



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

INTERVENTION BY H.E. MR. ALFRED CAPELLE,
THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS,
TO THE UNITED NATIONS,
DURING THE INTERGOVERNMENTAL PREPRATORY MEETING OF THE 15th
SESSION OF THE COMMISSION ON SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT
NEW YORK 26TH FEBRUARY 2007

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Mr. Chairman, Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen;

Madame Co-Chair;

My delegation fully associates itself with the statements made by both the Ambassador of Cape Verde on behalf of the AOSIS and the interventions made by Ambassador Robert Aisi of PNG on behalf of Pacific SIDS.

I wish to briefly describe our position regarding thematic clusters, which we will elaborate upon in greater length in the coming days.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands embodies many of the issues facing SIDS. We have a small land mass consisting of approximately 180 square kilometers of remote islands, but the responsibility for a biologically-rich Exclusive Economic Zone of nearly 2 million square kilometers of ocean.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands notes that many Pacific SIDS have a geographically-unique need for off-grid, renewable energy development which will have “cross-cutting” impacts of economic and social development to outer islands and remote areas.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands notes the proposed use of nuclear power as a means to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. While our low-lying island nation appreciates the severity of climate change impacts, we also emphasize our own ongoing struggle with the devastating environmental and socio-economic consequences of radioactive contamination and the imperfection of scientific assessments of nuclear safety.

Climate change and sea level rise threaten the continued survival of my nation and its oceans.

We note the potential to understand long-term impacts and consequences of specific proposed infrastructure projects, as this relates to greenhouse gas emissions; and we call for the technical study of this issue. Such a study may greatly assist in the local implementation of a broad range of existing international climate change goals and agreements.

We believe that, for SIDS, small-scale natural resource restoration should be discussed as a means of adapting to climate change - in particular we note the use of bio-rock technology as applied to the restoration of coral reef systems, all of which need adequate international support in enhancing local, national and regional technical capacities and financial resources.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman and Madame Co-Chair.