Climate and Oceans Monitoring and Prediction (COMP)

Pacific Islands - Online Climate Outlook Forum No. 126
Summary Report

Date: Wednesday 14 March 2018

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

Chair: Vanuatu

Apologies: Tuvalu

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 11 or 18 April 2018 (TBC). To be chaired by Republic of Marshall Islands

Participants:

The Forum was attended by 24 climate officers (8 female) from 10 partner PIC NMSs.

Cook Islands: Bates Nitoro Manea and Tinomana Naea

Fiji: Bipen Prakash

Kiribati: Kamaitia Rubetaake

Niue: Clemencia Sioneholo, Rossy Mitiepo, Sean Tukutama and Floyd Viliamu

Papua New Guinea: Kisolel Posanau, Kila Kila and Gabriel Tuno

Republic of Marshall Islands: Samson Kanenko and Nover Juria

Samoa: Kotoni Faasau, Junior Lepale, Mattaniah Salesa and Nuutofi Palemia

Solomon Islands: Max Sitai and Lloyd Tahani

Tonga: Seluvaia Finaulahi

Tuvalu:

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* 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)

Vanuatu: Moira Yerta, Kalsuak Gordon, Able Kalo and Grace

Australia: Grant Beard and Simon McGree

SPREP: Philip Malsale

OCOF tables were received from 11 participating countries before the meeting.

Observations and Verification of December 2017 to February 2018 outlooks:

Observed rainfall for the one and three-month periods ending February 2018 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
Rarotonga	February 2018	383.0	108	120
Vunisea, Fiji	February 2018	375.9	78	83
Butaritari, Kiribati	February 2018	44.5	6	80
Majuro, Marshall Islands	Dec 17 - Feb 18	1108.5	62	64
Wewak, PNG	February 2018	61.0	6	62
Kavieng, PNG	Dec 17 – Feb 18	1326.4	81	83
Port Moresby, PNG	Dec 17 – Feb 18	623.8	101	126
Afiamalu, Samoa	February 2018	1237.4	60	65
Nafanua, Samoa	February 2018	850.1	43	46
Apia, Samoa	February 2018	895.0	126	129
Faleolo, Samoa	February 2018	594.5	55	57
Apia, Samoa	Dec 17 – Feb 18	1899.9	122	127
Faleolo, Samoa	Dec 17 – Feb 18	1310.2	50	55
Auki, Solomon Islands	February 2018	118	2	57
Lata, Solomon Islands	February 2018	225	4	44
Taro, Solomon Islands	February 2018	104	4	42
Henderson, Solomon Islands	Dec 17 – Feb 18	1138	39	43
Taro, Solomon Islands	Dec 17 – Feb 18	496	3	39
Nanumea, Tuvalu	February 2018	644.3	81	86
Funafuti, Tuvalu	February 2018	134.3	5	65
Sola, Vanuatu	February 2018	165.7	4	46
Pekoa, Vanuatu	February 2018	50.5	3	48
Lamap, Vanuatu	February 2018	53.2	4	58
Aneityum, Vanuatu	February 2018	52.2	1	67

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

Validation of forecasts with observed rainfall for the December 2017 to February 2018 period showed 18 consistent, 23 near-consistent and 13 inconsistent outlooks (54 stations across 11 countries).

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

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

Cook Islands (2C); Fiji (2C, 8NC,2In); Kiribati (1C, 2NC); RMI (1C,1NC), Niue (1C); PNG (2C, 3NC, 2I); Samoa (2C, 2NC); Solomon Islands (3C, 1NC, 3In) Tonga (3C, 3NC), Tuvalu (1C, 1NC, 1In) and Vanuatu (2NC, 5In).

Overall: 18C, 23NC, 13In.

April to June 2018 Outlooks:

SCOPIC outlooks: 13% of the 60 stations have their highest probability in tercile 1, 8% in tercile 2 and 43% in tercile 3. Fifteen percent have near-equal probabilities in two terciles and 22% have near-equal probabilities in three terciles.

POAMA outlooks: 85% of the 48 stations have their highest probability in tercile 1, 2% in tercile 2 and 13% in tercile 3. POAMA does not predict near-equal in two or three categories at any site for the coming season.

Other matters:

Observed Rainfall and Validation

Country	February 2018	December 2017 to February 2018	Verification[†] for December 2017 to February 2018 outlooks
Cook Islands	Normal to above normal	Normal to above normal	Consistent
Fiji	Normal to Above normal	Mostly normal to above normal	Mainly Near-consistent
Kiribati	Below normal and normal	Below normal	Consistent to Near-consistent
RMI	Normal to above normal	Above normal	Consistent to Near-consistent
Niue	Normal	Above normal	Consistent
Papua New Guinea	Below normal to above normal	Below normal to above normal	Mixed from Consistent to Inconsistent
Samoa	Above normal	Above normal	Consistent and Near-consistent
Solomon Islands	Below normal	Below normal to above normal	Mixed from Consistent to Inconsistent
Tonga	Below normal to above normal	Normal to above normal	Consistent to Near-consistent
Tuvalu	Above normal	Below normal and above normal	Mixed from Consistent to Inconsistent
Vanuatu	Below normal	Below normal	Near-consistent to Inconsistent

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[†] 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).