

August Issue # 31 Climate Change Cook Islands Office of the Prime Minister

EDF10 Training in Fiji

Erina Korohina and Lydia Sijp attended the EDF Finance training in Fiji from 1-13th August 2015, attended by over 40 delegates from the region and hosted by PIFS- Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat. The training was very valuable especially for the countries who receive support and project funding from European Union. EDF10 Project funding is dedicated to EMCI for the BSRP –Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Project, and some of the Platform meetings are funded via this project.



Lydia Sijp and Erina Korohina at the workshop in Fiji (Photo provided by Lydia Sijp)

Last meeting of the SPC EU GCCA PSIS Programme

The Fifth Planning and Steering Committee Meeting of the Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States Project (GCCA: PSIS) was held at the Marina, Colonia, Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia (FSM), from 31 August – 1 September 2015. The meeting was attended by 65 representatives from the nine project countries, development partners and the GCCA: PSIS project team based in the Secretariat of the Pacific Community and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.

The meeting had the following objectives:

1. Share information about progress and completion of Project's Key Result Areas, 2015 work plan, and challenges faced.

2. Review the project budget, current and projected expenditure.
3. Discuss lessons learnt and how to share these within the Pacific region.
4. Review and endorse the draft 2016 work plan.
5. Review the project's exit strategy.
6. Further strengthen collaboration with development partners.

The team from Cook Islands, Ana Tiraa, Teina Rongo, Teariki Rongo and Teuru Passfield, used a news broadcast interview format interspersed with video clips for their presentation.



Ana Tiraa (top) Teina Rongo, Teuru Passfield, Teariki Rongo using a news broadcast format for their presentation

Key highlights were as follows:

- The climate change adaptation project involved strengthening environmental monitoring to inform fishers and pearl farmers in the northern Cook Islands, especially Manihiki. Several challenges had been faced with maintaining an electronic water quality monitoring buoy, changing shipping schedules and an airline monopoly

with just one airline serving Manihiki once every two weeks.

- Successes including the stationing of a marine biologist in Manihiki who could then work with the fishers and pearl farmers on a regular basis in water quality monitoring, maintain the pearl research farm and involve students from both schools; refurbishment of the two Ministry of Marine Resources' laboratories (in Rarotonga and Manihiki) and purchase of a boat. Overall the capacity of the Ministry of Marine Resources had been built.
- Education and awareness were an important part of the project, and it was decided to target the young people and the young farmers, since changing attitudes of adults was too difficult. Posting water quality information on public noticeboards, which are social meeting points in the northern islands, proved successful. Local solutions are best suited to local problems.
- Senior citizens who comprise an important sector of the population in the outer Cook Islands were targeted for internet training using tablets. They were also surveyed about their experiences and observations of environmental change. An analysis and review of the finding was published and a video prepared. Changes such as increased sedimentation and diminishing fish diversity was consistent throughout the Cook Islands. Many of the observed changes were related to climate variability.
- Applying to become a national implementing entity under the Adaptation Fund is a long process, resource-intensive and coordination is critical. However, the process creates broad flow on benefits to the country which extend beyond the NIE process, in managing overall finances and accessing other sources of climate finance as a result of strengthening national systems.



SRIC CC small grants project managed by Red Cross enticed 12 proposals from community groups and the Pa Enua. The small grants programme addresses three pertinent areas; Climate Change, Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Risk Management. Project manager Te Tuhi Kelly reported that six small grants project proposal were approved.

Lydia Sijp reported that gathering information on vulnerable persons and communities in some of the Southern Pa Enua islands have been completed which will feed into the EMCI geo-portal under the 'Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific' project (BSRP). The initiative is to create a data base which will be made available on the geo-portal for disaster risk management planning.

The Joint National Action Plan (JNAP) for disaster risk and climate change is due for review this year. The next one will cover 2016 - 2020. SRIC CC is moving ahead with delivering on its commitments to the Pa Enua. New projects being considered; are the lemon grass repellent where a young Cook Islander graduate will be charged to research and investigate the viability of lemon grass as a friendly alternative to imported chemical solutions. The school students TePitaka project for Penryhn island is at the logistics phase where materials and equipment is being sourced and purchased for shipment.

Mayor of Mitiaro Fred Tereva pointed out that the water project for Mitiaro should resort back to the original proposal of 20,000 litre tanks for each household. The Mitiaro water project is planning to provide 10,000 litre tanks for each occupied house hold.

Platform meeting Sept 10

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Funds to commence the third national communication has been received which will enable the commencement of the project.

On the Green Climate Fund which Climate Change Cook Islands was appointed the National Designated Authority, the contract on the readiness proposal was received. It was forwarded to Crown Law for their comments which has been received and being incorporated before signing.



Tina Newport on 'The Case of Cook Islands Climate Change Mobility' gave an update on the status of her research. Question posed was 'how does climate change and mobility related policies address the concerns of sovereign small island developing states like the Cook Islands with a special relationship to New Zealand in ways that strengthen their ability to negotiate their future'. According to Tina the results of the study thus far disclosed that; migration is embedded in the debates of population change and the economy re: depopulation, repopulation, labour market. Climate change is accepted but the relationship between climate change migration isn't well or widely understood. Sovereignty is an understated influence in our policy processes. Way forward for Tina is to continue with her fieldwork doing more interviews. She will also be an observant on the Cook Islands delegation to the upcoming COP21 in Paris. Tina will provide another feedback in March 2016.



Tina Newport pictured at the platform meeting 10 Sept 2015
Public Health completed the consultation on Mental Health in the Pa Enua and were able to prevent further outbreak of zika virus and more recently chikungunya. Public Health intends to shift from inorganic substances to using organic solutions in their efforts to control vector borne diseases. In the pipeline is the planting of lemon grass in the Pa Enua, and a research on sand flies on the islands of Mitiaro and Aitutaki.



William Tuivaga giving an update on SRIC CC projects
Otheniel Tangianau summarised how the Pa Enua Act 2013 is perceived in the Pa Enua. Although the devolution of the management of each island to the Island Council is slowly making head way, more training is needed particularly to articulate between the roles and responsibilities of Island Council and the Island Administration. Ideally, the island administration executes the decisions of the Island Council.

Under the National Implementing Entity (NIE) project, the Te Tarai Vaka was developed as a means of aligning proposals with our in country frameworks including social impact and relevance to Cook Islands.

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Te Tarai Vaka has been on trial for over a year now and the next phase is to seek Cabinet endorsement.



Atiu SRIC CC Focal Point appointed

Techelle Punua of Atiu was appointed as the new Focal Point for Atiu Island after a recent trip to Atiu by Programme Manager William Tuivaga. Techelle will be working closely with the Rarotonga SRIC CC office to drive on ground projects already approved for Atiu under the SRIC programme. Top of the list for Techelle will be the cold press coconut oil project.

Manihiki Hydroponics moving forward

John McLeod stayed back after the Maeva Nui celebrations to work on the Manihiki hydroponics project. John managed to move the project forward to the stage where successful tenders were contracted to provide materials that will be shipped on the first boat to Manihiki. John returned to Manihiki on 15th Sept to await arrival of materials to commence construction of the two hydroponics for Manihiki.



Alex Olah of Timberland signing contract to provide materials for the Manihiki hydroponics pictured with John McLeod Manihiki Focal Point and William Tuivaga SRIC CC Programme Manager 11Sept (Photo by Celine Dyer)



Zees of Aquaponics after signing contract to provide materials for the Manihiki hydroponics project pictured with John McLeod and William Tuivaga 11Sept (Photo by Celine Dyer)



**Thomas Taime
SRIC Focal Point reports from Tongareva Island**

Te Pitaka project was submitted by the senior students of Tongareva at the climate change proposal writing workshop in July. The project entails the refurbishing of the hut pictured below to be used as a working laboratory for students and the community when on motu Mangarongaro working with the onu.



Akasusa where the hut will be transformed to a science lab for students working on turtle tagging (Photo provided by Thomas Taime)



The proposal also includes clearing land and planting tamanu trees to create a

friendly and safe environment for turtles during their nesting season on motu Mangarongaro. Tongareva island hosts the largest nesting site for turtles in the Cook Islands. Thomas was hoping that materials requested for the project will soon arrive to Tongareva on the next boat so work could begin on clearing the land.

Our new SRIC CC banner



Ana Tiraa show casing the new SRIC CC banner

Matt Blacka from Water Research Laboratory of the UNSW, Australia reports below

Four Water Research Laboratory WRL staff from the University of New South Wales received the Kevin Stark Award for their paper, *Estimating Water Levels and Wave Heights inside Fringing Reefs during Extreme Conditions*, presented at Coasts and Ports 2015. The award was presented to WRL academic staff A/P Ron Cox and Senior Research Associate Dr. Kristen Splinter along with Senior Engineer Dr. Francois Flocard and Principal Engineer Matt Blacka for their work on extreme water levels in the Cook Islands

This is a significant acknowledgement from the coastal engineering industry for the importance of improving the understanding of coastal processes in Pacific Island nations, according to Matt Blacka.

Our research program on fringing reef processes is a direct result of our previous Rarotonga project, and without that original support from Climate Change Cook Islands our program would never have started. We are looking to further continue our reef wave processes research, and are hoping to get a couple of undergraduate students next year to undertake ongoing wave tank modelling.

: <http://www.wrl.unsw.edu.au/news/wrl-staff-win-kevin-stark-award#sthash.IUQKfymu.dpuf>



Matt Blacka is pictured here presenting the findings at the USP centre, Rarotonga in Oct 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Ministry of Marine Resources team in Tongareva

The resources feasibility study aims to help the Northern Group islands identify particular marine resources that can be developed and managed, or to

strengthen their management to enhance the livelihoods of our people.

This study is part of the EU Funded Global Climate Change Alliance: Pacific Small Island States (GCCA: PSIS) Project, and similar surveys have already been completed for Manihiki, Rakahanga, and Pukapuka.

The study is facilitated by MMR, and co-financing partners are SPC's Coastal Fisheries Science and Management Section (CFCMS) and the OPM's SRIC-CC (Strengthen the Resilience of Our Islands and Communities to Climate Change) Programme. The funding arrangements were organised by MMR's GCCA PSIS Project Manager Teariki Rongo.

Because of shipping logistics to the island the study was postponed from the third quarter of 2014 to enable supplies and survey equipment to arrive prior to the team.

The focus of the GCCA PSIS Project is on environmental monitoring to enhance community livelihoods and build resilience to Climate Change in Low Lying atolls of the Cook Islands. The study includes the assessment of finfish and invertebrate habitats; the substrate e.g. coral ; coconut crab populations; and bone fishing, fish farming and sea cucumber farming potential.

Young Penrhyn islanders will also take part in open water scuba diving training.

Information gathered from the study will soon be available for public consumption.

Solomona says one key area of the study in Penrhyn will be to begin monitoring the lagoon again so that lessons learnt from the environmental monitoring of Manihiki's pearl farming lagoon can be integrated in future. The study team were in Penrhyn for five weeks.

Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDCs) Workshop 28-29Sept

Teina Rongo and Celine Dyer attended the above workshop hosted at SPREP in collaboration with UNDP, UNFCCC, Australian Government, Global Support Programme for National Communications & Biennial Updated Reports. The workshop targeted small developing islands taking into account their special circumstances in the preparation of their INDCs. Objectives of the workshop were; to provide an introduction to the INDC concept and processes, provide a platform for participating countries to share experiences, challenges, and lessons learned and to learn from INDC submission to date, provide practical and concrete technical guidance on INDC preparation

and improve participant's capacity to prepare and submit INDCs.

Workshop format was organised around four clinics which the two participants from each island were able to attend two clinics held simultaneously over two days.

Considering that the Cook Islands had not submitted its INDC this workshop opened up scope with other options to consider when preparing INDC. More importantly that small islands highlight their plight as a consequence of climate change, to communicate their country plans and future goals to strengthen their capacities, to build resilience with low carbon development considerations. Consequently, making INDCs a political document for negotiation at COP21. An opportunity to integrate national processes to evaluate climate change related strategies to enhance resilience and lend support to low carbon development. Ideally, through this mechanism it paves a way to attract external support. The onus for countries is to use existing frameworks thus translating them into measurable, reportable and verifiable concrete actions in the near, medium and longer terms. The team envisage to complete the INDC by end of October as a negotiation document for negotiators at COP21.

Logical Framework Approach Workshop



First LFA workshop in 2013 held at Crown Beach (Photo provided by Ana Tiraa)

With support from SPC EU-GCCA: PSIS & the SRIC-CC Programme, the Climate Change Cook Islands Division of the OPM will be conducting a four day project/program proposal writing workshop from the 19th to the 22nd of October, 2015. The workshop will focus on the Logical Framework Approach as the tool to design, monitor and evaluate development projects/programs. This workshop is a follow-up to

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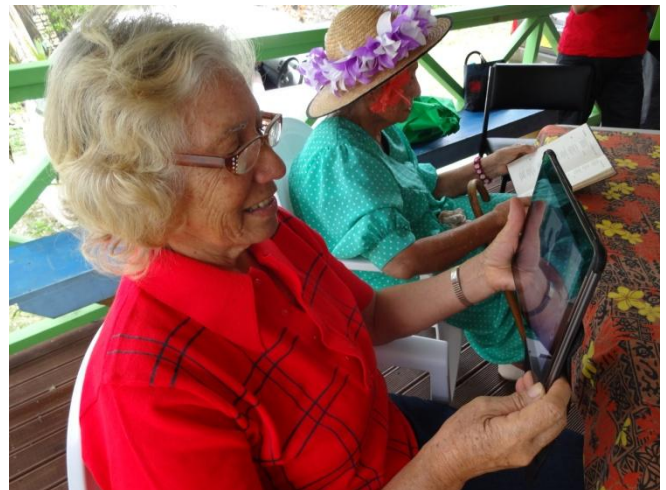
one held in May, 2013, which was also funded by the SPC EU GCCA: PSIS project.

The workshop will be held on Rarotonga at the University of the South Pacific in Avarua. Please be advised that only 28 places are available. Therefore if interested, ensure that the most appropriate person from your organisation is nominated. Ideally nominees should be person/s involved in project development or management. Nominees should be received by the Climate Change Cook Islands of the OPM by 14 October 2015. Successful nominees will be informed at the end of next week.

For any inquiries please feel free to contact Ann-Marie Roi or William Tuivaga by phone at 25494 Ext. 810

Tablet Training at Te Kainga

The Rauti Para tablet training commenced at Te Kainga earlier this month. Director of ICT division from the Office of the Prime Minister, Pua Hunter, delivered the training which was enthusiastically embraced by the mamas and papas who regularly attend Te Kainga. They were at first reluctant to touch the tablet thinking they might break or damage it. But after a few trials and with assurance from the trainer, they all got into the swing of things and were showing each other what to do. The tablets are funded by the SRIC CC project and the training will continue on every Mondays.



Till next time KIA MANUIA!