

Pacific-German Regional Programme on  
Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

**Climate Change in Vanuatu Curriculum**

7 April 2011  
Port Vila

There is no doubt that climate change is one of the biggest issues affecting Vanuatu and its people today and even more so in the future. For that reason the Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education, the Department of Meteorology and Geohazards, Live and Learn and SPC-GIZ jointly organized a workshop with the writers of the new Yr 11-13 Vanuatu curriculum to mainstream climate change. Curriculum writers stressed the importance of making the new curriculum fully relevant to the situation and useful to the students of Vanuatu, both urban and rural. Climate Change is already affecting everyone in Vanuatu and it is critical that students understand its causes, impacts and most importantly solutions for adapting to the changes in Vanuatu.

The convenors from each of the new curriculum's Learning Areas spent the day thinking of how climate change might be relevant to their subjects. Most people in Vanuatu think of climate change as a purely science subject: physics and chemistry. But presentations at the workshop highlighted the links between climate change and health, biology, physical education, social studies, and even writing and reading! For example, changes in rainfall are affecting the numbers and locations of mosquitoes in Vanuatu and the way malaria and dengue fever are spread. Carbon credits for protecting and planting forests may bring new income generating opportunities to rural communities and so learning about climate economics is important. Our government is involved in climate change negotiations at the international level and so classes on politics and government can talk about climate. According to James Melteres, Vanuatu Curriculum Coordinator, "The theme of climate change for certain subjects are not new, but this workshop helped writers better understand the situation for other subjects."

The Director of Meteorology, Salesa Kaniaha said "This workshop is historic because it opens a network of communication between the Meteo department and teachers across Vanuatu so we can get relevant climate information directly into schools."

The Department of Meteorology and Geohazards emphasized the fact that climate change is already happening in Vanuatu, and that high quality data and research results highlighting climate change are available in country and can be used by teachers in schools. Long gone are the days when schools and teachers in Vanuatu will have to use information from overseas when teaching their students. The Department has committed to providing the curriculum writers with real, simple and Vanuatu-focused graphs, charts and images for the new curriculum.

Live and Learn, a local NGO, presented to workshop on materials that are already available for Vanuatu teachers who would like to bring climate change into their classrooms. Robbie Henderson of Live and Learn stressed that "learning about climate change should not be compartmentalized into individual subjects which is not conducive towards developing a holistic understanding of environmental processes and problems that relates to everyday experiences" (E.g. L&L resources are freely available at <http://www.livelearn.org/resources/manuals.asp>).

The first draft of the new senior curriculum will be ready by July 2011 and by then climate change will be fully integrated and mainstreamed. Over the coming months, workshops with the primary level curriculum writers will also be organized so that not only senior level students will have exposure to climate change in schools, but every student from Kindy onwards will be know what climate change is and how they and their communities can adapt.

SPC-GIZ has confirmed its continuing support into the Vanuatu education sector through its Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region Programme and will include training of teachers, development of Vanuatu-specific supplementary materials on climate change, and small grants for interested schools.

For more information contact Mr Salesa Kaniaha, Vanuatu Department of Meteorology and Geohazards or Dr. Christopher Bartlett ([VanuatuClimateChange@gmail.com](mailto:VanuatuClimateChange@gmail.com)) or visit [http://www.spc.int/Ird/Climate\\_Change.htm](http://www.spc.int/Ird/Climate_Change.htm).

PHOTOGRAPHS ATTACHED

1. Teachers and climate change technical staff at the Vanuatu CC Curriculum workshop held on 7 April 2011 in Port Vila.

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