

Second Meeting of the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC-2)

1-5 July 2013
Nadi
Fiji Islands

Agenda Item 8.1: **The role of the Pacific within the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission of UNESCO**

Purpose

1. To note the benefits of interaction with the Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO, and lack of involvement by Pacific Island States.
2. To encourage more participation of PMC members in the IOC structure and decision making process.

Background

3. The Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) of UNESCO is the intergovernmental organisation and UN focal point for marine science, ocean observations, ocean data and information exchange, and ocean services such as Tsunami warning systems.
4. Most PMC members who have the international status to also be IOC members have already joined the IOC, with the exception of;
Nauru, Vanuatu, Federated States of Micronesia, Marshall Islands and Palau.
All of these countries are members of UNESCO.
5. Membership of IOC is zero-cost if a country is already a Member of UNESCO.
6. Activities of IOC include:
 - Warnings and protection from marine hazards, including the Pacific Tsunami Warning and Mitigation (PTWS) which has been functioning under IOC since 1965,
 - Capacity building initiatives to strengthen scientific, legal and institutional structures for marine and coastal science,
 - Management of the Global Ocean Observing System (GOOS), which is our eyes and ears on the ocean which surrounds the Pacific Islands,
 - Coordination of research on climate change and variability,
 - Support for the sustainable development of coastal and ocean environment resources.
7. The IOC works closely with the WMO, primarily through the Joint Technical Commission on Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM see www.jcomm.info).

8. While IOC receives its core resources from UNESCO, it has its own governing body including an Executive Council which, among other things, deals with the programme and budget of the organization.
9. There is a distinct lack of Pacific Islands' representation on the IOC Executive Council. The Pacific Islands are part of electoral group IV (Asia-Pacific). The current group IV representatives are:
Republic of Korea (Chair), Australia, China, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Japan, Malaysia and Thailand
10. Tsunamis:
 - a. The ICG/PTWS strategy and work plan is driven by Technical¹ and Regional (including Southwest Pacific) Working Groups.
 - b. A PTWS Southwest Pacific Seismic Data Sharing Task Team focuses on the sharing of real-time seismic data to support tsunami warning. Membership is open to all PMC countries, but very few have formally designated members.
 - c. The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) will implement new tsunami forecast products for PTWS countries in 2014² which all countries should benefit from, thus reducing uncertainties that are associated with the present warning system.

Recommendations

The meeting is invited to

1. **Request** those PMC members who are not IOC members to encourage their governments to join.
2. **Advocate** PMC members to increase Pacific Island representation on the IOC Executive Committee and involvement in working groups (e.g. tsunami).

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¹ The technical groups are: Risk Assessment and Reduction; Detection, Warning and Dissemination; Awareness and Response.

² Further details are in PMC paper to the joint DRM / PMC meeting: 6.5.1: *PTWC Enhanced Products for the PTWS*.