

“Government and Development Partners aim to promote resilience in unprecedented times”

On Monday 30th of August the Government of Tonga held a virtual forum with their development partners. The virtual conference was hosted by the Ministry of Finance and chaired by their Minister Honorable Tevita Lavemaau.

The Ministry of Finance presented first on the *Tonga Economy update and Government Priority Agenda (GPA FY2022)* followed by an update on the *Economic and Social Stimulus Package*. The CEO of Health Dr. Siale 'Akauola and CEO of MEIDECC Mr. Paula Ma'u both presented on the global issues faced by the Kingdom. The CEO of Health gave an update on their handling and management of Tonga's *COVID-19 National Plan* and the financial costs which has come with the huge success that has kept Tonga Covid free. In previous years before COVID-19 and when borders were still open, MEIDECC conducted their own 'Donor Roundtable' as part of its National Climate Change



CEO of MEIDECC Mr. Paula Ma'u and CEO of Health Mr. Siale 'Akauolu

Awareness Week to update donors on status of climate change projects and discuss potential and further funding opportunities. This particular two and a half hour virtual conference had integrated MEIDECC and gave the CEO the opportunity to virtually update the same donors aligning to the theme of the virtual conference 'Promoting Resilience in unprecedented times'.

Mr. Paula Ma'u provided an update of Tonga's *Joint National Action Plan 2* highlighting 'milestones' and priority areas in need of funding. The CEO was supported by the Director of Climate Change Ms. Lu'isa Tu'i'afitu

Malolo and the JNAP Secretariat.

The virtual forum was a success. Development partners acknowledged the Government of Tonga and the Ministry of Health for their commitment and continuous efforts in keeping Tonga a "Covid-free nation". Also acknowledging MEIDECC for their ongoing works through Tonga's second Joint National Action Plan (JNAP 2) in addressing the impacts of climate change through adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reductions activities. Development Partners also reaffirmed their ongoing support for the Government of Tonga in addressing its national priorities.

"This forum is very important for a small island state like Tonga and we are grateful for this opportunity to join together with the Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Health in voicing our priorities to our



Staff of Ministry of Finance and MEIDECC pictured here with Minister of Finance Honorable Tevita Lavemaau (front centre) and CEOs of Ministry of Health and MEIDECC

development partners” said Mr. Paula Ma’u. The virtual conference arrives a few weeks before National Climate Change Awareness Week, which is held on September 19th to September 24th.