



Regional Policy Briefing No.9

Briefing series on Small island economies: from vulnerabilities to opportunities

Building resilience to climate change in the Pacific islands

31st October-2nd November 2012, Le Lagon Resort, Vanuatu

PRESS RELEASE 24 October 2012

Key Briefing to push climate change and green growth agenda in the Pacific

Climate change is already disproportionately affecting the islands of the Pacific. Although islanders have done little to contribute to the causes of climate change – less than 0.03% of current global greenhouse gas emissions – they are among the first to be exposed to a range of environmental, social and economic effects.

Most islands are experiencing impacts on community livelihoods, infrastructure, water supply, coastal and forest ecosystems, fisheries, agriculture, and human health. They are increasingly exposed to the negative consequences of sea level rise, sea temperature increases, ocean acidification, altered rainfall patterns, and overall temperature rise.

Policy-makers, researchers, civil society groups, and development partners will gather in Port Vila, Vanuatu next week (31 October – 2 November 2012) to address these issues in a special briefing session organized by the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development (CTA), in partnership with the Government of Vanuatu, and the Pacific Group of Ambassadors based in Brussels.

More than 60 regional and international organisations are expected to join the talks, aiming to help lay the ground for an enhanced regional cooperation policy that focuses on shared responses and common strategies to climate change.

Experts will address climate change vulnerabilities, mitigation and adaptation, as well as aspects of green growth. Mitigation includes efforts to reduce the buildup of greenhouse gas and other climate-modifying constituents. Adaptation schemes enable communities, now or in the future, to cope with changes caused by global warming, such as using improved crops that withstand drought. Green growth involves economic progress that fosters environmentally sustainable, low-carbon and socially inclusive development – activities such as renewable energy, low carbon transport, energy- and water-efficient buildings, and sustainable agriculture and fisheries.

Climate change funding and strategies for international negotiations will also be on the agenda. Speakers come from a range of backgrounds, including UNESCO, SPREP, Oxfam, and the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat.

“These are serious matters for the Pacific region, not only in dealing with challenges we see today, but also in ensuring the survival and livelihood of future generations. The Briefing is an opportunity to bring together policy makers and practitioners to share lessons and propose concrete steps for the way forward. The Pacific countries will have to identify and develop areas of opportunity and comparative advantage,” said Mr Michael Hailu, Director of CTA.

The outcomes from the Briefing will be presented to the 1st ACP Council of Ministers on Climate Change that will be held in Brussels from 7 to 9 November 2012. It will also contribute to the 18th session of the Conference of the Parties to the UNFCCC, taking place 26 November to 7 December in Doha, .

H E Mr Roy Mickey Joy, Vanuatu’s Ambassador to the EU who is actively engaged in organizing the Briefing said, “The convening of this special briefing for the Pacific ACP region is an important

stepping stone in projecting the region's position and interests to the ACP Ministers Climate Change Meeting in Brussels as well as to the UNFCCC COP 18 process in Doha, in December“.

Ambassador Joy, speaking on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Vanuatu, said he is grateful to the ACP- EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Development CTA for their commitment and support for the briefing in Vanuatu.

For further enquiries, please contact Ms Isolina Boto (boto@cta.int) or visit the Regional Policy Briefings blog (<http://www.acpbriefings.net> and <http://brusselsbriefings.net>).

Full program attached.