

CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

Issue 22 — April 2014



World Water Day in the Republic of the Marshall Islands (photo: Moriana Phillip)

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Director's Note



Dr Netatua Pelesikoti

*Climate Change Division Director
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Dear Readers,

In March we commemorated both World Meteorological Day and World Water Day within a day of each other as a way of reminding ourselves of the important links between the different issues affecting our lives and the world we live in.

Meteorology offices in our respective countries provide us with daily weather information. Meteorology offices are staffed 24 hours, 7 days a week in order to provide warnings and predictions when there is an event likely to affect our region.

National Meteorological Services (NMS) hold historical weather and climate information going back 100 years and also have the capacity to project the likely climate in the future.

NMS functions include water information such as projected precipitation and the amount. The receipt of timely information on rainfall patterns is crucial for Pacific island nations, many of which have limited groundwater resources and are heavily reliant on rainfall for their freshwater.

Key questions to ask are: Do governments recognise the role of the NMS? Do we involve them in our development planning activities? How can we work with them in a more effective way to improve our planning for adaptation and risk reduction?

Talk to you again in the May CCM!

Until then,
Netatua

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

Echoing the call for swift, concentrated and global action on climate change

A new report released by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) paints the starkest picture yet of the extreme challenges facing our planet as a direct result of climate change.

Entitled *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability*, the IPCC Working Group II report outlines how the impact of climate change is already taking place in all continents and oceans around the globe. It also warns that in most cases, people and governments are not adequately prepared for the risks from a changing climate.

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

"One of the most crucial findings that we must take from this report is the critical importance of practical climate change adaptation and mitigation programmes, along with other activities that foster island resilience and reduce vulnerabilities to climate change."

David Sheppard
Director General, SPREP

SPREP, IPCC Bureau, USP and National University of Samoa will be coordinating a series of public events highlighting the WG2 and WG3 reports in May of 2014. Two events are planned, one in Apia, Samoa and one in Suva, Fiji on 12-13 May and 15-16 May respectively. Check the SPREP web site www.sprep.org for details about the coming events which will include presentations by leading IPCC contributing authors from the Pacific.

World Meteorological Day

Improving our understanding of the weather and a changing climate



Photo: © Stuart Chape/SPREP

World Meteorological Day – observed every year on 23 March – celebrates the birthday of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) in 1950.

The WMO Regional Office for South-West Pacific is based with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), reflecting the high priority that SPREP's members place on meteorological services in the region. SPREP, through the Pacific Meteorological Desk, is also secretariat to the Pacific Meteorological Council.

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

World Water and Forest Days

Two very important days are observed on 21 and 22 March each year.

These are World Forest Day and World Water Day, respectively.

These two very important natural ecosystems – our wetlands and our forests, both of which are essential to our access to water and in many of our islands, as a source of energy.

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



Photo: © Stuart Chape/SPREP

Local solutions for water supply in Kiribati

The atoll of Tamana, in Southern Kiribati, is the origin of a pump design that has helped thousands of communities in the Pacific island nation.

With project funding from USAID, SPREP has undertaken assessments on Abaiang atoll which included water testing that confirmed superior water quality at sites with 'Tamana' pump systems. There is great potential for improved water supply solutions on the atoll as 92% of households there reported using hand held buckets to obtain water from their wells.

For the full article at www.climate.gov.ki:

[Click here](#)



Photo: © Carlo Iacovino/SPREP

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Launching of the Environment and Climate Change Portal in Tonga



Mr. Asipeli Palaki, Chief Executive Officer for Lands, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources launched the Environment and Climate Change Portal on Wednesday 12th of March 2014 at the Moulton Hall Nukualofa.

The Climate Change Portal aims to ensure that information on Environment; Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management issues are readily accessible to relevant stakeholders in a coordinated and user-friendly manner.

For the full article:

[Click here](#)

Nauruan technicians trained on Solar PV operation and maintenance

Nauru is one of the smallest island nations participating in the Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project, better known as PIGGAREP.

PIGGAREP, now in its final year, commenced activities in mid 2007. Nauru has implemented two activities to date. The latest activity was a Solar Photo Voltaic training for staff of the Nauru Utility Corporation (NUC) and other public officers. Eleven government officials successfully undertook this training, which will assist the Nauru Utility Corporation (NUC) in its efforts to include renewable energy, particularly solar energy, in its electricity generation mix.

The training will also support the initiation of the Nauru Energy Road Map, which has a goal of generating 50% of its electricity from renewable energy sources by 2020. PIGGAREP was asked to support short term training focusing on grid-connected solar with emphasis on the type of solar system installed at the NUC power station by the Pacific Environment Community Fund from Japan. Training for local staff raised staff familiarity with the installation and provided skills to ensure proper operation and maintenance of the new solar facility.

For more information visit:

[PIGGAREP Website](#)

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In celebration of World Water Day *Adapting to climate change through better water management*

As the world observes World Water Day on 21 March this year, six projects under the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) programme have their own good reasons for celebrating. Each has contributed to major improvements in their nation's water management, making their communities much more resilient to the future climate.

“Six countries – Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Tokelau, Tonga and Tuvalu – all identified water as a priority issue at the start of the PACC programme in 2009.”

Peniamina Leavai
PACC Adaptation Planning Officer



Photo: RMI PACC project - Celebrating World Water day last year in the Marshall Islands

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

Sikaiana women of the Solomon Islands empowered



Planting a demonstration plot

Photo: PACC Solomon Islands

A three day Backyard Farming Workshop to empower Sikaiana women on food security was held at the Sikaiana settlement at Red Beach, East Guadalcanal.

About 30 women and a few men living in and outside Honiara participated.

The workshop included presentations by the Agriculture Research Officers on various backyard farming systems, food crops (tomato, cassava, taro, etc) and then focused on the more practical areas of field preparation and demonstration.

The Workshop was organized by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, thanks to the funding support from the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project.

For the full article in the Solomon Star:

[Click here](#)

For more information please contact:

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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.



Rauti Para Tablet Training in Southern Cook Islands



Grandparents at training while caring for their grandchildren in Mitiaro (Photo: Celine Dyer)

Cook Islands Office of the Prime Minister facilitated an ongoing Rauti Para Tablet training on the island of Mitiaro from the 3-7 of February. Mayor Fred Terreva welcomed the Climate Change team and thirty participants from ages 18-74. The training aimed to improve communication and information accessibility for the young and old. The training was funded by SPC EU GCCA: PSIS and SRIC programmes in partnership with Telecom Cook Island and ICT division of OPM.

For the full article:

[Click here](#)

PACC in Tonga seeing results

The Hihifo district on Tongatapu in the Kingdom of Tonga has earmarked 3 April, 2014 as the day to launch the Hihifo Water Supply System. The high concern for climate variability and changes (such as extreme droughts, intense rainfalls and accelerated increases in sea level rise) on this flat, non-mountainous island will make managing water issues extremely difficult for the government and people. Coupled with unreliable water supply systems and poor services, the six village district is highly vulnerable to future climate changes.

In light of these vulnerabilities, the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change project is an important example of the steps communities can take towards a climate resilient future. The presence of the King of Tonga, His Majesty King Tupou VI, to officially launch the event, symbolizes the importance of the issue of climate change and climate change responses to the Kingdom.



The distribution of fresh underground water to the people of Hihifo will be through a healthy network of tank reservoirs, new pipelines and storage tanks at the household level. Driven by solar-powered pumps, Hihifo will benefit from three 45,000 litre water tanks, one overhead 22,500 litre tank and 30 smaller tanks that hold 10,000 litres each. These have all been installed over the last year, with more than 400 households benefiting.

To be opened with the national anthem of Tonga, the launch event will be mastered by Mr. 'Asipeli Palaki, Chief Executive for Lands, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources (MECCNR). In attendance will be Lord Ma'afu Tukui'aulahi, Honourable Minister of MECCNR; His Excellency Mr. Bret Aldam, Australian High Commissioner to Tonga; Mr. David Sheppard, Director General of SPREP; Honourable Dr. 'Aisake Eke, Minister for Finance and National Planning and Representative for Hihifo Constituent. The blessings of the event by Reverend Dr. 'Ahio, President of Free Wesleyan Church and Royal Chaplain.

The PACC programme is the largest climate change adaptation initiative in the Pacific region, with activities in 14 countries and territories. PACC began in 2009 and is scheduled to end in December 2014.

For more information visit: www.sprep.org/pacc

Climate Update

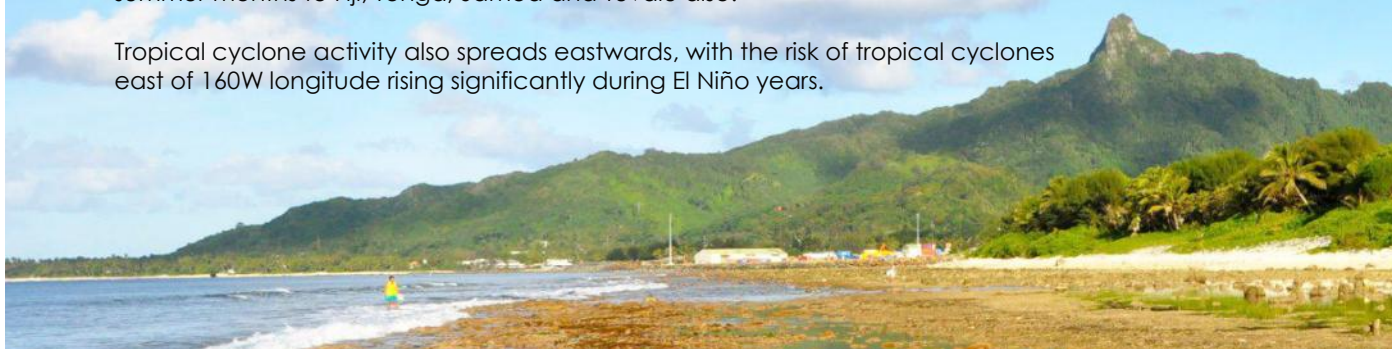
Speculation continues to mount in the climate community regarding the potential for a significant El Niño event later this year. Recent observations indicate that warming of the tropical Pacific is occurring, however the El Niño–Southern Oscillation (ENSO) indices continue to indicate neutral conditions persist – neither El Niño nor La Niña.

Data from the array of moored buoys straddling the equator show that the tropical Pacific Ocean sub-surface has warmed substantially over the past few weeks, which is likely to result in a warming of the sea surface in the coming months. A recent burst of westerly winds over the far western Pacific is the strongest seen since at least 2009 – the last time an El Niño developed.

In light of recent developments it is not surprising then that the overwhelming majority of international climate models now predict that warming of the tropical Pacific is likely in the coming months, with most models showing temperatures approaching or exceeding El Niño thresholds in the coming southern winter.

In the Pacific region El Niño is often, but not always, associated with below-average rainfall during the second half of the year across eastern Australia, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and New Caledonia. Extreme El Niño events such as 1997/1998 and 1982/1983 bring very dry summer months to Fiji, Tonga, Samoa and Tuvalu also.

Tropical cyclone activity also spreads eastwards, with the risk of tropical cyclones east of 160W longitude rising significantly during El Niño years.



Rarotonga, Cook Islands. Photo: © Diane McFadzien/SPREP

Events in April 2014

Event	Location	Date
Regional Consultation on Climate Services for the Pacific Small Islands Developing States (SIDS)	Cook Islands	31 March – 04 April
In Country Assistance: RMI PACC Project official ribbon cutting ceremony and Cartagena Dialogue Meeting	Marshall Islands	31 March – 05 April
FINPAC Inception Workshop and Steering Committee Meeting	Cook Islands	04 April
UNFCCC Joint Meeting of the Adaptation Committee and Nairobi Work Programme on Adaptation	Germany	01 – 04 April
UNDP/SPREP/CCCCC SIDS Negotiators Training Meeting	Singapore	6 – 11 April
In Country Assistance: Implement Adaptation Measures on Abaiang, Kiribati	Kiribati	6 – 17 April
Roadmap technical working group meeting	Fiji	8 April
In Country Assistance: Tautu Climate and Disaster Resilience Planning Workshop	Cook Islands	8 – 12 April
PACC Monitoring & Evaluation Workshop	SPREP, Samoa	8 – 11 April
5TH Japan-New Zealand Conference Tsunami Disaster Workshop	SPREP, Samoa	11 April
PACC Cook Islands Project official ribbon cutting ceremony	Cook Islands	24 April
Pacific iCLIM Inception Workshop	Australia	28-30 April
6th RAV/WMO Technical Conference	Indonesia	30 April – 8 May
PACC FSM Project official ribbon cutting ceremony	Kosrae, FSM	1 May