



Fiji Climate Change Newsletter

ISSUE 1 | MAY 2012

Welcome to the First Issue of the Fiji Climate Change Newsletter

For a global pressing issue that requires more awareness and action than ever before, the cataclysmic effect of climate change needs our concerted effort and the time is NOW!

As the focal point for harmonizing climate enhance resilience efforts in Fiji, I am pleased to present the first issue of the Fiji Climate Change newsletter and I must commend the Unit for this innovative and informative means to disseminate updates on the subject.

The intentions are to highlight updates on a quarterly basis on Fiji's climate change issues and progress on the implementation of National Climate Change Policy for Fiji. The National Climate Change Policy was endorsed by Cabinet on 19 February 2012, and launched by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation on 1st April, 2012.

In recognition of climate change as a key issue in Fiji's foreign policy, the Climate Change Unit is now under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation as part of the Political & Treaties Division. The Climate Change Unit coordinates the implementation of the National Climate Change Policy through a consolidated partnership domestically with key stakeholders in all sectors and at all levels of Fiji's society, and globally by ensuring the policy alignment to regional and global frameworks for the sponsorship of Climate Change resilience measures.

With leadership from the National Climate Change Country team, and a well synchronized approach, the Unit has the primary carriage of ensuring Fiji's resilience to climate change through effective adaptation strategies.

We are confident that this newsletter will bring information to all who are genuinely concerned with ensuring Fiji's resilience to the impacts of climate change as well as educate the public on climate change issues.

We welcome your contributions and feedback.

Siapora Mataikabara

Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs & International Cooperation

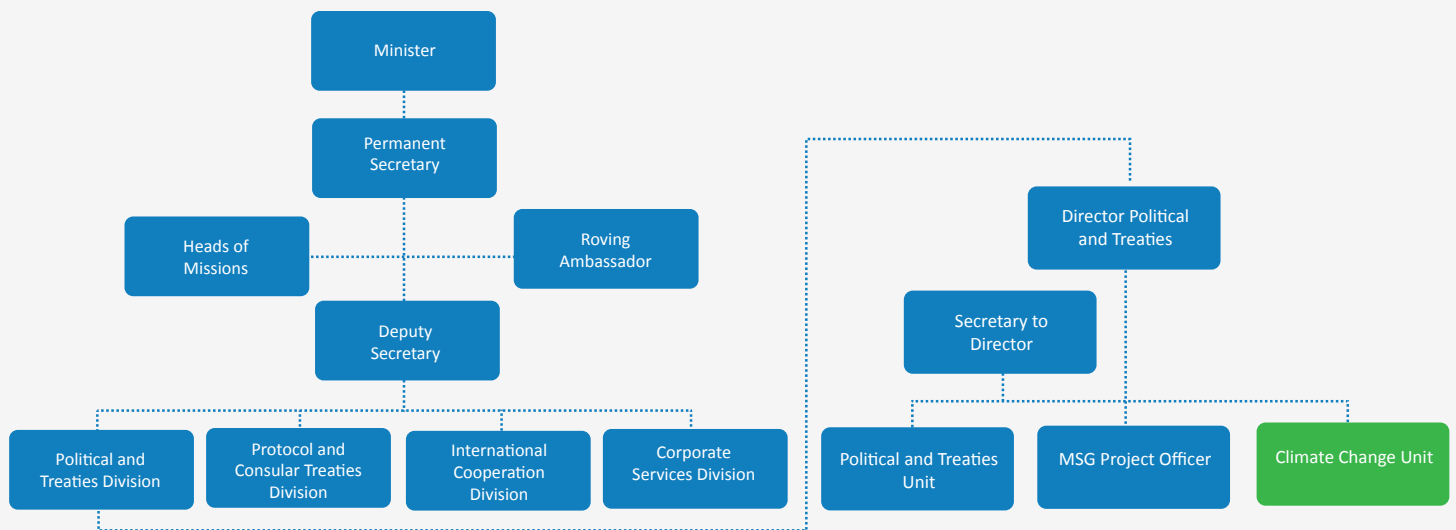
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Where is the Fiji Climate Change Unit located?

Organisational structure of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation



Fiji's National Climate Change Policy in place



Government Officials at the Fiji climate change policy launching.

Left to right: Mr. Jope Davetanivalu (Director of Environment); Mr. Govind Sami (Permanent Secretary for Social Welfare, Women and Poverty Alleviation), Col. Mason Smith (Permanent Secretary for Agriculture), Ratu Inoke Kubuabola (Hon. Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation), Mrs. Saipora Mataikabara (Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation), Mr. Malakai Tadulala (Deputy Secretary for Works, Transport and Public Utilities), Mrs Makareta Sauturaga (Permanent Secretary for Youth and Sports).

The Fiji National Climate Change policy was endorsed by cabinet on 19 January 2012 in Suva. On 01 March 2012 at the Holiday Inn, Suva, senior government official, non-governmental organisations, international and regional organisations, and members of the diplomatic corps witnessed the official launching of the policy by the Honourable Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Ratu Inoke Kubuabola.

The climate change policy is a result of exhaustive and extensive consultations across all sectors and through all levels. The policy provides direction on national positions and priorities on climate change. In launching the policy, Ratu Kubuabola highlighted the need for constructive co-operation and cross-sectoral collaboration to successfully implement the policy. To support this, the policy document includes an implementation plan to facilitate the coordination amongst implementers. The policy principles emphasise the need for accurate and relevant data and information to support sustainable approaches and solutions to tackling the

impacts of climate change. Cultural and gender issues are also highlighted as considerations for all planning and implementation phases of climate change adaptation and mitigation initiatives.

Accolades have been received locally and from abroad congratulating Fiji on a comprehensive and coherent climate change policy.

The development of the policy was supported by the SPC (Secretariat of the Pacific Community) /GIZ (German Agency for International Development Cooperation) Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region Programme and the SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme) /UNDP (United Nations Development Programme) /GEF (Global Environment Facility) Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project.

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Fiji's National Climate Change Policy - What does it mean for you?



By: Rachel Nunn, Devika Raj and Andrew Paris.

With the recent launch of the National Climate Change Policy (NCCP) by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, we've taken the time to have a look at it from a sectoral standpoint with particular emphasis on agriculture and tourism, both of which are and will be impacted by extreme weather events as a result of human induced climate change.

Agriculture, be it commercial or subsistence, is the spine which holds the country aloft and keeps its parts functional. As outlined in the NCCP, there will be "seasonal changes in rainfall and temperature" that will cause further complications such as changes in growing seasons, increase in pest, weed and diseases, and a reduction in water availability.

Traditional farming practices, such as root crop production, may no longer be viable with shifting climate patterns, bringing adverse effects a little closer to home. Figure 1 shows the total economic cost of the 2009 floods which, for example, is one of the ways weather extremes can wreak havoc on the economy.

Still not concerned? Imagine fish and lolo without the dalo. If farmers experience a decrease in crop tonnage per acre, they will require more land to plant on, thus clearing more of the forests and exacerbating climate change effects - a not so positive feedback cycle.

It may seem a little doom and gloom, yet the agricultural sector has the potential to play a key role in reducing the effects of climate change in the Fiji. According to the NCCP, the "national climate change adaptation strategy under development will contain sector-specific strategies and actions to allow

adaptation of the agricultural sector to climate change" which will improve land management practises and such like.

Tourism has always been an important industry for Fiji and, while the impacts on the tourism sector from the effects of weather extremes and climate change are considerable, there are various adaptation and mitigation measures outlined in the NCCP which are very practical.

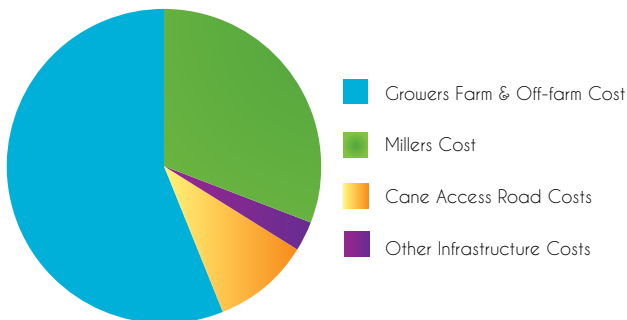
One of the adaptation measures outlined is an "increased diversity of transport methods/routes and development of contingency plans to address disrupted travel routes" which was evident during the recent flooding in the Nadi area where tourism operators used alternative methods and routes to and from Denarau Island as the main road was blocked off due to flooding. Some of these included transport by helicopter, by boat to Wailoaloa then buses/ 4 wheel drive trucks to the airport to ensure that guests and/or staff members were transported safely to and from the island.

The tourism sector also plays an important role when it comes to reducing greenhouse gas emissions, such as carbon dioxide, into the atmosphere. One of the ways specified in the NCCP is by the "use of renewable energy in tourist facilities" which has already been adopted by resorts in Fiji such as Matava Eco-Resort, Kadavu with their use of solar energy and Sonaisali Island Resort which have energy saving light bulbs in all rooms and biodegradable housekeeping/guest bathroom products.

The NCCP has also identified the need to "strengthen early warning systems to ensure effective and timely communication to the public, with particular attention paid to isolated, hazard-prone and disadvantaged areas" in times leading up to, during, and after a natural disaster and/or hazard.

Even though Fiji doesn't contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions, we rely heavily on our natural resources and there are always ways in which we can adapt and mitigate the effects of weather extremes in our rapidly changing climate. We all have a part to play and the NCCP is allowing both leading and implementing agencies to drive social and economic development to help reduce the risk of weather extremes and climate change in the country.

Total Economic Cost of the 2009 Floods = \$24m million



Source: 2009 Flood Economic Survey

Figure 1 - Total Economic Cost of the 2009 Floods.
Source: Lal et al., 2009.

Nadraki Weather Service | www.nadraki.com | P.O.BOX: 19231, SUVA



AusAID Building Resilience Project – Ba & Macuata Provinces

The AusAID Building Resilience (BR) Project is implemented by WWF SPPO (World Wide Fund for Nature South Pacific Programme Office), Land Use Planning Unit, Live and Learn Environmental Education and the Climate Change Unit under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation in the Ba and Macuata provinces; particularly within the Ba and Labasa river catchments. This two-year project aims to protect and improve coastal ecosystem services and support long-term food security, livelihoods and the well-being of the Fijian communities through activities that reduce community vulnerability to the effects of climate change.

The Building Resilience Project is currently planning a National Building Resilience Summit in late October, 2012 where an array of stakeholders will showcase local initiatives to climate-change resilience. A preparatory workshop for the core planning group was held in early February of this year to discuss the goals, objectives, structure and organisation of the upcoming Summit.

In March, a commitment agreement was signed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Department of Agriculture, Department of Fisheries and Forests, German Agency for International Development Cooperation (GIZ) and WWF SPPO in a show of support for the upcoming BR Summit.

Other more recent collaborations included the Ministry of Local Government, Urban Development, Housing and Environment (Dept. of Town & Country Planning) and the Labasa Town Council for the Labasa Stakeholder Consultation workshop on the 12 - 13 March, 2012 for their insight and input into town planning adaptation actions. In collaboration with the iTaukei Affairs Board, an awareness forum on climate change with the Roko Tuis is planned for their June quarterly meeting at Nadave.

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News in brief

Plans are underway to review the functions of **Fiji National Climate Change Country Team** so that the high-level multi-stakeholder team play a more active role in providing guidance on the implementation of the national climate change policy.

The draft **National Climate Change Adaptation Strategy** (for land-based resources) is undergoing final consultations. Consultation workshops with stakeholders from the agriculture, forestry, land use, water and environment sector began last year and continued in March this year. The development of the strategy is facilitated by the Fiji Climate Change Unit and GOPA consultants and supported by the SPC/GIZ Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Regional programme.

The Fiji national climate change portal is currently under development. A consultation workshop in March saw stakeholders from various sectors and agencies contributing to the design and content of the portal. The climate change unit is working with GOPA website and database experts on a set-up that will allow efficient and effective information sharing and accessibility. The development of the portal is supported by the SPC/GIZ Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Regional programme.

The national climate change **policy implementation plan** will be presented for discussion to targeted and potential implementing agencies in a workshop at the end of May 2012.

More details in the next issue!



Fiji's Second National Communication Project

Fiji as a signatory to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) is required to submit a national communication to the secretariat of the UNFCCC. The national communication has four main components: 1) national circumstances, 2) national greenhouse gas inventory, 3) vulnerability & adaptation assessment and 4) mitigation analysis.

Fiji submitted its Initial (first) National Communication (INC) in 2005 and is currently putting together the Second National Communication (SNC). The development of the SNC is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF).

The major activity of the SNC project the first quarter of 2012 was the individual consultations with Government and academia stakeholders from 22 - 29 February. The objective of the consultations was to strengthen existing stakeholder relationships to enable the successful implementation of the SNC project.

The consultations resulted with stakeholders confirming their commitment to make accessible relevant information and data for the compilation of the SNC and on the appointment of a dedicated representative to the relevant SNC working groups (workings groups on 1. greenhouse gas inventory, 2. mitigation, 3. vulnerability and adaptation and education and 4. training & awareness-raising).

The stakeholders consulted included the Department of Fisheries and Forests, Department of Agriculture, Ministry of Lands & Mineral Resources, Ministry of Works, Transport & Public Utilities, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Regional Development, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Information, National Archives and Library services, Bureau of Statistics, Fiji Electricity Authority, University of the South Pacific, and the Fiji National University.

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"...each Party to report to the Conference of the Parties (COP) information on its emissions by sources and removals by sinks of all greenhouse gases not controlled by the Montreal Protocol (greenhouse gas inventories); national or, where appropriate, regional programmes containing measures to mitigate, and to facilitate adequate adaptation to climate change [...]; and any other information that the Party considers relevant to the achievement of the objective of the Convention."

(UNFCCC Article 4, paragraph 1; Article 12, paragraph 1)

Progress of the Clean Development Mechanism in Fiji

Fiji's Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Policy Guideline was drafted in 2010 through the CDM sub-component – "Capacity Building related to Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEA) in African, Caribbean and Pacific (ACP) Countries project".

This draft CDM policy guideline is undergoing further developments to provide more defined policy directions. Technical experts from the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the SPC/GIZ Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region programme were consulted for the initial review of document. Further consultations will be carried out with national stakeholders before finalisation.

In March this year, CDM experts, Mr. Srikanth Subbarao and Ms.

Pradeeti Tyagi, were engaged to promote Fiji as a CDM destination. The consultants were based with the Climate Change Unit and worked with the locally recruited CDM consultant, Mr. Jone Feresi and the CDM Project Coordinator, Mr. Manasa Katonivualiku.

This effort has led to the development of three Project Idea Notes (PINs) for three CDM potential projects. One of these projects PINs will be further developed into a Project Design Document (PDD). Other CDM pipeline projects have also been identified for development.

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The Kyoto Protocol (1997) sets binding targets for GHG reduction. The protocol came into effect on February 16, 2005. The developed countries (Annex 1 countries) are required to cut their emissions by 5.2% below their 1990 levels on average during the first commitment period 2008-2012. To facilitate the emission reduction at the least cost, the protocol allows for cross-border trade of GHG emission reductions.

Trading under the CDM allows for project based Certified Emission Reduction (CER) (1 CER = 1 metric tonne of CO₂) trading between Annex 1 countries and Non Annex 1 (developing countries like Fiji). The project is based in the developing country (host) and the CERs are sold to the developed country. The CDM project should also support sustainable development in the host country.

Meet the Fiji Climate Change Unit



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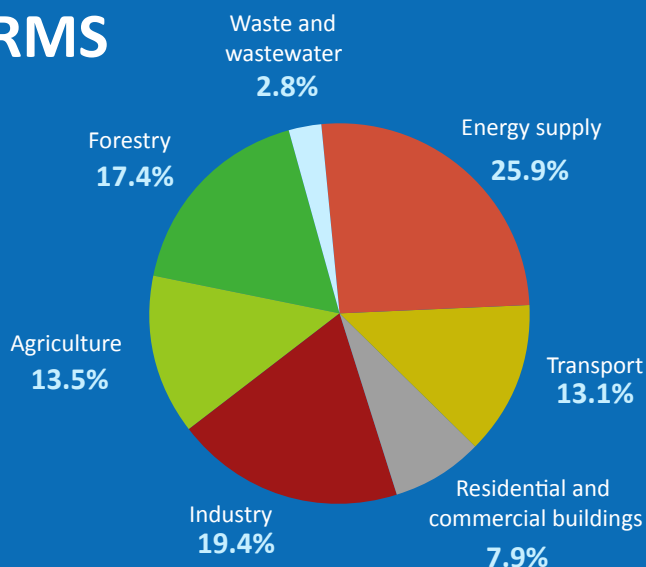
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LEARN CLIMATE CHANGE TERMS

WHAT ARE GREENHOUSE GASES?

Greenhouse gases (GHGs) trap heat in the atmosphere and this keeps the Earth warm. The main greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere are water vapour (H₂O), carbon dioxide (CO₂), nitrous oxide (N₂O) and methane (CH₄).

Since the turn of the century, people have been adding more and more greenhouse gases to the atmosphere. Carbon dioxide is the largest greenhouse gas emitted by humans. Scientists show that the sharp increase in temperature detected in the turn of the last century is directly attributed to the increase of these greenhouse gases. This increase in greenhouse gas concentration is contributing to global warming.



GHG sector emissions by source (from: IPCC Fourth Assessment Report, 2007)



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