

## COOK ISLANDS PROJECT FACTSHEET



# Strengthening the Resilience of our Islands and our Communities to Climate Change

## For Cook Islands

*Empowered lives.  
Resilient nations.*

### CONTEXT/BACKGROUND

The Cook Islands is subject to highly destructive cyclones, intense rainfall events, and devastating droughts. The isolated populations in the Pa Enua (sister islands to the capital island of Rarotonga) are especially vulnerable to the anticipated changes in climate, including increased frequency and intensity of rainfall and tropical storms; rising and extreme sea levels and changing wind patterns; and hotter, drier weather.

Adaptation planning in the Cook Islands already reflects the important implications of increasing risks associated with extreme weather and climate events. This includes taking an integrated approach to adaptation and disaster risk reduction, at institutional, policy and practical levels.

Disaster risk management and climate change adaptation need to be built up into an integrated development process in all islands in order to allow communities to transform lives from reacting to an increasing series of devastating, unforeseen events, to taking control, actively managing risks, sustaining livelihoods and maintaining the islands as liveable places. In general, climate change projects in the islands are currently implemented with a relatively narrow sectoral focus, or as demonstration projects that need to be considerably up-scaled to benefit entire islands, and the country as a whole. This proposed programme can build upon this very useful experience and will be a vehicle for quickly applying the lessons learned to a replicable nation-wide effort.

### PROJECT SUMMARY

The objective of the programme is to strengthen the ability of all Cook Island communities, and the public service, to make informed decisions and manage anticipated climate change driven pressures (including extreme events) in a proactive, integrated and strategic manner. In achieving this objective, the programme will support, at the national, sectoral, and island levels, implementation of the Cook Islands new National Action Plan (NAP) for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation (CCA).

This will be accomplished through four major components:

1. **Strengthening and implementing climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction at national level** (Initial allocated budget USD 400,000): this project will develop capacity for efficient and effective support at national level for disaster risk reduction and adaptation initiatives in the Pa Enua
2. **Strengthening capacities for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the Pa Enua** (Initial allocated budget USD 785,000): key players in Pa Enua development have the capacity to reflect disaster risk management and adaptation considerations when planning, making decisions and during operations revisions to national forestry policy



Mangaia, one of the SRIC project sites

### AT A GLANCE

**Project title:** Strengthening Resilience of our Islands and our Communities to Climate Change (SRIC)

**Project Timeframe:** 2012-2017

**Total Budget:** USD \$5.3 million

**Funding Source:** Adaptation Fund (AF)

**Implementing Agency:**

- Government of Cook Islands: Climate Change Coordination Unit and Emergency Management Cook Islands in Office of the Prime Minister

**Collaborating Partners:**

-National Climate Change Country Team  
-Ministry of Finance and Economic Management  
-Islands Councils and Administrations  
-Island Climate Change Community Teams  
-Technical Working Groups



and plans, enhanced coordination and forestry-related early warning systems, and increased capacities of government officials in climate adaptation.

3. **Implementing climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures in the Pa Enua** (Initial allocated budget USD 3,215,000): the project will result in enhanced resilience to climate change, including weather- and climate-related disasters, for all 11 inhabited Pa Enua.
4. **Climate change adaptation knowledge management** (Initial allocated budget USD 100,000): this project will generate lessons learned and best practices improve the effectiveness of initiatives to enhance the resilience of Pa Enua and other vulnerable communities.

#### Linkages with Related Initiatives, Policies, and Frameworks

The programme directly addresses the climate risk related priorities identified in the Cook Islands' Initial and Second National Communications, the Disaster Risk Management National Action Plan and the new NAP for DRM and CCA. All are fully aligned with the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP - Te Kaveinga Nui) 2007-2010. The SRIC programme represents a means to roll out the NAP for DRM and CCA at the island level, aligned with the Island Strategic Development Plans and related assessments.

#### Internal and External Collaboration

This project will be implemented through existing government institutions at the different levels, and working closely with National Environment Service and the National Climate Change Country Team, the programme will foster inter-ministerial and cross-sectoral coordination on CCA and DRM actions, in line with aim of the new NAP for DRM and CCA. Cross-sectoral climate change coordination mechanisms will be created and strengthened for climate change resiliency in all islands, with lessons learned in each island applied nation-wide and globally.

KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS	KEY PROJECT COMPONENTS and EXPECTED RESULTS			
	Strengthening and implementing climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction at national level	Strengthening capacities for climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction in the Pa Enua	Implementing climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction measures in the Pa Enua	Climate change adaptation knowledge management
EXPECTED RESULTS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Staff of national agencies and organisations on the NCCCT will be trained and working in ways that improve coordination and delivery of CCA and DRM initiatives on the ground in the Pa Enua</li> <li>National and sector policies, related instruments, and work programmes will be enhanced in ways that support CCA and DRM in the Pa Enua, consistent with island development plans</li> <li>Climate early warning and information systems will be fully operated.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Integrated climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction action plans for each of the 11 inhabited Pa Enua, including harmonization with island development plans</li> <li>In each of the 11 inhabited Pa Enua, island councils, administrators, technical officers, farmers, fishers, households and business owners trained in planning and undertaking integrated climate change adaptation and disaster risk reduction initiatives, consistent with the island development plans</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Small grants will be delivered to the 11 Pa Enua to implement CCA and DRR within the relevant framework and plans</li> <li>Climate-resilient agricultural and fisheries practices will be implemented in at least 5 Pa Enua</li> <li>Water capture, storage and groundwater management capacities will be enhanced in at least 7 islands, through community based actions and infrastructure climate-proofing projects</li> <li>Coastal protection and resilience of tourism enterprises to climate change will be enhanced at least 3 Pa Enua</li> <li>Health support and vector-borne disease control techniques will be introduced to address climate-induced health risks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lessons learned and best practices will be generated and distributed to other communities, civil society, policy makers in government and globally through appropriate mechanisms</li> <li>Training materials incorporating climate change issues will be developed and used for training of field staff, students and other key players</li> </ul>