

CSO Statement in response to the VNR report of the Government of Marshall Islands

Tuesday 13 July 2021, 3:15pm – 4:45pm (New York Time).

Wednesday 14 July 2021, 7:15am – 7:45am (Fiji/RMI Time)

On behalf of the Marshall Islands Council of NGOs (MICNGOs), Indigenous and  
NGO Major Groups and the APRCEM,

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We would like to acknowledge the Government of Marshall Islands commitment in reporting on the VNR . We appreciate the inclusion of Civil Society in the National SDG Taskforce and the allocation of resources to MICNGOs as the coordinated body for NGOs in the implementation of the National Strategic Plan (NSP). We applauded the Government in the multi-stakeholder approach taken in the review process.

There are key areas in the review that we urge Government to recognise:

- The inequality between rural and urban and between atoll islands needs to be prioritised for financing by the Government to ensure that basic public services are accessible by indigenous communities that dominantly reside in the atolls. This should be supported by an effective accountable local government system.
- The data that informed the implementation of the National Strategic Plan is limited to the main island. These data disparities further marginalise women, youth, people with disabilities and indigenous communities in the atoll islands as their realities are not part of sustainable development priorities.
- Climate Change, compounded with inherited nuclear legacy, continues to pose health issues for the people of Marshall Islands, so investment on public

health care should be a priority. This should be in addition to covid health related responses during the pandemic

We recommend increasing public awareness of SDGs to the wider network of atolls Islands; and the national review process of the NSP should be in consultation with the Review Stakeholders.

Lastly, our question to Marshall Island is: How can the Government improve the data disparities between urban and atoll islands, and is there any role for Civil Society and indigenous community to play?