

## **Elizabeth Genia: Navigating economic resilience in a changing climate - insights for Fiji and the Pacific**

Keynote speech by Ms Elizabeth Genia, Governor of the Bank of Papua New Guinea, at for 4th Reserve Bank of Fiji and Asia-Pacific Applied Economics Association Joint Researcher Workshop "Navigating economic resilience in a changing climate - insights for Fiji and the Pacific", Port Moresby, 10 November 2025.

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Good morning and Bula Vinaka

Firstly, let me acknowledge the traditional owners of the land, their elders past, present and emerging. Governor Ariff Ali, APAEA representatives, distinguished researchers, colleagues from central banks, development partners, and friends of the Pacific.

It is an honour to join you all at this important workshop, where academia and policy intersect to shape our region's future.

I extend my sincere appreciation to the Reserve Bank of Fiji and APAEA for convening this dialogue. We meet at a crucial time for the Pacific, when climate change has moved from an environmental concern to a defining economic reality.

For small island and developing economies like ours, climate change is not a distant threat. It is a lived experience that is reshaping our financial systems, livelihoods, and infrastructure every day.

My home Papua New Guinea faces increasingly frequent flooding, landslides and extreme weather. And here in Fiji, the force of mother nature is experienced at her most extreme. The Pacific is, without question, is on the frontlines of the climate crisis.

And yet, we in the Pacific are also on the frontlines of innovation and resilience. Our economic resilience is now inseparable from our climate resilience. The challenge before us is how to finance that transition. How do we design policies, institutions, and financial instruments that transform climate vulnerability into climate opportunity? And then, how do we translate opportunity into action?

In Papua New Guinea, our journey began with a realization. Sustainable growth requires aligning our financial sector with climate objectives.

Guided by this vision, the Bank of Papua New Guinea established our Green Finance Centre. The GFC is a dedicated department within the Bank intended to lead the country's transition towards a climate-resilient financial system.

The Centre serves as a technical arm of the Bank, coordinating climate finance reforms, guiding financial institutions, and integrating environmental and social risk management into our supervisory frameworks. It represents our commitment to ensure that every kina invested in Papua New Guinea supports not only economic growth, but also environmental integrity and social inclusion.

Early in our work, we developed a guiding document with our Inclusive Green Finance Policy. It was endorsed at the highest levels to ensure buy in – first by our Board and then across government. This policy sets the foundation for green lending, green deposits, and sustainable financial products. In turn, the policy enables our commercial banks, microfinance institutions, and investors to participate in climate-aligned growth.

We are now progressing with the next version of PNG's Green Taxonomy, incorporating Technical Screening Criteria for three sectors out of the eleven near finalization. This will define what qualifies as a 'green investment' at a national level. These nationally recognized frameworks are critical for ensuring credibility, transparency, and consistency in how green finance is measured and mobilized.

At the same time, BPNG, through the Green Finance Centre, is working with partners at the IMF, World Bank, IFC, AFD, ADB, AFI and GGGI to mobilise funding into climate finance instruments. Our first instruments are a Green Refinancing Facility to support lending for sustainable energy and agriculture projects, and a Green Guarantee Facility to de-risk private investments in green sectors.

Recently, we have begun to explore a Renewable Energy Facility. With Papua New Guinea's low electrification rates across our remote communities, renewable energy presents a compelling and resilient solution. We are also developing thematic bond guidelines for PNG and exploring a Sovereign Thematic Bond aligned to our Green Taxonomy. This would mark a historic milestone for the Pacific. Such instruments are not just financial tools; they are commitments to mobilize private capital for public good.

None of these achievements would be possible without collaboration.

At the national level, we work closely with Government partners and domestic financial institutions to align monetary and fiscal efforts with our climate goals.

Internationally, development partners have been instrumental in providing technical expertise and capacity building. These collaborations are strengthening our institutional readiness to manage climate risks, and delivering access to international climate finance.

As we continue on this journey, we are conscious that the lessons we learn in Papua New Guinea can benefit our neighbours across the Pacific. We are committed members of the Pacific Islands Regional Initiative, or PIRI. PIRI is coordinated by the Alliance for Financial Inclusion and includes 6 central banks from the Pacific; Fiji, Tonga, Vanuatu, Solomon Islands and Samoa. Collectively, all 6 central banks are building momentum in Inclusive Green Finance.

BPNG is committed to sharing our experience and frameworks with PIRI members through platforms like the Greening the Pacific Financial Systems Program, funded by the French Development Bank with GGGI as the delivery partner.

We believe that by working together the Pacific can speak with one strong voice in the global climate finance dialogue. We must work together to harmonise our taxonomies, share data, and co-develop green financial products. By working together, we can be more than the sum of our parts.

In conclusion, we see resilience as not just about surviving the next storm, but about redesigning our economies for a sustainable future.

To our academic colleagues here today, your research provides the crucial evidence base we need to make sound policy choices.

To my fellow central bankers, our leadership is shaping how the Pacific redefines stability in the era of climate change.

And to our development partners, your continued collaboration ensures that our ambitions are matched with the means to achieve them.

Together, let us continue to build a Pacific that is resilient, inclusive, and climate-ready.

Thank you, and I wish you all a productive and inspiring workshop.