Climate and Oceans Monitoring and Prediction (COMP)

Pacific Islands - Online Climate Outlook Forum No. 124
Summary Report

Date: Thursday 18 January 2018

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

Chair: SPREP

Apologies: PNG

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 Tuesday 13 February 2018. To be chaired by Tuvalu.

Participants:

The Forum was attended by 18 climate officers (9 female) from 9 partner PIC NMSs.

Cook Islands: Bates Manea

Fiji: Arieta Baleisolomone, Bipendra Prakash and Swastika Prasad

Kiribati: Kamaitia Rubetaake, Mwata Keariki and Mauna Eria.

Niue: Sean Tukutama, Clemencia Sioneholo and Rossylyn Mitiepo

Papua New Guinea:

Republic of Marshall Islands: Samson Kaneko.

Samoa: Tile Tofaeono, Faapisa Aiono, Vaueli Su'a, Mattaniah Salesa, Kotoni Faasau and Nuutofi Palemia.

Solomon Islands: Problems with connection

Tuvalu: No answer

Vanuatu: Moirah Yerta

Australia: Grant Beard

SPREP: Sunny Seuseu

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

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

Observations and Verification of October to December 2017 outlooks:

Observed rainfall for the one and three-month periods ending December 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
Suva, Fiji	Oct-Dec	1223.0	70	76
Navua, Fiji	Oct-Dec	1455.9	68	72
Majuro, Marshall Islands	December	497.6	62	64
Faleolo, Samoa	December	437.9	51	56
Apia, Samoa	Oct-Dec	1137.8	124	127
Faleolo, Samoa	Oct-Dec	991.3	52	55
Auki, Solomon Islands	December	525	50	54
Henderson, Solomon Islands	December	445	40	43
Kirakira, Solomon Islands	December	550	46	50
Kirakira, Solomon Islands	Oct-Dec	1060	44	49
Lata, Solomon Islands	Oct-Dec	1604	42	43
Niuafo'ou, Tonga	Oct-Dec	1225.1	43	43
Niuatoputapu, Tonga	Oct-Dec	1143.5	64	66

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

Validation of forecasts with observed rainfall for the October to December period showed a distinct improvement over the preceding September to November period, with only two inconsistent outlooks. This was due to a more reliable La Niña signal. The final tally was 13 consistent, 33 near-consistent and 2 inconsistent outlooks (48 stations across 10 countries).

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

Cook Islands (1NC, 1In); Fiji (4C, 7NC); Kiribati (1C, 3NC); Niue (1NC); PNG (NA); RMI (1C,1NC); Samoa (3NC, 1In); Solomon Islands (2C, 5NC); Tonga (1C, 5NC) and Vanuatu (3C, 4NC).

Overall: 13C, 33NC, 1In.

February to April 2018 Outlooks:

With a La Niña (albeit weak) now established, outlooks from SCOPIC and POAMA have shifted towards above average rainfall in a clear majority of southwest Pacific countries. The exceptions are those countries close to the equator in the central Pacific or near the Date Line, notably Kiribati and Tuvalu.

SCOPIC outlooks: 35% of the 51 stations have their highest probability in tercile 3, while only 16% have the highest probability in tercile 1. Of the remaining 49%, 24% have near-equal probabilities in three terciles and 22% have near-equal probabilities in two terciles. Two sites have their highest probability in tercile 2.

POAMA outlooks: 65% of the 40 stations have their highest probability in tercile 3 and 30% have the highest probability in tercile 1. The two remaining stations have near-equal probabilities in three terciles.

Other matters:

<u>Observed Rainfall and Validation</u>

Country	November 2017	September to November 2017	Verification[†] for September to November 2017 outlooks
Cook Islands	Normal to above normal	Normal to below Normal	Mixed: Inconsistent and near-consistent
Fiji	Mostly normal to below normal	Mainly Normal to above normal	Near-consistent and consistent
Kiribati	Normal to below normal	Mainly below normal	Mostly near-consistent
RMI	Mixed: Below normal and above normal	Mixed: Below normal and above normal	Consistent and near-consistent
Niue	Normal	Above normal	Near-consistent
Papua New Guinea			
Samoa	Above normal	Above normal	Mostly near-consistent
Solomon Islands	Mostly above normal.	Mostly above normal	Consistent to near-consistent
Tonga	Normal to above normal	Mainly normal to above normal	Mainly near-consistent
Tuvalu	Normal to above normal	Mainly normal	Mainly near-consistent
Vanuatu	Mainly normal to above normal	Mixed: Below normal to above normal	Consistent to near-consistent

[†] Forecast is <u>consistent</u> when observed and predicted (tercile with the highest probability) categories coincide (are in the same tercile).
Forecast is <u>near-consistent</u> 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 <u>inconsistent</u> when observed and predicted (tercile with the highest probability) differ by two categories (i.e. terciles 1 and 3).