

## **Tuvalu sea level rising by 5mm a year, according to scientific analysis**

By Online Editor

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Tide gauges monitoring sea level rise in Tuvalu is beginning to show an average peak of 5 millimetre rise in sea level per year.

This peak has been consistent now for a number of years, which proves that the sea level is rising every year.

“It does not take into account natural phenomenon like floods, storm surges and cyclones which could add to the current average that we have. If that is taken into account, then it becomes worrisome, said Tauala Katea, the scientific officer with the Tuvalu Meteorological Office.

“It appears to be averaging 5mm per year. Our data dates back 16 years ago. Just recently we have been recording a consistent 5 millimetre.

‘If we use that per year, it means that since 1993, sea level rise has gone up by 8 centimetres, which is a huge increase.

“That has also brought about the king tides we’ve experienced since 2000. Most of our low lying areas have flooded causing saltwater intrusion affecting agriculture.

“The faipulaka (garden) becomes salty. The wells are no longer fresh water and cannot be used for drinking and bathing, said Katea.

If the scientific predictions are on target, then by 2050, sea level rise would peak at 30 centimetres and over a metre in the next 50 years.

While these data are collated by the Australian Meteorology, there is need for a few more years of scientific monitoring to prove its analysis.

“Our data collection has been going on now for 16 years. We need at least 20 years of tide readings to provide a more relevant trend.

“We still need more data so not confuse or make people panic, said Katea.

Tuvalu should experience its peak king tide this year on Sunday 28 February.

“We are forecasting 3.3 metres this year, lower than 3.48 metres in 2006, when we experienced our highest king tide.

**SOURCE: PACNEWS**