

Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific alignment with Global and Regional Climate Frameworks and Policies

Elisabeth Thompson, Amanda Amjadali, Janita Pahalad & Neil Plummer
Australian Bureau of Meteorology

Recent scientific literature and media have paid significant attention to the vulnerability of developing countries to the impacts of climate variability and change. The Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac) is a 4-year climate services capacity building program, assisting fourteen partner Pacific Island Countries (PICs) through the Australian Agency for International Development (AusAID) funding. Administered by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (Bureau), COSPPac is an outcome-based program focussed on benefiting Pacific communities through improved climate services. Anticipated benefits to Pacific Communities as a result of the Bureau's COSPPac activities include improved: understanding of climate variability; skills and tools for adaptation to climate variability; malaria incidence reduction by exploring prediction opportunities; drought impact reduction; renewable energy management; gender equality in climate services; climate and ocean information in support of marine application; scientific-based decision-making; and communication of scientific information to specialist and non-specialist stakeholders.

The result of increased awareness of the challenges faced by climate-sensitive societies has been the development of programs, policies and frameworks to improve the resilience and adaptive capability of vulnerable communities. The implementation of COSPPac is closely aligned with frameworks and policies in the Pacific such as: the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO) Global Framework for Climate Services (GFCS), the Pacific Islands Meteorological Strategy (PIMS), and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG). Major components of the GFCS, the PIMS, and the MDG to which COSPPac activities are aligned, include: the support of developing countries; the improvement, digitisation and recovery of ocean and climate data; effective communication and dialogue for the delivery of climate services; the promotion of gender equality within climate services; guidance for effective climate service governance; improvements to climate and ocean disaster response and decision-making; and the application of climate services to the health, water, and renewable energy sectors. COSPPac adheres to international best practice guidelines such as the Pacific Plan, the Cairns Compact, and the Paris Declaration; as well as the 'principles to promote more effective coordination and implementation of climate change adaptation and mitigation actions' endorsed at the Pacific Islands Forum meeting in 2010. This paper demonstrates in detail how COSPPac, and subsequently the Australian Bureau of Meteorology will contribute to: GFCS Activities; PIMS Pacific Key Outcomes; the Millennium Development Goals; as well as briefly investigates COSPPac alignment with other regional programs and activities such as the AusAID strategic goals.