

AOSIS Fellowship Programme

Brief Background

Mr. Sione Toutou Tokai was selected for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) Fellowship Programme for 2023. He joined the Ministry of Finance in 2017 and is currently a Senior Economist under the Aid Management and Resilient Development Division (AMRDD).

Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS)

The Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) has represented the interests of 39 nations (including Tonga) in the international climate change and sustainable development processes for 30 years. The Group provides technical, political, legal, and administrative support to the alliance, facilitates the advancement of common positions, and produces concrete results for Small Island Developing States (SIDS) under various multilateral processes.

Recognizing the need to build lasting capacity in AOSIS member Governments, the AOSIS established the AOSIS Climate Change Fellowship Programme in 2014—a SIDS-designed programme intended to bring young professionals from AOSIS member countries to New York for a yearlong fellowship.

AOSIS Fellowship Programme

The curriculum of the AOSIS Programme enables Fellows to gain advanced knowledge of climate change, sustainable development, environmental protection, and international negotiations. At the core of this experience are opportunities for Fellows to participate in UN negotiations and represent their Government and AOSIS. The Fellows will also provide immediate increase in capacity for AOSIS member country Missions, UNFCCC delegations, and the AOSIS Chair.

Benefits for Tonga

The Programme expects the Fellows to return to their home country, utilize their knowledge and experiences at the international level regarding sustainable development, climate change and environmental aspects through direct engagement with capital experts and negotiators as an integral part of their national delegations on international conventions.

In his current role at the Ministry of Finance, he provides support to strengthen the mainstreaming of climate change into the Government's plans and its national budget which are mapped to the overarching framework of the Tonga Strategic Development Framework.

The impact of Climate Change is a major global issue and is a high concern for Tonga, thus, combating this phenomenon requires a lot of effort that involves quick action with capitalizing measures and resources. Despite the international commitments, Tonga still under-adequate resources to support these objectives and such capacity is not only limited to resources and finances, but also to human knowledge capacity.

As a young Government official, Sione is proud to represent Tonga on the 2023 AOSIS fellowship program and an opportunity to expand his knowledge and capacity to ultimately support Tonga's advocacy for climate change, protection of the environment, ocean, and its sustainable development.

