

**JOINT MEETING  
of the  
2013 PACIFIC PLATFORM FOR DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT &  
PACIFIC CLIMATE CHANGE ROUNDTABLE**

*8<sup>th</sup> – 11<sup>th</sup> July  
Sofitel Fiji Resort and Spa, Denarau Island, Nadi, Fiji*

**THEMATIC SESSION 3: INCREASING RESILIENCE - THE ROLE OF  
ECONOMIC/SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT SECTORS**

**Introduction**

Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) are inherently vulnerable to the risks of natural hazards (such as earthquakes, tsunamis, tropical cyclones, floods and droughts) and to the more slowly-evolving risks induced by climate change (such as sea level rise, changes in rainfall patterns, and ecosystem degradation). Climate change, however, is also likely to increase the frequency and/or severity of extreme weather events, hence further exacerbating the existing risks of natural hazards.

In the Pacific, these natural hazards often evolve into devastating natural disasters, due to the weak institutional and economic environment of most PICTs, leading to poor preparation, response and recovery capacity. Likewise, slowly evolving climate related risks may lead to serious social, economic, cultural and environmental long-term losses as well as political and social unrest linked to competition for scarce resources or land issues.

Natural hazards and climate change both increase the vulnerability of Pacific island communities and magnify existing challenges to sustainable development.

It follows that Disaster Risk Management (DRM) and Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (CCA & M) are not sectors in themselves. They are issues that cut across all economic and social development sectors and that need to be integrated (mainstreamed) into sectoral plans and strategies. These sectors include finance and land use planning, infrastructure, agriculture, fisheries, health, education, tourism, energy, water resources and environmental management. Practitioners working in these various fields therefore have a leading role to play in the implementation of DRM and CC strategies, in view of strengthening communities' long-term resilience.

At the moment, DRM/CC mainstreaming at national level is carried out through Joint National Action Plans on Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change Adaptation (JNAPs) in some countries. These plans highlight national priority goals and activities. DRM and CC are also being mainstreamed directly into countries' national development plans and strategies. However, there is often a missing link between the units in charge of DRM and CC and the various development sectors that should be in the lead for the implementation of DRM/CCA strategies on the ground. The challenge is therefore to involve the sectors more actively in the joint mainstreaming process.

Mainstreaming DRM and CC into the agricultural sector, for example, might entail analyzing the risk exposure of productive land areas while factoring in climate change predictions (rainfall variations, temperature increase, etc), to develop the appropriate response mechanisms, such as early warning systems, drought-resistant crops, water collection systems, desalinization plants, and so on.

In the infrastructure sector, it could mean conducting a risk assessment for coastal roads and building or upgrading appropriate coastal protection structures to prevent flooding or damage from storm surges, and to ensure these structures are adapted to the projected sea level rise. It could also mean, for inland roads, making adjustments to the engineering specifications to make them more resilient to heavier rainfall or reforesting a nearby hilly area to protect them from landslides.

In the tourism sector, DRM/CC mainstreaming might entail upgrading hotel infrastructures to ensure they are cyclone resilient or relocating structures from low lying areas to higher grounds if there is a risk of tsunami, storm surges or projected sea level rise, and training staff on disaster preparedness and response.

The joint approach will minimize duplication of efforts and redundancies, reduce potential conflicts in policy development, make efficient use of scarce resources, and recognize the significant overlaps between DRM and CC.

## **Purpose**

This session will provide the opportunity for participants to share their experiences on the existing levels of disaster and climate risk mainstreaming within a sectoral context, discuss the benefits and challenges of adopting a joint DRM-CC approach to mainstreaming at the sector level, and develop key messages to be factored into the development of the integrated regional strategy for DRM and CC.

## **Discussion**

- What are the benefits, barriers, challenges and opportunities associated with mainstreaming DRM and CC jointly at sectoral level?
- Based on PICT experiences, what works and what does not work in promoting mainstreaming of DRM and CC jointly at sectoral level?
- What is the role of development partners in assisting PICTs through a successful joint sectoral mainstreaming exercise? How can development partners improve their own internal processes to facilitate a joint DRM-CC approach to risk reduction among PICTs?
- What is the role of the national governments and relevant Ministries/Departments in ensuring that DRM-CC mainstreaming is carried out effectively at sectoral level, coherently across different levels of government and in a way that includes the needs of vulnerable groups?
- What are key messages to be fed into the formulation of the Integrated Regional Strategy for DRM and CC in regard to sectoral mainstreaming?

## **Intended Outcomes**

- Shared lessons learned and experiences on how to successfully mainstream DRM and CC jointly at sectoral level.
- Renewed and increased understanding of the linkages and overlaps between DRM and CC, and of the benefits of adopting a joint approach to mainstreaming at sectoral level.
- Contributions to the Integrated Regional Strategy for DRM and CC (in the form of an outcome statement agreed to be all participants).

### **Format**

The session will include plenary presentations/discussion and group discussions revolving around the questions outlined above.

### **Session Coordinators**

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