Climate and Oceans Monitoring and Prediction (COMP)

Pacific Islands - Online Climate Outlook Forum No. 113 Summary Report

Date: Tuesday 14 February 2017

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

Chair: Bureau of Meteorology

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 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 and the Bureau team.
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. Next meeting (Tuesday 14 March - TBC) to be chaired by Tonga.

Participants:

The Forum was attended by 16 climate officers (9 female) from 8 partner PIC NMSs.

Cook Islands: Arona Ngari, Bates Manea

Fiji: Bipen Prakash, Arieta Baleisolomone, Swastika Prasad

Kiribati: Kamaitia Rubewtaake, Mauna Eria

Niue: Rossy Mitiepo, Hingano Laufoli, Robert Togiamana, Clemencia Sioneholo

Papua New Guinea: Kisolel Posanau, Kila Kila

Republic of Marshall Islands: Nover Juria

Samoa: (Junior Lepale and Vaueli Su'a were ready to participate but the phone connection failed)

Solomon Islands: Noel Sanau (Chair)

Tonga: Uinita Vea

Tuvalu:

Vanuatu:

Australia: Grant Beard, Simon McGree (Bureau of Meteorology)

OCOF tables were received from 9 participating countries before the meeting.

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

Observations and Verification of November 2016 to January 2017 outlooks:

Observed rainfall for the one and three-month periods ending January 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	Year of record
Butaritari, Kiribati	Nov-Jan	215.1	4	76
Kiritimati, Kiribati	Nov-Jan	9.7	7	75
Majuro, Marshall Islands	Jan	448.3	61	63
Majuro, Marshall Islands	Nov-Jan	1188.2	61	63
Kwajalein, Marshall Islands	Jan	228.6	66	71
Kwajalein, Marshall Islands	Nov-Jan	851.4	67	71
Taro, Solomon Islands	Nov-Jan	1156	37	37

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

Validation of forecasts with observed rainfall for the November to January period showed 21 consistent, 17 near-consistent and 8 inconsistent outlooks (46 stations across 10 countries).

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

Cook Islands (2NC); Fiji (8C, 2NC); Kiribati (4C, 1NC); Niue (1NC); PNG (1C, 2NC, 1I); RMI (1C, 1NC); Samoa (3NC, 1I); Solomon Islands (3C, 3NC, 1I); Tonga (2NC, 4I), Tuvalu (4C) and Vanuatu (NA).

Overall: 21C, 17NC, 8I.

March to May 2017 Outlooks:

SCOPIC outlooks: 13% of the 53 stations outlooks had the highest probabilities in tercile 1, 4% in tercile 2 and 9% in tercile 3. Of the remainder, 45% had near-equal probabilities in three terciles and 28% had near-equal probabilities in two terciles.

POAMA outlooks: Only five countries provided completed POAMA tables this month: Cook Islands, Kiribati, RMI, Niue, Solomon Islands and Tonga. 29% of the 21 stations outlooks had the highest probabilities in tercile 1, 10% in tercile 2 and 52% in tercile 3. Nine percent had near-equal probabilities in three terciles or near-equal probabilities in two terciles.

Other matters:

Observed Rainfall and Validation

Country	January 2016	November 2016 to January 2017	Verification† for November 2016 to January 2017 outlooks
Cook Islands	Normal at Penrhyn and below normal at Rarotonga	Below normal at Penrhyn and above normal at Rarotonga	Near-consistent
Fiji	Below normal and normal. Above normal at Vunisea	Normal and above normal	Consistent to near-consistent
Kiribati	Below normal to normal	Below normal	Consistent to near-consistent
RMI	Above normal	Above normal	Consistent and near-consistent
Niue	Above normal	Normal	Near-consistent
Papua New Guinea	Below normal to above normal	Normal to above normal	Consistent to inconsistent
Samoa	Below normal. Normal at Apia	Below normal. Normal at Apia	Near-consistent. Inconsistent for Apia
Solomon Islands	Normal and above normal. Below normal at Auki	Normal and above normal. Below normal at Auki	Consistent and near-consistent. Inconsistent at Auki
Tonga	Below normal. Normal at Ha'apai	Below normal and normal	Near-consistent and inconsistent
Tuvalu	Below normal to above normal	Below normal. Above normal at Niulakita	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).