

CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

Issue 19 — December 2013



USAID funded adaptation planning workshop on Abaiang atoll, Kiribati

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Director's Note



Dr Netatua Pelesikoti

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Dear Readers,

The SPREP climate change programme started in 2013 with commitments guided by our strategic plan to deliver on adaptation, mitigation, information, communication and capacity building priorities in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs).

We have almost completed our 2013 journey. It is a time to look back at what has been accomplished through our various roles, what can be improved and what priorities to address next year.

I am happy to see the dedication of PICTs to achieve sustainable development through climate risk reduction and practical adaptation and mitigation measures implemented on the ground through the support of projects including Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) and Pacific Islands Green House Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy (PIGGAREP). GEF and UNDP were key partners for both projects.

SPREP's assistance delivered to National Meteorological Services have reached unprecedented heights with the support from WMO, NOAA, Government of Australia, Government of Finland, Government of New Zealand and the Government of Netherlands.

USAID Adaption support has enabled SPREP to assist remote communities in Choiseul in the Solomon Islands and Abaiang in Kiribati. In both sites, this has been undertaken in partnership with organisations including SPC, GIZ, UNDP and GCCA - PSIS to address integrated adaptation and risk reductions options through ecosystem based and whole of island approaches.

Our CCM newsletter throughout 2013 has documented and disseminated these achievements and more are featured in this edition.

The recent UNFCCC COP in Warsaw and the IPCC AR5 Working Group 1 report on Climate Change Science reminded us of the monumental challenges we face in 2014 and beyond. The SPREP Climate Change Programme will continue to work tirelessly to address this, as we fight together to preserve the very existence of many PICTs.

I would like to wish you all on behalf of SPREP's Director General, Mr David Sheppard and SPREP's senior management team a Merry Christmas and a very happy new year!

'ofa atu!

About Us

SPREP's Climate Change Division (CCD) is made up of three programmes:

1. Adaptation;
2. Mitigation;
3. Policy and Science.

The work of the CCD is directed by the SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015 based on the climate change priorities of SPREP Members and consistent with the *Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015* (PIFACC) and other relevant and approved policy drivers such as the Pacific Plan and the Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Management.

SPREP's three (broad) climate change strategic priorities for 2011-2015 are:

1. Implementing adaptation measures;
2. Improving members' capacity, knowledge and understanding of climate change, and risk reduction;
3. Contributing to global greenhouse gas reduction.

Please visit our website at: www.sprep.org/Climate-Change/climate-change-about-us

Samoa speaks on Building Resilience: Loss and Damage at COP 19



Samoa was featured during a special World Bank event at the UN Climate talks to launch their report called 'Building Resilience Integrating Climate and Disaster Risk into Development' which describes how the costs and damages from more extreme weather are growing rapidly.

Furthermore, it is not just climate change that threatens the productive ecosystems of the Pacific; environmental degradation associated with poor natural resource management continues to limit the options for future generations of Pacific Islanders.

For the full article: [Click here](#)

Tonga: Gaining ground on the climate change front at home

Over a three year period Tonga has carried out more than 60% of climate change and disaster risk management activities they have committed to under a national action plan.

In 2010 the Island Kingdom endorsed their Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management Joint National Action Plan (JNAP), a five year plan, since then progress in carrying out this plan has been swift.

For the full article: [Click here](#)



Ms. Luisa Tuiafitu Malolo with
Delegates from Tonga and Kiribati

Spotlight on COP 19



Mr. Espen Ronneberg on left during a side event
at the UNFCCC COP 19 in Warsaw, Poland

"Negotiators were able to agree on what could be described as a modest package of decisions at the United Nations Climate Change Conference in Warsaw. The negotiations are still on track." said Espen Ronneberg, Climate Change Adviser, at SPREP .

However the decisions underscore the challenges as parties work toward bridging their differences to reach a new global agreement in Paris in 2015.

For the full article: [Click here](#)

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Stakeholders discuss baseline survey on weather and climate



Over 75 stakeholders representing communities, National Project Advisory Committees, Non Government Organisations, partners, project In-Country Coordinators and staff amongst others gathered in Port Vila, Vanuatu

Over 75 stakeholders gathered in Port Vila, Vanuatu in October to discuss the progress of the USP EU Climate Change Alliance Project.

The joint Baseline Survey on weather and climate data usage in the Pacific Island communities and traditional knowledge, which is implemented through a partnership between the EU GCCA and the Finnish Pacific (FINPAC) Project implemented by SPREP, was also discussed.

Stakeholders noted the joint effort and expressed full support for the initiative recognising the value of integrating traditional knowledge and science in all climate change adaptation initiatives in the region as well as the importance of ensuring that community uptake weather and climate information for their daily planning.

Weather information now available for 3,700 locations in the Solomon Islands

Mobile phone users in the Solomon Islands can now request and immediately receive weather updates for up to 3700 locations across the country through texting. The modification to this service was done through the installation of the SmartMet weather forecasting and production software and partnership with the Big Interaktif SMS Ltd using its SMS auto response service.

Experts from the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) successfully installed this new tool at the Solomon Islands Meteorological Services in October. The system is used to produce new automated weather products in support of improving the services provided by the National Meteorological Services for end users and the general public.

Solomon Islands is the first country in the Pacific to start automated production of new products that are now available on its website www.met.gov.sb using SmartMet and almost all forecasters have received hands on training on using this new tool. The system has also been installed at the Samoa Meteorological Service and will be rolled out in Tonga, PNG and Vanuatu in



This initiative has been made possible through the Finnish Pacific (FINPAC) Project, funded by the Government of Finland through its Ministry for Foreign Affairs and implemented by SPREP.



Southern coast, Choiseul Province, Solomon Islands



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Abaiang communities discuss the future of their atoll



Facilitation with Abaiang community members led by Government of Kiribati staff

The Government of Kiribati's 'whole-of-island' team has returned to Abaiang atoll to present the findings of an integrated vulnerability assessment undertaken in September 2013.

Over 168 Abaiang residents attended the workshop, including representatives from villages, schools, health centres, the Council and the Island Development Committee.

For the full article: [Click here](#)

Nauru PACC success transfers to the Marshall Islands

Solar water purifiers, demonstrated under the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) project, have proved very successful in Nauru. Now, the Republic of the Marshall Islands is hoping to replicate this success to improve water security on the Republic's outer islands.

“The great potential of these units is to provide drinking water during drought periods, when rain-water tanks dry up and there are no other sources of drinking water available”

RMI PACC project coordinator, Joseph Cain

For the full article: [Click here](#)



Majuro Waste and Sewer Company workers help setup the Carocell units for display

Raising gender awareness in the Cook Islands – a double success for PACC



It is vital that both women and men are involved for effective responses to climate change. This was the message taken by the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) team to two recent events in the Cook Islands.

The team made a presentation at the 6th Pacific Water Conference, held in Rarotonga 13–15 November, on water projects under the PACC programme, with a particular focus on gender issues and gender actions.

For the full article: [Click here](#)

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The PACC Project consists of 14 member countries; it is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). It is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Australian Agency for International Development with support from United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Climate Change Capacity Development (C3D+) Programme.



Award nomination recognises work of the Pacific Climate Change Science team

The Pacific Climate Change Science team from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, the CSIRO and Pacific Islands country and regional partners were finalists of The Australian Innovation Challenge Award in the Community Services category for 2013, affirming the important role science plays in effective climate change adaptation.

The challenge is run by The Australian newspaper in association with Shell and Innovation Australia. As finalists, the science team represented by Dr Scott Power and Mr Kevin Hennessy, have been recognised for the benchmark climate research published in the 2011 report Climate Change in the Pacific and the range of science-based climate tools and communication and capacity development products and activities developed by the team.

The programs funded by the Australian Government under the International Climate Change Adaptation Initiative, were aimed at helping to increase the



scientific knowledge of Pacific Island countries so they are better able to adapt to the effects of climate variability and change.

“Through this collaborative effort, climate science can be seen to make a tangible contribution to realising sustainable development outcomes in the Pacific, something which is being continued under the Pacific-Australia Climate Change Science Adaptation Planning (PACCSAP) Program.”

Geoff Gooley, PACCSAP Science Program Manager

For more information: [The Australian Innovation Challenge](#)

USP students attend global climate talks



USP students L - R: Ms. Diana Salili, Ms. Andra Whiteside, Ms. Fetalai Gagaeolo

Pacific island university students are walking the halls of the Stadium Narodowy in Poland, venue of the 19th Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change.

The seven students are part of the Climate Change Programme at the University of the South Pacific (USP) and are attending the UN climate talks as members of the Nauru delegation. Nauru is the Chair of the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS).

For the full article: [Click here](#)

SPREP strengthens South- South Collaboration

The Indian Ocean Commission (IOC), Caribbean Climate Change Community Centre (5C's), in close partnership with SPREP met on Mahe Island in the Seychelles for a three day workshop in October of this year.

The meeting was opportune time to discuss the details and follow up actions of a memorandum of understanding (MoU) agreement between SPREP and the Indian Ocean Commission in June, 2013. With the assistance of Acclimatise (UK), IOC, 5Cs and SPREP were able to agree on key follow up actions including the build up to the SIDS Conference in 2014. The Indian Ocean Commission supports a move on two key issues which are; lessons learned and the process behind SPREP's experience with seeking accreditation as a regional implementing entity (RIE) from the Adaptation Fund Board (AFB) and also picking key experiences and background with the Regional Pacific Climate Change Portal.



Workshop participants of the IOC workshop in the Seychelle Islands October, 2013.



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Climate Update

The consensus of the available climate models indicate that neutral ENSO conditions are very likely (93 % chance) to persist for the coming months through to February 2014.

The pattern of Sea Surface Temperature (SST) anomalies across the tropical Pacific remains within the range of neutral ENSO conditions however warmer than average SST continue over waters between Fiji, Samoa and Tonga and up towards Nauru. For the most part SST profiles are unchanged from that of a few weeks ago, however waters in the east have cooled marginally while waters west of the Date Line and around the SPCZ have warmed slightly.

The SST anomaly map for the week ending 17 November shows warm anomalies west of the Date Line, near-average temperatures in the central Pacific, and areas of cool anomalies along the equator in the eastern Pacific, extending south of the equator between the South American coast and around 100°W. Warm anomalies around the western half of Australia also persist, and have strengthened compared to two weeks ago.

The atmospheric indicator of ENSO is the Southern Oscillation Index (SOI). The most recent 30 day averaged SOI value was -3.3, continuing a period of slightly negative SOI going back several months now. This value is well within the ENSO neutral zone for SOI. Sustained positive values of the SOI above +8 may indicate a La Niña event, while sustained negative values below -8 may indicate an El Niño event. Values of between about +8 and -8 generally indicate neutral conditions.

The SPCZ is forecast to be positioned slightly south of normal for the coming three months, lying close to or just north of Fiji and over central Tonga extending back across northern Vanuatu to the Solomon Islands. Normal or below normal rainfall is forecast for Western Kiribati, Pitcairn Island, Tuvalu, Eastern Kiribati, the Marquesas and the Tuamotu archipelago, while near or above normal rainfall is forecast for Fiji, the Southern Cook Islands, the Federated States of Micronesia, Papua New Guinea and Tonga. Near or above average SST is forecast for Fiji, Niue, the Southern Cook Islands, Eastern Kiribati and Western Kiribati, Tonga and Wallis and Futuna.



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Events in December 2013

Event	Location	Date
Climate Change Finance Meetings	Korea	1-5 Dec
PIGGAREP Board Meeting	Fiji	2 Dec
9th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas	Fiji	2-6 Dec
In Country Assistant: PACC FSM Scaling Up Proposal	FSM	5-20 Dec
PPCR Consultation for Tuvalu	Tuvalu	6-9 Dec
RoadMap Meeting, Technical Committee Meeting and Steering Committee Meeting	Fiji	9-10 Dec
In Country Assistance: Solar PV Training	Nauru	17-20 Dec