AOSIS's ROLE ON IMPLEMENTING PROTECTION OF CLIMATE CHANGE IN THE PACIFIC REGION's SMALL ISLAND STATES

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ABSTRAK

Small island countries in the Pacific region, such as Tuvalu, Kiribati, and the Marshall Islands, are the most at risk from the effects of global climate change, especially rising sea levels and coastal environmental degradation. Limited adaptive capacity and resources mean that these countries depend on multilateral cooperation mechanisms to fight for their right to fair and sustainable environmental protection. The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) serves as a collective diplomatic forum that represents the interests of small island countries in promoting inclusive global environmental governance. This study aims to examine the strategic role of AOSIS in implementing the principles of inclusive environmental protection in Pacific countries, as well as to evaluate the concrete impact of advocacy through international forums such as the Conference of the Parties (COP), particularly COP28 in Dubai. The research method used is a descriptive qualitative approach with secondary data analysis obtained from official AOSIS documents, COP reports, and academic literature. The results show that AOSIS has played an important role in helping create the Loss and Damage Fund, strengthening Pacific countries' access to climate adaptation and mitigation funding, and increasing the representation of developing countries in global policymaking. This role not only strengthens transnational solidarity, but also lays the foundation for building an inclusive, equitable, and responsive environmental protection system that addresses the needs of the most vulnerable communities.

Keyword: *AOSIS, Climate Change, Pacific Nations, Climate Justice, Inclusive Environmental Protection, Loss and Damage Fund*

INTRODUCTION

Climate change has been a global environmental issue since 1979, when it was discussed at the World Climate Conference held by the World Meteorological Organization. According to a report by the IPCC, climate change occurs due to two factors: nature and humans. They found that human activities are increasingly driving climate change, causing problems for the earth and human survival, such as substantial damage and increasingly irreversible losses in terrestrial, freshwater, cryosphere, coastal, and open ocean ecosystems. In this case, humans are very vulnerable to climate change because the two are interdependent.

The increase in extreme weather and climate events is due to the impact of climate change, which exposes millions of people to food scarcity and reduced water security, with the worst impacts in several locations, one of which is the SIDS in the Pacific region. The SIDS in the Pacific are a group of island countries with specific characteristics, namely small land areas, relatively small populations, and high dependence on marine resources for income.

In general, the Pacific region is divided into three main sub-regions, namely Micronesia, Melanesia, and Polynesia, each of which shows differences in terms of culture, geographical location, and history. Pacific SIDS are strategically located on international sea lanes. However, from an environmental and socio-economic perspective, these countries face very high vulnerability. Climate change and sea level rise are the greatest threats that could potentially endanger the territorial integrity and survival of their communities. On the other hand, there are limitations in natural resources, high dependence on international aid, and limited economic resilience. Among these small island states, Tuvalu, Kiribati, and the Marshall Islands are the small island states most significantly affected by climate change, particularly the threat of sea level rise. (from IPCC report 2023 A.2.3).

Tuvalu is one of the island nations located in the Polynesian region, consisting of nine coral islands with an indigenous population of Polynesian ethnicity. Kiribati, which is part of the Micronesia sub-region, is composed of many separates' islands spread out across a wide area, it deals with major problems caused by damage to the environment and the impacts of climate change. The economies of these countries generally still depend on the fishing sector and copra as their main export commodity. The Marshall Islands is another example of a country in the Micronesia region, consisting of thousands of islands and atolls. This island has a complex history as it is one of the archipelagos affected by nuclear testing and now depends on the Compact of Free Association with the US as part of their political and economic relations. For these countries, climate change is not just a discourse or a potential threat that will occur in the future, but a reality that they face every day. Compared to other regions in the world, the impact of climate change is felt much more intensely in SIDS. The vulnerability of SIDS is reflected in various aspects, ranging from the increasing frequency of tropical storms and extreme weather events, sea level rise that has the potential to contaminate freshwater sources, the increasing phenomenon of coral bleaching, to rising global average temperatures and ocean acidification that threaten coastal ecosystems. This is in line with research conducted by Thomas et al. (2020, 5-7) on the projected impacts and risks of climate change. They state that sea level rise is a critical threat to Pacific SIDS, resulting in habitat shrinkage, loss of biodiversity, and reduced ecosystem services. Several low-lying islands in the Solomon Islands and Micronesia, such as Kale and Rapita, have disappeared due to severe erosion, while other islands such as Hetaheta and Sogomou have lost more than half of their land since the mid-20th century. On Nuatambu Island, 51% of the village area and 50% of residents' homes have been lost due to coastal retreat, forcing the community to relocate. In addition, sea level rise has exacerbated tidal flooding, known as nuisance flooding, in which low-lying coastal areas are temporarily inundated during high tides. Sea level rise has also increased seawater intrusion into coastal aquifers, which are the main source of freshwater supply for many Pacific islands, thereby reducing the quality and availability of freshwater. Not limited to environmental issues, the challenges faced by SIDS also have socio-economic dimensions, such as high unemployment rates, which ultimately trigger brain drain and various forms of migration abroad. These conditions further highlight how climate change has multidimensional implications for the livelihoods of people in these small island countries.

Climate change refers to long-term changes in weather patterns and global average temperatures, mainly caused by an increase in greenhouse gases due to human activity. The impact of this phenomenon is particularly acute and critical in the Pacific and Oceania, home to

many low-lying island nations, including SIDS such as Tuvalu, Kiribati, and the Marshall Islands. Although these countries contribute only a small fraction of global greenhouse gas emissions, they face an existential threat due to impacts that are far more severe than the global average. The main threat to the region is sea level rise (SLR), which is occurring faster in the Pacific than the global average, putting many low-lying islands at risk of submersion. This rise accelerates coastal erosion, causes saltwater intrusion into the soil, contaminates freshwater sources, and damages vital agricultural land. In addition, rising temperatures and the increased frequency of heat waves increase the risk of disease and damage marine ecosystems, including vital coral reefs and mangrove forests. Stronger and more frequent storms and cyclones caused by rising sea surface temperatures also destroy homes, infrastructure, and livelihoods, forcing communities to flee. For example, Kiribati has experienced increased flooding and coastal erosion that has damaged agricultural land and infrastructure (Kumar et al., 2020). Tuvalu also faces a serious threat from SLR, with some islands nearly submerged, forcing residents to consider migrating to other countries as an adaptation measure (McNamara & Gibson, 2009). The Marshall Islands are also threatened by SLR, which has resulted in freshwater contamination and ecosystem damage, as well as a decline in income from the fisheries and tourism sectors (Klein et al., 2015).

The *Alliance of Small Island States* (AOSIS) is an intergovernmental coalition that represents SIDS in the United Nations, functioning as a unified voice to amplify their collective interests (AOSIS, 2018). Founded in 1990, two years prior to the drafting of the UNFCCC, AOSIS was established to consolidate the positions of its members in shaping global environmental and sustainable development agendas while engaging the wider international community (AOSIS, 2015a). It actively promotes international climate action and urges developing states to place sustainable development at the center of their policies (AOSIS, 2015a). AOSIS membership extends across various regions, including the Americas (e.g., Haiti, Cuba, Guyana), Asia (e.g., Maldives, Singapore, Timor Leste), and Oceania. In this context, Pacific SIDS are often regarded as crucial actors in global climate diplomacy, with AOSIS serving as a collective platform to defend their interests and resilience amid escalating climate threats.

The ambitious voices of AOSIS member countries in international climate discussions are much stronger than expected, given their small populations and size. However, the devastating threat that climate change poses to these countries is a cause for global concern. While the whole world is struggling to adequately adapt to and mitigate global climate change, small island countries are particularly vulnerable and ill-prepared (Rosales 2008: 1415). The vulnerability of AOSIS countries is complex and related to various factors, including severely limited economies, geographical locations that are only about 2 meters above sea level, and a lack of resilient infrastructure (Nanda 2015: 131). The tangible vulnerability they face has enabled AOSIS countries to unite and fight for their rights with confidence, strength, and power. Climate change is a matter of life and death for AOSIS members because if the impacts of climate change worsen, these island nations will quickly sink. In their movement, there are still many gaps in the involvement and international climate negotiations of some of the most vulnerable countries in the world.

Based on the literature reviews written in the paragraphs above, the author proposed a gap that has not been researched. The gap proposed is mentioned in the title, which is the pacific region. AOSIS 'role in the pacific region for advocating these states hasn't been studied comprehensively

and concentrated, but rather AOSIS's role in general. This research contributes to the academic debate on climate change and security by explicitly framing the role of the AOSIS through the lens of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) and Human-Centered Security. While many previous studies have highlighted the vulnerability of Small Island Developing States (SIDS), this paper advances the discussion by demonstrating how AOSIS not only voices existential threats in international forums but also institutionalizes climate protection through mechanisms such as the Paris Agreement and the Loss and Damage Fund. The main argument of this paper is that AOSIS functions as a proactive and collective diplomatic actor that supports small states across the world from Non-Traditional Threats, such as climate changes. This paper is written to perceive what AOSIS has done to advocate the small island developing states, primarily in the pacific region.

METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive analysis approach to explore the strategic role of the AOSIS in fighting for the interests of small island developing states (SIDS) in the Pacific region. The main focus is to analyze how the role of AOSIS is viewed through the lens of Non-Traditional Security (NTS) to frame the impact of climate change as an existential threat, rather than just an environmental issue. The aim is to demonstrate how this framing has succeeded in gaining global attention and commitment that has had a positive impact. The data collection technique in this study uses literature review as the main technique for data collection. Data was collected through searching and reviewing library materials in the form of official documents, books, journals, news, and reports from specific institutions relevant to the research topic.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Theory Non-Traditional Security

The writer chooses Non-Traditional Security as its analytical framework, because the Non-Traditional Security's indicator suits the author's wish to elaborate on the role of AOSIS on Implementing Protection of Climate Change in the Pacific's Small Island Developing States (SIDS). Unlike traditional security, which mainly emphasizes military threats and territorial sovereignty, NTS highlights non-military and transnational threats such as climate change, environmental degradation, food scarcity, and water crises. For Pacific SIDS, climate change represents an existential threat, as its impact not only disrupts sustainable development but also endangers the very survival of societies and the sovereignty of states. Rising sea levels, stronger tropical storms, coastal erosion, and the loss of strategic natural resources place these island states at risk of losing not only their territories but also their national identities.

In this context, AOSIS acts as a collective actor that frames climate change not merely as an environmental concern but as a non-traditional security issue. Through international forums such as the UNFCCC and COP, AOSIS has successfully pushed for global recognition that climate impacts threaten human security and the long-term viability of the most vulnerable states. This resonates with the NTS framework, which emphasizes the importance of international cooperation, global solidarity, and multilateral approaches in addressing non-military threats that cannot be managed unilaterally. AOSIS's efforts in advancing the implementation of the Paris Agreement, advocating, for the Loss and Damage Fund, and promoting climate adaptation

programs exemplify concrete measures of non-traditional security practices in safeguarding Pacific SIDS.

Thus, the application of NTS theory allows this paper to underline that AOSIS's role in climate protection is not only about environmental diplomacy but also about repositioning climate change as a global security concern. By adopting this perspective, the study shows how the nation of security is shifting from a state-centric and military-focused paradigm to a more inclusive one that prioritizes human security, environmental sustainability, and the survival of vulnerable states.

Existential Threats

The Non-Traditional Security (NTS) framework highlights that the concept of security extends beyond mere military might, borders, or weaponry; it fundamentally includes the well-being of individuals and their rights to exist, be respected, and live safely within their environments. For Small Island Developing States (SIDS), climate change represents challenges that threaten their homes, cultures, and national survival on a daily basis, rather than being a remote issue relegated to conference agendas. This perspective positions climate change as a prime example of a non-traditional security threat, underscoring the critical role of the AOSIS within this context.

One of the most visible threats comes from rising seas. For island nations like Tuvalu and Kiribati, every inch of sea-level rise translates into lost homes, saltwater seeping into drinking water, and the slow disappearance of ancestral lands. NASA projects that sea levels may rise by more than 15 cm by the 2050s. Numbers that, for larger nations, may seem small, but for SIDS, it means the loss of entire neighborhoods and sacred places (Jet Propulsion Library of California Institute of Technology, 2024). This is not just about land, it is about memory, identity, and the promise of safety for future generations. Extreme weather events bring another layer of insecurity. When Cyclone Yasa struck Fiji in 2020, families lost their houses overnight, crops were destroyed, and communities were left to rebuild from rubble. These storms may pass in a matter of days, but the scars by means of economic, emotional, and social might last for years. In places like the Solomon Islands, even smaller cyclones cause flooding, crop failure, and displacement, forcing families to choose between staying in unsafe homes or abandoning the places they have lived for generations (OCHA, 2023). At the same time, rising ocean temperatures are quietly eroding the foundations of SIDS economies and food systems. Coral reefs, which provide both food and protection from storms, are bleaching at alarming rates. Fish that once sustained island communities are moving elsewhere as waters warm, breaking cultural traditions tied to fishing and reducing food security (Morgan, 2023). The sea, once a source of life and livelihood, is becoming more unpredictable.

Changing rainfall patterns deepen this vulnerability. In Kiribati, prolonged droughts strip away access to freshwater on low-lying atolls that have no rivers or lakes, therefore, communities are forced to rely on imported bottled water or emergency desalination units (Asian Development Bank, 2017). Meanwhile, in Fiji and the Solomon Islands, heavy rains often flood homes and contaminate water supplies, leading to outbreaks of leptospirosis and other waterborne diseases (Togami et al., 2018, 849). Families find themselves trapped between thirst and contamination, and for parents, this means watching their children grow up in a world where access to safe water, something so basic, is no longer guaranteed. The health impacts of these changes are

equally devastating. In Papua New Guinea, rising temperatures have expanded the reach of malaria into highland regions that historically never faced the disease (Park et al., 2016, 1). After Cyclone Winston struck Fiji in 2016, flooded communities faced diarrheal disease outbreaks, stretching already fragile health systems. With limited hospital facilities and shortages of medical supplies, SIDS struggle to respond, leaving families to shoulder risks that wealthier nations can better manage (World Health Organization, 2016).

Perhaps the most painful dimension is displacement and loss of land. In Carteret Islands, Papua New Guinea, families have already begun relocating to Bougainville as rising seas engulf their ancestral land. But for atoll nations like Tuvalu and Kiribati, there is no "inland" to move to. Entire populations face the possibility of becoming climate migrants. This raises not only logistical challenges but also deep questions: What happens to a nation without land? How do you preserve a people's identity, their traditions, and their rights if their country disappears beneath the ocean? The economic vulnerability of SIDS only sharpens these insecurities. Tourism, fisheries, and agriculture—the lifeblood of many island economies—are all highly sensitive to climate shocks. In Vanuatu, repeated cyclones have damaged coconut plantations and reduced agricultural exports. In Fiji, bleaching events have weakened coral reefs, undermining both fisheries and tourism. Each disaster does not just destroy infrastructure; it traps nations in cycles of recovery, debt, and dependence on aid. For communities, this means the dream of stable livelihoods becomes harder to reach with each passing disaster.

Finally, there are cultural and security implications that cannot be measured in GDP or statistics. Languages, traditions, and spiritual ties to land and sea are under threat. Losing a home is one tragedy; losing the culture that makes that home meaningful is another. Amid these profound challenges, AOSIS emerges as a voice of survival and dignity. By framing climate change as an existential security threat at the UN and beyond, AOSIS has ensured that the struggles of SIDS are not ignored. Their advocacy helped secure recognition of "loss and damage" in global climate talks, forcing major powers to acknowledge their responsibility. AOSIS has shown that even the smallest nations can stand together and transform vulnerability into a source of collective strength. From an NTS perspective, the story of AOSIS is more than diplomacy, it is a testament to the resilience of people who refuse to be erased. It reflects the reality that security today means protecting not just borders, but human lives, livelihoods, and cultures from the slow-moving violence of climate change.

Human-Centered Security

The concept of human security encompasses seven fundamental and interrelated dimensions, as identified by the UNDP (1994), namely: economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, and political security. In the context of climate change, the human security paradigm is highly relevant because its impacts can transcend conventional territorial threats. Climate change directly affects people's daily lives, threatening vital aspects such as food security, water availability, public health, and housing stability. For example, saltwater intrusion into agricultural land reduces crop yields, while heavy storms events such as cyclones and floods destroy homes and critical infrastructure, thereby undermining both economic and community security. Rising ocean temperatures also contribute

to coral bleaching, which disrupts fisheries and tourism, directly threatening the livelihoods of island populations.

This approach argues that environmental threats are not merely technical or policy issues, but fundamental security issues that affect the capacity of individuals and communities to survive. As Barnett & Adger (2003) point out, this affirms a shift in focus from protecting national borders to protecting human welfare amid the climate crisis. In this sense, human security emphasizes the dignity and survival of individuals as the ultimate goal of security, acknowledging that the erosion of health systems, freshwater resources, and traditional livelihoods is just as destabilizing as armed conflict. By highlighting these dimensions, the framework compels policymakers to address not only immediate environmental hazards but also the long-term socio-cultural impacts of climate change, such as forced migration and the erosion of cultural identity in vulnerable states.

Human-centered security integration in the context of climate change in SIDS such as Tuvalu and Kiribati can be reinterpreted as a focus on individuals and groups facing existential threats, as well as centers of vulnerability and adaptation. In Tuvalu, for example, rising sea levels have caused repeated flooding and groundwater salinization, making access to safe drinking water increasingly precarious. The loss of habitable land due to rising sea levels has left communities homeless and facing other safety threats. Kiribati is experiencing the same thing, with the loss of fertile land and the risk of population displacement illustrating how climate change threatens not only physical survival but also social cohesion and political stability. By placing these challenges within the framework of human security, the debate moves beyond abstract climate models toward recognition of the reality of communities whose very existence is at stake.

Securitization for Political Leverage

In this context, political leverage refers to the influence gained by actors who have carried out securitization, whereby they have successfully classified an issue as a security problem. This allows these actors to propose and demand significant actions or movements that can transcend conventional political mechanisms and negotiations. AOSIS has effectively implemented this strategy by positioning itself as the group most vulnerable to climate change. AOSIS not only discusses environmental and economic impacts, but also more explicitly links the threats they perceive to their sovereignty, culture, and physical existence. The approach taken by AOSIS has shifted the discourse on environmental issues to security issues that require urgent response and priority at the global level.

Since the beginning of climate negotiations held under the auspices of the UNFCCC, AOSIS has served as a collective diplomatic forum for SIDS to consistently voice the existential threats posed by climate change on the global stage (Cecilia, 2018), particularly in the UNFCCC and Conference of the Parties (COP) forums. AOSIS adopted a narrative known as the "existential threat" to fight for the rights of SIDS. In various statements, speeches, and reports, AOSIS often emphasized issues such as coastal erosion, saltwater intrusion, and the loss of habitable land. The strategy implemented by AOSIS effectively creates a moral urgency that is difficult for other countries to ignore, thereby indirectly forcing them to acknowledge their responsibility for historical

emissions. Thus, AOSIS serves as a forum for collective diplomacy for SIDS in voicing the existential threat posed by climate change on the global stage, particularly in the UNFCCC and COP forums.

At the COP21, in Paris in 2015, an annual global conference organized by the UNFCCC to discuss the ongoing climate crisis, the leaders of the AOSIS took the opportunity to emphasize that this moment was the last chance for the current generation to substantially address climate change. They emphasized that AOSIS member countries face significant negative impacts from various extreme events related to climate change. In his speech at COP21, the AOSIS leader stated that small island countries are facing a new reality that is extremely difficult and unprecedented. He explained that during that year, there were various deadly disasters such as typhoons and cyclones in the Pacific region, storms in the Caribbean, record high tides and floods in the Indian Ocean, as well as various other environmental changes that have profoundly changed the lives of local communities. In addition, he also emphasized that ongoing phenomena such as sea level rise and ocean acidification continue to have a destructive impact on the coastal areas of small countries, where the impact can cause unrest and lead to individuals and groups losing their possessions.

AOSIS boldly voiced its opinion in the process of forming this agreement. The chair of AOSIS said that the time remaining to formulate an internationally binding climate agreement was running out. He emphasized several crucial elements that must be included in the climate agreement to achieve the objectives of the convention and protect the interests of countries, especially AOSIS members. There are three points in the statement issued by AOSIS to strengthen the formation of the agreement before the Paris Agreement is formulated.

First, AOSIS seeks to emphasize the target limit for global warming below 1.5 degrees Celsius. This is based on the belief that small island developing states, which are highly vulnerable, will face massive destruction if the temperature rises by 2 degrees Celsius. They consider 1.5 degrees Celsius to be the tolerance limit that will enable long-term greenhouse gas emission reductions and ensure the survival of these countries. Second, the agreement must explicitly recognize the needs and conditions of SIDS. AOSIS also emphasizes the need for accountability from the parties through legally binding mitigation commitments that are measurable and targeted. Third, for AOSIS, international mechanisms related to loss and damage are a crucial element that is essential to this agreement. Financial support is seen as a crucial factor in addressing losses caused by the damage of climate change, such as sea level rise, ocean acidification, extreme weather, and other severe impacts, given the economic limitations and adaptive capacity of SIDS. AOSIS stated that the estimated financial resources needed for mitigation and adaptation to the impacts of climate change must be increased, starting from a minimum of USD 100 billion (AOSIS, 2015).

The elements proposed by AOSIS and fully supported by other countries yielded positive results. Of the 196 member countries of the UNFCCC, 195 member countries, together with the presidency of the 21st COP conference led by Laurent Fabius of France, agreed through a consensus mechanism on the Paris Agreement as a joint decision that came into effect on November 4, 2016. If there are other sentences that need to be changed academically and formally, please let us know.

The Paris Agreement is a new protocol that will replace the Kyoto Protocol in addressing climate change with its various aspects and commitments. Articles 9, 10, and 11 of the agreement say that developed country Parties are obliged to provide financial resources, technology, and capacity building to support developing country Parties, particularly vulnerable and capacity-constrained countries, in implementing their obligations related to mitigation and adaptation under the Convention. Developed countries must also continue to lead in mobilizing climate finance from various instruments and sources and recognize the important role of public funds through various actions, including considering, prioritizing, and supporting strategies developed by relevant countries, as well as demonstrating progress that exceeds the established limits (UNFCCC,2017 0). In this context, the elements promoted by AOSIS successfully became the basis adopted in the Paris Agreement.

Furthermore, at the 23rd COP meeting held by Fiji on November 16, 2017, AOSIS reiterated its support for SIDS regarding concerns over the damage suffered by the Solomon Islands due to the effects of climate change. This event is clear evidence of the concern that a global temperature rise above 1.5 degrees Celsius will soon cause massive destruction for small developing countries (OESC, 2017). At the 28th COP meeting held in Dubai, United Arab Emirates (UAE), from November 30 to December 12, 2023, AOSIS continued to prioritize its narrative regarding the global warming temperature limit that must be kept below 1.5 degrees Celsius. AOSIS encouraged countries to take concrete actions that could achieve peak carbon emissions by 2025 and reject policies and technologies that could potentially hinder mitigation efforts. However, COP28 was controversial because the UAE is one of the ten largest oil-producing countries in the world. Coal and oil, as the main fossil fuels, are the primary causes of climate change through the release of greenhouse gases that accelerate global warming (BBC, 2023). In addition, the UAE appointed Sultan Al Jaber, CEO of a state-owned oil company, as President of the conference, which sparked debate regarding leadership at this global climate forum.

At the closing of COP 28, led by conference president Sultan Al Jaber, AOSIS assessed that the conference's final decision did not meet the fossil fuel phase-out targets needed to significantly reduce global warming. Implicitly, the agreed decision was only a gradual phase-out of fossil fuels without a commitment to complete elimination. This caused disappointment as it was considered insufficiently progressive in the face of the increasingly urgent climate crisis.

Transnational Nature of Threats

The meaning of "Transnational Security Threat" can be understood as a danger that originates in one country but has the potential to harm many countries or even the entire world. This term refers to issues that do not respect national borders and require international cooperation to be dealt with effectively. Developed countries have made the largest historical contribution to greenhouse gas emissions, which are the main cause of global warming. The impact of these accumulated emissions has triggered an increase in global temperatures, which in turn has contributed to sea level rise and increased intensity of extreme weather events. According to IPCC AR6, the causal relationship is clear: human activities, particularly those of industrialized countries, are accelerating global warming, which in turn increases the risk of coastal flooding and more destructive tropical storms. This situation puts SIDS in the Pacific in a vulnerable position, as their territories are directly exposed to the impacts of climate change.

Sea level rise not only causes environmental damage but also triggers the submergence of territories and forced migration. Empirical studies in the Solomon Islands, particularly the case of Nuatambu, show how half of the residential area has been lost due to abrasion and sea level rise, ultimately forcing many families to relocate. This situation reflects an existential threat: not only the loss of land, but also the loss of homes, communities, and cultural identity. Within the framework of NTS, such threats confirm that the issue of security is no longer limited to state sovereignty, but also concerns the protection of human life, livelihoods, and the cultural continuity of the affected communities. Furthermore, SIDS have limited resources, whether financial, technical, or institutional, to deal with the large-scale impacts of climate change. This makes them highly dependent on global commitment and international solidarity. This is where the role of AOSIS becomes crucial. AOSIS not only highlights the physical and social vulnerability of SIDS, but also raises issues such as climate-induced displacement, loss of homes, and threats to human security on the international agenda. Through the UNFCCC and COP forums, AOSIS has succeeded in promoting the creation of global mechanisms, one of which is the Loss and Damage Fund. This mechanism demonstrates how AOSIS acts not only as an advocate, but also as an implementing actor that translates NTS threats into an international law-based protection architecture.

Non-Militiary, Cooperative Solutions

Within the framework of Non-Traditional Security (NTS), security threats are no longer understood solely in a military context but also include cross-border non-military issues such as climate change, water crises, and food insecurity (Caballero-Anthony, 2016). NTS emphasizes policy, assistance, and international cooperation as the main solutions, given that climate issues are global in nature and cannot be addressed unilaterally. This approach is in line with the strategy of the AOSIS, which consistently advocates for three main instruments: climate finance as a form of historical responsibility of developed countries, adaptation support to improve the resilience of infrastructure and communities in SIDS, and capacity-building to strengthen the institutional and technical capabilities of these countries in dealing with the impacts of climate change (AOSIS, 2015; UNFCCC, 2016).

Furthermore, AOSIS's role in international forums such as the COP has made a significant contribution to promoting global recognition of the issue of Loss and Damage, which culminated in the COP27 decision in Sharm El-Sheikh and its initial implementation at COP28 Dubai (UNFCCC, 2023). Through the narrative that climate change is an existential threat to SIDS, AOSIS has succeeded in shifting the discourse on international security from a traditional paradigm focused on state sovereignty and military power to a more human-centered paradigm, where the protection of life, livelihoods, and cultural sustainability are the main priorities (Barnett & Adger, 2003). Thus, AOSIS not only fights for the interests of SIDS, but also plays a key role in institutionalizing climate protection through more inclusive, fair, and sustainable global agreements.

CONCLUSION

This study reaffirms that climate change represents an existential security threat for SIDS in the Pacific, where rising sea levels, environmental degradation, and socio-economic vulnerability converge into challenges that cannot be addressed unilaterally. Within this context, the AOSIS

has emerged as a proactive diplomatic coalition that reframes climate change as a non-traditional security issue. By advancing climate finance, adaptation support, and capacity-building, AOSIS institutionalizes climate protection through multilateral agreements such as the Paris Agreement and the Loss and Damage Fund, while simultaneously amplifying the voices of the most vulnerable states in global governance.

Critically, the Non-Traditional Security (NTS) framework proves valuable in highlighting the human-centered dimensions of climate threats, but it also presents limitations. Its broad conceptual scope may risk diluting specific power dynamics and asymmetries between developed and developing states in climate negotiations. Future research should therefore expand the analytical lens by combining NTS with approaches such as climate justice or critical security studies, which can better capture issues of responsibility, equity, and representation. Moreover, further empirical inquiry into the effectiveness of AOSIS's strategies, especially in monitoring the implementation of climate finance and adaptation commitments would enrich scholarly debates and provide policy-relevant insights.

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