

# CLIMATE CHANGE MATTERS

Issue 10 — March 2013

Ocean swells reaching the North shore of Upolu Island, Samoa *Photo: Carlo Iacovino*

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**SPREP**  
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional  
Environment Programme

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## Director's Note



**Dr Netatua Pelesikoti**

*Climate Change Division Director  
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Dear Readers

Climate Change Matters (CCM) is a newsletter that has a wide distribution and highlights SPREP climate change activities around the region.

This month is of particular interest as CCM is showcasing the importance of regional collaborations in responding to Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) climate change adaptation and mitigation priorities on the ground.

SPREP and SPC continue to advance their partnership in climate change as shown in the Choiseul interventions where donors such as USAID, EU GCCA, GIZ through SPREP and SPC come together to provide coordinated support to Choiseul communities capacity to timely and effectively respond to the challenges of climate change.

Similarly, SPREP, SPC, UNDP, GIZ and AusAID through the PACCSAP project recently pooled expertise and resources to support Kiribati in developing the Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management. This not only ensures that current disaster risks are considered together with climate change impacts but to foster and strengthen coordination at the national and community levels.

Collaboration among stakeholders (regional, national, men and women) and integration of various socio-economic, cultural, ecological and governance aspects in adaptation or risk reduction is the 'new approach' intergovernmental organisations and their partners are using to effectively respond to members climate change priorities.

I hope you enjoy reading this edition of CCM.

## About Us

**SPREP's Climate Change Division (CCD) is made up of three programmes:**

1. Adaptation;
2. Mitigation; and
3. Policy and Science.

The work of the CCD is directed by the SPREP Strategic Plan 2011-2015 based on the climate change priorities of SPREP Members and consistent with the *Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015* (PIFACC) and other relevant and approved policy drivers such as the Pacific Plan and the Framework for Action on Disaster Risk Management.

**SPREP's three (broad) climate change strategic priorities for 2011-2015 are:**

1. Implementing adaptation measures;
2. Improving members' capacity, knowledge and understanding of climate change, and risk reduction;
3. Contributing to global greenhouse gas reduction

Please visit our website at:

[www.sprep.org/Climate-Change/climate-change-about-us](http://www.sprep.org/Climate-Change/climate-change-about-us)

## Signing a new partnership for adaptation in the Solomon Islands

In Taro, Solomon Islands, over 100 community representatives, provincial and national governments joined partners on 28th January 2013, to witness the formation of a new partnership for climate change adaptation in the province.

The partnership is known as the Choiseul Integrated Climate Change Programme. It aims to increase the resilience of Choiseul Province against climate change and natural disasters, enhance food security and strengthen the resilience of natural ecosystems

**“What is special about this project is that it is an innovative partnership approach and I congratulate the Solomon Islands Government who brought together all the programme partners”**

Mr. David Sheppard, Director General of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

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Handshakes upon signing of agreement (photo: CHICCAP)

The Choiseul Integrated Climate Change Programme partners are: Secretariat of the Pacific Community; Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme; Deutsche Gesellschaft Für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ); Pacific-Australia Climate Change Science and Adaptation Planning Programme; The Nature Conservancy, and the United Nations Development Program.

## Losing the forests and mangroves that protect us from climate change

Gendley Galo is a community leader from Nuatabu village on the North coast of Choiseul Province in the Solomon Islands. Mr. Galo recently travelled to the provincial capital of Taro where a new [Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment report](#) was presented to representatives from community, government and development agencies. The report contains information gathered over several months from consultations at 27 villages across Choiseul.

At the meeting, Mr. Galo was one of many who raised the alarm about the impact of logging operations on forests that protect rivers and water catchments and disappearance of the mangroves that shield villages from storms and sea level rise.

**"We have a logging company operating in our area. I am concerned with what is happening. It was a terrible sight to see the log pond being established that caused about 2 hectares of mangroves to be cut down"**

Mr. Gendley Galo , Nuatabu community leader



Mr. Gendley Galo

Aside from impacts from logging, the Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment report identifies how multiple social, cultural, political, economic and environmental factors influence each community's ability to adapt to the adverse impacts of climate change.

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The report is published through an Ecosystem-based Adaptation Project in Choiseul, coordinated by SPREP and funded by USAID.

For more information, contact Ecosystem based Adaptation to Climate Change Officer Paul Donohoe: pauld@sprep.org



## Up-coming event! Pacific Climate Change Roundtable Meeting 2013

Planning is now underway for the 2013 meeting of the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR). This year's PCCR will be held in Nadi, Fiji in the first week of July (1 – 5 July).

The PCCR is a bi-annual meeting of national governments, regional and national organisations, civil society groups, donors and other partners, who are involved in climate change in the Pacific. It is the premier forum in the Pacific to share ideas on climate change and ensure coordination in support of efforts to address it.

This year the PCCR will be held in conjunction with the Pacific Meteorological Council, and will then be followed by a joint meeting of the PCCR and Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management – a meeting commonly being referred to as the Pacific Road Map meeting.



All information relating to the PCCR, will be posted on the Pacific Climate Change Portal website, at [www.pacificclimatechange.net/index.php/pccr](http://www.pacificclimatechange.net/index.php/pccr)

Additional queries can be sent to Espen Ronneberg ([espenr@sprep.org](mailto:espenr@sprep.org)) or Diane McFadzien ([dianem@sprep.org](mailto:dianem@sprep.org))

### PACC project heads to Sikaiana



Photo: Ontong Java communities

The Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project (PACC) will be expanding its work in the Solomon Islands to the communities of Sikaiana this year following the successful start of field work in Ontong Java in 2012.

In the Solomon Islands, PACC is focused on improving food security. PACC coordinator, Casper Supa, says the National Steering Committee for the project has approved activities for 2013 with Sikaiana the main activity for the year.

**“One of the first activities we will be looking at is to carry out a Vulnerability and Adaptation Assessment on the island to get accurate data and information about the communities on the island“**

PACC Solomons coordinator, Casper Supa

Also trials have been carried out on salt-resistant plants from other parts of the country. In Honiara, trials are taking place on food processing as a means of food storage for use by communities during times of natural disaster or extreme weather.

One of the major achievements on the ground was the start of demonstration work in the communities of Pelau and Luaniua, where farmers were trained on new farming methods.

For more information, contact Taito Nakalevu ,PACC Regional Project Manager: [taiton@sprep.com](mailto:taiton@sprep.com)



The PACC Project consists of 14 member countries; it is implemented by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in partnership with the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP). It is funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Australian Agency for International Development with support from United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR) Climate Change Capacity Development (C3D+) Programme.



## Kiribati integrates climate change and disaster risk management

Kiribati will soon have a single, overarching action plan that will jointly address the nation's climate change and disaster risk management through an integrated approach.

The Kiribati Joint Implementation Plan (KJIP) is being developed following the recent endorsement of the Disaster Risk Reduction Management Plan; and the National Framework for Climate Change and Climate Change Adaptation Framework.

*Photo: The team developing the KJIP in Tarawa*

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For more information, contact Tagaloa Cooper, Climate Change Coordination Adviser: tagaloac@sprep.org

## Dynamic stability study completed for energy in Niue



A Dynamic Stability Study has been submitted to the PIGGAREP (Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project) project in Niue.

The study has determined how to avoid running a second diesel generator and found the limit for the maximum amount of renewable energy that can be integrated into the Niue power system is 400 kW (from a total peak load of 480 kW).

*Photo: Solar arrays in Niue*

For more information, contact Sili'a Kilepoa-Ualesi, PIGGAREP Project Manager: siliiau@sprep.org

## Pacific Climate Change Portal training in the Northern Pacific

A recently-launched regional initiative to improve online access to current and accurate climate-relevant information reached yet another landmark this week as Northern Pacific users of the Pacific Climate Change Portal came together in Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, to undergo training on using and contributing to this regionally-owned information system.

The Pacific Climate Change Portal is an online platform designed to enable Pacific island nations to take responsibility for regional information sharing into their own hands. Once trained, in-country personnel will receive administrative access, enabling them to upload information directly on to the portal.



*Photo: Participants and officials in FSM*

**“Access to accurate, scientifically valid, Pacific-relevant information will enable more informed decisions in responding to the impacts of and adapting to climate change”**

Mr Kosi Latu, Deputy Director General, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

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For more information please contact Makelesi Gonelevu, Knowledge Management Officer: makelesig@sprep.org



## Tonga builds resilience to climate change

Tonga is taking crucial steps to mainstream climate resilience into development planning in collaboration with the Asian Development Bank (ADB).

With support from ADB's Preparatory Technical Assistance team, national stakeholders are formulating a project to implement Tonga's Strategic Program for Climate Resilience, which addresses the climate change risk priorities of the Government and those of vulnerable communities identified in the Joint National Action Plan on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management.

**“The implementation of the program will significantly reduce risks to our lives and livelihoods in Tonga”**

Asipeli Palaki

CEO of the Ministry of Lands, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources, Tonga

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*Participants at the Project Inception Meeting, Nukualofa, Tonga. Photo: ADB*

## Solar fruit dryers and banana propagation in Vanuatu

In January 2013, 45 adults and youth of Tanna Island met in the village of Enanakel in Vanuatu to participate in a climate change adaptation workshop.

One common problem once a cyclone strikes is a lack of food, with people from Tanna often calling for the government to supply rice. Imported rice is not a sustainable response to cyclones and the government has a new priority to encourage self-sufficiency after a cyclone. Many crops are fast-growing and can be planted after a storm to quickly rebuild food security. Bananas are of the first crops to be downed by strong winds, and replanting is difficult unless one has access to a large number of banana shoots.

Chief of the village of Enanakel on Tanna said, “We are very happy to learn to operate our new solar fruit dryer and develop a better understanding of solar fruit drying and banana propagation.” He and the community made a special custom ceremony to thank the technical team for the climate change adaptation training.

The workshop was facilitated by the SPC-GIZ Climate Change program with the support of the Vanuatu Government.



*Photo: Tanna women drying manioc*

For more information on Vanuatu and Climate Change, contact SPC-GIZ Climate Change Vanuatu at [VanuatuClimateChange@gmail.com](mailto:VanuatuClimateChange@gmail.com) or visit the NAB online Portal [www.nab.vu](http://www.nab.vu).

## Climate Update

After a period of quiet weather through February, more active monsoon weather is expected for the first few weeks of March. While atmospheric and oceanic indicators of the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) have remained near neutral levels since the 3rd quarter of 2012, there are signs of subtle changes in the ocean temperatures around the region. Sea surface temperature anomaly patterns show weak cool anomalies have been evident along the equator in the eastern half of the Pacific for a number of weeks (see the SST anomaly map for the week ending 24 February attached). Anomalies of more than 1°C warmer than average are also evident around the western Pacific, especially close to Solomon Islands and eastern Papua New Guinea.

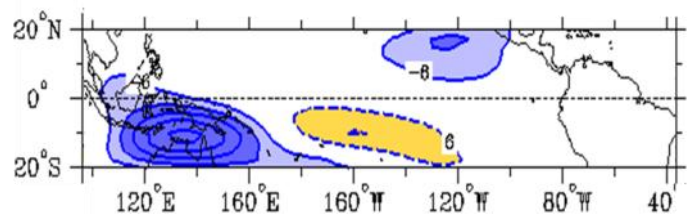
The most recent Australian Bureau of Meteorology ENSO Wrap Up highlights that climate models indicate ENSO-neutral conditions are likely to persist through the southern hemisphere autumn. While it is known that predictions from dynamical models during the April through June period have lower skill, all models currently forecast an ENSO-neutral state to continue for the coming southern hemisphere winter season. Forecasters predict the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ) will sit slightly south of normal to the west of the Dateline, while east of the Dateline it will be in a near-normal position. As a result, normal or below normal rainfall is forecast for the Austral Islands, the Northern Cook Islands, Eastern Kiribati and Western Kiribati, the Marquesas, Tokelau and Tuvalu, while near or above normal rainfall is forecast for Papua New Guinea, Tonga, New Caledonia, Niue, the Solomon Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.

The Madden-Julian Oscillation (MJO) remains active across Australian longitudes, and this MJO wave is expected to weaken and stall over the PNG/far western Pacific Ocean over the next fortnight. This will provide an extended opportunity for convective activity to reignite across northern Australia. As such, the Coral Sea and southwest Pacific islands can expect active monsoonal weather, including rainfall and increased chances of a tropical cyclone forming in the Gulf of Carpentaria and the Coral Sea. It remains unclear at this time if the MJO pulse will extend into the central and eastern Pacific. The preceding MJO wave moved well into our region leading to the formation of TC's Evan, Freda, Garry and Haley through December and early January.

Certainly the next few weeks will bring increased monsoonal activity to the south-west Pacific region and the risk of tropical cyclone development will remain elevated through to the middle of March. While no specific risk is evident at this time, we should remain vigilant for Fiji or any other country or territory in our region.

### Forecast for the next three months:

- Normal to slightly more than normal rainfall is expected in Papua New Guinea, Tonga, New Caledonia, Niue, the Solomon Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia.
- Normal to slightly less than normal rainfall is expected in the Austral Islands, the Northern Cook Islands, Kiribati, the Marquesas, Tokelau and Tuvalu.
- For more information, contact your local meteorological service, or check the [Island Climate Update](#).



**Above:** A Madden Julian pattern. Blue usually means more clouds and rain than normal, yellow means less clouds and rain than normal. These patterns generally move towards the east. The blue patch to the north of Australia is forecast to move over the Pacific Islands in the coming few weeks and will probably bring more rain. From [www.cawcr.gov.au](http://www.cawcr.gov.au).

For more information contact Neville Koop, Meteorology/Climatology Adviser: [nevillek@sprep.org](mailto:nevillek@sprep.org)

## Events in March 2013

Event	Location	Date
Pacific Road-Map (Pacific Platform for DRM) Steering Committee Meeting	Apia, Samoa	6 – 8 March
PACCSAP Science Symposium	Honiara, Solomon Islands	13 – 15 March
Asia Pacific Adaptation Network Meeting	Incheon, Korea	17 – 24 March
Solomon Islands JNAP	Honiara, Solomon Islands	18 – 21 March
Pacific Energy Summit	Auckland, NZ	24 – 27 March