



Fiji Climate Change Newsletter

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Climate Change communicated at the “Mother of All Festivals”

The Climate Change Unit (CCU) under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation (MFAIC) took advantage of the hugely popular annual Hibiscus festival to create awareness on the important and concerning issue of climate change. The Hibiscus festival, widely proclaimed as the “Mother of all Festivals” in Fiji, ran from 19 to 25 August 2012 at Albert Park, Suva.

The Permanent Secretary for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation, Mrs Saipora Mataikabara said that “while the government, through its various ministries and with support from civil society organisations and development partners, are implementing programs and projects to assist communities to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change, there is nevertheless an urgent need to raise awareness among the general public on climate change related issues”.

The daily awareness programs ran from 10am to 8pm and included climate change quizzes and games, giveaways, screening of climate change videos and display of variety of climate change awareness materials.

The climate change awareness booth drew a wide range of people from all walks of life. While most took time out to learn about climate change, students grabbed the opportunity to gather information to assist in tasks and assignments. Mrs. Ane Lagilagi, a teacher from Rakiraki, said she was very lucky to have visited the booth as she was able to gather useful teaching aids for her students. “The books, posters and brochures collected on climate change will help to better equip me to inform my students on this important issue”, she explained.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation would like to thank the government ministries – Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Fiji Meteorological Services, Department of Agriculture, Civil Society Organizations; Pacific Conference of Churches, Worldwide Fund for Nature South Pacific (WWF SPPO), University of the South Pacific’s Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD), SPC/GIZ Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region Programme and the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) for their support in donating climate change awareness materials and giveaways which led to the successful dissemination of climate change information during the week-long event.

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Fiji participates in training for Designated National Authorities (DNA)

The Regional Asia, Pacific and Eastern Europe Designated National Authority (DNA) training was held from the 16th to the 17th of July at the ADB (Asian Development Bank) Headquarters in Manila, Philippines.

The purpose of the DNA training was to i) provide capacity building for DNAs in priority areas of the CDM, as identified by the Conference of Parties (COP) serving as the Meeting of Parties to the Kyoto Protocol (CMP) at its last session (COP 17 in Durban), and ii) provide an opportunity for exchange of knowledge and experience amongst DNAs and practitioners. The Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Public Utilities, Works and Transport, Mr Francis Kean and the Climate Change Unit's CDM Project Coordinator, Mr. Manasa Katonivualiku represented Fiji in the two day DNA training.

The DNA training was followed by the "Third Workshop on Enhancing the Regional Distribution of CDM (Clean Development Mechanism) Projects in Asia and the Pacific" from the 18th to the 20th of July. The workshop aimed at providing a platform for participants to: i) share best practices and key lessons, ii) enhance their knowledge on the CDM and iii) discuss technical, financial, and policy issues specific to their projects.

The Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Public Utilities, Works and Transport, Mr Francis Kean, Ministry of Finance's Mrs Davina Whippy, Water Authority of Fiji's Mrs Kirti Chandra and the Climate Change Unit's Mr Manasa Katonivualiku attended the three-day workshop.

The ultimate objective of the training and the workshop was to promote and support CDM project activities in Asia and the Pacific countries, particularly in the least developed countries (LDCs) and small island developing States (SIDS). The Asia and Pacific countries currently host less than 10 registered projects.

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Kinoya Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) Project

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Project site: Kinoya Sewerage Works

The Kinoya Clean Development Mechanism (CDM) project involves capture and combustion of methane generated from the anaerobic digestion of sewage sludge. The CDM UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) methodology is: AMS-III.H. version 16 –Methane recovery in wastewater treatment and the project is registered as project number 4552 in the UNFCCC website.

It is the first methane capture project in Fiji and sets an example as a clean technology demonstration model for existing and new wastewater treatment plants in Fiji.

The **Asian Development Bank** provided the Suva – Nausori Water and Sewerage development loan and provides technical support for the CDM project.

The **Ministry of Works , Transport and Public Utilities** represents the Government of Fiji . Under this Ministry , Water and Sewerage Department and the Water Authority of Fiji are involved .

The project is developed by the **Water and Sewerage Department** and implemented by the **Water Authority of Fiji under the Ministry of Works, Transport and Public Utilities**.

The project aims to reduce green house gases (methane) by approximately 22000 tons CO2 per year and generating carbon revenue called carbon credits.

This project serves a model for future CDM projects in the Water and Sanitation sector.

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Linking livelihoods, climate and effective management

Effective management of mangroves and associated ecosystem lies at the heart of IUCN's (International Union for Conservation of Nature) MESCAL (Mangrove Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation and Livelihoods) project. IUCN Oceania and the International Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD) facilitated a training workshop for MESCAL coordinators from 23-26 July in Suva, Fiji to highlight the links between project impacts, livelihoods and climate. The workshop introduced participants to use the Community-based Risk Screening Tool – Adaptation and Livelihoods (CRISTAL) toolkit.

CRISTAL is a screening tool designed to help project designers and managers integrate risk reduction and climate change adaptation into community-level projects. It enables project planners and managers to understand the links between livelihoods and climate; assess a project's

impact on livelihood resources important for climate change adaptation; and devise adjustments to improve a project's impact on key livelihood resources.

The workshop is the first CRISTAL training to be offered for the Oceania region and also a chance for the MESCAL coordinators to work with the pilot version of the latest CRISTAL.

A critical component of CRISTAL is interaction with communities. Workshop participants visited the village of Nadoi, one of the communities in the Rewa delta and part of MESCAL Fiji's demonstration site, learning about Nadoi's climate hazards and current adaptation solutions.

Discussions with community members identified hazards including salt water intrusion, rainfall variation and extreme temperature fluctuation.

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A fairly flat area adjacent to the Rewa River Nadoi also floods frequently, crippling food production and the community's livelihood.

"The people of Nadoi have found ways to adapt to these hazards but it has made things financially difficult for the villagers", said Dr. Milika Sobey, MESCAL Regional Project Manager and IUCN Oceania and Water and Wetlands Programme Coordinator.

"MESCAL coordinators have agreed to use the new version of CRISTAL once it is launched, as part of their socio-economic surveys for their respective demonstration sites as it would aid in the improvement of

their plans for climate change adaptation and overall management of mangrove ecosystems," says Viliame Waqalevu, MESCAL Technical Officer at IUCN Oceania.

The MESCAL project is supported by the German government under the Federal Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety.

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Members of Nadoi village during the field visit (photo: IUCN)

Youth launch train-a-climate negotiator program

"Addressing and adjusting to the challenges of climate change is certain to be a defining feature of the future of today's youth," says the United Nations World Youth Report 2010.

Constant references to youths as "future leaders" deny them their place and recognition as current leaders thus further marginalising their active, sustainable and meaningful participation in decision making, policy formulation, political and international affairs. Youths in Fiji have the potential to bring about changes so that the quality of life for not only youths but for everyone in society is improved.

"Project Survival Pacific" is a youth-based environmental organization in Fiji pioneered by Mr. Krishneil Narayan, Fiji's Youth Ambassador to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) meetings since 2009.

Since its inception in 2009, Project Survival Pacific has been involved in the UNFCCC processes. The youth of our country need to develop the skills in climate change negotiations so that they can effectively help our economic, social and environmental

sectors address the impacts of climate change and become experts in this field.

The Project Survival Pacific's Train-A-Climate Negotiator (TaCN) Program is a one year leadership training for young people between the age of 18 – 28 years. TaCN participants have the unique opportunity to learn skills in international climate change negotiations and understand international climate change policy processes. The participants will work with government; NGO's, civil society and with the international youth in advance of climate change conferences to educate themselves and their communities to develop policy priorities, acquire skills in effective lobbying and engage the broader youth community. TaCN participants will work side-by-side with government delegates, leaders from international organizations, and fellow members of civil. We invite the government departments, NGO's, civil society organizations and all stakeholders to join us in this new youth initiative.

For more information, contact Krishneil Narayan: projectsurvivalpacific@gmail.com

Exciting findings from Fiji REDD+ Pilot Site survey

The Fiji National REDD+ (Reducing Emission from Deforestation and forest Degradation + forest conservation, sustainable management of forests, enhancement of forest carbon stocks) Programme carried out a series of surveys at the first Fiji REDD+ pilot site, in the Province of Navosa, from 03 to 27 July 2012. The pilot site has an area of around 7,300ha covered with largely intact indigenous forest. The site is owned by the Mataqali Emalu and is one of the largest areas of land in Fiji owned by a single Mataqali.

For decades the Emalu Forest has been of great interest to loggers due to the rich timber stands it hosts. The major constraint for loggers has been gaining access to the isolated area. However, recent infrastructural development in neighbouring areas has rekindled the interest of loggers and the pressure to log the area is increasing. It is envisaged that REDD+ will be an alternative to the conventional logging of this pristine and valuable forest. The Emalu landowners have indicated their support to this approach.

All REDD+ projects should ensure the protection of biological diversity and cultural rights and the improvement of local livelihoods. These components need to be measured and monitored to affirm its protection and/or enhanced. The surveys carried out in Emalu are part of the measurement process and will go toward the development of indicators in the monitoring system.

The pilot site surveys included the forest and carbon inventory (carried out by the Forestry Department, the Draua Landowners technical team and SPC), a comprehensive biodiversity survey (by the Institute of Applied Sciences of the University of the South Pacific and local experts), a socio-economic survey (by the Forestry Department, Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and Department of Culture and Heritage, and GIZ), a cultural mapping exercise (by the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and Department of Culture and Heritage), and archaeological mapping (by the Fiji Museum). Prior to the surveys intensive consultations were undertaken amongst stakeholders and the Mataqali Emalu members and the Draubuta villagers. These consultations were led by the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) and the Provincial Office with TLTB providing the project necessary guidance on the suitable working arrangements between the REDD+ Project and landowners.

Prior to the socio-economic survey, facilitators underwent a three-day participatory rural appraisal (PRA) training prior to the survey and the surveys were conducted in a participatory manner. Information from the socio economic survey is significant for the REDD+ Project as it provides a baseline on the socio-economic situation in the village.

The information gathered from the socio-economic survey of Draubuta Village included the level of skills and formal education in the village, the main source of income in the village, past and current land use practices, sources of income, household budgeting and dietary patterns and others. The facilitators had undergone a three-day participatory rural appraisal (PRA) training prior to the survey and the surveys were conducted in a participatory manner. Information from the socio economic survey is significant for the REDD+ Project as it provides a baseline on the current socio-economic situation in the village and developments in this area will be monitored.

The archaeological survey revealed various war defence features,

well preserved house mounds, old clay pottery, and agricultural terraces. These signify a once thriving environment of human habitation and activities.

The forest inventory saw unusually large and dense stands of indigenous trees (like Dakua and Sa). A preliminary calculation for forest carbon (above ground biomass) for Emalu forest was estimated at 1million tonnes CO₂eq. This is currently undergoing verification.

All surveys strongly recommend the protection of the Emalu Forest not only for its relatively large carbon reservoir but to also protect its very high biological diversity and cultural richness. The biodiversity survey and the socio-economic survey will be completed early next year. The surveys were supported under the Fiji National REDD+ Programme and the SPC/GIZ Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region Programme.

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Draubuta women's group showing off their village profile

Learn climate change acronyms

CDM – Clean Development Mechanism

COP 18 – 18th Session of the Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC

GHG – Greenhouse gas

IPCC – Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change

REDD+ - Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation + conservation of forests, sustainable management of forests, carbon stock enhancement

SNC – Second National Communication

UNFCCC – United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

V&A assessment – Vulnerability and Adaptation assessment

Bridging modern science and local knowledge to build community resilience

Building resilience is about the security of our environment: our islands, our food supply and our health. Translating definitions relating to climate change climate, is the responsibility of practitioners, managers and agencies working with local communities.

LäjeRotuma (LRI) is a community-based environmental initiative aimed at informing and strengthening the capacity of its own community to make informed decisions to manage their natural resources well on Rotuma Island. LRI worked with women, children, village men, youth and traditional leaders on the island.

LäjeRotuma recognises the use and conservation of island biodiversity as an integral part of its culture, inseparable from its ethical and aesthetic values or from its socio-economic reality. Adaptation is primarily a local process which means that technology and solutions need to suit local conditions and that local capacity must be developed to use and build resilience of island life.

Over the years, LäjeRotuma has been engaging youth, women and children with an age range of 6-17 years with the aim of empowering these key social groups to address sustainability issues. Translating materials into the vernacular empowers local people to understand climate change issues better. It also enhances community participation for maximum stakeholder involvement and commitment.

The Adopt-a-habitat approach and ecocamp model is a great approach for engaging women and children, utilizing visual arts tools- mural art sessions, driftwood workshop, song and dance, and story-telling sessions. Field trips such as bird-watching, seagrass-beach-coral reef watch and forest walks engage the group to observe natural changes and seasonal effects of or variability in their natural environment. Innovatively, these activities work with the women and children to re-tell their knowledge of old stories which describe an event about the environment, real-time local observations about how the changing climate and seasons affect their way of life on Rotuma.

Exploring a custom still in practice reveals the intrinsic links between traditional practices and climate. The mat-weavers of Rotuma are now facing an unreliable supply of pandanus due to the missed timing of the lunar cycle now 'riddled with rain'. There is now unusual weather pattern during the pandanus harvesting season (as defined by knowledge passed down from their grandmothers). Such witness stories enable us to understand better how to work with specific groups with their customary expectations in the face of a changing climate.

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News in brief

- The University of Fiji hosted a regional Climate Change and Health Symposium from 13th – 15th September. The symposium aims to bring together researchers and stakeholders in government and civil society organizations that are involved in climate change and health-related projects and activities. This important symposium was organised by Ministry of Health, World Health Organization (WHO), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the University of the South Pacific
- The Fiji government is preparing a drought plan in response to the impacts of Climate Change. The drought steering committee is spearheading the formulation of the national drought action plan.
- There will be a National Climate Change Country Team Meeting in the 4th Quarter to endorse Fiji's National Position and delegation to the COP 18 (Conference of Parties) to be held from 26th November – 7th December, 2012 in Doha, Qatar.

Interprovincial Adaptation Forum

– AusAID Building Resilience Project

An inter-provincial adaptation forum was held on the 25th and 26th of June, 2012 at Nadave. World Wild Fund for Nature (WWF) through its AusAID funded Building Resilience Project in collaboration with the iTaukei Affairs Board organised the 2-day forum targeting all provincial administrators.

Deputy Chief Executive Officer for the iTaukei Affairs Board, Colonel Apakuki Kurusiga said all the Roko Tuis played an important role in the dissemination of climate change information to the grassroots level. “We have diverted our task and refocused our strategies to the conservation of our environment by raising awareness to the villagers,” Colonel Kurusiga said.

The two-day forum offered a diverse range of plenary and keynote sessions, talanoa, film nights, plus people, places and stories exhibitions. The topics discussed included consumerism in flooding situations, disaster risk management planning, good practices in gender equality for environmental security, sustainable land management practices, climate smart planning, agriculture and climate change, and disability inclusiveness.

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Fiji Climate Outlook

September to November 2012 & December 2012 to February 2013

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HIGHLIGHTS

- The tropical Pacific continues to be in neutral El Niño Southern Oscillation (ENSO) state, however, oceanic indicators of ENSO are increasingly shifting towards a developing El Niño;
- The chances of settling of El Niño conditions are enhanced in the remaining months of this year;
- Generally, equal chances of below average, average and above average rainfall is favoured for the September to November period, while average to below average rainfall is anticipated for the December 2012 to February 2013 period;
- The maximum and minimum air temperatures are expected to be normal over both the September to November and the December 2012 to February 2013 periods;
- The sea surface temperatures are predicted to be around normal in the Fiji region through September to November 2012.

Detailed Outlook report on this link: <http://www.met.gov.fj/Outlook.pdf>

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