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The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.

Twenty Fifth SPREP Meeting of Officials

Majuro, Marshall Islands
 30 September – 2 October 2014

Agenda Item 10.2.3: Climate Information and Meteorology

Purpose of the Paper

1. The purpose of this paper is to provide Members with an update on progress made by the Secretariat and its partners in relation to meteorology and climatology activities that are contributing to building the capacity of National Meteorological Services (NMSs) in the region. These include the Finnish-Pacific (FINPAC) project on reducing vulnerability of Pacific island countries communities' livelihoods to the effects of climate change impacts, including linkages with the Pacific-Australian Climate Change Science and Adaptation Planning Programme (PACCSAP) and the Climate and Oceans Support Programme for the Pacific (COSPPac).

Background

2. FINPAC started in January 2013. The approach of this project is based on the development of the capacity of NMSs to respond to the growing needs of communities to prepare and respond to changing weather patterns and climate trends by developing and using improved meteorological tools and services.

3. FINPAC complements the efforts undertaken by other projects such as: (a) COSPPac funded by the Australian Government and implemented by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BoM), which seeks to apply relevant tools provided by these projects to build the capacity of the NMSs on Climate Services; and (b) PACCSAP, which provided climate projections for each Pacific Island Country (PIC) and Timor Leste.

1. PROGRESS OF THE FINPAC PROJECT

- (i) The Inception Workshop and first face-to-face Steering Committee Meeting for the project were held in April 2014 in the Cook Islands;
- (ii) FINPAC supported the first Pacific Islands Climate Services (PICS) Panel meeting in August jointly with the WMO as endorsed at the last SPREP meeting. The PICS Panel will act as an expert advisory body to the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC) and consists of experts from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA), SPREP, the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO), University of the South Pacific (USP), BoM, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Samoa Water Resource Division and the NMSs from Niue, Vanuatu and Palau. A Draft Action Plan on all climate services matters in the region has been developed;

- (iii) Established the Quality Management System (QMS) – through the “Pacific Regional Roving Team” in July and support for the first training for the team in August. The team consists of members from Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Niue, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and PNG;
- (iv) Access to lightning location data for the Pacific to assist with severe weather forecasting services was enabled at the end of July to set up direct feed to the Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, PNG and Fiji Met Services. A regional training on the usage of the data will follow in October 2014;
- (v) The SmartMet weather forecasting system was installed in Samoa and Solomon Islands with in-depth training of forecasters in using the new system in the last quarter of 2013. From September 2014, SmartMet will be installed in Tonga, PNG and Fiji;
- (vi) Partnerships have been established with USP and the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) to effectively deliver community consultations. The first community consultations in Aitutaki, Cook Islands were completed in April 2014, Teone Community in Tuvalu in August and Jenrok in Majuro, RMI in September. These will be followed by Tonga and Niue with the remaining countries scheduled for 2015;
- (vii) The project will support the first Ministerial Meeting for Ministers of Meteorology to be held in conjunction with the 3rd PMC Meeting planned to be held in Tonga in 2015. The meeting will further raise the visibility of the NMSs and generate additional support from the governments for meteorological services in the region.

2. COLLABORATION WITH THE PACCSAP PROJECT

- (i) It is widely acknowledged that improving the understanding of climate change science in the region will provide an enabling environment and better guidance for decision makers when implementing climate change related projects on adaptation, mitigation and disaster risk reduction. SPREP's Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Project and many projects in the region have utilised PACCSAP climate projections to guide adaptation planning and implementations;
- (ii) Products from the Pacific Climate Change Science Programme (PCCSP) and the PACCSAP Program have both contributed significantly to Theme 3 of the Pacific Islands Framework Action on Climate Change (PIFACC) in improving the understanding of climate change science in the Pacific region. The country specific down scaled models have provided quantitative evidence that improved National Communications reporting's, and inspire a renewed voice from the Pacific in the UNFCCC negotiations and in other international arena. PACCSAP was implemented by the Government of Australia Commonwealth Scientist and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) and the former Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency;
- (iii) The PMC during its second meeting in Nadi, Fiji Islands in July 2013, *"noted the importance of the PCCSP/PACCSAP programme and its contribution to building the capacity for climate science information in the region and strongly advocated for a next phase to the current project"*. The strong support was made to realise the importance of scientific information guiding policies, planning and on-the-ground interventions;
- (iv) Some of the crucial tools developed during the PCCSP and the PACCSAP program include [Volume 1 & 2 of the Pacific Climate Change Science Reports](#), [the Climate Futures](#), the [Pacific Climate Change Data Portal](#), [Pacific Tropical Cyclone Data Portal](#), the experimental seasonal prediction using POAMA, and the Climate Data for the Environment (CliDE). Management System (installed in the NMSs). These information and tools are currently being used by countries in the region to support sustainable development in relation to climate and

meteorological services. For some countries, these are the only tools and information that will help guide their policy and planning.

- (v) FINPAC will utilize the climate futures from PACCSAP in the implementation of its Climate Services activities in relation to the Implementation Plan for Climate Services developed by the PICS Panel, and communicate this information to users at the grassroots level through its community workshops and pilot projects. The availability of CLIDE is also useful in the planning for storage and management of weather observations and other meteorological data, which will be generated from the FINPAC Project.
- (vi) The tools developed under the PCCSP and the PACCSAP are very important and useful for the region, however, there is no clear sustainability plan in place on the continued support provided to the NMSs and their national stakeholders. SPREP will continue to discuss these projects with donors and partners to ensure that any new initiatives will build on the useful products developed under PCCSP and PACCSAP.

3. COLLABORATION WITH THE COSPPac

- (i) COSPPac is a AUD 31.5 million programme from 2012-2016 funded by the Government of Australia;
- (ii) COSPPac is contributing to the implementation of the Pacific Key Outcomes (PKO) of the Pacific Islands Meteorological Strategy on Climate Information and Prediction and to the understanding of sea level change in the region;
- (iii) The project's focus on Climate Services activities in the Pacific has contributed significantly to the institutional capacity of the Climate Services Divisions in the NMSs to provide relevant information (such as Climate Outlooks) for sectoral planning;
- (iv) FINPAC complements the work of COSPPac through communications training for staff of the NMSs with a greater focus on how to best work together with the media to channel weather and climate information produced by COSPPac to the public. In addition, the community interventions of the FINPAC projects is a platform for users at community level, to provide feedback on how NMSs can further improve the quality of their information services.

RECOMMENDATION

4. The meeting is invited to:

- **note** the progress of the FINPAC Project;
- **note** the valuable contribution from CSIRO, BoM, other participating scientists from Australia and from NMHS to enable climate change projections and associated tools, such as climate futures provided under the PACCSAP project; and
- **note** the valuable contribution from the COSPPac Project in developing the climate services capacity in the Pacific and its collaboration with FINPAC.