

GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS

KAVEINGA TAPAPA

Climate & Disaster Compatible
Development Policy
2013 - 2016





ADAPTATION FUND

*“Strengthening the Resilience of our Islands and our Communities
to Climate Change” (SRIC)*

Prepared by: Akairo Limited
For Climate Change Cook Islands, Office of Prime Minister.

Cover Photo by Dr Teina Rongo

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Government of the Cook Islands

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Mitiaro school students 5th Sept 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)



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Foreword



Preparedness for disasters and building resilience to climate change is imperative to the future survival of our people and nation.

This policy articulates directions that are inclusive of all peoples of the Cook Islands building on our community spirit to strengthen our resilience to climate change and disasters whilst embracing a holistic approach. The fundamental message is to prepare today for tomorrow.

The journey that we must take will only be as effective as the plans and policies that direct us. Mapping out our steps into a future fraught with climate change and disaster management is a move in the right direction.

Kaveinga Tapapa captures the essence of Te Kaveinga Nui and helps maintain a path to the highest quality of life for our people in harmony with our culture and environment. Kaveinga Tapapa thus speaks directly to our national vision and informs our preparedness for disasters and resilience to climate change.

We will face challenges as we endeavour to sustain this policy approach. But it will be a journey that we take together with renewed purpose. Appreciating our limitations, understanding the specific circumstances and needs in our remote communities, and pulling together our resources, will be important, as will the need to develop and strengthen partnerships.

Kaveinga Tapapa builds on our existing structures and draws on our capability to lift our game. Our people can be assured that we have the confidence to fulfil our vision, and prosper in a secure environment with a sustainable future.

Kia Manuia

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Henry Puna'. The signature is stylized and fluid, with a large loop at the top.

The Honourable Henry Puna
Prime Minister and Minister of Disaster Risk Management
Cook Islands



An underwater scene with a sandy seabed, green and blue coral, and small fish swimming in the water.

Policy Statement

Ensure that the sustainable development of the Cook Islands is actively pursued by our people through a climate and disaster resilient approach that has the capacity to manage climate and disaster risks and reduce our emissions in the context of sustainable development.

1. Background


1.1 Introduction

Disasters and climate change are development challenges that cannot be viewed independently of the Cook Islands' economic, social, environmental and cultural progress. In this regard, our national and local development strategies give emphasis to our heritage and resilience as a large ocean state promoting low carbon economic development alongside social and environmental benefits that are triple wins and no regrets.

The impacts of climate change and disasters threaten our Cook Islands natural resource security -sustainable access to water, food, energy, land and marine resources, from our biodiversity and ecological systems. Our social security - pa enua and coastal communities, education, health, welfare, labour, cultural traditions and practices are threatened by encroaching on the well-being and livelihood of Cook Islands people. This policy advocates a 'stay and adapt' approach in the medium to short term, and recognises the need for a longer term planning approach to address potential displacement, migration and resettlement with the slow onset of climate change impacts and associated potential pressure to move off our coral atolls and away from our coastal areas.

While our carbon footprint is negligible on a world scale, as a global citizen our development approach promotes low carbon strategies in infrastructure, electricity and transportation, along with abatement measures in our land and ocean use. To this end, we make use of tried and true renewable energy technologies and efficiency practices as well as innovations based on traditional knowledge.

Our ability to address climate change and disaster risks will require that we take account of the complexity of the external funding architecture, and ownership for the legal and sovereign implications over our resources. Our partnerships and means of coordination and communication must recognise the capacity of our people and systems to plan and implement our climate



and disaster resilient development strategies. It is key that generating research, transferring and managing traditional and scientific knowledge and technologies shape evidenced-based decision making and our ability to act.

This policy serves to connect the overarching strategies of the National Sustainable Development Plan 2011-2015 and Medium Term Budget Framework to a range of existing development, climate and disaster related policies and plans. It also serves to provide direction to new policy, planning and budgetary tools available to the government and its partners seeking to build upon or incorporate the directions set out in this document.

2. Guiding Principles, Goal, and Objectives

2.1 Guiding Principles

Leadership and Partnership

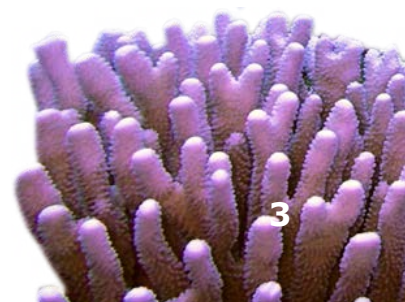
In building our climate and disaster compatible development approach, climate change and disaster risk management priorities have been set through the country's national vision, strategies and outcomes. Strong and decisive leadership from government is required as the champions of change and accountability. Such leadership demonstrates to our local and international partners sound country led ownership, accountability and transparency that enables effective partnerships and collaboration to overcome the resource gaps and implementation obstacles we face.

Equity and Inclusion

It is important to ensure the equitable inclusion of all, particularly our people who are most at risk and marginalised by biases in our society of gender, age, disability and geographical location to the threat of disasters and climate change. Providing coordinated opportunities to participate, deliver and enjoy the benefit of initiatives is fundamental to a triple win, no regrets policy approach.

Knowledge Based Action

In order to shape and guide decision making and take action, our understanding of climate change impacts and disaster risks must be informed by the best available traditional, local and scientific knowledge. It is not always possible to have all relevant information available to us at any one time. However, as these bodies of knowledge continue to evolve over time and our understanding increases, opportunities to develop and expand the value and use of research must be pursued with momentum.





Linked implementation and Measured performance

Complexity exists amongst the inter- and intra- related and dependent links between actions, policies and strategies from one sector to another, one discipline to another, one field of activity to another and their potential gains or weaknesses. However, identifying the synergies and working in an integrated way should be fostered to ensure efforts are maximised to deliver benefits beyond a single sector or field. This includes the monitoring and reviewing of arrangements developed to measure the performance of policy instruments. Ensuring the policy instruments are based on clear and direct causal links between goals, objectives and intended results that can be reported against by uncomplicated means. The use of readily available quantitative and qualitative data should be fostered.

Relevant and cost effective

In achieving sustainable outcomes, meeting risks and impacts with appropriate and affordable measures is essential. Measures must be designed to meet the specific situation in which they will be implemented. They must offer value for money deliver tangible sustainable benefits and outcomes to its beneficiaries.

2.2 Goal and Objectives

The policy is focused on three thematic areas:

1. Climate and disaster resilient development (adaptation and disaster mitigation linked to development),
2. Low carbon development (CC mitigation linked to development) and
3. Strengthening the enabling environment for ensuring development that is climate and disaster resilient and reduces the carbon footprint of the Cook Islands.

Goal

The goal of this policy is to:

Provide an integrated and coherent policy and planning framework that directs country led and coordinated adaption and mitigation actions and resources towards climate and disaster compatible development outcomes.

Strategic Outcomes

- Sustainable water, food, energy and social security
- Increased community preparedness and adaptation to risks and impacts
- Effective and sustained use of land, sea, and natural resources
- Safeguarded biodiversity and eco-systems

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions
- Reduced reliance on fossil fuels
- Improved energy security
- Enhanced coordination and strengthened implementation through integrated institutional and implementing arrangements across communities and sectors

Strategic Objectives

Climate and Disaster Resilient Development

1. Implement climate change and disaster risk assessment and management measures that strengthen infrastructure and safeguard essential services, natural ecosystems, economic development and livelihood systems in key sectors
2. Access and build bodies of knowledge that research and promote traditional knowledge and coping mechanisms alongside scientific investigations and evidence to drive decision making and actions
3. Bolster the conservation and management of biodiversity and eco-systems through integrated holistic approaches

Low Carbon Development

4. Enable sustainable development through investment in proven low carbon infrastructure and technology development while becoming carbon neutral through effective measures in land and sea use, electricity, energy efficiency, transport and waste management.

Enabling Environment

5. Ensure continuous climate and disaster financing from government as well as new and additional funding from partners that is effectively coordinated and managed using local systems in addressing financial risks associated with immediate and slow onset events.
6. Build the capacity of people and systems to implement national, sector and community C&DCD strategies and initiatives through effective processes and procedures including gender mainstreaming and targeted human resource development opportunities including research, assessments, training and education.
7. Strengthen governance and management arrangements for C&DCD including policy, fiscal, compliance, legislative and regulatory frameworks, data management, performance monitoring and reporting frameworks that enable the ongoing assessment and management of disaster and climate risks and impacts.

The background of the page is a vibrant underwater scene. At the top, there's a dense layer of green and blue coral. Below it, the water is clear and blue, with several small, colorful fish swimming. The bottom of the page features a close-up of purple and pink coral.

3. Institutional Arrangements

The structures required to implement this policy framework must enable efficient and effective planning and delivery, transparency, accountability, as well as build support amongst agencies and be able to deliver on climate and disaster compatible development outcomes.

Current governance and management arrangements are multi-faceted encouraging ownership and participation by all government agencies, local partners, villages and communities as well as regional and international development partners. The DRM and CC National Platform as a multi-stakeholder forum operates to share information and unite around related policy and programmes of action as an 'all of country' approach.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (MFAI) are the political focal point for CC, DRM and Development. In 2011 Climate Change Cook Islands (CCCI) as a division of the Office of the Prime Minister (OPM) was established with the transfer of the operational focal point functions from the National Environment Services (NES). All international, regional and national climate change matters are managed, overseen and coordinated by CCCI. Disaster risk reduction matters are coordinated by Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI) as legislated by the 2007 Disaster Risk Management Act. The Central Planning and Policy Division (CPPO) is mandated to oversee the implementation of development priorities. Advice and information on progress is currently provided to Cabinet on C&DCD related outcomes by these divisions through the National Sustainable Development Commission (NSDC) and the minister. As portfolios of the Prime Minister, these divisions along with the Office of the Energy Commissioner and Renewable Energy Development Division form a central policy and planning hub in addressing climate and disasters risks to Development.

The strengthening of these arrangements will be undertaken as identified in existing CC and DRM related policies and plans.

4. Implementation Arrangements

The arrangements required to implement this policy are set through identified roles and responsibilities, assigned strategies and actions including financing strategies of existing policy instruments. Primarily, this is the DRM & CCA JNAP and the Renewable Energy Chart, the Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment policy, National Health Strategy and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan as adopted policy instruments.

Going forward implementation arrangements for draft policy instruments as well as those scheduled for preparation in sectors such as Water, Waste, Sanitation, Tourism, Agriculture, Land, Marine Resources, Environment and Culture and issues such as gender, disability, displacement and migration will be prepared to ensure alignment with this policy.

5. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting

The monitoring, evaluation and reporting systems for this C&DCD policy framework will mirror existing Public Service and NSDP monitoring and reporting processes including those set out in the JNAP DRM&CCA. Other non government partners involved in the execution of C&DCD policy related actions including implementation of projects are to monitor and provide reports to CCCI, EMCI and respective funding partners as appropriate. In order to avoid duplication, administrative burden and increased transactions costs, where ever practicable and without compromising quality, monitoring and reporting requirements should make use of existing monitoring data, tools and systems. This will also include incorporating the review of this policy within a national policy review cycle and a prioritised schedule.

6. Communication arrangements

The development of a communication strategy is required to support the implementation of C&DCD policy framework. This is expected to incorporate a DRM CCA JNAP communication strategy and utilise the finalised CC communication guide developed by CCCI. This activity will be led by CCCI with support from the EMCI Information and Communications Officer and other key partners.



Tereapii Aurupa & Papa Nootai Nootai of Mitiaro 5th Sept 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)



7. Monitoring, Evaluation and Reporting Arrangements

Monitoring and reporting on the performance of the policy framework is based on existing arrangements.

Government Agencies:

1. Using targets and indicators from relevant C&DCD policy instruments such as the CCA&DRM JNAP, REC, GEWE policy in annual business plan and budget submissions as the basis for internal government monitoring and management
2. Providing PSC, MFEM and OPM (CPPO) with six monthly progress reports to enable:
 - a. PSC to review six month and annual report and provide feedback to Heads of Ministries on the agency performance
 - b. MFEM to review financial performance against budget allocations and provide feedback to HOMs
 - c. CPPO to review performance against NSDP indicators and provide feedback to HOMs, EMCI and CCCI

Coordinating Agencies

1. OPM (CCCI, REDD & EMCI) providing consolidated six monthly progress reports for the NSDC and Cabinet and include:
 - a) Results achieved including (if possible) impact of JNAP implementation in relation to the achievement of policy goals and the relevant NSDP indicators.
 - b) Lessons learned.
 - c) Actions taken to improve performance and address issues/risks arising from implementation.
 - d) Forecast programme for the next six months.
2. EMCI, CIMS and CCCI to submit reports to MFEM on utilisation of financial support directed to non government, civil society and auxiliary organisations etc. These would be based on reports submitted to EMCI, CIMS and CCCI by relevant NGOs, CSOs and auxiliary organisations.
3. EMCI and CCCI to submit required Regional and International reports (as in 4 above) to relevant development partners. E.g. SOPAC and DRM Partners Network, UNFCCC national communication, progress reports to SPREP.

Non Government and Civil Society Organisations

1. Entities in the governance and implementation of priorities and activities to provide reports to EMCI, CIMS, and CCCI and to respective development partners as appropriate.
2. Village and community groups to ensure active participation in the review process of C&DCD planning and implementation.

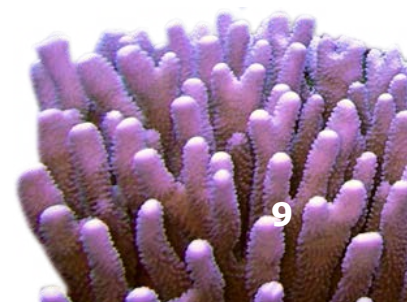
Further development required to strengthen existing systems includes ensuring:

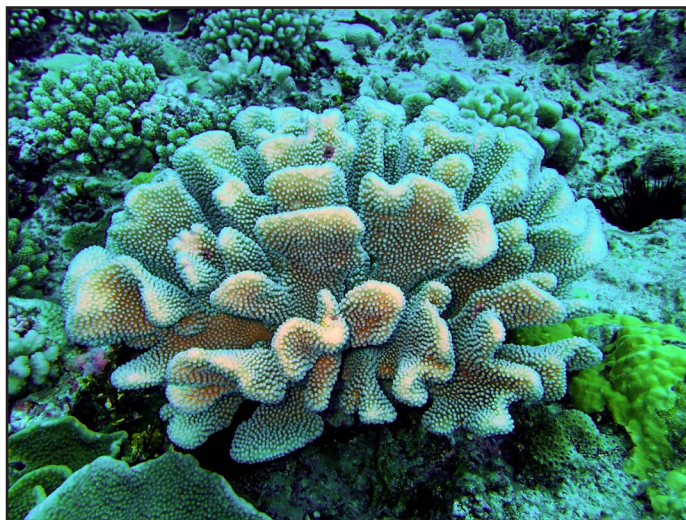
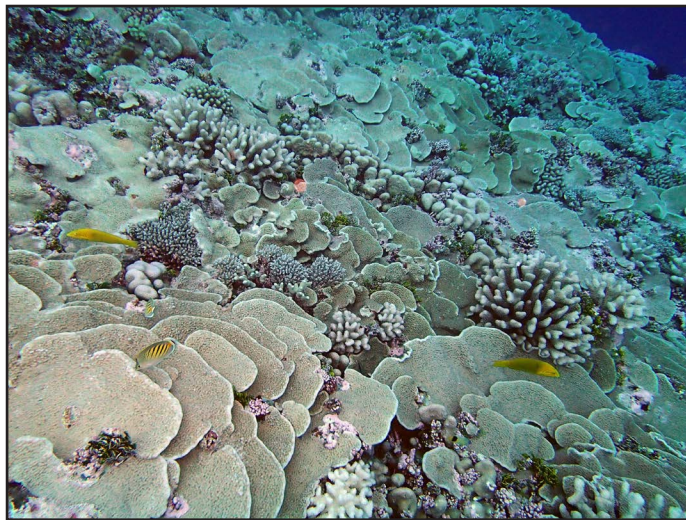
- All relevant plans and implementation tools incorporate relevant targets and indicators linked to C&DCD outputs and outcomes.
- The M&E system provides for continuous improvement with feedback opportunities to identify and incorporate improvements
- Provides capacity building opportunities to those using the system as well as targeted beneficiaries.

This policy will be reviewed every three years by CCCI/EMCI in collaboration with implementing agencies and partners. An independent peer review team to evaluate the outcomes of the policy and to incorporate new developments may be scheduled during the second term of the policy.



Mama Temou Raeputa of Mitiaro 5th Sept 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)





(Photos by Dr. Teina Rongo)





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