Climate Change Matters

World history will be made next month as the Paris Agreement enters into force on 4 November, 2016, just days before the start of the next Climate Change Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC in Morocco from 7 – 18 November. The Paris Agreement is a global milestone for which we in our Pacific corner have provided a valuable contribution to, our small islands played a pivotal role with other nations under the Alliance of Small Island States in bringing the Paris Agreement into being.

Throughout history, small islands have made a huge impact. Vanuatu was the first Chair of AOSIS and drove the development of the proposal which gave birth to the Kyoto Protocol, which was submitted by the then Chair Trinidad and Tobago. It was the Marshall Islands that spearheaded the work of the Coalition of High Ambition Nations with St Lucia at COP 21. Samoa is the representative to the Board of the Green Climate Fund on behalf of the SIDS, and the Leaders of Kiribati and Tuvalu have championed the Climate Change cause for the Pacific islands on the global scene.

While only a few are listed, all Pacific islands have played their part in making history throughout the years and will continue to do so as the Paris Agreement enters into force next month and we meet again after the COP21 in Paris.

Onwards and upwards.

“Climate change matters. Our Pacific islands matter.”
**Pacific head to Marrakech for Climate Change negotiations**

The 22nd session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will commence in Marrakesh, Morocco, on November 7th. The Pacific will be there in full force, supported by a team of technical and communications adviser from SPReP, along with other regional agencies.

A main focus of this session will be the operationalisation of the Paris Agreement. The first session of the Conference of the Parties, Meeting as the Parties to the Paris Agreement known as the CMA, will also commence at this climate session, given that the Paris Agreement enters into force on November 4th.

READ MORE ...

**Tuvalu’s Prime Minister Appointed President of the SIDS DOCK Assembly**

SIDS DOCK, the Small Island Developing States (SIDS) Sustainable Energy and Climate Resilience organisation, announced that His Excellency Mr. Enele Sosene Sopoaga, OBE, Prime Minister and Minister for Public Utilities of Tuvalu, has been appointed President of the second SIDS DOCK Assembly, on 24 September 2016, during its second session held at the United Nations (UN) headquarters on the margins of the General Debate of the 71st United Nations General Assembly.

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**Epau Community in Vanuatu completes Early Warning System Pilot Project**

Almost two years on after Tropical Cyclone Pam tore through the islands of Vanuatu causing extensive damage across the country, the people of Epau village in Efate witnessed the completion of its Climate and Disaster Resilience pilot project to help improve the village’s early warning capacity.

Through the Finland-Pacific (FINPAC) Project, a four-year regional project coordinated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPReP), the village of Epau came together to undertake a range of activities to prepare its people for future disasters. A Community Disaster and Climate Change Committee (CDCCC) was established in collaboration with the Vanuatu Disaster Management Office (NDMO) to coordinate community preparedness and response.

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**Pacific iCLIM conducts Information and Knowledge Management training in Tonga**

Organisations involved in climate change in Tonga now have increased capacity to implement good practice Information and Knowledge Management (IKM) in their organisations following a one day training workshop last month.

The training was delivered as part of the Pacific iCLIM project’s national activities, with the aim of improving the capacity of government departments and other organisations to manage climate change-related information.

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**Climate change awareness grows in Torba**

Torba Province in Vanuatu complete Climate Change Portal training

Awareness-raising of the National Advisory Board (NAB) and the National Advisory Board Portal was delivered to more than twenty area secretaries, the secretary General and the Torba Council President during the TORBA Provincial government Technical Advisory Committee meeting in Sola. Torba is the furthest Northern Province in Vanuatu; name derived from the combination of the Torres and Banks Islands

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**Successes, Good Practices, Lessons Learnt in the development of Climate Services in the Pacific showcased**

National Meteorological Services (NMSs) across the Pacific and partners celebrated an outstanding achievement in showcasing some of the successes, good practices and lessons learnt in the provision of climate services through the launch of a compendium of case studies titled ‘Pacific Islands Meteorological Services in Action: A Compendium of Climate Services Case Studies.’

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**Enhancing Community Resilience through the Pacific RoadMap for Strengthened Climate Services in the region**

A workshop to further hone the Pacific Roadmap for Strengthened Climate Services in the region was held in Fiji in October. A Pacific Roadmap Action Plan for the implementation of the WMO Global Framework for Climate Services was developed through regional consultations with national meteorological services and partners. The Pacific Roadmap Action Plan for strengthened climate services focussed on the needs of the national met services and the key sectors that rely on their information and advice for development planning and decision making.

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**Preparing for the Tropical Cyclone Outlook in the Pacific islands**

Eight to ten Tropical Cyclones expected to be named are forecast for the Pacific island region this cyclone season, with elevated activity to the North of the Coral Sea and close to the international dateline near Tonga and Niue. This was announced at the Second Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum (PICOF-2). PICOF-2 brought together national and regional Pacific island met staff, international experts, and representatives of key Pacific island priority sectors including disaster management to discuss the seasonal climate outlook and the application of this information to sectoral decision making, in particular, that in the disaster risk reduction sector.

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SPREP hosts 9th COSPPac Planning and Steering Committee meeting

The Climate and Ocean Services Program in the Pacific (COSPPac) held the 9th Planning and Steering Committee Meeting at the SPREP Campus in Samoa from 3-5 October 2016. The discussions were primarily focused on the transition of tools and products from the Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Geoscience Australia to regional organisations as well as the continued implementation of activities under the project.

COSPPac was designed to address the needs of 14 Meteorological and Hydrological Services, Land and Survey Departments as well as other important in country stakeholders.

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Mid term review takes place for Pacific Island Meteorological Strategy

A review of the Pacific Island Meteorological Strategy (PIMS) 2012-2021 to encompass current and emerging priorities for the Pacific region was the objective of a regional workshop held at SPREP in October. The Strategy was adopted by the Pacific Meteorological Council in 2012 to set out the strategic priorities for strengthening the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHS) in the Pacific region, to ensure they can effectively deliver their basic and core functions on weather and climate over the next decade.

READ MORE ...

How well do you know El Niño?

ENSO, El Niño and La Niña are key meteorological terms that Pacific islanders need to become more familiar with as their impacts reach into the daily lives and homes of island communities. Pacific island Met workers united with disaster management officers from across the region for the Second Pacific Island Climate Outlook Forum to learn more of these climate phenomena and how the information can be best used to help prepare island communities.

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Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum focusses on disaster risk reduction and information relevance

The second Pacific Island Climate Outlook Forum brought together national, regional and international experts on climate services and disaster risk reduction to explore common approaches and best practices for climate services that can be extended throughout the Pacific region. With the cyclone season closing in, the two-day event hosted by the Fiji Meteorology Service in Nadi placed a special focus on disaster risk reduction and the importance of climate information for community preparedness.

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Pacific Coral Bleaching outlook

One often overlooked feature of a strong El Niño is wide-spread coral bleaching. The 2014-2015 El Niño triggered a multi-year global bleaching event, the longest ever recorded. Bleaching has been particularly severe in several areas, such as the Great Barrier Reef and Kiribati, including the first ever observed bleaching in the northernmost Great Barrier Reef.

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Regional Statement on the Impacts of the 2015/16 El Niño and 2016/17 Climate and Tropical Cyclone Outlook for the Pacific islands

The following statement was formed at the Second Pacific Islands Climate Outlook Forum. Key Messages:

2015/16 El Niño

• The strong El Niño in 2015/16 was similar to previous events in 1997/98 and 1982/83.
• Significant impacts associated with the 2015/16 El Niño were anticipated and experienced across the Pacific Islands region, mainly associated with below normal rainfall and reduced sea level in the southwest Pacific. The central Pacific experienced increased rainfall and elevated sea level.
• These impacts came on the back of “El Niño like” conditions experienced throughout most of the region in 2014.

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IPCC Agrees Outlines of New Report

The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has agreed the outlines of two new reports that will help governments implement the Paris Climate Change Agreement. The decision on the outlines, or table of contents, which had been drafted by scoping meetings in August, clears the way for the IPCC to launch the call for nominations for authors for both reports at the beginning of November. The special report on 1.5°C was requested at the UNFCCC COP21 in Paris in December 2015, which set a target of limiting global warming to well below 2°C above pre-industrial levels while pursuing efforts to hold it to 1.5°C.

READ MORE ...

El Niño Southern Oscillation Update

Currently, neither El Niño nor La Niña conditions prevail in the Pacific; this is referred to as ENSO-neutral conditions. Continued ENSO-neutral conditions or a weak La Niña is expected over the period November 2016 to February 2017. Thereafter, ENSO-neutral conditions are favoured.

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<td>FINPAC SmartAlert Training</td>
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We kindly acknowledge the following donors and partners: