

PACIFIC MEDIA SUMMIT
PINA-SPC/GTZ CLIMATE CHANGE WORKSHOP OUTCOMES REPORT
(Port Vila, Vanuatu, 24-25 May 2009)

CHANGING MEDIA CLIMATE & SUPPORTING FOOD SECURITY IN THE PACIFIC

Purpose

1. This paper provides a report on outcomes of the PINA-SPC/GTZ workshop to progress media outreach and media reporting of issues relating to Climate Change and Food Security in the Pacific.
2. It also emphasises the unique position of Climate Change in that it cuts all sectors whether it be rural development, forestry, fisheries, and in socio-economic developments of people in the Pacific region specifically in PINA member countries with special reference to flooding in tropical areas, and droughts in subtropical areas, which are projected to become more frequent and intense, together with cyclones which are expected to become more severe.
3. At the outset, the outcomes present a set of objectives that participants of the workshop hope the PINA executives will endorse and carry through in respective media organisations in ensuring continuous and consistent coverage, awareness raising and community outreach programs to ensure climate change and food security are placed on top of agendas, developments and strategies in local, national and regional levels.
4. The workshop acknowledges the efforts of leaders, decision makers and executives in media organisations and the Pacific media industry in recognising Climate Change and Food Security and the real threats it poses to Pacific island people.
5. It also recognises the important role the media plays in educating, informing and empowering people on Climate Change and Food Security issues that affect their livelihoods, their earning capacities and significantly their lives in islands in the region.
6. This document is to be viewed concurrently with the resolutions of the Commonwealth Broadcasting Association Climate Change workshop held in Tonga from the 9th – 10th February, 2009, and the media round-table on Climate Change in Samoa, in 2008 together with presentations annexed herewith.

Background

7. The workshop was supported by GTZ (German Agency for Technical Cooperation) through the SPC/GTZ Regional Programme “Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region.
8. The workshop was facilitated by PINA with resource persons from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) and Secretariat of Pacific Community SPC and GTZ.

This year 2009, is the Pacific Year of Climate Change and the media’s role in highlighting this is reiterated.

9. **Key Issues:**

Experts and presenters highlighted a series of issues that participants felt PINA should consider while endorsing this outcomes report. These are food security, climate change and food security, climate change, climate change and agriculture and climate change and forestry.

a. Food Security

Food security is under threat in the Pacific. Agricultural production is not keeping pace with population growth and two thirds of Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) are not able to meet consumer demands for food and are now importing food. Much of the food brought into the region is of low nutritional value and non-communicable diseases (NCDs), such as obesity, diabetes, and heart diseases, are now prevalent in the Pacific.

National and regional policies currently being implemented in the region that the media can help promote include:

- Diversify food production systems to adapt to climate change
- Boost local production of crops and fish through investment in science
- Make agriculture attractive to youth
- Strengthen infrastructure for food distribution
- Reduce the burden of higher prices
- Develop peri-urban and urban agriculture
- Raise awareness of nutritional value local foods
- Implement effective biosecurity
- Undertake vulnerability analyses for all food production sectors
- Raise awareness of threats to food security and available solutions at the community level
- Provide incentives for economic growth to increase the options for achieving food security
- Review content of agriculture and fisheries courses at tertiary institutes

b. Climate Change and Food Security

Fisheries are particularly important for food security in the Pacific Islands region. A few examples:

- Per capita consumption is high >35 kg for 11 Pacific Island countries and territories, world average is 16 kg
- Subsistence fishing, provides most (50-90%) of fish consumed by rural households in this region
- Fish supplies most animal protein in the diet - 70-80% in coastal rural areas

Forecasts of the fish needed for food security in the Pacific Islands in 2030 show that Melanesia will need an extra 100,000 tonnes, Micronesia will need an extra 10,000 tonnes and Polynesia an extra 5000 tonnes due to population growth.

A key question is where will this fish come from?

The region needs to ensure that coastal fisheries continue to make their contribution to food security by managing to keep harvests within sustainable limits and ensuring that coastal developments do not damage fish habitats.

The emerging gap between the fish required and the fish available from coastal fisheries needs to be filled by:

- Using more of the national tuna catch for food security.
- Expanding the national infrastructure for food security by installing low-cost inshore fish aggregating devices (FADs) to assist rural subsistence fishermen to catch tuna.
- Introduce regulations for landing 'discards' and 'bycatch' from commercial tuna vessels at urban centres to provide low-cost fish (such as the rules developed by the Parties to the Nauru Agreement, a regional group of countries with rich tuna resources that cooperate to manage tuna fishing) .
- Diversify the supply of fish in rural and urban areas by developing sustainable small-pond aquaculture for freshwater fish, such as Nile tilapia.

c. Climate Change and Forestry

Forests are a big carbon reservoir covering about 4 billion ha (30 % of total land area) in the world and there are about 34 million hectares of forest in the Pacific excluding Australia and NZ. If you include these two countries, the area rises to 206 mill ha (Australia about 164 mill, ha and NZ about 8 mill. ha). There are 13 million hectares of forests loss in the world every year and some Pacific Island countries have still large areas covered with forests (Vanuatu, Fiji, Solomon Islands, Papua New Guinea). Forest degradation and deforestation contributes to 18 percent of global green house gases emissions. Forests are a huge biodiversity and they protect against soil erosion.

The mitigation of climate change through forestry means conserving and managing existing forests, reducing deforestations, planting new forests, use of wood for energy supply and construction. Forest must also adapt to climate change. Therefore we need to maintain and manage existing forests, monitor relationship between climate parameters and forests and carefully chose species for plantations. The emissions from deforestation and forest degradation are the third largest source of green house gases emissions (18 percent). Thus, reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD) is an important contribution to mitigate climate change. Reducing emissions by avoiding deforestation can generate carbon credits that can be offered to buyers or funding mechanisms.

The Coalition of Rainforest Nations – 41 countries including Vanuatu, Fiji, Samoa, PNG, Solomon Islands - strongly supports REDD. Under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) discussions are ongoing to include REDD in the post-Kyoto agreement.. Major open questions so far concern baselines, additionality, leakage,

permanence, funding and governance.

Action Points for Consideration

The executive of PINA are requested to consider these issues raised during the workshop:

- i. Strengthen partnership and collaboration between media, governments, partners in development and regional technical and scientific organisations and private organisations;
- ii. Need for media reporting guidelines to ensure accurate reporting
- iii. Help promote timely and accurate coverage on Climate Change and Food Security;
- iv. Empower journalists to hold the public and private sectors accountable on their promises about Food Security and Climate Change mitigating and adaptation strategies;
- v. Need for information sharing with experts, stakeholders, governments and communities and civil society groups
- vi. Need to encourage governments to discuss climate change and food security openly
- vii. Need for journalists to use and check credible sources of information particularly dealing with data and statistics, (sources eg IPCC, SPC, SPREP, GTZ, PINA),
- viii. Avoid sensationalising issues relating to climate change and food security
- ix. Integrating climate change and food security issues in daily reporting
- x. Use of simple and vernacular languages when reporting climate change and Food Security
- xi. Need to support Pacific communities to build on the existing resilience and local knowledge how to adapt to a changing environment, and help to preserve that knowledge
- xii. Understanding international commitments as required by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and watch dog roles to ensure commitments are carried through by governments
- xiii. Proper use of climate change jargons
- xiv. Need to strengthen capacity of media persons at all levels, through training courses, workshops, seminars and meetings;
- xv. Utilising regional expertise to deliver solutions to Pacific Island challenges;
- xvi. Improving the dissemination of information within the media sector; and
- xvii. Supporting regional organisations and their media related needs and concerns at international conferences through attendance.

Recommendations

10. PINA executives are requested to:

- i. **Recognise** Climate Change and Food Security as priority issues
- ii. **Note** and **support** the work of regional organisations – including the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS), Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP), Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), University of the South Pacific (USP) – in dealing with Climate Change issues, Food Security and related cross-cutting issues;
- iii. **Direct** the PINA Secretariat to further progress Climate Change and Food Security capacity building programs, media coverage and the developments of IEC materials to increase awareness and empowerment of Pacific island peoples for its members and source funding in this regard;
- iv. **Direct** the PINA Secretariat to source funding to fund Climate Change and Food Security capacity building programs like training for journalists in the region;
- v. **Endorse** the considerations of this outcome document and implement the Actions for Consideration and appoint regional media representatives to consult with experts on the way forward for media development and climate change and food security reporting requirements;
- vi. **Note** the issues raised in the annexes; and
- vii. **Adopt** this document.