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UN IN ACTION

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TUVALU: FOOD SECURITY

VIDEO

AERIAL VIEW OF TUVALU ISLANDS

AUDIO

NARRATION:

In the middle of the South Pacific Ocean lies a boomerang-shaped narrow strip of land. The Funafuti atoll. It is one of nine islands comprising the remote nation of Tuvalu. (14.5")

BEACH

With total land area of 26 square kilometres, this is one of the smallest countries in the world. Its average elevation of two meters makes Tuvalu extremely vulnerable to storms and sea-level rise. (15.5")

MAN AND CHILD IN WATER

TOMA LIVETI: (English) **M**

LIVETI ON CAMERA

"It's getting more high tides than before." (2")

LIVETI FISHES

NARRATION:

Toma Liveti is a fisherman who has lived in Tuvalu all his life. (5")

LIVETI ON CAMERA

TOMA LIVETI: (English) **M**

"Before the tide could be about one metre or

something but now it's getting to two metres."
(5")

FISHING

NARRATION:

But the water does not only come from the seashore; it also comes from underneath. Made of corals, the islands are extremely porous, and salty water surging from the underground is poisoning the soil. (18")

ROCKS ON SEASHORE

WATER BUBBLES UP FROM SOIL

LAUSAVEVE ON CAMERA

ITAIA LAUSAVEVE: (English) **M**
"If salt water, purer salt water comes in, it will just kill all the plants." (4")

LAUSA VAEVE IN OFFICE

PULAKA PLANT

NARRATION:

Itaia Lausaveve, the Director of the Agriculture Department of Tuvalu, says staple crops like the large taro-like tuber plant – pulaka – are being destroyed. (11.5")

LIVETI AT PULAKA PLANTATION

Pulaka is traditionally grown in pits, close to the water table. Saltwater has been intruding into the pits causing the plants to rot, turning green leaves yellow and stunting the growth of the plants. (15.5")

LIVETI ON CAMERA

TOMA LIVETI: (English) M
“The taste of the pulaka is different.
getting too salty.” (5”)

LIVETI WORKS ON PULAKA FIELD

NARRATION:

Pulaka cultivation used to play an essential part in Tuvalu's subsistence economy and its

LIVETI WITH SON ON
MOTORCYCLE

culture. Pulaka-growing secrets are passed from father to son. (12")

LIVETI ON CAMERA

TOMA LIVETI: (English) **M**

"I brought my son to the pulaka so that he can see what I'm doing. He can learn. I tell him how to plant the pulaka ... practicing how to live as a man." (13")

LIVETI WITH SON AT PULAKA
PLANTATION

NARRATION:

LIVETI AT PULAKA PLANTATION

There is more at stake here than food.

With the potential loss of pulaka, the ancient traditions could be lost. (10")

MUSIC AND LOCAL DISHES AT
COMMUNITY GATHERING

ITAIA LAUSAIVEVE: (English) **M**

"Still, in traditional ceremonies like weddings, funerals, birthdays, the pulaka is still displayed. It still maintains that cultural importance of the family." (15")

LAUSAIVEVE ON CAMERA

NARRATION:

PEOPLE BOARD AIRPLANE AT
AIRSTRIP

So climate change is having a negative impact on the traditional lifestyle, already under threat by globalization. A healthy crop, rich in calcium and other nutrients, pulaka takes hours to cook. Today, younger people prefer rice and processed foods, all of which comes from abroad. Only land-owners can grow pulaka here, on the main island. Toma is lucky to be one of them. (33")

PULAKA BEING PREPARED

BAGS OF RICE / PROCESSED
FOODS ON STORE SHELVES

LIVETI WALKS BY ROAD

WOMEN PERFORM TRADITIONAL
DANCE

So, it is people with no land rights in Funafuti – like the ones from the outer islands – that

COMMUNITY GATHERING / FOOD
BUFFET

depend on processed food. They have left their pulaka pits behind. (11")

STREETS OF TUVALU

But with Tuvalu being so remote, its 12,000 inhabitants cannot rely on imported food. (7")

LAUSAVEVE ON CAMERA

ITAIA LAUSAVEVE: (English) **M**
"We cannot depend on importation of food, like what happened last year with the sudden rise in prices in which a lot of people were affected. They actually went back to eating breadfruit; going back to their friends and asking for breadfruits." (16.5")

ISLAND VIEWS / LARGE WAVE
FLOODING BEACH

NARRATION:

Tuvalu may become the first country to fall victim to sea-level rise. But long before they are submerged by the sea, the islands may become uninhabitable due to lack of food. (15.5")

LAUSAVEVE ON CAMERA

ITAIA LAUSAVEVE: (English) **M**
"It will be a real disaster ... culture loss, food loss and then country loss. There is no point in staying here then..." (8.5")

CHILDREN PLAY ON PIER AT
SUNSET

NARRATION:

This report was prepared by Saša Gorišek for the United Nations.

UN LOGO