

Twenty Third SPREP Meeting of Officials

4-6 September 2012
Noumea
New Caledonia

Agenda Item 9.2.2.1: General Update on Meteorological Activities

Purpose

1. To report on progress made on strengthening the capacity of the Pacific Meteorological Desk Partnership.
2. To report on regional initiatives in support of National Meteorological Services and the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC).
3. To seek the support and commitment of SPREP Member countries to the on-going development of National Meteorological Services (NMS) and the regional programme being developed and implemented by SPREP that supports them.

Background

4. The Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC) was established in 2011 following the 14th SPREP Regional Meteorological Services Directors (RMSD) Meeting. The establishment of the PMC is a direct result of a review of Regional Meteorological Services carried out by SPREP in 2009 and 2010. The PMC serves as the conduit through which meteorological services in the region coordinate their activities to build capacity and improve information gathering and dissemination. SPREP has undertaken to provide the necessary secretariat support for the PMC through the establishment of the Pacific Meteorological Partnership Desk (PMPD). The PMPD is SPREP's and its partner's modality for serving the needs of the NMS, PMC and their bi-annual meeting.
5. SPREP has considerably strengthened its capacity on meteorological services over the last few years. In the first quarter of 2012 the Meteorology and Climate Adviser position was filled by Neville Koop. This position is a secondment from the Commonwealth Secretariat for two years. In addition, AusAID, as a result of the 2011 donor round table, approved two positions for the PMPD, namely the Meteorology and Climate Officer (MCO) position and an Administrative Officer. Both positions are under recruitment. The PI-GOOS position was transferred to SPREP under the Regional Institutional Process (RIF) and has also been filled by Phillip Wiles. The Secretariat is securing funding for the PI-GCOS position and it is anticipated this will be advertised later in 2012.
6. SPREP's work on Meteorology is carried out in close partnership with the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), National Meteorological Services and other partners. It is also implemented as an integral element of SPREP's overall work on Climate Change.

Ongoing Support for Regional Meteorological Services

7. Since the 22nd SPREP Meeting in September 2011, considerable progress on development of meteorological services in the region has been made through close cooperation between WMO and SPREP in the following areas.

- Development of an updated Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between WMO and SPREP in September 2011, renewing and further strengthening cooperative activities in the areas of weather, water, climate and climate change;
- Development of a Letter of Agreement (LoA) between WMO and SPREP to support the operation of Pacific Meteorological Desk Partnership (PMDP). concluded in October 2011, under which WMO will provide financial and in-kind contributions to the operation of the PMPD for 5 years (2011-2015);
- Upgrading and/or replacing Emergency Manager Weather Information Network (EMWIN) systems for early warning systems in Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs);
- Drafting of meteorological, geo-hazard and climate change legislation for Vanuatu, completed in November 2011;
- Drafting of meteorological legislation for Niue, completed in April 2012; and
- Technical and financial assistance to the Kingdom of Tonga for the drafting of their meteorological legislation (underway).

8. In addition, the Government of Finland approved in January 2012 the “Finnish-Pacific Project to Reduce Vulnerability of the Pacific Island Countries' Livelihoods to the Effects of Climate Change” (FINPAC). The concept of this project was approved by the PMC in 2011 and a full project proposal was developed by the Secretariat in consultation with NMS. FINPAC aims to build the capacity and strengthen the scientific and technical capacities of meteorological services in the region. A key objective of this project is ensuring that the valuable knowledge within meteorological services are better used to support the social, environmental and economic planning within PIC's so that those in the rural and remote regions, and those most disadvantaged, benefit from these services. This includes building and strengthening links between weather services and other government agencies such as health, agriculture and national planning. A particularly important goal is to ensure that weather services are able to contribute to addressing climate and climate change issues in the planning process.

9. Implementation of the FINPAC project will be undertaken jointly by the Finnish Meteorological Institute (FMI) and SPREP within the 14 independent SPREP member countries (Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Vanuatu). Commencement of the project is anticipated in the last quarter of 2012. Total budget for this project is around 4 million Euros with the project scheduled to be completed within 4 years.

Recommendation

10. The Meeting is invited:

- to **note** the considerable progress made since the last SPREP meeting in advancing the objective of strengthening National Meteorological Services in the region; and
- to **thank** the regional and international partners who have made financial and in-kind contributions to SPREP in the ongoing work to strengthen meteorological services in the region, including from the Government of Finland, COMSEC and AusAID