

Climate Change Matters Newsletter

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Director's Note

Photo— Stuart Chape

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The devastation caused by super storm sandy in the Caribbean and recently east coast of the United States captured our attention as we enter our cyclone season (November – April). The 'cyclone season' though cyclones may not be strictly confined to those months but a cyclone is the time where our risk reduction actions, preparations, early

warnings, and subsequent responses and recovery capacities are tested.

It is therefore crucial that we continue to build our capacity in every aspect (ecosystem, social, economic, technology, knowledge/skills, governance and management etc) to be able to reduce our vulnerability to the impacts of climate change and related extreme events.

While governments of the Pacific Island Countries are preparing for the UNFCCC Conference of the Parties, and we note that while international support is required to build and strengthen our resilience against the impacts of disasters and climate change

we, as governments and people of the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) have important roles to play. Specifically, we must ensure that development and budgetary policies consider the likely hood of disaster risk throughout the entire year. Further, that infrastructure planning and development are sound and appropriate through the integration of current disaster risks and projected risks in designs and building of structures.

I hope you will enjoy reading this Climate Change Matters edition.



SPREP

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional
Environment Programme

CLIMATE CHANGE DIVISION

SPREP, Apia, Samoa.

T: +685 21929

E: climatechange@sprep.org

W: www.sprep.org

Communicating Climate Change



Mr. Joe Pokana (PNG) and Mr. Haden Talagi (Niue,)



Mr. Edward Parker
(Cook Islands)

A survey in 2011 found that 97% of climate experts believe that humans are causing global warming, yet only 72% of the general public agreed with this.

Maybe the scientific community could do more to simplify their message and communicate in a way that could be understood by a wider audience?

To address this issue of communicating climate science to media and communities, staff from SRPEP and the Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) facilitated a very well received 'Communicating Climate Change' workshop in Apia, Samoa on Wednesday the 24th of October 2012. Participants from throughout the Pacific attended and enjoyed many fun and interactive activities throughout the day including: learning the importance of two way communication and translating climate terms into local languages so they can be understood at a village level.

'We now have opportunities within and outside our countries to do media interviews and build on our confidence doing them' said Mr. Ewan Cameron of the Cook Islands.

One highlight was a mock press conference role where participants took the role of journalists asking questions and spokespeople made statements based on the Australian Government [Pacific Climate Futures](#) country brochures. This activity was light hearted in nature, even though many complicated and hard hitting issues were raised.

For more information contact Ms Nanette Woonton at Nanettew@sprep.org

Mal, AOSIS Deputy Negotiator, and Brian Philips, Vanuatu, present on damage and adaptation, during the pre COP.



"The workshop provided a real opportunity for Pacific Island government representatives to work through issues that are of a key priority to our member countries' and 'ensures that the strategies that we take into the climate negotiations are driven by our members themselves'.

Ms Diane McFadzien (Climate Change Adaptation Advisor, SPREP)

Pacific prepares for United Nations Climate Change negotiations

Negotiators from the Pacific came together, in Apia, Samoa for a two day workshop to prepare for the upcoming Climate Change negotiations, to take place in Doha, Qatar in November this year.

The workshop allowed negotiators update their knowledge on the issues under the negotiations, the current state of climate change science and to work together to develop their political strategies for the meeting ahead.

Delegates focused on issues related to climate change financing; how to address issues related to loss and damage from the adverse impacts of climate change; and how to ensure that the international community agrees to climate actions ambitious enough to ensure the long term viability of all Pacific Island nations.

According to In addition, Malia Talakai, Deputy Negotiator for the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS), Government of Nauru stated "This training has been very useful in preparing Pacific negotiators for Doha. It brought

together Pacific resource people, experienced and new negotiators. Negotiators were able to share their knowledge and experiences with each other, identify Pacific priorities within the broader AOSIS priorities and work together on a Pacific strategy from now until Doha. The highlight of the training for me was seeing the confidence of new negotiators increased and seeing more experienced negotiators foster mentorship with those who are new". For more information contact dianem@sprep.org

New National Climate Change Policy & Action Plan for Tuvalu

Tuvalu Prime Minister Hon. Willy Telavi recently launched Tuvalu’s National Climate Change Policy (TCCP) and their National Strategic Action Plan for Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management (NSAP).

This historic announcement took place at the closing of the Least Developed Countries Expert Group (LEG) training hosted by Tuvalu in late September. Please refer to *Climate Change Matters*

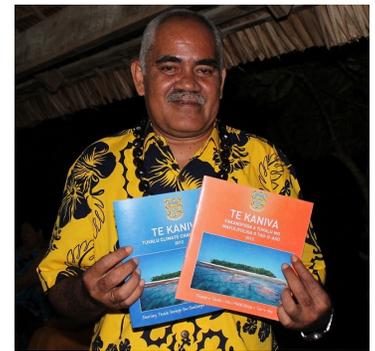
Issue number 6 for a full story of the LEG training).

The Prime Minister called on donors, Tuvalu Development Partners and regional organisations to continue to support the implementation of these initiatives. The technical and financial support, provided by SPREP and SPC, to facilitate and guide the nationwide consultation to develop both the new policy and action plan was also acknowledged. The Island’s

leaders, communities and Government Ministers were all present at the launch.

[Read Full Article](#)

For copies of the Tuvalu policy and action plan, please contact Pepetua E Lautasi at Pepetua@gmail.com or Netatuap@sprep.org or Mosese@sopac.org



Hon. Willy Telavi
Prme Minister for Tuvalu

Accessing Funds for Climate Change

Pacific Island climate Change focal points and other government officials came together at the end of October, for a two day training workshop, focusing on developing project proposals for climate change adaptation; and to understand better the skills needed to access climate change funding.

This workshop represented a joint effort between SPREP, the Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN) and SPÇ (through their Global Climate Change Alliance Small Islands States project).

The main objectives of the workshop were to increase general understanding of Pacific officials working on climate change about specific donors and the type of climate change financing available to the Pacific, as well as enhance skills in proposal development.

[Read full article](#)

For more information contact— Ms Diane McFadzien - dianem@sprep.org



Workshop Participants



Pepetua Lautasi—Tualu

New Interactive Tool for Ocean Data

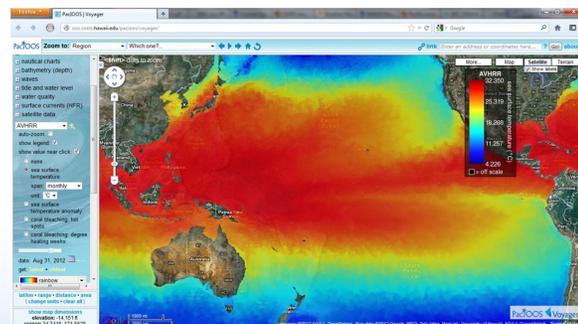
Information on the Pacific Ocean is now easily accessible via a new interactive mapping tool.

The Pacific Voyager interface (found at www.pacioos.org/voyager) was launched in October by the Pacific Integrated Ocean Observing System (PacIOOS) and allows users to browse for information such as ocean currents, waves, sea surface tempera-

ture and sea level. Data is combined from several different sensors including satellites, tide gauges and numerical models (some of which provide an ocean forecast).

[Read Full Article](#)

For more information contact
[Dr Phil Wiles—
philw@sprep.org](mailto:Dr Phil Wiles—philw@sprep.org)



A screenshot of sea surface temperatures across the Pacific taken from the www.pacioos.org/voyager website.

What happens when the limits of adaptation are reached?

At the recent United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) workshop on loss and damage for Small Island Developing States, experts considered what happens when the limits of adaptation are reached.

The issue is of great importance to the Pacific region. As experience is gained in adaptation implementation and as more robust climate change modelling is being made available, the scope of potential

impacts are being seen more clearly.

While there are examples of regional catastrophic risk insurance, these are not comprehensive in covering all climate change risks or damages, nor were they established without international financial and technical support. In particular there is concern at non-economic losses not currently being considered.

These issues call for a response that comprehensive and effective. This work will be continued at the upcoming Doha Conference of the Parties, and the Pacific will be strongly pushing for a decision to move forward in establishing a mechanism on loss.



Soranamola Village, Solomon Islands—Photo(P. Donohoe)

Fit for the Funds

On the 9th and 10th of October 2012, eighteen representatives of eight countries (including the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme representative – SPREP) in the Asia-Pacific region met in Bangkok for the UNEP National Climate Finance Institutions Support Programme's (NCFISP) second regional workshop.

The SPREP Climate Change Mitigation Officer attended the Workshop on behalf of the Pacific region.

The workshop addressed the modalities for accessing international climate funds, in particular, the Green Climate Fund (GCF). A special focus was on monitoring and reporting guidelines. The group

proposed recommendations to the GCF Board in view of the agreed criteria “efficiency, equity, and equality” that included issues such as transparency, equality, the balance between mitigation and adaptation, and attracting the private sector. [Read Full Article](#)

For more information contact nixonk@sprep.org



Participants at a co-generation power plant in Thailand.

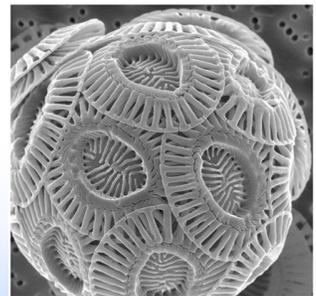
Tropical Oceans Too Hot For Plankton

The paper, published by a team in the United States led by Midrul Thomas of Michigan State University on October 25th, surveyed previous work on plankton distribution and compared this to global ocean temperatures.

It noted that many tropical species of plankton are sensitive to higher than usual ocean temperatures.

As the globe continues to warm, many of these species will move away from the tropics and towards the poles.

See <http://news.sciencemag.org/>



Tiny marine plants, such as this coccolithophore phyto-

GCCA Global Learning Event

One hundred and fifty climate change practitioners and experts from around the world gathered in Brussels, 12-14 September 2012, for a Global Learning Event to share knowledge, information and lessons learnt from the Global Climate Change Alliance's (GCCA) 45 climate change programmes implemented in more than 35 countries and across four regions.

The European Union established the GCCA in 2007 to strengthen dialogue, exchange experiences and promote cooperation on climate change with developing countries most vulnerable to climate change, in particular the Least Developed Countries and the Small Island Developing States. It provides technical and financial support to partner countries to integrate climate change into their development policies and budgets, and to implement projects that address climate change on the ground.

This meeting brought together partners directly involved in the implementation of GCCA-funded programmes across the world, including several projects in the Pacific region – these included bilateral programmes in Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu and two regional projects, one implemented by the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and the other by University of the South Pacific.

Three representatives from SPC's **Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (SPC GCCA: PSIS) project** participated in the meeting. They were Gillian Cambers, Project Manager; Pasha Carruthers, Climate Change Advisor North Pacific; and Cynthia Ehmes from the Federated States of Micronesia, Office of Environment and Emergency Management. The event provided the opportunity to exchange experiences across projects and countries; identify some achievements and lessons learned; build knowledge about the best ways of implementing climate-related assistance; and promote networking across GCCA partners.

€11.4 million has been allocated to the SPC GCCA: PSIS project to support the Governments of nine small island states of the Pacific, namely: Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Tonga and Tuvalu, in their efforts to tackle the adverse effects of climate change. The project promotes long term strategies and approaches to adaptation planning and aims to pave the way for more effective and coordinated external support delivery on climate change at the national and regional level.

Since February 2012 the SPC GCCA: PSIS team has been working with the nine countries to introduce the project, formalise agreements and identify counterparts. National climate change profiles have been prepared and are available on the web at www.spc.int/GCCAPacificSIS. Several countries have advanced their plans for specific on-the-ground adaptation projects and mainstreaming activities; areas of focus identified to date include sectors dealing with health, water, marine resources and coastal zone management. Collaborating with other organisations and other climate change projects is a key component of the GCCA: PSIS project as for example at a recent sub-regional media training workshop on climate change adaptation in the north Pacific and at the Pacific Climate Change and Finance Workshop held in Samoa, 25-26 October 2012.

These experiences and others were shared at the GCCA Global Learning Event, and the SPC GCCA: PSIS representatives learnt valuable lessons from other projects some of which are in a more advanced stage of implementation.



Pacific Island participants at the GCCA Global Learning Event, Brussels, Belgium, 12-14 September



For more information contact Dr Gillian Cambers at gillianc@spc.int

“Learning from others on how they are implementing their projects was a plus for me. It was good to hear of challenges they are facing and lessons learned as that will help FSM in the implementation of our component under this SPC GCCA: PSIS project”.

Cindy Ehmes– FSM

Southwest Pacific Tropical Cyclone Outlook

Near average or slightly above average numbers for many island countries likely, and increased activity in the late season near Tonga and Niue

Meteorological forecasting centres across the Pacific are predicting near average or slightly above average numbers of tropical cyclones for the 2012–13 season (November 2012 to April 2013). On average we can expect 10 named tropical cyclones each season in the southwest Pacific (between 135°E and 120°W and from the equator to 25°S - essentially the tropical Pacific Ocean south of the equator from Australia to French Polynesia). The forecast is for 9 to 12 named cyclones in the above region for the 2012 – 2013 season. Tropical cyclone activity east of the International Dateline is expected to be normal, with above normal activity for Niue and Tonga during the second half of the season.

Most countries west of the International Date Line, including Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, New Caledonia and Fiji are likely to experience close to normal or slightly above normal activity because of ENSO-neutral conditions. It should be recognised that increased activity to the west of the Dateline is expected as the season progresses. Note that the forecast of normal or above normal activity for islands like New Caledonia, Vanuatu, Fiji, and Tonga indicates two or three tropical cyclones interacting with each of those countries during the season can be expected. At least one or more severe tropical cyclones (Category 3 or higher) could occur anywhere across the southwest Pacific during the season.

The 2011/2012 season saw very much below average tropical cyclone activity in the south-west Pacific, with just 4 named tropical cyclones last season. The lower than normal activity was attributed to consecutive La Nina events which are known to cause tropical cyclone activity to shift further west over the north western Australia / Indonesia region. The forecast for the coming season represents a significant increase in activity from last season.

With the tropical cyclone season commencing on 1 November, all communities should remain vigilant. Now is the time to ensure your pre-season checks have been undertaken and your plans for responding to tropical cyclone threats are completed.

For more information contact nevillek@sprep.org

Upcoming Events for November-December 2012

Activity	Date	Where
SOPAC STAR and SOPAC/SPC Division Meeting	5 – 16 November	New Caledonia
Partner meeting for USAID EbA Project in Choiseul, Solomon Islands	5 – 9 November	Fiji
Pacific Climate Change Portal Training	06th – 08th November	Fiji
Household Solar PV Project	10 – 17 November	Solomon Islands
Cooperative Audit Planning for Climate Change and DRM Meeting	19 – 24 November	New Zealand
Gender Training Toolkit Development Workshop	19 – 23 November	Fiji
COP 18	20 Nov – 8 Dec	Qatar
PACC Board Meeting	5th December	Fiji