

- The Marshall Islands has been at the forefront of the fight against climate change from day 1. In fact, when no one believed it and thought 2 degrees was a foregone conclusion, RMI was at the forefront of a coalition of countries led by the High Ambition Coalition, while the Paris Agreement was negotiated, ensuring the inclusion of the more ambitious temperature limit of 1.5 in the Paris Agreement.
- At the time 1.5 was the lifeline for countries like RMI. As an atoll country no higher than 2 meters above sea level, the rise of the ocean was seen as a life or death of our country and those like ours. but also for the whole world. We were the “canary in the mine”. The bird that is sacrificed to warn others of the danger and help them seek safety.
- The IPCC Synthesis Report paints a very real and somber picture about the irreversible effects at the global scale if global average temperature increase exceeds 1.5 degrees especially for Small Island Developing States like us but for everyone. With 75 % of the planet facing deadly heat waves, I am afraid the canary allegory might be more real than an advocacy allegory. What is becoming increasingly clear is that too many continue to underestimate the harm and lethality of 1.5 let alone surpassing it.
- And while we often associate the vulnerability of the Marshall Islands with inundation resulting from sea level rise we are also facing drought due to severe weather partners, and increase in diseases such as dengue not to mention the threat of pandemics such as covid.
- The IPCC Sixth Assessment cycle has confirmed what we feared: the window of opportunity is narrowing down - at an even more rapid pace than we thought. We shall not despair: global average temperature increase can still be kept below 1.5 degrees is still within grasp. Because of inaction the cost of attaining it is increasing by the day, but the cost of doing nothing is increasing even more by the same timeframe. And we’ve seen it was possible to do so. The last measures introduced during covid have shown what needs to be put in place. We have to by immediately phasing out fossil fuels and scaling up renewable energy. It is a matter of political will. If we don’t do it ourselves, it will happen in any case, more violently and more horrifically.
- At the same time, We know we know that even if ambitious mitigation and adaptation measures are taken today, losses and damages are already and will be further felt across the globe, especially by countries that are

particularly vulnerable like SIDS. In this context, the creation of a loss and damage facility at COP27 has been a very important step forward to help vulnerable countries cope with climate change losses and damages.

- When it comes to mitigation, adaptation and loss and damage, human rights play a cornerstone role. Only rights-based, participatory measures to address the causes and consequences of climate change ensure effective action in a way that protects, respects and promotes human rights.
- The SYR importantly reaffirms the importance of climate justice, human rights and equity when putting in place mitigation and adaptation action. It highlights that vulnerability is exacerbated by various types of inequity and marginalization, including gender, ethnicity, disability, age and colonialism, among others.
- The Marshall Islands are working relentlessly to advance a human rights-based approach to climate action. During our term as a member of the Human Rights Council, we rallied with SIDS to highlight the dire impacts of climate change on the rights of our population, and the imperative for the international community to take action. This is why we worked on the creation of a Special Rapporteur on human rights and climate change. While our membership has come to an end, we are continuing to engage actively across various human rights institutions to keep climate change high on the agenda.
- The Human Rights Council is playing an increasingly important role in better understanding the way in which climate change is interlinked with human rights, and clarifying States' relevant obligations. In doing so, it is essential that it interacts with relevant international fora and processes, including the IPCC.
- It is a pleasure for us to be part of today's side event, to assess the lessons learned from the IPCC Synthesis report and discuss how a human rights-based approach can secure rapid, effective and just climate action, which ensures the survival of countries like ours and protects livelihoods and ecosystems globally.