

Community based adaptation in the Pacific

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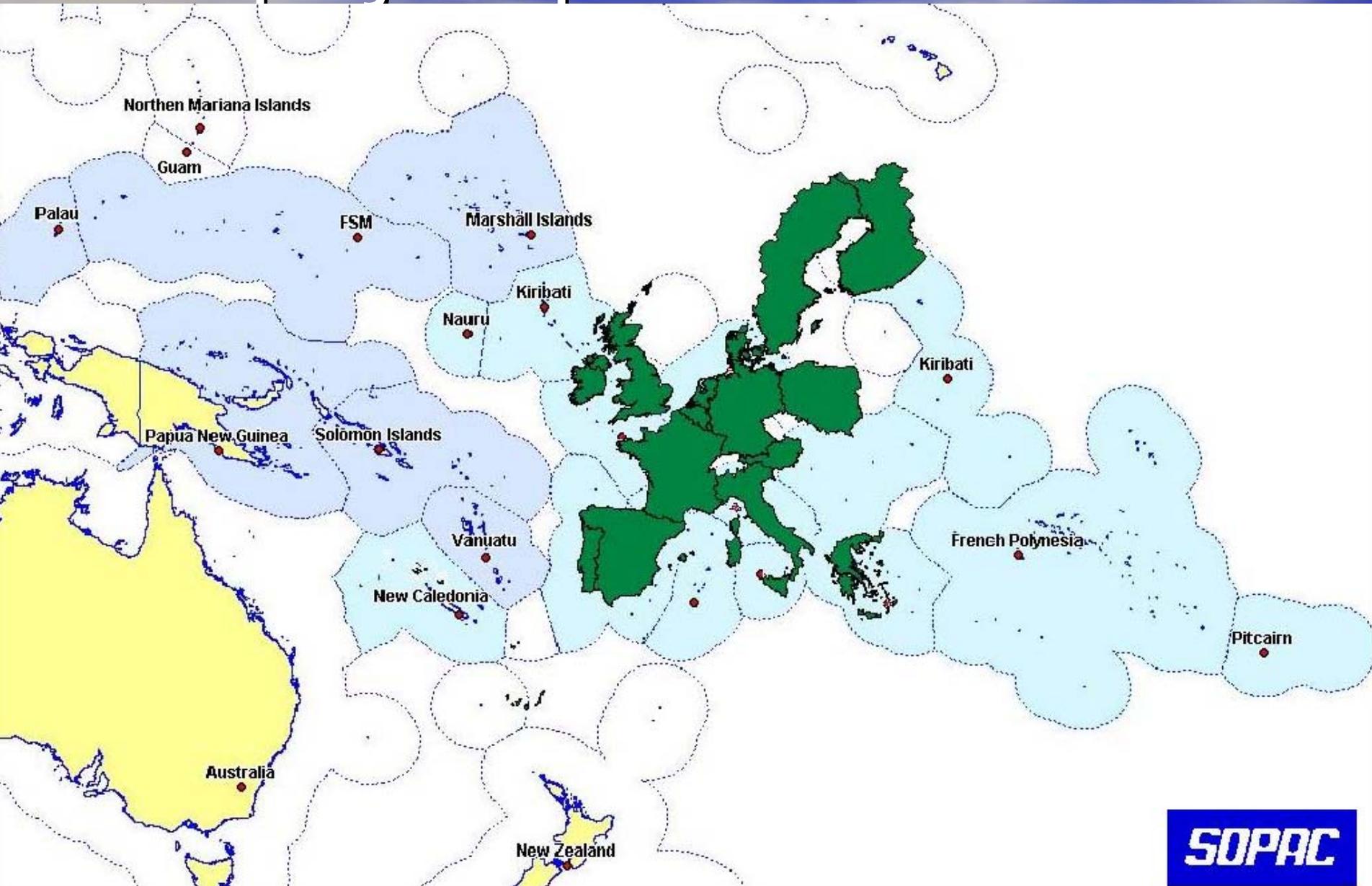
Overview

- adaptation activities in the Pacific
- lessons learned and best practices identified
- remaining gaps, needs and concerns
- the role of local, national, regional and international actors
- how can the UNFCCC process better facilitate community-based adaptation

The Pacific SIDS

- 14 Independent SIDS covered by this presentation – Cook Is., Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Is., Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Is., Tonga, Tuvalu, Vanuatu
- Although work by SPREP also involves the non-self-governing territories of the Pacific, except Pitcairn
- Supported by our Members Australia, France, New Zealand and USA

Europe juxtaposed on Pacific



Adaptation experiences of past climate change programmes

- Pacific Island Climate Change Assistance Programme (PICCAP) – established as an enabling activity project for the then Parties to FCCC, expanded to include all 14 States
- Primarily to enable completion of Initial National Communications to UNFCCC
- Allowed for adaptation activities, through vulnerability and adaptation training and some individual site studies, set stage for future work

Impacts of PICCAP

- PICCAP as an enabling activity has built capacity largely of Environment/Meteorology Department officers. SPREP is broadening its capacity building programme to reach out to other line government departments and communities
- V and A assessments done using simple models
- Related projects CLIMAP and CBDAMPIC – have enabled us to trial Stage 3 implementation, and to look at risk reduction. PICs are calling for more implementation projects as a result – Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project

PACC

- 3 focal areas: water resource management, coastal management and infrastructure, food production and food security
- National consultations resulted in consensus for one project for each SIDS, bearing in mind existing efforts and needs
- Eg. Niue on water mgt, Vanuatu on coastal zone mgt, Fiji on food security

Lessons learned

- focus on sea-level rise and storm surges from tropical cyclones
- early emphasis on protecting land through 'hard' shore-protection measures rather than "soft" – now changing
- costs of overall infrastructure and settlement protection is a significant proportion of GDP well beyond the means of SIDS
- recent studies on adaptation: water resources and watershed management, reef conservation, agricultural and forest management, conservation of biodiversity, energy security, increased share of renewable energy in the energy supply, and optimized energy consumption
- emphasis has thus become more broad-based and looks at climate change impacts from a more comprehensive perspective.

Systemic issues

- increase the ability of islands' physical infrastructure to withstand impacts
- increase the flexibility of potentially vulnerable systems through adjustments in management practices
- enhance the adaptability of vulnerable natural systems, by reducing stresses due to non-climatic effects
- reverse trends that increase vulnerability by reducing human activity in vulnerable areas, preserving natural systems that protect against hazards, and ensure that the incidence of "scoring own goals" is reduced
- improve public awareness and preparedness by informing the public about risks and possible consequences of climate change, and by developing overall communications strategies that make climate change science accessible to the average citizen.

Remaining gaps

- Past adaptation activities have been small scale and have successfully included communities
- Mainstreaming adaptation will require adjustments to Government consultative processes
- Brain drain, retention of skilled personnel
- Presence in region of particular skills?

Remaining challenges

- assessment and transfer of technologies for adaptation to climate change is complex
- uncertainty regarding site-specific vulnerability and subsequently what adaptation will be required at the local level – improvement in modeling
- uncertainty carries over to the identification of appropriate adaptation measures, options and technologies, as well as to the stakeholders that are affected
- need community discussion on hard technologies, which may not be appropriate, versus the importance of soft technologies, because of synergies between mitigation and adaptation
- E.g. work on a bio-fuels industry in Fiji has highlighted the potential for soil conservation as an adaptation measure to be integrated into what is largely a mitigation activity

Current adaptation related activities

- Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015 endorsed by Leaders
- Establishes sets of priorities for action on climate change in the region – involves local, national, regional and international levels
- Adaptation is focused on: multi-stakeholder, risk management, no regrets, improving safe secure livelihoods, focus on most vulnerable areas and integrate in NSDS and other strategies

Pacific Framework

- Those key areas in the PIFACC for future direction thus show the importance of adaptation - but for example PACCC is only one means to that end
- SPREP will also be assisting PICs in their Second National Communications so that they can better prepare for adaptation implementation
- Does not take away the fact that capacity building etc. will continue. Pacific will continue to seek specific capacity building projects with adaptation elements included

Establishment of Regional Roundtable on climate change

- To provide a major opportunity for the Governments and communities to build a consensus on what actions should be taken to alleviate climate change impacts
- practical work will be undertaken through regional and national policies as part of regional projects (PACC, PIGGAREP and PI-GCOS), and through NAPAs and SNCs.

Role of the UNFCCC

- Has provided forum giving importance to adaptation
- Next stage should provide mechanisms for adaptation information exchange, to act on capacity needs assessments as well as technology needs assessments, to build capacity in Pacific SIDS to acquire, adopt and implement adaptation technologies, and to provide adequate financing for adaptation.
- FCCC COP should consider ensuring that the communities that are going to be most affected by climate change are indeed the recipients of technical and financial assistance.