

The Pacific Tradewinds Quarterly

39th Pacific Islands Forum Held in Niue

Inside this issue:

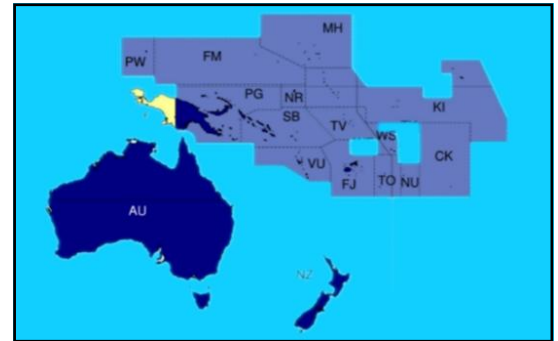
Tornado Touchdown on Malatia, Solomon Islands	2
Cook Islands Tsunami Warning System Examined	2
Papua New Guinea Climate Change Office	3
Solomons School Grows Its Own Rice	3
Climate Bulletins Prove Critical for Decision Making	4/5
Project Monitors Sea Level Change in Pacific	5/6
Papua New Guinea to Use Coconut Fuel to Power Networks	6/7
Chinese Ethanol Experts to Visit Fiji	7
Cook Islands Landowners Okay Planned Wind	8
Saving the Soil—A Plan to Stop Land Degradation	9/10
Classroom Weather Focus—Soil Erosion	11
ENSO Update	12
Weather Word Search	12

The Thirty-Ninth Pacific Islands Forum was held in Alofi, Niue from 19-20 August 2008.

Climate change was the main theme for this year's forum. Originating from the theme of climate change was the slogan "Tu Tokakga" which means "being on your guard at all times", or more precisely, be alert and be prepared to cope in any unforeseen circumstances relating to climate change.

At the forum, the first ever climate change declaration for the region was written and endorsed. This declaration expresses concern about the growing threat posed by climate change. Climate change affects the economic, social, cultural, and environmental well-being of Pacific Island countries. Despite the threats caused by climate change, Pacific Islanders find it important to remain living in their own countries to preserve each country's social and cultural identity.

The forum addressed many old and new ways to combat climate change. The three year old Pacific Plan had made considerable progress in the areas of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance, and security. This year the leaders agreed the Pacific Plan will focus on food and energy security, fisheries, economic integration and trade, climate change, transport, information and communications technology, land, health, education and human resource development, and governance.



Forum State Members

Australia (AU)	Kiribati (KI)	Samoa (WS)	Solomon Islands (SB)
Cook Islands (CK)	Nauru (NR)	Tonga (TO)	Papua New Guinea (PG)
New Zealand (NZ)	Tuvalu (TV)	Fiji (FJ)	Niue (NU)
Marshall Islands (MH)	Palau (PW)	Vanuatu (VU)	Fed. Sts. Of Micronesia (FM)

The leaders requested that the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) continue to meet the needs of individual countries. The leaders are in favor of continuing to strengthen the meteorological services across the Pacific. By adding and improving the meteorological services, they hope to make it easier to monitor the effects of climate change.

The Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change (2006-2015), which was adopted by forum leaders in 2005, establishes a programmatic approach to addressing the interlinked causes and effects of climate change-related impacts in the region. The 2008 Forum leaders stress the fact that all major economies should participate in a responsible manner. The need for all countries to balance the act of emissions reductions and economic growth is fundamental for progress toward climate stability.

The Fortieth Pacific Islands Forum in 2009 will be hosted by Australia and the Forty-First Pacific Islands Forum in 2010 will be hosted by Vanuatu.

Sources: "Forum Leaders endorse the Niue Declaration on Climate Change Content: Press Statement", 26th August 2008. and "Thirty-Ninth Pacific Islands Forum: Forum Communiqué"

Pictures from: http://39pifniue2008.gov.nu/Pacific%20Islands%20Forum%20Leaders%20Summit_files/



Tornado Touchdown On Malatia, Solomon Islands

Friday, August 29, 2008

The National Disaster Management Office has revealed that a Tornado ripped through Muki village, East Are Are on Malaita, leaving more than two hundred people homeless, yesterday (Thursday, August 28, 2008) morning.

The confirmation of the Tornado was from Sergeant Robert Kwaeria of Police Emergency Management and Special Events Planning from the Atoifi Police in Malaita

A police situation report after 2pm yesterday said that people affected from the tornado are in immediate need for food, shelter and repair to their damaged water supplies.

The situation report said the tornado hit Muki village around 9.30 am lasting about one minute and damaged eighteen houses. Fortunately, there were no casualties but only one minor injury that was treated in the village clinic.

A helicopter surveillance team dispatched by the Solomon Islands Police Force and the NDMO this afternoon turned back at the Malaita Capital, Auki due to very poor weather conditions. However, another attempt has been made this morning to take much needed supplies for those affected.

Reprinted from:
Press Release (National Disaster Management Office)
<http://www.solomontimes.com/news.aspx?nwID=2435>

...the tornado hit Muki village around 9.30 am lasting about one minute and damaged eighteen houses.

Cook Islands Tsunami Warning System Examined

Tuesday, June 10, 2008

An assessment of the tsunami warning system in the Cook Islands begins today.

The assessment is funded by the Australian Government, and run through the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, visiting experts, and the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission, or SOPAC, and Emergency Management Australia.

SOPAC's disaster risk advisor, Noud Leenders says the assessment will look at how well the public can be warned of an impending tsunami.

He says the Cook Islands should be quite well off.

"Their communication systems are reasonably up to date, they have just gone through major legislation and disaster management restructuring over the past few years, with the help of ADB, for instance, and quite a lot of support from SOPAC at this point in time."

The project runs from the 10th to the 13th of June.

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<http://archives.pireport.org/archive/2008/june/06%2D11%2D15.htm>

"the assessment will look at how well the public can be warned of an impending tsunami"
- Noud Leenders,
SOPAC Disaster Risk Advisor

Papua New Guinea Climate Change Office has Director

Wednesday, June 25, 2008

The National government's newly created office of Climate Change and Environment Sustainability (OCC&ES) now has a director whose core responsibility is to get the office up and running.

Until his appointment, Dr. Theo Yasause was the chief of staff and economic adviser to the Prime Minister Sir Michael Somare. He gained considerable experience in project management while employed by the Pacific Islands Forum in Suva, Fiji, for the five years as trade policy adviser and project manager for the European Union-funded economic partnership program.

Yasause has excellent credentials with his national and international experience. He holds a PhD in International Trade and also holds a Bachelor of Arts Honors in International Political Economy majoring in Corporatisation and Privatisation, a

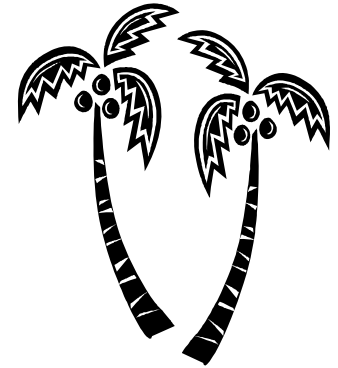
Bachelor of Arts in Politics & Public Administration, a Diploma in International Trade & Economic Policy from the WTO (Geneva), Certificate in Negotiations of Technology Transfer, and a Certificate in Project Management. He therefore has a very strong grounding on both the theoretical and applied knowledge of development issues affecting Papua New Guinea and the Pacific region.

Professionally, Yasause has worked in the areas of economic, environment, coastal and marine resources (oceans, fisheries), and sustainable development and how these issues are integrated into trade and industry policies/programs.

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The National:
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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/June/06-26-16.htm>



Solomons School Grows Its Own Rice

Monday, July 21, 2008

Saint Joseph's Tenaru National Secondary school East of Honiara is benefiting from its rice farm.

The school's farm manager, Thomas Kaoni, says that the school can supply its own rice for the whole of this year with its rice farming activities.

He says currently there are about seven tons of rice in the school stores which will enable the school students eat rice for the next twelve weeks.

Mr. Kaoni says another crop will be ready before the end of the year to ensure continued supply of the food.

He says the school is saved from

spending hundreds of thousands of dollars in rice because it produce its own food and the money can now be used in other school requirements.

Kaoni says the school previously sold rice to some companies and individuals in Honiara.

However, he says with the recent increase in the price of rice from less than 100 dollars to nearly 200 dollars, the school has stopped public sale of its rice.

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<http://archives.pireport.org/archive/2008/July/07%2D22%2D17.htm>

**"the school is saved
from spending
hundreds of
thousands of dollars
in rice "
- Thomas Kaoni**

Climate Bulletins Prove Critical for Decision Making

Tuesday, May 27, 2008

Vanuatu Meteorological Services Acting Director, Salesa Kaniaha, said the main aim of the meeting was to facilitate an interaction between the climate scientists who make forecasts and the people who use it for planning purposes.

“By discussing how the forecasts are used together with members of the public, civil and business sectors, we hope to make many improvements this year and rapidly upgrade the ICU product to better suit the public’s needs.” The workshop was a pilot for ICU Project’s initiative to consult with key regional and national decision makers who use climate updates. “Hopefully this workshop will be replicated in other island nations in the Pacific region to help improve end user interactions with the local Meteorological Services and uptake of the ICU monthly forecasts,” said Kaniaha.

The workshop was organized jointly by VMS, the project implementing agency – Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC), and project partners the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research (NIWA). ICU is funded by the New Zealand Agency for International Development (NZAID).

SOPAC based Pacific Islands Global Ocean Observing System (PI-GOOS) Coordinator, Paul Eastwood, says the workshop’s objective was to better understand the needs of local end-users for climate information, to help to improve ICU products and services, and to ensure their effective delivery to local end users.

“The workshop allowed end users from various public sectors departments to express their needs for national, regional, and local level climate information, such as improved forecasts for rainfall, sea surface temperature, runoff, and soil moisture.”

“It was agreed that the best mechanism to deliver accurate climate forecast information to in-country end users is through the monthly climate bulletin issued by the Vanuatu Meteorological Service.”

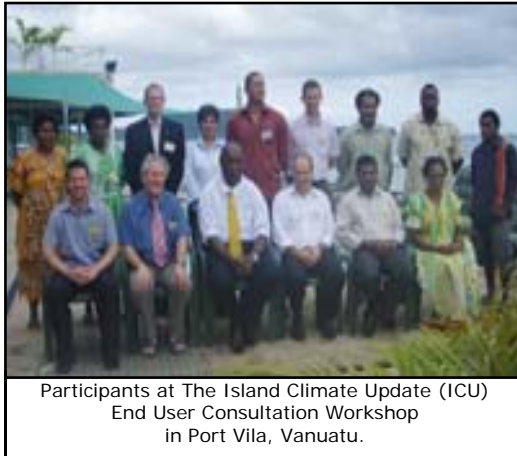
Eastwood added that strengthening the capacity of the national meteorological services of SOPAC member countries to “issue accurate and high quality climate bulletins that reach out to all sectors of society will continue to be the main focus of the Island Climate Update in the future”.

The ICU Project was set up in 2000 to improve effectiveness of planning processes in climate-sensitive sectors in the Pacific through increasing access to accurate climate information.



“Hopefully this workshop will be replicated in other island nations in the Pacific region to help improve end user interactions with the local Meteorological Services” - Salesa Kaniaha

Its main output, "The Island Climate Update" Bulletin provides a monthly climate outlook that is distributed widely across the Pacific to National Meteorological Services (NMS) and other Interested readers. ICU products and services include the Regional Climate Review, Regional Climate Outlooks, Soil moisture, ENSO Update, Tropical Cyclone update and National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, New Zealand (NIWA) scientists' expertise. More information can be obtained at the ICU website (www.niwa.cri.nz/ncc/icu).



Participants at The Island Climate Update (ICU) End User Consultation Workshop in Port Vila, Vanuatu.

include National Meteorological Services (NMS), National Hydrological Services (NHS), National Disaster Management Offices (NDMO), Agriculture, Fisheries, Health and Tourism sectors as well as water and power utilities.

The workshop was attended by end-user representatives from Vanuatu Government departments, NMS representatives from Vanuatu, New Caledonia, and Australia and experts from SOPAC, SPREP and NIWA.

Reprinted from:
http://www.sopac.org/tiki-read_article.php?articleId=111
 May 27, 2008
 SOPAC Secretariat
 Private Mail Bag, GPO
 Suva, Fiji Islands

Targeted users of the ICU bulletin

"It was agreed that the best mechanism to deliver accurate climate forecast information to in-country end users is through the monthly climate bulletin issued by the Vanuatu Meteorological Service."- Paul Eastwood, PI-GOOS Coordinator

Project Monitors Sea Level Change in Pacific

Friday, July 4, 2008

The Continuous Global Positioning System (CGPS) was commissioned in Honiara on Monday.

The system is part of the South Pacific Sea Level and Climate Monitoring Project (SPSLCMP) funded by the Australian Government.

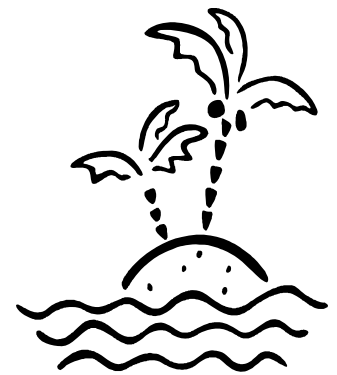
It was commissioned by Minister of Environment, Conservation and Meteorology Gordon Darcy Lilo and Australian High Commissioner Peter Hooton.


Mr. Lilo said the system is to:

- Monitor trends in sea level through a large part of the south west Pacific oceanic region and Provide sea level and tidal data and information services to the 12 partnering Pacific Island Countries (PIC).

He said such equipment is very important for Solomon Islands, which has low-lying islands that are vulnerable to rising sea and tsunami.

The AusAID funded project cost a r o u n d S B \$ 3 0 0 , 0 0 0 [US\$43,000].





"The system is to monitor trends in sea level through a large part of the southwest Pacific oceanic region." - Gordon Darcy Lilo, Minister of Conservation and Meteorology

Project manager Manoj Deo said it covers the antenna, the computer accessories and the complex.

Mr. Deo said the antenna detects earth tremors and sea level rise and sends data to satellites for monitoring and analysis by scientists in Australia.

He said Solomon Islands is the last to benefit from the project, which started in 1991. Most of the 11 countries in the Pacific region have already benefited from the project.

With the completion of the system now based at the Meteorology Office, Vavaya Ridge.

Its other functions include provid-

ing the country with:

- Routine tide predictions for major port areas,
- Provision and management of a high quality sea-level data-set, and

Regular reports on trends in sea-level behavior across the region and in individual island countries.

Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC) is the regional organization which provides technical and operational support to the project.

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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/July/07-04-13.htm>

Papua New Guinea to Use Coconut Fuel to Power Networks

Friday, July 11, 2008

Papua New Guinea could be the first country in the world to have its mobile phone networks powered by coconut fuel.

Irish company, Digicel is carrying out trials on Bougainville amid growing concerns about soaring fuel prices and global warming threats.

The trials are being carried out at one of Digicel's towers in Lontis on the far north of Buka Island.

Digicel began operations on Bougainville in March this year and contracted a Buka-based engineering firm owned by businessman Matthias Horn, to carry out the trials.


The pilot project is expected to

run for about three months.

Digicel Pacific's chief operations officer Fiona McGloin lauded the initiative, saying "if it is successful we are planning on rolling out more sites operating on coconut oil fuel."

"By using coconut oil as an alternative fuel source, Digicel is contributing to a safer environment as well as opening up opportunities for a new fuel market where coconut oil fuel can be sold both nationally as well as on the international market as an alternative environmental friendly fuel source," she said.

"Digicel is also anticipating that copra producers on the island stand a great chance of benefiting from the project."



"It is an environmental friendly product and in light of the current fuel price it is a cheaper alternative." - Matthias Horn, Businessman

Ms. McGloin said Digicel was also experimenting with other environmental friendly power sources such as solar power to run the mobile radio sites.

Mr. Horn said there was great potential for coconut fuel to be developed as a viable alternative fuel source.

"There is a clear potential for coconut oil to become a better product to use than fuel in PNG," he said.

"It is an environmental friendly product and in light of the current fuel price it is a cheaper alterna-

tive. Furthermore it is a good product for PNG since coconut oil is produced in the country so we will no longer have to be so dependent on imported fuel in the future. If we experiment with it now and market it in the right way, coconut oil could become a major source of income for all copra producers in PNG especially if it hits the international markets as a serious replacement for fuel," Mr Horn said.

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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/July/07-11-02.htm>



Chinese Ethanol Experts to Visit Fiji

Monday, September 15, 2008

Four Chinese experts in ethanol production will be in Fiji this month to carry out studies on the requirements of setting up a plant and identify potential factory sites.

The experts, from the Guangxi State Farm, will visit Fiji from September 17 to as long as it will take to complete the study.

The delegation comprises Chao Wufang, general manager of Liangxi Sugar Mill; Li Jun, Research Fellow of Tropical Corp Research Institute; Gao Shougua, manager of Mingyang biochemical project; and Zeng Wensheng; Siyuan Winery manager.

A tentative itinerary of the delegation's mission include visits to Fiji's four sugar mills, seeing possible cassava farm lands, identifying existing kinds of cassava crop and checking out possible lands for factory sites.

Fiji's ambassador to the Peoples Republic of China, Sir James Ah Koy, confirmed the multi-million dollar ethanol project was coming over to Fiji.

He said this was the one project he had been focusing on for some time.

"This is the one, for me, will be one of the life saviors for our country because what it does, it produces ethanol from cassava," Ah Koy said. "Cassava can be grown anywhere. We require 7 tonnes of cassava to make one tonne of ethanol. So that means, if we are going to put a plant to produce 50,000 tonnes of ethanol a year, we will require 30,000 tonnes of cassava every month. That is a lot of tavioka (cassava) so hopefully, all the hills can be planted with tavioka."

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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/September/09-15-08.htm>

"It is an environmental friendly product and in light of the current fuel price it is a cheaper alternative." - Matthias Horn

Cook Islands Landowners Okay Planned Wind Farm

Wednesday, July 9, 2008

By Moana Moeka'a

Landowners have given the go-ahead to survey the land being singled out as a proposed site for a wind farm project on Rarotonga.

Just over 20 landowners/representatives attended last week's meeting called by the energy division of the Ministry of Transport.

"It was a good meeting," says Tangi Tereapii of the MOT. "The majority of the landowners said it was a good idea and that this is something that is overdue."

Tereapii says he expects surveying of the land to take around four weeks. The site is an area near a ridge, inland from Club Raro. The wind farm could take up an area of around 3,600 square meters.

After the survey, Tereapii says landowners will be called back for another meeting to decide their next step, which will involve taking soil tests and preparing an environment impact assessment.

"We want the landowners to think along the lines as to what are the options.

Tereapii says they have not determined exactly how big the farm will be, and as to how many turbines will be installed. The turbines can rise up to 60 meters above the ground.

Testing for wind potential in the area has been carried out since May 2007. The data collected was then analyzed by a SOPAC consultant Gerhard Zieroth, who assisted with government's presentation to last week's meeting.

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<http://www.cinews.co.ck/index.htm>

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"The majority of the landowners said it was a good idea and that this is something that is overdue." - Tangi Tereapii, Ministry of Transport



http://www.metaefficient.com/king_island_wind_power_flow_batteries.jpg

A wind farm on King Island

Saving The Soil

A Plan To Stop Land Degradation

By Asterio Takesy, APIA

World Environment Day on June 5th [2006] has the theme "Deserts and Desertification," so it is appropriate to stop and think about this issue. Why, you might ask, as we are so fortunate in the Pacific region: we have no extended periods of drought that lead to desertification as is the case in arid regions of the world? Nevertheless, many of our islands are undergoing land degradation that is at least as serious; and many Pacific islands have variable rainfall patterns and significant rain shadow areas. The small land area of our islands, and the close link between the land and coastal reef systems, make our region particularly vulnerable.

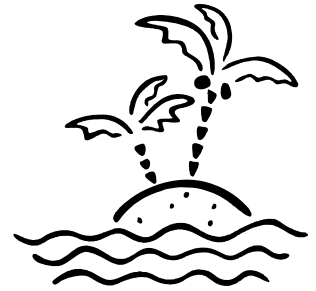
Broadly defined, land degradation is any form of deterioration of the natural potential of land, which in turn affects ecosystems and people's livelihoods. Most people have heard about problems associated with changing weather patterns, and the effects of people on the environment. These, and a host of other complex interactions between socio-economic and biophysical processes, and in some places population pressures, are giving rise to increasing rates of land degradation.

This is happening across the islands in our region and impacting on the proper functioning of ecosystems. In some places, such as Nauru, Banaba in Kiribati, and parts of Papua New Guinea, land degradation has been the direct result of historic, extensive or intensive mining activities.

Atoll countries like Kiribati and Tuvalu are experiencing increased salinity of soils due to salt-water intrusion that is affecting plant growth. Countries with bigger islands such as Fiji are experiencing soil loss at very high rates. Studies are revealing losses between 20 and 70 tones per hectare per year: due partly to agriculture and forestry activities coupled with high levels of rainfall. In the Solomon Islands the rapid decline in areas of natural forests by unsustainable logging is a main cause of land degradation. This is associated with increases in runoff and sedimentation that threaten coastal lagoons and other marine ecosystems.

Pacific Islanders depend on their land and marine resources. Many are people still living in, and relying on, the rural subsistence economy. Because of the relatively small size of the islands, any disturbances to the land can also affect the surrounding marine environment and in turn impact on livelihoods of families and communities. It is one of the challenges accepted by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to assist its member countries and territories to address this issue.

The need to combat land degradation and mitigate the effects of drought was recognized by world leaders over the period leading up to the Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992. Much attention was placed on the arid regions of the world. The Earth Summit dwelt on the definition, causes and effects of desertification and endorsed the recommendation for a specific convention to be established. The



Because of the relatively small size of the islands, any disturbances to the land can also affect the surrounding marine environment...



The Pacific's no desert, but islands have significant land degradation problems. Uncontrolled clearing of slopes for agricultural purposes is a major cause of soil loss.

United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD) was eventually adopted in 1994. Fourteen Pacific Island independent states have since become Parties to the Convention, thus making a commitment to addressing the causes and effects of land degradation through the framework of National Action Programmes (NAP).

legislation and regulations. It may mean mainstreaming NAPs into national sustainable development strategies and the promotion of alternative livelihood options and activities.

SPREP's role includes developing guides and promotional materials, providing technical support to Pacific countries and addressing regional aspects of land degradation. SPREP is working closely with SPC, SOPAC, USP, Forum Secretariat and other Pacific regional organizations to foster stronger integration of regional initiatives in support of countries, and strengthen environmental governance at the regional level.

The international community is beginning to acknowledge the particular needs of the Pacific, and has responded by making funding available through the Global Environment Facility to address land degradation in the region.

SPREP welcomes the opportunity to assist its members with defining these National Action Plans, by contributing its expertise, and working closely with other partners to bring these plans to fruition. After all, whether it's drought or excessive rain (as many of us have experienced in recent months), the weather does have a major impact on the land and its degree of degradation. Combined with unsustainable or poorly managed land use practices, this is a major environmental concern. And while we can do little to change the weather in the short term, we can and will do our utmost to assist individuals and communities in working towards a sustainable environment for all.

The writer is the director of the Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme, which is based in Apia, Samoa. See www.sprep.org

Reprinted from:
<http://www.pacificmagazine.net/issue/2006/05/01/saving-the-soil>

With funding from the UNDP Governance in the Pacific (GovPac) Project, SPREP is assisting its member countries to plan, develop and implement their National Action Programs (NAPs). As Parties to the UNCCD, all 14 Pacific Island countries are required to develop NAPs to guide on-going work in combating land degradation and mitigating the effects of drought.

Nauru and Palau have completed their National Action Programs. Fiji, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands and Tuvalu started theirs in 2005, while the remaining seven Pacific island countries will start this year with an overall aim of lodging them formally by the end of 2006.

National Action Programs provide countries with an opportunity to identify the causes and effects of land degradation and establish strategies and mechanisms to address them. These may include measures such as establishing watershed management plans. It may mean conducting research to identify critical areas, reviewing and developing appropriate land-use

National Action Programs provide countries with an opportunity to identify the causes and effects of land degradation and establish strategies and mechanisms to address them.



Classroom Weather Focus

Soil Erosion

OBJECTIVES:

In this experiment, you will find out how the type of soil affects how much erosion can occur. Soil is a mixture of **inorganic** materials (rocks, sand, silt, or clay) and **organic** materials (decomposing leaves and organisms). The ratio of these components to each other determines the kind of soil and its texture. In turn, the texture of soil determines how well the soil can support plants and withstand erosion. Before you begin, make an educated guess about the outcome of this experiment based on your knowledge of soils and erosion

MATERIALS:

- 2 to 3 pounds (1 to 1.5 kilograms) potting soil
- 2 to 3 pounds (1 to 1.5 kilograms) sand
- 2 to 3 pounds (1 to 1.5 kilograms) clay
- 2 to 3 pounds (1 to 1.5 kilograms) neighborhood soil
- 4 shallow pans. Cookie sheets with 0.5 to 1.0 inch (1.25 to 2.5 centimeters) high edges work well.
- 4 glass jars, approximately 24 fluid ounces (680 milliliters)
- scrap lumber
- a sprinkler can or hose nozzle with mist setting
- water
- measuring cup
- labels
- outdoor area to conduct experiment, since it may be messy
- a baking dish, approximately 9 x 13 x 2 inches (23 x 33 x 5 centimeters)
- magnifying glass (optional)
- paper to make a recording chart

PROCEDURE:

1. First, examine your soils. You may want to look at their particles with a magnifying glass. On your chart record your soils in the order of their textures, from coarse to fine. If you cannot see separate particles, then the texture is very fine.
2. Place your shallow pans in a row and place a different kind of soil in each one. Fill each pan evenly up to its edges all around.
3. Prop one end of your potting soil pan on a board to simulate a hill. The exact slope is not important, but you must use the same slope for each pan.
4. Place the bottom end of the pan so it is resting in the baking dish.
5. Measure 3 cups of water into your sprinkler can.
6. Sprinkle the water over your "hillside," mostly from the top edge, and watch what happens.
7. After the can is empty, wait 5 minutes.
8. Pour the water from the baking dish pan into a glass jar. Look at its color and measure how much you have collected. The darker the water, the more soil has run off.
9. Label the jar with the type of soil.
10. Repeat the procedure for sand, clay, and neighborhood soil.

DISCUSSION:

Compare the amounts and colors of water in each jar. The darker the water, the more soil has run off in it. What have you discovered? Did coarser soils have less runoff? Was your hypothesis correct? Fill in your chart carefully and summarize what you found.

ENSO Diagnostic Discussion

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Synopsis: ENSO-neutral conditions are expected to continue through the end of 2008.

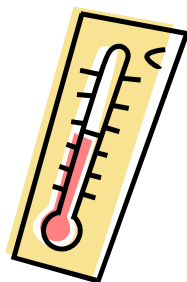
ENSO-neutral conditions continued during August 2008, as recent increases in sea surface temperatures (SSTs) abated across the equatorial Pacific Ocean. Above-average SSTs in the east-central and eastern Pacific diminished, while below-average SSTs in the central Pacific strengthened slightly. From west to east, the latest weekly SST index values range from -0.4°C in the Niño-4 region to +0.7°C in the Niño 1+2 region. The subsurface oceanic heat content (average temperatures in the upper 300m of the ocean) also decreased in response to the emergence of negative temperature anomalies at thermocline depth in the east-central Pacific.

Although ENSO-neutral conditions have been in place since June 2008, the atmospheric circulation over the western and central tropical Pacific continues to reflect lingering aspects of La Niña. Enhanced low-level easterly winds and upper-level westerly winds persist in this region, while convection remains generally suppressed over the central Pacific. Despite this lingering La Niña signal in the atmosphere, the overall atmospheric and oceanic system is consistent with ENSO-neutral conditions.

Most of the dynamical and statistical SST forecasts for the Niño 3.4 region indicate a continuation of ENSO-neutral conditions through the Northern Hemisphere Spring 2009. While the model spread continues to include the possibility of an El Niño, the decrease in subsurface and surface temperatures makes this outcome unlikely during the next several months. In addition, the redevelopment of negative temperature anomalies at thermocline depth and the historical tendency for multi-year La Niña episodes means that even a return to weak La Niña conditions is possible. However, based on current atmospheric and oceanic conditions, recent trends, and model forecasts, ENSO-neutral conditions are expected to continue through the end of 2008.

NOAA Climate Prediction Center
http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/ensodisc.html

Weather Word Search



e	w	t	l	u	h	u	l	w	e
r	h	s	n	l	h	g	n	n	c
u	o	d	n	i	w	t	h	d	n
t	w	u	s	g	o	d	t	n	r
a	w	o	s	h	n	o	e	t	l
r	p	l	b	t	s	e	r	n	e
e	e	c	h	n	o	a	r	l	a
p	d	o	t	i	i	r	i	n	t
m	b	l	l	n	d	a	m	c	l
e	a	d	m	g	h	t	r	o	c
t	h	u	n	d	e	r	n	n	n

- clouds
- rain
- storm
- rainbow
- hot
- cold
- wind
- thunder
- lightning
- hail
- temperature
- snow



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