

MINISTRY OF CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION



E-NEWSLETTER

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DISASTER RISK REDUCTION

**ENSURING
A SAFE AND
INFORMED
VANUATU**



Director General's Foreword

It gives me great pleasure to welcome you all to this edition of the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and National Disaster Management's e-newsletter, which comes out at the beginning of the cyclone season.

This initiative is part of the Ministry's strategy to fulfil our vision of promoting a resilient, sustainable, safe and informed Vanuatu.

It also aligns with the national Communications & Engagement Strategy & Action Plan in line with the country's highest level policy framework, the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) – Vanuatu 2030 – The People's Plan.

The Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Energy, Environment and National Disaster Management is the youngest Ministry in the Vanuatu Government, created in 2014.

This Ministry's Corporate Plan operates under a mission of developing sound policies and legislative frameworks and provide timely, reliable scientific information service delivery to enable resilient communities, a sustainable



environment and economic development.

I acknowledge our international, regional and national partners that work with the Ministry's Corporate Services Unit and the Department of Climate Change, Department of Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Department of Energy, Department of Environment and the

National Disaster Management Office, through bilateral and multilateral support, to ensure targets are met and projects are developed, planned, implemented and completed within their timeframes.

Esline Garaebiti Bule
Director General

VISION

Promote a resilient, sustainable, safe & informed Vanuatu



MISSION

Develop sound policies & legislative frameworks and provide timely, reliable scientific information for service delivery to enable resilient communities, a sustainable environment and economic development



Doppler Weather Radar to Enable 'Nowcasting'

Ensuring resilient thinking and planning ahead

Vanuatu will soon have its first Doppler weather radar that will be able to forecast weather within its 200 to 300 kilometre-radius to enable "nowcasting".

This means forecast can be done now up to six hours.

This will be possible through component one of the Vanuatu Klaemet Infomesen blong Redi, Adapt mo Protekt (Van-KIRAP) Project.

Van-KIRAP was established in Vanuatu as part of the Global Framework for Climate Services, through funding from the Green Climate Fund, to address the missing link between climate information services and sector activities and plans to improve resilience in Vanuatu.

National Project Manager, Moirah Matou, says one of the upcoming major developments to be carried out is the installation of a Doppler weather radar.

Mrs Matou says this is a device that detects clouds that produce rain and wind direction. The instrument will monitor weather around Port Vila Airport especially, and Efate.

It has a coverage radius of 200 to 300 kilometres. The proposed site of installation is at Klem's Hill on Efate.

The arrival of instruments means an upgrade of the Information and Communications Technology to ensure the storage of all the data recorded.

Also included in this first component of the Van-KIRAP project is the procurement of an archive scanner to digitize Vanuatu Meteorology and



Photo: Almanac

Geo-Hazards Department (VMGD) archives, eight automatic weather stations, eight rain gauges, six ocean buoys to record ocean acidification, sea level rise and sea surface temperature.

The data from all these instruments will be transmitted directly to the ICT section at VMGD.

Component two of the project is to do with outreach, to get the data and put into useful information to get to community through communications and Community Climate Centres that involve case studies. A case study would involve the Sarakata River for flood warning.

There will be 12 Community Climate Centres where people can get quick access to climate information and be familiar with what VMGD is doing as well as someone at hand they can talk to.

The Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation (CSIRO) will be involved in component three of

the project to undertake the social and economic impact. This is to ensure if information are going out and people are using it; and if these information are improving peoples' lives.

Included in this component is the use of traditional knowledge as encouraged in the VMGD vision.

Traditional climate science comes handy when there is no power to access mobile phones or radio and internet or newspapers.

The fourth component of the Van-KIRAP Project is to do with capacity building.

This is to train people at community up to government levels– including members of parliament, to make decisions when information are received.

Overall, the main objective of the project is to build a climate resilient thinking, to plan ahead three to six months before disaster strikes.

Outlook: At least 3 to 4 tropical cyclones in 2021-22 season

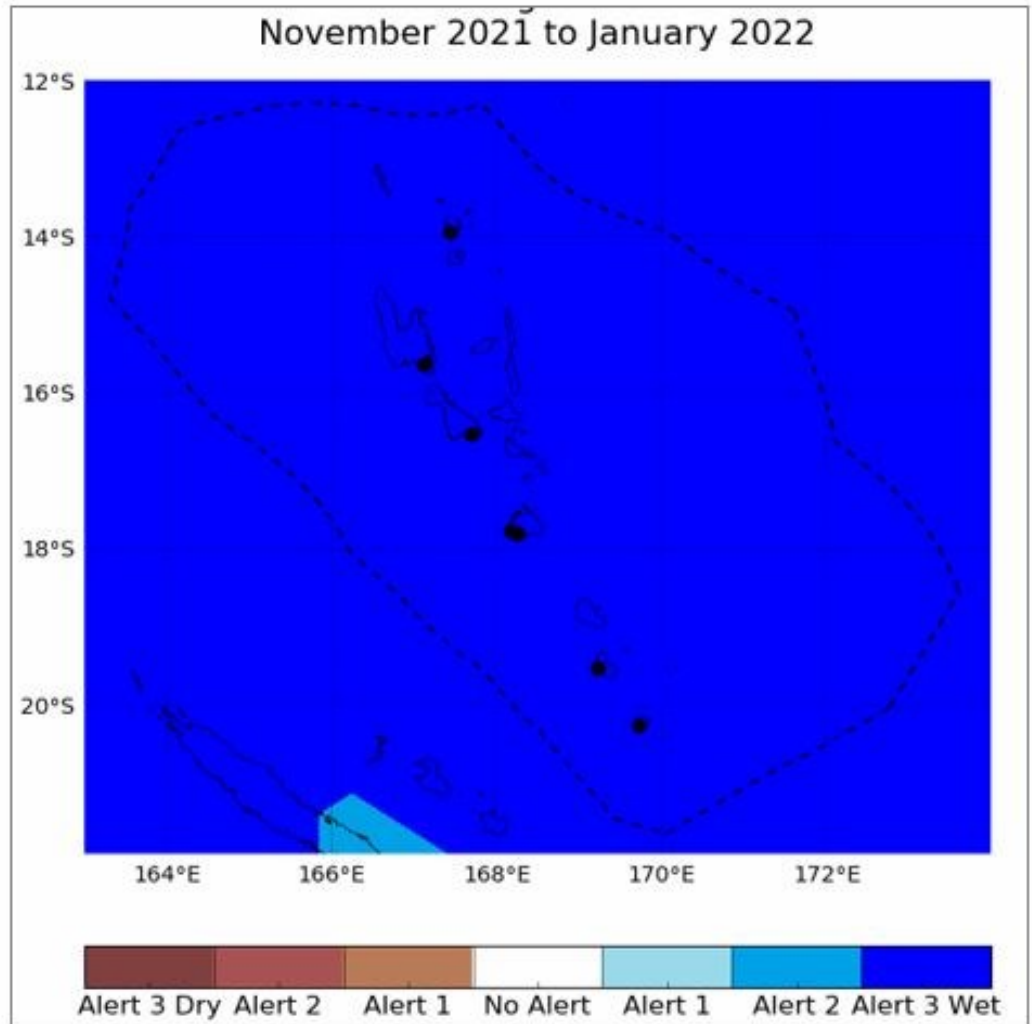
Vanuatu's tropical cyclone outlook, issued by the Climate Division of the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geo-Hazards Department (VMGD), shows that at least three to four tropical cyclones will pass in Vanuatu's area of responsibility in the current season from November 1, 2021 to April 30, 2022.

While the official cyclone season is from November to April, Vanuatu has experienced cyclones forming outside this period such as tropical cyclone Liua in September 2018 and cyclone Donna in May 2017. All communities have been advised to remain vigilant and prepared.

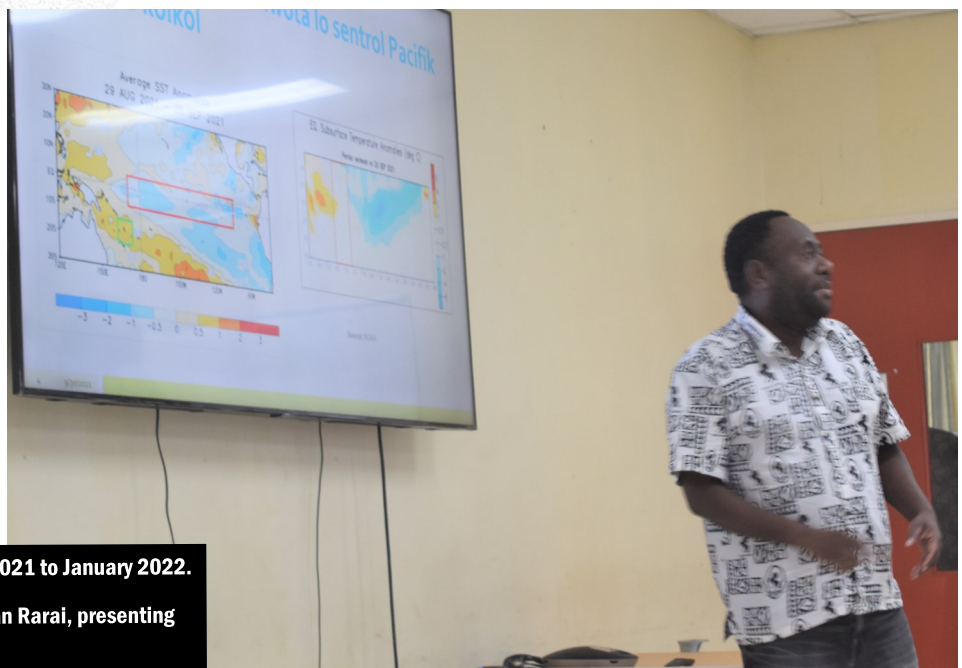
The 2021-22 cyclone season risk for Vanuatu, compared to all cyclone seasons, is 'average to slightly above average risk'.

The peak tropical cyclone season historically for Vanuatu, is usually from January to March. Vanuatu is currently experiencing La Niña-like conditions, which means the country expects wetter than average conditions in the next three to six months. With the La Niña conditions and slightly above average risk for cyclone, the Climate Division of VMGD has advised that there is possibility for flooding and extreme winds that can damage different sectors and impact the socio-economic livelihoods of the people.

Government, through the National Disaster Management Office clusters, with partners are advised to start planning on cyclone preparedness and response during a pandemic.



Source: BoM



ABOVE: Wetter than normal from November 2021 to January 2022.

RIGHT: Manager, VMGD Climate Division, Alan Rarai, presenting the three-month outlook.

3-Day Disaster Risk Reduction Awareness Held in Luganville



The National Disaster Management Office (NDMO) organized a three-day International Disaster Risk Reduction Day in Luganville, Santo, from October 11 to 13.

The launching of the big event was witnessed by the Town Clerk, Jonathan Iavere and Luganville Mayor, Alan Awa.

This is the first big event of its kind for the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day after smaller activities in other provinces of Vanuatu.

NDMO Director, Abraham Nasak said the national Government is working with its international and national partners that included non-government organizations not only to respond to disasters but also to address areas of disaster preparedness.

"The National Disaster Management Office Act allows us to coordinate responses - to not only address disaster responses, but also address areas of preparedness in terms of early warnings and monitoring of hazards that eventually leads to a disaster response," Director Nasak said in his speech before the official opening by the Town Clerk.

The International Day For Disaster Risk Reduction as declared by the United Nations in 1989 was on October 13, and this saw a float parade taking place on the main street of Luganville to the Unity Park, the venue of activities.

There were booths where government and non-governmental organizations displayed what they do in communities to reduce the risks before or after any disaster strikes. For example, the Adventist Development and Relief Agency (ADRA) and Department of Water Resources displayed the importance of ensuring clean drinking water.

Some of the stakeholders that participated included the Vanuatu Red Cross Society, World Vision, Save The Children, Vanuatu National Provident Fund, Department of Agriculture, Oxfam Vanuatu, and departments under the Ministry of Climate Change, Energy, Environment Protection and Conservation, Disaster Management and Meteorology & Geo-Hazards.

The slogan for the event was, 'Tugeta Yumi Redi, Tugeta Yumi Daonem Risk Blong Disasta'.

The theme was 'The hour is getting late, only together through international, regional, national and provincial cooperation can we be resilient'.

Director General of the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Esline Garaebiti Bule, said October 13 was declared by the United Nations as the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day, and is commemorated around the world by communities where awareness are made on how to live before and after a disaster.

The DG says the day is important for people to be educated and reminded about disaster risk reduction through preparedness, prevention and mitigation, which is also outlined under The People's Plan or the National Sustainable Development Plan of Vanuatu. Ms Bule reminded that Vanuatu is prone to natural disasters as experienced in past disaster events such as Cyclone Uma in 1987, Bay Martelli tsunami in 1999, Port Vila earthquake in 2002, Cyclone Pam in 2015, Ambae Volcano eruption in 2017 and Cyclone Harold and COVID-19 in 2020. "These events have taught us to be resilient," the DG said.

Matevulu College Plants More Trees



On October 12, 2021 the Year 10 students of Matevulu College took part in a tree-planting programme in the school premises as part of commemorating the International Disaster Risk Reduction Day.

The tree-planting exercise was a joint collaboration by the Department of Climate Change and Department of Environment, Ministry of Education and Department of Water Resources.



First Pre-COP hosted in Vanuatu



Vanuatu hosted its first Pre-COP event on October 25, 2021, in the lead up to the COP26 meeting that was held in Glasgow, Scotland.

The Pre-COP started with a High-Level Ministerial Segment that involved Prime Minister, Bob Loughman Weibur and the Secretary General of the Commonwealth, Baroness Patricia Scotland. The purpose of the Pre-COP event was to provide a setting to discuss and exchange views on some key political aspects of the negotiations and offer political guidance for subsequent negotiations.

The Pre-COP aimed also at providing a

platform for Vanuatu's technical experts that will participate at the COP26 [via virtual means] to refine and confirm Vanuatu's national positions and participate in a Mock Negotiation in preparation for COP26. The High-Level Ministerial Segment was an opportunity for high-level support for Vanuatu's priority national positions (mainly Climate Finance, Mitigation, Adaptation, Loss and Damage, Transparency) under the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC).

"Vanuatu signed the Paris Agreement in 2015, expecting that every country would approach the climate crisis with all resources, technology, science and

ambition, submitting National Determined Contributions (NDC) that do not overshoot the 1.5 degrees goal," the Prime Minister said. He noted that despite these efforts, the current global NDCs are taking a path to beyond 2.7 degrees Celsius. Present for the milestone occasion were the Minister of Climate Change Adaptation, Bruno Leingkon, Minister of Finance and Economic Management, Johnny Koanapo and Minister of Trade and Industry, James Bule, along with Directors General and Directors. Under the guidance of Climate Change Expert, Dr Christopher Bartlett, mock negotiations took place on October 26 (Tuesday) where Vanuatu delegates participated under their thematic areas.

Vanuatu Delegates Participate in COP26 Virtual Meetings

This year has been a couple of firsts in terms of Vanuatu's participation at the Conference of the Parties (COP) meeting.

As decided by the Government, through the Council of Ministers, Vanuatu's participation in this year's COP26 meeting by delegates was mostly through virtual meetings.

Vanuatu was physically represented at COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland, by the country's envoy in Europe, Ambassador Sumbue Antas.

However, in Vanuatu the delegates followed sessions of the COP26 online and also participated through interventions in different panels, one of which was made by the Director General, Esline Garaebiti Bule. The delegates joined different thematic areas virtually.

The first thematic area is Mitigation, which relates to Carbon Markets, that Vanuatu has tapped into following the virtual signing of agreement with the Government of Switzerland. The second thematic area for Vanuatu relates to Finance and the new global finance goal of USD\$100 billion from large polluting countries.

Third is Transparency that involves reporting templates and National Determined Contributions within set timeframes.

Fourth is Loss and Damage that relates to governance and Santiago Network Operation, which is related to the destruction caused by the climate crisis on lives.

The last thematic area for Vanuatu is Adaptation that involves adaptation communication registry, the National Adaptation Plans and the Global Goal on Adaptation.



Climate Change March

Gov't partners with stakeholders in climate change awareness



A climate change march was held on November 10, 2021 in Port Vila to re-enforce Vanuatu's stand on climate change issues as world leaders converge for COP26 in Glasgow, Scotland. The march was organised by the Pacific Island Climate Network (PICAN) in collaboration with the Vanuatu Climate Action Network (VCAN). The march was supported by the Government through the Ministry of Climate Change and Adaptation (MoCCA).

Director General, Esline Garaebiti Bule and staff from the Ministry joined the civil society to march from the Fatumaru Bay to the Seafront Stage in Port Vila demanding glob-

al action on climate issues as Vanuatu, among many countries in the world, is prone to natural disasters. There was call for major polluting countries to ensure their National Determined Contributions limit global heating to 1.5 degrees Celsius and show their commitment to the promised US\$100 billion annually until 2025 as big countries' emissions are already responsible for the loss of universal human rights, and environmental rights of Pacific people, communities, and ecosystems.

Bilateral Agreement For Sustainable Development

The Minister of Climate Change Adaptation, Bruno Lengkone, signed a bilateral Agreement on climate change cooperation with Switzerland's Federal Councilor, Simonetta Sommaruga, on November 11, 2021.

This bilateral agreement, Vanuatu's success story of COP26, was signed virtually via Zoom on the side of the global climate conference that took place in Glasgow, Scotland. Ms Sommaruga said Switzerland is very pleased to have Vanuatu as partner, alongside Peru, Ghana, Senegal and Georgia.

"The Agreement we sign today will benefit the global climate, as well as Vanuatu and Switzerland.

"The cooperation will lead to enhanced investments in climate action. It will contribute to sustainable development in Vanuatu, financed by Switzerland and will allow Switzerland to reduce more Greenhouse Gas Emissions than only through national measures as part of its Nationally Determined Contribution under the Paris Agreement.

"In short, our cooperation will unlock mitigation action and social benefits that otherwise would not have happened.

"I am very pleased that the foreseen mitigation activity under our Agreement may be one of the world's first Article 6 projects. I am very glad to see Vanuatu,



a small island state most vulnerable to climate change and at the same time least responsible for it, benefiting from Article 6 cooperation.

"Thus, I would like to express my full support for the "Modular & Scalable Energy Access" program, the mitigation activity foreseen under our bilateral Agreement.

"The activity aims to provide access to solar power to all islands of Vanuatu for household- and productive use. "It is foreseen to be based on innovative Swiss technology that allows small-scale solar power generation and demand-based scaling.

"The key to enable solar energy supply in remote areas.

"I am very pleased by the climate and social benefits of this activity.

"It is the intention of Switzerland to authorize this mitigation activity upon en-

try into force of the bilateral Agreement in early 2022."

In his remarks, Minister Lengkone said Vanuatu will do its best to mitigate but would require financial, technical and capacity building support to do so. Vanuatu has very low emissions at under 0.0016% of world emissions, the minister said.

He acknowledged the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) for its continuous support to move towards Vanuatu's climate goals, through such historic bilateral agreement.

"Looking ahead, Vanuatu envisages to take forward the projects/programmes which qualify under the Article 6 of the Paris Agreement through the bilateral collaboration for transfer of Internationally Transferrable Mitigation Outcomes (ITMOs), that can stimulate investments into mitigation activities and NDC implementation," the minister stated.

One of the thematic areas for Vanuatu is Mitigation, that targets Carbon Markets, which this bilateral agreement addresses.

Electric vehicles for transport mooted in consultations

The first Stakeholders' Consultation on Low Emission Land Transport Sector in Vanuatu took place on November 4, 2021 as part of the Climate Technology Centre & Network's (CTCN) supported feasibility study for low emission land transport sector in Vanuatu.

The stakeholders present for the consultation meeting, organized jointly by the Overseas

Environmental Cooperation Center, Japan (OECC) and the Department of Energy, included the representatives of the transport and energy sectors.

Presentations during the consultation were made by the Pacific Community, the Public Land Transport Authority, the Department of Energy, and the OECC with its partner, ALMEC Corporation.

Much of the discussions focused on low emission vehicles, such as Electric Vehicles (EV) and necessary infrastructure that would be needed such as charging stations, cost of electricity, the market aspect of promoting EV and the necessary enabling frameworks.



Director General for the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation, Meteorology and Geo-Hazards, Environment, Energy and Disaster, who is also the National Designated Entity (NDE) of Vanuatu, Esline Garaebiti Bule, officially opened the consultation.

The NDE of Vanuatu is responsible for the application and implementation of projects financed by the Climate Technology Centre & Network (CTCN).

"I wish to convey my sincere appreciation and gratitude on behalf of the Vanuatu Government to the CTCN for providing financial and technical support for the feasibility study that will facilitate the identification of main barriers to the land

transport sector, and also to find the most efficient low-emission options suitable to the characteristics of our country. "We all know this is not an easy task, and it will require the support from all stakeholders in order to move forward in our joint efforts to become a low carbon society.

"The CTCN has selected the Overseas Environmental Cooperation Center to conduct this study with the support from our ministry.

"However, due to the effect of the global pandemic, they will not be able to join us today physically, but we hope that they will be able to come to Vanuatu in the near future.

"The OECC has been entrusted with the task of conducting this feasibility

study and they will also prepare a concept note for the Green Climate Fund, aiming at the implementation of a practical and viable solution," the DG and NDE of Vanuatu said. Mrs Bule requested stakeholders present for the consultation to cooperate with the OECC team by providing as much information as possible to enable them to come up with tangible results. Issues raised include upgrading infrastructure facilities to accommodate low emission land transport vehicles in the future, as well standardized vehicles and transport system.

Introducing energy efficient initiatives is also part of the goals set under the National Energy Roadmap (2016-2030).



Retreats Discuss achievements, lessons learnt and 2022 plans

The Corporate Services Unit (CSU) of the Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation held a two-day retreat on November 18 and 19.

This meeting was an opportunity for all CSU and National Advisory Board (NAB) staff to get together and discuss the achievements, challenges, lessons learnt and importantly, planning for 2022.

The staff involved included the administration officers, human resource officers, finance officer and NAB secretariat.

The main **objectives** of the retreat were to:

Increase staff understanding and input into the business continuity plan and the procurement guidelines

Draw upon and discuss lessons learned from 2021 activities; prioritise and identify key lessons to be incorporated into the 2022 business plan

Review and discuss the 2021 expenditure and develop 2022 budget

Ensure that coordination of activities enhance time and cost efficiency between activities, staff skill sets and linkages between other departments.

Develop a 12-month business plan, outlining 2022 priorities

This meeting was held before the four-day Ministry of Climate Change Adaptation Retreat that involved all five departments within the Ministry.

These five departments are Department of Climate Change, Department of Meteorology & Geo-Hazards, Department of Environment Protection and Conservation, Department of Energy and Department of Disaster Management. The Ministry's Retreat saw presentations by each of the departments on what they achieved in 2021 to achieve their targets and meet national goals as set out under the National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) through the three pillars of Society, Environment and Economy.



Lest We Forget



Major Natural Disasters That Enhanced Resilience of the People of Vanuatu

Cyclone Uma

February 1987
1 Dead



Tsunami

November 1999
Bay Martelli
Pentecost
5 Dead

1

2

Cyclone Pam

March 2015
6 Dead



Earthquake

January 2002
Port Vila
No Dead

4

3

Volcanic Eruption

2017 - 2018
Ambae



Cyclone Harold

April 2020
1 Dead



5

6

COVID-19

Though this is not a natural disaster, the ripple effects of this infectious disease was global as Vanuatu's economy took a hit after borders were closed, resulting in no international tourism arrivals

7

