

CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

Issue 9 — February 2013



Thumbs up! Construction of six wind monitoring towers is now complete in Vanuatu

Photo: Silia Kilepoa Ualesi

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

Directors Note	2
About us	2
Wind Monitoring in Vanuatu	3
UN consider loss and damage	3
Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions	4
PACC Intervention in Tuvalu	4
PACC support for atolls in the Solomons	4
Vanuatu launches Climate Portal	5
Cost benefit analysis training in Kiribati	5
Finding synergies in Implementation	5
Tropical cyclone season outlook	6
Expected rainfall across the Pacific	6
Upcoming Events	6

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



SPREP
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

CLIMATE CHANGE DIVISION

SPREP, Apia, Samoa

T: +685 21929

E: climatechange@sprep.org

W: www.sprep.org

ISSN: 2227-6947



Director's Note



Dr Netatua Pelesikoti

*Climate Change Division Director
SPREP*

Dear Readers

SPREP's Climate Change Division is happy to resume publishing *Climate Change Matters*, our monthly electronic newsletter in 2013.

Climate Change Matters highlights SPREP's and its partners' climate change activities in the region. We would like to greet our readers to the first edition of the year and take the opportunity to welcome your own articles, comment and feedback for inclusion into future editions.

In the Pacific, extreme weather has been at the front of our minds during this cyclone season, in particular the devastation caused by Tropical Cyclone Evan in Samoa and Fiji.

In Samoa alone, the cost of repairing damage caused by Evan has been estimated at greater than NZ\$200 million, 80% of the forest cover on the island of Upolu was stripped away by strong winds and, in a devastating blow to local families, 14 lives were lost.

According to the Samoan Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, the amount of damage caused by Evan was similar to that from the three previous cyclones Ofa, Val and Heta combined.

The IPCC 4th Report predicted that one of the consequences of climate change in the Pacific would be increased frequency and intensity of extreme weather events. Although the economic cost and lives lost in Cyclone Evan cannot solely be attributed to climate change, increasing exposure of people and economic assets has led to major increases in economic losses from weather and climate related disasters. Addressing current disaster risks, the capacity to deal with them and our responses to the impacts are an excellent starting point for addressing the projected risks of climate change.

To do so, the adaptation and mitigation initiatives and activities you can read about in this *Climate Change Matters* need replication and up-scaling as appropriate in every community, in every village and in every Pacific Island country and territory.

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;
3. Contributing to global greenhouse gas reduction

Please visit our website at:

www.sprep.org/Climate-Change/climate-change-about-us

Wind Monitoring in Vanuatu

The Energy Unit of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources in Vanuatu oversaw the successful installation of six wind monitoring masts in six different provinces of Vanuatu.

The wind monitoring stations will be collecting wind speed and other related parameters over the next 24 months. This data will be analysed to determine if the sites receive enough wind to be viable for electricity generation. Information gathered will also support Vanuatu in producing a country-wide wind map and identifying potential investment projects for wind energy.

All the installations were successfully completed, despite delays caused by the late arrival of required material and the rugged terrain making it difficult to access the site locations.

Funding for the installation was provided by a partnership between the SPREP Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP) and the International Union for Conservation of Nature.



For more information, contact Sili'a Kilepoa-Ualesi, PIGGAREP Project Manager: siliau@sprep.org

UN to consider an international mechanism for loss and damage



Pacific island delegates at COP18 (photo: Nanette Woonton)

Of particular concern to the Pacific are slow onset events such as ocean acidification and sea level rise. It must also be recognised that there will be impacts that countries and ecosystems will not be able to adapt to, such as the loss of entire coral reefs due to temperature-induced coral bleaching. This leads to the broader question of how such events will be addressed or compensated for.

The Pacific has been pushing very hard on this issue for a number of years now. It has pleaded that not only additional support be given towards adaptation financing and preparation for climate

The 18th Conference of the Parties (COP 18) to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change saw Pacific countries work with the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) to gain support for an international mechanism to address the issues of loss and damage caused by the adverse impacts of climate change.

In a landmark decision, the Governments present at COP 18 agreed that there is a need to focus increased efforts on this issue and that the next COP will establish the required institutional arrangements to address this, such as an international insurance mechanism.

climate related disasters, but also that insurance be available to allow for rehabilitation from the impacts of climate change.

SPREP will be working with our Pacific partners and AOSIS to provide support on this issue in the lead up to COP 19 (in Poland during November 2013).

For more information, contact Diane McFadzien, SPREP Climate Change Adaptation Adviser: dianem@sprep.com

Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions

As part of the global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, the Framework Convention on Climate Change (FCCC) approved a system for developing countries to voluntarily communicate their mitigation plans and state what capacity building, finance and technology related assistance will be required.

While there is no international guideline, SPREP commissioned a study on what would be a reasonable guide for Pacific Island Countries to undertake NAMAs.

The guide takes the user through the various steps needed to gather the information and prepare a document for the registry.

This was trialed in Cook Islands and resulted in a NAMA being presented to the FCCC registry. SPREP will be publishing the guide shortly and now stands ready to assist other PICs with their NAMAs.

For more information contact Espen Ronneberg, SPREP Climate Change Advisor: espenr@sprep.org

PACC Adaptation Intervention handed over to the Lofeagai Community in Tuvalu



A new PACC-supported water cistern will keep 700,000 liters of water in reserve to help the Lofeagai community in Tuvalu cope with droughts.

The water cistern was handed over to the Lofeagai community in a ceremony presided over by the Deputy Prime Minister of Tuvalu and attended by the Prime Minister, the Foreign Affairs Minister, Cabinet Members, UNDP officials and community elders from around Funafuti.



Atoll communities get support from PACC in the Solomons

A recent visit to Pelau and Luaniua on the remote atoll of Ontong Java in the Solomon Islands established demonstration agriculture plots to support the food security of these communities.

A team from Solomon Islands Ministry of Agriculture Research Department and Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project have returned from the atolls after planting new salt resistant crops that have shown good initial growth.

"We are implementing an integrated agriculture and climate change adaptation approach in our demonstrations"

Team leader Mr. Jasper Bonie.

"We fully understand the agriculture situation in low lying communities where soil salinity and lack of nitrogen has been affecting the growth of the crops and we are trying as much as possible to address this" said Mr. Bonie.



Mr. Jasper Bonie
in Pelau, Ontong Java

For more information, contact Taito Nakalevu, PACC Regional Project Manager: taiton@sprep.com



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.



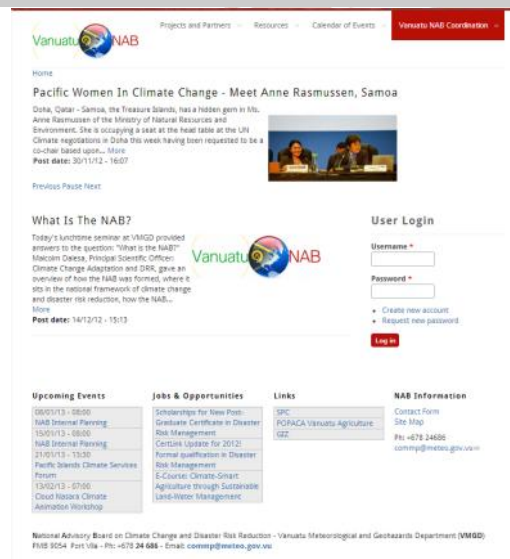
Vanuatu launches Climate Change Portal

The Vanuatu Government, through the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-hazard Department (VMGD) and National Disaster Management Office (NDMO), launched the Vanuatu climate change portal on the 17th of December 2012.

Development of the portal was funded by GIZ and will be maintained by the National Advisory Board on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction. The Vanuatu climate change portal is a pilot for integrating the national climate change portal with the regional climate change portal currently being maintained by SPREP.

To access the portal visit www.nab.vu

For more information, contact Ms Rebecca Iaken
riaken@meteo.gov.vu



Cost benefit analysis training in Kiribati

A national workshop recently took place in Tarawa to guide government officers in how to use cost-benefit analysis (CBA) in projects affected by climate change.

"Cost benefit analysis is essential to make sure we do not waste government and donors' money. This tool is useful to provide an evidence base to make the most of all our policies and projects."

Mr Terieta Mwemwenikeaki, Deputy Secretary of Office of the President, Kiribati

Two cost-benefit analyses discussed during the week include an assessment of alternative energy options on Kiritimati Island and the deployment of fish aggregating devices (FADs). The training is supporting the Fisheries Department to establish monitoring plans for improving the evidence base to guide the deployment of FADs.

Over the longer term, climate change is expected to lead to a decrease in coastal fisheries productivity but an increase in skipjack tuna in the waters around Kiribati.



The deployment of near-shore FADs is recommended to increase access of local fishers to tuna and other oceanic fish, and assessments are needed in Kiribati to demonstrate that the benefits of FADs outweigh their costs.

The workshop was delivered by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and (GIZ).

For more information, contact Aaron Buncle, SPREP
Environmental Resource Economist: Aaronb@sprep.org

Finding synergies in climate change implementation

One of the challenges consistently identified by climate change related projects in the Pacific is that many projects are implemented in 'silos' and do not cooperate with similar projects.

However, there are now some excellent examples in the region that have overcome this issue.

At the initiative of the Nauru Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Environment, and with assistance from SPREP and SPC, the coordinators and steering committees of the PACC and Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) projects are working closely together to share resources and information.

The PIGGAREP+ project in the Solomon Islands is building on existing work by UNDP and SPC and complementing activities under the Australian-funded Climate and Ocean Support Programme for the Pacific. This represents an opportunity for the two projects to work together for mutual benefit.

It is important to recognize opportunities such as these for enhancing climate change implementation in the region, and SPREP will continue to assist countries by emphasizing coherence and cooperation between related projects.

For more information contact Espen Ronneberg, SPREP
Climate Change Advisor: espenr@sprep.org

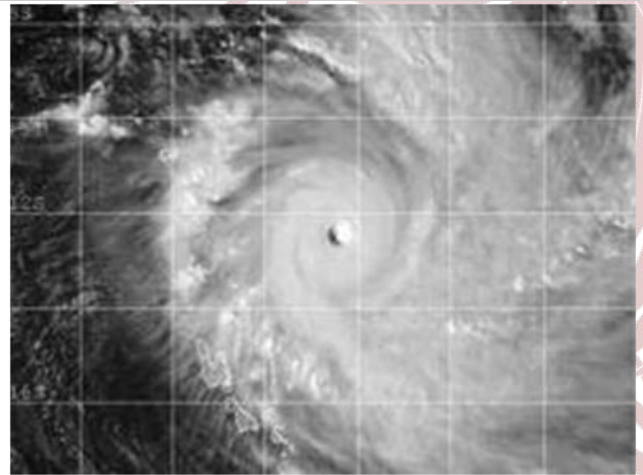
2012/13 Tropical cyclone season outlook

The 2012/2013 tropical cyclone season has been a busy one so far. Two strong depressions and two severe tropical cyclones have brought destruction and, sadly, some deaths to the South Pacific. As this article is being written, a third cyclone has narrowly missed the Samoas last month.

With the season less than half over, there is still the prospect of much more activity. February is the month with the highest incidence of tropical cyclone formation in the Pacific region.

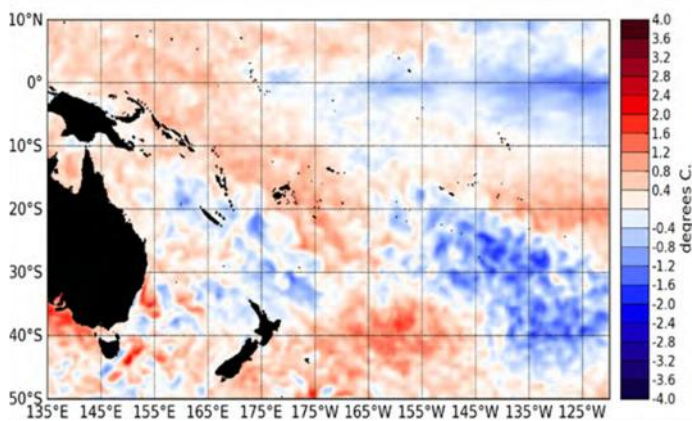
There are still several months left of the season and we are likely to experience the 9 named cyclones predicted by NIWA for this region in that time. It is also expected that, with two cyclones already reaching Category 4 intensity, the forecast of three severe cyclones is likely to be exceeded.

All Pacific islanders need to remain alert to the threat of heavy rain and destructive winds during tropical



cyclones. Whenever any threats arise, listen for local advisory messages from your weather office and disaster management office, and follow the instructions of local authorities.

Expected rainfall across the Pacific



The strong rain which has been experienced recently near the dateline (in Samoa, Wallis and Futuna and American Samoa) should ease over the coming month.

The sea surface is slightly cooler at the equator and east of the dateline (see image). While this situation is technically neutral, the pattern is similar to that of a weak La Niña.

The consensus of global ocean and atmosphere models indicate that this situation will continue, and that rainfall in the regions of cooler sea surface will not be as strong as usual. In particular;

- Below normal rainfall is forecast for the Marquesas and the Northern Cook Islands.
- Normal or below normal rainfall is forecast the Tuamotu archipelago, Tuvalu, Eastern Kiribati and Western Kiribati and Tokelau.
- Near or above normal rainfall is forecast for the Federated States of Micronesia, Pitcairn Island and Tonga.

For more information contact Neville Koop, Meteorology/Climatology Adviser: nevillek@sprep.org

Upcoming events

Event	Location	Date
Kiribati JNAP	Kiribati	31 Jan – 8 Feb
PACC Strategic Planning Workshop	Samoa	11 – 15 Feb
Development of a SPREP-IFRC base line study for FINPAC Project	Fiji	11 – 15 Feb
WMO KOICA Coastal Inundation in Fiji Project Stakeholders Meeting	Fiji	18 – 21 Feb
Working Arm on Climate Change (WACC) Meeting	Fiji	18 – 22 Feb
Pacific Climate Change Portal Training for Northern Countries	FSM	19 – 21 Feb
2013 CC Division Planning Meeting	Samoa	25 – 26 Feb
South West UN Regular Process Meeting	Australia	28 Feb – 01 Mar