



Ministry of Marine Resources
GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS



SPC
Secretariat
of the Pacific
Community



Australian Government
AusAID

Priority adaptations to climate change for fisheries and aquaculture in Cook Islands: reducing risks and capitalising on opportunities

Ministry of Marine Resources (MMR), SPC and AusAID

25 and 26 June 2013

Rarotonga

Background

Fisheries and aquaculture are vital to the development goals of the Pacific Islands region. Nowhere else in the world do so many countries and territories depend as heavily on the benefits derived from catching or growing fish and shellfish. Industrial fish processing operations and fishing fleets account for a substantial proportion of gross domestic product in several countries and territories. Licence fees from distant water fishing nations also make significant contributions to government revenue for some small island states. Fish is a cornerstone of food security in many Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs), and coastal fisheries and aquaculture provide jobs and other opportunities to earn income across the region.

To maintain or improve the important contributions made by fisheries and aquaculture in the face of the many drivers affecting the sector, PICTs are implementing the plans required to (1) optimise the economic benefits derived from tuna fisheries, (2) provide sufficient fish for food security, and (3) identify the number of livelihoods that can be sustained from coastal fisheries and aquaculture.

Climate change is among these drivers and expected to progressively increase in significance. SPC has co-ordinated a comprehensive assessment of the vulnerability of tropical Pacific fisheries and aquaculture to climate change¹ to assist PICTs to understand how global warming and ocean acidification may affect their plans to maintain or improve the benefits they derive from fisheries and aquaculture. In addition, FAO has produced a global overview of the current scientific knowledge and adaptation and mitigation options for the sector². Recently, SPC and FAO have summarised the priority adaptations to climate change for Pacific fisheries and aquaculture³.

¹ Available at <http://cdn.spc.int/climate-change/fisheries/assessment/>

² Available at <http://www.fao.org/docrep/012/i0994e/i0994e00.htm>

³ Available at http://www.spc.int/DigitalLibrary/Doc/FAME/Meetings/13_SPC_FAO_climate_workshop_Proceedings.pdf

MMR is organising this workshop to help stakeholders in the fisheries and aquaculture sector to use this information to identify priority adaptation actions to climate change with the ultimate aim of building resilience and flexibility at the community and enterprise levels.

Objectives of the Workshop

The objectives of the workshop are to provide government departments, non government organisations, communities, enterprises and their development partners with a sound understanding of (1) the main projected effects of global warming and carbon dioxide emissions on the ecosystems supporting fisheries and aquaculture; (2) the consequences for the national and local economies; and (3) the actions required to reduce the risks and capitalise on the opportunities.

An interactive format will allow participants to work closely to:

- understand the possible direct and indirect effects of climate change and ocean acidification on tuna fisheries, coastal fisheries and pearl farming;
- identify the implications of the projected changes to fisheries and aquaculture for economic development, food security and livelihoods; and
- identify the adaptations and policies needed to build the resilience of enterprises and communities to the projected threats and to equip them to take advantage of the potential opportunities.

Expected Outcomes

Participants will leave the workshop with (1) an increased awareness of climate change implications for fisheries and aquaculture; (2) knowledge of the tools to better understand the vulnerabilities of enterprises and communities to these changes; and (3) clear ideas about the planning and actions needed to assist the sector adapt to climate variability and climate change (including the risk of climate-induced natural disasters).

Expected Outputs

A list of priority adaptations and suggested supporting policies to be included in the strategies for the sector, and integrated into national plans for climate change adaptation and disaster risk management.

Programme for Cook Islands Workshop on Climate Change, Fisheries and Aquaculture

Tuesday 25 June

08h30	Registration and tea/coffee
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Session 1: Welcome and introduction

09h00	Welcome, opening remarks by MMR and prayer
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09h10	The fisheries and aquaculture sector in Cook Islands - MMR senior staff
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09h50	Objectives and structure of the workshop
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COFFEE & TEA: 10h00 – 10h20

Session 2: Understanding the projected changes to surface climate and Pacific Ocean

10h20	Observed and projected changes to surface climate - Arona Ngari
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10h40	Observed and projected changes to the ocean – Johann Bell
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11h00	Breakout groups to discuss projected changes to surface climate and the ocean
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Session 3: Understanding projected changes to coastal fisheries

11h40	Projected changes to tuna food webs – Johann Bell
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12h00	Projected changes to tuna stocks – Johann Bell
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LUNCH: 12h20 – 13h30

13h30	Breakout groups to discuss effects on tuna food webs and tuna stocks
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Session 4: Understanding projected changes to tuna

14h10	Projected changes to coral reefs – Johann Bell
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14h30	Projected changes to coastal fisheries – Johann Bell
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14h50	Breakout groups to discuss effects on coral reefs and coastal fisheries
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COFFEE & TEA: 15h30 – 15h50

Session 5: Understanding projected changes to freshwater fisheries and aquaculture

15h50	Projected changes to aquaculture production – Johann Bell and Dorothy Solomona
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16h10	Breakout groups to discuss effects on aquaculture production
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16h50	End of Day 1
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Wednesday 26 June

Session 6: Implications, adaptations and suggested policies	
09h00	Implications, adaptations and policies for economic development – Johann Bell
09h20	Breakout discussion groups
09h50	Implications, adaptations and policies for food security – Johann Bell
10h10	Breakout discussion groups
COFFEE & TEA: 10h40 – 11h00	
11h00	Working groups to identify priority adaptations
LUNCH: 12h30 – 13h30	
Session 7: Communication and integrating with national strategic plans	
13h30	Communicating climate change concepts to communities – Anna Passfield
13h50	National plans for climate change adaptation & DRM – Anna Passfield
14h10	Breakout groups to discuss communication and national plans for CCA & DRM
COFFEE & TEA: 15h00 – 15h20	
15h20	Finalising the outputs of the workshop
16h00	End of workshop