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## Responding to Climate Change in Small Island Developing States

Climate change presents unique challenges to Small Island Developing States (SIDS). The difficulties that all countries face in effectively coping with climate change impacts are exacerbated in SIDS because of their small geographical area, isolation and exposure. The associated development challenges from sea-level rise, altered rainfall patterns, and storm-surges threaten to reverse progress made towards the Millennium Development Goals now and in the future. The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides on-the-ground support for small island and low-lying countries at the global, regional and national scales. Direct support to SIDS is provided through UNDP Country Offices and (Sub-) Regional Service Centres. The centres give access to analytical resources and advisory services and implement sustainable development projects to address climate change.

A key UNDP objective is to assist developing countries in catalyzing low-emission, climate-resilient development. UNDP is actively involved in climate change projects in SIDS, leveraging funding from donors and co-financing of more than US \$200 million to deliver projects in climate change adaptation, mitigation and capacity development. UNDP has also supported major inter-governmental meetings, including the Alliance of Small Island States Climate Change Summit at the UN General Assembly in 2009 and the Mauritius Strategy+5 Review in 2010.

### CROSS-REGIONAL PROJECTS

UNDP recognises the critical role played by regional bodies, including the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) in the Pacific and the Caribbean Community and Common Market's (CARICOM) Caribbean Community Climate Change Centre.

UNDP also coordinates exchange of experiences between countries and regions, and improves awareness and understanding through the provision of training and knowledge products.

The ***South-South Cooperation between Pacific and Caribbean SIDS on Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Management*** project is a US \$800,000 three-year project, funded by UNDP's Special Unit for South-South Cooperation and by the UNDP-Japan Partnership Fund. It aims to help SIDS in the Caribbean and Pacific share regional best practices, technologies, and planning tools to improve resilience. Specifically, the project is funding exchanges between practitioners involved in national planning, transfer of technologies and the knowledge of how to use them, and methodologies for building disaster risk reduction into development.

In 2010, the first exchange took place in Fiji, focussing on comparing methodologies and techniques for the management and mitigation of such hazards. The Pacific Islands Applied Geo-Science Commission, SPREP Secretariat, University of the South Pacific, Meteorological Services Tonga, National Emergency Management Office Palau, and the Maldivian Meteorological Service all participated.

### ADAPTATION

Adapting to ongoing and future climate change is critically important for SIDS. UNDP, along with donor partners, supports SIDS through projects that enhance the resilience of SIDS and their capacity to adapt to climate change.

The ***Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC)*** project delivers US \$13.4 million from donors and co-financing of US \$44.7 million to implement a UNDP Global Environment Facility (GEF) project involving 13 Pacific countries: the Cook Islands, Fiji, Micronesia, Marshall Islands, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. The objective is to enhance the capacity of the participating countries to adapt to climate change in key development sectors such as coastal zone management, food security and water. The project also aims to enhance regional cooperation to share lessons learned and promote innovation in mainstreaming adaptation.

With US \$1.2 million in funding from the Government of Spain, UNDP is also concluding the ***Integrating Climate Change Risk and Opportunities into National Development Processes and UN Country Programming*** project in 5 countries. The objective is to develop the capacities of government stakeholders and UN staff to integrate climate change risk considerations in national development plans. In Cape Verde, for example, project activities included a risk screening analysis of the One UN Programme and the Government's Poverty Reduction Strategy Paper to identify climate risks, and propose options to manage these risks and integrate adaptation into national development assistance. <http://www.adaptationlearning.net/project/integrating-climate-change-risks-and-opportunities-national-development-processes-and-unite-2>

## MITIGATION

Adaptation to climate change remains the key priority for SIDS. At the same time, activities which reduce fossil fuel dependency and increase electricity services are vital for SIDS to meet their sustainable development objectives, especially on energy security. UNDP is a key partner in supporting mitigation projects that simultaneously contain greenhouse gas emissions while also contributing to development.

In the face of rising energy-demand and increasing pressure on housing, the Mauritius-based, GEF-funded ***Removal of Barriers to Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation in Buildings*** project addresses one of the most significant contributors to energy use in the country: buildings. The project activities are designed to ensure that energy in buildings is used cost-effectively and rationally so as to reduce greenhouse gas emissions over time.

This reduction is being achieved through the transformation of the market for existing and new buildings to one that favours energy efficiency. Activities therefore focus on policy, functioning markets, awareness, and monitoring & evaluation. Over US \$6 million has been allocated to this project. [http://un.intnet.mu/undp/html/mauritius/energy\\_env\\_ongoing\\_projects.htm](http://un.intnet.mu/undp/html/mauritius/energy_env_ongoing_projects.htm)

The five-year ***Pacific Islands Greenhouse Gas Abatement through Renewable Energy Project (PIGGAREP)*** is underway with the support of the GEF, with donor funding and co-financing totalling over US \$33.2 million. The project aims to reduce the growth rate of greenhouse gas emissions in the Pacific Island Countries through the removal of barriers to the use of renewable energy.

The project is expected to:

- increase the number of successful commercial renewable energy applications in participating SIDS,
- enhance institutional capacity to design, implement and monitor projects that make use of renewables,
- increase the availability and accessibility of financing to projects, and
- strengthen the legal and regulatory structures in the energy and environmental sectors.

Results from this project are already being realised: In Fiji, for example, 200 solar home systems have been installed in various remote locations and 4 schools have been equipped with biogas digesters. Similarly, a Renewable Energy Information Centre has been created in the Solomon Islands in order to improve awareness and access to information.

[http://www.sprep.org/climate\\_change/piggarep/index.asp](http://www.sprep.org/climate_change/piggarep/index.asp)

## UNDP support for Capacity Development in SIDS

Responding to the climate challenge in SIDS requires significant capacity development and support for engagement in international negotiations. UNDP and its partners support SIDS in their inputs to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change through the ***National Communications Support Programme*** (<http://ncsp.undp.org>) and ***National Capacity Self Assessments Programme*** (<http://ncsa.undp.org>) through which UNDP is delivering over US \$14 million to implement projects in more than 30 SIDS.

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