

Email Correspondence

Harry:

1. How likely do you think countries like New Zealand, Indonesia, Australia and Papua new guinea are to accept climate refugees from the south pacific islands?
2. As part of paris agreement countries agreed to give US\$100bn (in loans and donations) each year from 2020 to finance projects that enable vulnerable countries to adapt with the impacts of climate change and this agreement will enter into force once it is ratified by the 55 countries, representing at least 55 per cent of emissions. Have those vulnerable countries already received any of that money and if not when will they?

John:

1. How likely do you think countries like New Zealand, Indonesia, Australia and Papua new guinea are to accept climate refugees from the south pacific islands?
Indonesia and PNG will not. Indonesia would claim to be already overcrowded (hence, partly, its own efforts to resettle people from densely crowded Java to Borneo and West Papua) and to have enough displaced people of its own. PNG will have some displaced people too - but the real issue is land tenure and the dislike by local landowners of new settlers – evident, for example, in the reaction against the refugees in Manus who have sought to settle outside the detention centres, and the inability to settle people displaced from Manam after volcanic eruption. New Zealand and even Australia will – when it becomes necessary, but NZ will recognize this need much sooner than Australia, not least because of its own tiny territory, Tokelau, that is made up of three coral atolls.
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I don't know the answer to that, but significant amounts of money are flowing in from EU etc for climate mitigation etc and it has proved difficult to develop good projects to absorb this money. After consciousness raising much has gone on seawalls etc – traditional mechanisms – but the problem is the basic geography of atolls – thin and sinuous, relative to population size, and impossible to build seawalls everywhere. It may be that some of the atoll states will have to 'save' some islands – obviously the largest

capital city atolls- and sacrifice some where problems will be greatest – e.g. the southern Kiribati islands – but that is a ‘solution’ that will satisfy no-one. Recent studies show that, surprisingly, on average the atolls are still getting marginally larger – even if livelihoods may be worsened by cyclones etc.