

Climate and Oceans Monitoring and Prediction (COMP)

Pacific Islands - Online Climate Outlook Forum No. 122 Summary Report

Date: Tuesday 14 November 2017

Time: Australian Eastern Daylight Time 12:00PM (01:00 UTC)

Chair: Samoa

Apologies: Tuvalu, Marshall Islands, Solomon Islands

Main purpose for the OCOF:

- To provide a regular forum for the 11 participating PIC NMSs to discuss the current ENSO status, recent one and three-month rainfall, drought (if present) and their seasonal climate outlooks with other countries and the COMP (Bureau of Meteorology and SPREP) project team.

In addition, it serves as an online training forum for recent SCOPIC* development and gives the project team and the NMSs an opportunity to discuss other project related matters.

Agenda:

1. Brief introduction of PIC participants, SPREP and Bureau of Meteorology teams.
2. Brief report on current ENSO status.
3. Each NMS report on their past one and three months' rainfall in relation to the current ENSO situation (include ranking and verification), and their three-month outlooks. Wherever appropriate NMS to report on their drought status.
4. Round-table discussion: addressing general concerns/queries on outlooks and SCOPIC*.
5. Feedback on COSPPac products and services.
6. Country statements with regards to drought or drought-like conditions, drought module issues/concerns.
7. The next OCOF will be held on 12 December 2017 (TBC). To be chaired by Solomon Islands

Participants:

The Forum was attended by 17 climate officers (10 female) from 7 partner PIC NMSs.

Cook Islands: Bates Nitoro Manea

Fiji: Arieta Baleisolomone, Swastika Prasad

Kiribati: Kamaitia Rubetaake, Mauna Eria

Niue: Hingano Laufoli, Clemencia

Papua New Guinea: Kisolet Posanau, Kila Kila

Republic of Marshall Islands:

Samoa: Faapisa Aiono, Junior Lepale, Mattaniah Salesa, Vaueli Su'a and Nuutofi Palemia.

Solomon Islands:

Tonga: Seluvaia Finaulahi

Tuvalu:

Vanuatu: Kalsuak Gordon, Peter Feke

* Seasonal Climate Outlooks in the Pacific Island Countries: climate prediction software developed under the PI-CPP.

Australian Aid Project: Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac)

Australia: Grant Beard

SPREP: Philip Malsale

OCOF tables were received from 10 participating countries before the meeting.

Observations and Verification of August to October 2017 outlooks:

Observed rainfall for the one and three-month periods ending October 2017 were discussed for each PIC. This month, several countries experienced extreme rainfall as shown in the following table:

Station	Period	Rainfall Amount (mm)	Rainfall Rank	Years of record
Rarotonga, Cook Islands	August-October	172.3	11	119
Penang Mill, Fiji	October	7.1	4	108
Rotuma, Fiji	October	625.1	100	103
Penang Mill, Fiji	August-October	84.4	8	107
Lautoka Mill, Fiji	August-October	55.3	8	118
Kiritimati, Kiribati	August-October	6.9	8	92
Port Moresby, PNG	October	113.2	115	120
Port Moresby, PNG	August-October	155.6	96	105
Niuafu'ou, Tonga	October	550.2	45	45
Niutoputapu, Tonga	October	379.6	62	68
Niuafu'ou, Tonga	August-October	848.2	43	45
Whitegrass, Vanuatu	October	157.1	43	46

[Note: The above data may not have undergone quality control]

Validation of forecasts with observed rainfall for the August to October period showed 28 consistent, 37 near-consistent and 26 inconsistent outlooks (49 stations across 10 countries).

A summary of results (C-consistent, NC-Near Consistent, I-Inconsistent, N/A-not available) for each country is as follows:

Cook Islands (1C, 1I); Fiji (6C, 5NC, 1I); Kiribati (3NC, 1I); Niue (1I); PNG (2C, 3NC, 2I); RMI (1NC, 1I); Samoa (1NC, 3I); Tonga (1C, 1NC, 4I) and Vanuatu (5C, 2NC).

Overall: 15C, 20NC, 14I.

December 2017 to February 2018 Outlooks:

SCOPIC outlooks: 0% of the 53 stations have their highest probability in tercile 1, 8% in tercile 2 and 4% in tercile 3. Forty seven percent have near-equal probabilities in two terciles and 42% had near-equal probabilities in three terciles.

POAMA outlooks: 25% of the 44 stations have their highest probability in tercile 1, 0% in tercile 2 and 73% in tercile 3. Two percent have near-equal probabilities in two terciles, while 0% have near-equal probabilities in three terciles.

Other matters:

Observed Rainfall and Validation

Country	October 2017	August to October 2017	Verification[†] for August to October 2017 outlooks
Cook Islands	Normal	Below Normal	Consistent and inconsistent
Fiji	Below normal to Above normal	Below normal to above normal	Mostly consistent or near-consistent
Kiribati	Below normal to normal	Below normal to above normal	Mainly near-consistent
RMI	Normal and above normal	Above normal	Near-consistent and inconsistent
Niue	Normal	Above normal	Inconsistent
Papua New Guinea	Below normal to above normal	Below normal to above normal	Consistent to inconsistent
Samoa	Normal to above normal	Normal to above normal	Mostly inconsistent
Tonga	Below normal to above normal	Normal to above normal	Mostly inconsistent
Tuvalu	Normal to above normal	Normal	Near-consistent
Vanuatu	Below normal to above normal	Below normal to normal	Consistent to near-consistent

[†] Forecast is consistent when observed and predicted (tercile with the highest probability) categories coincide (are in the same tercile).

Forecast is near-consistent when observed and predicted (tercile with the highest probability) differ by only one category (i.e. terciles 1 and 2 or terciles 2 and 3).

Forecast is inconsistent when observed and predicted (tercile with the highest probability) differ by two categories (i.e. terciles 1 and 3).