



REUTERS  
INSTITUTE for the  
STUDY of  
JOURNALISM

**Reuters Institute Fellowship Paper, University of Oxford**

**Staying afloat in Paradise:**  
Reporting climate change in the Pacific

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Hilary Term 2010

## Table of Contents

### Acknowledgements

#### Chapter I

- 1.1 Introduction
- 1.2 Essential Background - Samoa
- 1.3 Pacific Islands
- 1.4 Climatic Changes in the Pacific
- 1.5 Climate Change Journalism
- 1.6 Challenges in Reporting

#### Chapter II

- 2.1 Media Landscape
- 2.2 Methodology
- 2.3 Content Analysis
- 2.4 Samoa climate change coverage
  - 2.4.1 Samoa Observer
  - 2.4.2 Newsline Samoa
  - 2.4.3 Savali
- 2.5 Outcome

#### Chapter III

- 3.1 Samoa Editors' Perspective
- 3.2 Editorial Priorities
- 3.3 Editorial Challenges

#### Chapter IV

- 4.1 Other Pacific Island Newspapers
- 4.2 Online Analysis

#### Chapter V

- 5.1 UK Newspapers
  - 5.1.1 The UK Guardian
  - 5.1.2 Financial Times
  - 5.1.3 The Sun

### VI Conclusion

### Appendix

- Recommendations
- Editor Questionnaire

### Bibliography

## Acknowledgements:

Studying at the University of Oxford was a great privilege, and being a Reuters Fellow at the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism will remain one of my more memorable experiences.

My time at Oxford would not have been possible without the support of so many people who helped me make it happen, and helped me through the whole experience.

Firstly I would like to thank James Painter, my advisor, for his patience and guidance throughout my research in 2010. His passion for climate change journalism, especially in developing countries, gives me hope that future journalists from small islands will receive more recognition for their efforts in reporting on climate change.

I would like to thank the Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism for affording me the opportunity to be part of such a unique academic and professional development initiative.

A due *faafetai* is owed to John Vidal, the Environment Editor of the Guardian for welcoming me into The UK Guardian, to Peter Rudiak-Gould Anthropologist and honorary Pacific Islander for his guidance and friendship, Omega, Alex and Tau for visiting me in Oxford, Jan Scriven for her hospitality in Summertown, to Peter Clarke for being there during my final presentation and to Alex Reid for the support in office.

A great *faafetai* is also owed to all the Reuters Fellows who in such a short period of time made Oxford feel like home, especially to Johanna and Marsh, Zubair, Liisa and Giang.

Lastly my time at Oxford would not have been possible without the support of my family who believed in my efforts and encouraged me. *Faafetai* to my Samoan and English relatives for visiting me in Oxford, and for the good wine they brought.

For my mother High Chief Vaasiliifiti Moelagi Jackson and the late Edward Barry Jackson, thank you for inspiring me. For Tupai Fleur Desiree-Oltai, *faáfetai tele lava*.

Last but not least to my partner Paul Kahlil Anderson, thank you for your love and support through it all.

*Faáfetai, faáfetai tele lava.*

## Chapter I

### Introduction

Climate change as a news topic can be quite complex: it requires a basic understanding of the science and how it relates to the Pacific.

Samoa, an island in the middle of the Pacific Ocean, is already feeling the adverse effects of climatic changes. Sea level rise is forcing coastal populations to move further inland, while prolonged droughts and shifts in the wet and dry seasons are causing changes to crop production and, inadvertently, the livelihoods of the people of Samoa. These changes are being reported throughout the Pacific; however, it is more pronounced for residents of coral atolls such as Kiribati, Tuvalu and the Marshall Islands.

There is no doubt that the increase in such incidences has had and will have an effect on the lives of Pacific Islanders. With this knowledge in mind, this paper seeks to explore how the climatic changes and their effects are reflected in the newsprint media in the Pacific. I sought to explore the scope and depth of reporting on climate change from newspapers in Samoa, Marshall Islands, Cook Islands, Fiji Times and Solomon Islands. The first part is an analysis of coverage in Samoan newspapers. The paper determines the status of climate change reporting in the newspapers *Savali*, *Newsline* and *Samoa Observer*. It goes on to do a comparison between the reporting of climate change and other issues such as politics and sports, and the third part gauges the opinion of editors on the coverage of climate change.

The second section is an analysis of coverage by four other Pacific newspapers, namely the *Marshall Islands Journal*, *Fiji Times*, *Solomon Star* and *Cook Islands News*.

The last part of this study is devoted to the coverage of climate change in the Pacific by three UK Newspapers, namely *The Sun*, *The UK Guardian* and *The Financial Times*.

The issue of climate change is one that is of personal interest. In 2007 when the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) released the report: *Climate Change 2007: Working Group I: The Physical Science Basis*, there was a chapter specifically devoted to the

effect of climate change on small islands. Chapter 11 referred to temperature shifts, tropical cyclones and sea level rise and predicted how climatic changes might affect small islands.

After speaking with a climate change specialist in Samoa, conducting further research online and quoting heavily from the IPCC Report, I wrote a localised in-depth piece on the effect that climate changes could have on Samoa. The story was strong, in my view, well researched and, most importantly, the subject had not been reported in the local media. It took me two days to convince my Editor-in-Chief that it was a worthy topic and that it would draw some attention to the issue. “We don’t want to alarm people,” he said. The report was certainly alarming because the story suggested that, given time and the consistency in climate changes seen in the past ten years, the Samoan economy, infrastructure and society as a whole could be hard hit. The Editor-in-Chief and I compromised. I settled for a less dramatic headline and the story ran on the front page in 2007. Outside of that, there has been very little mention of climate change in the whole newsprint media in Samoa in the following years.

Prior to this study there has been no extensive research on any aspect of the media in Samoa. Although climate change reporting has been researched in the Pacific, it is superficial.

I hope this paper can shed some light not just on the status of climate change reporting in Samoa and the region, but the value of reporting on such an issue. The Pacific is just one part of the world that is most vulnerable to the adverse effects of climate changes, as illustrated above, yet the newspapers pay little attention to reporting this issue. This paper draws on the disparity of vulnerability of Pacific Islands and the lack of coverage of climate change in the newsprint media.

## 1.2 Essential Background – Samoa

Samoa, a small island country in the South West Pacific, was the first in the region to become independent in 1962. The islands of Samoa lie between latitudes 13°-15°S and longitudes 168°-173°W. It consists of four main inhabited islands and six smaller uninhabited islands. The capital, Apia, is located on the second largest island, Upolu, and has a population of approximately 40,000 people. Samoa has a total land area of 2,935 km<sup>2</sup>.<sup>1</sup> The islands are of

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<sup>1</sup> William Collins Sons & Co Ltd (1983), Collins Atlas of the World (revised 1995 ed.), London W6 8JB: HarperCollins

volcanic origin, clearly visible in the form of several dormant volcanoes and lava fields.

Approximately 70% of Samoa's population and infrastructure are located in low-lying coastal areas.<sup>2</sup>

New Zealand seized Western Samoa from Germany in 1914, and in 1946 it became a United Nations trust territory, administered by New Zealand. A resistance movement to both German and New Zealand rule, known as the Mau movement, helped to edge the islands toward independence. In 1962, the citizens of Samoa voted for independence, the first country in the Pacific region to do so.<sup>3</sup>

The government is a parliamentary democracy with a parliamentary term of five years. The Prime Minister, who is chosen by Parliament and appointed by the Head of State, leads a Cabinet of twelve members. The governing Human Rights Protection Party (HRPP) is dominant in Samoan politics. It came to office in 1982, at that time led by the late Hon Tofilau Eti Alesana. It was re-elected in 1991, 1996, 2001 and, most recently, on 31 March 2006 with the leadership of current Prime Minister Tuilaepa Sailele Lufesolai Malielegaoi.<sup>4</sup>

Samoa has a very young population with 41 percent under the age of 15.

Despite limited natural resources and a vulnerability to cyclones, Samoa has one of the fastest-growing economies in the Pacific region. A reform programme launched in 1993 transformed the Samoan economy into one of the better-performing economies in the Pacific. During the second half of the 1990s, the overall balance of payments moved from deficits to increasing surpluses, largely as a result of increased tourism receipts and family remittances.<sup>5</sup> Samoa is a small, fairly liberalised economy, with a GDP of around NZ\$867 million (to the end of 2008). It is reliant on foreign imports and has a large trade deficit. The economy is largely driven by tourism (20-25% of GDP), remittances (25% of GDP), and foreign aid.<sup>6</sup> Samoa's economy remains highly vulnerable to economic shocks and natural disasters. For example, cyclones in 1990 and 1991, combined with the onset of taro blight, caused severe economic setbacks. Increased dependence on tourism and Samoa's largely coastal infrastructure could cause even

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<sup>2</sup>Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment of Samoa (MNRE, National Adaptation Programme of Action Task Team (NTT), National Adaptation Programme of Action. Samoa, Apia, 2005, P 7-10

<sup>3</sup> Garman, Jason., and Hamilton Janna (Eds)., Oxfam New Zealand, Samoa Country Profile, <http://www.oxfam.org.nz/>, accessed 21 January 2010

<sup>4</sup> MFAT, NZ, Samoa, Political Situation, <http://www.mfat.govt.nz/Countries/Pacific/Samoa.php>, accessed 12 Feb 2010

<sup>5</sup> Asia Development Bank, Samoa, <http://www.adb.org/samoa/> accessed 100 Feb 2010

<sup>6</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Samoa Quarterly Economic Review, 2007

more significant cyclone-related setbacks in the future. In such circumstances Samoa would become heavily dependent on overseas development assistance.<sup>7</sup>

### 1.3 The Pacific Islands

The Pacific Islands comprise 20,000 to 30,000 islands in the Pacific Ocean. Those islands lying south of the tropic of Cancer are traditionally grouped into three divisions: Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia.<sup>8</sup> The region's islands are classified into two groups, high islands and low islands. Volcanoes form high islands, which generally can support more people and have a more fertile soil. Low islands are reefs or atolls, and are relatively small and infertile.

Melanesia, the most populous of the three regions, contains mainly high islands, while most of Micronesia and Polynesia are low islands.

In addition, there are many other islands located within the boundaries of the Pacific Ocean that are not considered part of Oceania. These islands include the Galápagos Islands of Ecuador; the Aleutian Islands in Alaska; the Russian islands of Sakhalin and Kuril Islands; Taiwan; the Philippines; the South China Sea Islands; most of the islands of Indonesia; and the island nation of Japan, which includes the Ryukyu Islands. The inhabitants of these islands are not considered to be Pacific Islanders and are usually identified with their nearest continent.<sup>9</sup> For the purpose of this study four newspapers from other Pacific Islands will be analysed to gauge the coverage of climate change in the region. These are the Marshall Islands from Micronesia, Cook Islands from Polynesia, and Fiji and Solomon Islands from Melanesia.

### 1.4 Climatic Changes in the Pacific

Although not a low-lying island, Samoa experiences to varying degrees the effects of climate change. Like other small island states, Samoa inherits high vulnerability to natural disasters and to external economic and trade developments over which it has no control.<sup>10</sup>

These natural disasters include tropical cyclones, prolonged periods of drought, extreme flooding, pests and sudden outbreak of diseases, storm surges and sea level rise.

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<sup>7</sup> Ministry of Foreign Affairs, *ibid.*

<sup>8</sup> Wikipedia, Pacific Islands, [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific\\_Islands](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pacific_Islands), accessed 12 Feb 2010

<sup>9</sup> Wikipedia, Pacific Islands, *ibid.*

<sup>10</sup> Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment of Samoa (MNRE, National Adaptation Programme of Action Task Team (NTT), National Adaptation Programme of Action. Samoa, Apia, 2005, P 7-10

Climate change and sea level rise are serious concerns given that 70% of Samoa's population and infrastructure are located on low-lying coastal areas. Samoa's economy largely depends on its natural resources, which must rely on favourable climatic conditions for growth and sustenance.<sup>11</sup> But these can be threatened by the increasing effects of climate change on Samoa.

Best estimates of long term, systematic changes in the average climate for Samoa indicate that by 2050 the sea level is likely to have increased by 36 cm, rainfall by 1.2%, extreme wind gusts by 7% and maximum temperatures by 0.7 C.<sup>12</sup>

The observed long term trend in relative sea level for Apia is 5.2 mm annually. But the maximum hourly sea level is increasing by approximately 8 mm every year at a rate far in excess of the observed local and global trends in mean sea level. For Apia an hourly sea level of 1.8 m above the mean sea level is currently a 100-year event. It will likely be at least a four-year event by 2025.<sup>13</sup>

It is worth keeping in mind that changes in sea level do not occur uniformly around the globe. There is a fair amount of difference in sea level rise due to ocean circulation and wind pressure patterns. The effects of storm surges and spring tides need also to be kept in mind when evaluating sea level rise effects.<sup>14</sup>

Projected sea level rise however could exacerbate coastal erosion, loss of land and property and dislocation of the island inhabitants.

These effects extend to much of the Pacific island countries, with low-lying islands such as Kiribati, Tuvalu, Marshall Islands and Tokelau the most affected.

Sea levels are likely to continue to rise on average during the century around the small islands of the Northern and Southern Pacific Oceans.<sup>15</sup>

There have been large observed variations in sea level rise in the Pacific Ocean, mainly due to ocean circulation changes associated with ENSO events. From 1993 to 2001, all the data showed large rates of sea level rise over the western Pacific.<sup>16</sup>

The potential socio-economic effects of climate change on the smaller Pacific island countries have been assessed in a series of vulnerability studies. Depending on one worst-case scenario

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<sup>11</sup> National Adaptation Programme of Action Task Team (NTT), National Adaptation Programme of Action. Samoa, Apia, 2005, P 7-10 (ibid)

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Hay, John E., Climate Risk Profile for Samoa, Samoa, 2006

<sup>14</sup> Greenpeace, Sea level Rise, <http://www.greenpeace.org/> , accessed 10 Feb 2010

<sup>15</sup> Solomon, S., D. Qin, M. Manning, Z. Chen, M. Marquis, K.B. Averyt, M. Tignor and H.L. Miller (eds.), IPCC Fourth Assessment Report: Climate Change 2007, Small Islands, Assessment of projected climate change for Small Islands regions, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, 2007

<sup>16</sup> Church, J. A., and N. J. White, A 20th century acceleration in global sea-level rise, *Geophys. Res. Lett.* 2006



(one metre sea level rise), the studies suggest that sea level rise will have negative effects on tourism, freshwater availability and quality, aquaculture, agriculture, human settlements, financial services and human health. Low lying coastal areas of all the islands are especially vulnerable to a rising sea level, as well as to changes in rainfall, storm frequency and intensity. Inundation, flooding, erosion and intrusion of sea water are among the likely effects. These catastrophes would result in economic and social costs beyond the capacity of most Pacific island countries and threaten the very existence of small atoll countries. Shifts in rainfall regimes and any increase in tropical cyclone intensity and frequency greatly amplify the effect of sea level rise. A rise of average sea level by one metre, when superimposed on storm surges, could easily submerge low-lying islands.<sup>17</sup>

Globally, sea level rise is predicted to have inconsistent effects on different regions of the world. Published values for the long-term, global mean sea level rise determined from tide gauge records exhibit considerable scatter, from about 1 mm to 3 mm annually. Current sea level rise has occurred at a mean rate of 1.8 mm per year for the past century in the Pacific.

### 1.5 Climate change journalism

The vulnerability of Pacific islands to the effects of climatic changes means that this should naturally be news worthy in the Pacific. However, this has not been the case.

The effects of climate change are generally known to the specialists, those who work in the environment sector through non-government organisations, the private sector, government and academia. The educated population of the Pacific who are exposed to international news media do have some understanding of climate change. But then there are those who rely on local media for their news.

Local newspapers, television stations and radio news channels are their window to the world and their source of information.

Journalists therefore become the immediate informant for local populations, and become responsible for reliable information being relayed to the public. The integral role played by the media is not surprising, as it is still the main source of information and opinion for millions of readers and viewers - and voters - through newspapers, magazines, television, radio and the internet. As people gain most of their political, economic or other news from the media, so they do with scientific stories. Various studies have shown that the public gathers much of its

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<sup>17</sup> UNESCAP, Climate Change and the Pacific Islands, Global warming, sea level rise, and climate change, Kitakyushu, Japan, 2000

knowledge about science from the mass media<sup>18</sup>, with television and daily newspapers being the primary sources of information. Given their wide reach, it is therefore important to investigate the media's coverage of scientific topics and how it influences both science and policy.<sup>19</sup>

Climate change is a pertinent issue in the Pacific and has parallels as an important news story with the recession in the USA and hunger in Africa. Climate change is news for the Pacific, yet it does not receive the coverage it deserves in Pacific newsprint media, as illustrated in the next chapter.

According to Mike Shanahan, a researcher and climate change journalist, there are many criticisms of how the media has covered climate change to date, but many signs of improvement too. For journalists new to the topic, climate change is complex, making training a priority for media outlets.<sup>20</sup> Shanahan's observations may be true for the international media, whose budgets, talent pool and scope may allow for improvement in the reporting of climate change, but in the Pacific climate change reporting is making slow progress. As explored later in this paper, in the newsprint media in Samoa, the Cook Islands, Fiji and the Marshall Islands there is little coverage.

As journalists, the responsibility to inform readers on issues that affect them is one of the founding principles of the trade. Yet climate change continues to be under-reported in a region that is feeling firsthand the effects of climate change.

It is my view that the media's job is not to change the world. It is up to society to turn bad news into good. But the media do have a role to play in empowering people to make informed choices.<sup>21</sup>

A journalist therefore may inadvertently hold the responsibility of being an informant to the public who will be affected by climate change. Because the readers can be affected first hand, they have the right to know the how, why, when and, most importantly, the 'what' in climate change. Because climate change is sometimes viewed as a 'foreign' issue, it therefore needs the skill of the journalist to adapt it to local scenarios and languages that readers can understand.

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<sup>18</sup> M. Wilson, Kris, *Communicating climate change through the media, Predictions, politics and perceptions*, London, 2000

<sup>19</sup> Boykoff, Maxwell, and Rajan, Ravi S, *Signals and noise. Mass-media coverage of climate change in the USA and the UK*, USA, 2007

<sup>20</sup> Shanahan, Mike, *Talking about a revolution: climate change and the media*, London, 2007

<sup>21</sup> Shanahan, Mike, *ibid.*

In short, media coverage of climate change matters. News media play a key role in shaping the variegated, politicized terrain where people may be galvanized into action, or mired in a swirl of contradictory phraseology, and resigned to passivity.<sup>22</sup> This influences perceptions as well as ongoing dynamic interactions with climate policy and the public.<sup>23</sup>

### 1.6 Challenges in Reporting

Although the responsibility falls on the Pacific journalist to inform his or her readers, the obstacles and challenges to reporting climate change can be a discouraging factor. In Samoa (and this is true for other Pacific island countries too) three main factors hinder the progress of reporting on climate change: the complexity of the subject, under-resourced newsrooms and the lack of accessibility to information and reliable sources on the topic. For journalists, the main problem is to grasp the complex nature of climate change as it continues to gather new dimensions.<sup>24</sup>

Most journalists in the local newspapers in Samoa have no formal qualifications.<sup>25</sup>

Complexity is a serious problem for reporters with little or no science background and for news organisations that rely on general assignment reporters to cover climate change.<sup>26</sup>

Another challenge is under-resourced newsrooms: the biggest newsprint newsroom in Samoa has four general news reporters, and two editors who also write news stories. There are simply not enough journalists to afford specialisation in the newsroom. All journalists report on all issues - even court reporting is shared among journalists - and therefore climate change, like any other subject, receives no special attention or devotion of resources.

Another main obstacle is access to experts and sources who can comment or assist in a climate change story. There is a gag order placed on third-level government workers in Samoa, which prohibits them from speaking to the media on any matter relating to their job.

As the government is the main source of information for national climate change initiatives and programmes, this creates extra difficulties in putting together a story. The climate change

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<sup>22</sup> Richard J. Bord, Robert E. O'Connor, and Ann Fisher, In what sense does the public need to understand global climate change?, *Public Understanding of Science*, July 2000

<sup>23</sup> Boykoff M.T., Boykoff J.M., Climate change and journalistic norms: A case-study of US mass-media coverage (2007) *Geoforum*, 38 (6), 2007

<sup>24</sup> Shanahan, Mike, *Talking about a revolution: climate change and the media*, London, 2007

<sup>25</sup> Journalists Association of Samoa, Status of the Media: Samoa, [www.jawsamoa.blogspot.com](http://www.jawsamoa.blogspot.com), Samoa, accessed Jan 2010

<sup>26</sup> M.Wilson, Kris, *Communicating climate change through the media, Predictions, politics and perceptions*, London, 2000

principal officer is Anne Rasmussen, and, although she is cooperative when asked for comments, the gag order tends to limit her responses to known facts.<sup>27</sup>

There are a limited number of experts who can comment on climate change in Samoa. The Climate Change Advisor for the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme, Espen Ronneberg, comments regularly in the Samoan media, and is often sought by journalists in the Pacific for their stories. However, at times when he is travelling to climate change meetings, it is virtually impossible to get a comment within the same week.

There is also the problem of political affiliations. Climate change specialists are usually employed by intergovernmental organisations and cannot make direct criticisms of Pacific island governments as they do their work in the interests of those countries.

As climate change is sometimes viewed as a foreign concept in Samoa, the best way to relay a message is to localise the issue. Local angles to global stories are often the 'hook' they desire for their reports.<sup>28</sup> But this remains a challenge. According to anthropologist and climate change researcher in the Pacific, Peter Rudiak-Gould, climate change is indeed a foreign concept for the people of the Pacific islands. According to him, the concept itself has been introduced from abroad, and locals interpret climate change in a different way to how international climate scientists present it.<sup>29</sup>

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<sup>27</sup> Jackson, Cherele, Reporting Climate Change in Samoa: A Newsprint Perspective, Apia, 2007

<sup>28</sup> M. Wilson, Kris, Communicating climate change through the media, Predictions, politics and perceptions, London, 2000

<sup>29</sup> Rudiak-Gould, P. (2010, Feb). Personal interview.

## CHAPTER II

### 2.1 Media Landscape

Samoa has a fairly vibrant media, compared to the size of the community and the resources at the disposal of the industry.

There are currently two privately-owned radio stations, which broadcast on five different channels, and use up to ten frequencies. There is one government radio station, the 2AP, which broadcasts on AM. There are at least four Christian channels, which include Catholic, Seven Day Adventist and other religious organisations in Samoa.

In television there are three privately-owned stations: Star TV which broadcasts mainly international programmes, TV3 owned by a Parliamentarian, and the Samoa Quality Broadcasting, formerly the Samoa Broadcasting Corporation. This was the first television station, originally owned by the government, but recently privatised after strong recommendations by the Asia Development Bank. Outside of these two, there are also two Christian channels, and occasionally CCTV and ABC filters through the existing channels.

In newsprint, there are five newspapers currently being sold in Samoa. *The Samoa Observer*, *Newline Samoa Newspaper*, *Savali*, *Le Mau a Samoa* and *Samoa Post*. The *Le Mau a Samoa* and *Samoa Post* are both published in the Samoan language and tend to feature more tabloid style stories. The major distribution point for the three English newspapers is the town of Apia. The estimated combined readership is 50,000.<sup>30</sup>

Altogether the three newspapers employ twelve full-time journalists who report the news in English. Consistent with common practice, journalists in Samoa also have the freedom to pitch story ideas during a morning news meeting, with suggestions from the editor. Numerous writers - usually journalists themselves - have discussed the complex process involved in gathering, selecting and finally publishing news. From the decision as to which potentially newsworthy events should be covered by reports to an editor's last-minute cutting during paste-up, judgements are continually being made.<sup>31</sup> In Samoa there is a general freedom by journalists to write stories they are interested in and, because it is a small community, most stories that are pitched are accepted by the editors.

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<sup>30</sup> Journalists Association of Samoa, Status of the Media: Samoa, [www.jawsamoa.blogspot.com](http://www.jawsamoa.blogspot.com), Samoa, accessed Jan 2010

<sup>31</sup> Kariel, H.G., and Rosenvall, L.A. Places in the News. A study of News Flows, Canada, 1995

Each newspaper has one full time main editor, whose job is to assign stories, edit stories, place stories and approve the outcome of the paper the next day.

Making choices as to what to publish, something usually done under pressure as press time nears, requires judgement. Even though editors are rarely able to make explicit the criteria used, there is considerable homogeneity among them.<sup>32</sup> In their 1995 research of Canadian news media, Kariel and Rosenvall proposed specific criteria for the selection of news by Canadian editors. Although Samoa is of significant difference in society, media landscape and attitudes to Canada, criteria for selection of news are surprisingly similar. The criteria that seem to be used by these gatekeepers include:

1. The size of the available newshole, a limitation set by the size of the newspaper, the amount of advertising it runs, and the space allocation among various departments.
2. The policy preferences of the publisher and editor, including the paper's role in the country's press system.
3. Certain commercial criteria. Whatever else it is, a newspaper is a business; in order to stay in business its product must sell. Achieving this goal requires striking a balance between giving the public what it wants and printing what the editor and publisher believe should be printed.
4. The relative news value of different items from which the selection is to be made.<sup>33</sup>

## 2.2 Methodology

All three English newspapers in Samoa were selected for this study: the daily, the *Samoa Observer*; a tri-weekly, *Newsline Samoa* and a weekly newspaper, *Savali Newspaper*. All three papers have an environment section in each edition, although on most days the page is usually filled by a sponsored advocacy sheet from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment. The three newspapers were analyzed beginning from May 2008 to May 2009 and one edition each in 2010. The dates were selected as they included the United Nations Conference of the Parties in Poznan, Poland in 2008, and the first five months of 2009, the year of the Copenhagen Climate Summit.

Only Friday editions were selected to ensure equal representation from all three newspapers. It is important to note that *Samoa Observer* has six other editions, and *Newsline* has two other editions. These were not included in the content analysis. On occasions where there were no

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<sup>32</sup> Kariel, H.G., and Rosenvall, *ibid*.

<sup>33</sup> Cohen, Bernard C, *The Press and Foreign Policy*. Princeton, 1963

Friday editions, if it was a public holiday, or the paper was published on another day, an alternative issue was used for analysis, to maintain balance.

*Savali Newspaper* was fully analyzed in that time period as it is published weekly.

The news values of each newspaper were first analyzed, categorising the coverage of the twelve months into seven major categories, so as to determine the coverage of climate change in relation to other issues.

The climate change stories which were published and found during the analysis period were also further analysed in terms of sources, accompanying illustrations, author, placement of article and length.

### 2.3 Content Analysis

The three newspapers were analysed in regards to their coverage of climate change, politics, environment, health, politics, business, sports and society. Fig 1 illustrates the priorities of each newspaper in three colours, red, blue and green.

All three newspapers have the highest number of stories in business and politics, with *Savali* having significantly more coverage of both issues. Out of 1,394 articles published under the said categories, 643 came under business and politics. Environment stories varied in numbers with *Savali* again leading in coverage, followed by *Newsline*.

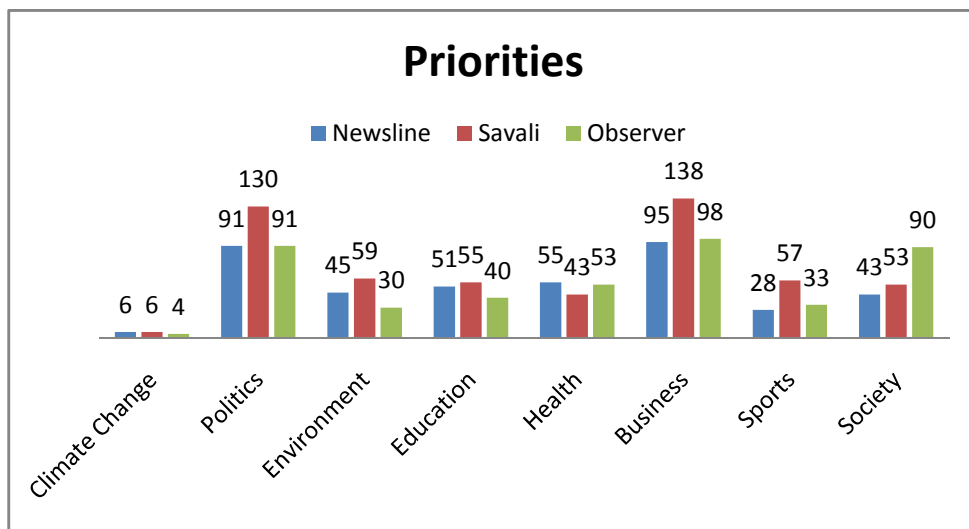


Fig 1

### 2.4 Samoa Climate Change Coverage

Out of the twelve months analyzed, , only 16 stories featured climate change. The stories were mostly based around events that took place such as workshops or seminars hosted in Samoa; there were no investigative pieces or ones that revealed new facts in relation to Samoa.

So, out of 1,394 stories analyzed, 16 were climate change stories. This is by far the lowest of any category. Out of the 16 climate change stories, Samoa Observer featured four, while *Newsline* and *Savali* featured six stories each.

Out of the 16 stories, 5 were sourced from press releases and foreign media, as in Fig 3. The rest, 11, were written by local reporters. As illustrated in Fig 2 he stories that were sourced locally were done mostly by local journalists. Of the total sources, 69% of the stories were written by local journalists. Press releases amount for 19% of the total climate change articles, while agency-sourced stories made up the rest.

In Fig 4 the articles are divided by writers. Tupuola Terry Tavita wrote most of the climate change stories, followed by Cherelle Jackson, Asenati Taugasolo Semu and then Mataafa Keni Ramese Lesa and Alan Ah Mu.

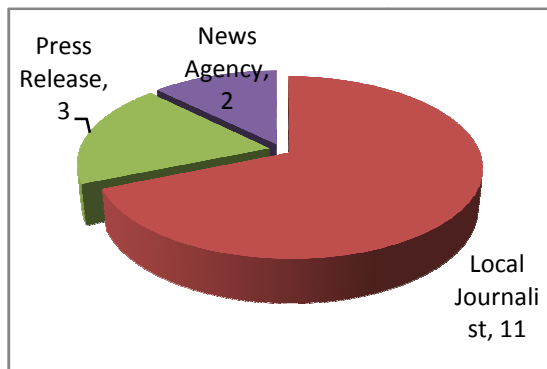


Fig 2



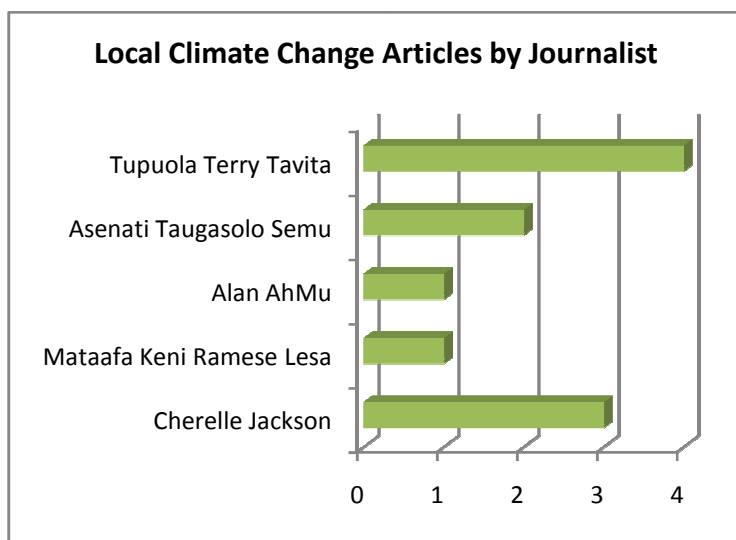


Fig 3

#### 2.4.1 Samoa Observer

In the period studied, *Samoa Observer* featured four stories on climate change. The stories were written by three authors, Alan Ah Mu, Cherelle Jackson and Mataafa Keni Lesa. The most sources used in one story were three. Most of the people quoted in the stories were government representatives or non-government organisation representatives. All climate change stories featured were accompanied by a photograph. The length of each story was at least half a page. Two of the stories were allocated full pages. The placement were usually within the local news, all stories were placed on the left pages, on page 2, 4 and 6. This indicates the level of prioritisation that climate change falls under.

Headline	Author	Type	Length	Placement	Sources	Illustrations
Lelaulu calls for one voice on climate change	Alan AhMu	News Article	Full Page	Page 2	1 Consultant	1 Photograph
Climate change Minister states Samoas case on climate change	Cherelle Jackson	News Article	Half Page	Page 4	1 Minister 1 UNFCCC report 1 NAPA	1 Photo
Earth Hour calls for action	Mataafa Keni Lesa	News Article	Full Page	Page 6	1 NGO 1 Report	2 Photos
Samoa delegation prominent in Poland	Cherelle Jackson	News Article	Half Page	Page 6	1 Report	1 Photo

## 2.4.2 *Newsline Samoa* newspaper

*Newsline Samoa* featured six stories on climate change in the period studied; however all of those stories were sourced from outside the publication, with only one written by a local journalist. Two of the stories were press releases, four were from news agencies or other online publications, and one was by the author of this study, Cherelle Jackson.

The stories were slightly shorter than those which appear on *Samoa Observer* with the largest story in *Newsline* being three quarters of a page. Three stories were given half pages and two quarter pages. Most of those quoted were from non-government organisations, with UN agencies being second-most quoted.

*Newsline* also featured a photo spread of a climate change media training held in Samoa. Three other stories featured photographs. The local story however did not feature a photograph.

The placement of the stories varied, with the closest to the front page being page 4. Two articles were placed on page 5, one on Page 11 and one on Page 8. The placement of articles on the right hand side pages does indicate a degree of prioritisation of climate change stories.

Headline	Author	Type	Length	Placement	Sources	Illustrations
Climate change and Samoa's response	No Author News Agency	News Article	Half Page	Page 8	1 Government Rep 1 UN report	1 Photo
Climate change for journalists	No Author Press Release	Photo Spread	¾ Page	Page 6	1 IGO 1 Association	3 Photos
Religious Leaders call for Pacific climate change action	No Author News Agency	News Article	Half Page	Page 11	1 Church 1 NGO	None
Small island nations survival threatened by climate change	No Author News Agency	News Article	Quarter Page	Page 5	1 UNFCCC 1 NGO 1 Science Report	1 Photo
Round table talks in Apia set goals for climate change	No Author Press Release	News Article	Half Page	Page 5	1 IGO Rep 1 Consultant	1 Photo
Samoa praised over climate change plans	Cherelle Jackson	News Article	Quarter Page	Page 4	1 NAPA Report 1 GEF 1 Report 1 Govt Rep	None

### 2.4.3 Savali Newspaper

*Savali* featured six climate change stories in the period studied. All articles were written by *Savali* staff. Two articles were written by Asenati Taugasolo Semu and four were written by Tupuola Terry Tavita. Five featured articles were news pieces whereas one was an editorial - the only editorial in the year studied amongst the three newspapers. Two of the articles were allocated full pages and the rest were given half pages. The articles were featured in the local news sections, but placed as far back as page 13. Three articles were placed on the left hand pages, and three on the right side including the editorial. All articles were accompanied by photographs, with two featuring one photograph each. Two stories featured two photographs each, and one featured streamline talking photographs of the interviewee.

Headline	Author	Type	Length	Placement	Sources	Illustrations
Why Samoa is ahead when it comes to climate change	Tupuola Terry Tavita	Editorial	Half Page	Page 7	Government Report Government Minister	2 Photos
The Kiribati plan immigration with dignity	Asenati Taugasolo-Semu	News Article	Full Page	Page 13	SPREP Report Environment Worker	2 Photos
Minister of Environment calls for public support	Asenati Taugasolo-Semu	News Article	Half Page	Page 4	Government Minister Government Report	2 photos
Something fishy about climate change	Tupuola Terry Tavita	News Article	Half Page	Page 2	Government Report Government Official	1 photo
Chatting climate change and Manu Samoa with Lelei	Tupuola Terry Tavita	News Article	Full Page	Page 2	IGO Consultant SPREP Report	Photo stream
Why climate change centre will be built in Avele	Tupuola Terry Tavita	News Article	Half Page	Page 3	Government Report	1 Photo

### 2.5 Outcome

The coverage of climate change stories by the three newspapers is less frequent than their coverage of sports and health. Society stories, such as weddings and birthdays feature much more than climate change stories. The climate change stories used are mainly about the coverage of meetings or workshops held locally. In *Samoa Observer* only two of the stories

were written by staff reporters as the other is a freelance writer. Of the two stories written by the staff reporters both attributed four sources between them. For a daily newspaper which has the largest staff in the newsprint media, the coverage of climate change is low.

*Newsline* newspaper tended to use materials from news agencies. Although they are outsourced, the articles are probing and rely on a variety of sources. *Savali* features stories that are slanted towards the government's point of view as the sources are mainly government officials and government reports. Despite this, the issues covered by these articles are wider than those presented in the other two publications, and are written by staff reporters. In terms of writers of the stories, the editors of *Savali* and *Samoa Observer* wrote most of the stories. This is an indication that the interests of the editor can be reflected on the pages of the publication they are responsible for. Tupuola Terry Tavita, editor of *Savali*, wrote most of the stories, and seems to have a considerable interest in climate change.

## Chapter III

### 3.1 Samoan editors' perspective

Although the role of the journalist is very important in determining the reporting of climate change, ultimately it is the editor who holds the final say in what goes in to the paper. Because they do not want their articles to be buried somewhere deep inside the paper, journalists have a strong incentive to learn and internalize prevailing definitions of news and to anticipate their editors' priorities.<sup>34</sup> But in Samoa the editors are also the journalists, so their personal interests can clearly be seen in the news priorities of the newspaper.

Five editors from the three newspapers filled in a survey questionnaire for this study. (see appendix for a copy of the questionnaire) Three were editors, and two were acting editors. When necessary they will be referred to as E1, E2, E3, E4 and E5.

The questionnaire was given out in September and October in 2009. The questionnaire asked a variety of questions which included the challenges, prioritisation and personal opinions on the value of reporting climate change. They were asked to say if climate change was not important, important or extremely important to report on. Three said it was important and two said it was

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<sup>34</sup> Hilgartner, Stephen and, Bosk Charles L. The Rise and Fall of Social Problems: A Public Arenas Model The American Journal of Sociology, Vol. 94, No. 1, Chicago, Jul., 1988

extremely important. All editors said they have a fair understanding of the concept of climate change except for E2 who said they had ‘a little’ understanding.

### 3.2 Editorial Priorities

Editors were asked if they thought climate change should be a priority issue in their newspaper. Four answered ‘yes’ while one answered ‘not sure’. E4 who answered ‘not sure,’ was from the same publication as E1 who said ‘yes’, it should be a priority issue.

Asked to place the value of reporting on climate change on a scale of one to ten, with ten being the most important, one editor said ten, whereas two gave it 6, one with 8 and one with 4, a low priority. Fig 5 indicates that 60% of the editors indicate that the coverage of climate change is ‘extremely important’ while 40% say it is ‘important.’

In Fig 6 editors were given three issues and asked to rank them by importance from one to five. The five random issues were climate change, technology, politics, society and religion. None of the editors ranked climate change the lowest, although one did rank it as a 4<sup>th</sup> priority area in relation to the other issues. E2 and E4 ranked climate change as the third most important issue, whereas E5 ranked it number 1, with E2 ranking it at 2. In relation to the other issues, the ranking of climate change is dispersed evenly. Three editors ranked society as their number one issue of coverage and one ranked politics as number one. It is clear in this graph that the editors have differing news priorities.

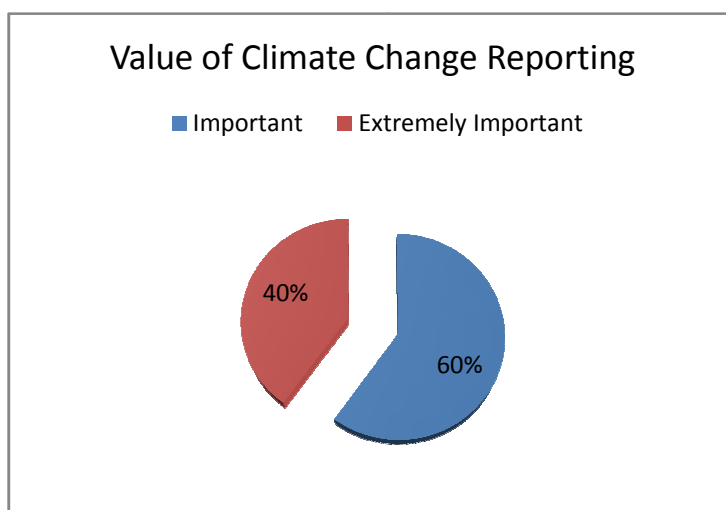


Fig 4

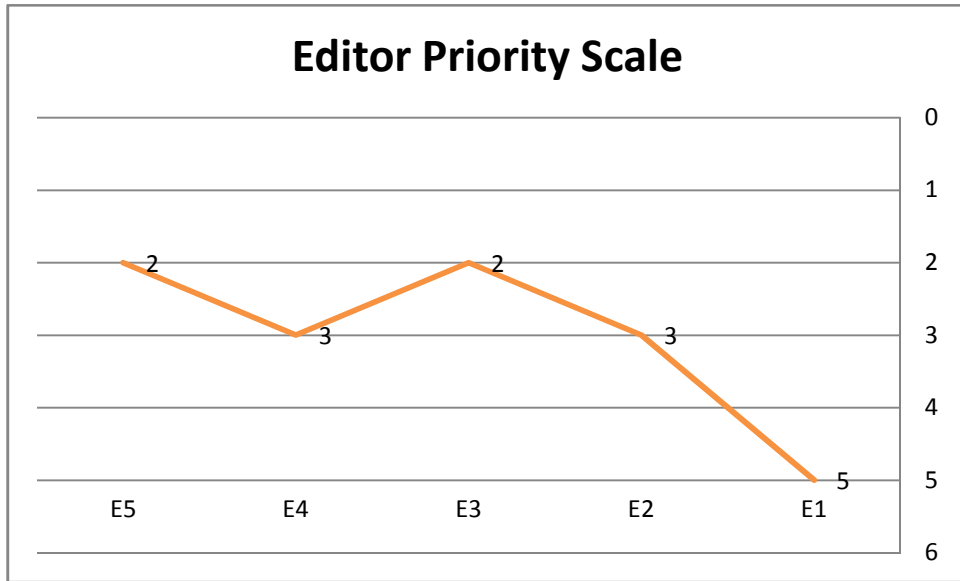


Fig 5

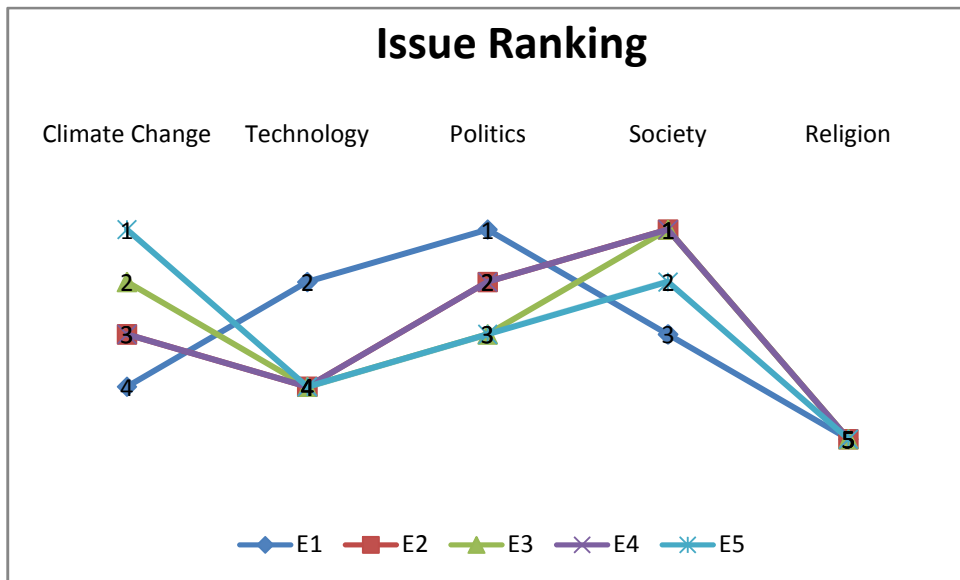


Fig 6

In a separate question, the editors were asked whether they would put a climate change story on the front page: four said yes, and one said maybe. E1 who answered ‘maybe’ is from the same newspaper as E4 who answered ‘yes’ to the same question. This illustrates that under the leadership of the different editors, climate change can fall under separate priorities.

The editors were asked in the month of October whether they had featured a climate change story on the front page: two said ‘no’ and three said ‘yes’.

It is worthy to note that the questionnaires were given out after the occurrence of the tsunami on the 29<sup>th</sup> of September 2009. Some editors, based on a casual conversation saw the tsunami as a climate change story.

Because the mass media are so influential and central to a functioning society, their selection of stories to report upon, or “news judgment”, leads to pressure from all directions, including persuasion to change or omit stories. A survey by the Pew Research Center and Columbia Journalism Review (2000) of US news reporters, editors, and executives indicated that self-censorship is prolific and that some stories are ignored because they conflict with the interests of news organizations or their advertisers.<sup>35</sup>

In Samoa, when the editors were asked if they think there should be more coverage of climate change in their publications, all editors answered ‘yes’. However when asked to say whether they think their readers are interested in climate change news, E2 said ‘maybe’ whereas the rest said ‘yes’.

The editors were asked what the benefits of reporting on climate change were. Three said it creates awareness, one said it creates awareness and educates journalists and one said it educates journalists. Asked as to what their responsibility was to the reader in regards to climate change, two said they were ‘informers’, two said they ‘educate’ and one said they prefer to play the part of ‘informer’, ‘educator’ and ‘influencer.’

Under training, E1 and E5 both received climate change reporting training; the rest said they never received training in the area. Only one newsroom has received climate change reporting training for the staff.

### 3.3 Editorial Challenges

Asked what the challenges were in reporting on climate change three editors attributed their lack of coverage to ‘Lack of proper knowledge’, one attributed ‘Under-resourced’ and one said it was because it was a low priority. Asked if they would be interested in featuring more climate change stories, they all said ‘Yes’. Considering ways to improve the coverage, all editors agreed that training current journalists was the best approach. Although one editor said hiring specialised reporters would be beneficial, as well as training himself on prioritising news better, he also said that the use of more freelance pieces would add value, as well as making climate change a priority news round.

All felt that their reporters needed training on climate change reporting. Asked about who should provide this training, the opinions varied. E1 and E3 said that it is the responsibility of the government, employer, media association, UNFCCC and the Secretariat of the Pacific

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<sup>35</sup> Antilla, Liisa, One Blue World: notes on media coverage of climate science, [www.oneblueworld.blogspot.com](http://www.oneblueworld.blogspot.com), USA, 2009

Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). E2 said it is the responsibility of the government, E4 and E5 said it is the responsibility of the employer.

Although the editors vary in training and knowledge of climate change, they all showed willingness and enthusiasm to feature climate change in their newspapers. E1 who is one of two editors who received training on climate change reporting is also the only one who said 'maybe' to featuring climate change as a front page. The editors interviewed all felt the need for training in the area of climate change reporting to equip journalists with the knowledge to successfully cover climate change stories.

## CHAPTER IV

### 4.1 Other Pacific Island Newspapers

Four other newspapers from the Pacific region were used for this study: two newspapers from Melanesia, *the Fiji Times*, and *the Solomon Star*, one from Polynesia, the Cook Islands News and one from Micronesia, the *Marshall Islands Journal*. This is not an exhaustive study. The newspapers were analyzed based on their online editions. The *Marshall Islands Journal* was analyzed based on PDF archive of its publications provided by the publisher.

The period of analysis covered 25<sup>th</sup> of December 2009 to 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2010.

The first exercise was to look at the first fifty local news articles as they appeared on the news website on the 17<sup>th</sup> of February 2010 and count the number of climate change stories within the first 50 articles. The date was selected at random, it has no relevance to climate change meetings or any events of significance in the Pacific, It was chosen specifically for that reason, to see how climate change is featured on a random news day in the Pacific.

In the second method of analysis, a word search was done of the websites of the three newspapers and in the PDF files of the Journal on the terms 'climate change' and 'COP 15'. The term 'COP 15; was used as this is generally used by Pacific journalists when referring to the Conference of the Parties 15 which was held in Copenhagen in December 2009.

It is important to note that some of the websites may not have featured all the newspapers' printed articles, although this is unlikely.

### 4.2 Online Analysis

Based on this random news day analysis, only the *Marshall Islands Journal* featured a story on climate change in the first fifty articles: the other three publications did not feature any stories



on climate change. The story in the *Marshall Islands Journal* was about the King Tide Festival in Tuvalu where people of the Pacific were invited to come to Tuvalu to participate in the cultural festival.

As illustrated in Fig 8, for the ‘climate change’ word search, the highest number of articles appeared in the *Solomon Star*, with 23 climate change articles. The *Marshall Islands Journal* featured 8 climate change stories The *Cook Islands News* featured 4 stories, whereas the *Fiji Times* featured one story.

In the word search for COP 15 (Fig 9), the *Fiji Times* came up with 6 matching results as did the *Solomon Star*. The *Marshall Islands Journal* came up with 3 while the *Cook Islands News* came up with 2.

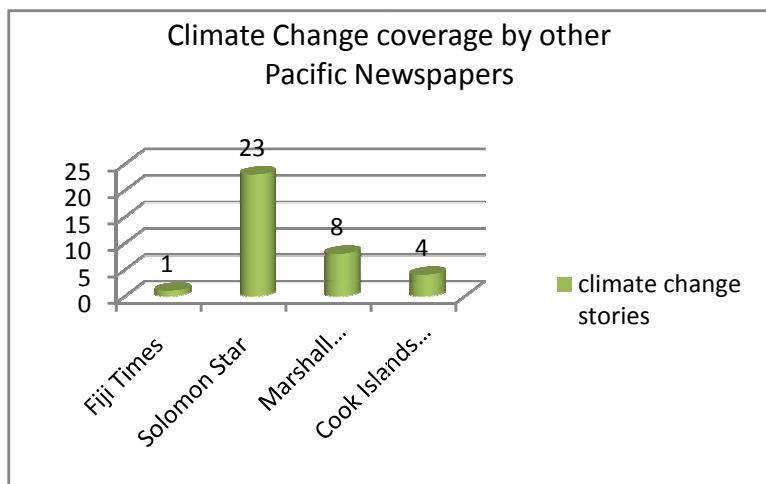


Fig 8

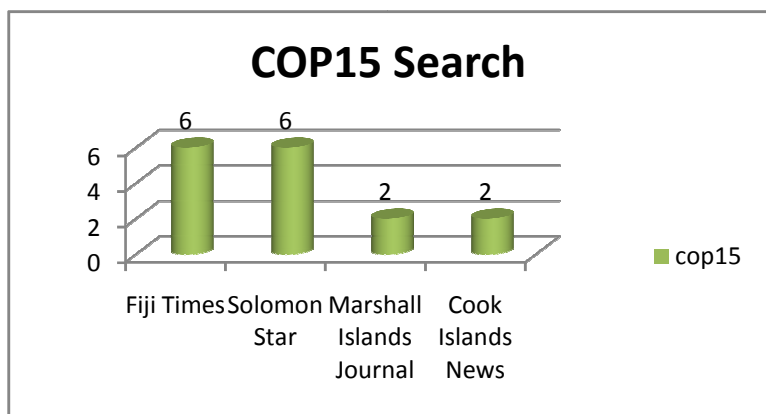


Fig 9

## Chapter V

### 5.1 UK coverage of Pacific islands climate change

The coverage of climate change in the UK press is extensive compared to the Pacific press. However when analysed closer, the coverage of the effects of climatic changes on the Pacific islands is limited in the major publications of the UK. The three newspapers were analysed in the same period of analysis as the Samoan newspapers, from May 2008 to May 2009. The search for climate change articles featuring Pacific Islands totalled 16 articles in the period reviewed for all three newspapers, *The UK Guardian*, *Financial Times* and *The Sun*.

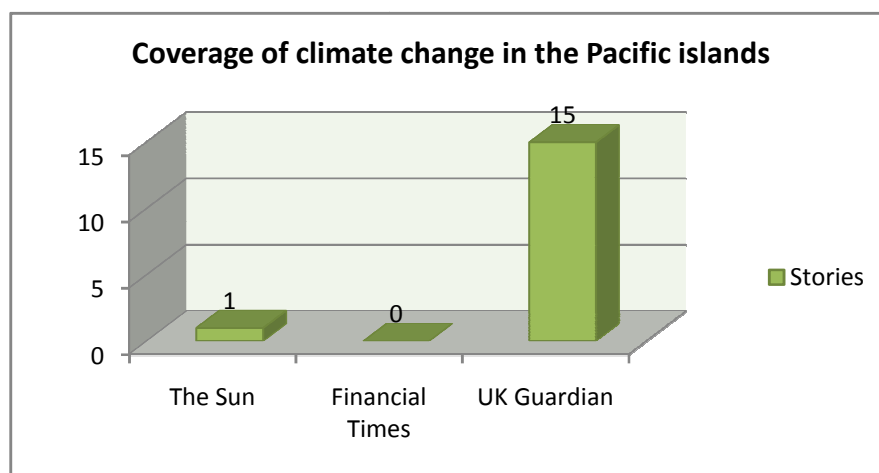


Fig 11

#### 5.1.1 The UK Guardian

*The Guardian* featured by far the most articles about the Pacific Islands in the climate change section of the newspaper. It featured three articles specifically on Tuvalu, Kiribati and Tokelau. Another article was devoted to the Carteret Islands near Bouganville. One article titled 'Loss of Mangroves threatens Pacific Islands' looked at the effect of sea level rise on the mangrove areas of the Pacific and how it affects eco-systems. The rest of the Guardian articles on climate change in the Pacific, were mainly about a global issue such as sea-level rise, and the Pacific is mentioned as an example along with Asian and Caribbean islands.

*The Guardian*, which hosts the biggest environment section for a mainstream newspaper in Britain, has mixed opinions about their coverage of Pacific Islands in climate change reporting. The *Guardian* Environment Editor, John Vidal says they do not have a strong coverage of Pacific Islands compared to other regions in the Guardian environment pages.

Because we are the European media, it is very easy to see everything from the point of view of the north, rich countries. We have kind of made a speciality of deliberately

calling to developing countries and poorer countries. It is not an issue so much about the north, it's as much an issue about the south. At the Guardian, it has been one of our strongest points, is to make sure that we are listening to everybody and not to just a few, fantastically wealthy people in America or Britain. In terms of getting stories from the Pacific the Guardian says it is about opportunity. (Vidal)

Reflecting the challenges also faced by Samoan editors in terms of accessibility to material, Vidal says that this is also a challenge for *The Guardian*. He says that availability of material equals better coverage.

It's really where we get the information from, the stories tend to be where the journalists are. We have a Chinese environment correspondent, who is looking much more closely at climate change. We are getting far more stories now out of America and China about climate change, then we were every getting it before these people were appointed. Equally because we have someone in China and America, other correspondents in Africa, Latin America see it's on the agenda so they're offering more stories now for their regions. So there's much more stories now from Latin America and from India. There's been a general uplift from the number of stories.

Where we don't cover it very well is in the smaller countries, frankly, and we don't have anyone in the Pacific. (Vidal)

Despite *The Guardian* hosting one of the more advanced environment sections in Britain, Vidal says that interest and resources are also an issue in the coverage of regions such as the Pacific.

The interest depends on the story. We are reactive, we can't afford to be proactive, we can't just say oh, let's go to Samoa and find out what's happening on climate change. It's more if somebody from Samoa offers us a piece or if there was an international report then we would use it. The availability of material is absolutely fundamental. (Vidal)

Asked if there should be more coverage from the Pacific in climate change stories, Vidal said there should certainly be more from the Pacific. But the Head of Environment for *The Guardian*, Damian Carrington, says it is not high on the agenda of *The Guardian*.

To be honest it's not top of our agenda all the time, because it's a long, long way away, some of the islands are pretty small, I think, you wouldn't be surprised to hear that the times we have written about it, it's about Tuvalu and places, small low lying nations, that's really a thing that has taken it. (Carrington)

Carrington determines the overall content of the section. He said it's unfair to say that the Pacific is not a priority after that statement:

'We think every part of the world is important is just that we have reasons to cover some parts and not others. I don't know, maybe if we have compelling stories from these places then we would write them.' (Carrington)

Asked as to why he felt there was low reporting of Pacific Island issues compared to other regions, Carrington said that perhaps there are no events worth reporting on.

That's my honest answer basically, not many interesting things happen. (Carrington)

David Adam, one of the Environment Correspondents for *The Guardian* struggled to remember the last time he wrote about the Pacific in a climate change story.

'I may have mentioned the Pacific Islands in a story on typhoons, in passing and I may have mentioned the severe effects of sea level rises has had on small island states as reported in IPCC. I wrote about ghost states and this idea that there could be these small islands that swallowed by the sea, there was and it was about climate refugees.' (Adam)

Adam felt a personal responsibility towards reporting the issue in any region.

'I am in a way passionate about reporting on climate change, I think I am passionate about the fact that this is a problem and that a lot of people do not grasp the scale of the problems, in a way it's a very hard subject to report that you're telling time and time again.' (Adam)

### 5.1.2 *The Financial Times*

The Financial Times did not have any stories about the Pacific Islands in the period analysed. They did however publish a story in December 2010 titled 'China vs Tuvalu' during the Copenhagen summit, analysing the rift between negotiators from the two countries, but this was not within the time period of analysis. Contrary to my findings, Fiona Harvey, Environment Editor of the FT believes that they cover all regions of the world fairly but that it also depends on the location of correspondents.

We are mindful that we have to talk about climate change around the world, climate change in Africa, South America, Europe, everywhere. I think we are very good at that, we have the biggest network of foreign correspondents of any newspaper in the UK certainly, and those correspondents are alive to these issues, and they file stories from their parts of the world. (Harvey)

Harvey did say that there is room for improvement.

Obviously I would like us to cover it more, I think sometimes that when there are other big stories, it's difficult to find a space for climate change. The challenge is to ensure that climate change stays a big story in our newspaper and others. (Harvey)

### 5.1.3 *The Sun*

*The Sun* featured one story on climate change and the Pacific Islands in the period studied. But the story, although it mentions Tuvalu in relation to sea level rise, was not about climate change or about Tuvalu but rather about the price of pints around the world. Entitled 'Cheapest pint is 10p', it turns out that Tuvalu, known for its gradual disappearance as a result of sea-level rise, has the cheapest pints in the world. Thus Tuvalu was mentioned in this line:

"As for Tuvalu, there are virtually no jobs except fishing, and the islands risk being wiped off the face of the earth as sea levels rise. If anyone deserves a cheap pint, it's them." (Jackson)

Ben Jackson, Environment Editor of *The Sun* says they do pay special attention to the Pacific and have done special pieces specifically Kiribati.

'When we started gearing up and doing more on the subject, at the time we were doing an offer on light bulbs, on low energy light bulbs, but they wanted to help show why it was important to do it.

We sent somebody to Kiribati, it took ages, one of our reporters who grew up in Kiribati, her father was a doctor there and we sent her back to see how it had changed 20 years after she had left. It was just a really interesting place, a difficult place to get to, but hugely affected. That was one of three pieces we did.' (Jackson)

He said contrary to their initial thoughts on the piece it proved popular.

'We didn't think it would have much of an impression at all, it was the biggest selling (most read) newspaper that year, it was massive it went through the roof.' (Jackson)

But Jackson was not sure if it was because the Pacific was the subject.

'I don't know if all of that was concern over Kiribati but I think all of that was transferred concern to an area that we all are world citizens, and certainly nothing crystallises more what's happening than either the pole or islands like Kiribati.' (Jackson)

Jackson echoed some of the statements made by Vidal and Carrington in that a challenge to covering the Pacific such as distance and resources. Jackson emphasised the need for journalists to report the Pacific from the ground.

'It's difficult to do from this distance, the way that is encapsulated best is when people make the effort to take a reporter and go there, because otherwise it doesn't translate over distance, you have to go there speak to the people, get the anecdote and the observational information and the pictures to show it.' (Jackson)

## VI: CONCLUSION

Samoan editors are clear that there is a need for more climate change reporting in the Pacific. This need is clearly not being met by Samoan newspapers nor by the newspapers in four other Pacific Island countries.. Environment editors in the UK print media also expressed the need for more reporting of the Pacific Islands in their climate change coverage.

The challenges which hinder the reporting of climate change in the Pacific by local newspapers are the complexity of the issue, under-resourced newsrooms and accessibility to sources and information on the islands. Climate change is simply not as high a priority for Pacific newsrooms as issues such as health, education and politics which all take precedence over even general environment reporting. For a region mainly classified by the United Nations as 'Least Developed' and 'Developing' countries, it is apparent that there are more pressing issues than climate change.

But the fact that the islands of the Pacific are already at the bottom end of the scale in regards to wealth and infrastructure, and the fact that climate change is also threatening the mere existence of some islands, should make it a big story. But it isn't.

This brings into question the responsibility of a journalist to his or her readers. In this case the Pacific journalist and editor have a responsibility to inform readers on how climatic changes can affect them. The Samoan editors do claim this responsibility as an informant, but this does not translate into the pages of their newspapers.

For the UK coverage of climate change, distance and interest are factors. It seems that, if there was a greater interest from the readers, the newsrooms would seek to include more stories from the Pacific. However the distance of the Pacific makes it difficult for UK newspapers to fully

cover climate change issues in that part of the world. But there is an intention to do more. The location of correspondents plays a big role in the overall coverage of a region, and all three UK newspapers studied do not have Pacific correspondents.

The study has proven that editors both in Samoa and the UK see the need for more climate change coverage and its likely impacts on Samoa and other Pacific islands. The challenge is to turn that desire and willingness of the editors into more column inches.

## **Appendix**

### **Recommendations**

1) In order for climate change to be a priority issue for the Pacific media, more training of journalists needs to be implemented. This is the key, as it is only when the journalists are interested and pursue stories on climate change will it translate into the pages of the Pacific newspapers.

2) Panos London, a media development organisation, says that the media play an important role in stimulating discussion in developing countries. Yet journalists say editors have a poor understanding of the climate change debate and express little interest in it. It is important for the media in the Pacific to understand that not only are they playing the role of informant when it comes to climate change they are also creating a healthy space for discussion.

3) Editors also need training in news priorities, and encouragement to see climate change as an environmental issue to focus on in their respective publications.

At a climate change reporting workshop in the UK some years ago Mike Shanahan wrote: ‘If there was a single message that emerged from the conference it was that journalists the world over are gearing up to report on climate change but need considerable support from their editors, first to see that climate change is a story worth telling, and second to keep on telling it in new and engaging ways.’

## Climate change reporting in Samoa

A study on the coverage of climate change in the newsprint media in Samoa

**Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism**

**University of Oxford**

**Researcher:** Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson

Name:

Title:

Organisation:

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

**1. Do you think climate change should be a priority area in newsprint media?**

Yes

No

Not Sure

**2. With reference to the issues below, how would you prioritise them?**

(With 1 being highest priority and 5 being the least priority).

Climate change

Technology

Politics

Society

Religion

**3. In the past six months have you featured a front page story on climate change?**

Yes

No

If so, what was the story about? \_\_\_\_\_

**4. Would you put a climate change story on the front page?**

Yes

No

Maybe

\_\_\_\_\_

**5. How would you describe the value of climate change coverage in your publication?**

Not important

Important



Extremely Important

**6. In your opinion, what are the challenges in reporting climate change?**

Under resourced

Lack of proper knowledge

Low priority

Not relevant for my audience

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**7. If you had the opportunity to cover more climate change stories, would you do it?**

Yes

No

\_\_\_\_\_

**8. In your opinion, what is the benefit of reporting on climate change? Please indicate with ticking the box.**

Sells papers

Creates awareness

Educates the journalist

Educates self

Other

**9. On a scale of one to ten where does climate change come in your priority areas?**

(With 1 being extremely important and 10 being the least important?)

Please circle the number:

1    2    3    4    5    6    7    8    9    10

**10. How do you think you can improve on reporting climate change? (Please tick where relevant)**

Train current working journalists

Hire specialised reporters

Train myself on news priorities

Make it a priority news run

Use more freelance pieces

Other.....

**11. In your opinion, what is your responsibility to the readers in regards to climate change reporting?**

Informer

Influence

Educate

Other \_\_\_\_\_

**12. Have you had training on climate change reporting?**

Yes

No

- If yes – did you find it useful?

**13. Has any of your staff had training in climate change reporting?**

Yes

No

- If yes, what sort of training?

**14. Would you say you have a fair understanding about the concept of climate change and can report on it?**

Yes

No

A little

**15. Do you think your readers are interested in reading more about climate change?**

Yes

No

Don't Know

Maybe

**16. Who do you think is responsible for training of journalists in reporting on climate change?**

Employer

JAWS

Government

SPREP

UNFCCC

Other

**Please feel free to provide any additional feedback regarding climate change reporting.**

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*Thank you for completing the Survey.*

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