

Climate and Oceans Monitoring and Prediction (COMP)

Pacific Islands - Online Climate Outlook Forum No. 117 Summary Report

Date: Tuesday 13 June 2017

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

Chair: Vanuatu

Main purpose for the OCOF:

- To provide a regular forum for the 10 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 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 and the Bureau team.
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. Next meeting (TBC) to be chaired by Fiji.

Participants:

The Forum was attended by 16 climate officers (7 female) from 8 partner PIC NMSs.

Cook Islands: Bates Manea (Chair)

Fiji: Bipen Prakash, Swastika Prasad, Arieta Baleisolomone

Kiribati:

Niue: Robert Togiamana, Sean Tukutama, Rossy Mitiepo

Papua New Guinea: Kisolet Posanau, Nanao Bouauka, Kila Kila

Republic of Marshall Islands: Nover Juria

Samoa: Tile Tofaeono, Junior Lepale, Faapisa Aiono, Vaueli Su'a

Solomon Islands:

Tonga: Mele Lakai (for a short period before a communications failure)

Tuvalu:

Vanuatu: Moirah Yerta

Australia: Grant Beard, Simon McGree, Grant Smith

SPREP: Sunny Seuseu, Philip Malsale (both in Melbourne)

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

Australian Aid Project: Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac)

OCOF tables were received from 11 participating countries before the meeting.

Observations and Verification of March to May 2017 outlooks:

Observed rainfall for the one and three-month periods ending May 2017 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
Butaritari, Kiribati	Mar-May	413.1	6	78
Majuro, Marshall Islands	May	125.2	5	63
Port Moresby, PNG	May	0.6	5	126
Momote, PNG	Mar-May	1256.4	67	67
Afiamalu, Samoa	May	1007.9	62	64
Nafanua, Samoa	May	951.5	46	46
Apia, Samoa	May	882.2	128	128
Faleolo, Samoa	May	420.4	56	56
Afiamalu, Samoa	Mar-May	1705.9	59	63
Nafanua, Samoa	Mar-May	1527.1	45	45
Apia, Samoa	Mar-May	1292.9	125	128
Faleolo, Samoa	Mar-May	945.2	54	55
Niuatoputapu, Tonga	May	622.2	67	67
Ha'apai, Tonga	May	356.9	68	70
Vava'u, Tonga	May	342.8	67	71
Nuku'alofa, Tonga	May	232.2	71	73
Niuatoputapu, Tonga	Mar-May	1222.5	63	63
Nui, Tuvalu	May	403.5	67	72
Sola, Vanuatu	May	689.1	44	45
Bauerfield, Vanuatu	May	403.0	41	45
Pekoa, Vanuatu	May	527.9	47	47
Aneityum, Vanuatu	May	330.9	60	65
Pekoa, Vanuatu	Mar-May	988.7	43	47
Bauerfield, Vanuatu	Mar-May	1256.0	45	45

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

Validation of forecasts with observed rainfall for the March to May period showed 15 consistent, 27 near-consistent and 12 inconsistent outlooks (54 stations across 11 countries).

A summary of results (C-consistent, NC-Near Consistent, I-Inconsistent, N/A-not available) for each country is as follows:

Cook Islands (2I); Fiji (2C, 7NC, 3I); Kiribati (2C, 3NC); Niue (1NC); PNG (1C, 3NC, 1I); RMI (2NC); Samoa (2NC, 2I); Solomon Islands (2C, 4NC, 1I); Tonga (2C, 2NC, 1I); Tuvalu (2NC, 2I) and Vanuatu (6C, 1NC).

Overall: 15C, 27NC, 12I.

July to September 2017 Outlooks:

SCOPIC outlooks: As we're heading into the time of year when ENSO begins to have an effect, SCOPIC has begun to shift more outlooks into discrete terciles - 40% of the 60 station outlooks have the highest probability in tercile 1, 18% have the highest probability in tercile 3, 25% have near-equal probabilities in three terciles, and 12% have near-equal probabilities in two terciles. Three stations (5%) have the highest probability in tercile 2.

POAMA outlooks: Eleven countries provided completed POAMA tables this month. Forty-eight percent of the 48 stations outlooks have the highest probabilities in tercile 3, 25% have the highest probabilities in tercile 2, 23% have the highest probabilities in tercile 1, and the final two stations have near-equal probabilities in three terciles

Other matters:

Observed Rainfall and Validation

Country	May 2017	March to May 2017	Verification [†] for March to May 2017 outlooks
Cook Islands	Normal	Above normal to below normal	Inconsistent
Fiji	Mainly normal to above normal	Mainly normal to below normal	Mostly near-consistent
Kiribati	Mainly normal to below normal	Mainly normal to below normal	Consistent to near-consistent
RMI	Below normal	Below normal and normal	Near-consistent
Niue	Normal	Below normal	Near-consistent
Papua New Guinea	Mainly normal to above normal	Normal to above normal	Generally near-consistent
Samoa	Above normal	Above normal	Near-consistent to inconsistent
Solomon Islands	Mainly normal to above normal	Mainly normal to above normal	Consistent to near-consistent
Tonga	Above normal	Normal to above normal	Consistent to near-consistent
Tuvalu	Mostly above normal	Normal to above normal	Inconsistent to near-consistent
Vanuatu	Above normal	Mainly above normal	Mostly consistent

[†] 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).