership over, climate change matters.¹¹⁴ In the previous chapter it was observed that women play a strong role in NGOs/CBOs, which tend to be more connected to the outside world than the traditional structures. Notably, it was also the female participants who were more likely to say they believed in climate change, suggesting that there may be a relationship between the two findings.

The preference of the government and NGOs to use participatory processes reveals a consciousness in the power of the Tuvaluan local structures. But have they gone far enough? For instance, this would suggest that there needs to be stronger relationship between the central government agencies and local *Falekaupule*. The new TuCAN may provide some answers to these dilemmas. This multi-sectoral network includes EKT, which will enable their work to fully embody the Christian values underpinning much of Tuvaluan society.¹¹⁵ Although TuCAN plans to take a grassroots approach, it was not clear from interviews to what extent they will work through Tuvalu's more traditional structures.

¹¹⁴ It is important to note that the government in Tuvalu has been working to bridge local and scientific knowledges. This follows a similar trend throughout the Pacific region.

¹¹⁵ It may be important to also involve other religious institutions in Tuvalu.

5.7.2 International expertise and resources

In an interview for this study, Tataua Pese (Tuvalu Red Cross) said that it is Tuvalu's lack of funds that makes it vulnerable. In his view, with adequate funds, they could build their resilience so that the threat of forced migration would not be so great. It is true that the extent to which in-country adaptation will be successful is limited by Tuvalu's available skills and resources, which to some extent depends on the international community. The scarcity of skills and resources in Tuvalu makes it difficult to bring plans into fruition. It reduces the independence of Tuvalu and its people, and is one factor making it difficult for people to tackle their own climate-smart development.

A UNFCCC LDC Expert Group was established in 2001 to advise on the preparation and implementation strategies for NAPAs of LDCs. Tuvalu has benefited from this Expert Group already. Additional expertise has also been brought into Tuvalu under non-climate change related projects; through bilateral agreements (eg with Taiwan or NZ); and through INGOs (eg WWF or Alofa Tuvalu).

As with all SIDS, Tuvalu is particularly concerned that there are inadequate resources available under international financing mechanisms to assist in implementing concrete adaptation projects (PIFS, 2008). When interviewed, Mataio Tekinene (Environment Department) expressed concern that the longer the delay in getting resources, the less commitment there will be from people to implementing projects. A failure to implement projects immediately could bring about the undesirable: the forced migration of Tuvaluans.

Under the UNFCCC and Protocol, the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) was given the responsibility to manage financial mechanisms, including three special funds: the Special Climate Change Fund, the LDC Fund, and the Adaptation Fund.¹¹⁶ Unfortunately, these application processes are slow and do not give Tuvalu adequate flexibility. The former UN Tuvaluan representative, Enele Sopoaga, was recently appointed as a member of the Kyoto Protocol Adaptation Fund Board and will offer Tuvaluan views on improving the processes.

Prime Minister Ielemia (2007, p. 19) has also called for the 'polluter-pays' principle to apply:

To meet [adaptation] costs, [the world] needs a significant shift in thinking about accessing the necessary funds. It is important that we step out of the mindset of simply redirecting existing development assistance. We must apply the polluter-pays principle and hence explore vastly

¹¹⁶ Other bilateral, regional and multilateral funding mechanisms are available to some State parties.

new sources of funding based on [greenhouse gas] emissions. The share of proceeds from the Kyoto Protocol's Clean Development Mechanism is a first step, but we must explore others.

Tuvalu is also pursuing home-grown and country-specific solutions to the funding problem of their climate-smart development projects, such as their trust funds and offshore investments. The government (under a previous administration) also explored legal options to seek compensation for all the times they consider other countries have wronged them, or taken advantage of them.¹¹⁷ Politics and limited resources have generally prevented these legal actions from proceeding.¹¹⁸

5.8 Summary

As this chapter outlines, climate change must be factored into all Tuvaluan planning. Globally, the response has been slow, however, the Tuvaluan government, NGOs and INGOs have pushed hard to alert the world to the futures Tuvalu may face and to find the resources to implement climate change projects. This contrasts greatly to grassroots Tuvalu where, as interviews showed, climate change is not perceived as a threat in the daily lives of many Tuvaluans. This dichotomy of highly active and aware, versus inactive and internally conflicted, threatens to weaken the climate-smart development plans and Tuvaluans themselves. However, by bridging scientific and theological gaps; improving communications mechanisms; and ensuring that traditional institutions and families are leading the charge toward climate-smart development, Tuvalu would be well placed to activate its greatest in-country adaptation resource – its communities.

Chapter six now examines the additional elements that must be considered if Tuvaluans are to be empowered in shaping a possible future beyond Tuvaluan borders.

¹¹⁷ Examples include exploring options to seek compensation from the British government for what it believes were substandard terms and processes imposed at the time of independence; seeking compensation from the United States (US) who left deep pits in the porous coralline during the Second World War after using the materials to build a runway, seawall and other projects; suing polluting corporations and countries in the International Court of Justice, or as one lawyer suggested, bringing a tort action against the biggest greenhouse gas emitter – the USA – in USA courts (Allen, 2004; Reed, 2002 and research participants).

¹¹⁸ Gabriel (2004) observed that the government has been called opportunistic by some, angling for foreign handouts and special recognition for 'environmental refugees'.

In Case of Migration: A Future Beyond Tuvaluan Borders

6.1 Introduction

Migration or community relocation is one adaptive response to climate change. If other responses to climate change continue to be slow, it may become a very important option as scientists claim that Tuvalu may be uninhabitable in the next 50–100 years. This would have a significant impact on Tuvaluan communities and the ability of Tuvaluans to actively shape their own futures.

Professor Norman Myers has been commonly cited as estimating that there will be 200 million ‘climate migrants’ by 2050 (Brown, 2007) with wide ranging cultures, religions and needs. The Tuvaluan population may only be a small percentage of those who will potentially be displaced, but Tuvaluan needs, just like the Tuvaluan *tuu mo aganu/iloga*, are unique and must be considered in this way. Tuvaluans’ challenges will be faced at individual, community, and national levels. A failure to acknowledge these challenges early, could lead to a much wider impact beyond Tuvaluan borders.

Tuvaluan migration is not always forced. In the Pacific, migration:

...is not just a contemporary phenomena as our chants, genealogies, stories, landscapes and names suggest centuries of interdependence and networking exchanges among our Pacific peoples. Today peoples of the Pacific have continued to ‘canoe’ around the world...It is in our bloods to do over-sea travels...to unite and re-unite, to group and re-group. From these travels we build our strengths and capabilities of living in the world, as well as reminding ourselves of our various linkages. (Nabobo-Baba, 2004, p. 17)

It is possible to build on the strengths and capabilities Pacific peoples have built through their past travels, to develop solutions to both address the potential of Tuvaluan forced migration and to better support those who voluntarily migrate for other reasons. Ideally this would involve Tuvaluans and Tuvaluan diaspora participating in the design and implementation of these solutions.

This chapter considers Tuvaluans’ participation in planning for possible futures beyond Tuvaluan borders, and how plans can build on existing networks and strengths. There are three parts to this chapter. First, a theoretical overview of both voluntary and forced migration.

Second, an outline of Tuvaluan migration and potential migration, and finally, an examination of the links between individual and family migration plans and the migration policies of governments in the region. It concludes with case studies of two types of migration previously undertaken by Tuvaluans: community-led and individual-led migration.

6.2 *Theoretical overview of migration: Voluntary and forced*

6.2.1 Introducing migration

Throughout history, migration has been closely related to economic and social development. International migration is often said to occur when there are development imbalances between home and receiving states, revolving around three Rs: recruitment, remittances and return (Nyberg-Sorenson, Hear, & Engberg-Pedersen, 2002a). However, this analogy reduces migration to an economic act, whereas there are other social, cultural, environmental and political reasons for migration, particularly relevant to forced migration. Nevertheless, the line between forced migration and voluntary migration is often blurred.

The development implications of forced migration, compared to voluntary migration, are significant. In both cases there is a loss of labour, skills and capital from the country of origin. Also, new opportunities for remittances open up. However, a mass forced migration can put strains on both the migrating population and the receiving nation. In the receiving market, this can be in terms of food, housing, land, transport and other goods and services; changes in labour markets; local social changes with the introduction of humanitarian assistance; changes in demands on health care, education and other public services; demographic and cultural changes; influences on infrastructure; and ecological and environmental changes (Nyberg-Sorenson et al., 2002a). The carrying and caring capacity of receiving states determines how they respond to this.

Migration is increasingly being recognised for its role in creating social linkages or networks between countries of origin and destination. Rather than breaking off from their country of origin, migrants often continue to have obligations and linkages with those at home, such as through increasing trade and investment links; technology transfers; and sending remittances (GFMD, 2007). Remittances may, in fact, be a key aspect of a family's income diversification strategy.¹¹⁹ Migrants also play a role as 'ambassadors' or 'advocates' for the interests of those in

¹¹⁹ Research suggests that remittances to developing countries are higher than foreign aid, and are a more constant form of income. However, this money is more likely to be used for social or livelihood purposes rather than to achieve larger scale development outcomes (Connell, 2003b; Nyberg-Sorenson et al., 2002).

their home country (Nyberg-Sorenson et al., 2002a). In recent years, governments in countries of origin, including Tuvalu, have made it easier for migrants to maintain links with their home countries through policy changes, such as allowing their citizens to hold dual passports.

Regardless of whether migration is voluntary or forced, a country's right to decide who can enter its borders is at the heart of the concept of state sovereignty. The last forty years has seen a tightening of immigration controls by many states, with immigration policies in most developed countries being linked to their economic growth and thus focused on labour shortages. This, however, contradicts the increasing interest in the global development-migration nexus, and the 2008 OECD *Ministerial Declaration on Policy Coherence for Development* (see 4.2.1) as it does not factor in the role migration plays in the development strategies of developing nations.

Currently, the most significant exception to this rule is in relation to refugees, whereby nation-states lose their tight border control as they have responsibilities towards these migrants.¹²⁰

6.2.2 Refugees

The acceptance of refugees runs contra to the nation-state logic, and in doing so, refugee movements affect, and are affected by development in each of the countries they move into. As Black (2002) claims, refugee flows — from countries of origin into countries of first asylum and then, where appropriate, into third countries for resettlement — run parallel to wider development issues.

The term 'refugee' is tightly defined under international law. The UN 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees and its 1967 Protocol relate only to those people who "owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, [are] outside the country of [their] nationality, and [are] unable to or, owing to such fear, [are] unwilling to avail [themselves] of the protection of that country." Although the terms 'environmental refugee' or 'climate refugee' are often thrown around in the media, people forced to migrate for environmental reasons are not generally considered to be refugees where it counts – under international law. Depending on legal interpretation, there may be exceptions in:

- Africa, where since 1969 the Organisation of African Unity (now the African Union) has

¹²⁰ States have sought to limit this 'rule-breaking' by introducing pre-departure controls which limit the number of people who can travel to their territory and claim refugee status.

recognised people who have fled “events seriously disrupting public order”; and

- Latin America, where the Cartagena Declaration on Refugees 1984¹²¹ includes those who have fled “circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order”.

The lack of legal recognition for ‘environmental refugees’ (hereafter called ‘environmental migrants’ or ‘climate migrants’) throughout the rest of the world means that the rights accorded to Convention refugees are not extended to those forced to leave their homelands for environmental reasons.

There is a high level of resistance from the international community to expand the Convention definition of ‘refugee’ in any way. For example, receiving countries fear opening flood gates to a whole new group of migrants for whom they will be responsible; the UN High Commissioner for Refugees¹²² is already overstretched without adding climate migrants; and some human rights lawyers fear that tinkering with the current Convention may lead States to dilute the protections that they have already signed up to for the Convention refugees (Joly, 2004; Landau, 2007; Myers, 2002). Ultimately, the international capacity to deal with environmental migrants systematically is limited (or virtually non-existent). “Yet as the problem becomes more pressing, our policy responses fall further short of measuring up to the challenge” (Myers, 2002, p. 611).

Despite the link between development and migration, Nyberg-Sorenson et al. (2002a, p. 36) say that “policies on development cooperation, humanitarian relief, migration, and refugee protection are internally inconsistent and occasionally mutually contradictory. It is time to be more innovative in managing migration. Wolf (2007, p. 15) agrees stating:

We need to find ways of working together at a higher level of collaboration and cooperation than we ever have before. However, this is not the most likely direction – nor the one rich nations’ seem to be bracing for. Instead, they are bracing for global conflict which is aimed at both controlling resources and controlling populations who might resist or flee. It will take leadership, and *an involved public*, to follow the third path. [emphasis added]

6.2.3 Relationship between climate change and migration

Migration has always provided an important mechanism by which people can respond to changes in climate, be it in pastoralist societies or in densely packed populations (Brown, 2007).

¹²¹ A non-binding Latin American declaration which was heavily influenced Latin American domestic law.

¹²² Charged with the responsibility of caring for the world’s refugees.

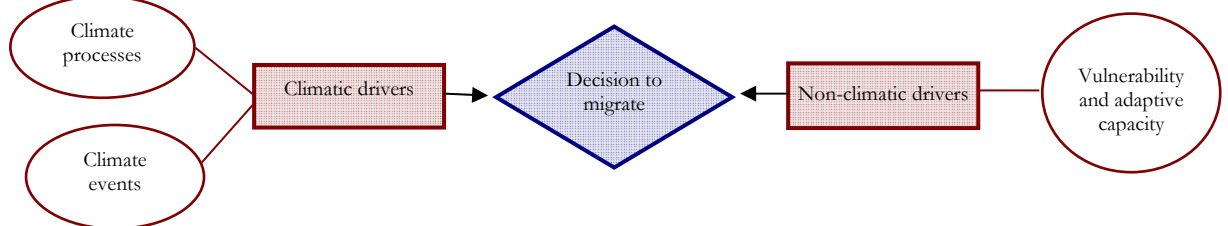
For the Pacific Islands, Kelman (2008) claims that approximately 700 years ago local sea-level fall and changes forced some islanders to abandon their settlement. However, in 1998, Lonergan (in Brown, 2007, p. 12) stated that:

there is too often an uncritical acceptance of a direct causal link between environmental degradation and population displacement. Implicit in these writings is the belief that environmental degradation – as a possible cause of population displacement – can be separated from other social, economic or political causes.

Lonergan's observations lie at the heart of the complex climate change-migration nexus — the uncertainty about the extent to which environmental degradation is a driver in decisions to migrate. This uncertainty often provides an excuse for policy-makers to ignore the issue altogether.

Environmental degradation is socially and spatially constructed. The role it plays in causing population movements can only be understood when considered within the regional political and cultural context. Decisions to migrate are often made at individual or household/family levels (unless a state decides to relocate a community).¹²³ These individual and household decision-makers each evaluate social and financial implications of the move, which are influenced by present and future environmental factors. The extent to which households have economic, social and cultural capital at their disposal may determine whether migration is a feasible option (McLeman, 2004).¹²⁴ This principle also applies to communities as a whole, in relation to their vulnerability and adaptive capacity. Figure 17, which is based on McLeman's findings, presents a simplified picture of the drivers for and against migration that are assessed by communities (or individuals) considering relocation due to climate processes or events:

Figure 17: Drivers for migration



While there may be a variety of 'push' and 'pull' factors when deciding whether to migrate,

¹²³ Gershon (2007) suggests that it is misleading to view migrants as individual decision-makers rather than as nodes in a network within which knowledge and resources circulate.

¹²⁴ The costs of migrating are much greater for the poorer and less skilled individuals, as they are likely to face greater obstacles implicit in immigration policies which focus on labour mobility (IOM, 2008).

there are limits on the human ability to survive certain climatic conditions and events. Warner, Dun and Stal (2008, p. 14) claim that “environmentally induced migration occurs when ecological tipping points are exceeded”. The decision then becomes whether to migrate permanently or not. Brown (2007) identifies four categories of environmentally induced migration:

1. temporary, due to a climate event (likely to return home)
2. permanent, due to permanent changes to their habitat, such as sea-level rise (unlikely to return home)
3. temporary, as an adaptive response to climate stress (likely to return home)
4. permanent, due to their habitat no longer providing for their basic needs, such as losing crops due to salination (unlikely to return home).

Temporary displacement is very different from permanently leaving one’s homeland and identity (Kelman, 2008), and therefore, the tipping point may vary. Ironically, there is likely to be more media attention given to climate events which will demand an immediate and obvious international response, despite the fact that predictions are that climate processes will permanently displace a greater number of people and will require a bigger response.

6.2.4 The challenges of the move

As outlined above, a mass forced migration can put strains on both the migrating population and receiving nation. There are many factors that influence the impact the migration or relocation¹²⁵ might have on migrants and their communities. According to Campbell, Goldsmith and Koshy (2005) the social, cultural and economic costs of relocation increase with the distance travelled from their homelands. These also increase when certain thresholds are exceeded such as crossing land tenure boundaries, island boundaries or national boundaries (see Figure 18).

Where international migration has taken place, new communities may be quite different from the communities migrants have come from – they may compose of people who share only a common national, rather than island, or local village, origin (Campbell et al., 2005). For

¹²⁵ “[T]he term relocation is [generally] used to refer to the permanent (or long-term) movement of a community (or a significant part of it) from one location to another. This is distinct from the movement of individuals away from an origin to a variety of destinations. It infers that the community stays together at the destination in a social form that has some similarities to the community of origin.” (Campbell et al. 2005, p.12).

example, Tuvaluans group together rather than by their islands (Funafuti, Vaitupu, Nanumea, etc) as they would in their homeland.

During the colonial era there were a number of cases of communities that were relocated in the Pacific region. In 1977, Lieber (in Campbell et al., 2005) found that these

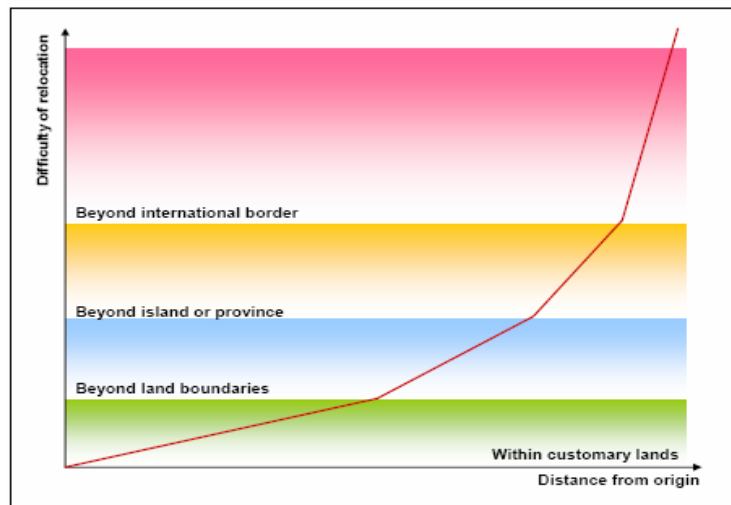
relocated communities often, but not always, faced difficulties in their new settings. It was found that these were exacerbated where they were immersed among members of a different culture. Campbell et al. (2005) looked at Pacific examples of forced relocation¹²⁶ and identified three themes, which are consistent with findings of this thesis outlined below:

- *difficulties when relocating to urban places* — where international relocation to urban areas on the Pacific rim was necessary, community maintenance was extremely difficult.
- *the importance of land* — the very strong relationship or bond that exists between most Pacific Island communities and their land (see chapter three). Abandoning their land was therefore problematic, especially when there was no chance of return.
- *the role of colonialism* — decisions about community location, land and immigration were ‘easier’ under the colonial government, ie it was easier to facilitate inter-colony migration than that between sovereign states. Yet, decisions to relocate were made in the centre without participation from local Pacific communities, proving to be problematic.

Forced migrants were disempowered during colonial times, and it can be said that disempowerment continues today as a result of the ad hoc processes and mechanisms that the international community has set up to deal with forced migration situations,¹²⁷ in particular, when people have been forced to leave traditional land damaged by an environmental disaster (Kirsch in Campbell et al., 2005; Choquette & Duval, 2006). Fussell (2006) confirms this in her

Figure 18: The difficulty of relocation

(Source: Campbell et al, 2005)



¹²⁶ For example, migration from Phoenix Island to Ghizo in the Solomon Islands (SI) because of draught (1955); or Tikopia (SI) to the Russell Islands (SI) because of land scarcity and a tropic cyclone (1956).

¹²⁷ Voluntary migrants can also feel disempowered. This is discussed in the following paragraphs.

article on New Orleans' disaster management experiences. She described how in New Orleans many internally displaced persons sought assistance to get to jobs or relatives in other cities, but the focus of the official response was put on giving them food, accommodation and clothes *in situ*. She emphasises the vital role of social networks in both evacuation and recovery, but only if managed well. Gershon (2007) supports this, as he highlights how, in the Pacific, families and their trans-national connections sustain diaspora, making them both durable and visible. They are intertwined in culturally specific networks: "...the Pacific is not just a sea of islands, but also a sea of families" (Gershon, 2007, p. 474).

If forced migration were to occur from countries such as Tuvalu, it is possible that many people who live in villages may find themselves forced to migrate into cities in other countries. Many of the findings of a UN report looking at transitions from villages to the cities in the South Pacific are relevant (UNESCAP, 1999). For instance, the research shows that the urban shift impacts negatively on traditional leadership structures. This in turn can drive down levels of community participation and social cohesion, which are important for that community's ongoing development.

Generally, displaced persons have not been treated as rights-holders in terms of the international human rights instruments, eg in relation to housing, land and property. However, there is growing acceptance that permanent relocation should not result in homelessness, and that housing should adhere to international human rights standards (Leckie, 2008). As outlined by UNIMPP & UNPF (2004), many migrants (forced or voluntary) face difficulties enforcing their rights because:

- they are socially and economically marginalised
- they work in the '3-D jobs' – dirty, difficult and dangerous
- legal access is hampered by linguistic and cultural obstacles, fear of public institutions or lack of knowledge.

There are also likely downstream effects. "Where migrants are less well accommodated, there are likely to be less socio-economically productive and more likely to suffer from a variety of physical and psychosocial problems" (Carballo, Smith, & Pettersson, 2008). Thus, development problems amongst migrants can be exacerbated if they are left unchecked, but can be minimised if a resettlement programme is established to address these likely issues in advance.

6.2.5 Planning for climatically forced migration

When it comes to adapting to climate change, the international spotlight has been on adapting

in situ. Migration options have been referred to as the available options if adaptation fails. Yet, even where migration as the ‘failed option’ has been considered, this does not seem to find its way into NAPAs. This lack of precautionary planning may lead to reactionary policies that do not take into account the needs and world views of the migrating population.

...relocation is an extremely complex process and often can only be achieved at considerable economic, environmental, emotional and social cost. International relocation is likely to be extremely difficult in the post-colonial era. Any relocation that involves moving away from a group’s traditional territory and into that of another is likely to be highly fraught and *will require considerable consultation and negotiation*. (Campbell et al., 2005, p. 5) [emphasis added]

In line with the findings in chapters four and five: Who should be planning and who should participate? Individuals? Families? Communities? Individual nations? Regions? Or should there be a more systemic, global solution? Perhaps a global umbrella strategy is necessary, with more regionalised and localised solutions to fit the needs of the potential migrants and receiving nations. A problem of such complexity requires many minds and many hands to solve. Yet, the more people and nations involved, the longer it will take to come up with an acceptable solution. With this in mind, the problem solving process cannot wait.

If left to individuals or families, people are likely to migrate along existing paths where social or financial capital already exists (for instance, support networks, cultural or ethnic ties, or funds that facilitate the move (Brown, 2007)). Decisions of where to go are also influenced by the potential of the receiving location to accommodate migrants,¹²⁸ as well as local attitudes towards migrants. However, if migration or relocation is considered to be a necessary option and a community or national level decision is made, other factors must be taken into consideration. For instance, with regard to land:

It is highly unlikely that it would be possible to transplant a community from one cultural and environmental setting to another in the contemporary Pacific. Where suitable land might become available...the original inhabitants would most likely have priority...Relocation outside the region would most likely be to countries...where land is held in fee simple and where the current political economy is capitalist and lifestyles are individualistic. In this sense...the community characteristics of the origin [would be] considerably transformed. (Campbell et al., 2005, p. 28)

The literature reveals a number of principles and factors for consideration in the decision-

¹²⁸ In this sense, climate change may have positive impacts on some locations which will be able to sustain a larger population for reasons such as improved growing seasons due to warmer temperatures and increased rainfall in traditionally dry areas (Brown, 2007).

making process in advance of environmentally induced migration. Table 9 synthesises arguments drawn from Kelman (2008), Campbell et al. (2005) and Perry and Lindell (1997, in Campbell et al., 2005) shown as ‘A’, ‘B’ and ‘C’ respectively below. All focus on forced migration or community relocation in the Pacific and draw lessons from hindsight, and are discussed in the next section.

Table 9: Factors and principles to be considered in advance of environmentally induced migration

| Process should consider: | Solution should consider: |
|---|---|
| Involving potential relocatees/migrants in the decision-making process. It is likely to be much more successful if communities have a sense of ownership over the process. (B) | The level of sovereignty or autonomy desired or possible. (A) |
| Ensuring potential relocatees/migrants are fully informed, including of the multi-organisational context in which relocation/migration is to be conducted. (C) | Whether it is better to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. integrate into an existing society¹²⁹ 2. re-create their society on land obtained from another state or reclaimed. (A) |
| Ensuring there is local leadership. (B) | Whether the places for relocation/migration are safe and similar to their current environment (to minimise emotional troubles and practical concerns). (A +B) |
| Preserving and building on existing social networks. (C) | All costs: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - economic: both set up costs and longer term costs such as extra transport costs to markets. Who will pay? (A+B) - other (social, cultural, spiritual) costs, such as separating from land, losing connections with neighbouring communities and kin, and having to adapt to new lifestyles and modes of living.¹³⁰ (B) |
| Giving adequate time to relocation decision-making, “rather than being forced to rush into a rapid and hurried relocation after houses have been destroyed by a climatic extreme event.” (B, p. 43) | The timing of move – should evacuation happen now or only once the impacts of environmental change are felt? (A+B) |

6.2.6 Participating in planning for a future beyond national borders

The first box in Table 9 supports the lessons about participation embedded in chapter four. In this case, participation would help ensure that the needs of potential relocatees or migrants are met in a way that builds on their own strengths, and is in line with their own culture. However,

¹²⁹ Brown (2007) assumes a solution that involves integration, and considers that planning should progress in three areas: 1) legal-political (such as expanding the legal definition of ‘refugee’); 2) incorporating into domestic NAPA plans (although domestic solutions might not be enough); 3) addressing immigration policies of potential receiving states.

¹³⁰ “Pacific Islanders most often migrate into countries such as NZ, Australia, and the USA, all of which have complex histories of colonialism, past and ongoing, with Pacific nations. Infrastructures in these countries encourage living as nuclear families rather than as extended ones” (Gershon, 2007, p. 480).

participation has generally been limited to involvement in local and national decision-making and development. In matters of migration, potential migrants do not tend to be consulted during policy development as the policies are primarily created in the interests of the receiving state.¹³¹

The call for better engagement by all stakeholders in planning for environmentally induced migration is new, but is growing momentum. For example, at the conclusion of its 2008 conference on migration and the environment, the IOM noted the importance of engaging *all stakeholders* in managing environmentally induced migration and its implications for human security (IOM, 2008) – yet, most notably absent from the groups they identified as stakeholders were the migrants themselves.¹³² In contrast, Landau (2007) included displaced populations when she called for dialogue amongst the various actors critical in protecting displaced peoples. The relevant actors Landau identified are portrayed in Figure 19 overleaf. Landau considers these actors each as sites of knowledge – this is consistent with participatory development theories discussed in chapter four. The Global Forum on Migration and Development (2007) has also noted the key roles that NGOs, international organisations and migrant networks can play as they are more able to access migrants on the ground than governments. They suggest a ‘partnership’ and ‘co-management’ approach.

In April 2008, the Climate Change, Environment, and Migration Alliance (CEEMA) was established as a “multi-stakeholder global partnership” bringing together key international organisations, the private sector, groups of interested state parties, the scientific and professional communities, and representatives of civil society” (Morton, Boncour, & Laczko, 2008, p. 7). This Alliance aims to gain a better understanding of the nexus between policy and practice, and to improve interdisciplinary regional, international and global collaboration and coordination.¹³³

6.3 Tuvaluan migration: Past and present

6.3.1 Overview

Brown (2008, p. 9) has called for “more detailed and nuanced case studies of how, why and where people migrate” in order to understand “what that means for the welfare and the

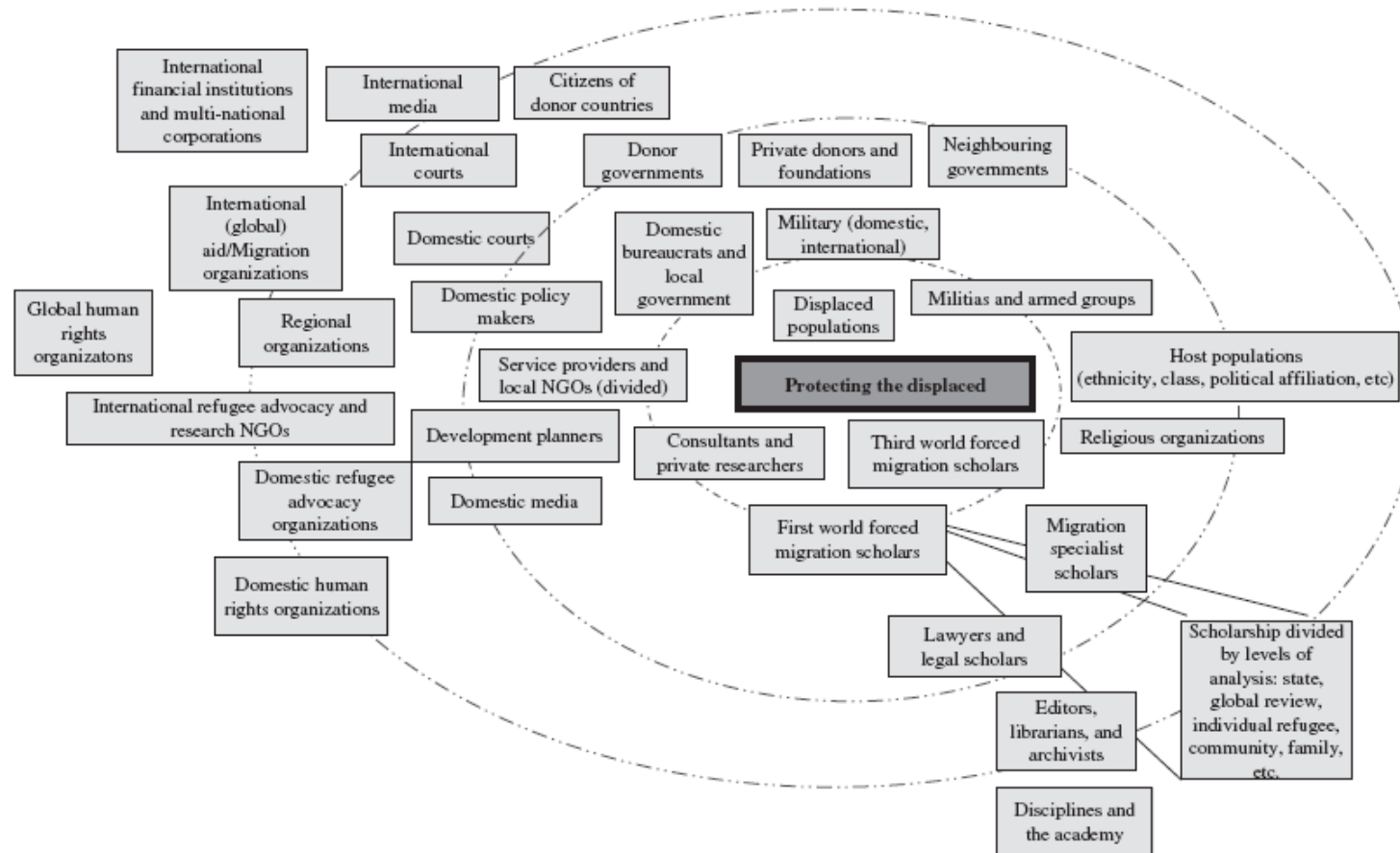
¹³¹ Comment based on personal and professional experience of the author.

¹³² The IOM includes NGOs amongst the stakeholders, but this assumes that NGOs are representative of the populations themselves.

¹³³ This alliance, however, has been described as ‘fledgling’ (Pacific Island News Association, 2008).

Figure 19 : Actors, boundaries and sites of knowledge

(Source: Landau, 2007)



prospects of the areas they leave, the places they go to and the migrants themselves”. This section looks more deeply into the case of Tuvaluan migration, its impact on Tuvalu and its communities, and what lessons the past can provide for the future.

Although Pacific peoples (including Tuvaluans) are known for place-centredness, Huffer & Rakuita (date unknown) argue this does not mean that they are place-bound. Tuvaluans have a history of travel and migration, including at the founding of their islands. Most scientists believe that the series of migrations which populated Tuvalu, were carefully planned (Dunford & Ridgell, 1996). Since then Tuvaluans have migrated due to force, need, and by choice. It has been suggested that most migrate temporarily, returning to their homelands to fulfil their cultural obligations. Research outlined below shows that even for those who permanently migrate, their Tuvaluan homeland remains important for their existence.

In the 1860s, some Tuvaluans were forced to leave. Resture (1999) describes how blackbirders went to the islands of Nukulaelae, Funafuti, Nukufetau, and Nanumea, and how this had a major impact on the social structures of the effected islands. Resture claims Tuvaluans needed to be even more resilient, drawing on their wider family units for support.

In the 1930s and 1940s population growth led to a search for migration solutions for those from the most densely populated areas of the then Gilbert and Ellice Islands (Bedford, 1967). For instance, some Niutao people went to the Solomon Islands; a proposal to send Nanumagans to Tonga fell through, as did Nanumean plans to purchase a Fijian island (SPC & ILO, 1983). The purchase and settlement of Kioa Island by Vaitupuan occurred during this time, however, it was not due to overpopulation. Instead, it was mostly because an opportunity existed (more detail is provided at 6.5.4 and in the Kioa Island case study (Appendix 1)).

Tuvaluans have also voluntarily migrated (temporarily and permanently) as students and missionaries, as well as for adventure and for employment due to limited resources and opportunities at home. Key destinations in Tuvaluan history include Nauru and Banabas (Ocean Island) where they mined phosphate, Tarawa (Kiribati) the capital of the former colony, and into the international shipping industry (for which Tuvalu has a training school). More recently, there has been increased migration to NZ, Australia, and Fiji for reasons such as policy changes and a perception that there are new opportunities (see 6.4).

Tuvaluans are also migrating between islands, particularly to Funafuti for paid employment; medical facilities; more modern resources; (perceived) less intensive commitment to community activities; the ports from where they can depart for overseas or to other islands.

6.3.2 Length of stay

Much of Tuvalu's external migration has been temporary – return migration is a norm, especially since independence (Connell, 2003b; Esela, 2005). Chambers (1975, p. 100) stated:

[e]mployment was rarely continuous, more often consisting of scattered work periods throughout a man's first 20 years of maturity. This resulted in a constant rotation of the workforce through the total population and *maintained community cohesion*...Nanumeans tend to view periodic off-the-island employment as an enjoyable interlude in a basically subsistence life... [emphasis added]

While people may live away from Tuvalu for many years, they have tended to return to their homelands, 'their place' (Connell, 2003b). When commenting on such 'circular migration' elsewhere in the Pacific, Gegeo (2001) commented that people return to fulfil leadership responsibilities and cultural obligations. In Tuvalu, new generations also return which may suggest that a sense of obligation back to Tuvalu is passed down through generations. In the 2002 census it was found that 20.2% of Tuvaluan residents were born overseas (SPC, 2002).¹³⁴

In the Pacific, migration is sometimes regarded as a safety valve for governments – reducing pressures to provide employment opportunities and welfare services (Connell, 2003b). The Tuvaluan government has actively promoted migration and remittances since independence as they are an important aspect of Tuvalu's economy. Boland and Dollery (2005) estimate that remittances formed between 4.3–23.5% of Tuvalu's GDP each year from 1986–2002.¹³⁵ As a permanent NZ diaspora population has grown, Tuvalu has become more like a MIRAB economy.¹³⁶

Labour mobility has become a priority in the Pacific region because of its economic value and lack of jobs at home. Schemes such as NZ's RSE scheme have been established (Case study 3 at 4.3.3). Other opportunities opening up include a new labour mobility scheme from Australia, and potential for employment in Guam as new military bases and surrounding infrastructure are built. These schemes provide Tuvaluans with opportunities to increase and diversify

¹³⁴ The Secretariat of the South Pacific (SSP) warns that the statistics used are based on limited available data and are only basic estimates.

¹³⁵ Remittances are normally low for the first four years following arrival in a country such as NZ as the migrants settle. They then appear to be sustained for at least 30 years (Simati & Gibson, 2001). In Tuvalu remittances are used for both investment and consumption, such as fishing boats, retail activities, replacing thatch roofs with corrugated metal, installing rainwater tanks, constructing proper pig pens, and school fees.

¹³⁶ Migration, Remittances, Aid and Bureacracy (MIRAB). This concept was developed by Geoff Bertram and Ray Watters to explain the state of economic development of some Pacific SIS, in which their wellbeing and stability is dependent on aid and ongoing remittances from emigrants (Beban-France & Brooks, 2008).

income sources. By better resourcing families, it is hoped that communities will also be better resourced, enabling them to improve the lives of their people and become more resilient. Another benefit of these labour schemes is that those who participate get exposure to life outside of Tuvalu, helping with skills and knowledge transfer. This will help if there is forced migration in the future as it assists to build understanding of life beyond Tuvalu. Some side effects of these schemes, however, are the long periods of separation from family members, which places pressure on family units (for instance, seafarers will be gone for around 12 months at a time, leaving their wives and families); and the ‘brain drain’ and ‘brain waste’ experienced where more qualified Tuvaluans leave to countries such as NZ to work in less skilled jobs. Nevertheless,

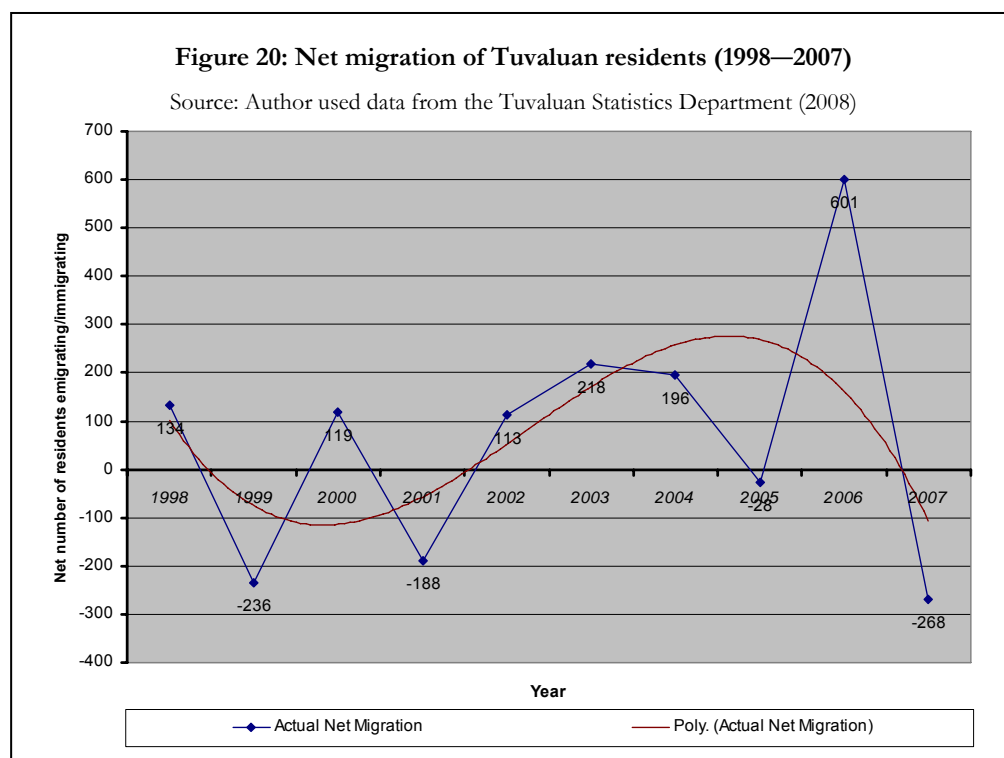
The implication...is that origins remain important for their existence value even for those who have moved away permanently. (Lazrus, 2008, p. 14)

6.3.3 Migration trends

Net migration trends in Tuvalu are difficult to accurately gauge because there have been no statistics available to distinguish between permanent and temporary migration.¹³⁷ Estimates based on the 2002 census were that around 100 more residents were leaving Tuvalu than entering it each year. It was anticipated that this pattern would continue. However, data retrieved during the research process from the Tuvaluan Statistics Department for the period 1998–2007 (Figure 21) showed very erratic migration patterns. Using a polynomial trend line,¹³⁸ between 2002 and 2006 there were actually more people entering Tuvalu than leaving. This seems to contradict many of the films and articles published during this period that purport Tuvaluans are fleeing their country due to climate change. One explanation for this inward migration is the mass return of Tuvaluan workers from Nauru in 2006 when the phosphate mine closed down. Another reason given by key informants was that from the late 1990s Tuvaluan descendents could return to claim citizenship free of charge, and many did so to gain access to such things as Tuvaluan scholarships. This policy changed in 2005 and citizenship

¹³⁷ New departure cards were due to be introduced in late 2008 that will record temporary and permanent migration as well as the reason for migration. Currently in Tuvalu, net migration is calculated as emigration less immigration (temporary and permanent).

¹³⁸ Polynomial trend lines are used with fluctuating data.



became costly. Further discussion on reasons for and against migration are set out below.

Statistics on the number of Tuvaluans living overseas are not readily available either. In 1973, while Tuvalu was still part of the British colony, an attempt was made in the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Population Census (in SPC & ILO, 1983). This located 3,122 Tuvaluans outside of Tuvalu. Kiribati had the biggest diaspora population at that time (1,989 people). This was followed by Nauru (619), Fiji (237), Samoa (129), Solomon Islands (37), Marshall Islands (26), Tokelau (25) and NZ (25). Vanuatu, Tonga, Australia, Hong Kong, UK, North America and West Germany all had 10 people or less.

This appears to have changed. Independence saw a return of many Tuvaluans from Kiribati, and the more recent mine closure in Nauru led to a radical decline there. The biggest Tuvaluan expatriate society is now in NZ. In the 2006 NZ census, 2,625 Tuvaluans were resident in NZ¹³⁹ (Statistics New Zealand, 2007); Fiji is estimated to have a Tuvaluan population of around 1,000¹⁴⁰ (Tine Leuelu, Tuvaluan Consulate in Suva), while Australia has 114 Tuvaluan-born residents (Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2006)¹⁴¹ and Niue has around 100 (XNA, 2004).

¹³⁹ This includes 954 NZ-born Tuvaluans.

¹⁴⁰ Not including those from Kioa Island who are now Fijian citizens.

¹⁴¹ Statistics are not collected on ethnicity.

There is further discussion on destinations for Tuvaluan migration in 6.4.

6.4 Research participants' reflections on migration

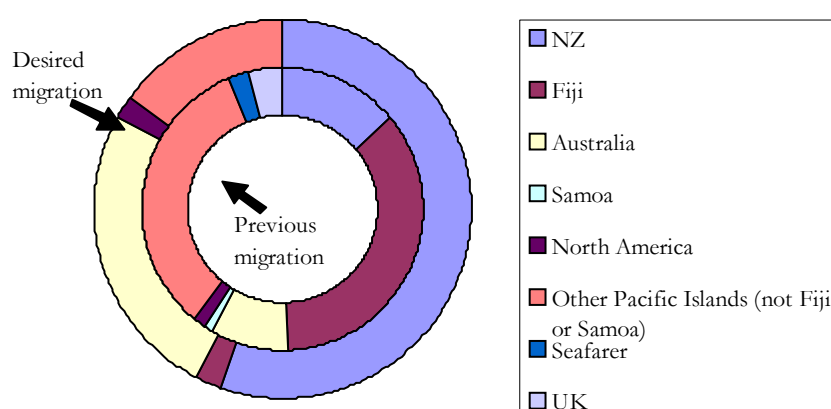
Due to the inconsistency of available data on where and why Tuvaluans were migrating and their experiences of migration, questions around participants' former migration, family migration, reasons for and against migration, and experience of migration were discussed in interviews and workshops.¹⁴² This data is primarily drawn from Tuvaluan-based participants; however, findings were tested during interviews with NZ-based and Kioa-based participants as well.

6.4.1 Past and future migration

Over half of the Tuvaluan-based community participants indicated that they had spent some time living in a country other than Tuvalu (often for two to three years at a time). Nearly all said they had family (including extended family) living outside of Tuvalu, and half desired or had thought of migrating externally in the future. Older participants were less likely to have considered leaving Tuvalu. This was explained by a group of youth who thought it was much easier to migrate if you were younger and less settled. Of the younger participants, females had thought more about migrating than males.

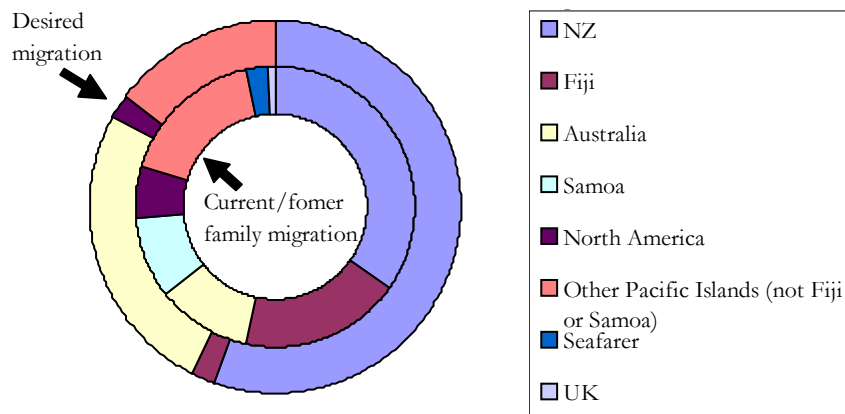
Figure 21 and Figure 22 show the locations where participants have considered migrating to. For over half of these participants, NZ was the desired location, followed by Australia. However, these diagrams also reveal that there is a greater correlation between migrating to

Figure 21: Previous participant migration compared with desired migration



¹⁴² It should be noted that the Tuvaluan government was in the process of introducing a new departure card for residents in 2008 while this thesis was being written. This card will collect much more information on where Tuvaluans are travelling to, for how long and why in a much more systematic way.

Figure 22: Current or former family migration compared to desired participant migration



where their families have an established diaspora or migration path, than to where the migrants themselves have previously lived. One factor seems to be that previously there were overseas employment opportunities in countries such as Nauru, Banabas (Ocean Island) and Kiribati. Now that these employment opportunities have dried up, there are more opportunities in countries such as NZ and Australia.

Community participants were not only thinking of migrating externally. A number of workshop participants living in Funafuti indicated that they would like to *migrate back* to their home outer islands to contribute in those communities. Conversely, some of the outer island participants indicated a desire to go to Funafuti for reasons discussed above.

6.4.2 Drivers

Community participants in Tuvalu were also asked to consider why they thought of migrating externally, and/or why they believed others were migrating (ie their drivers for migration) in order to understand the extent to which migration is perceived to be forced or voluntary, and therefore, the extent to which Tuvaluans feel they are shaping the direction of their futures. In the latter interviews and workshops it was possible to ask participants to rank the drivers from the most common to the least (see Picture 4).

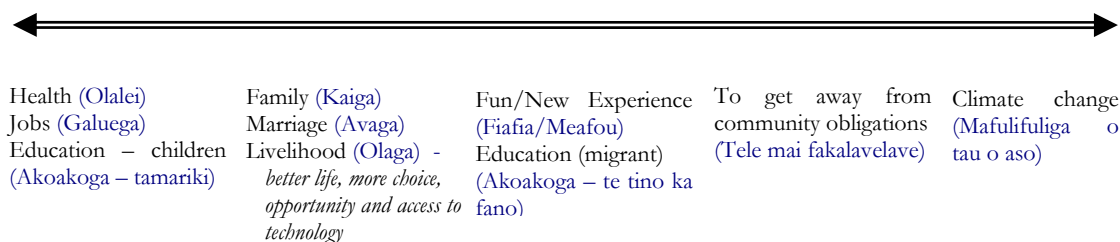
The responses were not unanimous, but an analysis of the responses revealed some clear

Picture 4: Participants ranking migration drivers



patterns (Figure 23).

Figure 23: Drivers for migration (Identified by community participants in Tuvalu)



The most common reasons given for migration were health (especially as healthcare services in Tuvalu are limited); jobs (a better income); and education for children — which they hope will lead to better jobs. These findings are supported by Barnett and Mortreux (in Lazrus, 2008) who indicate that climate change is not a primary motivation for Tuvaluan international migration. The reasons for migration given by participants in this study that appeared most controversial or disputed were:

- *education for children* – although there was better *access* to education outside of Tuvalu, many of the women questioned whether those brought up in countries such as NZ were actually *getting* a better education. They felt that in such countries, both parents had to work many hours to survive, therefore they were not there to support their children to do well in school. They also saw more opportunities for the brightest Tuvaluan-based students to gain scholarships to universities. The response given by the Tuvaluan diaspora in NZ to this concern was that the quality of children’s education ultimately depended on how parents raised them.
- *livelihood, as it relates to more choice and opportunity* – for young women, in particular, they considered that they had more opportunity to “dress as they pleased”, to “express their rights” and to “get more ideas about what you want”. This was not viewed positively by many older participants who were concerned about how the “*palagi* way” was damaging Tuvaluan culture.
- *to get away from community obligations* – a number of people expressly denied that this was a reason Tuvaluans decided to migrate. However, there were participants¹⁴³ who felt that the financial cost of contributing to community events or causes (providing *fakalavelave*) was becoming too expensive. They believed that if they migrated to a place with fewer

¹⁴³ Particularly interviewees. Workshop participants were less likely to say this amongst their fellow Tuvaluans.

Tuvaluans, these obligations would not be so great. However, interviewees based in NZ indicated that this has often proven to be untrue as they tend to form Tuvaluan communities to which they feel obligated to contribute, whilst also remitting money back to family in Tuvalu.

- *climate change* – numerous Tuvaluan-based participants did not consider climate change to be a reason for people migrating. One participant even stated that no Tuvaluan can legitimately state that they are leaving because of climate change yet. However, climate change was on the mind of some of the Tuvaluan-based participants who were considering migration, and many of the diaspora in Auckland who were interviewed listed climate change as their main reasons for migrating *or not returning to Tuvalu*.

Other aspects of Tuvaluan life that a few participants wished to leave behind if they were to migrate were: politics and perceived favourable treatment given to families with high status; tensions between those of different religions; and the limits on roles women play in Tuvaluan decision-making.

Numerous reasons were also given by participants for wanting to remain in Tuvalu and not migrate externally, including ties to land and sea, belonging to a community and maintaining a culture, being able to meet their basic needs, and feeling happy and safe (Table 10).

Table 10: Reasons for wanting to remain in Tuvalu

| Reason | In Tuvalu: | Outside Tuvalu: |
|--------------------------|---|---|
| Land and sea | There is the family land to care for – Tuvaluans have a connection to their ancestors through the land (especially when living in their home islands) and sea. This also includes the burial sites of their family members. | You can lose your connection with the sea and with the land. |
| Belonging to a community | There is a strong sense of community and belonging. Tuvalu is home. Friends and family are close-by to talk to and share with. There is time for family and there are always activities to participate in. One person said “Being in your country you feel secure, confident and proud. Its hard to go somewhere and be treated as a second class citizen.” | Demands of working life make it difficult to maintain as much family connectedness (eg practices such as evening devotion). |
| | | Life outside of Tuvalu can be lonely. It is much harder to walk over to catch up with friends and family as people live quite far apart. It costs money to travel there, it can be easy to get lost, and some people do not feel safe. One participant commented that “Tuvaluans feel sick if they stay alone.” |

| Reason | In Tuvalu: | Outside Tuvalu: |
|------------------------|--|---|
| Maintaining culture | Tuvaluans can freely live and practice their <i>tuu mo aganu</i> . | The culture is different and children learn new behaviours that contradict tradition. For example, in Tuvalu holidays are the time when children learn life skills at home. In NZ children expect to spend holidays at the beach, etc. There is also greater access to drugs and alcohol. |
| Meeting basic needs | Everybody has free access to food, shelter and water. | Life is difficult. Life is expensive because of needing to pay for things such as rent. One participant described how “the meter starts ticking the moment you leave your doorway – everything costs money.” |
| Feeling happy and safe | There is not much crime – people are generally safe. | Tuvaluans can experience racism in the workplace. |
| | It is a happy, quiet and simple life, with little stress. | Some laws may prevent Tuvaluans carrying out their culture. For example, laws against taking trees for canoe (<i>vaka</i>) carving. |

6.4.3 Challenges

Interviews also revealed other specific challenges faced by Tuvaluans who migrate to a country such as NZ.¹⁴⁴ For instance:

- culture shock and dealing with different cultural norms (eg alcohol availability and drinking habits; no open sharing of resources, such as driving cars belonging to somebody else without permission; living to the clock)
- financial challenges such as using the banking systems, dealing with laws and procedures (eg income tax, and immigration procedures), as well as budgeting to meet all the costs of life in a society where everything costs money
- it is difficult for family members who have been left behind, both emotionally and practically (for example, they may have lost the person who fishes or retrieves the toddy for the family)
- airfares are expensive – this is particularly an issue in cases of temporary migration for schemes such as RSE.

¹⁴⁴ For this reason NZAID provides pre-departure training for scholarship students. Training was also provided to RSE workers, although this training has been criticised for being inadequate and inappropriately delivered by NZ’s Department of Labour who did not understand the best way to communicate with Tuvaluans.

These challenges are amplified for those who do not speak English, and are described more fully at 6.6 and in Appendix 1. These challenges vary somewhat from those described by the Vaitupuan community that relocated to Kioa Island (Fiji) in the 1940s, which relate more to collective difficulties around misunderstandings regarding immigration matters; lack of pre-departure knowledge of Kioa Island and surrounding circumstances leading to an inadequate ability to plan; complex layers of authority and decision-making powers, as well as gaps in local leadership; lack of control and adequate consultation; and uncertainty around land tenure. These are also described more fully at 6.6 and in Appendix 1.

6.4.4 Preparing for environmental migration

The developed countries should be prepared to accept the idea of taking refugees for they have greater part in causing the Global warming and must be responsible. But, to decide on such a drastic move, should it prove necessary, is very hard for the people, so it is important for the Government of Tuvalu to do research to find out the people's feelings about resettlement. (Niutui, 1991, p. 83)

As Niutui argues, it is important to know how Tuvaluans feel about the prospects of forced migration, so this was discussed in interviews and community workshops. In many instances, participants' beliefs in climate change did not influence whether or not they thought planning for the possibility of forced migration should be underway. Nevertheless, as indicated in the previous chapter, it did influence who they thought should be preparing for such a future. The majority of participants thought that planning should be underway now – a few even emphasised that if this was not done, the international community would dictate where Tuvaluans would go. The minority thought that the focus should be on *in situ* adaptation and that future generations could plan for the possibility of forced migration if *in situ* adaptation failed: “If we just get up and leave than we don't love our country” (male participant).

Participants also expressed a sense of resilience, trust in God and ability to adapt that balanced out any sense of urgency around planning. There was a great desire to make the most of their life in Tuvalu, safe in the knowledge that God would take care of them. A few participants had dual citizenship in countries such as Tonga, NZ, Fiji and Australia and felt prepared for whatever future they would face.

Participants identified two different options for migration:

- individual/family-led migration, for example, as people immigrated to NZ under NZ's immigration laws; and
- community-led migration/relocation, for example, as Vaitupuan immigrants to Kioa

Island, Fiji.

The reasons given for supporting each option are set out in Table 11 below.

Table 11: Reasons for migrating as individuals/families versus as a community

| Individual/family-led migration | Community-led migration/relocation |
|---|---|
| Individuals/families can go where and when they want (this is particularly important where there are other drivers). | This option fits better with the Tuvaluan community approach to problem-solving. |
| It is ‘easier’ for individuals and families to find some way to meet the costs – the government does not have much money. “If the government can’t, individuals must” (female participant). | It is easier to maintain <i>tuu mo aganu/iloga</i> and family/community connectedness. “If we are going to be moved, it has to be to a new space called Tuvalu. This will help maintain the culture – if not, all will be lost” (female participant). |
| Individuals/families can come up with their own solutions and not rely on government. | Tuvalu can maintain its identity and autonomy. “If you separate the people from their land their identity will fade” (female youth participant). |
| The government is too slow and there is too much uncertainty if individuals/families wait for government. | Not all individuals/families have the social and economic capital that will enable them to migrate, therefore, the community needs to relocate together. |
| It is less complicated to organise. | It is easier for individuals because it would be led by Tuvalu’s leaders/government. There are already some available options (eg Kioa Island). |

Community-led migration/relocation received slightly more support than individual/family-led migration. However, it was suggested by some of the participants who appeared to have a better understanding of climate change and the international political environment that a combination of the two would be most appropriate. This would allow those people who felt they did not want to wait; who wanted to go to a particular location; and/or who had the necessary social and economic capital, to leave when they were ready. It would also ensure that there was a solution for all Tuvaluans, and a way to ensure that *tuu mo aganu/iloga* and family/community connectedness could be maintained.

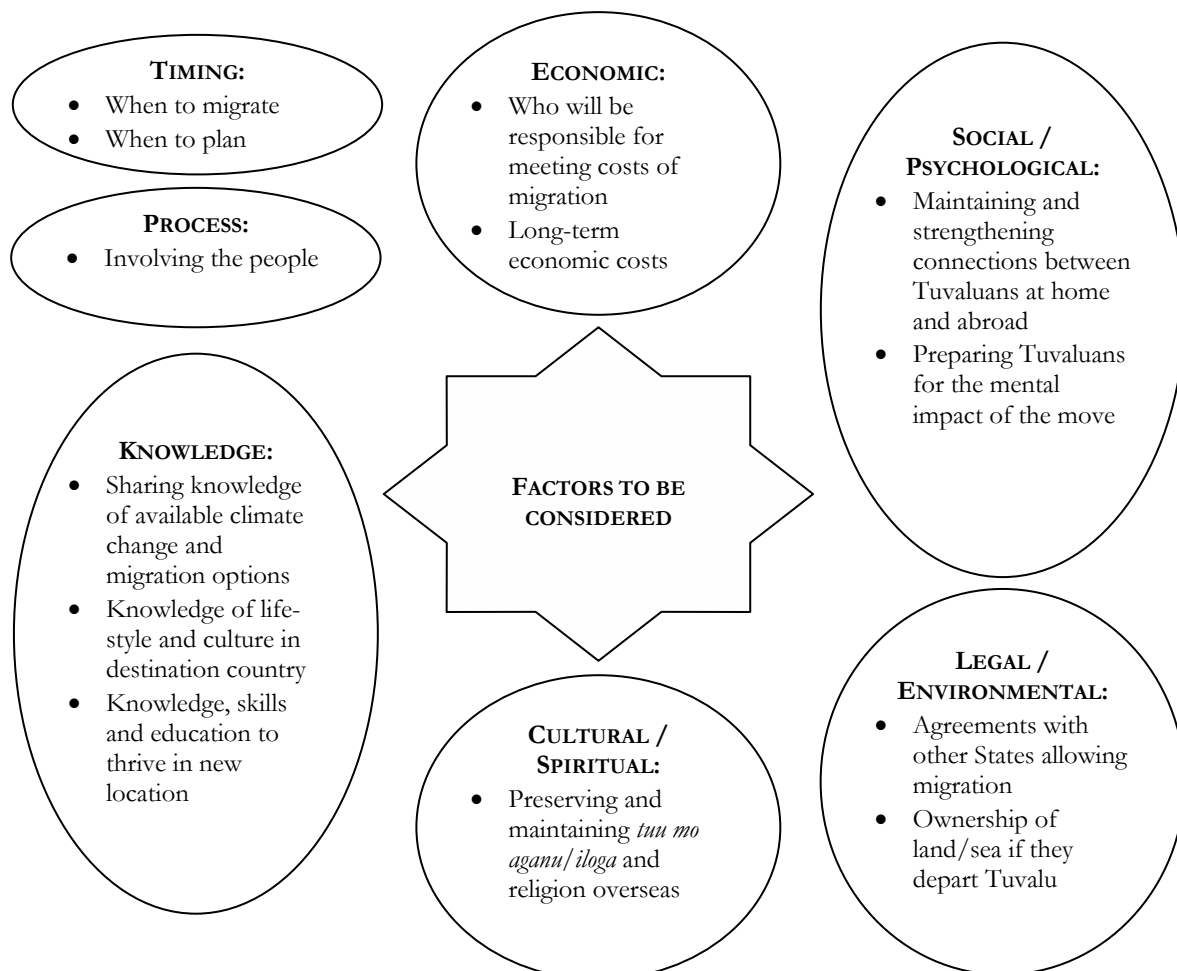
Those that did not believe in climate change were also more likely to support the community-led migration option as they thought that it was the government’s responsibility to consider the scientific evidence and prepare for such challenges. For community-led migration, participants also thought the Church, the *Falekaupule*, the *Kaupule*, NGOs, INGOs, international/regional organisations and Tuvaluan groups overseas needed to show leadership and take responsibility. For example, an underlying sentiment expressed by numerous participants was that the UN (as the most significant multi-governmental agency) has an obligation to look after the people of the world, and as the ‘developed’ world had “caused the problem” the UN and the ‘developed’

world were responsible for meeting the costs of migration (if necessary).

When it came to individual/family-led migration, participants generally considered that the government was doing a good job in negotiating schemes such as the Pacific Access Category (PAC) (see 6.5) and RSE schemes to NZ that help empower Tuvaluans to make their own decisions. All they felt they required was *better information* on these schemes.

When participants spoke about the kind of preparations they would like to see, it was not limited to having a place to go. Figure 24 outlines the factors that participants thought needed to be considered, which have been classified under the headings of process, knowledge,

Figure 24: Factors to be considered in planning for formed migration (identified by participants)



cultural/spiritual, legal/environment, social/psychological, and economic.¹⁴⁵ In addition to these factors are those identified in Table 10, in particular, concerns about having a sense of belonging to a community, feeling happy and safe (social/psychological needs), and being able to meet their basic needs (economic needs).

Taukiei Kitara, who works with TANGO and as part of TuCAN, said “the basic thing is trying to advocate to people that they should be prepared for any case. It might not happen in their lifetime, but they should take precautions. People need to be aware, and they need to think.” Other participants also emphasised that the government and community leaders needed to ensure people are aware of the threats and of their options so that Tuvaluans at home and abroad can do their part and contribute to preparations.

6.5 Formal responses to the possibility of forced migration

Information in this section is drawn from interviews with available key informants, a review of reports, media articles and other available literature.

6.5.1 Governments

Although, at the time of undertaking this research, the government had principally focused on *in situ* adaptation, it had not completely ignored the possibility of migration. In fact, it has made the possibility of forced migration from Tuvalu clear to the international community in many fora. Having communicated this threat to their nation, the Tuvaluan government has needed to respond to questions about what it plans to do if Tuvalu does become uninhabitable, whether by climate processes or a climate event. At the time of this research, the Tuvaluan government did not seem to have a clear response to this question. It has, however, investigated and identified some options as outlined below.

The government appears to be conscious of discussing the need for planning for forced migration with its population in case it causes panic, as noted by Gabriel (2004):

Talake, Tuvalu's former Prime Minister, realises that his government cannot order people off the atolls, but must balance continued development of the country with the evacuation of the most vulnerable. Aid agencies have criticised this spending on development, even though the government has expressed a need to neither discourage nor frighten their population.

¹⁴⁵ These factors align quite closely to the factors and principles to be considered in advance of environmentally induced migration identified in the literature and outlined in Table 9. Additional factors and principles in Table 9 that are not in Figure 24 relate to process (ensuring local leadership, adequate preparation time) and legal/environment (considering the desired level of sovereignty/autonomy, whether integration or society recreation is desired, whether a similar physical environment is available).

Yet, the government's reluctance has led to anxiety by some Tuvaluans, as outlined above. The government considers that NZ's PAC scheme goes some way to alleviate concerns about forced migration by giving an outlet for individual/family-led migration, despite not having been established for this purpose (see Case study 7). However, as with other matters, key informants indicated during an interview that it was difficult to get good information on immigration schemes to Tuvaluans enabling them to make informed choices.

Case study 7: NZ's Pacific Access Category (PAC) scheme

It is often reported that NZ policy of accepting 75 Tuvaluans annually under the PAC is directly in response to climate change. The NZ Government has put a firm communiqué on its Foreign Affairs website stating that this is not the case. The people who have migrated under the PAC are required to have a valid job offer – most job offers have come from the agricultural industry (Stahl & Appleyard, 2007).

In a competitive market, this often means drawing the skilled migrants away from Tuvalu, hence, the developmental effects of the PAC policy on Tuvalu could be interpreted as negative. It can accelerate brain drain while shutting the borders to those who would be most likely to benefit from access to the NZ labour market (the unskilled migrants, who may now receive the benefits of the RSE temporary migration scheme). According to Shen (2007, p. 19), one Tuvaluan community leader has condemned the PAC scheme “as a new form of ‘slavery immigration’, in which educated Tuvaluans give up their stable, white collar government employment in Tuvalu to end up being cleaners or fruit-pickers in Aotearoa NZ”. Not all Tuvaluans feel the same way – a community leader based in NZ wished to convey his thanks to the NZ government for the scheme.

The Tuvaluan government is also quietly exploring other migration outlets in formal and informal discussions with the governments of Niue, NZ and Australia (this was not confirmed by government representatives). These paragraphs outline what has been reported in the media and other research reports, as well as in correspondence with the NZ government.

Some years ago¹⁴⁶ around 100 Tuvaluans were resettled to Niue, whose own population has been migrating to NZ. There have been further discussions between the Tuvaluan and Niuen governments as to whether more Tuvaluans could migrate to Niue, both as an outlet for Tuvaluan forced migration and as a way of bolstering the Niuen population (XNA, 2004). In 2006, Niue's government commented that it had to tread softly and ensure that it had appropriate infrastructure before it agreed to anything (Pacific Magazine, 2006b). However, in 2008 the Niuen Premier indicated that his country was ready to encourage more Tuvaluans to settle there as they had fitted in well. He said that the previous resettlement has been poorly resourced and requested that the PIF provide assistance (RNZI, 2008).

¹⁴⁶ Available reports do not include a date.

The NZ Office of the Minister of Foreign Affairs (Simpson, 2008) has stated that the Tuvaluan Government has not requested that NZ provide assistance specifically to help them prepare for climate change. It also noted that although the Tuvaluan Government is committed to the PAC programme, that does not necessarily constitute a specific view from that government on a response to climate-forced migration. Nevertheless, in discussion points provided to the former NZ Minister of Foreign Affairs (date unknown), it is stated that:

While we have not made any specific commitment to resettle environmental migrants, NZ has a proven history of providing assistance to friends in need in the region. Any response to the emergence of environmental migrants would be consistent with this.

Australia has also been floated as a possible location for migration. There are reports that the Tuvaluan government approached the former Australian administration with a suggestion of granting permission to the Tuvaluans to live on one of the uninhabited islands at the northern end of Australia's Great Barrier Reef, and that the Australian government was uncooperative (Gabriel, 2004). Further reports in 2008 suggest that the Tuvaluan Prime Minister again visited Canberra (the new administration) to float a migration plan, but Australian officials have refused to comment (Crouch, 2008). Before being elected, however, the Australian Labor Party did release a policy paper where it stated that Australia should be part of an international coalition accepting climate refugees (Australian Labor Party, 2006).

6.5.2 Island authorities

Although *Falekaupule* have territorial authority and are not invited to think in terms of planning outside their areas under the Act, according to women workshop participants, some island communities have started to make plans in case of forced migration. For example, Funafuti has started fundraising and is thinking of purchasing land somewhere if it becomes necessary and if the government has no plans in place (workshop participants).¹⁴⁷

6.5.3 Community and academic leaders

Where there have been no formal responses from governments or local authorities, other actors have taken the lead in initiating discussions, exploring the issues, and ensuring that the uniqueness of Tuvaluan culture can be preserved. Reverend Tafue Lusama provides an example. When interviewed for this study, he explained that he is working on a concept paper on planning for the possibility of forced migration to give to the government. He is concerned that at the moment:

¹⁴⁷ I was unable to confirm this with the Funafuti Falekaupule, however, during my time in Tuvalu.

“All Tuvalu is doing is crying to the international community. When Tuvalu gets asked what it wants to do by the international community, Tuvalu hasn’t got any plans. Unless we prepare and give it out to the international community, they will come with the ‘solution’.”

Vaitupuan are in a slightly different situation due to the earlier migration of some of their population to Kioa Island (see case study in Appendix 1). Many think of Kioa Island as their “insurance plan” (male participant). In 2004, a retired scientist named Don Kennedy¹⁴⁸ proactively wrote a proposal to develop Kioa Island in order to house all Tuvaluans if they are forced to migrate (after having sought permission from the Vaitupuan-based *fono a matai*¹⁴⁹ of Kioa Island to do so). He believes that a mass relocation of Tuvaluans would ensure that the language and culture was preserved. The proposal was given to the Tuvaluan government, who have said that moving to Fiji is not a priority, but if they did they would need funding to develop the island (RNZI, 2006). The Fijian government has also been cautious about the plan (Pacific Magazine, 2006a). During interviews for this study, those living on Kioa Island appeared to be open to discussions about their Vaitupuan relations coming to live with them, but they were more nervous about the whole of Tuvalu migrating there. It was observed that there was a level of frustration in Kioa Island about their late involvement in seeing the proposal, and representatives of the Kioa Island Council indicated that they will continue to develop the island in line with their own plans, not those of Don Kennedy.¹⁵⁰

Other commentators are putting pressure on foreign countries to consider taking in Tuvaluans – both through individual/family-led and community-led migration. For instance, Kelman (2004), a researcher at the Centre for International Climate and Environmental Research in Norway, argues that:

Australia, Japan, NZ/Aotearoa, the USA, or other states could make an enormous impact at minimal cost to themselves by ceding appropriate islands for the Tuvaluans to re-establish their country. Such action would be a generous indication that we are all on the same planet and that we must all bear responsibility for the changes we have wrought.

Meanwhile, the Australian-based Friends of the Earth (2008) has simply called on the Australian and NZ Prime Ministers to “do more”.

¹⁴⁸ Part-Tuvaluan and son of Donald Kennedy, the former Administrator of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

¹⁴⁹ Council of the heads of the landholding family groups – the shareholders of Kioa Island.

¹⁵⁰ The Council was aware of an alternative proposal that was floated by Tito Tapugao and the former Prime Minister Koloa Talake to sell Kioa and buy land in Australia. They were pleased that this was rejected by the *fono a matai* in Vaitupu.

6.5.4 Diaspora

The Tuvaluan diaspora in countries such as NZ have not been idle. Interviews with NZ Tuvaluans revealed that they are actively speaking with their families in Tuvalu about climate change and the possibility of migration. They are also discussing with the Tuvaluan government the possibility of purchasing land for Tuvaluans in NZ. Furthermore, they have taken on an advocacy role where possible, such as communicating their concerns to the NZ government. Many feel responsible for investigating what preparations they can do to help their countrymen if they are forced to migrate, but would like direction from the Tuvaluan and NZ governments as to what will happen.

Perhaps the greatest role that the diaspora can play, however, is through sharing their experiences of migration to inform decisions about the possible relocation of Tuvaluan communities. Appendix 1 contains two detailed case studies:

- a Tuvaluan community formed following individual/family-led migration — NZ (principally Auckland-based)
- a Tuvaluan community relocated through community-led migration — Kioa Island.

Table 12 on page 126 provides a comparative analysis of these case studies against the factors identified in the literature (Table 9) and by research participants in Table 10 and Figure 24. The significant factors that can be drawn from this analysis are discussed below.

6.6 Discussion

It is the Tuvaluan government's role to initiate planning for the potential of forced migration, but this must be undertaken with regard to the regional and international context. Other countries need to be willing to talk about solutions that will meet the needs of not only their nationals, but Tuvaluans as well. There are indications that both formal and informal discussions are underway between governments. However, if Tuvalu wants to avoid having the international community dictate the terms of the migration of its people, it is important that the government articulates clear proposals to the international community and possible bilateral partners before it is too late.

Such a strategy should be developed with its people and with diaspora communities. This would first mean ensuring that they have adequate access to information about the possible migration options and process, as well as the way of life at the potential destinations. The research in this thesis, clearly shows that participants have mixed opinions about whether

migration should be individual/family-led (eg the NZ example) or community-led (eg the Kioa Island example). It in fact indicates that a double-barreled strategy may offer the best solution, that is, having policies that make it easier for people to initiate their own migration if they are willing and able, but also planning a community-led option for those who wish to remain in Tuvalu for as long as possible, or who do not have the necessary economic, social and cultural capital to relocate at an earlier stage.

Table 12 highlights that the community-led approach, which is more in line with a Tuvaluan collective approach to life, has greater potential to meet the cultural, social and psychological needs of Tuvaluans, but that it is the more complex option. One participant who had lived in both Kioa Island and NZ commented that it was easier to maintain culture in place like Kioa Island, where the population lived together on its own land. This supports the notions of identity and culture outlined in chapter three, whereby shared identity comes from sharing food, water, land, spirits, knowledge, work and social activities. This occurs more frequently on Kioa Island than in NZ.

Table 12 also shows that it is likely that Tuvaluans would maintain much more ownership over their futures if they were to migrate as communities because as a group they may have more power to migrate on their own terms. Yet, this involves a much more collective process of decision-making, both before and after establishing the community at the new destination. It also involves addressing a number of legal and economic hurdles that may themselves undermine the success of the relocation if not properly prepared for.

Community-led migration also appears to be the best option for those Tuvaluans who were not considering migration unless forced. As groups, there would need to be decisions around the timing of migration. This is difficult when it comes to climate change processes, as these processes may lead to different tipping points for different individuals, families and communities depending on the vulnerability and local adaptive capacity (eg some families may lose the use of their land before others. See Table 8 at 5.4).

If Tuvaluan people are willing to adapt and integrate more into an alternative culture, the analysis in Table 12 suggests that the option of individual/family-led migration offers more flexibility and room for individual choice (if individuals have the necessary financial and social capital). It takes into account the fact that many Tuvaluans are currently migrating for reasons other than climate change. It also allows those who feel they have reached their tipping point before entire communities have made up their minds, to be able to leave. Individual/family-led migration may mean compromising on their cultural, social and psychological needs somewhat,

although diaspora communities and host nations can assist to minimise this. It would be beneficial to find out more about the needs of Tuvaluan migrants when designing the immigration policies for individual/family-led migration.

6.7 Summary

Migration is one adaptive response to climate change. If not planned well, however, migration can be very disempowering for the people and populations involved. As a small population amongst a potential pool of 200 million environmental migrants by 2050 there is a risk that Tuvalu's unique culture, traditions and needs will not be adequately considered if forced migration were to occur. The social, cultural and economic damage can be minimised if thought is given in advance of forced migration becoming a reality, and if Tuvaluans at home and abroad participating in planning and delivering the solutions.

Like other countries in the Pacific region, migration forms part of Tuvalu's history. Tuvaluans now have networks throughout the Pacific and beyond, which demonstrate Tuvaluans adaptive capacities and provide important lessons for the future. These also create possible paths for migration, and potential support mechanisms for future migrants. Governments would do well to build on the strengths of the Tuvaluan networks and to take into account the multiple other drivers for Tuvaluan migration.

Table 12: Comparative analysis of Tuvaluan case studies of individual/family-led migration versus community-led migration

| | Individual/family-led migration (NZ) | Community-led migration (Kioa Island) |
|---------------------|--|---|
| Process | Policy established by NZ government (primarily in the interests of NZ). Individuals/families prepare and go through immigration process alone, which can be long and time consuming. Involves travelling to NZ Embassy in Fiji. | Following numerous community meetings and negotiations, a community decision to purchase Kioa Island when the opportunity arose. Negotiations with the Fijian Administration regarding immigration matters occurred as part of the purchasing process (however, see comment under Legal/Environmental). |
| | Once in NZ there are some settlement supports available from the NZ government and communities, however, greatest support comes from NZ-based Tuvaluan diaspora (if migration is to an area where there are more Tuvaluans). | Kennedy, the <i>fono a matai</i> and magistrate showed leadership from within Vaitupu. Various <i>takitaki</i> were given leadership roles on arrival in Kioa Island before a more formal leadership structure was established. Migration occurred as a community, but when local leadership was not strong or the settlers did not feel in control of their own development, factionalism occurred. Kioans have also identified uncertainty around decision-making powers as an impediment to their development – they are now working with all concerned parties to clarify decision-making powers. |
| | Tuvaluan communities form in NZ with leadership from individuals or from the Church. These communities work together to maintain <i>tuu mo aganu/iloga</i> and develop their communities. | |
| Timing of migration | Once immigration policy allowed for migration, individuals/families applied when they wished and if they met NZ immigration policy. | When the opportunity arose and the community (in particular the <i>matani</i>) decided, the settlers staggered migration over two years. |
| Knowledge | Accurate knowledge and understanding of immigration policies and processes before migrating is often limited. There are reports of people chosen under the PAC who have found themselves stuck in Fiji as they did not understand the job offer requirement. | Knowledge and understanding of immigration conditions impeded the development of Kioa Island and the connection the settlers could maintain with those back home (Vaitupuan had planned for a rotational form of migration — maximum 250 at a time — consistent with Tuvalu's history of return migration, but Fiji only allowed 250 people over 10 years for permanent migration). |

| | Individual/family-led migration (NZ) | Community-led migration (Kioa Island) |
|-----------------------------|---|--|
| Knowledge (contd) | Potential migrants are often unaware of some of the more challenging aspects of life in NZ, which can make settling difficult. This has led to some migrants returning to Tuvalu. Diaspora have an important role to play in both building understanding of the immigration policies/processes, and life in NZ. Although many Tuvaluans have learnt some English, more focus could be given to ensuring that Tuvaluans have the skills and education that is in demand in NZ (eg trades). | There had been a scouting mission to Kioa Island before migration occurred but this was insufficient to plan adequately, as the terrain was very different. A lack of experience in planning community relocation of this kind, and inadequate support from authorities in both countries also made establishing a community and developing Kioa Island challenging. |
| Economic factors | Costs of migration and subsequent living costs are met by the migrants and their families (and so it is generally limited to those with the necessary financial capital and networks). Most foodstuffs need to be purchased as the majority of Tuvaluans do not have access to land to grow their own food. In 2006, the median annual income for the Tuvaluan adult population was NZ\$19,000 (compared to NZ\$24,400 for the total NZ population), thus meeting their basic needs can be a challenge. | Money that had been saved by Vaitupu workers during the war for island developments was redirected towards the Kioa Island purchase. Additional personal donations and fundraising efforts by the <i>mataniu</i> (landholding families). Initially the settlers struggled to provide for their basic needs on Kioa Island, however, once crops had matured they could do so from the land and sea. |
| | Tuvaluan community development projects are then mostly funded through fundraising efforts amongst the NZ communities, or through grant applications to government and philanthropic funders. | Uncertainty about decision-making powers and land ownership has meant that decisions about who should cover the resettlement and development costs on Kioa Island have been difficult and are still being worked through. Many Kioans found work on other Fijian islands to meet the financial needs of their families – this produces a shortage of labour for the development of Kioa Island (mostly unpaid work). |

| | Individual/family-led migration (NZ) | Community-led migration (Kioa Island) |
|------------------------------------|---|---|
| Legal/ environmental factors | The legal and policy frameworks are set down by the NZ government, although immigration programmes such as the RSE have taken more account of Tuvaluan needs than previous immigration policies. | In addition to the confusion around immigration conditions outlined above, land tenure has proven to be problematic (although it is not disputed that the land belongs to Tuvaluans). The title was transferred to the Governor of Fiji “as trustee for and in behalf of the people of Vaitupu Island” and the <i>fono a matai</i> in Vaitupu did not consider that the migrants to Kioa had a free hand to develop the island as they wished. This has led to complex layers of authority and decision-making powers that the Kioa Island Council is looking to clarify. This challenge continues – the Kioa Island Council describe Kioans as “hang-loose citizens” who could be evicted at any time. It may have acted as a disincentive to developing the island. |
| | Policies are clearly directed at integrating Tuvaluans into the existing NZ community, rather than giving them autonomy. However, within that, Tuvaluan communities have the opportunity to form their own groups and undertake community development activities (and can receive support to do so). | This case study is clearly about the re-creation of a Tuvaluan community in Fiji, which maintains a certain level of autonomy because of its geographical isolation even though it lives under Fijian law. |
| | The physical environment in NZ is very different. The lack of ownership of land and the urban lifestyle that most Tuvaluans have adopted contrasts greatly to their situation in Tuvalu and does impact on culture and lifestyle. The NZ-based Tuvaluans are scattered and appear to miss living in close proximity to each other with a central communal base. | Kioa Island is a high island, which contrasts greatly to Tuvalu’s atolls. Kioans have had to learn to adapt, but continue to live a subsistence lifestyle (now with a more varied diet than in Tuvalu). They have maintained their village-based lifestyle and living in close proximity to each other. |

| | Individual/family-led migration (NZ) | Community-led migration (Kioa Island) |
|-------------------------------------|---|--|
| Cultural/ spiritual factors | There have been clear attempts to maintain <i>tuu mo aganu/iloga</i> and faith within the NZ-based Tuvaluan communities. Of the Pacific communities in NZ, Tuvaluans have best maintained their language. However, some research participants felt that their Christian values were somewhat compromised in NZ. Time dedicated to religion is minimised because of the demands of work and ‘ <i>palagi</i> ’ time frames’. Churches have shown leadership roles in maintaining faith, culture and community cohesion. | As the settlers arrived together, they have had to working together to build up a community on Kioa Island. The geographical isolation has made it easier to maintain language and <i>tuu mo aganu/iloga</i> , although in some instances local Fijian practices have been adopted (mostly by exposure through the education system, employment, inter-cultural marriage, and social activities). |
| | Similarly, the lifestyle, the market-based economy, and the geographical separation that occurs in NZ, have impacted on community-connectedness. Alternative influences in NZ have also impacted on the appreciation of <i>tuu mo aganu/iloga</i> amongst younger generations who see new and different opportunities. | Religion still plays a very important role in the lives of most Kioans. Although most Kioans live a subsistence lifestyle, money is of increased importance and has modified culture somewhat. |
| | NZ-based Tuvaluans do appear to be trying to maintain their high level family-centredness. In 2006, 86% lives in a family situation – 62% living with extended family. | As in Tuvalu, Kioans live in villages and are accommodated as families – this often includes multiple generations and extended families in households. |
| Social/ psychological factors | Most Tuvaluans in NZ appear happy, although participants report that life is difficult and they can be discriminated against in the workplace (life was most difficult for the first Tuvaluans to NZ). Most miss the freedom and pace of life in Tuvalu. Those who are most content are involved in community activities regularly and/or are in employment. As migrants who may not be aware of all the systems in NZ, some participants reported feeling like second-class citizens, especially where language was a problem. | Most Kioans appear happy and show pride in their identity as Kioans from a Tuvaluan origin. They report that life was particularly difficult for the first settlers although it is now getting easier, and that it was important to work as a community. Although these settlers report yearning for Tuvalu in the early years, they are now pleased to have pushed through the hard times. The support given to the Kioan settlers from neighbouring islands was important in helping them to establish themselves. |

| | Individual/family-led migration (NZ) | Community-led migration (Kioa Island) |
|--|--|---|
| Social/ Psychological factors (contd) | Many feel lonely and not as safe as they would in Tuvalu as crime levels are higher and the geographical spread of the community means that children do not have the freedom to play as they would in Tuvalu. Most associate with other Tuvaluans, rather than the wider NZ community. Their sense of belonging is as a Tuvaluan – one of the Pacific communities – rather than identifying primarily with their island in Tuvalu. | There is a sense of safety on the island — crime is very low (virtually non-existent), and because of the village community there is collective care of the children. |
| | There are more education and employment opportunities than in Tuvalu, but children are exposed to more negative influences and it is up to individual families to constantly ensure that they follow a good path. | Kioans have access to the Fijian education system, but after primary school that means leaving Kioa Island. Employment opportunities on the island are few and many have to leave the island to find jobs. Development of the island has also been slow. |
| | They maintain connections with their families in Tuvalu by sending remittances (or sometimes goods), and communicating through the telephone, post and email (where possible). Most have land in Tuvalu under the care of other family members, but the cost of returning is prohibitive (visits or group exchanges do occur at times though). In these cases, families and communities in NZ provide support to the migrants or visitors. | Contact between Kioa Island and Vaitupu is limited due mostly to the prohibitive cost of travel, and the limited communication technology on both islands. Kioans are not currently in a position to send remittances to Vaitupu. Some still have land in Tuvalu under the care of family members. Group exchanges have occurred, as have visits with the <i>fono a matai</i> when there are matters concerning Kioa land to discuss. |

Some Concluding Words

This thesis examined how a range of Tuvaluans perceive their engagement in the community and decision-making that affects their lives. It explored which factors Tuvaluans consider important for shaping their participation and their futures, as well as the role that information and different knowledges – scientific, local and theological – play in how decisions are made. In light of the climate change threat, it questioned which futures Tuvaluans might face at home or abroad, and to what extent the people are empowered to shape their own futures and build on their interconnectedness and community responsiveness. Finally, this thesis explored the extent to which Tuvaluans are empowered, as individuals and communities, to formulate their own responses to the threat of being forced to migrate beyond their own borders, and what factors need to be considered if such a future is to be planned for.

This thesis is a qualitative study. It is exploratory and involved only a small number of participants. There is, therefore, scope for further research to test the findings amongst a greater number of Tuvaluans, and against the experience of the professional government and NGO staff in the region.

Although this research has only canvassed the views of a small number of participants, it attempted to gain a more in-depth insight into their thinking, teasing out some of the nuances in the range of views expressed. Attempts were also made to triangulate the findings by using multiple research methods by repeating interviews and workshops.

Despite having been undertaken as a postgraduate study, it is hoped that the findings of this thesis will be helpful beyond academia. The rich contribution that the wide range of research participants have made to this research, both through their ideas and their initial analysis of some of the findings (eg ranking exercises), helps to make this study relevant and informative. The research followed three topics of exploration identified early on in the research process: participation, climate change and migration.

This thesis began by outlining the cultural, social, historical and temporal context of contemporary Tuvalu. Participants were asked to not only draw from their past experiences, but also to think about the futures they may face, and how Tuvaluans might shape those futures despite uncertainties and any barriers that exist to their participation. The community-hearted approach to living was identified as Tuvalu's greatest strength in planning for their possible futures, as it connects the people and makes the society resilient.

A Pacific world view is holistic. Taking account of the broader context is an important component of addressing complex challenges. These include the need to mitigate and adapt to climate change within Tuvalu, or possibly beyond Tuvaluan borders if scientific predications that Tuvalu will become inhabitable come true. Multiple perspectives help to paint such a holistic picture, including the perspectives of those at the grassroots who have conventionally, within the field of development, been treated as ‘beneficiaries’ of development projects rather than participants. Much of the world is now striving to increase the participation of citizens in the development of themselves, their lives and their environment. Tuvalu has cultural foundations that set a sound foundation for the future of participation. Tuvalu’s recognition of the importance of civic participation is also embedded in *Te Kakeega II: National Strategy for Sustainable Development — 2005—2015*.

Tuvaluans in the research sample indicated that they relate mostly to those mechanisms for participation that are historically significant or in close geographical proximity (that is to say, communities of place rather than communities of interest). These have mostly served them well. However, now that the complex challenges of the world are on Tuvalu’s doorstep, threatening Tuvalu’s future, these mechanisms may no longer be adequate. This research suggested that Tuvalu’s formal and informal oral networks through which information passes, may no longer be sufficient to ensure that Tuvaluans have the information they need to inform their individual, family, community and national decisions and actions. This includes information on processes, institutions and factors of influence in their lives such as climate change, migration options and/or processes, and the Falekaupule Act. Internet technologies may offer some low cost solutions for increasing information dissemination, however, access to this technology is still limited in Tuvalu. Moreover, although online forums could potentially offer a new form of civic engagement, they will only ever be a partial substitute for the communities of place that are central to Tuvaluan life. This research has shown that loss of or change in land directly impacts on the social fabric of Tuvaluan communities. Therefore, there is value in strengthening the existing mechanisms for engagement, in particular, the relationships between central government agencies and the local *Falekaupule*.

Culture, institutions and networks change over time in response to varying conditions. The Tuvaluan government and NGOs are aware of this, and are working to realign their processes to meet the demands of the twenty-first century whilst remaining true to *tuu mo aganu/iloga*. It was found that underlying tensions requiring further exploration include: the changing roles of women and youth and *tuu mo aganu/iloga*; how scientific knowledge relates to theological and traditional knowledge; and the future of ‘community’ and sharing practices as the increased demand for

money brings with it increased individualism. To what extent this individualism may be accentuated by the effects of climate change warrants further investigation.

Tuvaluan limits in human capacity and financial resources restrict the extent to which development plans can be implemented, and can increase Tuvalu's reliance on the outside world. Delays in project implementation can bring about frustration in the community, which undermines Tuvalu's strong community spirit and resources. The multiple layers of trust funds in Tuvalu do assist somewhat, but if climate-smart development projects continue to be delayed, Tuvalu's future within its own land may become less feasible.

Beyond Tuvaluan shores, Tuvaluans are able to shape some aspects of their own futures. Tuvaluans have a history of migration and have extensive networks, in particular family-based networks, throughout the world. They tend to congregate wherever they are and work towards the development of their people both within the diaspora communities and in their home country. Yet, there are significant geographical and lifestyle constraints to participation in countries such as New Zealand. Tuvaluans are also limited in the extent to which they can influence the immigration opportunities available to them, as destination countries tend to generate immigration policy that is primarily in the interests of their state. New labour mobility policies in New Zealand and Australia (the two destinations research participants identified as attractive for migration) may be signs of a change in this tendency, as they have sought increased policy coherence for development in the region.

This research showed that like others, Tuvaluans already migrate for many reasons, the least of which appears to be climate change. However, if there is to be forced migration from Tuvalu because of climatic processes or a climatic event, there is a risk that Tuvaluans may become disempowered and unable to meet their social, cultural, economic and spiritual needs. Moreover, their communal way of life may be undermined. Research participants felt there were a number of factors and principles that need to be considered in preparation for the possibility of forced migration. This includes ensuring that the decision-making processes involve the potential migrants and diaspora communities, as well as maintain and strengthen connections between Tuvaluans at home and abroad. Participants identified two possible options – community-led or individual/family-led migration. Although this thesis began to explore the complexity of these options through examining past Tuvaluan experience, there is much more work to be done with Tuvaluans both at home and abroad in exploring these options further.

There are a number of themes that participants identified as important throughout this research including: the role of land, people and social structures, economy, and quality of life. Wherever

Tuvaluans may find themselves in the future, these factors should remain central to planning for their development. It would also be beneficial to find out more about the specific needs of Tuvaluan migrants in the destination countries (compared to other Pacific groups) when designing immigration and settlement policies.

The challenges that Tuvalu and the world face are complex – they transcend borders – but so too do the solutions. Participatory processes need to adjust to this new environment, and solutions need to take into account civil society's networks and the resources that are the people.

Life is changing
Make the right decisions
You are now part of a global village
Go with confidence
And don't panic
Never look back!

(Tuvaluan Song, sung in the Funafuti Manaepa in Bayer & Salzman, 2005)

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Case studies

Case study 8: Community-led Tuvaluan migration to Kioa Island, Fiji¹⁵¹

Verse I

Ite tausaga 1947
Ite lua afeafe ate asu Tapu
Ne tu laukele mai ei aui Kioa nei
Seai loa se fakatalofa io mese leo i logona
Te loto fiafaki kai fai la nei pefeia.

Chorus

Fakalofa au
Fakalofa au
Fakalofa au i toku loto nei
Mea ne momoe,
Kae ne faga ne koe
Vaitupu e
Manaua mai au ne leve.

Verse II

Fakafetai lasi te Atua ite lagi
Mo tena alofa lasi mo tatou
Ko aulia manuia nei tatou te aso tenei
Fa-sefulu-valu tausaga o Kioa mo toku galue
fua mo toku malie
Fakafetai lasi mote pula te Atua.

Kioan song – name and author unknown.

Verse I

In the year 1947
At two o'clock on a Sunday afternoon
I set foot in Kioa
There is no welcome, no sounds to be heard
We think of return but there is nothing that
can be done.

Chorus

Pity on me
Pity on me
Deep pity on me
It was lying dormant and you woke it
Vaitupu remember us here.

Verse II

Thank you very much to God up there
For all the love that you have given us
You have blessed us with this richness on
this day
Forty-eight years now in Kioa
Working without pay
Thank you very much for the leadership
God.

This case study provides an outline of Tuvaluan community-led migration to Kioa Island; the challenges faced in establishing the community on the island; as well as contemporary life on Kioa Island and the migrants' continuing connections to Tuvalu.

¹⁵¹ Information for this case study is drawn primarily from interviews with and observations of Kioans and Vaitupuan in Tuvalu, Kioa and NZ; the *Kioa Island Proposed Budget for 2009* (Kioa Island Council, 2008); an anthropological study *Kioa: An Ellice Community in Fiji* (White, 1965); and Koch's 1978 biography of Neli Lifuka, *Logs in the Current of the Sea*. There are inconsistencies in the information gathered due mostly to the passage of time that has passed since the original migrations from Tuvalu to Kioa and the various lenses through which participants and authors interpret history. Rather than resolve these inconsistencies, I have attempted to draw lessons from them where possible.

Introducing Kioa Island

Kioa Island is located just off the east coast of Vanua Levu, Fiji (see Figure 25). It was first purchased by the people of the Tuvaluan island of Vaitupu in 1947. The Fijian government agreed for up to 250 people to migrate from Vaitupu to Kioa Island. Two generations on, the Kioa Island Council reports that the population of Kioa Island is now around 600 (although some are temporarily resident elsewhere in Fiji).

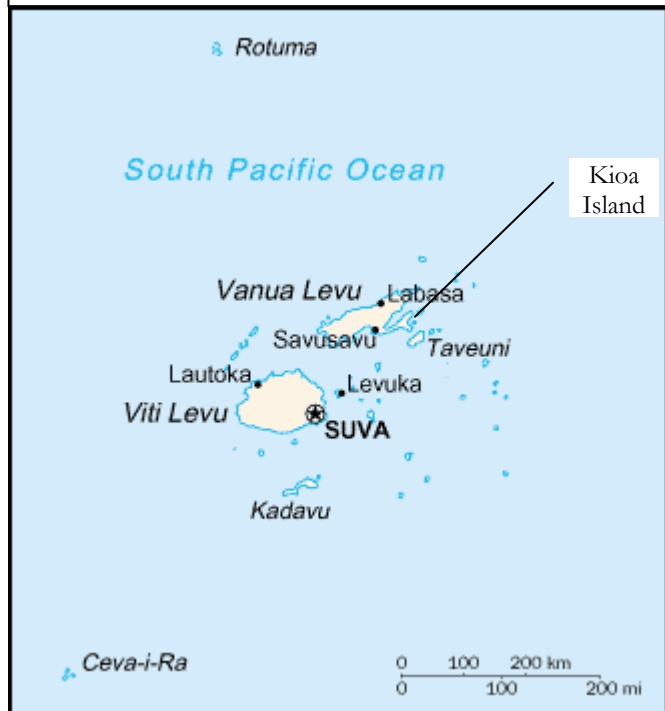
Many media reports indicate that

Kioa Island was purchased due to overpopulation in Vaitupu. This, however, is not an accurate account of what occurred. Unlike other islands in the then Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony, Vaitupu did not have pressing population concerns – families had enough land and food, droughts were rare, and there were medical and educational facilities available. There were also much more fruitful offshore employment opportunities available in places such as Nauru, Banaba (Ocean Island), and Tarawa.

The purchase of Kioa Island was in fact an example of Vaitupuan seizing an opportunity presented to them by a *palagi*, Donald Kennedy.¹⁵² Kennedy was in the process of relocating Banabans to the island of Rabi in Fiji,¹⁵³ when he alerted the Vaitupuan to the upcoming public auction of Kioa Island. Initial discussions between Kennedy and those in Vaitupu appear to have been brief, and it is unclear from the various accounts whether it was the Vaitupuan *aliki* (the *ulu aliki* Laupula and another *aliki* Ueseli), or the young and influential Vaitupuan magistrate (Neli Lifuka) who took the lead in seizing this opportunity. What is clear, however, is that before any final decision was made there were many behind-the-scenes discussions and the whole community came together in the Vaitupu *manaepa* to discuss the benefits of making the investment. The final

Figure 25: Map showing location of Kioa Island

Source: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Fiji_map.png



¹⁵² Previously the founder and headmaster of the Government School located in Vaitupu as well as a former administrator of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony.

¹⁵³ Clearing the land in Banabas (Ocean Island) so that phosphate could be exploited.

factors driving the community decision to purchase Kioa Island appear to have been:

- the fertility of the Fijian land compared to that on the Vaitupuan atoll, and its access to other markets. Vaitupuan thought it may generate income for them in the future (this was particularly important as they recalled the copra crisis of the 1930s)
- the pride of Vaitupuan in being a progressive island within the Ellice (Tuvalu) group
- the possible future overpopulation of Vaitupu. This appears to have been an afterthought.

When it came to volunteering to go to Kioa Island the motivations appear to have been different at the individual and family levels. There were four main boats of settlers between 1947 and 1951, chosen by the Kioan *fono a matai* (council of the heads of the landholding family groups – the shareholders). The first group were chosen with the goal of having able-bodied workers on Kioa to establish the village. No children (but one) were allowed. An *ofo* (challenge) was laid down¹⁵⁴ for people to volunteer. On the second boat, selection was more relaxed – each man could take his wife and one child. By the third trip people were less willing to volunteer as they had learned that life on Kioa Island was difficult, and representatives of those shareholder families that had not sent someone previously were persuaded to go. This was a similar story with the fourth boat. Those on the first boats went mostly because of their ability to work, and because of their expertise (eg on the second boat the person sent to relieve the first *takitaki* (leader) was both a teacher and a dresser¹⁵⁵). Other settlers went to serve their island or family, others went to visit, wanting “to see the hills and the mountains”. Some of these settlers only planned to go temporarily, while others set out to establish permanent homes.

The Gilbert and Ellice Islands Colony Administration did not make any financial contributions to the purchase of Kioa Island,¹⁵⁶ the money came from the Vaitupuan people themselves. Money that had been saved by Vaitupu workers during the war for island developments, such as a maternity hospital, was redirected towards the Kioa Island purchase. Moreover, through additional personal donations and fundraising efforts the Vaitupuan saved around £5,000, purchasing the island freehold for only £3015. Those *mataniu* (landholding family groups) that made contributions and signed the trust deed became the 110 shareholders.¹⁵⁷

¹⁵⁴ A mat was laid down for three days and people could offer themselves / their lives.

¹⁵⁵ A person who serves as a doctor's assistant especially in the dressing of lesions.

¹⁵⁶ The Resident Commissioner of the Gilbert and Ellice Islands did attend the auction of the island on behalf of the Vaitupuan people.

¹⁵⁷ Following the World War II the Fijian Government imposed restrictions on immigration and the purchase of

Although, the purchase of the fertile Kioa Island had much potential, this has only partially been fulfilled. Bedford (1967) considers that the difficulties experienced were due to the Vaitupuan lack of experience in undertaking such a venture. As outlined in chapter six, such community-led migration is complex, and to be fully successful requires good planning, inspiring leadership, and adequate knowledge and resources.

There are dimensions of life on Kioa Island that have flourished – most importantly, Kioan settlers have shown adaptability to a vastly different situation. Kioans have also maintained their spiritual wellbeing (for example, the bells still chime to remind everyone to take time for devotion), the Tuvaluan language, and many of their cultural practices (discussed further below).

On Kioa Island there is limited access to energy supplies, technology, medical care and other forms of social assistance. Some food stuffs can be purchased through the local cooperative store, but most food comes from the land and the sea. Thus, Kioans continue to live a subsistence lifestyle with close connection to the land.

They now plant a more diverse range of crops, providing Kioans with a more varied diet than in Tuvalu. They still value family connectedness, and appear happy and confident in their identity as Kioans with Tuvaluan heritage. Moreover, like in Vaitupu, most Kioans live geographically close to each other in the settlement of Salia (Figure 26), despite the large size of the island.¹⁵⁸ This naturally facilitates community connection and helps make Kioa Island a safe place to live. They also divide their settlement into two villages (*fakai*) or sides for the purposes of competition and activities.

Figure 26: Kioa Island, showing area of settlement

(Source: adapted from Google Earth Maps)



There have been particular challenges to the development of Kioa Island, in particular:

- misunderstandings regarding immigration matters

land, preventing further acquisitions from Tuvaluans. (Bedford, 1967)

¹⁵⁸ The island is mountainous and travel by land takes time. Kioans also travel by boat around the island.

- lack of pre-departure knowledge of Kioa Island and surrounding circumstances, causing an inadequate ability to plan
- complex layers of authority and decision-making powers, as well as gaps in local leadership
- lack of local control or adequate consultation
- uncertainty around land tenure.

Further detail is provided below.

Immigration matters

Unfortunately, there was a misunderstanding between the Vaitupuan people and the Fijian administration in regards to migration to Kioa Island. It had been agreed that 250 people could go to Kioa over ten years, however, the Vaitupuan people thought that this mean that 250 people could be at any one time on Kioa Island, but that they could rotate who these people were. The Vaitupuan plan for Kioa Island settlement would have created a much closer relationship between Vaitupuan and Kioans over the generations, however, the need to permanently relocate Vaitupuan to Kioa Island led to the development of two distinct population groups, which continue to relate on contemporary matters, but based on historical ties.¹⁵⁹

Predeparture knowledge of Kioa Island

Although a scouting party was sent to Kioa Island from Vaitupu before the purchase, knowledge of Kioa Island was very limited. Kioa Island is rugged and mountainous with only narrow coastal bands – in great contrast to Vaitupu. Island temperatures are also much cooler than in Tuvalu. The only structures on Kioa Island at the time of purchase were a copra dryer at Salia and a house on the opposite side of the island, at Namba. Thus, the first settlers had to begin by building basic community infrastructure. The song introducing this case study reveals how difficult it was for the original settlers. Siapo Nimo, who travelled on the first boat describes the arrival:

“There were high expectations before we arrived, but when we arrived there was only one shelter on the beach. It was the first time that we had seen big mountains, and the only thing we felt was regret. There was a call for the first devotion. We started the hymn, but by the second verse, we heard the ship leaving and we were all weeping. It was not what we had expected.”

Planning for the relocation was done by the *fono a matai* from Vaitupu – the colonial

¹⁵⁹ The immigration scheme, however, was much easier for Fiji to administer than that proposed by the Vaitupuan.

administrations were only involved as far as dealing with immigration and transport matters. Unfortunately, the first group had no food supplies when they arrived due to a boat capsizing as the food was being transferred to the ship. The support and goodwill of Fijians and Rabi Banabans nearby was, therefore, essential in the early days in helping them to establish themselves; in learning which foods were edible; and how to plant crops in a foreign terrain. Food rations remained very small for a few years until crops began to mature.

Drawing from the Tuvaluan sense of community, the new arrivals were able to work together to build their homes at Salia (the houses for the first settlers were completed in three weeks and many are still lived in), their *manaepa* (after the completion of the houses) and their Church (following the arrival of the second boat). They did this under the direction of a *takitaki* (leader). Following the arrival of a new *takitaki* on the second boat, working crews were divided into groups for house building, land clearing, and cutting and drying copra from a neglected plantation in Namba.

Land tenure

Land tenure on Kioa Island proved to be problematic, undermining development efforts on the island.¹⁶⁰ Early on, a decision was made to transfer the title of the land to the Governor of Fiji “as trustee for and in behalf of the people of Vaitupu Island”. The *fono a matai* in Vaitupu thus did not consider that the migrants to Kioa Island (which represented some, but not all, of the *mataniu*) had a free hand to develop the island as they wished.¹⁶¹ This decision caused many problems in relation to who had the authority to make decisions about land division and use. It is claimed that the confusion regarding land title in Kioa Island was a disincentive to developing the island — Kioans were not deemed to be shareholders, so they were doubtful as to whether the development work they undertook would be of benefit to themselves and their families in the future.¹⁶² This challenge continues to this day — the Kioa Island Council (2008) has described Kioans as “hang-loose citizens” who could be evicted at any time.

¹⁶⁰ See the appendix in Koch (1978) for full discussion of the legal history of the Kioa settlement.

¹⁶¹ Officially, the *matai* remained in Vaitupu and *sui matai* (sub-*matai*) became the custodians of the land for each family on Kioa Island. A Vaitupuan-based *matai* explains: “If I am a *matai*, I have to pass this to someone and become a *sui matai*, and then I can move to Kioa.” However, over time this system appears to have become less clear cut as new generations have been born on Kioa Island and the challenges of land tenure have become apparent. There are now people resident in Kioa Island who consider themselves to be *matai* (passed down through their fathers), but who are considered to be *sui matai* by those in Vaitupu. The *matai* / *sui matai* differentiation is important because it relates to who has the authority to make decisions about land usage and tenure on Kioa Island.

¹⁶² There is concern that if title to land is put in the names of individuals or families, rather than in the name of the trustees on behalf of the community then land can be sold off to non-Kioans or non-Vaitupuan.

It might be argued that had [the colonial administrations] given more attention to land tenure as practiced in Vaitupu and had they advised Vaitupu to imitate a system of tenure on Kioa more consistent with the traditional values placed on land ownership then much of the trouble on Kioa could have been prevented. This, however, ignores the complexity of the problem – initial difficulties of detailed coordination, environmental change, the piecemeal population of Kioa, shareholders resident on both islands, and subsequent communication difficulties. (White, 1965)

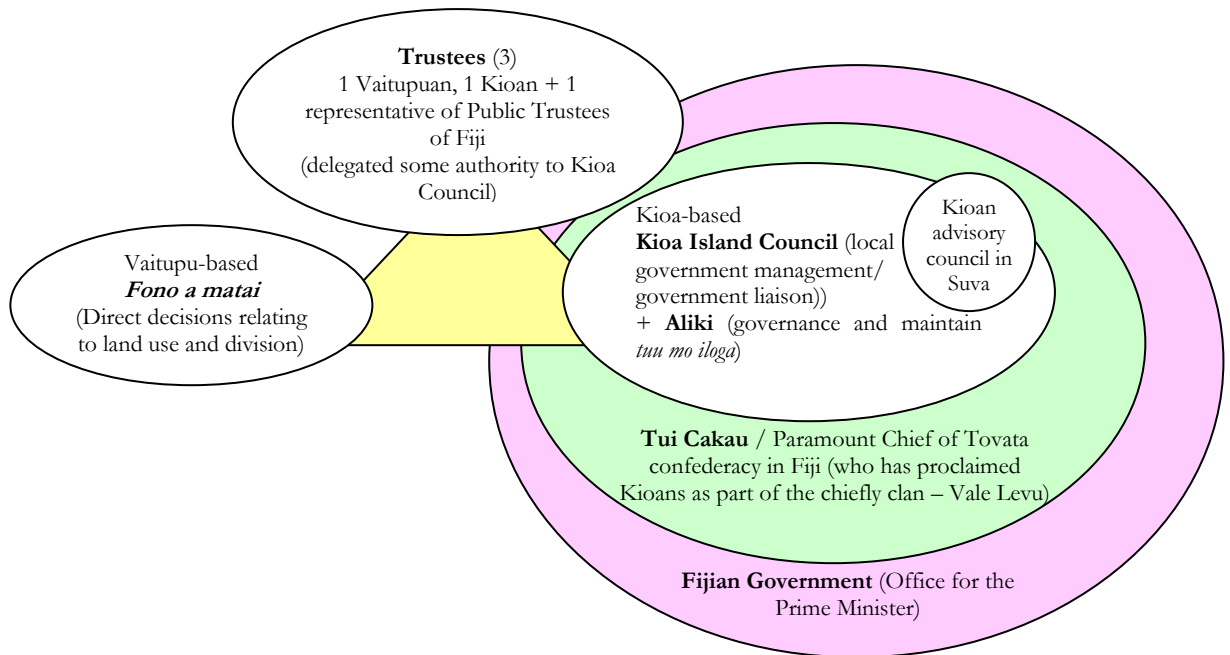
Authority, leadership and consultation

Strong local leadership was needed to ensure that the Kioan community continued to effectively work together. Unfortunately, factionalism occurred in various instances as Kioans disagreed both amongst themselves, and with the *fono a matai* back in Vaitupu on who should lead and how the island should be developed. The most notable dispute was in relation to Kennedy (the *palagi* who had first proposed the Kioa Island purchase). He had visited Kioa Island and had been asked to remain as a development advisor. He invested his own money into the island and proposed plans for land ownership and development from which he too would benefit. Over half of the Kioan residents were suspicious about Kennedy's motives. They also felt that Kennedy was only consulting with the *takitaki* of the day about development plans – they wished to participate and be more in control of their own development. This resulted in the Kioan residents asking Kennedy to leave.¹⁶³

Local leadership challenges were exacerbated by the complex layers of authority and decision-making powers. This has improved slightly over time — Figure 27 below represents the current situation. What this diagram does not show, however, is the lack of formal authority that the locally elected Kioa Island Council has to make decisions. This Council is elected every three years by Kioans, however, the ultimate power lies with the trustees,¹⁶⁴ and decisions over land use and division are ultimately made by the Vaitupuan-based *fono a matai*. The Council is responsible for leading island development planning (like the *Kaupule* in Tuvalu) and putting proposals before the *aliki*. They have now established an advisory council made up of educated and employed Kioans based in Suva. This Council feels that if it had more authority to make decisions, island development would proceed much faster. The latest plans from the Council try to address the matter of decision-making authority.

¹⁶³ Although Kioans have reconciled nowadays, this still remains a sensitive issue amongst those who were involved.

¹⁶⁴ Only one of which is a Kioan, who is currently understood to be based in NZ.

Figure 27: Kioan decision-making authority

The uncertainty about decision-making powers and land ownership also means that decisions about who should cover the resettlement and development costs of Kioa have been difficult to make: should it be those who have relocated and who have been responsible for building up the community? Or should it be the Vaitupu-based *fono a matai*? There is a tension for those on Kioa Island between allowing residents to go off to other Fijian islands to earn money for their families' survival, and requiring them to stay to contribute to the island's development at home through mostly unpaid labour. On the other hand, those in Vaitupu feel that they have already contributed to the purchase of the land, and although they have made some further small contributions, they have been limited in the support they could or wish to provide.

At the time of agreeing to the settlement of Kioa Island, the Fijian government believed that:

The settlement or settlements would, of course, be entirely self-supporting and their establishment would occasion no expense whatever to the Fiji Government who would, on the other hand, benefit materially from the advent of an element generally recognised to be exceptionally hard-working, frugal and law abiding. (File note CS 128/23/1 cited in K. Koch, 1978)

Yet, the Fijian government has taken some responsibility in helping to develop Kioa Island through the contribution of funds for community projects,¹⁶⁵ by providing technical

¹⁶⁵ Nowadays the Fijian government provides F\$20,000 annually in line with development proposals submitted to the Fijian Office for the Prime Minister.

advice,¹⁶⁶ and by giving Kioans tax benefits in the year immediately following their arrival.

To overcome funding challenges, in 2008 a decision has been made to have a Kioan Trust Fund to help in the development of the island. The details for the fund are still being worked out, but it has been suggested that it will have five community bases – Kioa Island (main), Viti Levu (Fiji), Vanua Levu (Fiji), Tuvalu, and NZ – each of which will be required to make contributions. They have set a target amount for collection by Kioa Island's 70th Anniversary in 2017, which will go towards the island's development.

Living on Kioa Island

These technical and development challenges have weighed greatly on Kioan settlers and the generations that have followed. There are those who returned to Vaitupu – some because life in Kioa was too difficult, others for health reasons or for marriage. Yet, the people who remain in Kioa Island now consider themselves to be Kioan in the first instance (rather than Tuvaluan). A new generation of Kioans clearly regard themselves as Fijian citizens and express gratitude for having been raised in Kioa. Many have not visited Tuvalu, although they think of Tuvalu as their motherland.

Much of Tuvaluan culture has continued in Kioa Island, and the Church continues to play an important role. However, there are changes that can be observed. Money plays a much greater role in life – many people work on the Fijian mainland,¹⁶⁷ and Kioan elders observe that less people go to weddings and other celebrations than in Tuvalu as costs are prohibitive. Kioa Island has not yet positioned itself to be able to participate much in the market (apart from through its workers). They have had small sales of logging, copra and fishing at various times. They also have limited engagement in the tourist industry through irregular *fatele* performances, sale of handcrafts, and tourist visits to the island.

Fijian customs have also influenced Kioans (for example, the use of *kava*¹⁶⁸ during ceremonies). Kioans claim that their own culture has also influenced the Fijian culture (for example, the Chief who has adopted the Tuvaluan *naka* (canoe) ceremony to welcome special visitors).

¹⁶⁶ For example, the Fijian Administration sent someone to advise Kioans on the proper materials to be used for house posts and poles, as well as in how to plait bamboo for walls and flooring.

¹⁶⁷ Many of the adults have access to employment opportunities throughout Fiji, and are able to remit money home, visiting Kioa Island much more frequently than Vaitupuan who work abroad and remit money home.

¹⁶⁸ A drink made from the Piper Methysticum plant used in Pacific communities, largely for ceremonial purposes.

As Fijian citizens, children attend primary school on Kioa Island in the Tuvaluan language, followed by high school on Taveuni Island (a boat ride away) in the Fijian language.¹⁶⁹ Some have gone on to university in Suva and beyond. Through this outside education, the younger generations are exposed to alternative cultures and lifestyles, although their connection to Kioa Island remains strong due to its close proximity. Intermarriage with non-Tuvaluans / non-Kioans is also becoming more common, especially as there is a shortage of women of marriageable age on Kioa Island.

Connecting with Tuvalu (and beyond)

Contact between Kioa Island and Vaitupu is limited due mostly to the prohibitive cost of travel, and the limited communication technology on both islands. Kioans are not currently in a position to send remittances to Vaitupu. Many Kioans still have land in Vaitupu under the care of other family members. Group exchanges have occurred, as have visits with the *fono a matai* when there are matters concerning Kioan land to discuss. Kioans also have family members in other countries such as NZ, although as Fijians, they do not have access to the PAC immigration policy.

¹⁶⁹ Some students have been sent to Motufoua High School in Vaitupu so they can get to know their own roots.

Case study 9: Individual/family-led Tuvaluan migration to NZ¹⁷⁰**KI MUA***Verse 1*

Taunuku mai i tatou i tenei nuku fou
 Te kehekehe mai
 Faigata o te olaga te fakafita a tatou
 Hoga hoga mai

Verse 2

A fia malamalama ki tatou
 I te gagana ma na uiga o ki latou
 Fakalogologo ki ei
 Fakatu ai au tautahi
 Taumahai tatou tokolahi
 Faka holoholo ki ei

Chorus

E fano ai au i toku mafaufau
 I te kukula mate filemu
 Tokaga ki mea oku matua
 Te fehili kua laga a tu ki mua
 Ko matou e fia kai ite kavei
 Te malau pulaka ma te fekei

Verse 3

Kua manatua na taimi ma na uiga fakafiafia
 Miti miti mai
 Te mimita lahi ki haiga ko na uiga fakatahi
 Fitikitiki mai

Chant

Galulue mai ki mua nei
 Tahahao mai ki mua nei
 Pehepehe mai ki mua nei
 Fatele mai ki mua nei

Written by Opetai Foa'i (who is half Tokelauan, half Tuvaluan, born in Samoa and bought up in a Tokelauan community in NZ). Sung by the NZ-based band "Te Vaka" of which many members are part Tuvaluan.

TO THE FUTURE*Verse 1*

When we arrived in this new land
 it was so different
 we struggled with the life
 it was very hard on us
 but we were determined

Verse 2

We struggled to understand
 this language and new way of doing things
 We listened hard
 I stood up among
 the many who were adjusting
 moving towards understanding together

Chorus

But I go there in my mind
 The red sky and the peacefulness
 remembering what my parents taught me
 many questions come to the fore
 also craving for familiar food
 The *malau* (fish), *pulaka* (taro) and *fekei* (octopus dish)

Verse 3

I remember times of great joy
 always dreaming about it
 the pride in living among my close family
 keeping it together

Chant

We're working to the future
 we're playing to the future
 we're singing to the future
 we're dancing to the future

Translation from www.tevaka.com.

¹⁷⁰ Information for this case study is taken from NZ census data and from interviews with, and observations of, primarily the Auckland-based Tuvaluan community.

This case study provides an outline of Tuvaluan individual/family-led migration to NZ; the challenges Tuvaluans face in living in NZ and forming communities; and contemporary life on NZ and the diasporas' continuing connections back to Tuvalu.

Introducing the NZ-based Tuvaluan diaspora

NZ is home to a large and diverse Pacific population. The ability of Tuvaluans to migrate to NZ has been determined by NZ government policies and processes. This is largely guided by NZ's needs and not created with potential migrants' needs in mind. Individuals/families then decide whether they wish to migrate in accordance with those policies and processes. Some research participants found immigration policies and processes difficult to understand and follow. The processes were often drawn out and may involve travelling to the NZ Embassy in Fiji for an interview.¹⁷¹

In the 1970s, the NZ government introduced a labour scheme that allowed Tuvaluans to work in NZ on 11-month contracts – most returned home at the end of their contracts. Tuvaluans then began migrating to NZ under a guest-worker scheme in 1986, which provided work permits for up to 80 workers from Tuvalu to be employed in NZ at any one time (for a maximum period of three years). At that time, Tuvaluans could also enter under the three month visa-free period that they are allowed for family visits and holidays. In both instances, once in NZ many Tuvaluans remained through means such as renewing their visas, marrying NZ residents, or overstaying. Visa-free entry and the guest-worker scheme ceased in 2002. Instead, the PAC scheme was introduced in 2003, allowing for the entry of up to 75 Tuvaluans each year for residence purposes. To gain residence it was necessary to have a job offer. The temporary RSE scheme was then introduced in 2007 to meet NZ's need for increased seasonal labour over the fruit-picking season, as well as to enable increased remittances to be sent to countries such as Tuvalu. Tuvaluans have also entered NZ on student permits (at times on scholarship) or on workplace attachments. The conditions of these schemes normally mean that the person must return to Tuvalu on completion of their study or attachment.

The reasons for migration are as set out in chapter six. Decisions to migrate were made by individuals or families, and the costs of their migration and subsequent living costs are met by the same people or their families. Potential migrants to NZ note that saving in advance of migration makes settling into NZ much easier.

¹⁷¹ There are reports of people who were unable to gain the job offers they required in time, and finding themselves stuck in Fiji.

The Tuvaluan population in NZ has increased rapidly since the turn of the century. Some people migrated from Tuvalu, others came directly from countries such as Nauru where they have previously been working in the phosphate mines. In 2006, there were 2,625 people who identified as Tuvaluan (or part Tuvaluan) in the NZ census — an increase of 34% since 2001. Of those who identified as Tuvaluan, 954 were born in NZ.

Living in NZ

Research participants reported both positive and negative aspects of life in NZ. Although many have made NZ their home, some Tuvaluans have returned to their homeland after intending to migrate permanently, having discovered that life in NZ was much harder than expected.

Despite coming from a village-based lifestyle in Tuvalu, 99% of Tuvaluans in NZ lived in urban areas in 2006 — 80% lived in Auckland (in particular South and West Auckland, which are divided by over an hour's drive). This geographical separation gave many participants a sense of loneliness, as visiting with friends and family was more difficult. NZ-based Tuvaluans jokingly point to the Auckland suburb of Ranui as the Tuvaluan capital in NZ (there are even particular streets that are home to multiple Tuvaluan families). During interviews with NZ-based Tuvaluans, it was clear that many had a preference for the geographical closeness of friends and family that is experienced in Tuvalu. Thus, it makes sense that they would seek to form geographical communities.

Tuvaluans who are NZ residents have access to existing systems education, medical care and income support (where necessary).¹⁷² Living in NZ also gives them greater access to a variety of foods and goods than they would have in Tuvalu, including more advanced technology.

Parents who participated in this research claimed that their children are exposed to more negative influences in NZ and that it is up to individual families to constantly ensure that they follow a good path. They also commented on how it is much harder to have communal responsibility for the care of children (as in Tuvalu) due to the geographical spread of the community. They do not consider it as safe for children to play in the open as they would in Tuvalu, as crime in NZ is higher than in their homeland.

Most participants associated with other Tuvaluans, rather than the wider NZ community. Some participants reported that as migrants, who may not be aware of all the systems and ways in NZ, they felt like second-class citizens, especially where language was a problem. There were also reports of discrimination in the workplace.

¹⁷² Twenty-four percent received income support.

Most participants considered life in NZ to be expensive and they emphasised the need to learn to budget. One participant stated that “the meter starts ticking the moment you leave your doorway – everything costs money”. At the time of 2006 census, 56% of the Tuvaluan adult population were employed either full or part-time. The most common occupations for Tuvaluans in NZ were labourers (41%), followed by professionals and community and personal service workers at 10% each. Only 2% of Tuvaluan adults were self-employed. In 2006, the median annual income for the Tuvaluan adult population was NZ\$19,000 compared to NZ\$24,400 for the total NZ population.

A big difference for Tuvaluans in NZ is in land ownership. In 2006, only 14% of Tuvaluan adults in NZ owned, or partly owned, the dwelling they lived in – most were in rental accommodation. A significant factor of not owning land is the need to buy most foodstuffs instead of growing them. Research participants also noted the extra expense of not being able to bury their dead on their land. The expenses associated with funerals and the purchasing of plots is significant, and they reported having less money available for other family events such as weddings and birthdays.

Maintaining culture and religion

In the 2006 census, 93% of NZ-based Tuvaluans indicated that they were of a Christian religion (less than in Tuvalu).¹⁷³ However, some participants in this research felt that their Christian values were somewhat compromised in NZ where time dedicated to religion was minimised due to the demands of work and *palagi* time frames. Similarly, community-connectedness is impacted on by the busyness of life in NZ.

“In NZ, because of the distance and because we are all working at different times, we can’t make time to be as *talavou*.” (male participant)

As the song at the beginning of this case study indicates, for the first Tuvaluan migrants to NZ there was not much support.¹⁷⁴ Where there were no other Tuvaluans, migrants reported feeling lonely and disconnected from their culture. For this reason community groups sprung up wherever multiple Tuvaluans resided,¹⁷⁵ often led by individual leaders or the Church.¹⁷⁶ During interviews, members of the Tuvaluan community in Auckland described how a new Church had

¹⁷³ The predominant Church in Tuvalu, the EKT, has itself set up five churches in NZ (four in Auckland and one in Wellington), although Tuvaluans also attend other Churches.

¹⁷⁴ The NZ government and community organisations in NZ now provide a much wider variety of settlement support.

¹⁷⁵ Some new arrivals to NZ choose not to associate with the Tuvaluan communities in NZ during their first years, as they are establishing themselves and cannot afford to contribute.

¹⁷⁶ This can be contrasted with community-led migration where everybody already belongs to a community when they arrive in their destination.

been established in an area where some Tuvaluans were feeling lost – thus, the Church has an important role in maintaining culture and driving community development (eg in West Auckland where some Tuvaluans meet weekly in the church hall for aerobics to help address health issues in the community). Tuvaluan community development projects are mostly funded through fundraising efforts amongst local Tuvaluan communities, or through grant applications to government and philanthropic funders. Other projects are undertaken alongside other Pacific groups (eg the Waitakere Pacific Arts and Cultural Centre).

When living in countries such as NZ, Tuvaluans are ‘lumped in’ with other minority groups and Pacific nations for the purposes of policy and service delivery, and as a minority in the NZ Pacific population it can be harder to maintain the uniqueness of the Tuvaluan culture and address specific Tuvaluan needs. Thus, in contrast to Tuvaluans in Tuvalu, most NZ-based Tuvaluan participants indicated that they identified firstly as Tuvaluan, and only secondly as from their home island. Nevertheless, participants said that associations for each island meet monthly in Auckland, and each of these associations are members of the Tuvalu Community Trust.¹⁷⁷

A challenge faced by the Tuvaluan communities in NZ is the fact that most do not have access to land of their own to create a ‘centre’ or *ahiga* in which to bring the community together.¹⁷⁸ For instance, although the South Auckland Tuvaluan community had planned activities for Tuvaluan Independence Day 2008 on a local marae, they needed to vacate the marae when it was suddenly required for a *tangi* (funeral).

NZ-based Tuvaluans do appear to be trying to maintain their high level family-centredness. In 2006, they were more likely to live in a family situation (86%) than the total NZ population – 62% living with extended family, and 25% in households with two or more families.¹⁷⁹ However, participants in the research described how it was much more difficult to have as much family time as they did in Tuvalu because of all the demands of life in NZ. Many made great efforts to ensure that they made time for family evening devotion each day.

Language retention is one method of gauging culture retention. In the 2006, 71% of Tuvaluans maintained that they could hold an everyday conversation in Tuvaluan. The desire to teach the language to younger generations was clearly expressed by many participants who said they tried to

¹⁷⁷ On the Trust there are three members from each of the island associations plus a chair, a secretary and a treasurer. There are no *aliki*.

¹⁷⁸ One of the Churches does own its own land, and other Tuvaluan community groups are fundraising to purchase land on which to build a Church and a hall.

¹⁷⁹ These do not add up to 86% due to rounding.

encourage the use of Tuvaluan in the home as they saw language as the gateway to Tuvaluan culture. A Tuvaluan preschool has also been established in Auckland and some of the older women are part of the 'Pacific Mamas' who teach traditional arts and crafts to children at the Waitakere Pacific Arts and Cultural Centre. However, having had the opportunity to observe the children and youth at a community event in Auckland, it was evident that many youth were unfamiliar with, or not interested in, Tuvaluan *tuu mo aganu/iloga*. Some youth also admitted that it is more natural for them to use and think in English.

Connecting with Tuvalu

As indicated in chapter six, NZ-based Tuvaluans do maintain connections with their families in Tuvalu by sending remittances. They also communicate through the telephone, post and email (where possible).¹⁸⁰ Furthermore, many still have land back in Tuvalu, although it is left under the care of other family members. The cost of returning to Tuvalu is prohibitive for most of the Tuvaluan community in NZ. At times the island communities in NZ have fundraised to send goods back to their island communities, and the women's' groups in Tuvalu have sent back goods that are difficult to get in NZ, such as mats. On other occasions exchange groups have visited, such as a youth choir.

When Tuvaluans do visit NZ, or if they are new migrants, the Tuvaluan community steps in to provide support (rather than relying on support from those outside the Tuvaluan community). In the first instance, the family of the newcomers is normally responsible (if there is family), and then those people from the same island community. Support comes in many forms, such as sponsorship, paying for tickets, finding jobs, helping with language and accommodation, and providing company to prevent new migrants being lonely (for example, a new arrival will sometimes rotate between families each week until they are established). The Tuvaluan Cabinet has even appointed Tuvaluan Liaison Office to help look after Tuvaluans in NZ who have trouble with NZ authorities (in addition to having a Tuvaluan consulate).

¹⁸⁰ Eighty-three percent lived in a household with access to a telephone and less than 40% have access to internet. Many relatives in Tuvalu also have limited telephone access and may have no internet access.

Appendix 2 – Information sheets and consent forms

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui



Key Informant Interviewee Information Sheet

Research Project:

Researcher: Kathryn Paton, Master in Development Studies student, Victoria University of Wellington

Interpreter (if required): _____

Academic Supervisor: Associate Professor Tagaloatele Dr. Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, [email]

Due to the effects of climate change, Tuvalu faces multiple possible futures that may have severe impacts on its people, including possibly forcing migration from the Tuvaluan atolls. In *Te Kakeega II, 2005–2015 – National Strategies for Sustainable Development*, the Tuvalu government recognises the need for participation and cross-sectoral collaboration in development planning. It has also begun work to mitigate the effects of climate change and respond to possible disasters.

My research will identify and build on those aspects of current Tuvaluan planning processes that encourage participation, to identify ways in which Tuvaluans (living both in Tuvalu and abroad) can participate in planning for a future that may be outside Tuvalu itself. The aims of my research are to:

- look at the current governmental and non-governmental participatory planning processes that engage Tuvaluans (at home and abroad) in their development and planning; how Tuvaluans participate in these processes; and whether these processes facilitate planning for multiple futures
- ask to what extent Tuvaluans can participate in planning and preparing for all possible futures (both privately and publicly), if one highly possible future may lead to them needing to leave Tuvalu
- ask whether the international community enables and empowers Tuvaluans to participate in preparing for a possible future outside their own lands.

Participation in this research is voluntary. The interview will be conducted in person and should require no more than 60 minutes of your time.

During the interview I hope that you will share your personal and professional views, feelings, ideas, and recommendations on planning for Tuvaluan development and emergency management. The interview will cover:

- your ideas of “participation”
- how you (or your organisation) have participated, or will participate, in Tuvaluan development and emergency management planning at individual, local, national or international levels
- what you see as the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and challenges of these planning processes
- your key concerns for Tuvaluans if they are forced to leave their country; what you think should be done to prepare for that situation; and who should be involved.

Before you can participate in this research you will be required to sign a Consent Form. If you agree to participate:

- your information will be used to inform the researcher’s Masters thesis. The findings may also be presented to interested stakeholders, such as government and NGO groups

- your views may be attributed to you personally or the organisation you represent in the report, depending on which preference you indicate. Alternatively, you can request that your views remain confidential.
- you can withdraw any information you have provided by 31 October 2008 by emailing or calling Kathryn Paton directly after August 2008 on [email], [telephone]. Alternatively you can write to Kathryn Paton, [address].
- the information you have provided will be stored securely and only accessed by the researcher, the researcher's interpreter (if necessary) and Academic Supervisor named above to enable its use for further qualitative research, academic publications, and presentations. The data will be held for a period of up to five years.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research or the information provided on this information sheet please contact Kathryn Paton using the contact details provided above.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your responses will be a valuable contribution towards this research

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui



Key Informant Interviewee Consent Form

Research Project:

Researcher: Kathryn Paton, Master in Development Studies student, Victoria University of Wellington

Interpreter (if required): _____

Academic Supervisor: Associate Professor Tagaloatele Dr. Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, [email]

I have received an explanation of this research project and had an opportunity to have any questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that the purpose of the interview is to explore and collect personal and professional views, feelings, and ideas on participation in planning related to Tuvaluan development and emergency management; and efforts that have been made to plan for a Tuvaluan future outside of Tuvalu, as well as key considerations and challenges to planning for such a future.

I understand that participation is voluntary and that in participating:

- the information I provide will be used to inform the researcher's Masters thesis. The thesis findings may also be presented to interested stakeholders, such as government and NGO groups
- my views (choose one):

☐ may be attributed to me personally / the organisation I represent (delete one or both) in the report.

☐ should be treated as confidential.

- I can withdraw any information I have provided by 31 October 2008 by emailing, writing to, or calling Kathryn Paton directly on the contact details provided to me in the information sheet.
- the information I have provided will be stored securely and only accessed by the researcher, the researcher's interpreter (if necessary) and Academic Supervisor named above to enable its use for further qualitative research, academic publications, and presentations. The data will be held for a period of five years.

I would/would not (delete one) like to receive a copy of the thesis / summary of the research (delete one). This can be sent to the following address:

Address: _____

Or email: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

Name: _____

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
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Research Participant Information Sheet

Research Project:

Researcher: Kathryn Paton, Master in Development Studies student, Victoria University of Wellington

Interpreter (if required): _____

Academic Supervisor: Associate Professor Tagaloatele Dr. Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, [email]

Due to the effects of climate change, Tuvalu faces multiple possible futures that may have severe impacts on its people, including possibly forcing migration from the Tuvaluan atolls. In *Te Kakeega II, 2005–2015 – National Strategies for Sustainable Development*, the Tuvalu government recognises the need for participation and cross-sectoral collaboration in development planning. It has also begun work to mitigate the effects of climate change and respond to possible disasters.

My research will identify and build on those aspects of current Tuvaluan planning processes that encourage participation, to find ways for Tuvaluans (living both in Tuvalu and abroad) to participate in planning for a future that may be outside Tuvalu itself. The aims of my research are to:

- look at the current governmental and non-governmental participatory planning processes that engage Tuvaluans in all aspects of their development and emergency management; how Tuvaluans participate in these processes; and whether these processes facilitate planning for multiple futures
- ask to what extent Tuvaluans can participate in planning and preparing for all possible futures (both privately and publicly), if one highly possible future may lead to them needing to leave Tuvalu
- ask whether the international community enables and empowers Tuvaluans to participate in preparing for a possible future outside their own lands.

Participation in this research is voluntary. Interviews should require no more than 60 minutes of your time and workshops should require no more than 180 minutes of your time.

During the interview/workshop, I hope that you will share your personal and professional views, feelings, ideas, and recommendations on planning for Tuvaluan development and emergency management. The interview/workshop will cover:

- your ideas of “participation”
- personal and public development and emergency management planning in Tuvalu and abroad that you have participated in, heard about, or not heard/thought about until asked by the interviewer
- your key concerns for Tuvaluans if they are forced to leave their country (if relevant, drawing from your own migration experiences); what you think should be done to prepare for that situation; and who should be involved.

Before you can participate in this research you will be required to sign a Consent Form.

If you agree to participate:

- the information you provide will be used to inform the researcher’s Masters thesis. The thesis findings may also be presented to interested stakeholders, such as government and NGO groups.
- your name will not be used in any report or presentation. You can remain confidential or you can choose an alternative name with which to be identified.

- you can withdraw any information you have provided by 31 October 2008 by emailing or calling Kathryn Paton directly after August 2008 on [email], [telephone]. Alternatively you can write to Kathryn Paton, [address].
- the information you have provided will be stored securely and only accessed by the researcher, the researcher's interpreter (if necessary) and Academic Supervisor named above to enable its use for further qualitative research, academic publications, and presentations. The data will be held for a period of up to five years.

If you have any questions or concerns about this research or the information provided on this information sheet please contact Kat Paton directly on the contact details provided above.

Thank you for agreeing to participate in this interview. Your responses will be a valuable contribution towards this research.

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui



Research Participant Consent Form

Research Project:

Researcher: Kathryn Paton, Master in Development Studies student, Victoria University of Wellington

Interpreter (if required): _____

Academic Supervisor: Associate Professor Tagaloatele Dr. Peggy Fairbairn-Dunlop, [email]

I have received an explanation of this research project and had an opportunity to have any questions answered to my satisfaction. I understand that the purpose of the interview is to explore and collect personal and professional views, feelings, and ideas on participation in planning related to Tuvaluan development and emergency management; and efforts that have been made to plan for a Tuvaluan future outside of Tuvalu, as well as key considerations and challenges to planning for such a future.

I understand that participation is voluntary and that in participating:

- the information I provide will be used to inform the researcher's Masters thesis. The thesis findings may also be presented to interested stakeholders, such as government and NGO groups
- my name will not be used in any report or presentation. My identity can remain confidential or I can choose an alternative name with which to be identified.

Choose: Confidential / Alternative name. (My chosen alternative name is: _____)

- I can withdraw any information I have provided by 31 October 2008 by emailing, writing to, or calling Kathryn Paton directly on the contact details provided to me in the information sheet.
- the information I have provided will be stored securely and only accessed by the researcher, the researcher's interpreter (if necessary) and Academic Supervisor named above to enable its use for further qualitative research, academic publications, and presentations. The data will be held for a period of five years.

I would/would not (delete one) like to receive a summary of the research. This can be sent to the following address:

Address: _____

Or email: _____

Signature: _____ Date _____

Name: _____

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui



Translator/Interpreter or Co-Researcher Statement of Non-Disclosure

Research Project

I, _____, have agreed to work with Kathryn Paton as a translator/interpreter / co-researcher (choose one) on the "At Home or Abroad: Tuvaluans Shaping the Tuvaluan Future" research project. I understand that confidentiality is important to everyone taking part in this project. I promise that I will not discuss what was said in any of the interviews or focus groups that I have translated/interpreted for. I also promise that I will not reveal the names or identities of any of the project participants to anyone.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

VICTORIA UNIVERSITY OF WELLINGTON
Te Whare Wananga o te Upoko o te Ika a Maui



Focus Group Statement of Non-Disclosure

Research Project:

I, _____, have taken part in a focus group organised

by Kathryn Paton as part of the " _____ " research project. I understand that confidentiality is important to everyone taking part in this focus group. I promise that I will not discuss what was said in this focus group with anyone who did not take part in it. I also promise that I will not reveal the names of other participants in this focus group to anyone.

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 3 – Individual community interview guide

(Semi-structured – as a guide only)

Introduction

Give a copy of information sheet

Explain:

- purpose of research
- the interview is voluntary and that their name will remain confidential if they want
- the information will be used in a Masters thesis and will be shared with other interested government and non-government groups.

Seek agreement and explain that at the end will ask to complete a form.

Basic Data

Interview date:

Interview place/island:

Sex: M/F

Age group: High school/Youth / Elders

Suggested questions about participation

One of the things that seems to make Tuvaluans so resilient is the strength of community connections and an ability to help each other when needed. Would you agree?

One way to describe “participation” is “involvement in people's development of themselves, their lives, their environment” (FAO). How does this fit with your understanding of “participation” (kaufakatasi)?

[Table Participation Avenues diagram] *From the conversations we have had so far, we have identified these avenues as those through which people are involved in their development. Are there any that you feel are missing?*

Which are most relevant to you in your daily life? Can you describe your involvement in, or relationship to any of these structures/avenues? What is/was your role?

In your opinion, have these avenues, or the role they play in your society, changed in recent years?

What works / doesn't work? Is there anything you think should be changed?

Are Tuvaluans living overseas involved in these structures? If yes, how?

Suggested questions about migration and climate change

Family island:

Island living:

Have you lived in other islands/places? Have you thought about migrating?

Where do your other family members live? Do you maintain connections to them?

If you or your family have migrated or are considering migrating: Why? Why have you come back (if relevant)? (*Look for reasons such as employment, family, to move away from community obligations, climate change*) [Ask specifically] Is climate change part of the decision?

Do you know about climate change? Do you believe in it? Why/Why not?

Do you believe that someday Tuvaluans might need to leave Tuvalu because of climate change (worst case scenario)?

What do you think some of the key challenges/opportunities would be if people are forced to migrate?

Do you think that there should be any work done to prepare for Tuvaluans to have a place to go in the worst case scenario? When should this start?

If work was to be done to prepare Tuvaluans for a future outside Tuvalu, who should lead it / participate in it?

What work would you like to see happening?

What role could the other groups/structures play?

Is there any planning you know of that is happening? (at any level)

Any other comments? Any questions you would like to ask me?

Thank them and ask to complete the form.

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