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Newsletter



Pacific Resilience Meeting

The 2021 Pacific Resilience Meeting (PRM) was held between 6 and 8 July 2021, with a pre-PRM youth forum on 5 July. The meeting was both virtual with national hubs with PACRES the main funding partner.

The PRM is a key event for strengthening regional coordination in climate change and disaster resilience through the multi-stakeholder Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) for the effective implementation of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) - an integrated approach to address climate change and disaster risk management.

The PRM is Pacific-owned and Pacific-led and provides a platform to inspire and connect resilience practitioners from all levels across our Blue Pacific region.

This year's theme: **"Our people, our journey: nurturing Pacific resilience from home"** emphasises building resilience starts with our people, our homes and our communities and recognises that our Pacific people have been culturally and traditionally resilient whilst at the same time embracing new and modern challenges and opportunities.

It also emphasises that we all have a responsibility and are accountable through the actions and approaches we take for a resilient Pacific. With information and knowledge sharing, learning and improving our experiences, the journey towards a resilient future is achievable.

The organisation of the 2021 PRM in a similar fashion to the 2019 PRM demonstrates a highly inclusive leadership approach from the planning to delivery with all events coordinated and supported by a multitude of partners, including PACRES, representing various stakeholder groups reflecting a true spirit of diversity and inclusivity, and demonstrating the true principles of the FRDP and the PRP in action.

A little over 1,800 people registered for the event with on average over 700 joining the pre-PRM youth forum and over 900 joining online plus around 100 joining at the national hubs on a daily basis throughout the 3 days of the PRM. Countries that hosted national hubs included Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Nauru, Palau, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

The PRM was officially opened by the Prime Minister of Tuvalu and Chair of the Pacific Islands Forum, Honorable Kausea Natano who highlighted the meeting as a good example of how the region can leverage digital technology and adapt to the circumstances. He further emphasised that the current circumstances we find ourselves in highlight the need to constantly strive for better ways and systems of building resilience in all sectors and all parts of societies and that resilience should be an integral part of how we plan for, resource, implement and then monitor our development. The PRM sessions were inclusive, diverse and rich in content, reflecting the multi-faceted aspects of and approaches to resilience in the Pacific.

Meet the team:



Mr. Stone Fulivai
SPREP PRP/FRDP
Coordinator



Ms. Laura Mitchell
SPREP PACRES
Finance and
Administration
Officer



Mr. Ritesh Verma
PIFS PACRES Finance
& Administrative
Assistant



Ms. Elenoa Tuicakau
SPC PACRES
Networking Assistant;
and



Ms. Sainimili Elliot
USP PACRES Finance
and Administration
Officer

About PACRES

The €12.18 million Intra-ACP GCCA+ Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change and Resilience Building (PACRES) is a multi-donor project funded primarily by the European Union (€12 million) with targeted support from Monaco and the Swiss Confederation. It aims to ensure better regional and national adaptation and mitigation responses to climate change challenges facing Pacific ACP countries.

PACRES is being delivered jointly by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), the Pacific Community (SPC) and the University of the South Pacific (USP). Implementation will continue through to mid-2023.

PACRES is providing regional support by:

- strengthening regional coordination in climate change and disaster resilience through the multi-stakeholder Pacific Resilience Partnership for the effective implementation of the Framework for Resilient Development in the Pacific (FRDP) - an integrated approach to address climate change and disaster risk management;
- assisting national governments in United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change negotiations;
- strengthening existing climate change and disaster resilience networks;

- scaling up Pacific professional resilience capacity, including through enhanced technical and vocational education and training qualifications;
- increasing access to and reach of climate change and disaster resilience information;
- a USP research programme; and
- strengthening strategic engagement and dialogue with the private sector to deepen regional and public sector understanding of the role and contribution of the private sector with respect to climate change and disaster resilience.

In Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Timor-Leste and Vanuatu PACRES is scaling up adaptation pilots including ecosystem-based adaptation. These are the five Pacific ACP countries not receiving similar support under GCCA+ Scaling Up Pacific Adaptation (SUPA).

In other participating Pacific ACP countries, PACRES is supporting:

- review or development of climate change and disaster resilience strategies and policies;
- further mainstreaming of climate change and disaster resilience; and
- national climate change information portals.

News in brief

PACRES is continuing to implement project activities nationally and across the region with support from our national implementing partners and local PACRES teams. Following are some country highlights since our last newsletter in March 2021:

- in Papua New Guinea our consultant developing options to build resilience to climate change and natural disasters in Karama and nearby communities has completed the desktop review of options. These will be discussed during a site visit to communities shortly, after which work will begin implementing agreed options, including enhanced shoreline protection, food security and disaster planning;
- in Solomon Islands the Government has approved their revised NDC for submission to the UNFCCC in advance of COP26. PACRES funded the NDC update;
- in Honiara and Port Vila, consultancies have commenced to explore local eco-friendly technology, materials and alternatives for riverbank stabilisation and riparian zone rehabilitation and to implement

the most viable options to restore the Mataniko and Tagabe riverbanks and riparian zones;

- in Honiara a survey is underway to support development of the Botanic Gardens Landscape Architecture Master Plan;
- in Port Vila the Tagabe Forestry nursery is being expanded;
- in Cook Islands a consultancy has commenced to develop a robust guideline to inform development of a Climate Change Bill; and
- in Tuvalu PACRES is providing support to maintain the national climate change portal.

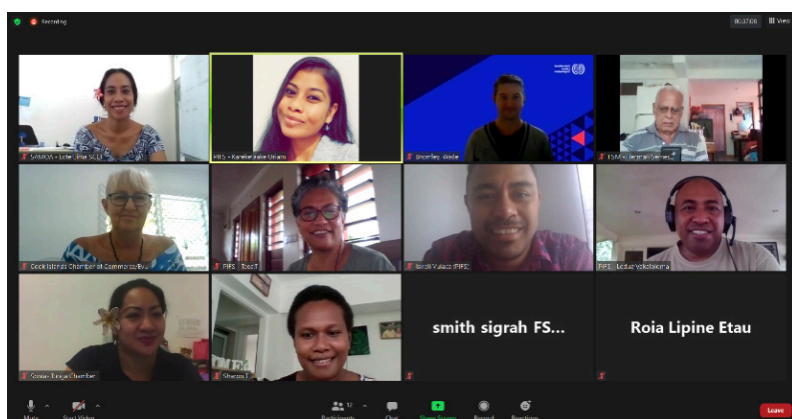
The second PACRES Steering Committee Meeting will be held as a virtual meeting on 27 July 2021. The Meeting will provide an update on progress over the past year and offers partners the opportunity to discuss challenges in project implementation and comment on proposed activities between now and June 2022.

PACRES tree planting around Port Vila

A three-day tree planting training workshop was organised by the PACRES SPREP and USP teams in Vanuatu 17–19 May 2021. Held in collaboration with Vanuatu's Departments of Climate Change and Forests, the activity aimed to enhance the understanding and capacity of change agents from Provincial and Municipality offices and communities in the area of tree planting and nurturing. After a two-day classroom session, the trainees planted 500 mahogany seedlings in Erangorango, the upper Tagabe River watershed and zone 3 of the Matnakara Protection Zone of the Port Vila Water Source. Facilitated by Ioan Viji, the SPREP PACRES Nursery Officer and Judy Kalotap, the Shefa Forest Officer from the Department of Forests, the workshop trained 24 change agents, 14 women and 10 men. It is hoped that through this training the change agents are able to confidently organise their own community tree planting events, care for trees planted via earlier initiatives such as this, and replace trees destroyed by cyclones and flooding.



Strategic plans of the private sector



Exploring opportunities for cooperation and learning about the available resources and tools that can support specific needs of the national Chambers of Commerce in the Pacific region was the focus of an information session held virtually on 30 April. Participants, included representatives from the Chambers of Commerce of Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga and Tuvalu with the International Labor Organization (ILO) Bureau of Employers' Activities (Bureau) represented by Wade Bromley who shared what the Bureau does and how national Chambers of Commerce could be supported in their strategic planning reviews. A few Chambers of Commerce have benefited from this tailored support from the ILO and the PACRES Project hopes to continue with the collaboration. The information session was organised by PIFS through PACRES in collaboration with ILO, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO) following requests from Chambers of Commerce to support them with their strategic plan review.

Project collaboration to sustain ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches around Honiara

In Solomon Islands and Vanuatu, PACRES is building on EbA activities commenced under the Pacific Ecosystem-based Adaptation the Climate Change (PEBACC) Project funded by the German Government and implemented by SPREP in Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu between 2015 and 2020.

One of the PEBACC lessons learned was that "EbA interventions should ideally occur over a longer time period than conventional projects – preferably 5-10 years"

The value of this longer time approach is now being demonstrated as PACRES builds on PEBACC investments around Honiara and Port Vila. The decision to build on PEBACC activities was taken during PACRES design missions to Honiara and Port Vila undertaken by SPREP PACRES M & E Officer Semi Qamese and Finance and Administration Officer Laura Mitchell in July 2019.

In this issue, we explore how PACRES is building on PEBACC's work around Honiara. A future issue will examine how PACRES is building on PEBACC and Ridge to Reef Project activities around Port Vila.



Student Research

Two of the PACRES sponsored students carried out their fieldwork in recent months. Rahul Prasad, who is working on impacts of climate change on sugarcane production for his Masters research, completed a two-week data collection exercise across five villages in Nadogo District in Fiji. Data collection was done through interviews and consultations with sugarcane farmers to record their experiences on impacts of tropical cyclones, floods and droughts on sugarcane production. Rahul's preliminary findings indicate sugarcane farmers opt for cash crops, livestock and labor work as alternative livelihood when the sugarcane yield is low.

Jyoti Prasad, a PhD candidate working on ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) for food security and livelihoods in the agriculture sector, completed her field work in two locations in Fiji — Cakaudrovo (Taveuni) and Macuata (Vanua Levu) provinces. Jyoti's data collection focused on people's livelihood, food and nutrition sources, sustainable land management and existing EbA practices across 10 villages. Her initial findings include that unemployment has caused urban-to-rural migration and villagers focusing on farming for their food source. The present situation has also prompted traditional practices for obtaining food; subsistence farming and barter system is prominent across the study sites. In non-Covid-19 times, when villagers are gainfully employed in Fiji's urban areas, there is a lesser dependence on subsistence agriculture to sustain their livelihoods.

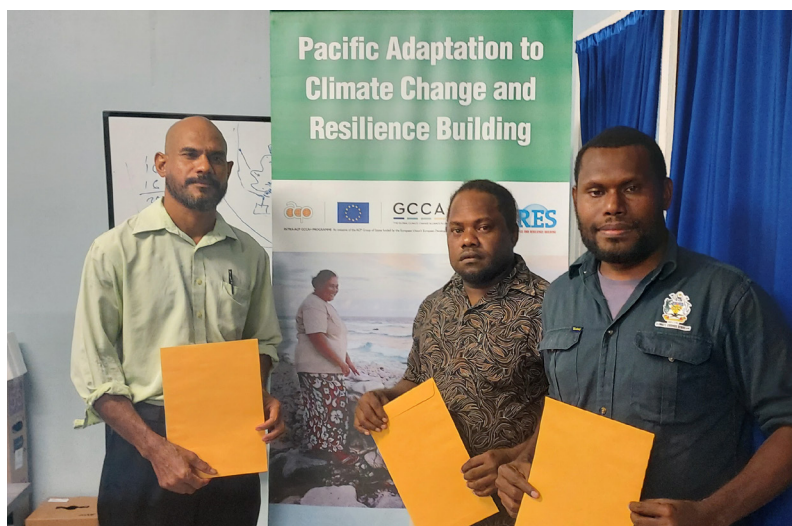


Private sector experience in accessing the GCF's readiness grant

To address one of the common barriers to effectively engage the private sector in the discussion and accessing climate finance, PACRES in collaboration with the Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO), the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI) Office in Vanuatu and the Vanuatu Business Resilience Council (VBRC) organised a talanoa session for the private sector in the region on 18 May. The focus of the session was to allow GGGI as the delivery partner and VBRC as the executing agency to share their experiences on how Vanuatu managed to secure the readiness grant from the GCF. To-date, only 3 countries in the region have been able to access the readiness grant to support the private sector.

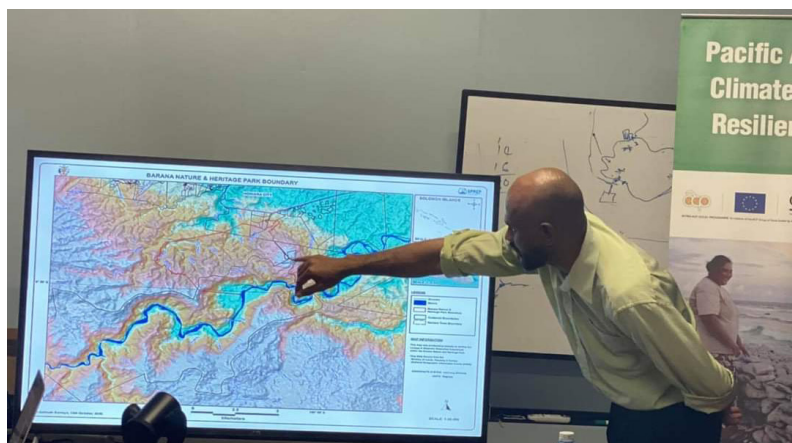
The virtual talanoa session was attended by more than 20 representatives from the private sector and representatives of the GCF's National Designated Authority in some countries. Similar sessions are planned for the private sector in the future to learn from the experiences of Cook Islands and Tonga as a few national Chambers of Commerce are keen to explore the opportunity from the GCF to strengthen capacity and help build resilience of the private sector.

Protecting Honiara's water catchments



Honiara's water supply comes from the Lunga, Mataniko and Kovi/Kongulai rivers. Management of the upper catchments of these rivers was identified by PEBACC as a priority ecosystem-based adaptation option to include and conserve Honiara's water supply. The Barana community who are the traditional owners of the upper catchment area land supported establishment of the Barana Community Nature and Heritage Park in 2017. Through PEBACC an Environmental Resources Centre was built to serve as a meeting place for the Park Management Committee as well as an education centre and a space for researchers. A nursery was established.

In 2020 PACRES funded a survey to extend the boundaries of the Park to include the entire Honiara catchment. Maps of these new boundaries were handed over to the Solomon Islands Government at a ceremony in Honiara on 11 May 2021. Guests at the handover ceremony included Hon Richard Reti, Minister for Culture, Tourism, Environment and Disaster Management, Hon John Batista Nano, MPA and Dr Melchior Mataka, Permanent Secretary, Solomon Islands Government Ministry of Environment, Conservation, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM). Chief Cartographer at the Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey, Dalton Hone acknowledged receipt of the map files of the extended boundaries and Reginald Ruben, GIS Specialist at MECDM thanked the Barana Nature and Heritage Park Committee and community for their cooperation and support during the ground truthing and survey work.



Honiara Botanic Gardens

PEBACC also supported upgrading of the Honiara Botanic Gardens, working with local partners to re-establish the Botanic Gardens Management Committee in 2018. This included building a new timber boardwalk and producing the Honiara Garden Management and Business Plan 2020-2023. PACRES is building further on PEBACC support for the Botanic Gardens and has engaged a consultant to develop the Botanic Gardens Landscape Architecture Master Plan.

Opportunities for Private Sector Engagement in Climate Change Action in the Pacific

A policy brief for the private sector was published by PIFS in May 2021 to support private engagement with governments in the Pacific on resilience building and accessing climate finance. The policy brief has been developed in line with past decisions of the Forum Economic Ministers in 2018 and 2019 to strengthen private sector investment in low-carbon and climate resilient development. This includes the opportunity for the private sector to establish strategic partnerships with governments at the national level to be able to contribute to resilience building and to access funding from various global climate finance sources. The policy brief is expected to also address some practical challenges related to lack of access to information and awareness about climate finance, ineffective coordination with other actors at the national level and the requirements of funding agencies. Some of these challenges have been outlined in the policy brief including options that could be jointly undertaken by the government and the private sector to address those challenges. A few case studies from the Pacific and other regions have also been included to showcase successful private sector and government partnerships towards resilient development initiatives. This could help promote more public-private partnership initiatives in the region and support private sector investments in the domestic market. A copy can be accessed from the PIFS website using this link:

https://www.forumsec.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/Policy-Brief_Opportunities-for-Private-Sector-Engagement-in-Climate-Change-Action-in-the-Pacific.pdf



PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM

Policy Brief



Pacific Resilience Partnership

This newsletter focuses on the PRP Localisation Technical Working Group co-chaired by PIANGO, FemLinkPacific and Fiji Disabled People's Federation. The focus of the TWG is to establish communities of best practice actively engaging in knowledge sharing in disaster preparedness, response and recovery as a means to mobilise transformative action across all stakeholders. Its membership includes various humanitarian and development actors from government, civil society, private sector, Faith-based Organisations and Community-based Organisations.

Recently the TWG did a mapping exercise on humanitarian localisation activities conducted by partners at the national level across the region through an online survey. 123 organisations from 21 Pacific Islands Countries and Territories working in various sectors responded to the survey. The report from this survey was launched through the Pacific Resilience Partnership (PRP) webinar "Towards Strengthening Local Humanitarian Action" held on 25 May via Zoom and Facebook live virtual platforms.

The report highlights challenges with regard to humanitarian actions faced by Pacific Island Countries, and was framed around four key areas: capacity, leadership, partnership, and funding.

Through the webinar, panelists from the humanitarian sector highlighted challenges towards strengthening local and humanitarian actions at national and community level.

"Affected communities and the most vulnerable should always be at the center of humanitarian response" - these were the sentiments shared by Isoa Frank, the Secretary General of the Federated State of Micronesia Red Cross Society. He further highlighted that "disaster response should address the needs of the most vulnerable regardless of their nationality, beliefs, class or political opinions".

Setareki Macanawai, the CEO for Pacific Disability Forum emphasised a strength-based approach building on and developing the capacities that exist at the community level noting that all local actors have capacity but at varied levels of maturity and focus. The report highlighted that of those who received capacity development support in the previous 12 months, only 46% agreed that the support received was completely relevant and appropriate.

The report highlighted that while 91% of Pacific Islands Countries are part of their national coordination mechanisms for the aftermath of an emergency, only 35% are engaged in international coordination mechanisms or meetings. The report can be accessed through: <http://www.resilientpacific.org/localization/>