



## Towards a Pacific Focus on Climate Change – a strategy for the Pacific Year of Climate Change (2009) and beyond

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### 1. Background

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Climate change is one of the most serious threats to the sustainable development of Pacific island communities and nations. Although climate change affects the entire world, the Pacific islands region is among the most vulnerable. The Fourth Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment identifies the following key issues for island states:

- **Sea level rise** is expected to exacerbate inundation, storm surge, erosion and other coastal hazards, thus threatening vital infrastructure, settlements and facilities that support the livelihood of island communities.
- **Deterioration in coastal conditions**, e.g. through erosion of beaches and coral bleaching, is expected to affect local resources.
- By mid-century, climate change is expected to reduce **water resources** in many small islands, including those in the Pacific, to the point where they become insufficient to meet demand during low-rainfall periods.
- With **higher temperatures**, increased invasion by non-native species is expected to occur, particularly on mid- and high-latitude islands.

At the core of climate change are people. People's lives and livelihoods will ultimately be affected by the pressures created by climate change. On the other hand, it is the behaviour of people that will determine whether and how we reduce the pressures and adapt to climate change. In fact, the sustainable development of the Pacific islands hinges on the level of engagement of Pacific islanders in this critical issue.

There is a need therefore, to increase exposure of Pacific people to climate change issues and ensure that there is understanding at all levels of society of the impacts of climate change on natural, cultural and socioeconomic systems. More importantly, there is a need to engage people in dialogue and discussion to elicit innovative thinking in planning and policy-making for adaptation to climate change. Implementation of such plans will require an informed public and leadership that is adequately prepared and motivated for action.

The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is mandated by its member governments to assist countries to address the issue of adapting to climate change and to this end, has designated 2009 the Pacific Year of Climate Change (PYCC). The theme: *Our century's challenge, our Pacific response*, aims to encourage thinking beyond a single "year" and enable SPREP and its partners to build a long-term plan of action for climate change in the Pacific. The Pacific Year of Climate Change focuses on the concrete measures people can take to adapt to the new climate reality and, at the same time, reduce their carbon footprint. While the latter is important primarily for the moral and political message sent to the rest of the world and for our own sustainable development efforts, it is the former that will consume our attention in the years to come. The Year will aim to encourage solution-based thinking through dialogue and partnerships for addressing climate change in the Pacific islands.

The Pacific Year of Climate Change will also help build momentum for Pacific input to the 15<sup>th</sup> Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC, which will meet in December in Copenhagen, Denmark. The PYCC will contribute to greater participation in climate-related discussions at both national and international level by raising understanding among Pacific islanders of the challenges presented by climate change and possible interventions and solutions.

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## 2. Goal

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The goal of the Pacific Year of Climate Change is to build capacity for promoting ***the development and implementation of solutions for mitigating and adapting to the impacts of climate change in the Pacific Islands region.***

The proposed overall objectives of the campaign, as determined through consultation with national focal points for climate change and regional and national climate change experts, are to:

- promote urgent and immediate action on planning for adaptation to climate change at the regional, national and community levels;
- strengthen human capacity in the Pacific to identify, analyse and implement cost effective adaptation measures as well as greenhouse gas reduction measures and create a pool of informed resource persons conversant with development of practical steps in adaptation tools and methods;
- strengthen human capacity to identify and integrate economic, scientific and traditional knowledge into adaptation and greenhouse gas reduction practices; and
- raise awareness at the international level about the need to support adaptation to climate change in the region and mitigation of climate change globally, to reflect these concerns and needs in the outcome documents of the Copenhagen COP-15.

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## 3. Specific Objectives

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*The specific objectives to be met through the campaign are:*

1. All SPREP Pacific island focal points are aware of and have access to up-to-date information on climate change issues by July 2009.
2. At least six (6) Pacific island countries demonstrate adaptation considerations in their policy and planning and have taken steps to implement these.
3. At least five (5) private sector organisations in the Pacific incorporate climate change considerations in their activities
4. The “Pacific voice” promoted at the 2009 Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC
5. A 50 per cent increase in reporting on climate change by Pacific media by October 2009.
6. At least three (3) schools in each of 10 Pacific islands demonstrate the successful incorporation of climate change in their education programmes by March 2010

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## 4. Key Audiences

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Climate change is a complex and multi-faceted issue, requiring understanding and input at diverse levels. The Year of Climate Change will target the following key audience groups at the regional level. However, it is recognised that there will be other specific audiences to be addressed as part of an ongoing focus on climate change for the Pacific islands region, particularly at the national level.

### Primary Audience

- **National Policy Makers** (e.g. environment, agriculture, fisheries, health, meteorology and energy sectors). Adaptation to climate change will require effective planning, policymaking and strong leadership. For this to happen, planners and policymakers need to be equipped with the knowledge and skills required to enable appropriate planning and the wherewithal to action adaptation plans.
- **Private Sector, business and industry.** Any national level activity that aims for significant structural and policy changes will require support, commitment and action from business and industry. Engagement of the private sector by building a sense of corporate responsibility is essential at the earliest stages of this campaign if significant change is to be possible.

### Secondary Audience

- **NGOs (including Civil Society/Faith-based Organisations).** A significant proportion of awareness and advocacy work is carried out by civil society organisations and faith groups. These groups will need to be made aware of current regional understanding/thinking on climate issues and engaged to work toward practical solutions for adaptation. This group may be divided into several categories:
  - Local/National Civil Society Groups/NGOs
  - Faith based organisations
  - Regional/international NGOs
- **Media.** The international, regional and national media are an essential tool for sharing information on adaptation at a number of levels of society. The media can also play a powerful advocacy role for climate change mitigation, if it is well-informed and aware of the Pacific region's overall needs in this area.
- **CROP Agencies.** The support, financial and technical, of these agencies will assist countries to take practical steps in terms of formulating and implementing adaptation strategies and plans. There is a need to ensure meaningful collaboration between CROP agencies to ensure enhanced mechanisms for addressing climate change issues in the region without duplication.
- **International Community and donors.** The support and engagement of the international community is imperative in the ongoing global climate negotiations for reduced carbon emissions as well as in supporting funding mechanisms for appropriate adaptation (e.g. based on the principles of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation).
- **Schools.** Engagement of young people at an early stage is a proven effective tool for raising awareness and sensitising communities to social and environmental issues. Good quality, jargon-free information for teachers will help to make climate change better understood and ensure that the younger generation is well-equipped to participate in climate change related decision-making. Schools will also be encouraged to participate in programmes and activities that highlight adaptation and mitigation options.

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## 5. Key Messages:

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*With regard to public education and communication, climate change issues have suffered from being viewed as “too scientific” and inaccessible to the average member of the public. As such, these issues are often inaccurately reported or ignored altogether by the media and other public educators. The Pacific Year of Climate Change will aim to address this key challenge by marketing a series of messages that will make climate change more relevant to the lives of Pacific people and thus support long-term planning and decision-making processes.*

*The messages will be framed appropriately through discussion and focus group work once campaign partnerships are established.*

***The overarching message is that the very survival of Pacific Islanders depends on our learning to adapt to the changes around us but that the rate of global greenhouse gas emissions must be reduced significantly to prevent further long term change.***

Audience-specific messages could include:

- a. **Our climate is in crisis and Pacific people's lives and homes are under threat.**  
 The Pacific is already experiencing significant changes in weather patterns, the intensity and frequency of storms, coastal erosion, increasing water salinity levels in low lying atolls, and higher king tides. Climatic changes are likely to heavily impact coral reefs, fisheries and other marine-based resources. Increasing temperatures will lead to increased invasion by non-native species and impact on species distribution. Similarly changes in temperature and rainfall patterns will also affect planting seasons and the sustainability of some crops, as well as the availability of water for drinking and for crops. The

natural environment, food security, health and economic security of Pacific island communities are threatened. **[National Policy Makers]**

b. **Improved and strengthened management of our natural environment will help reduce our vulnerability to the risks presented by climate change.**

The pressures humans are placing on the natural environment will make our natural ecosystems even more vulnerable to climatic changes. Some of the pressures include overfishing; reef destruction; poor waste management; marine pollution; introduction of invasive species; unrestricted/unmanaged logging; and destructive coastal practices such as sand mining. Alleviating these stresses and finding alternatives will strengthen the adaptive capacity of our natural ecosystems. **[National Policy Makers; Private Sector]**

c. **Together we can develop solutions.**

Pacific island communities and leaders can find solutions for dealing with the impacts of climate change if we begin thinking innovatively, learning from each other and working together to implement long term adaptation plans, which build on community level knowledge, learning and scientific information. **[All audiences esp Civil Society; Media; Schools]**

d. **Adaptation = Assess, Plan, Preparedness (disaster risk management)**

Appropriate adaptation mechanisms can only be developed when we understand the science, utilise our observations and are able to plan and prepare for changes. Disaster risk management, for example, is a first line of defence against the impacts of climate change and should be an important focus of our immediate adaptation work **[National Policy Makers; Civil Society/NGOs; Media]**

e. **Mitigation makes sense.**

There are sustainable, political and moral benefits for Pacific island involvement in addressing mitigation by reducing our greenhouse gas emissions **[National Policy Makers]**

**Sample specific messages that could be used depending on country context**

- *Better management of our natural environment and reduced waste generation will help build resilience of Pacific communities to the impacts of climate change*
- *Excessive solid waste generation and poor disposal practices exacerbate the climate change impacts being felt in the Pacific.*
- *Ensuring coastal protection and sound marine and watershed resource management will assist in building your community resilience to the impending impacts of climate change.*
- *Weather changes will change where plants and animals can live - this will affect our native forests, agriculture, coral reefs and threatened species. Conservation [all?]planners need information to manage these changes.*

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## **6. Partnerships (non-government)**

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Strong, well-coordinated partnerships with non-government entities will be essential for the success of the Pacific Year of Climate Change and will form a foundation for ongoing work in climate change in the region. SPREP, as the regional intergovernmental organisation tasked with addressing adaptation to climate change, will take the lead in this process of coordination. Effective coordination will require regular, transparent and ongoing communication processes.

Key regional partnerships will include:

- SOPAC
- WWF
- SPC
- PIFS
- Pacific Conference of Churches
- IUCN
- FSPI

- SeaWeb
- Business and industry/private sector organisation(s)

At the national level, focal points will identify their own partnerships and seek to work closely with national NGOs and other civil society and private sector organisations.

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## 7. Branding and Image

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A PYCC theme and logo have been adopted. The theme: *Our Century's Challenge, Our Pacific Response*, in conjunction with the logo, aims to encourage long-range thinking for adaptation planning now and into the future. The logo further conveys the dynamic and changing nature of island ecosystems and their role in the global community. The protection of island ecosystems and the survival of Island Countries must be part of any new post-Kyoto arrangement.

The PYCC logo will be used alongside the SPREP logo in all PYCC products and materials. Partner and donor logos will be displayed in accordance with prior established agreements.

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## 8. Products

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A series of resource material will be produced to support national level activities. Products will be distributed through national focal points and other organisations working on climate-related activities. Building on lessons from past observances of regional and international “years”, all materials will be designed to be functional well beyond the duration of the PYCC.

All products will also be made available electronically and be downloadable from the PYOCC website where possible.

Current list of materials to be produced are:

### a. Website

*The website is under construction and will provide an interactive means through which information on climate change can be disseminated. The website will provide a “one-stop-shop” for PYCC-related activities and also have links to other climate change sites.*

### b. Generic information poster on climate change

*This poster will highlight the importance of climate change to Pacific communities and urge increased participation in addressing the issue. The poster will be part-funded by SPREP's Coastal Management Programme.*

### c. Set of policy briefs and fact sheets on climate change and specific issues

*The fact sheets will provide up-to-date information on current issues in climate change, including its science, economics and socio-cultural dimensions. They will cover a range of climate change issues such as biodiversity, waste and pollution, health, agriculture, water, etc and be distributed to learning networks, education programmes and national focal points*

*Part funding from Coastal Programme (Vanuatu project)*

*Part funding from MEA*

### d. Information booklet on Copenhagen COP 15

*The information booklet will serve as a useful tool for officials and ministers involved in preparations for COP15. The booklet will contain key information on the COP15 process, Pacific viewpoints, key contacts, etc. [Esen to advise]*

### e. Media Kit (also in e-copy)

*This will include fact sheets, definitions, list of acronyms, key regional contacts, the media poster and other useful material for the media. Although the kit will be designed with media as the primary audience/user, it*

*is intended that it could also serve as a useful resource for others (eg. Teachers, civil society groups, university students, etc).*

**f. Media Poster** (also in e-copy)

*UNESCO funded*

**g. Stickers** (also in e-copy)

*Stickers provide a simple, yet durable and effective option for communicating a snappy message. A working group will prepare an appropriate slogan/statement and advise an illustrator on a suitable image. The stickers will be used as giveaways and for general promotional work in conjunction with the other materials.*

**h. T-Shirts**

*A set of t-shirts have already been produced and will serve as useful promotional giveaways for the PYOCC.*

**i. 2008 CC Films**

*Duplicate and distribute*

*Broadcast across the Oac*

*Funding from the British High Commission Suva [mid-April]*

**j. Climate Change Exhibit**

*A generic and portable exhibit which can be used at the SPREP meetings, SP Mini Games, the CC roundtable, and other appropriate venues on an opportunistic basis.*

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## **8. Key Events**

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A complete roll-out plan is still under development, however a series of events are planned and are briefly outlined here. The 12-month period that marks the PYCC will focus on a series of events and activities that highlight climate change issues throughout the region.

**a. Launch**

Several countries have already commenced activities for the PYCC and it is expected that others will take a similar lead. An “official” regional launch event will be organised to kickstart activities under this strategy.

Ideas for launch activities

- Identify national champions from each of the launch countries to speak on how climate change has impacted their livelihoods and the types of action needed by everyone.
- Daytime launch in open area as a show of energy efficiency
- A concert type theme with no electronic instrument only traditional, and cultural instruments to be used by a band (or bands)
- Special presentation from SPREP for the launch countries (framed photograph, etc)

**b. Media Award**

The Environment Report award will be launched in 2009, but will end in 2010. It is to motivate and encourage environmental reporting within the Pacific region and will have 4 categories – Print, TV Broadcast, Radio Broadcast and Journalism Student Award.

**c. Architectural competition**

The competition will invite architects from the Pacific islands region to participate in designing “sustainable” buildings that take into account potential climate change impacts and reduce impacts on the environment.

**d. Photo competition**

*Focus of the competition will be on imagery that depicts climate change impacts in the region. Depending on the quality of material received, the photos will be compiled into a book, exhibit or other showcase item.*

- Images will be placed in an online photo gallery with short abstracts from photographers
- Best photos will be used for an exhibit at Copenhagen

**e. Climate Change Films**

*Films made as part of the Climate Change Film Project and launched during the Climate Change Film Festival in 2008 will be compiled and distributed to key education institutions and broadcast houses. The films highlight climate change issues from around the Pacific and have been made by local film-makers.*

**f. School Climate Adaptation/Mitigation demonstration programmes**

*Countries will be encouraged to develop in-school programmes which demonstrate good practice in adaptation (and mitigation) for climate change. Schools will be invited to report on their activities and assistance will be provided to help showcase activities and successes*

**g. Preparation for Copenhagen COP15**

*Attendance at and preparation of media, other communications personnel, youth representation for COP15. The Climate Change exhibit (8j) will be used at COP15.*

## 9. Pacific Year of Climate Change Campaign Work Plan

Target deadline	Activity	Resource people/key individuals	Comments
<b>Regional Groundwork</b>			
23 March	Finalize PYOCC working committee	Seema, Espen, Ewan, Lance, Nanette, [I&E?]	
28 March	WWF Earth Hour	Seema, Kosi (statement), Social Club	Opportunity to highlight the PYOCC
31 March	Confirmation of final communications plan	PYOCC WC	
16 April	Campaign coordinator commences	Ewan	Bulk of work to be carried out by this position. ESCA to oversee.
<b>Product Development/Activities</b>			
30 April	1. Photo competition promotion commences	Lance/Seema	
10 May	2. Climate change films edited, copied and distributed	Ewan/Nan	
30 April	3. Architectural competition promotion commences	Espen/Lance/Seema	
30 April	4. Launch Website	Lance/Seema	
	5. T-Shirts		Done. Requires collection from NZ
7 May	6. Factsheets	Ewan/Ken/Lance	
7 May	7. Generic poster	Ewan/Ken/Lance	
7 May	8. Stickers	Ewan/Lance/Ken	
7 May	9. Media poster	Nanette/Ken/Lance	
17 May	10. CC Folder	Ken/Ewan	
7 May	11. Media kit information prepared + CD Rom	Nanette/Ken/Lance	
14 May	Media kit collated and distributed	Nanette/Ewan	
24 May	12. Issue of Pacific Year of Climate Change Packs (resources) to the National Focal points	Ewan/Seema/Lance	
	13. Schools demonstration projects initiated	Ewan/Seema (Lance)	
	14. Regional Launch of the Campaign	Ewan/Espen/Seema	Identify two countries; need in-country support
	15. Media coverage of launches	Nanette/Ewan/Lance	
June 5	16. World Environment Day	Seema/Ewan/Lance	Key countries tbd. Could be included in national activities
July?	17. Media award launched (PINA)	Nanette/Lance	tbd



13-18 July	18. Pacific Youth festival	Seema/Ewan	Input to be determined/possible activity with UNESCO
11 Sept	19. Information booklet (COP15)	Seema/Ewan/Ken/Lance	CCA to advise on content/priorities
21 Sept-22 Oct	20. South Pacific Mini Games [obtain permission for inclusion of PYOCC material in athlete's packs]	Seema/Ewan/Deyna Marsh (Ckls)	
April 09 – March 2010	21. Ongoing support for national activities	PYOCC WC as needed with Seema oversight	Country visits, support with strategic planning, funding as available, provision of materials to record activities (film, DVDs, etc)
Late Sept?	22. Climate Change exhibit developed		Could be used for the SP Mini Games, CC RT, etc
October	23. Climate Change Roundtable?		Media workshop may be run during this time
Dec	24. Communications team to Copenhagen		
Jan '10			
Feb '10			
Mar '10			
Apr '10	Evaluation, audits, follow up plans, etc		

## 10. Monitoring and Evaluation

Ongoing monitoring will help address weaknesses and successes of the campaign and enable adjustments to be made. In order to be effective it must be done quickly and cheaply, focus on a few specific questions, and supply reliable and valid data. The following template is suggested as a basis for monitoring of the PYCC campaign and requires further input.

Objective	Activities/Milestones	Indicator(s)	Risks
<b>All SPREP Pacific island focal points are aware of and have access to up-to-date information on climate change issues by July 2009.</b>	Information materials produced	Posters, fact sheets produced	
	Information materials distributed to all focal points	Website updated	
	Focal points using/referring to materials	Hard copy of materials received and acknowledged	
<b>50% increase in reporting on climate change by Pacific media by October 2009.</b>	Media kit produced	--	
	Media kit distributed	--	
	Media workshop?		
	CC reporting commenced	Number and accuracy of CC related reports in national media (by country)	
<b>At least 5 private sector organisations in the</b>			

<b>Pacific incorporate climate change considerations in their activities</b>			
<b>At least 6 Pacific island countries demonstrate adaptation considerations in their policy and planning and have taken steps to implement these</b>			
<b>The “Pacific voice” promoted at the 2009 Conference of Parties to the UNFCCC</b>	Side event held (possibly joint with MSV); Permanent SPREP exhibit in corridors Communications support to Pacific delegations/AOSIS	Media event with participation by high-level Pacific representatives; Dissemination of SPREP climate change information – exhibit of PYCC contest winners, etc.	Scheduling conflicts with negotiations
<b>At least 3 schools in each of 10 Pacific islands demonstrate the successful incorporation of climate change in their education programmes by March 2010</b>			