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CONCEPT NOTE

Climate Vulnerable Forum Regional Workshop: Pacific

Apia, Samoa – 26-28 February 2015

The Climate Vulnerable Forum (CVF) is hosting regional workshops during 2014-15 in Africa, Asia, Central America/Caribbean, the Middle East and the Pacific to inform its global advocacy efforts ahead of UNFCCC COP21 on the basis of a more representative understanding of climate change policy priorities of vulnerable countries.

Samoa and SPREP are hosting the Pacific regional workshop of the CVF, which aims to identify an up-to-date understanding of the types of challenges, successes, needs and gaps experienced by Pacific Island developing nations as they strive to implement climate change policies across the region.

The workshop's conclusions will directly inform a Global Consultation of the hosts of all the CVF regional workshops of 2014-15 taking place in Bonn in June 2015 during the UNFCCC inter-sessional there.

In grappling with high degrees of vulnerability to climate change, the Forum coalesces around the extent to which developing countries from all regions of the world share concerns on issues such as:

- The management of urgent business, environmental and population risks
- Resourcing and implementation of national adaptation and mitigation policy responses
- Full participation in the green economy: involvement in UNFCCC mechanisms, accessing technology, leveraging finance

BACKGROUND

Despite adversity, successful climate change responses in a wide range of sectors have already been pioneered by one or more vulnerable developing countries. Structured South-South cooperation among this group can therefore promote a wider dissemination of the best response models where they are urgently needed.

While significant work is being done by National Meteorological Services (NHMs) and project partners to improve capability and technical capacity, many challenges are faced in leveraging this, for instance, through tangible, on-the-ground improvements in agricultural extension services at both national and community levels, thereby directly affecting the food and nutrition security of farming and fishing households.



Gaps in understanding information needs, training, technology, and communications continue to impede the dissemination and uptake of climate information by agricultural ministries and agencies, producers and managers and farmers/fishers/herdsmen etc.

The CVF workshop is being preceded by an Asia Pacific Adaptation Network Conference and the Regional Partners' Roundtable on Climate Services for Agriculture and Food Security (RCAF), together with FAO, which will review practical cases and examples of gaps in climate services and their use from within the Pacific region. Steps to overcome these gaps will help define ways forward to build more resilient agriculture and enhance food security in the region.

The RCAF will provide for an entry point to the Pacific workshop of the CVF, to delineate specific linkages between adaptation, food security and climate services.

KEY LINKAGES AND PROGRESS ON CLIMATE SERVICES AND FOOD SECURITY

The "Towards a Food Secure Pacific – Draft Framework for Action on Food Security in the Pacific 2011-2015" document, drafted following the 39th Pacific Islands Forum held in Niue, August 2008, defines key pathways to food security and warns of risks due to climate variability.

The Pacific Islands Meteorological Strategy, 2012-2021, developed strategic directions for sustainable weather and climate services in the Pacific. The Strategy defines Key Outcomes for meteorological services including improved early warnings systems for risks such as floods and droughts that have direct impacts on agriculture.

The Global Framework for Climate Services, developed by the World Meteorological Organization, supports the systematic development of climate services and emphasizes, through a User Interface Platform, the vital interaction and partnerships needed between providers and users of climate information, that lead to day-to-day risk mitigation and decision making. The National Adaptation Programmes of Action, funded largely by the GEF, support the prioritization of aspects of environmental sustainability in many countries, including the Pacific. An outcome has been the enhancement of capability of National Meteorological Services and their ability to deliver customized information to stakeholders and users of weather and climate information.

This workshop also builds upon earlier regional training workshops also facilitated by SPREP (in partnership with APAN and the SPC EU GCCA SIS project).

5-DAY PROGRAMME

- 23 – 24 Feb: Focusing on climate change and food security with FAO
- 25 Feb: APAN Sub Annual Conference
- 26 – 27 Feb: Climate Vulnerable Forum Regional Workshop

DAYS 1 – 2: CLIMATE CHANGE AND FOOD SECURITY:

For the RCAF/FAO section will define specific objectives and outcomes for climate services to agriculture [and also what needs to happen on the agriculture (authorities etc.) side], drawing on the following generic questions:

- What services do the providers (NHMs) have that can be customised and/or directed to agricultural planning and production?
- What information and services do the users (national authorities (?), extension workers, farmers, agricultural service providers) need?
- What are the gaps and why?
- What is needed to bridge the gaps?
- Available technology
- Drawing on experience (traditional knowledge and the observational record)
- Education, training and communication
- Partnerships and response plans
- Climate and weather services staff
- Future tasks, responsibilities, and investment and resource mobilization

DAY 3: ASIA PACIFIC ADAPTATION NETWORK ANNUAL CONFERENCE

This will look at raising awareness of APAN, and how it might better support adaptation in the Pacific. There will also be a focus on communications for adaptation.

Expected outcomes include:

- Raised awareness of APAN as a network
- Agreed actions on priorities for future APAN activities
- Raised understanding of how communications can support adaptation objectives

DAY 4-5: CLIMATE VULNERABLE FORUM

The CVF workshop constitutes the Pacific region input to global initiatives taken by the Forum, in particular ahead of UNFCCC COP21. The conclusions of the workshop will be conveyed by event hosts Samoa and SREP to the high-level Global Consultation of CVF regional meeting hosts taking place in Bonn in June 2015. This Global Consultation will review the findings of all the regional workshops collectively and inform global level actions and advocacy of the Forum ahead of COP21 with the objective of ensuring strong and representative inputs of vulnerable countries.

Key outputs from the two days of the CVF workshop will include clarity on Pacific developing countries experience in implementing national/regional climate change policies, in terms of:

- The most significant challenges faced by countries in the implementation of climate action (whether programmatic, geographic, governance, finance, technology or in other respects), inclusive of adaptation and mitigation
- What projects, programmes or aspects of climate policy have met with the most success at national or regional levels – knowledge that countries from other regions could benefit from
- Headline needs and priorities for achieving further progress and the advancement of the response to climate change on the ground (adaptation and mitigation)

Building on issues raised in the first two days, the following days will be used to enable climate vulnerable countries to reflect on lessons learned from previous climate change adaptation projects, and identify the best tools and approaches for addressing their concerns.

This will include:

- Lessons learned from previous climate change adaptation projects (with Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC) Programme as a case study)
- Lessons learned from the application of the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change (PIFACC) – and a review of the PIFACC adaptation section, and identification of new and emerging issues to be captured (to be fed directly into the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable (PCCR) Adaptation and Loss and Damage working groups)
- How should adaptation be addressed by the Strategy for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific (SRDP) post 2015?
- Identification of potential future projects and development of adaptation project concepts
- How the Regional Technical Support Mechanism (RTSM) might support adaptation work in the Pacific
- The use of knowledge management tools such as the Pacific Climate Change Portal and the Climate Change Matters newsletter

The structure of the two days CVF segment of the conference will include:

- Presentations/lessons learned
- Working sessions in rotating breakout groups
- Concluding session by a Ministerial representative of the host government, with presence of the diplomatic corps and media to disseminate key findings and recommendations

Expected outcomes of the CVF workshop include:

- Identification of the most important risks, solutions and needs for vulnerable countries of a single region (in the context of the new post-2015 international climate change regime)
- Exchange knowledge on policy response success and identify promising new areas for South-South collaboration in addressing climate change
- Promote local/regional public awareness
- Shared understanding of lessons learned from adaptation work in the region and how these might be applied to future adaptation projects/programmes
- Shared agreement on future climate change policy priorities
- Recommendations for consideration by the PCCR AW Group – future actions
- Recommendations for how adaptation might be addressed by the SRDP
- Draft concepts of potential adaptation programmes for funding
- Raised understanding of how to utilise the RTSM and potential RTSM requests submitted
- Raised understanding of how communications tools such as the Portal and CCM can support adaptation work in the Pacific

PARTICIPANTS

- Pacific Island Country Climate Change Focal Points
- Country experts on food security and National Meteorological Services
- The international and expert community based in Apia/Samoa

PARTNERS

- SPREP
- CVF (UNDP)
- Asia Pacific Adaptation Network (APAN)
- FAO
- SPC

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