

Climate Change, Adaptation and Sustainable Development: *Experiences & Challenges*

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Abstract

The Federated States of Micronesia (FSM) is already facing substantial climate-related risks, and are projected to further increase due to climate change, variability and extremes. For an infrastructure project, it is possible to avoid or reduce most of the damage costs resulting from climate change in an effective and efficient way, if adaptation to climate change is undertaken as an integral part of the project design. Integrating adaptation to climate change into project design can be further enhanced and cost effective when adaptation to climate change is mainstream into existing assessment procedures such as environmental impact assessment. Reducing climate related risks to communities can also be enhanced if planning (e.g. land use plan) and other regulatory measures incorporate adaptation to both current and future risks. Creating a conducive environment for all these to happen therefore necessitates the need to create national strategic development plans that take into account adaptation climate-related risks strategies. This therefore establishes the requirement to include adapting to climate change at the project level (e.g. road project), at the sub-national (e.g. state, island, community) development plans/regulations, and helps to ensure that actions taken to reduce climate-related risks are integral part of, and in line with, sustainable development goals.

The presentation provides an overview of the approach (risk-based) and experience gained during the process in FSM, and shows the linkages between adaptation and sustainable development.

Three Case Studies were identified through a consultative process with the aim to demonstrate the risk-based approach, and the range of levels where adaptation can take place; and the linkages between them, and to sustainable development. The levels are: 1) project (road in Kosrae State), 2) Community (Sapwohn in Pohnpei State) and 3) National (Strategic Development Plan). Climate profiles for 1 & 2 locations were prepared showing current and projected changes in climate (temperature, precipitation, etc) at different times in the future. Using the risk-based approach, risks were identified and adaptation options were quantified, and options were selected based upon “acceptable risk” to development project (road) and community (Sapwohn). Some examples of the way in which the FSM National Strategic Development Plan was “climate proofed” will also be presented.

The presentation concludes with some challenges and experiences encountered during the project with the aim to foster discussions, and contribute to resolving current impediments to moving adaptation to climate variability, change and extremes forward.

