

## November Issue# 10 Climate Change Cook Islands Office of the Prime Minister 2013

### *Regional Development Bankers Conference....*



*Regional participants enjoyed a day on the Motu at Ngatangiia, 1<sup>st</sup> Nov 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

Our neighbours from around the Pacific converged on Rarotonga from 28<sup>th</sup> October to 1<sup>st</sup> November 2013 for the Regional Bankers Developmental Conference which was hosted by the Bank of Cook Islands (BCI). Purpose of the conference is to listen, share and learn from each other around the region on developmental activities involving donor partnerships with governments. Climate Change office was invited as the guest speaker on Captain Tama's Cruise to speak on the impacts of climate change affecting biodiversity in the lagoon and the reef. Dr Teina Rongo explained the impacts of sea level rise, coral bleaching and cyclones on the reef systems and the local biodiversity." Human development is also a concern with seepage of sediments into the lagoon" said Dr Rongo. Participants from around the region were particularly impressed with the overall cleanliness of Rarotonga and couldn't get over the large number of tourists on the island. The cruise eventually ended on Motu Koromiri for lunch before returning back to shore.

### *Climate Change & EMCI goes on "Karangaranga" Tuesday 26 Nov 2013*



*Charlie Numanga and Charles Carlson on radio Cook Islands Karangaranga talk back show (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

Climate Change & Emergency Management Cook Islands went on radio to promote the Climate & Disaster Compatible Development Policy 2013 – 16. Charlie Numanga from Red Cross also joined in the team to emphasise the impacts of cyclones on communities, islands and the people who are ill prepared when cyclones strike. In his experience with past disasters in the Cook Islands most destruction occurs where people are ill prepared. The Climate and Disaster Compatible Development Policy 2013 – 16 maps the way forward in our preparedness and with the strengthening of our communities to climate change.

### *SRIC Adaptation Fund and Ministry of Health partnership*



*Rarotonga and Pa Enua participants at the Health Vector borne diseases workshop 25 – 29 Nov 2013 (Photo by Michelle Foster)*

Public health officers from around the Cook Islands congregated on Rarotonga to undertake vector borne disease training workshop. This is made possible with the recently signed partnership between SRIC and the Ministry of Health in the effort to strengthen our communities against vector borne diseases from climate change. Participants were introduced to the concepts of climate change by Climate Change Director Ana Tiraa.



*Climate Change Director Ana Tiraa explaining the concept of climate change to participants, New Hope Church (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

Charles Carlson from Emergency Management Cook Islands spoke on preparedness for disasters whilst William from SRIC explained the connectivity between SRIC and the communities in delivering climate appropriate projects at the grassroots. Building partnerships with different ministries was hailed as cost effective means of delivering relevant climate change services to the communities. The initiative is to strengthen the resilience of the people in the Pa Enua against vector borne diseases pertaining to climate change. The Health vector borne strategy will begin rolling out next year.

## ***Climate & Disaster Compatible Development Policy 2013 – 2016 Launch***

Thursday the 28<sup>th</sup> of November 2013 marked the Climate & Disaster Compatible Development Policy launch, held at the Red Cross Centre in Tupapa. A good mix of participants attended the launch, and ranged with a variety of stakeholders. These stakeholders consisted of Government, Civil Societies, Private Sectors and Non Government Organisations. The programme started with The Honourable Henry Puna opening the launch with a foreword thinking speech that

targeted preparedness for disaster and resilience to climate change.



*Prime Minister Hon. Henry Puna launching the policy at Red Cross 28 Nov 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

Director of Climate Change Ana Tiraa then continued the procedure by pin pointing key features about the policy, in that it is not a written law, but is used as guidelines to conduct our nations business in addressing Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management, whilst still being able to achieve national outcomes. It was also noted that the policy is not a sector policy but a country one.

Charles Carlson Director of Emergency Management Cook Islands then spoke on how simple the policy is, in that it only consists of six pages aimed for easy reading that is not complicated and burdensome to a small country. A key component of the programme included a break out group session, used to generate new ideas and thoughts on the policies strategic objectives. Here groups of three were formed and were each delegated a strategic objective from within the policy, and then asked to brainstorm how they interpreted their given strategic objective or how it could be improved. These strategic objectives included

- Climate and Disaster Resilient Development
- Low Carbon Development
- Enabling Environment.

How these objectives were interpreted by participants provided great insight to new ideas and how future policies can be improved. It also provided the opportunity for Ana Tiraa and her team to reiterate parts of the policy which

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participants may have misunderstood. As expected, a number of new ideas were generated from the group session and have been taken into account for future policy considerations. (By Alanna Smith)



*Attendees at the launch 28 Nov 2013*



*Attendees at the policy launch with Prime Minister Hon. Henry Puna 28 Nov 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*



*Group discussion at the launch 28 Nov 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*



*A group presentation at the launch 28 Nov 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

### *Report from COP19*

Participating countries at the Warsaw COP19 agreed on a 2015 deadline for draft plan outlining their voluntary greenhouse gas emission targets and plans. Pacific Island countries urged developed countries to honour their pledge to the Green Climate Fund. The Cook Islands team negotiated for assistance to adapt and mitigate climate change, based on the vulnerable and assessment studies completed in the Pa Enuu.



*Cook Islands negotiators at COP19, Ms Linda Siegele, Ms Mii Matamaki, Ms Ana Tiraa, Ms Amelia Fukofuka and Ms Lavinia Tama (Photo by Amelia Fukofuka)*

The team also included Diane McFadzien, Nanette Woonton and Ewan Cameron from SPREP. The Cook Islands NAMA was also presented at a special event highlighting the progress of the renewable energy commitment made by government. It was noted that the Cook Islands is the first Pacific Island country to register its NAMA with UNFCCC. The good news from

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COP19 is the commitment from donor countries for a further US100million dollars to the Adaptation Fund.

## **Report from the Manihiki SPC GCCA PSIS project**

Project manager Teariki Rongo reported that the first weekly report was released on the 5<sup>th</sup> Nov 2013. The project aims to release a weekly water quality report to be made available to pearl farmers on the island of Manihiki. The report card is translated into Maori and pinned on the island notice board for the farmers to check on regular water updates. The initiative is to monitor and produce regular water quality reports so pearl farmers are aware of the water conditions in order to plan their pearling activities according to these changes. Copies of the weekly report can be obtained by contacting the Ministry of Marine Resources.

## **Kura-Kuriri**

We welcome Alanna Smith to Climate Change Cook Islands. Alanna is undertaking an internship with us whilst on her school break from studies at Otago University where she is majoring in Environmental Management. She will be with us till mid February.



*Alanna Smith is also a team member of the Cook Islands national netball squad (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

**WELCOME TO CLIMATE CHANGE COOK ISLANDS ALANNA!!!**

## **SRIC T-Shirts**



*Michelle Foster & Ana Tiraa modelling the SRIC t-shirt 28 Nov 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

Sorry no te climate change team ua!!

Dr Teina Rongo is in Fiji attending the regional biodiversity conference. This serves an opportunity for Dr Rongo to present the findings of the recently completed marine research on Aitutaki, Manuae, Takutea, Atiu and Mitiaro.

Maori version of the Climate & Disaster Compatible Development Policy will be available from our office from early next year.

**Finally, we at Climate Change Cook Islands and Emergency Management Cook Islands wish all our readers, partners, stakeholders, supporters...**

**'A VERY MERRY XMAS & A WONDERFUL, SAFE AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR 2014!**

**AND THANK YOU ALL FOR A GREAT YEAR 2013!**

**Till next time – KIA MANUIA!**