



2023 Forum

**PACIFIC ISLANDS CLIMATE
COLLABORATIVE**

**MARCH 8 @ 1 PM - 4 PM HAWAII
(MARCH 9 @ 8 AM - 11 AM JAPAN/PALAU
AND 11 AM - 2 PM FIJI)**

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<https://www.pichtr.org/pacific-islands-climate-collaborative/>

Pacific Islands Climate Collaborative (“Collaborative”) - 2023 Virtual Forum (over Zoom)

OBJECTIVE:

The objective of the **Collaborative** is to promote collaboration between the US, Japan and partners in Pacific Island Countries (PICs) by coordinating, planning and executing clean energy and climate adaptation/resilience projects. Target PICs include Fiji, Tonga, Palau, and Federated States of Micronesia.

2023 FORUM OVERVIEW:

The first Forum was held in March 2022 to engage stakeholders in meaningful, action-oriented conversations that would result in networking and collaboration toward the development of joint clean energy and climate adaptation/resilience projects in the PICs.

Building on this foundation, the 2023 Forum will facilitate previous and new participants in engaging with one another towards working on joint projects. The forum starts by sharing information on recent clean energy and climate adaptation projects in PICs that are funded by Japanese and US governmental agencies and others. Then, it will host performers who have developed projects in PICs to share insights on opportunities and challenges for multilateral collaboration. Finally, it will hone-in on near-future opportunities for international collaboration in the PICs.

DATE and TIME:

Wednesday, March 8 at 1 - 4 PM Hawaii (Thursday, March 9 at 8 AM - 11 PM Japan/Palau and 11 AM - 2 PM Fiji)

AGENDA:

Moderator: Veronica Rocha, Naoki Nagai, PICHTR Advisers

Opening remarks:

- Welcome remarks: Ian Kitajima, President, PICHTR [5 minutes]
- Special remarks: Noriyuki Shikata, Cabinet Secretary for Public Affairs, Prime Minister's Office of Japan [5 minutes]
- Keynote Speaker: Suzanne Vares-Lum, President of the East-West Center [10 minutes]
 - The United States in the Pacific Islands and Partners in the Blue Pacific (PBP)
- Keynote Speaker: Akihiro Okochi, Deputy Director-General Economic Affairs Bureau and Ambassador in Charge of Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan [10 minutes]
 - Japan's role in inclusive and sustainable growth in the Indo-Pacific region

Panel 1: Governmental and international agencies activities in the PICs to tackle climate change

Goal: To understand, more specifically, how Japanese and the US governmental organization as well as other international organizations have been funding climate related projects in the PICs in order to provide context for future potential joint climate projects in the PICs. This panel discussion will focus on the process (including what each entity looks for) in funding projects in PICs.

- Daisuke Watanabe, Deputy Director General, Southeast Asia and the Pacific Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) [5-10 minutes]
 - JICA's activities in the PICs
- Marisol Perez, Deputy Coordinator, Pacific Islands and Mongolia, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) [5-10 minutes]
 - USAID's activities in the PICs
- Mits Motohashi, Pacific Hub Energy Program Coordinator, The World Bank [5-10 minutes]
 - World Bank's energy sector engagements in the Pacific
- Moderated Q&A [10 minutes]

Panel 2: Insights from recent success cases of climate projects in the PICs

Goal: To showcase success cases in climate projects in the PICs and share insights on how performers collaborated with the funding entities from project formation to execution.

- Jake Hamstra - Chief Communications Officer, East West Center (EWC) [5-10 minutes]
 - Promoting Just, Engaged, Civic-minded and Transparent Governance in the Pacific (PROJECT Governance) with USAID
- Benjamin Martin, Assistant Manager, Xenosys Inc. [5-10 minutes]
 - Technology Development and Deployment with SATREP
- Leon R. Roose - Chief Technologist, GridSTART, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI) [5-10 minutes]
 - Developing Renewable Energy Storage System for the Pacific Island Countries (PICs)
- Moderated Q&A [10 minutes]

Panel 3: Upcoming climate project opportunities in PICs

Goal: To open dialog on upcoming project funding from US and Japanese governments and how different parties could collaborate in the near term future.

- Tadayuki Ogawa, Senior Advisor, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) [5-10 minutes]
 - Call for proposal: introduction of the program description, funding announcement
- Brent Harrison, Manager, Indo-Pacific, Healthcare and Smart Grid, U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA) [5-10 minutes]
 - Overview of USTDA, its current priorities for clean energy as well as climate adaptation/resilience, examples of prior USTDA projects at Pacific Islands, and the Pacific Island Strategic Infrastructure Initiative RFP
- Akuila Tawake, Deputy Director - Georesources and Energy Programme at GEM Division, The Pacific Community - SPC [5-10 minutes]
 - PICs project needs in relation to the energy sector. What are the related priorities and how are PICs going about addressing them? Where do PICs need the most contribution to address these priorities and how can entities participating in the Forum be of help?
- Moderated Q&A [10 minutes]

Speaker Bios and Contact Information

PICHTR Advisers

	<p>Veronica Rocha, Founder & Principal, Essential Leap</p> <p>Recognized as a “40 under 40 Top Business Leader” and “Woman Who Means Business” by Pacific Business News, Veronica is a clean energy and climate adaptation consultant with a decade of experience working in Hawaii across the private, public and nonprofit sectors in multiple industries. Prior to founding Essential Leap, Veronica served as the Renewable Energy Branch Manager at the Hawaii State Energy Office where she led efforts to achieve 100% renewable energy by 2045. This included working on the development of over 10 laws and representing HSEO in over 10 regulatory proceedings on topics such as utility and distributed energy resources, community based renewable energy, grid modernization, microgrids, electrification of transportation, tax incentives, and GHG reductions. She also led the implementation of the Hawaii Renewable Fuels Production Tax Credit. Veronica has a Master of Business Administration and a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering from Stanford University.</p> <p>veronica.rocha@essentialleap.com +1 (831) 840-7954</p>
	<p>Naoki Nagai</p> <p>Naoki Nagai is an advisor to the Pacific International Center for High Technology Research (PICHTR), a non-profit in Hawaii, where he provides technical analysis and organizational development support. He works on a wide range of projects involving energy, climate change, and equitable 5G/broadband projects across the Pacific region. He started his career at McKinsey and Company’s Tokyo Office as a management consultant, and advised top management in social, financial and technology sectors. He later founded a translation agency specializing in presentations and returned to the United States with his wife and children, settling in Hawaii. He also founded Quintessence LLC to develop and license trading algorithms to investment funds in the US and Japan. Naoki was born and raised in Japan, attended United World College Atlantic in the UK as a high school student, and graduated from Harvard University with honors in Applied Mathematics. He publishes his improvisation music on Spotify and Apple Music. He is an active member of the US-Japan Council.</p> <p>naokinagai@quintsec.com +1 (808) 269-9884</p>

Opening Remarks



Ian Kitajima, President, Pacific International Center for High Technology Research (PICHTR)

Prior to joining PICTHR, Mr. Kitajima was the “Tech Sherpa” and Director of Corporate Development at Oceanit for over 21 years developing and commercializing next generation technologies for defense, medical, clean energy, and consumer applications. While at Oceanit he co-founded 3 venture startups, initiated new areas such as nanotechnology and applied AI, and championed the Design Thinking and computer science movements in public education for over a decade.

He is a Board member for several organizations such as PBS Hawaii, Public Schools of Hawaii Foundation, the Workforce Development Council, University of Hawaii Alumni Association, and the Hawaii Institute for Public Affairs.

Mr. Kitajima is a proud public-school graduate of Castle High School, Windward Community College, and received his BBA with a double major in Marketing & International Business from the University of Hawaii at Manoa.



Noriyuki Shikata, Cabinet Secretary for Public Affairs, Prime Minister's Office of Japan

Noriyuki “Nori” SHIKATA was appointed as Cabinet Secretary for Public Affairs under Prime Minister Fumio KISHIDA in October 2021. Most recently, he was Assistant Minister/Director General, Economic Affairs Bureau of Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) (2020-21). His other prior positions include: Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary, Deputy Chief of Mission, Embassy of Japan in China (2017-19); Deputy Director General, Asian and Oceanian Affairs Bureau, MOFA(2016-17); Political Minister, Embassy of Japan in the U.K.(2012-14); Director of Global Communications, Prime Minister's Office(2010-12), Director of respectively, Economic Treaties, Second North America (Japan-U.S. economic issues), International Press, and Status of U.S. Forces Agreement Divisions. He has also been a Visiting Professor at Kyoto University's Graduate School of Law/Public Policy (Japan's diplomacy), and Associate, Program on U.S.-Japan Relations, Harvard University. He holds a B.A. in Law from Kyoto University and Master of Public Policy (MPP) from Harvard Kennedy School of Government. He is a winner of the Gold Standard Award for Political Communications 2011. His Twitter handle is: [@norishikata](https://twitter.com/norishikata).



Ms. Suzanne (Suzy) Puanani Vares-Lum, President, East-West Center

Ms. Suzanne (Suzy) Puanani Vares-Lum took office as President of the East-West Center in January 2022. She is the first woman and Native Hawaiian chosen for this role. Vares-Lum brings executive leadership and planning experience spanning the past several decades, culminating in five years serving with and advising the most senior officials at US Indo-Pacific Command, where she cultivated and maintained key relationships with nations throughout the Indo-Pacific region.

As a retired Major General with 34 years of service, Vares-Lum has held key roles addressing priority national security challenges in the region. After retirement, she formed Vares-Lum Indo-Pacific Consulting, LLC to provide consulting and advising on regional issues. She is a seasoned keynote speaker and advocate on Indo-Pacific issues; leadership and mentorship; and Women, Peace, and Security. She led collaborative initiatives in the Pacific, including Hawai'i, Guam, and the Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands.

As a community leader, Vares-Lum serves on a variety of non-profit boards, including the American Red Cross Pacific Islands Region, Pacific & Asian Affairs Council, and the Pacific International Center for High technology Research. She has also served on committees that promote Hawai'i's economic diversification, workforce development, and community dialogues on issues regarding land and water. She has also served as a Strategic Advisor to the Hawai'i Chamber of Commerce Military Affairs Council, and is an active member of the U.S.-Japan Council.

She received her Bachelor of Arts degree in Journalism in 1989 and her Master of Education in Teaching in 1996 from the University of Hawai'i at Manoa. As a graduate of the US Army War College, she earned a Master of Strategic Studies degree in 2011. In 2019, she became a National Security Fellow of the Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs at Syracuse University. She is also an alumna of the Daniel K. Inouye Asia-Pacific Center for Security Studies.

Vares-Lum received the Ellis Island Medal of Honor in 2017. Additionally, the State of Hawai'i House of Representatives, Governor of the State of Hawai'i, and Hawai'i Congressional Delegation presented her with certificates of recognition for outstanding service to the State of Hawai'i in 2021.

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Akihiro Okochi, Deputy Director-General Economic Affairs Bureau and Ambassador in Charge of Economic Diplomacy, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Japan

Born on 3rd August, 1971, in Kyoto, Japan

April 1993 Joined the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA)
February 2007 Principal Deputy Director, WTO Division

Economic Affairs Bureau

January 2010 Counsellor, Permanent Mission of Japan to the United Nations

August 2012 Head of G8/G20 Summit Office, Economic Policy Division, Economic Affairs Bureau

July 2014 Director, International Safety and Security Cooperation Division, Foreign Policy Bureau

October 2015 Director, Social Treaties Division
International Legal Affairs Bureau

September 2017 Director, Free Trade Agreements Division, Economic Affairs Bureau

August 2019 Minister, Japanese Mission to the European Union

August 2022 Deputy Director-General, Economic Affairs Bureau
(- present) Ambassador in charge of Economic Diplomacy

Academic background:

University of Tokyo (Faculty of Law)

University Paris 1 Pantheon-Sorbonne (Faculty of International Relations)

Panel 1: Governmental and international agencies activities in the PICs to tackle climate change



Watanabe Daisuke, Deputy Director General for Southeast Asia 5,6 and Pacific (Philippines, East Timor and Pacific countries), Southeast Asia and Pacific Department, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

(2022/9~ current)

Deputy Director General, Southeast and the Pacific Department, JICA
Mainly responsible for the Philippines, East Timor and Pacific countries.

	<p>(2020~2022) Director, Division 5, Southeast and the Pacific Dpt. Responsible for Philippines</p> <p>(2016-2018) Director, Division 1, Africa Dpt. Responsible for 9 countries in Africa</p> <p>(2011-2014) JICA Vietnam Office</p> <p>(2009-2011) Deputy Director, International Cooperation Bureau, Ministry of Finance (Seconded. Responsible for Asia Development Bank)</p> <p>watanabe.daisuke@jica.go.jp</p>
	<p>Marisol Pérez, Deputy Coordinator, Pacific Islands and Mongolia, U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)</p> <p>Marisol E. Pérez is a Foreign Service Officer serving as USAID’s Deputy Coordinator for the Pacific Islands and Mongolia. She is the technical lead for USAID’s Pacific Islands climate, governance, health, and energy program portfolio.</p> <p>Ms. Pérez previously served with USAID in Guinea, Malawi, Pakistan, Ghana, Pakistan, and Peru, leading USAID’s education, democracy, rights and governance, and health portfolios. Her public and private sector experience spans education in emergencies and crisis, education management, and information technology, working with foundations, international government organizations such as Save the Children, the InterAmerican Development Bank and fortune 500 clients.</p> <p>With over twenty-five years development management experience, Ms. Pérez promotes life-long learning and equitable human development. She is a 2022 International Career Advancement Program Fellow, USAID Diversity Trainer and is Embassy Manila’s Diversity, Equity, Inclusion and Accessibility Council Chair. Ms. Pérez is Returned Peace Corps Volunteer from Guinea and holds an M.Sc. in Development Management from American University, a B.A. degree in International Relations from Colgate University and a Pre-College Certificate in Music from Juilliard.</p> <p>mperez@usaid.gov +63 917 595 3851</p>



Mits Motohashi, Pacific Hub Energy Program Coordinator, The World Bank

Mits Motohashi is an international development professional with over 20 years of experience at multilateral and bilateral development banks. He joined the World Bank in 2009, and he has since worked on energy sector programs in multiple countries in Africa, Europe and Central Asia, and East Asia and the Pacific. He is currently Pacific Hub Energy Program Coordinator & Senior Energy Specialist based in Sydney, Australia. Before joining the World Bank, he was Advisor to Executive Director at the Asian Development Bank (ADB), where he advised on ADB's policies and projects, and Deputy Director at the then Japan Bank for International Cooperation (JBIC), where he worked on climate change, energy and water programs primarily in Southeast Asia.

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Panel 2: Insights from recent success cases of climate projects in the PICs



Jake Hamstra, Chief Communications Officer and/or Jim Potenza, Senior Project Manager, East West Center (EWC)

As the East-West Center's Chief Communications Officer, Jake Hamstra directs the Department of Communications & External Relations and leads the coordination of communications and engagement strategy and activities across the Center. He is also Principal Investigator of two Centerwide initiatives, the Best American Story Evaluations (BASE) project, and PROJECT Governance. Jake previously served as Special Advisor to the President, with a particular emphasis on strategic communications and Pacific Islands programs.

Before joining the East-West Center, Jake was Senior Policy Advisor at the New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade office in Honolulu where he led engagement with the Compact States and analysis on regional economic, political, and defense/security issues. Jake spent a decade in Hong Kong as Asia Editor/Economist with The Economist Intelligence Unit, including several years as lead analyst for the Mekong region. Jake has lived in Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Thailand, China, and Hong Kong. He holds an MA in International Relations from The Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy (Tufts University), an MA in Political Philosophy from Georgia State University, and a BA (Hons) in History and Philosophy from Calvin College

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Benjamin Martin, Assistant Manager, Xenesis Inc.

Benjamin Martin is focused on research and development to commercialize ocean thermal energy conversion (OTEC) at Xenesis, whose core capabilities include the design and construction management of power generation systems utilizing small thermal differences and the manufacture of heat exchangers, the most important component of such systems. Xenesis and their partners have supported a variety of projects including a joint JICA and Japan Science and Technology Administration SATREPS project in Malaysia. Mr. Martin is also secretary general of the Ocean Thermal Energy Association.

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Leon R. Roose, Chief Technologist, GridSTART, Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI)

Mr. Roose is a tenured faculty member of the Hawaii Natural Energy Institute (HNEI), University of Hawaii, where he formed and leads GridSTART (Grid System Technologies Advanced Research Team), a research team focused on the integration and analysis of energy technologies and power systems, including smart grid and micro grid applications.

He served in numerous leadership roles at the Hawaiian Electric Company for 19 years prior including management of renewable energy planning and integration, generation resource planning and competitive procurement, negotiation of all power purchase agreements for the utility, transmission and distribution system planning, smart grid planning and projects, system relaying and protection, and fuel purchase and supply to utility generating plants. He is a licensed attorney, worked in private law practice in Hawaii and was formerly Associate General Counsel at Hawaiian Electric. He holds a B.S. in Electrical Engineering and a J.D. from the University of Hawaii.



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Panel 3: Upcoming climate project opportunities in PICs



Ogawa Tadayuki, Senior Advisor, Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA)

After working for a domestic power company, he worked for a consultant firm as an electrical engineer. Since 2010, he has been appointed as a JICA Senior Advisor in energy and power sector development. Mainly involved in the formation and implementation of ODA projects in the fields of renewable energy and power distribution; since 2017, he has worked as Chief Advisor to the 'The Project for Introduction of Hybrid Power Generation System in the Pacific Island Countries', currently supporting the establishment of a sustainable human resource development system in the Pacific region. In other regions of Africa and Asia, he is working towards the decarbonisation of the energy sector through the efficient operation of power grids and grid stabilisation for the introduction of renewable energy. Professional Engineer (electrical and electronic, general engineering supervision), 1st Class Chief Electrical Engineer qualified in Japan.

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	<p>Brent Harrison, Country Manager for the Indo-Pacific Region, U.S. Trade and Development Agency (USTDA)</p> <p>Mr. Harrison is responsible for business development, project preparation, management, and supervision of USTDA activities in the region. His sector focus includes healthcare, smart grid, adaptation/resilience, and satellites infrastructure.</p> <p>Before joining USTDA, Brent was a Director at CG/LA Infrastructure where he focused on domestic and international infrastructure project identification, development, and advocacy. He started his career in economic research at the Institute of International Finance, primarily focused on global macroeconomics and financial market surveillance. Following that, he joined the World Bank's Development Economics Prospects Group where he provided analysis on global capital flows, Latin America, and South Asia. He has also worked as a consultant for the Growth Dialogue, a DC based think tank helping policymakers in the developing world consider relevant policy actions to effectively promote economic growth.</p> <p>bharrison@ustda.gov +1 (571) 243-7332</p>
	<p>Akuila Tawake, Deputy Director - Georesources and Energy Programme at GEM Division, The Pacific Community - SPC</p> <p>With a total of more than 24 years of professional experience largely in the mining industry, Akuila has served many Pacific Island Countries (PICs) in the last 18 years. Between 2011 and 2017, Akuila held the positions of Team Leader for the Pacific Regional Deep Sea Minerals Project and Head of the Geo-surveys and Geo-resources Sector at SPC. Prior to joining SPC, he held the positions of Senior Adviser – Aggregates Geology at the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) for more than 7 years, and Exploration / Mine / Project Geologist in three mining projects in Fiji for another 7 years. He graduated with a MSc in Geology from the University of Wollongong, Australia.</p> <p>akuilat@spc.int</p>