



Pacific Islands need climate help, EU says



By Online Editor
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With Pacific Island nations feeling the effects of climate change, it's important to link development to environmental issues, an EU official said from Vanuatu.

European Commissioner for Development Andris Piebalgs is in the Pacific island nation of Vanuatu for a conference on climate change.

Piebalgs said in a statement that it was important for island nations to link economic development to environmental issues.

“Without combating the effects of climate change, we cannot alleviate poverty here,” he said.

Rising sea levels, volatile weather patterns, erosion and the mixing of salt and fresh water are creating major problems for nations in the Pacific Ocean.

Piebalgs said most countries in the region aren't creating problems for the environment yet their dependence on imported energy and exposed geography puts them "directly in the firing line" of problems associated with climate change.

He said the European Union was offering millions of dollars in aid to Pacific island nations to help them adapt.

“It is now time for the Pacific and the EU to step up a gear,” he said.

SOURCE: UPI/PACNEWS