Climate and Oceans Monitoring and Prediction (COMP)

Pacific Islands - Online Climate Outlook Forum No. 129 Summary Report

Date: Wednesday 13 June 2018

Time: Australian Eastern Daylight Time at 11:00AM (01:00 UTC)

Chair: SPREP

Apologies: Cook Islands, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu

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 July 2018 (TBC). To be chaired by Fiji.

Participants:

The Forum was attended by 13 climate officers (6 female) from 7 partner PIC NMSs.

Cook Islands:

Fiji: Arieta Baleisolomone and Jasneel Chandra

Kiribati: Kamaitia Rubetaake

Niue: Floyd Viliamu, Lenita Tongiamana and Sean Tukutama

Papua New Guinea: Kila Kila and Nanao Bouauka

Republic of Marshall Islands: Nover Juria and Samson Kanenko

Samoa: Kotoni Faasau and Junior Lepale

Solomon Islands:

Tonga: Mele Lakai

Tuvalu:

Vanuatu:

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

Australia: Grant Beard

SPREP: Philip Malsale

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

Observations and Verification of March to May 2018 outlooks:

Observed rainfall for the one and three-month periods ending May 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
Penrhyn, Cook islands	March to May	488.6	1	78
Laucala Bay, Fiji	May	485.4	72	77
Rotuma, Fiji	May	56.2	4	105
Lautoka Mill, Fiji	March to May	961.2	109	118
Viwa, Fiji	March to May	986.1	36	36
Vunisea, Fiji	March to May	1070.3	77	81
Tarawa, Kiribati	March to May	78.4	3	69
Majuro, Marshall Islands	May	554.1	62	64
Kwajalein, Marshall Islands	May	567.2	72	74
Majuro, Marshall Islands	March to May	1578.5	63	64
Kwajalein, Marshall Islands	March to May	1268.4	73	74
Momote, PNG	May	137.0	6	64
Lata, Solomon Islands	May	680.3	43	43
Taro, Solomon Islands	May	154.2	3	43
Lata, Solomon Islands	March to May	2191.6	43	43
Fua'amotu, Tonga	March to May	980.9	37	39
Nuku'alofa, Tonga	March to May	899.1	72	73
Nanumea, Tuvalu	May	55.7	2	78
Nanumea, Tuvalu	March to May	344.1	7	78
Funafuti, Tuvalu	March to May	681.3	6	86

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

Validation of forecasts with observed rainfall for the months of March to May 2018 period showed 24 consistent, 15 near-consistent and 2 inconsistent outlooks (41 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 (2C); Fiji (8C, 4NC); Kiribati (2C); RMI (1C, 1NC), Niue (1C); PNG (1NC) Samoa (3NC, 1In); Solomon Islands (5C, 1NC, 1In) Tonga (2C, 4NC), Tuvalu (3C, 1NC) and Vanuatu (no participation).

Overall: 24C, 15NC, 2In.

July to September 2018 Outlooks:

SCOPIC outlooks: None the 53 stations have their highest probability in tercile 1, 11% in tercile 2 and 0% in tercile 3. Six percent have near-equal probabilities in two terciles and 83% had near-equal probabilities in three terciles.

POAMA outlooks: 39% of the 41 stations have their highest probability in tercile 1, 10% in tercile 2 and 37% in tercile 3. Ten percent have near-equal probabilities in two terciles, while 5% have near-equal probabilities in three terciles.

We'd expect SCOPIC to have a fairly wide distribution of outlooks because we're in the ENSO transition season when the skills of statistics outlooks is at minimum.

Other matters:

Observed Rainfall and Validation

Country	May 2018	March to May 2018	Verification† for March to May 2018 outlooks
Cook Islands	Below normal and normal	Below normal and above normal	Consistent
Fiji	Below normal to Above normal	Below normal to above normal	Consistent to Near-consistent
Kiribati	Below normal and normal	Below normal	Consistent
RMI	Above normal	Above normal	Consistent and Near-consistent
Niue	Normal	Normal	Consistent
Papua New Guinea	Below normal to above normal		
Samoa	Normal and above normal	Above normal	Near-consistent and Inconsistent
Solomon Islands	Below normal to above normal	Below normal to above normal	Consistent to inconsistent
Tonga	Below normal to above normal	Below normal to above normal	Consistent and near-consistent
Tuvalu	Below normal to above normal	Below normal and normal	Consistent and near-consistent
Vanuatu	Normal to above normal	Below normal and normal	Near-consistent and inconsistent

† 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).