A REPORT FOR THE REGIONAL WORKSHOP HELD IN SYDNEY, AUSTRALIA FROM 19TH NOVEMBER TO 22nd NOVEMBER 2019.

Workshop title:
Pacific Islands Regional MRV Network 1st Training and Peer Review Workshop

19 NOVEMBER-22 NOVEMBER 2019
Executive summary

The Pacific Islands Regional MRV Network 1st training and peer review workshop was held from October 19 – 22 November 2019 in Sydney, Australia. This training workshop was co-hosted by UN Environment and UNFCCC secretariat and funded by Global Support Programme (GSP). A total of 13 participants drawn from Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Cook Islands, Nauru, Palau, Niue, and Marshall Islands were present.

Selection of the participants was done through the National BUR/NC project Coordinators who nominated two (2) participants (a national project coordinator and Mitigation/ GHG Inventory expert) based on their active role in the day to day management of NC/BUR project(s) as well as their participation in national climate reporting processes under the UNFCCC. The agenda of the training and peer review workshop focused on the following main objectives;

i. Sharing of good lessons and challenges on national NC/BUR project implementation and national MRV institutional arrangements
ii. Training on Enhanced Reporting Framework of the Paris Agreement Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines (MPGs)
iii. Presentation and demonstration on IPCC 2006 Software
iv. Identifying priority areas for capacity building in the Pacific Islands region and developing training plans
v. Peer review of national reports of selected countries (Biannual Update Reports, BURs)

This workshop is a follow-up to the first workshop held in Bangkok, Thailand during which Pacific Islands Regional MRV Network was formed.

The training workshop approach involved presentations from UNEP GSP staff, IPCC-IGES resource person and UNEP-GSP Consultant; group exercises, panel discussions, open interactions as well as question and answer sessions. The workshop concluded with regional and in-country training plans; and a final evaluation of the training workshop.
Background

Being Parties to the United Nations Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC), developing countries have committed to providing timely and sustained submissions of National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Update Reports (BURs). Timely and submission of these reports is critical to the tracking by UNFCCC of global greenhouse gases emissions and trends and allow for a better understanding of the diversity of climate actions and strategies among developing countries. Understandably, because of different circumstances in the developing countries, there have been various challenges faced by most countries in meeting the national climate change reporting requirement in a timely, transparent and sustainable manner.

Various initiatives have been implemented in trying to overcome the barriers of timely submission of climate change reports by developing countries. Lessons learnt and gaps identified during the National Communications (NCs) and Biennial Update Reports (BURs) processes have been instrumental in understanding the underlying challenges that contribute, not only to delays in report submission, but also limited transparency of submitted reports. Recognizing the importance of timely and transparent reporting under the Convention and expected Paris Agreement reporting frameworks, Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) initiatives are being rolled out by different international, regional and national organizations, with the objective of enhancing national climate change reports from developing countries.

Objectives of the Workshop

The five main objectives of the workshop included:

i. Sharing of good lessons and challenges on national NC/BUR project implementation and national MRV institutional arrangements
ii. Training on Enhanced Reporting Framework of the Paris Agreement Modalities, Procedures and Guidelines (MPGs)
iii. Presentation and demonstration on IPCC 2006 Software
iv. Identifying priority areas for capacity building in the Pacific Islands region and developing training plans
v. Peer review of national reports of selected countries (Biannual Update Reports, BURs)

To achieve the above objectives, the workshop adopted a delivery approach based on presentations; questions and answers sessions; Inventory and Mitigation review; IPCC2006 software installation and demonstration; breakout group discussions as well as group feedback presentations and panel discussions.

Opening and expectations

The training workshop commenced with opening remarks from UNEP/UNDP Global Support Programme, UN Environment and a representative from the Australian government. The UNEP/UNDP GSP representative appreciated the government of Australia for accepting to host the workshop. He informed the participants that Paris Agreement encourages countries to have enhanced ownership of the reports submitted. The UNEP/UNDP GSP representative also informed participants that the workshop provided a good opportunity for countries to interact and share experiences as well as enhancement of the reporting requirements under the UNFCCC, GEF and UNEP. An official opening address was provided by Ms Nikki Fitzgerald from the Ministry of Energy, Australia. This session was followed by introduction
of all the participants and a presentation on the overview of the workshop which included the Agenda and expectation.

A summary of the expectations highlighted based by the participants are as follows:

i. Understand the IPCC 2006 software

ii. Learn effective ways for addressing BUR/TBC project issues from other countries experiences and by learning and capturing new ideas from the experts

iii. Align country gaps with support given by GSP

iv. Understand how UNEP and UNDP can support other regional organizations like SPREP

v. To be fully informed of the MRV processes, UNFCCC expectation from countries in terms of NCs and BURs

vi. Go back to the country with a clear forward plan about a strategy on MRV institutional establishment

vii. Continuation of communication and networking of Pacific Islands regional network

viii. Understand how to prepare ToR and where to get related templates

ix. Understand the difference between BURs and NCs

x. Understand MRV methodology, purpose and tools

Summary of the Discussions and Conclusions of the Workshop

For effective delivery of the training, the workshop agenda was structured in four modules namely:

**Module A:** Status of Pacific Islands Regional MRV Network and Report back from the countries; national reporting development since the 1st Network meeting

**Module B:** Reporting under the Enhanced Transparency Framework

**Module C:** Training on Preparation of BURs

**Module D:** Activity planning for the Pacific Islands MRV Network

This structure ensured that there were no overlaps and the participants could easily link subsequent presentations to previous presentations.

**Module A:** Status of Pacific Islands Regional MRV Network and Report back from the countries; national reporting development since the 1st Network meeting

This module focused on status of Pacific Islands national MRV arrangements, including status of their national climate change reporting for NC and BUR and challenges that need technical support, capacity gaps and expected submission dates of reports. This session provided input into the capacity building plan for the Pacific Islands MRV Network.
A summary of the challenges faced by pacific islands are:

- No proper institutional arrangement/ functionality within the ministries
- Weak governance & policy gaps
- Lack MOU and cooperation/coordination between sectoral ministries
- Lack proper MRV systems institutionalization in place to enhance data collection
- Poor achieving systems to keep and store existing data
- Lack of technical expert and high of staff turn over
- Need support in providing standard TORs templates for ease of recruitment
- GSP is implemented jointly by UN environment and UNDP support technical skills of country project teams on reporting. This support is not extended to equipping the projects with materials but rather specific to providing technical skills to countries
- This support can be in GHG inventory, mitigation such as integration with NAMAs and costing of mitigation.
- GSP also support development of institutional arrangements for climate change activities as well as enhancing knowledge management, best practices, communication and outreach
- GSP technical support is provided to all countries that approach the GSP team. Countries can get in touch with GSP team through emails.

- Best practices in institutional arrangements include;
  a) Establishing national legal/formal arrangements as appropriate, this can help enhance the coordination and supervisory role
  b) Choosing and maintaining appropriate coordinating body, this can help avoid the loss of experience, skills, institutional memory and information given the enhanced frequency of reporting.
  c) Stakeholder involvement, which provides access to information and raises awareness of reporting activities
  d) In-country institutional and technical capacity-building which can help in enhancing the country ownership of the process of the preparation of NCs and BURs.

II. Module B: Reporting under the Enhanced Transparency Framework

This module focused on key considerations for the Enhanced Transparency Framework. New reporting structure was presented, including the key requirements of a full-fledged national inventory report (NIR). Countries were encouraged to map out their national preparedness on new reporting requirements, including National Inventory Reports

A summary of the deliberations and recommendation/actions is presented below:
• The enhanced transparency framework will not be different from the current practice; it will be more on what needs to be reported under the Paris agreement.
• National MRV must be a central function of government.
• An initial framework for national MRV can be developed in a relatively short period if agreement on policy objectives and institutional arrangements can be reached.
• The benefit of this approach is that it will ensure that a system meets national requirements and is sustainable without on-going donor support.
• National approaches must be tailored to meet national circumstances and be flexible.
• It is vital to clearly agree on program and policy objectives up-front.
• Guidance and demonstration on installation and use of IPCC 2006 software was provided.

III. Module C: Training on Preparation of BURs
This module focused on providing the participants with training on the preparation process for BURs, including a checklist on key issues that ought to be included in the report. The objective was to familiarize countries that had not submitted any BUR with the report preparation process and contents.

A summary of the deliberations and recommendations/actions on BUR preparation include:

• Planning and coordination is key to successful participation in the international consultation and analysis (ICA) process.
• Usually the National Focal Coordinator prepares TORs for consultant on GHG inventories. In some cases, consultants are asked to prepare their own TORs and in most cases, they do not give impressions that they were developed in accordance with the guidelines requirements. This pose a challenge in GHG inventories preparation. Planning is underway to prepare guidelines for TORs.
• Annex I of technical analysis summary reports (TASRs) provides specific details of the technical Analysis of the team of technical experts (TTE). It is important to check if Party agrees with TTE and provide clarifications/further information if necessary.
• Technical Analysis process under BUR provides opportunities:
  a) To analyse where the country is in terms of their climate change policy and actions
  b) To interact with technical experts within a neutral setting to clarify or provide more information for the TASR
  c) For learning and continual improvement of the national BUR preparation process (e.g. fine tune planning and coordination process and improve stakeholder interaction).

Module D: Activity planning for the Pacific Islands MRV Network

This module recouped on previous modules and based on the different status of MRV activities in the region, including MRV national arrangements, NC and BUR status and capacity gaps and need, areas of strength and gaps in each country and in the region, were identified and listed. Areas of strength in each country and region helped to identify themes for bilateral collaboration, in-country training and MRV Network events. Participants were divided into two groups and provided feedback to the plenary. During the plenary, an overall
Pacific Islands MRV Network list of capacity gaps were developed, and training plan developed

A summary of the deliberations and recommendation/actions for this module is presented below:

i. Countries should consider the following when nominating participants for trainings among others;

   a) The person nominated should be dealing with the mentioned activity and should be able to help the country to undertake the mentioned activity
   b) Look at how roles are distributed in the project, that is, how will the nominated person transfer the skills when they come back from the training
   c) Identify the nominee based on the challenges and needs of the project
   d) In cases where there two people such as project coordinators for BUR and NC, the workshop organizing team will fund one project coordinator and the country to fund the other using their funds.

ii. The training organizing team will always stipulate the qualifications for the relevant trainings to help countries in nominating participants to attend the trainings.

Some of the gaps highlighted by countries during group discussion include:

**Group 2 - Vanuatu, Palau, Niue and Kiribati**

**Vanuatu**

- Most of the work done by consultants and no local expertise to continue the GHG
- NC/BUR work done by consultations as well and not sustainable
- Lack of local experts on GHG Inventory
- Lack of in-country expertise on capacity in developing NC/BUR
- Stakeholders guidance is needed during reviewing process of the reports. Wait time is up to 2 months and to get feedback.
- Work is Project-based
- MRVs is at level of 6 out of 10. To get to level 10 and focuss is on getting the correct data (Data sensitivity and quality).
- NDC is energy based

**Palau**

- MRV – Palau 91 million gallons of petrol as a reference. As a sectoral need to subtract that from airplanes.
- More training on MRV.
- They need a Capacity Building Officer
- Quantity/quality to look at the values in ensuring the appropriate measures. Check formulas and equations with 2-3%
- How to use the tool properly for the training.
- Need a technical assistant.
- No communication on who is doing the NC with MRV and BUR. Sometimes people do the NC and no connection. National need. Formally, institutionalised. No decree or executive order to formalise the process and group. This can be done nationally.

**Niue**

- Need to strengthen Institutional arrangements
• They need to work on identifying technical experts
• Conduct training for the experts
• They need to introduce tools for the experts
• They need to plan on data collection and archiving

**Kiribati**

• Ongoing engagement with local consultant from Kiribati.
• Mobilisation of funds for the project is a challenge
• Processing the fund is taking longer
• Stakeholders take longer to provide feedback. No one from specific Ministry/stakeholder to focus on task on top of their current work.
• No additional budget to address such issues. No benefits in sharing of data. Possible reasons of taking longer.
• Equipment: 2 desktops but for TNC 3 staff which they share.
• Data collection: Data doesn’t match with the current existing information but need to look at the guideline.

**COMMON GAPS AND ACTION DISCUSSED**

**Ownership and sustainability**

• Build strong Institutional Arrangements that incorporates coordinated Agencies

**Capacity Building;**

• Training; IPCC 2006 Guidelines and software
• Vulnerability and Adaptation (V&A)
• Awareness, Data Collection and Assurance;

**Technology**

• Storage and Archiving
• Equipment

**ACTIONS AGREED BY THE GROUP**

• Institutional arrangement country by March
  • Focal point
  • Technical team
  • Budget plan
• 1\textsuperscript{ST} training on IPCC 2006 software early April-May 2020
  • Countries use own data e.g. energy, livestock
  • Global Warming Potential
• Training on V&A tools, scenario planning (in-country) TBD
  • Scoping for specific country needs
  • How to mainstream adaptation into national policies and programs

**Group 2 - Cook Islands, Marshall Islands, Nauru and Solomon Islands**

**Areas of Strength:**

• Mitigation through the adaptation process
• Existing institutional arrangements – need to be enhanced to be inclusive of MRV work
• Enabling legislations and policies – just need to be operationalized/implemented
• Regional Frameworks and networks
• Council of Regional Organization Partners (i.e., SPREP, SPC, USP, etc., etc.)

**Possible Solutions**
• South-South Exchanges
• Regional Training on common technical and capacity gaps
• Countries to work on their GHG and build capacity (team approach/peer to peer/buddy system)

Country Specific needs/challenges/Actions

**Cook Islands** – Need assistance in building Institutional Arrangements, in house technical working groups

**Nauru** – Need capacity building in information analysis

**Solomon Islands**: Its remoteness and isolation makes it difficult to get necessary information to collect data. Very limited Information Communication Technology Infrastructure in place

**Marshal Islands**: Building and enhancing national capacities to operationalize existing frameworks for environmental protection and conservation i.e the REIMAANLAK survey data and info, analysis and modeling Process contributes to VA and mitigation actions