

Vanuatu, one of the most climate-vulnerable countries, launches ambitious climate plan

The Pacific country has committed to 100% renewable energy in electricity generation by 2030



Vanuatu has been named by the UN as the country most at risk from natural disasters. Photograph: @ Didier Marti/Getty Images

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The Pacific country of **Vanuatu** has launched one of the world's most ambitious climate policies, committing to 100% renewable energy in electricity generation by 2030 and ambitious targets on loss and damage.

The announcement signals yet another instance of the small island state making its mark in international climate efforts.

At last year's UN climate summit in Glasgow, **all countries were urged to “revisit and strengthen” their nationally determined contributions** (NDCs) on climate action by the end of 2022. Vanuatu is one of just 12 countries to have done so, and its ambitious targets have been praised by regional experts.



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“They are really setting an example for the rest of the world,” said Tagaloa Cooper-Halo, the director of the climate change resilience program at the **Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)**.

“Vanuatu is leading by example in many ways, despite having negligible emissions. They are taking the lead by putting up their plan. This was a monumental effort by their government and all the stakeholders because it takes a lot of work and coordination to arrive at that announcement.”

Vanuatu is already a carbon-negative country – meaning it absorbs more emissions than it produces – but has committed to going further, by phasing out fossil fuels almost entirely and hoping to become 100% renewable in its electricity generation by 2030.

They are also pushing for a **loss-and-damage finance facility** to be rapidly established in order to support vulnerable communities.

According to the government, the costs of achieving Vanuatu's revised commitments, are estimated at \$1.2bn by 2030.

“Thirty years ago, Vanuatu was the first nation in the world to call for climate polluters to pay for the permanent losses and irreversible damage caused by their emissions,” said Dr Wesley Morgan, a senior researcher at the climate council.

“Today, Vanuatu is calling for the establishment of a new loss-and-damage finance facility at the UN. To be an effective ally to the Pacific on climate action, Australia should support a new loss-and-damage finance facility.”

The move also sets the tone for the Pacific's preparation for the **COP27 summit to be held in Cairo** in November.

Vanuatu, which is rated the country most at risk of natural disasters by the UN, is also currently **pushing for the International Court of Justice (ICJ) to hand down an advisory opinion** on climate-related harm.

“The Vanuatu government has been very bold in pursuing the ICJ opinion, and this is all good for the Pacific,” said Cooper-Halo.

According to the Vanuatu government, more than 80 states from around the world are supporting their pursuit for an advisory opinion from the ICJ ahead of a vote at the UN General Assembly at its forthcoming session.