



NEW ASSETS FOR PUMA



Your cooperation is necessary to improve our Monthly News letter, so please give us information about coming events and projects.

The Planning and Urban Management Agency at the beginning of this month received additional equipments

The equipment includes a *sound level meter*, 3 *computer workstations*, *digital camera*, and a *vehicle*. The new equipment have been procured under the joint-project between the World Bank and the Government of Samoa, namely the Second Infrastructure Asset Management Project (SIAM-2) to strengthen the Ministry's Planning and Urban Management Agency's capacity for environmental and coastal monitoring.

The Agency welcomes the new resources and the impact has been immediate and positive. Administering the Planning and Urban Management Act 2004 has required these resources to ensure site inspections are carried out, information is recorded appropriately, and assessments are made to ensure that environmental resource management is addressed effectively. For example, the sound level meter provides the quantitative method and objectivity for addressing excessive noise complaints on behalf of the community.



Tagaloa Jude Kohlhase (ACEO PUMA), Vitaoa Peleiupu Fuatai (Project Component Manager, SIAM-2 C4) and PUMA staff displaying the new resources.

RELATED ARTICLE

THE NOISE POLICY

The PUMA Act 2004 (Section.63) requires the Agency to control the emission of noise and to mitigate any negative effects of noise. The Agency has developed a 'Noise Policy' to provide guidance on how the Samoan planning system can be used to minimise the adverse impact of noise without placing unreasonable restrictions on development or adding unduly to the costs and administrative burdens of business.

The Noise Policy sets out standard noise limits for every land use and is applied generally to both urban areas and on large scale developments in the rural areas.

The impact of noise is one of the considerations of the Agency when assessing a proposed development through the development consent process.

The Agency will ensure that existing and proposed developments do not cause an unacceptable degree of disturbance or is 'excessive'. The Noise Policy sets out noise limits which the Agency has adopted to manage noise and conditioning development approvals. Noise intensity is measured in decibels (dBA) units by using a sound level meter.

Excessive Noise is defined as any noise that is under human control and of such a nature as to unreasonably interfere with the peace, comfort and convenience of any person.

Excessive noise is a nuisance and can certainly affect the amenity of the community specifically to residence with sick or elderly parents. Excessive noise is not only a nuisance but it has detrimental health effects particularly to human sense of hearing.

There are a variety of strategies for mitigating noise. Roadway or traffic noise can be mitigated by using noise barriers, limitation of vehicle speeds and heavy duty vehicles. Industrial noise can be control by using buffer zones from sensitive land uses such as residential. Site layout design can also mitigate noise impact but considering the surrounding area and possible noise impact to the proposed development.

(A copy of this policy can be obtained from the Office at 5th Floor DBS building, Savalalo)



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PACIFIC ISLANDS HERITAGE WORKSHOP

Cairns, Queensland Australia

The Pacific Islands World Heritage Workshop attended by Mr. Elisaia Talouli and Ms. Tuiolo Schuster was coordinated by Australia focused on achievements and challenges faced by PICs in terms of implementing the World Heritage Convention and to agree on a process to address these in the coming years.

It was also an opportunity for the region to ensure that its interests in World Heritage are appropriately addressed with the development of the new Pacific Action Plan 2010 - 2015.

A total of 85 participants from 18 countries and international bodies attended the workshop and each of the country participants presented on the status of the convention and preparations for World Heritage Listing (WHL), heritage sites on the Tentative List, how the sites were being managed and issues to be addressed in the new Action Plan.

There were also a number of presenters from various international bodies, Australian Heritage Agencies and, in particular, traditional leaders from the local Aboriginal communities (known as 'rainforest people') who shared their experiences on the various aspects of heritage management.

With the Pacific recognized as one of the most under-represented regions on the World Heritage List (WHL),

this year at the 32nd World Heritage Committee meeting in Canada marked the inscription of 4 new Pacific sites in the WHL. These sites were successfully prepared and nominated from Vanuatu (1) and PNG (3) in addition to East Rennell Island of the Solomon Island. Samoa submitted its Tentative List in 2006 with two sites that can be considered for inscription in the near future.



Tuiolo Schuster & Emily from UNESCO



Elisaia Talouli & representative from FSM at Green Islands (Heritage Site)

World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Coordination and Capacity Building Meeting for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) in Asia-Pacific

Port Villa, Vanuatu

Resolutions and deliberations at the WMO Congress and Executive and Regional Association; (WMO Programme for LDCs Brussels Plan of Action Midterm Review Process (Preparatory meetings; Inter-Agency Consultations Group; WMO/OHRLLS Joint Events in New York 2006 - 2007; Madrid Action Plan on Socio-Economic Benefits of Meteorological and Hydrological Services and Information Meeting for LDCs in Africa (2007) highlight the need for an Asia-Pacific LDC meeting for Regional Association V.

The Government of Vanuatu requested the organization to host this meeting and agreed for 6 to 10 October 2008.

The scope was to provide a forum for enhancing partnership and coordination at national and regional levels between various government Officials, which include LDC focal point at the National Planning level and Heads' of Meteorological and Hydrological Services

and also to undertake basic strategic planning and addressing the implementation of the Programme of Action for LDCs .

The objectives of the meeting:

- Promote a better understanding of the actual and potential contribution of NMHSs to the development of LDCs and enhance WMO support to the implementation of the Programme of Action for the LDCs

- Share experiences and best practices on the beneficial use of weather, climate and water related services and information to address poverty reduction and other challenges

- Enhance leadership skills of Directors of NMHSs

The ACEO-Meteorology Division, Mulipola Ausetalia Titimaea attended the meeting on behalf of the Ministry and hence the government.

METEOROLOGY

RAINFALL REPORT

The month of October was drier than normal; even drier when it is compared to the rainfall observed in the same period last year. It is the driest October in five years. Majority of the climate stations recorded below to well below average rainfall.

Suppressed rainfall was first observed in July; but it was not until August that our climate forecasting model SCOPIC generated drought warnings for Apia, Afiamalu, Faleolo and other areas in Savaii including Asau. To date, only Afiamalu and Asau are still experiencing the effects of the meteorological drought that has been over Samoa for the past three months.

The impact of the meteorological drought was also felt further east at the Afulilo hydropower station with the decrease in electricity outputs from the Taelefa power plant. Water supplies were also affected in some villages around Apia.

Analysis of monthly rainfall totals for the previous three months, a steady increase was evident in the months heading into the Wet Season. Despite this increase, it was still not enough to ease water shortages experienced in main catchment areas and notably in streams and rivers across the country.

Looking at seasonal rainfall totals for August to October period, it is noted that this season's rainfall total of

227.0mm is the lowest seasonal total since 1990 (18 years). The displacement of the rainfall producing system known as the South Pacific Convergence Zone (SPCZ) south-west of its normal position (south of Samoa) is one factor affecting the rainfall patterns. Fresh cold easterly winds are also blamed for fanning the ocean surfaces around Samoa keeping it cool, reducing evaporation and moisture critical for making rain.

For the next three months from November to January 2009 and if current ocean and atmospheric conditions persist, there is a good chance rainfall will be normal to below normal.

Table 1. October Monthly totals

STATION	MONTHLY TOTAL	% OF NORMAL
APIA	120.9	53%
NAFANUA	167.8	71%
AFIAMALU	161.2	36%
FALEOLO	138.8	89%
MAOTA	146.4	47%

For more information in relation to the above please consult the "October 2008 Climate Summary" report or the Climate Services Section on telephone line 20855 or email address sunny.seuseu@mnre.gov.ws.

EARTHQUAKE REPORT

SUMMARY

Magnitude (Richter) GSN reading	4.9
MMI Intensity	MM 2
Region	Tonga
Coordinate Location	16.301 deg S, 173.687 deg W
Depth (km)	15 km (9.5 miles)
Time (UTC / SLT)	07:18:54 UTC or 8:18:54 pm SLT (Wednesday 29/10/2008)
Distance from Apia (km)	405 km South West of Apia, Samoa
Felt (YES / NO / ?)	Yes
Tsunami (YES / NO / ?)	No
Damaging (YES / NO / ?)	No report of any damage from this ground motion shaking

A magnitude 4.9 earthquake in the Tongan Region has occurred at: **16.301 degrees S, 173.687 degrees W**, Depth **15 kilometers** on Wednesday October 29 2008 at **8:18:54(pm)** Samoan local time.

For more information, please contact the Geophysics Section or the National Disaster Management Section of the Samoa Meteorology Division.

WASTE MANAGEMENT BILL

The Environment and Conservation Division in particular its Waste Management Unit is formulating a Waste Management law to provide a sound administrative and regulatory framework in Samoa for the management of solid wastes and hazardous wastes (and substances).

The draft *Waste management Bill 2008* would enable the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) to discharge its functions in relation to the management of all wastes in an environmentally sound manner and also reflect Samoa's international obligations under the relevant Conventions that Samoa has already ratified such as the Rotterdam Convention, Waigani Convention, Basel Convention and the Stockholm Convention.

This project is supported by SPREP.

A first draft of the Waste Management Bill was developed and two consultations have been carried out already beginning within the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment on 8th October 2008 and followed by the broad stakeholder consultation on 15th October 2008. The latter consultation involved senior and management officers of MNRE, senior officers from ten (10) government Ministries, representatives from government corporations such as SPA, EPC, SLC and SWA. Also participated were private companies dealing with collection and recycling of waste and US Peace Corps Office, SUNGO and SPREP.

The key features of the Waste Management Bill is that it introduces the 'user pay principle' to enable the imposition of special waste related levies on particular goods that have adverse effects on the environment.

It also includes the development of Environmental Standards relating to waste management practices and facilities and the Division of Environment for the time being shall be responsible for monitoring and enforcement of these. Public health standards relating to waste management practices and facilities shall be set by the Ministry of Health and MoH shall be responsible for monitoring and enforcement of these.

The new law should permit the making of rules relating to such matters as -

- The size and nature of waste receptacles.
- The placing of waste receptacles so as to facilitate the collection of wastes.

- The provision of stands and for containment of wastes.
- The separation of certain types of wastes.

If these are not complied with then collection may be refused or an additional charge may be applied.

The draft Waste management Bill also enables the development of a licensing scheme to register waste collection and disposal contractors.

It is envisaged that the community consultation for the said draft Waste Management Bill will take place before the end of the year and then submit the final draft to the Attorney General's Office for its further review.

Consultations with the Ministry and Stakeholders



NOTICE BOARD

NATIONAL ENVIRONMENT WEEK
5TH - 8TH NOVEMBER

Promotion
Sila Faleao - Procurement Officer