

Ireland and ADB working together for a green post COVID-19 recovery for Small Island States

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The Minister of State for Overseas Development Aid and Diaspora, Colm Brophy TD, and Asian Development Bank (ADB) Vice President, Ahmed Saeed, today co-hosted a virtual consultation with leaders from the small island states of the Pacific aimed at preparing for a sustainable post COVID-19 recovery.

Minister Brophy said:

"The small islands are suffering very significantly as a result of the pandemic. They are also already suffering arguably the worst effects of a climate emergency they didn't create. Ireland is determined to ensure their voices are heard and that their needs are clearly understood by the international community. Today's event was an important opportunity to listen to their ideas and concerns as part of the process of building back better and greener post COVID-19.

"Today I reiterated Ireland's steadfast friendship with fellow small island states. We actively advocate for the Pacific island states at the EU table and as part of our ongoing membership of the UN Security Council."

Participants in the event included leaders from Vanuatu, Fiji and the Marshall Islands. Also taking part were Selwyn Hart, Special Advisor to the UN Secretary General on Climate and Ambassador Ken O'Flaherty, UK envoy for the UN Climate Summit (COP26) to be held in Glasgow in November.

In 2019, Ireland adopted its first strategy for cooperation with Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Ireland, through Irish Aid, has committed €12m over the period 2019-2024 to the establishment, within the ADB, of the Ireland Trust Fund for Building Climate Change and Disaster Resilience in Small Island Developing States, with €4.2m assigned so far. This funding is enabling projects which are enhancing the preparations and adaptations which small islands must make as they prepare for the effects of climate change. This includes supporting communities in Tonga and Vanuatu as they design more resilient infrastructure, and promoting the building of better coastal defences in Fiji, the Marshall Islands and Timor Leste.