

Roadmap towards an Integrated Regional Strategy for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change in the Pacific by 2015

Executive Summary



Introduction

The Roadmap outlines a process to facilitate the development of an integrated strategy for Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change (CC) for the Pacific islands region by 2015. The new integrated strategy will succeed the existing Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action 2005 – 2015 (RFA) and the Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006 – 2015 (PIFACC)¹.

The Roadmap process was developed and endorsed in 2011 by the Pacific Platform for DRM, the Governing Council of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and the Committee of Representatives of Governments and Administrations (CRGA) of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)². The process has been developed in response to DRM/CC integration efforts already ongoing at national and regional level, in consultation with a broad range of development partners and donors, in addition to DRM and CC stakeholder groups within Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). It has received widespread support at international, regional and national levels in the Pacific. The Pacific will be leading the way on this process, as it will be the first region in the world to fully integrate Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change into a single overarching policy framework.



Background and Rationale for DRM/CC integration

The Pacific islands region is highly exposed to numerous natural hazards of geological and hydro-meteorological origin including volcanic eruptions, earthquakes, tsunamis, cyclones, flooding, landslides, and droughts. Of the top twenty countries with the highest average annual losses to GDP from disasters, eight are Pacific island countries³. This exacerbates existing development challenges of the region.

The effects of climate change are likely to increase the frequency and/or intensity of climate related hazards, and also cause ecosystem degradation, reduction in food and water availability and changes in communities' livelihoods that in turn increase their vulnerability. Climate and disaster risks cut across all sectors (agriculture, natural resources management, transport, infrastructure, economic development, health, education, etc.) and hinder sustainable development efforts.

Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation share the same aim, to reduce the vulnerability of societies to hazards by improving their ability to anticipate, resist, prepare for, respond to and recover from their impacts. Similar tools are used to monitor, analyse and address adverse consequences of disasters and climate change. Therefore, it makes sense to consider and implement them in a systematic and integrated manner. For example, risk assessments, vulnerability assessments, flood management systems and building code enforcement contribute to both policy goals and more generally to building communities' resilience.

An integrated approach, working across all sectors, will be more effective at reducing risks to sustainable development as it can make better use of existing national and regional capacities and resources to address multiple hazards or phenomena, whether climate-related or geological, sudden or slow onset. It will also contribute to improving policy coherence and the coordination of donor-assisted investments.

Most countries in the Pacific region have already started taking concrete steps to address disaster and climate risks in an integrated manner. For example, through the development of Joint National Action Plans for DRM and CC (JNAPs), or by joining their national institutional arrangements for DRM and CC.

The new integrated regional strategy will provide a framework to guide and support integration efforts at regional and country level. It will further raise the profile of DRM, CC and other cross-cutting development issues within governments and communities, will lead to improved monitoring and evaluation of progress, and demonstrate to the global community that integration at policy and operational levels are not only possible but also a key priority.

The integration process will entail working across different stakeholder groups to harmonise institutional arrangements for DRM and CC, ensure that efforts are nested within the context of countries' national development strategies and reflected in their budgets, encourage the participation of multiple stakeholder groups, strengthen countries' capacities for risk governance and support the development of well-coordinated innovative funding mechanisms.

Roadmap Process

The process to facilitate the development of a Pacific integrated regional strategy for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change will be led by a Steering Committee facilitated by partner organisations (SPC, SPREP and UNISDR). A Technical Working Group will provide expert technical advice and support. The PICTs are represented in both committees and in participatory and consultative processes where they will contribute to defining the focus and parameters of the new strategy and a broad range of stakeholders will be invited to contribute their perspectives.

Outputs by 2015

- Integrated Regional Strategy for DRM and CC, including related implementation arrangements
- Regional Synthesis Report on the implementation of the RFA and PIFACC
- Compendium of case studies on DRM/CC in the Pacific

Current CC/DRM efforts and initiatives⁴ will also continue to be carried forward, and the experiences gained from these activities will further inform the development of the strategy.

The formulation and drafting process will take place between 2013 and 2014 and will include a wide range of consultations (which have already been initiated) at national, regional and international level. Lessons learned from the implementation of the RFA and PIFACC will also be factored into the process.

Main milestones in the Roadmap process

- **July 2013:** Political support and priorities for considerations to be gathered at the Joint Meeting of the Pacific Climate Change Roundtable & Pacific Platform for Disaster Risk Management
- **April 2014:** A complete draft of the integrated regional strategy for DRM and CC is in place
- **September & November 2014:** Final draft of the strategy is submitted to the SPREP Governing Council and SPC CRGA for endorsement
- **August 2015:** Endorsed draft of the strategy is submitted to Pacific Islands Forum Leaders for approval

The successful implementation of the integration process will rely on the leadership of PICTs through existing regional mechanisms and close collaboration between development partners and donor organisations.

¹ These regional instruments provide a policy basis for making investments that aim to strengthen the resilience to disasters and climate change at regional, national and subnational levels within the Pacific islands region. The RFA is the Pacific adaptation of the Hyogo Framework for Action 2005 – 2015. The PIFACC is aligned to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change. The RFA and PIFACC were both identified as imperatives for action under the Pacific Plan endorsed by Pacific leaders in October 2005.

² The document was then revised and updated to take into account developments in the Roadmap process from 2011 to March 2013. The revision has not altered the focus and overall intent of the process endorsed in 2011. The full text can be found at http://www.pacificdisaster.net/pdnadmin/data/original/SOPAC_SPREP_2013_DRM_CC_Revised180413.pdf

³ Acting Today for Tomorrow: A Policy and Practice Note for Climate and Disaster Resilient Development in the Pacific Islands Region (The World Bank).

⁴ For example, the current work on the development of Joint National Action Plans, the mapping of institutions, policies and mechanisms for DRM/CC, the improvement of databases on hazards, exposure, vulnerability and risk assessments, capacity building programs, projects, and information management systems to support DRM and CC actions.



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