



WFP in Small Island Developing States: Perspectives from the Caribbean and the Pacific

Side event on the margins of the first regular session of the Executive Board
Tuesday, 27 February 2024

This two-part event at the first regular session of WFP's Executive Board aims to bring greater awareness to Member States of the particular and inherent challenges for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) on their path towards achieving sustainable development.

SIDS face multi-hazard vulnerabilities. They are inherently vulnerable due to their small size, remoteness, narrow resource base, and exposure to global environmental threats and external economic shocks. Their unique geographic composition poses significant challenges for trade, physical connectivity and access to vital resources. An over-reliance on external economic activity increases their volatility, making them some of the most vulnerable and exposed countries in the world. These conditions were compounded during the coronavirus disease 2019 pandemic. The convergence of global challenges has had negative impacts on agriculture, livelihoods and food supply chains, exacerbating food insecurity in these island states in the Caribbean and the Pacific.

WFP's focus on SIDS is driven by the urgent need to address specific vulnerabilities that these countries face as a result of convergent factors above, in the context of climate change and its impact on food security and nutrition. By providing technical assistance, country capacity strengthening and emergency preparedness and response support, early action and early warning systems, WFP works with SIDS to support them in building more sustainable food systems in the face of a changing climate. WFP also advocates for SIDS and works closely with national governments and regional inter-governmental organizations as partners, reinforcing their efforts to address these challenges and raise SIDS concerns in international fora.

As stated in the Final Declaration of Havana's G77+China Summit in September 2023, South-South cooperation among SIDS on climate issues and food security is also crucial due to the shared and unique challenges these nations face. As such, this side event aims to spur the exchange of knowledge and best practices across countries and regions.

Starting with a panel discussion, the event aims to bring attention to the governments' own experience, and that of WFP, in their joint work to address such challenges. The discussion on the margins of the Executive Board session, will also look at how WFP's work could be further prioritized and strategically placed to support SIDS with the broader international community, in the road map to the Fourth International Conference on Small Island Developing States, which will take place in Antigua and Barbuda in May 2024.

The panel will be preceded by a light lunch at WFP headquarters' Peace Garden. The second component of the event will be an exhibition on SIDS to illustrate the peculiar challenges, opportunities and solutions addressed through WFP's strong programmatic action.

The side event "WFP in SIDS: Perspectives from the Caribbean and the Pacific" will count on the participation of WFP leadership and government representatives from Cuba, Fiji and Saint Lucia as key speakers. The WFP Executive Board membership is invited to attend this side event in-person in the auditorium or online, on 27 February starting at 13:30 CET, followed by the opening of the exhibit in the Blue Foyer.