



PHOTO: LESLI DAVIS / USAID

# PAPUA NEW GUINEA CLIMATE CHANGE COUNTRY PROFILE

Boasting seven percent of the world’s biodiversity in less than one percent of the world’s landmass, Papua New Guinea contains rich natural resources, diverse marine ecosystems, and primary forests. USAID works with partners to promote effective stewardship of natural resources and conserve biodiversity while promoting livelihoods, expanding access to clean energy, and addressing the drivers of illegal, unreported, and unregulated fishing.

As a Pacific Island nation, Papua New Guinea is increasingly vulnerable to climate change impacts, including through rising sea levels which cause coastal erosion, displace communities, and damage infrastructure. More frequent and severe weather events like cyclones and heavy rainfall are leading to flooding, landslides, and damage to homes and critical infrastructure. While altered rainfall patterns are disrupting agriculture and impacting food security and water resources, droughts and water scarcity are also becoming more common.

Climate change has led to both warmer ocean temperatures and coral bleaching, affecting marine ecosystems and fisheries. On land, warmer temperatures have also led to the increased spread of diseases, such as malaria and waterborne illnesses. Addressing climate change is crucial for Papua New Guinea to protect its people and natural resources, making adaptation and mitigation efforts top priorities.

# Government of Papua New Guinea Climate Priorities

The Government of Papua New Guinea’s Climate Change and Development Authority (CCDA) is the statutory body responsible for climate change and coordinating all related policies. CCDA is tasked with ensuring a path to climate-compatible economic growth. In 2009, the Government of Papua New Guinea launched a 40-year development strategy, “PNG Vision 2050,” which is intended to develop sustainable development measures in all sectors and increase resilience to the impacts of climate change.

The Government of Papua New Guinea has instituted government-wide climate change initiatives, which include goals to fulfill the country’s obligations under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). The Government of Papua New Guinea has set targets of 100 percent renewable energy and a 25 percent reduction in annual deforestation and forest degradation by 2030, and is mainstreaming climate change throughout the country’s development, as captured in “PNG Vision 2050” and the National Strategic Plan 2010-2030.

The country’s 2016 NDC was revised under the terms of the Paris Agreement in 2020. The Government of Papua New Guinea has further demonstrated its commitment to reducing its greenhouse gas emissions by submitting its first Biennial Updated Report and REDD+ Annex in 2019, and the country is currently preparing for the Biennial Transparency Report for 2024. The Government of Papua New Guinea will focus on four development sectors—agriculture, health, infrastructure, and transport—which are reflected in the country’s National Adaptation Plan.

## USAID’S Climate Change Program: Objectives and Results

### Adaptation

#### Key Results and Programs

The USAID-supported Climate Ready project worked with the Government of Papua New Guinea to achieve its climate change adaptation goals by assisting in the development and implementation of inclusive and equitable climate action policies and plans. Climate Ready supported the Government of Papua New Guinea’s development of its National Adaptation Plan, which was launched in April 2023 and marked an important milestone in addressing the country’s climate adaptation challenges. Climate Ready also supported the CCDA by building capacity to access climate finance, which resulted in a Readiness Grant from the Green Climate Fund of more than \$677,000 in 2017.

USAID has helped:

- Bolster the country’s ability to manage the more frequent and intense extreme weather events brought on by climate change, through humanitarian assistance and investments in disaster risk reduction and by partnering with the Government of Papua New Guinea’s National Disaster Center and Provincial Disaster Committees to better prepare for and mitigate the impact of exposure to natural disasters

- Provide more than \$12 million in funding during the past two years for disaster risk reduction and disaster relief, including supporting displaced populations and providing disaster preparedness and response training
- Support more than 22,000 people with disaster preparedness, disaster protection, and climate-smart agriculture interventions between 2020 and 2024 helping build resilience to disasters and future climate-related threats

## Renewable Energy

Papua New Guinea has one of the Asia-Pacific region’s lowest electrification rates: Only an estimated 15 percent of the population, most of whom live in urban communities, have reliable access to electricity. To broaden communities’ access to a stable and clean supply of electricity—which is foundational to sustainable development and economic growth—USAID partnered with the Government of Papua New Guinea, Government of Australia, Government of New Zealand, and Government of Japan to form the Papua New Guinea Electrification Partnership (PEP). USAID also designed and launched the USAID-PEP activity to support the broader PEP partnership.

### Key Results and Programs

The USAID-PEP activity contributes to the Government of Papua New Guinea’s goal of connecting 70 percent of the country’s population to electricity by 2030, and the activity is working to deliver 350,000 new household connections by the end of 2025. Since 2020, USAID has reached more than 220,000 households and more than 1.1 million people with improved access to energy and leveraged more than \$2.2 million in private sector funding.

USAID has helped:

- Assist PNG Power Limited (PPL), the state utility, in adopting initiatives to increase operations efficiencies, which resulted in a 10.8 percent reduction in the share of diesel-based energy generation in favor of renewable energy; USAID-PEP also helped PPL design and implement an Amnesty Program to encourage those illegally connected to the grid to come forward and register without penalty; this program started in Port Moresby in 2022, and has since expanded to Mount Hagen, Lae, Goroka, and Kokopo; to date, PPL has successfully converted more than 56,000 illegal connections to registered paying customers
- Support the development and expansion of the supply chain for quality-certified standalone solar products through the Trupela Sola consumer awareness campaigns’ expositions and networking events for women-owned micro-, small-, and medium enterprises; through the end of June 2023, USAID-PEP partners recorded sales of approximately 135,000 standalone solar products
- Provide technical assistance and co-funding for the development of 20 mini-grids in communities outside of PPL’s franchise area; two solar mini-grids have been established—in Pimaga Rural Hospital, Southern Highlands and in Kuriva, Central Province—in partnership with Santos

Foundation and TotalEnergies, respectively, resulting in better health services and improved living conditions in those communities; 18 other mini-grids are in various stages of development.

## Natural Climate Solutions

The tropical forest of New Guinea Island, which spans Papua New Guinea and Indonesia, is the third-largest rainforest in the world and functions as a major carbon sink. Since 2000, according to Global Forest Watch, Papua New Guinea has lost about 1.87 million hectares of tree cover primarily due to unsustainable land use in the agriculture and forestry sectors and other industries that are dependent on resource use. This loss has resulted in the release of 1.4 billion tons of greenhouse gasses—the equivalent of running approximately 19 coal-fired power plants for 20 years.

USAID works to transform Papua New Guinea’s forests and peatlands into key pillars of the country’s low-carbon economy of the future. USAID helps address the threats and drivers of biodiversity loss by improving the capacity of key stakeholders to better manage natural resources.

### Key Results and Programs

USAID works hand in hand with the Government of Papua New Guinea to ensure that the country’s rich natural resource base does not erode, bolster national and community resilience in the face of environmental change, and promote and support the scientific, cultural, and economic benefits of biodiversity. USAID works to protect the environment and address the impacts of climate change collectively through our close partnerships with the public and private sector.

USAID has helped:

- Place approximately 250,000 hectares of biologically significant areas under improved management through the Lukautim Graun, or “Look After the Environment” activity; 10 community conservation deeds have been signed by communities, protecting almost 60,000 hectares from unsustainable exploitation
- Support the Government of Papua New Guinea through the Lukautim Graun as it endorses its Timber Legal Standards and tests the timber legality verification system with the industry to ensure legally sourced timber is exported to reputable international markets
- Train almost 3,500 people in sustainable natural resource management practices; close to 7,000 people are now participating in group-based savings, micro-finance, and lending programs
- Support improved forest governance, increased environmental sustainability of the forest industry, and protection of communities’ land and resource rights in order to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, enhance carbon sequestration, and increase the sustainability of natural resource management; this work has been undertaken as part of USAID’s \$18.5 million Papua New Guinea Sustainable Landscapes Activity, which also supports women as forestry and conservation leaders