

# ARMS 2024 CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

**Theme:** Global and local research partnerships for a sustainable future

**Title:** A PACT to address climate change - Challenges and opportunities in developing a transnational research centre

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**Abstract:**

Fiji is world-leading in drawing attention to the impact of climate change on Pacific nations. Community-led business and economics research is essential to inform public policy for sustainable economic and social wellbeing in the Pacific nations as they address these impacts. Monash Business School has partnered with Fiji National University to pursue policy-focused research on climate mitigation and adaptation initiatives in collaboration with industry, civil society and governments.

The partnership began with a 12-month co-design process to scope governance and business development matters. Relationship-building was key, with extensive in-country visits to government agencies, NGOs and civil society groups to explore opportunities and challenges. 'Bootcamps' uncovered research strengths and built academic connections. Pilot research projects emerged, involving lead investigators from each university, as well as champions from Fiji government agencies to ensure goal alignment.

This work informed a detailed business case to establish the Pacific Action for Climate Transitions centre (PACT) to advance climate policy research and build local capacity.

Operationalisation of the centre's business model has been complex and multi-dimensional, highlighting the importance of diverse teams spanning every area of university professional services. Portfolio leadership changes in government and within institutions have demonstrated the importance of a strong central mission for the longevity of transnational initiatives. Alignment with Monash's strategic priorities<sup>1</sup> and proven research engagement in the region, and the Australian government's commitment to the Blue Pacific Initiative<sup>2</sup> have provided a strong foundation for PACT in the face of these challenges.