

Coral reef in Niue.  
(photo: Niue Tourism Office)

# CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

Issue 23 — May 2014

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Environment Programme

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ISSN: 2227-6947

## Director's Note



**Dr Netatua Pelesikoti**

*Climate Change Division Director  
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Dear Readers,

National Meteorological Services in the South Pacific must be relaxing a little bit with the end of the 2014 cyclone season. But with a changing climate, a cyclone may occur outside the cyclone season.

The recent World Meteorological Organization (WMO)-Pacific consultation to strengthen the region's climate services in line with the Global Framework for Climate Services, highlighted the need to improve the provision for climate services all year round and not necessarily confining these to climatic seasons.

Climate services in terms of information, technology transfer, warning, forecasting and projection are crucial for informed development and adaptation planning and implementation on the ground. The use of past, current and future climate

information not only helps to determine the most appropriate action but also facilitates long term development planning and designs. National Meteorological Services are ready to support development planning and implementation at the national and community levels with provision of weather and climate information.

The PACC project in Tonga achieved its goals with the Hifiho community gaining access to improved water services, with similar outcomes for PACC RMI following the improvement to the airport reservoir. These are the impacts on the ground that not only make a difference on communities' livelihoods and development but also demonstrate accountability to donors on how their resources are being used to achieve targeted outcomes.

*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](http://www.sprep.org/Climate-Change/climate-change-about-us)





Photos: Regional Consultation attendees (top) and Prime Minister Henry Puna (below)

## Pacific Climate Services conference

The Regional Consultation on Climate Services for Pacific Small Island States and Related Meetings was held from 31 March to 4 April and brought together over 60 delegates including representatives from the Meteorological Services of each Pacific Island Country and Territory.

**"Early warning systems, smarter communication, and preparedness, are key support factors in the reduction of risks."**

Hon. Henry Puna, Prime Minister of the Cook Islands

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

## Lessons learnt by Tonga Met Service after Cyclone Ian

Cyclone Ian, a category 5 Tropical Cyclone, passed over Tonga in January this year leaving behind USD 120 million in damages, one fatality and the complete destruction of 564 homes on the island of Ha'apai.

**"Information must get to our communities in an accurate, timely manner that is understood."**

Ofa Fa'anunu, Director of the Tonga Meteorological Service

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



Photo: © Tonga Meteorological Service

## More meteorological and climate services news from the Pacific:



Photo: Obtaining well water in Tarawa, Kiribati

Kiribati Met Services help Tarawa Drought Response Plan

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

Samoa Met Division, providing CLEWS

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

Global Framework for Climate Services seeks Pacific input

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



# Preparing for weather and climate events - the Tautu villagers way

## Aitutaki, Cook Islands



Photo: Group recommending the structure of the Tautu Disaster Council

The Tautu Community Climate and Disaster Planning Workshop was held in Aitutaki, Cook Islands on 8-11 April 2014. This workshop marks the beginning of a series of workshops that will be conducted in 11 countries across the Pacific as part of the FINPAC Project under its Component 2. FINPAC is a four-year regional project funded by the Government of Finland and coordinated through SPREP with a range of partners. FINPAC aims to improve livelihoods of Pacific island communities by delivering effective weather, climate and early warning services.

These objectives and expectations are enhanced through the joint collaboration between the Cook Islands Meteorological Service and the Red Cross. The workshop was attended by approximately 30 villagers over four days. Participants demonstrated how an empowered and informed community can proactively address various vulnerabilities in adapting to a changing climate.

The community has had many hardships relating to extreme weather and climate events such as droughts and intense cyclones. A vivid example of this was the 2010 disaster of Tropical Cyclone Pat, which destroyed community property and family homes. A more recent event was the 2014 Tropical Cyclone Mike, which highlighted the urgent need for an improved early warning system and better communication between the stakeholders including the Cook Islands Meteorological Service and the Aitutaki Island Council.

This community workshop marks the beginning of ongoing work for the project, its development partners and the Tautu Disaster Management Council. This work will be to finalise the integrated Tautu Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation Plan which is related to a broader Aitutaki Island Disaster Risk Management Plan.

The main objectives and expectations of the workshop were to:

- **Improve awareness and understanding of Tautu vulnerabilities and capacities**
- **Improve awareness and understanding of weather and climate information**
- **Identify priority weather and climate information needs including suitable delivery mechanisms and educational materials**
- **Develop a clear, simple and achievable Community Climate and Disaster Resilience Plan (CCDRP)**
- **Provide follow up support by designing and implementing a pilot project relating to improved weather and climate services**



Photo: Participants of the FINPAC Project Component 2 Tautu Community Climate and Disaster Planning Workshop

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## UNFCCC meets in Bonn for Gender and Traditional Knowledge



Photo: Group photo at Bonn (image from UNFCCC secretariat)

United Nations looks at how to better integrate Indigenous and Technical Knowledge (ITK) and gender considerations into climate change adaptation work.

The United Nations Framework Convention for Climate Change (UNFCCC) brought together policy makers, traditional communities, adaptation practitioners, civil society groups, research institutions and regional/international organisations to look at how to better address ITK and gender concerns in adaptation planning.

This was the first time that the UNFCCC has brought government representatives and experts together to discuss what is now recognised as a very important component of adaptation planning. The Pacific was also well represented in this experts meeting, with representatives from SPREP, USP, Nauru, Vanuatu and also the University of Hawaii.

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



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## PACC project openings in Tonga and Marshall Islands



New reservoir increases water security on Majuro >

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

< His Majesty King Tupou VI launches new water system for Hihifo District

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



Photo: (c) Tonga Daily News. Used with permission

Photo: First Lady Mrs Loeak and Alexandria Rantino (DFAT Australia) cut the ribbon in Majuro

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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.





## Weather talk with the Cook Islands Media



Media training (Photo: Nanette Wontoon)

On Monday, 7 April, helping local communities understand weather terminology and forecasts was at the core of a one day media and communications training for the Cook Islands Meteorological Service.

Bridging the gap between understanding weather forecasts and their role in helping communities prepare for what may come is part of a project funded by the Government of Finland and implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and partners.

*"As much as possible we tailor this training to involve and strengthen relations already in place, we understand that we ourselves will come and go, with work continuing at the national level between local media and met services," said Nanette Woonton, Media and Public Relations Officer at SPREP.*

The one day media training for the Met Services was to help strengthen weather reports made through the media so they are understandable by the local communities. The Cook Island News and the Pitt Media Group made presentations at the training as a way to help the Met Services understand the processes in

their newsrooms and the best ways that they can work together to help local communities learn more about Met terms and forecasts.

*"It was a good training, we defined the topics selected because it was the first training that we actually wrote it into a sentence that people can understand," said Manea Maretaku, Observer, Cook Islands Met Service.*

*"I know what they mean but this is the first time we have defined it so that people can understand our weather forecasts, we can explain it to people so they also understand."*

## SPREP works with National University of Samoa to strengthen Climate Change

Over 20 students of the Journalism School at NUS took part in a one day climate change training hosted by SPREP. The training is to help students understand more about climate change and our environment so they can report accurately on this topic.

Coordinated in partnership with the Journalism school at NUS, the students learnt about Environment reporting in general with Lagipoiva Cherelle Jackson, Climate Change Mitigation and Adaptation with Peniama Leavai and Sili'a Ualesi Kilepoa as well as projects on these in Samoa with Moira Faletulutu, Ecosystem based Adaptation with Carlo Iacovino as well as having a Q and A session with a panel of Senior Editors in Samoa – Merita Huch, Jason Brown and Terry Tevita.

*"We had really great support from those that came to present and spend time with the students," said Nanette Woonton, Media and Public Relations Officer at SPREP.*

*"The interaction between the students and presenters was excellent they asked some really great questions of our presenters and panel. They took the time to ask more about misconceptions and common mistakes made when reporting on climate change."*



NUS students at SPREP (Photos: Nanette Wontoon)

The one day training also include time for news interviews with staff of SPREP, these news items will be developed for judging. The awards will be presented at the World Press Freedom Day event in May this year.

The training took place at the SPREP Headquarters on April 16.



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## The Pacific Islands CAN

Climate Action Network (CAN) members in the Pacific region met in Fiji in early March to pave a way for the formation of a CAN Pacific Islands Network.

CAN is a worldwide network of over 850 Non-Governmental Organizations in more than 90 countries, working to promote government and individual action to limit human-induced climate change to ecologically sustainable levels. CAN members work to achieve this goal through information exchange and the coordinated development of NGO strategy on international, regional, and national climate issues.

CAN has been present in the Pacific for several years and is working through its members and national nodes in Tuvalu, Kiribati, Cook Islands, Niue and soon in Vanuatu. These nodes are made up of various local community based organisations and regional NGO's working on climate change.

This meeting brought together Pacific Islands CAN members and interested partners to discuss how to strengthen regional cooperation in the Pacific and formalize the setting up of a more structured regional CAN node.

CAN members are organised as working groups around various policy areas, like those in the UNFCCC – Adaptation, Bunkers, Capacity Building, Finance, Flexible Mechanisms, LULUCF, Legal Matters, MRV, Mitigation, REDD+, Shared Vision and Technology.

A major outcome of this meeting was an agreement to form a regional Pacific Islands CAN (PI CAN) node/secretariat to ensure a coordinated voice from the Civil Society Organisations (CSO) at international and regional meetings.



Top: PI CAN group photo. Below: Kahealani of Niue CAN and Daniel of Vanuatu CAN brainstorm on the governance structure of PI CAN at the March Meeting in Fiji.

The members also agreed to work on common climate policy positions focusing on adaptation and on loss and damage. The PI CAN will also look into capacity building and representation from CSO's to various climate related forums.

PI CAN is now working on its governance structure and formal set up through its members

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## Pacific Australia Climate Change Science Adaptation Planning Program wraps in June



Photo: Mr. Geoff Gooley of PACCSAP

The three year Pacific-Australia Climate Change Science Adaptation Planning Program funded by the Government of Australia comes to an end in June this year. It consisted of two major components - adaptation; and science.

Yet to be released under the science component are three key products now being finalised for release shortly, a conclusion to projects that have culminated in many different science products communications training training and online tools over the term of the program.

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



## SPREP partners to deliver negotiations training held for Small Island Developing States Climate Change Negotiators

17 negotiators from small islands across three oceans (Pacific, Indian and Caribbean Ocean) met in Singapore, in early April, for a climate change negotiations training workshop. The workshop was funded by the Australian Government, and run jointly by UNDP Barbados, UNITAR, SPREP and the Caribbean Climate Change Community Center. It was hosted by the Government of Singapore.

This training activity was the final in a series of activities which were held over the last 12 months, starting with a negotiations training workshop in New York, and from there an on line training course was held, developed by UNITAR.

While over 60 people participated in the overall training programme, only 17 countries were selected to attend this final training event. This was based upon merit where participants were chosen based upon previous attendance as well as achieving a high score in the on-line training. Of the 17 participants, 5 were from the Pacific, including negotiators from Nauru, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Cook Islands and Vanuatu.



Participants reported back that they particularly enjoyed the interactive nature of the Singapore training workshop. Participants not only had the opportunity to learn more on technical topics related to the negotiations (such as issues related to loss and damage, finance and the development of a new legal agreement for climate change) but also had opportunities to practice actual negotiations skills.



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### Events in May 2014

Event	Location	Date
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC) Induction Training	Oslo, Norway	28 April – 02 May
Pacific ICLIM Inception Workshop	Brisbane, Australia	28 April – 02 May
6 <sup>th</sup> RAV/WMO Technical Conference	Jakarta	30 April – 08 May
PACC FSM Project official ribbon cutting ceremony	Kosrae, FSM	01 May
2 <sup>nd</sup> Regional Technical Meeting: The Intra-ACP Global Climate change Alliance (GCCA) Programme	Brussels, Belgium	05 – 07 May
Nansen Initiative Induction	Geneva, Switzerland	05 May – 11 May
SPREP Corporate Review Meeting	Nadi, Fiji	12 – 14 May
5 <sup>th</sup> Joint Mission to Abaiang with SPC, GIZ and Partners	Kiribati	18 – 25 May
COSPPac Planning Meeting	Nadi, Fiji	19 – 21 May
IPCC AR5 Apia Launch	NUS	19 May
Implementation of Delivery of Trainings for Financial Institutions in Pacific Islands	Marshall Islands	19 – 23 May
Consultation Work for Coastal Management Policy	Mangaia Is, Cook Is	26 – 28 May
UNFCCC and AOSIS Loss and Damage Preparatory Meeting	Bonn, Germany	27 May – 15 June