



RESCUING SINKING STATES

Climate change is an existential threat to the **Pacific Island nations**. A fellow of the Robert Bosch Academy is working hard to protect them.

PHOTOS: MANUEL FRAUENDORF, JOSH ORTER, RISING NATIONS INITIATIVE HERITAGE PROJECT, GETTY IMAGES/IMAGEBROKER/MICHAEL RUNKEL

There are only a few decades remaining before the Pacific Ocean will completely swallow up the microstates of Tuvalu, Kiribati, and the Marshall Islands. It is likely they will be the first countries in the world to disappear as a result of climate change. What will become of their peoples, their cultures, and their histories? “I feel sad when I see what the future holds for my nephews and my future children. There is a great responsibility and burden on our generation to take action,” says Grace Malie, youth delegate of the Rising Nations Initiative, a U.N. member states-led initiative for the protection of the Pacific atoll countries. In May, Malie and a delegation traveled from Tuvalu to Europe at the invitation of the Robert Bosch Stiftung to appeal to political representatives for support for her homeland. The visit was initiated by Kamal Amakrane, a Richard von Weizsäcker fellow at the Robert Bosch Academy. “We need to strengthen those on the front lines when it comes to climate protection. We also need to discuss sovereignty and statehood, cultural heritage, and youth empowerment,” Amakrane says. The director of the U.N. Global Center for Climate Mobility in New York initiated a joint appeal to the German government with the Robert Bosch Stiftung, through which Germany is being urgently encouraged to make the protection of the Pacific Island nations a core issue of its climate foreign policy.

Amakrane is one of more than 100 distinguished



Grace Malie
Youth delegate of the Rising Nations Initiative at the Robert Bosch Stiftung in Berlin.

Kamal Amakrane
Director, U.N. Global Center for Climate Mobility



fellows from more than 39 different countries who have been guests at the Robert Bosch Academy so far. The Robert Bosch Academy has been a permanent fixture of the foundation at its Berlin site

since 2014. Each year, it invites international experts, decision-makers, and thought leaders to address the global issues of our time. They spend a six-month residency as Richard von Weizsäcker fellows in Berlin. The fellowship program was established in honor of Richard von Weizsäcker, the former German president who served for many years on the Board of Trustees of the Robert Bosch Stiftung.

A GLOBAL NETWORK

The fellows use their time in Germany to meet with decision-makers and experts and exchange ideas with them and other fellows. In this manner they benefit from the community in Berlin, as well as from the global network of fellows. Current fellows in Berlin include Kate Crawford, a scientist whose research looks at the relationship between technology and power, and Fiona Hill, a security expert interested in how Germany is dealing with changes in both the domestic and global economy. “Our fellows bring invaluable international perspectives to the political and social dialogue as well as to the Stiftung’s work, and they return to their regular positions with a better understanding of the German and European discourses,” explains Henry Alt-Haaker, director of the Robert Bosch Academy, describing the goal of the program.

◀ Claudia Hagen

The Robert Bosch Academy: Think. Debate. Inspire.

Each year, the Robert Bosch Academy organizes around 25 public events, 65 community events, and 1,000 informal background discussions in Berlin. The website lists the profiles of the Richard von Weizsäcker fellows. The fellows write opinion pieces that are published on the website and in the Robert Bosch Academy newsletter *Quarterly Perspectives*. Henry Alt-Haaker and Pradnya Bivalkar host a podcast called “Think. Debate. Inspire.” where they invite fellows to discuss the most urgent challenges of our time. The conversations revolve around a wide range of topics including foreign policy, global governance, climate change, health, and education.
www.robertboschacademy.de