

Kiribati eyeing land in Fiji as sea levels rise

By Online Editor

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President Anote Tong

The central Pacific Islands of Kiribati are planning to buy land in Fiji in case rising sea levels make the country unliveable.

Kiribati president Anote Tong has confirmed to Fiji TV that a local land agent has identified 1500-2000 hectares of freehold land on the island of Vanua Levu.

Tong is now in negotiations with the Fijian Government to buy the land. If a deal can be worked out, Tong will go back to his own Government to get funding approval.

ONE News Pacific Correspondent Barbara Dreaver said when she last spoke to Tong, he told her that rising sea levels - which are already affecting the islands - could make the whole country unliveable within the next 40-50 years.

“It's really little surprise that he's working on this as a back up plan,” said Dreaver.

Tong last year said he had been eyeing up empty land in New Zealand.

“Every time I fly into Auckland I see these huge land masses which they call derelict islands but we would love to have them,” Tong said at the time.

Kiribati is made up of 32 low-lying atolls and one raised coral island and has a population of around 100,000.

SOURCE: TVNZ/PACNEWS