

# CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

Issue 2 — June 2012

PACC Samoa © PHOTO - S. Tavanabola/SPREP

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*"The Pacific Environment—sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures"*



**SPREP**  
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional  
Environment Programme

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ISSN: 2227-6947

Talofa lava!

...and greetings to you all

## Director's Note



*Dr Netatua Pelesikoti,  
SPREP Climate Change Division Director*

'Accessing climate change finance' has become a buzz phrase in every regional forum where climate change is discussed.

This is not surprising when we hear billions of dollars of climate change funds pledged after the Copenhagen and Cancun conferences and similar pledges such as green funds, adaptation funds and other programmes to assist the region.

Most PICs prefer some form of direct access to these funds but there are some stringent conditions and regulations that countries have to comply with if they themselves are to seek funding, or by seeking assistance from their regional organisations and partners.

These are 1) accounting, 2) audit, 3) internal control, 4) procurement and 5) inclusiveness of stakeholders in the project development process.

National level policies and procedures should be in place for all five areas and must ensure compliance with International Accounting Standards.

In combination with the strong financial procedures referred to above; PICs should make sure that national/provincial/community climate change risks and related disasters policies, strategies and prioritised actions are in place to support their application for direct access.

In this *Climate Change Matters* volume there is an article on 'Fit for Funds' and a recent UNFCCC Adaptation Meeting held in Apia.

The weather man report will be a constant feature. In additions to the many exiting articles, we also, have a summary of the IPCC Special Report on *Managing Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation* (SREX) and a review of a recent study Simon Donner's "Sea Level Rise and the Ongoing Battle of Tarawa".

Enjoy this **Climate Change Matters** volume and as I mentioned in the first volume – we would be happy to hear from you either with an article for the next volume or with feedbacks.

## About Us

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

- (1) Adaptation;
- (2) Mitigation; and
- (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; and contributing to global greenhouse gas reduction

## Tafitoala community secures eroding coastline



Mr Pepe Utai at Tafitoala Village

23th May 2012

Tafitoala village located south of Upolu, Samoa has over the years witnessed the slow erosion of their coastline forcing a number of its families to relocate plantations and houses further inland.

55 year old Mr Pepe Utai lives with his family and has seen evidence of unpredictably strong waves hit their shores during high tides. Over the past 50 years they have seen their coastline erode to about 50 metres causing problems to houses and plants. He is happy with the integrated coastal protection measures undertaken by the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project to cushion these impacts.

[View full article](#)

For more information, contact PACC Samoa Coordinator Ms Moira Faletutulu at moira.faletutulu@mnr.gov.ws

## Family man happy with newly installed solar purifiers



Mr Frederick Cook standing in front of his solar purifiers outside his home

21st May 2012

Fredrick Cook, a father of nine would go a long way in ensuring there is quality water for him and his family.

Like other small islands in the Pacific, Mr Cook's island home Nauru faces water problems and has many water safety and conservation concerns.

Under the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project newly installed solar purifiers have helped address these concerns and for Mr Cook, this has helped supply more quality drinking water for him and his family. [View full article](#)

For more information, contact PACC Nauru Coordinator Ms Mavis Depaune at mavis.depaune@naurugov.nr

## 'Vital Water' Video shows Tuvalu's will to survive



Photo courtesy of J. Hitchcock

30th May 2012

The most recent science on the years ahead of Tuvalu's climate shows a grim future of long dry periods with no rain.

The Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) project presents to you the true reality in Tuvalu.

Hear from the people on how they are making changes to the way they live, not only to save water, but to save their future and their destiny. [View video](#)

For more information, contact PACC Tuvalu Coordinator Ms Loia Tausi at jesekielu@yahoo.com

## 'Vital Road' Video captures Vanuatu's efforts to adapt to climate change



Photo courtesy of J. Hitchcock

30th May 2012

Vanuatu, as one of the participating PACC countries, is improving the roading infrastructure on Epi Island to reduce climate-related risks. Epi's inhabitants depend on local transport infrastructure to transport their crops to market, their sick to hospital, and to connect to the outside world. By relocating coastal roads, rehabilitating sea walls, and protecting the coastline through re-vegetation of native species, these long-term adaptation measures are preserving livelihoods and improving climate resilience. [View Video](#)

For more information, contact PACC Vanuatu Coordinator Mr Brian Philips at piccap@vanuatu.com.vu



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.



## Pacific Islands roll out the International Year of Sustainable Energy for All



*A Communication tower in Nauru powered by Solar Panels*

23 May 2012

In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly designated 2012 as the International Year for Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All), in recognition of the growing importance of energy for economic development and climate change mitigation.

The Pacific launched this initiative in Suva on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012 joining the rest of the world in fostering concrete actions that will see the achievement of the three objectives of SE4All. [View article](#)

For more information, contact Mitigation Officer Mr Nixon Kua at [nixonk@sprep.org](mailto:nixonk@sprep.org)

## Pacific Islands prepare policy positions ahead of COP18 negotiations



*Cook Island representatives at the Conference of Parties*

20 May 2012

The key issues Pacific Islands are preparing for this year's Conference of Parties are the Second Commitment Period of the Kyoto Protocol and raising the current levels of ambition in reduction of green house gas emission.

The United Nations Climate Change Negotiations held in mid May in Bonn, Germany provided the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) an opportunity for a three day workshop to prepare policy positions ahead of the meeting, exchanging views and information. [View article](#)

For more information, contact Climate Change Adviser Mr Espen Ronneberg at [espenr@sprep.org](mailto:espenr@sprep.org)

## Fit for Funds for developing countries

20th May 2012

Major barriers to climate finance in many developing countries is not the supply of funds, but the insufficient demand for attractive low- carbon projects and the national capacity to absorb and use the funds.

The 'Fit for Funds' programme helps developing countries access funding and assist with preparations to

plan, finance and implement climate change projects and actions.

This programme is coordinated by the Frankfurt School – United Nations Environment Programme Collaborating Centre and is supported by the Government of Germany and several technical partners. [View article](#)

For more information, contact Climate Change Adviser Mr Espen Ronneberg at [espenr@sprep.org](mailto:espenr@sprep.org)

## Workshop show requirements of national accreditation to the Adaptation Fund



*Participants engaged in an Adaptation Financing session at the Pacific Islands Climate Change Focal Points Consultations and Expert Meeting*

20 May 2012

The Adaptation Fund (AF) set up under the Kyoto Protocol shares proceeds from the Clean Development Mechanism and can be monetized and used for adaption in vulnerable countries. The role of the Adaptation Fund Board, currently co-located with the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is to approve and dispense resources to accredited national and multilateral institutions for adaptation. Over the past two years, the AF has dedicated more than US\$115 million to increase climate resilience in 18 countries. [View article](#)

For more information, contact Climate Change Adviser Mr Espen Ronneberg at [espenr@sprep.org](mailto:espenr@sprep.org)

## Vanuatu draft meteorological, geohazard and climate change legislation



*Community Consultations were held to seek inputs from communities.*  
Photo © Dr C. Barlett, SPC-GIZ

1 May 2012

For Vanuatu to provide a sound administrative and operational framework in dealing with issues arising in the context of meteorology, geo hazards and climate change, the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo hazard Department drafted a new legislation to form the basis of its responsibilities, powers, operations and authority. Through the initiative, the WMO Voluntary Cooperation Programme, SPREP and the GIZ assisted the Vanuatu Government late last year to address gaps in its laws to issues relating to meteorology, geohazards and climate change. [View article](#)

For more information, contact WMO Programme Officer [henryt@sprep.org](mailto:henryt@sprep.org)

# Fiji Meteorology Services—the Past, Present and Future



The consultants. Left Mr. Bikenibeu Paeniu, right Mr. Atu Kaloumaira, together with SPREP Meteorology and Climate Adviser Neville Koop

23 May 2012

In 2010, the United Nations General Assembly designated 2012 as the International Year for Sustainable Energy for All (SE4All), in recognition of the growing importance of energy for economic development and climate change mitigation.

The Pacific launched this initiative in Suva on the 18<sup>th</sup> May 2012 joining the rest of the world in fostering concrete actions that will see the achievement of the three objectives of SE4All. [View article](#)

For more information, contact Meteorology/Climatology Adviser Neville Koop at [nevillek@sprep.org](mailto:nevillek@sprep.org)

## An update from the Pacific Islands Global Ocean Observing System



May 2012

The Pacific Islands Global Ocean Observing System (PI-GOOS) and the Australian Integrated Marine Observing System (IMOS) undertook the first continuous record of plankton species along a transit line from Brisbane to Fiji in May.

Plankton are vital to the health of the world's oceans, and can be broken down into two groups; *phyto-plankton*, which photosynthesize sunlight into food at the bottom of the ocean food chain; and *zooplankton*, which often consists of invertebrate and fish larvae (eggs) drifting across the ocean between islands.

Continuous Plankton Recorder (CPR) measurements in the North Atlantic have shown a significant shift northwards of plankton species over the past 30 years.

These new measurements in the South Pacific are an important step towards investigating plankton populations, which are important for ecosystem health and the Pacific's fishing industry.

The recently collected plankton samples will be sent back to Australia for analysis.

However, discussions were held with the University of the South Pacific, IRD (*Institut de Recherche pour le Développement*) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community at the recent International Conference on Southern Hemisphere Meteorology and Oceanography (ICSHMO) to identify potential funding sources and a laboratory in the Pacific to undertake this task in the future.

Other discussions at the ICSHMO meeting

focused on developing a centralised website for accessing oceanographic data in the Pacific, or the Pacific Islands Ocean Data Network (PI-ODN).

The data (e.g. temperature, currents, sea level, and salinity) are necessary for effective marine management (e.g. fisheries) and meteorological forecasting.

Australia and the USA have invested large amounts of money in similar systems, and are willing to share their products in the Pacific region.

PI-GOOS also had a presence at the recent Sea Level Rise conference in Wellington, New Zealand, in early May.

This conference focussed on the science and adaptation of sea level rise in New Zealand and the South Pacific.

Many issues being faced by Pacific Island communities regarding sea level rise are also being addressed by developing countries, and there are many lessons that can flow both ways between developing and developed countries.

The University of Washington is undertaking leading climate and ocean circulation work around a deep sea feature called the Samoan Passage, about 400km north of Samoa, in July-August of this year.

Matthew Alford is leading a research team on the research vessel Roger Revelle to investigate deep ocean currents and mixing through the passage, which is a critical location for global deep water circulation.

There are opportunities for students and/or researchers to participate in this cruise. See email below for further details.

For more information, contact the PIGOOS Officer, Mr Philip Wiles at [philipw@sprep.org](mailto:philipw@sprep.org)

## Review of Simon Donner's 'Sea Level Rise and the Ongoing Battle of Tarawa'

By Philip Wiles  
Pacific Islands Global Oceans Observing Systems Officer

Eos, Vol. 93, No. 17, 24 April 2012.  
(<http://www.agu.org/pubs/crossref/2012/2012EO170001.shtml>)

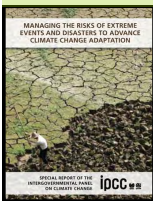
Simon Donner's recent article provides a timely reminder of natural climate variability and coastal development impacts on coastline changes and localised sea level. He illustrates this point by referring to recent changes in sea level around Kiribati (by as much as 45cm in one year) caused by naturally occurring El Niño and La Niña events, and misinterpretation of this by climate change activists.

He points out that while global sea level rise is a very real process we will have to deal within the long term, naturally occurring regional fluctuations have a much greater impact on sea level changes over the time scale of weeks to several years. When added to the expected long term global sea level rise, these natural variations will cause higher sea levels to be experienced more often.

The author also notes that a complicating factor on coastal impacts is inappropriate coastal development, particularly land reclamation, beach mining and the construction of causeways. Climate change should not be blamed when poor planning and construction by local communities is really the root cause.

*Sea Level Rise and the Ongoing Battle of Tarawa* is concise; essential readings for all practitioners of climate change adaptation, whether they are working on low-lying Pacific atolls or the down town of New York City.

## Reports Now Available Online



### IPCC Launches Special Report

Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change launched its Special Report on Managing Risks of Extreme Events and Disasters to Advance Climate Change Adaptation (SREX) on 26<sup>th</sup> March of 2012. This report has significant implications for the climate change adaptation agenda in the Pacific and globally, as well as on disaster risk management and development agendas in general. [View article](#)



PACC Tuvalu  
Quarterly Newsletter  
[Click to view online](#)



PACC Federated States  
of Micronesia  
Quarterly Newsletter  
[Click to view online](#)



Green Distillation  
Technologies Plant in  
Warren, Australia

By Espen Ronneberg, SPREP  
Climate Change Adviser  
[View report](#)

# Weather Outlook for June

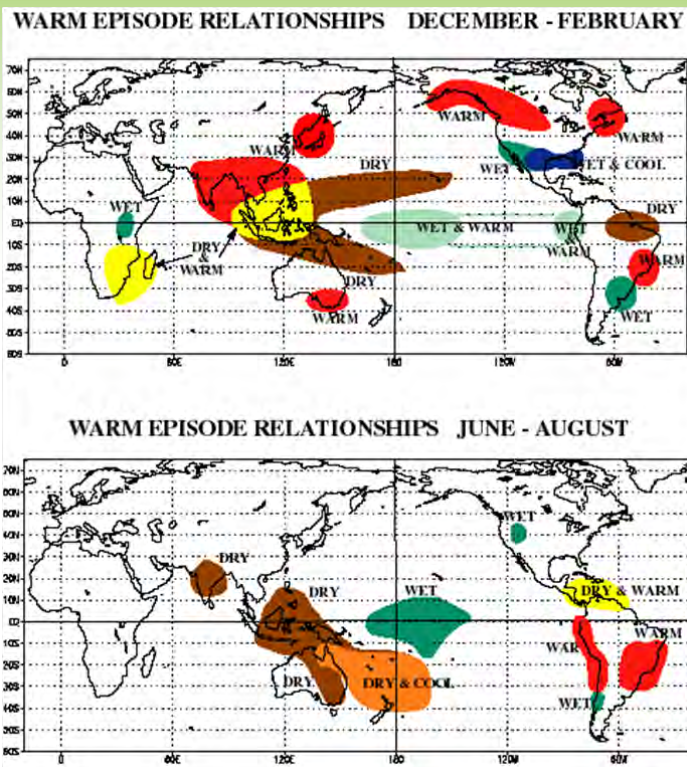


Figure 1 - Typical climate impacts of a WARM EPISODE (warm phase of the ENSO) or El Niño conditions. Most island countries west of the dateline will see less than normal rainfall, potentially reaching drought conditions.

As we move into the first month of the southern hemisphere winter season it is becoming evident that the climate regime around the

Pacific is changing. After 2 consecutive La Nina events, the 2010/2011 being the strongest in almost 100 years, sea temperatures is warming in the central Pacific.

While oceanic and atmospheric indices that are used to measure the state of ENSO remain very much in the neutral zone, the recent trend of warming sea temperatures coupled with the output of the majority of the reliable climate models point to an increased likelihood of El Niño conditions developing over the Pacific through the second half of 2012.

For June rainfall patterns are likely to stay close to normal across much of the Pacific region, which is a seasonally dry month for many countries especially south of the equator. May has been a little drier than usual for many locations west of the dateline, with strong high pressure bringing stable weather to the region. Computer forecasts suggest this trend will carry into the early part of June at least, meaning farmers can expect the seasonally dry weather to continue.

For Fiji the recent dry weather after the devastating floods of January and March means sugar cane crops not destroyed in the floods are maturing nicely and with the harvest about to commence those crops standing should bring a good yield. Only time will tell if we do experience an El Niño this year, however this is the most likely outcome, with three consecutive La Ninas being extremely rare in recorded history.

El Niño is commonly associated with drought over many countries in the region, depending on the severity of the event, with those countries west of the date line most at risk. Tropical cyclone risk increases also, especially east of the dateline. Countries such as the Cook Islands and French Polynesia typically only experience major tropical cyclone events during El Niño years.

## Upcoming Events

| Event   | Location         | Date                |
|---|------------------|---------------------|
| European Union - Asia - Pacific Roundtable "Engaging with Asia-Pacific on Climate Change  | Brussels         | 1—5 June 2012       |
| Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) Chief Executive Officers Meeting  | Suva, Fiji       | 4—5 June 2012       |
| World Bank—Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme—Secretariat of the Pacific Community Launching of the World Bank Policy Note on Climate Change Mitigation and Disaster Risk Management | Suva, Fiji       | 4—5 June 2012       |
| Roadmap and Hyogo Framework   | Suva, Fiji       | 6—8 June 2012       |
| Monitoring and Evaluation PIGGAREP Activities in Solomon Islands  | Solomon Islands  | 6—18 June 2012      |
| PIGGAREP Board Meeting  | Nadi, Fiji       | 19 June 2012        |
| Disaster Risk Reduction Pilot Course Training   | Suva, Fiji       | 18—21 June 2012     |
| Monitoring and Evaluation of PIGGAREP activities in Vanuatu   | Vanuatu          | 20—29 June 2012     |
| PACC Project Cost Benefit Analysis Training and Meeting with RMI PACC Team and Acting Director of Office of Environmental Planning and Policy Coordination  | Marshall Islands | 25 June—2 July 2012 |