



Security ramped up at quarantine residences

Government reiterates working together to protect people and country from coronavirus

This week marks one month since the Nauru Government placed the first plane of arrivals in quarantine under its 'capture and contain' policy to manage and minimise the impact of coronavirus in Nauru.

His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea gives regular media briefings to update Nauruans about the government's plans on coronavirus. To date, Nauru has no confirmed cases of coronavirus.

The ministry of health continues to closely monitor all new arrivals including pre-boarding checks, on the flight and on arrival at Nauru, as well as testing of anyone showing signs and symptoms.

The Government has reminded the public that the coronavirus situation will not end soon and the reality that until a vaccine or an effective treatment is developed, the risk of the virus spreading, infection and death is ongoing.

"We are in for a long battle," President Aingimea said.

"It is widely accepted that it will be 12 to 18 months for a vaccine to be available and then it will take time to supply and have the global population vaccinated.

"We should all prepare and expect that our way of living will be affected by coronavirus for a long time to come.

"There will be some kind of restrictions on our lives for the next one to two years," the President said.

One such example is the likely restrictions on international travel until the virus is under control with global vaccination or an effective treatment is discovered.

As unfounded fears mount on ignorant ideas circulating the internet of how the



The Budapest Hotel in the northern part of Nauru is one of the designated quarantine residences declared under national emergency measures for the management and minimisation of the impact of coronavirus in Nauru

coronavirus might be spread, the President reiterated that the virus is passed on primarily from human-to-human. That it may be transmitted from one infected person passing the virus onto a surface and another person contacting that surface, and there is no other known or scientifically proven transmission.

The Nauru Coronavirus Coordinating Committee continues to talk with the Fiji Government on repatriating Nauruans, most of whom are students. Plans to repatriate Nauruans from other countries are also being looked at.

Nauru continues to host and assist other Pacific Islanders, including weightlifters from Kiribati, Tuvalu, and Solomon Islands, who were uplifted with Nauruan lifters training at the Oceania Weightlifting Institute in Noumea. The Pacific lifters have completed their quarantine time and are awaiting repatriation to their home countries.

The Government maintains discussions with the private sector and business owners to ensure food and fuel stocks are at adequate levels, while monitoring price control and

hoarding practices under the coronavirus state of disaster regulations.

As a result of recent security and perimeter breaches at the designated quarantine residences, security has been beefed up with additional police, security and community liaison officers (CLO), and restrictions put in place. A perimeter curfew is now enforced from 8pm to 8am daily.

The President warns that people caught flouting quarantine rules and regulations will face hefty fines and penalties.

The President also warned about being complacent and advised the community to remain vigilant. "We must never bring down our guard."

The public is encouraged to adhere to the rules and regulations put in place as a matter of public and national safety.

Unfortunately, as a result of one incident, six nurses were among the people that were traced to have been in contact with those breaching quarantine rules. The nurses have since self-isolated and stayed away from work. This is the stark reality of thoughtless acts that result in adding further burden to the hospital's limited resources and medical staff.

Education is key to a well-informed community. President Aingimea said addressing coronavirus is a national effort, and therefore educating parents, children and the whole population, is vital for Nauru.

Although Nauru has no confirmed cases, the Ministry of Health and the Coronavirus Coordinating Committee have identified isolation and treatment facilities to remove infected persons from the community while they are being treated and cared for by medical staff should the need ever arise •

Nauru receives \$4.5M in COVID-19 support

His Excellency President Lionel Aingimea met with Australia's High Commissioner in Nauru, Angela Tierney for the announcement of Australia's provision of AU\$4.5 million to support Nauru's COVID-19 response and economic recovery, 15 April.

High Commissioner Ms Tierney explained the application of funds.

"Five hundred thousand dollars will go through the WHO to provide assistance and supplies, \$250,000 of that will be dedicated to supporting vulnerable people, the disabled, and will go towards addressing gender-based violence as well.

"The rest of it will go into the Government of Nauru's account and it can be used for both the health response but also, importantly, economic recovery."

In his media briefing later that day, President Aingimea expressed gratitude for the donor support towards Nauru's effort to capture and contain the impact of coronavirus, noting the support from Australia and that Nauru's finance department and the Australian High Commission will be working together to strategically plan the allocation of the remaining \$3.75 million.

As stated in an Australian High Commission of Nauru media release, "Australia's commitment will assist the Government of Nauru manage the emerging health, economic and social impacts of COVID-19. We are working to deploy this support quickly to meet Nauru's most immediate needs."

In addition, changes in visa arrangements will allow Pacific workers who are unable to return home to stay and work in Australia for up to another 12 months, and scholarship students who have completed their studies, but are unable to return home, to extend their visas.

"We have a Pacific Labour Facility (PLF) in Brisbane and it's providing all the support to the Pacific workers who are there under our Pacific Labour Scheme," HC Tierney said.

"Hamilton Island [in Queensland] closed down because it was a tourist facility and because of the travel restrictions they had to close.

"We have a number of Nauruan workers there, and the PLF has taken care of them, it's put them in accommodation and provided them with support and it's found them employment with other employers, because there's such demand in Australia for Pacific workers, including Nauruans.

"They've managed to redeploy those workers, and they can extend their visas if they need to.



Australian High Commissioner Angela Tierney and President Lionel Aingimea replace a handshake with an elbow bump for the \$4.5M COVID-19 donation from the Australian government

"The students who are there studying under scholarship; their universities are taking care of them. They are continuing their studies via distance education, along with Australian students.

"For those who have finished their degrees and were due to come home, their student visas will just be extended because we understand they may not be able to travel because of the border restrictions.

"So we're making sure they're all OK. All of their support is continuing, so they are protected and supported because it's a difficult time for everyone," Ms Tierney added.

As a demonstration of mutual cooperation, HC Tierney praised Nauru's assistance to Australia in this ongoing crisis.

"As far as Nauru assisting Australians, Nauru obviously has one of the major regional airlines, and an airline which is continuing to function and provide flights, so that has greatly assisted us, not only in getting Australians who needed to travel back to Australia or vice versa.

"It's also helped us get some Australians out of neighbouring countries where flights had ceased. We were able to access some Nauru Airlines charters that were flying, so it's been very much appreciated."

The high commission concluded their media release by reinforcing Australia's solidarity with the region.

"There has never been a more important time for Australia to stand with our Pacific family as we face the COVID-19 pandemic together." •

It's the law:

Drive safely.

Speed limit 50 km/h.

Wear a helmet.

Consider your fellow motorists and pedestrians.

Keep Nauru safe.

COVID-19 Alert • Reduce your risk of coronavirus infection

Hand wash regularly with soap and use hand sanitiser
Cover your mouth and nose with a flexed elbow or tissue when coughing and sneezing

Regularly disinfect and wipe tables, and objects like phones, keyboards

If you have underlying health conditions like diabetes, heart disease, TB etc., please comply with your medications
Smoking damages your lungs and other parts of your body and may increase your risk of getting a severe case of coronavirus
Disallow smoking in your homes. Secondhand smoke also causes respiratory damage

COVID-19 pacific humanitarian pathway - This is as big as Angam: Appi

Deputy Foreign Minister Asterio Appi took part in a virtual Pacific Islands Forum (PIF) foreign ministers meeting to establish a Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19 (PHP-C), 8 April.

Alongside him were representatives from Nauru finance and health, with Secretary for Foreign Affairs Camilla Solomon. Tuvalu's Foreign Affairs Minister Simon Kofe chaired the meeting.

PIF leaders have invoked the Biketawa Declaration (2000) to collectively respond to the COVID-19 pandemic.

"The Biketawa Declaration recognises that in time of crises, all actions must be taken on the basis that all members of the Forum are part of the Pacific Islands extended family. This I believe is the Pacific way.

"This could include expediting medical assistance, expediting customs clearance of medical supplies, and facilitating diplomatic clearances for chartered flights and commercial shipping," Minister Kofe said in a PIF media release.

DM Appi expressed his perturbation in the meeting that the PHP-C had very little emphasis on aiding and facilitating the repatriation of countries' citizens, choosing to focus instead on 'key' and front-line personnel movement.

"I spoke on wanting to have repatriation as one of the core elements of this pathway. From Nauru's perspective, our government's stand has always been that we want our people back.

"It is a priority for us. We want to be together in a time of crisis like this. There's too much uncertainty, therefore they [Nauruans] want to find closure with family.

"It is always about Angam*, returning home, that togetherness. It's about kinship... about existing as a nation. It is embedded within us that we pull our families back."

Nauruans overseas are telling the government "we want to come home".

"That's what we're trying to facilitate at this time of pandemic," DM Appi said.

In the meeting, foreign affairs leaders agreed in principle with the PHP-C, with the caveat that countries may continue to exercise their sovereignty and governance without outside interference.

According to the PIF Secretariat FAQ sheet, no regionally led, high-level mechanism in the Pacific for strengthened cooperation and assistance existed prior to the PHP-C, which is overseen by a seven-forum-country Ministerial Action Group (MAG) that includes Nauru.

The PHP-C will work with, and complement, existing health and coordination mechanisms in the region such as the WHO-led Pacific COVID-19 Joint Incident Management Team (JIMT) and the OHCA-led Pacific Humanitarian Team (PHT).

"Due to our size, we do not have the capacity to continue reporting to organisations," DM Appi said, now that the PHP-C is positioned to expedite processes often weighed down by bureaucracy.

However, it is repatriation of nationals the Deputy Minister wants prioritised.



Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs, Asterio Appi spoke to his Pacific counterparts on considering repatriation as one of the core elements of the pathway

"We [the Government of Nauru] have put in place the 'capture and contain' policy that is enough for us and we are confident it will work, therefore, we acted upon it early and we advocated for repatriation to be a core outcome of the PHP-C.

"Capture and contain enables and facilitates repatriation.

"I thank Fiji for complementing our repatriation efforts when it came time to the uplifting of Lautoka. So they uplifted, we repatriated.

"And now we're working closely again with Fiji. They uplifted Suva, we're mobilising our people back to Nadi so that we will start uplifting again."

Nauru Airlines repatriation flights are not standard commercial flights; COVID-19 specific standard operating procedures are in place at all stages, with aircraft taking around half the usual number of passengers to ensure social distancing, all staff wearing PPE, and prior-to-boarding and in-flight temperature checks on travellers.

Nauru has offered to repatriate citizens of other nations to return to their countries.

"Nauru facilitated the uplift of weightlifters from the Oceania Weightlifting Institute in Noumea.

"On the plane coming back [to Nauru from Brisbane], they diverted the plane to Noumea, picked up i-Kiribati nationals, Tuvalu nationals, Solomon Islanders.

"These people are well looked after, they are being fed. In fact, we are building a platform to allow them to continue exercising. We are happy to accommodate them."

Sadly, however, with closed borders, some Pacific nations have said to Nauru "please look after our citizens," DM Appi said.

Nauru has citizens in Fiji, Australia, Kiribati, the Marshall Islands, Taiwan and Japan, and will try again to repatriate some nation's citizens to be able to pick up Nauruans in those countries.

"That has failed, so far. We are hoping to attempt another try now with the uplift of Suva. We can pick up in Suva, and drop off [citizens of other nations]."

Meanwhile, Nauru's borders are not completely closed, with Brisbane flights still operational.

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COVID-19. This is as big as Angam: Appi

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Deputy Foreign Minister Appi praised the efforts and expertise of Nauru's COVID-19 coordinating committee (the taskforce).

"The taskforce has been working really hard to maintain the quality of the services provided to the residents and the medical service... all in the interests to maintain Nauru COVID-free, and all in the interest that, you know, this is as big as Angam.

"The threat is that real. So that's why we took it very seriously. We embarked on this journey earlier on. We didn't just embark on a journey of theory, we embarked on a journey of practicality.

"It was calm and collected; just lay it out, this is the plan, let's do it, let's execute it this way."

DM Appi reiterated the vital importance of accurate, consistent, up-to-date and frequent public awareness messaging, stating the core message to the general public.

"While we don't want you to panic, we want you to take extra precaution, we want you to take extra medical care of yourself, we want you to understand the gravity of this pandemic.

"This pandemic has the ability to wipe us clean.

"The reality is right in front of our eyes. It's really up to us."

At the time of writing, WHO put global COVID-19 deaths at 157,970 people. Nauru's statistics bureau, as at late-2019, lists Nauru's population as 11,550; COVID-19 has killed the equivalent of Nauru's population almost 14 times over.

The Biketawa Declaration is a declaration agreed to by PIF leaders at the 31st PIF summit held at Kiribati in October 2000 that forms a framework for a coordinated response to regional crises.

Back then, the regional threats were identified as declining governance in the region's bigger Melanesian countries, a coup attempt in Fiji, and the outbreak of ethnic fighting on Guadalcanal, in the Solomon Islands.

Two decades later, in 2020, the region's mechanism will provide the enabling political environment and commitment to expedite assistance and cooperation between member countries in preparing for and responding to COVID-19, by enabling the provision of medical and humanitarian assistance from regional, international and development partners in a timely, safe, effective and equitable manner.

**Angam: Twice in its recent history the Nauruan race has been threatened almost to extinction. Angam Day falls on 26 October each year and celebrates the times in the early 20th century, when the Nauruan people reached a population count to survive. The first existential threat was during the Spanish influenza outbreak in the 1920's, another pandemic, and again during WWII when two-thirds of the population was exiled by the Japanese invaders. On both occasions, Nauru's population dropped to below 1,500 – the number regarded as necessary for a viable population. On both occasions, it was the birth of a baby girl, in 1932, and again in 1946, that completed the count.*

Save <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019> to your bookmarks for daily updated statistics•

Climate Change remains our greatest challenge: Dame Meg

In light of the establishment of the Pacific Humanitarian Pathway on COVID-19 (PHP-C), Secretary-General of the Pacific Islands Forum, Dame Meg Taylor released a statement 'COVID-19 and Climate Change: we must rise to both crises', 17 April.

In it, she mentions the multiple threats currently experienced in the Pacific, including the impacts of coronavirus, climate change and Cyclone Harold, "that reverse decades of development gains in a matter of hours or days".

Fortunately, the establishment of the PHP-C under the Biketawa Declaration (2000), a political mechanism to expedite much-needed medical supplies and humanitarian assistance throughout the region, will help cut through the 'red tape' and policy dilemmas Pacific nations may be facing.



Dame Meg says notwithstanding the current threats and impacts of COVID-19, climate change remains the biggest threat facing humanity today

[Photo: file]

"Cyclone Harold is a clear example that climate change induced disasters can exacerbate the COVID-19 crisis in our Blue Pacific continent. For instance, an already struggling small public system that has closed its borders under COVID-19 may now have to respond to the impacts of Cyclone Harold and the dilemma of opening its borders for external assistance."

SG Taylor offers COVID-19 as a 'tip of the iceberg' scenario compared with the consequences of inaction on climate change.

"Notwithstanding the current threats and impacts of COVID-19, climate change remains the biggest threat facing humanity today. We must not lose sight of this reality. The COVID-19 public health emergency and its ensuing humanitarian and economic fallout offers us a glimpse of what the global climate change emergency can become - if it is left unchecked and if we do not act now."

The science offers the window through which we can see the future, which will be 'catastrophic' for Small Island Developing States (SIDS), according to SG Taylor.

"The State of the Global Climate in 2019 Report recently released by the World Meteorological Organisation confirms that the world has now surpassed 1.1°C of global warming above pre-industrial levels, and that severe cyclones and storms will be the new norm this decade. Without urgent action, it is likely that we will reach the 1.5°C threshold as early as 2030."

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Climate change, our greatest challenge: Dame Meg

...from pg 4

Dame Meg calls on the global community to use the coronavirus pandemic as an opportunity to continue to apply pressure and act on climate change commitments, despite the deferring of important events like the 26th Conference of the Parties (COP 26) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change 2020, now set for 2021.

“We need to limit the global average temperature rise to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels and pursue efforts to achieve 1.5°C, as Pacific countries have consistently advocated for.

“This is an opportunity for our region and for the world at large to consider climate-smart response and recovery measures... and to shape 21st century economies and societies in ways that are healthy, clean, safe and more resilient.”

Labour mobility workers re-deployed

The 27 Nauruans currently in New Zealand and Australia under seasonal worker and labour mobility programs are well and being looked after by either their respective employer or the Australian government's Pacific Labour Facility (PLF) during the coronavirus crisis.

Ten Nauruans, as well as other Pacific islanders, who were employed in the tourism industry at Australian resort Hamilton Island had their employment terminated due to the employers closing down its facility as a result of a downturn in business activity due to the coronavirus.

Twelve other Nauruans employed with Australian citrus packing company SimFresh have retained their jobs as well as five others employed by New Zealand company Eastpack under the Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme. A handful of others were also ready to return to New Zealand this season but were then unable to travel due to the lockdown in New Zealand.

Following this the PLF, who oversees the program on behalf of the Australian government, had stepped in and taken over covering costs of their movements from their initial place of employment to a transition phase while they continue to prepare for re-location to new areas of employment.

A dedicated welfare team of Pacific Labour Facility oversees the wellbeing of Nauruans and other Pacific Islanders affected by the loss of employment. They are looked after and provided accommodation, daily food allowances and telecom services while waiting for interviews and preparations to move on to new employment.

Employment opportunities are already available in the meat, aged care and horticulture sectors.

Secretary for Administration at the Department of Chief Secretary Angelo Dimapilis who oversees the labour mobility program says the program will enhance the individual worker in acquiring new skills and obtaining consistent employment.

“These schemes are targeted to alleviate unemployment in Pacific Island countries and therefore are targeted to those whom have no employment. It will no doubt raise the income generated for those families and ultimately a higher standard of living,” Mr Dimapilis said.

SG Taylor advises Pacific nations to use this time for development planning; health systems and infrastructure, climate change and disaster preparation, community resilience building and risk contingency financing mechanisms.

In addition, “countries must review and strengthen their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) and seek to integrate health priorities and financing into their revised NDC commitments, which are expected this year.”

Climate change remains our greatest threat, with Pacific nations to “suffer the ‘tragedy of the commons’ if industrialised nations do not heed the warnings and curb their emissions to acceptable limits as set out in the Paris Agreement.”

“The Pacific Islands Forum will continue to play its part in strengthening the resilience of the Pacific region, our countries, our communities and our peoples. We are all in this together. We will and we must come out stronger.” •



President Aingimea and Australian High Commissioner Tierney with labour mobility employees ready for deployment in February

At the community level the program opens up opportunities for various skills that have potential for development and to bring young people together, keep them occupied, trained and with access to employment opportunities. This in turn reduces crime rates that are usually borne out of young people being bored and unoccupied.

Mr Dimapilis says the Government sees the program as one to pursue and to ensure it will help Nauru.

“There are uncertainties ahead with regards to current employment for major employers such as RPC, and therefore Government must prepare and be proactive in working to open up sustained opportunities both local and abroad to cater for the needs of her people.

“The COVID-19 currently will have or already has its global impact on the economy. This particular avenue (labour mobility) is one avenue for government to pursue as part of the effort to address economic recovery resulting from this crisis,” Mr Dimapilis said.

Australia's Pacific Labour Facility will help meet business demand across all sectors in rural and regional Australia. Workers from Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu are currently able to apply for low and semi-skilled employment in Australia under the Scheme. Uncapping the Scheme and expanding it to more Pacific island countries will help deliver more workers to fill shortages in rural and regional Australia.

NZ's Recognised Seasonal Employer (RSE) scheme came into effect in April 2007. The policy allows the horticulture and viticulture industries to recruit workers from overseas for seasonal work when there are not enough New Zealand workers•

Digicel half-yearly dividend over \$600K

Deputy Minister for Telecommunications and Media Pyon Deiye accepted Digicel Nauru's half yearly dividend on behalf of the Government of Nauru, 8 April.

The dividend of AU\$607,681.09 was presented by Digicel Nauru's CEO Christopher Manaog and Technical Manager David Daao.

With coronavirus front and centre on the agenda globally, the application of the dividend in fighting the virus was uppermost.

"I'm very delighted always to give back to the shareholders as this directly translates into helping the Nauruan people, especially during this time.

"I'm very confident that these funds will help the Government of Nauru on their initiatives under the 'capture and contain' strategy," Mr Manaog said.

In reply, DM Deiye returned, "I'm very honoured to accept on behalf of the Government and the people of Nauru this cheque and, yes, as you said, in this time of need, it will be put to good use."



Deputy Minister for Telecommunications, Pyon Deiye (R) receives the \$600k Digicel dividend from CEO Christopher Manaog and technical manager David Daao

The Republic of Nauru is a 30 per cent shareholder in Digicel Nauru.

The country remains COVID-19-free as a result of the government's 'capture and contain' strategy, and the latest half-yearly Digicel Nauru dividend can be directed to the nation's efforts to keep Nauru coronavirus-free •

Labour mobility policy to drive employment

Nauru is developing the National Labour Mobility Policy Framework that will be the guiding document for the management of labour mobility for the country and in line with the National Sustainable Development Strategy (NSDS).

Labour mobility is managed by the Office of Chief Secretary and the policy is being developed with assistance from consultant Meleoni Uera from Tonga who worked in the Tongan public service and headed their labour mobility for a number of years.

Ms Uera says Australia and New Zealand have various schemes, which Nauruans are participants of, and the schemes have expanded in both countries.

"There is therefore a need to provide some strategic framework for how Nauru as a sending country manages labour mobility, as it has associated benefits as well as challenges," Ms Uera said.

While the document will guide the development of more detailed actions, it also aims to provide guidance on key areas that Nauru focuses on and ensures the strategy and direction taken is in line with the NSDS 2019-2030.

Ms Uera said there are many sectors opening up and Nauru needs to identify which sectors match the current skills sets and strengths of the people and "have a more focused approach into penetrating those markets," but warns these labour arrangements are usually long term and associated with separation of families for prolonged periods of time.

"There is a need to consider these risks and put in place measures and actions to pursue further in more details of how to mitigate these potentially negative social impacts" Ms Uera said.

The policy will identify the various key stakeholders that will need to work together to enhance the delivery of outputs as set out by the policy.

With labour mobility having a strong focus on skills development, there needs to be collaboration with education, the communities and the public service in order to deliver outputs that will create employment as well as generate increased revenue, address Nauru's unemployment rate, and "ultimately contribute to the overall national vision for Nauru which is 'A future where individual, community, business and government partnerships contribute to a sustainable quality of life for

Labour mobility policy consultant Meleoni Uera says many sectors are opening up and Nauru needs to identify which sectors match current skills and strengths of the people



all Nauruans'".

In terms of the region, Ms Uera says the policy recognises and draws on the overall strategies relating to labour mobility in the Pacific.

While Nauru can take into consideration the policies used by Australia and New Zealand, the primary importance of Nauru's policy framework focuses on Nauru's priorities and how these opportunities can be utilised and maximised.

In light of the global health pandemic, Ms Uera says that coronavirus and its associated impact will play a big part in the shape and form of the policy developed.

"The full force of the impact of the COVID-19 both on receiving countries, Australian and New Zealand, and sending countries of labour (Pacific Island countries) will change tremendously as we move forward.

"There's great economic recovery needs that will arise out of this and therefore, the timing of development of the policy means that it must take this into account and must consider how the policy will work towards addressing that for Nauru," Ms Uera said.

Ms Uera holds a combination of a bachelor and masters in management and public policy and conducted consultancy work since 2013 for Tonga and other Pacific countries. In 2014 she developed a communication and marketing strategy on labour mobility for Nauru and PNG and in 2015 delivered a marketing tool for Nauru to assist in its marketing efforts for the Seasonal Worker Program (SWP) in Australia •

DeepGreen acquires third Pacific-sponsored seabed mining stake

DeepGreen acquires a third seabed contract area to explore for polymetallic nodules, with the strategic acquisition of Tonga Offshore Mining Limited (TOML), 7 April.

The government of Nauru through Nauru Ocean Resources Inc (NORI), along with Kiribati and now Tonga, sponsor Canadian company DeepGreen Metal Inc in their exploration of the Pacific Ocean's Clarion Clipperton Zone (CCZ), where polymetallic nodules rest on the ocean floor at depths of around four kilometres.

DeepGreen's exploration portfolio now contains polymetallic nodules with enough nickel, copper, cobalt and manganese to build over 250 million electric vehicle batteries and covers.

NORI's exploration area is 74,830km² and holds polymetallic nodules weighing 893 million tonnes (wet) capable of powering 140 million 75KWh NMC811 lithium chemistry batteries and copper harnesses required to run electric vehicles, key to the global green energy transition away from fossil fuel reliance.

"The benefits of this acquisition are that it demonstrates DeepGreen's commitment to the industry, it will allow for collaboration on research and development between NORI and TOML on things such as environmental work which will benefit everyone, it also positions DeepGreen as a leader within the industry and provides an additional Pacific Island State as a sponsoring state and ally to Nauru as they support NORI and the industry," DeepGreen's Head of Stakeholder Engagement Corey McLachlan said.

The latest acquisition will provide opportunities for employment, capacity building and royalties from future production. In addition, the acquisition means "DeepGreen will benefit from existing environmental studies, a Canadian NI 43-101 compliant technical resource report and an intellectual property portfolio," according to the latest press release.

With TOML on board, DeepGreen's extensive library of CCZ deep-sea data is expanded, with 10,450 preserved biological samples, 3,153 line-kilometers of seabed images and 115,591 square kilometers of high-resolution bathymetric (undersea topographical) data.

Current exploration contracts in the CCZ cover 1.2 million km² and are estimated to contain enough metal to electrify the entire global car fleet.

DeepGreen is also increasing its fleet, recently acquiring a former drilling ship from Allseas Group for conversion to a nodule collection vessel.

While the environmental impacts of deep seabed mining are still being assessed under the watchful eye of the governing body,



Team member sorts polymetallic nodules collected during NORI exploration cruise

the International Seabed Authority (ISA), an intergovernmental body established by the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), the argument has shifted to the lesser of two evils; the impacts of mining for polymetallic substances on the seabed versus land-based mining.

"Our research shows that ocean polymetallic nodules can provide society with these metals at a fraction of the environmental and social impacts associated with land-based extraction," DeepGreen CEO and Chairman Gerard Barron said.

In a recent study, DeepGreen claims that shifting away from land ores to polymetallic nodules would allow society to eliminate or dramatically compress the most serious environmental and social impacts associated with conventional metal production, including child labour, tropical deforestation and habitat destruction, large-scale generation of toxic waste, residues and tailings as well as climate change impacts through direct emissions and release of sequestered carbon.

The Eastern CCZ will be one of the most well-studied parts of the deep ocean by the time DeepGreen completes its Environmental and Social Impact Statement and applies to the ISA for an exploitation contract in 2022.

Altering the global power balance is another positive consequence of the green energy transition anticipated by DeepGreen.

"Past industrializations had richer countries exploiting the natural resources and labour of poorer countries, which locked them into what became known as the 'resource curse', leaving many poorer countries perpetually underdeveloped and unstable.

"But with the potential for deep-sea nodules to help drive the green transition, our sponsoring states can consider themselves as 'Big Ocean States' with real agency through the ISA, enabling Pacific Islanders to shift the balance of power as we take on the urgent challenge of decarbonising the global economy," Mr Barron said.

For information about DeepGreen, visit www.deep.green •

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