



Name of Project: Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development

Implementing Agency: Samoa Tourism Authority

Project Coordinator: Amiaifolau Afamasaga - Luatua

Telephone: 63506

OUTCOME 5 - TOURISM COMPONENT

Progress Report, January – June 2013

Summary of Project Goal and Objectives:

The main goal of the Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development Project is ***“to safeguard human development in Samoa from risks associated with climate change on planning, water resources, fire prevention and tourism sectors while simultaneously reducing green house emissions across these sectors”***

The objectives are:

- To increase the resilience and adaptive capacity of Samoa’s meteorological, planning, water, fire and tourism sectors with ongoing sustainable sources of funding
- To reduce the nation’s green house emissions through mitigation technologies within the agro-forestry sector

The Tourism Component which is the Outcome 5 of the Samoa-Australia Partnership for Development Project aims to ***“increase the resilience and adaptive capacity of the tourism sector in Samoa, by reducing current and future climate-related risks to the sector and its related economic, social and environmental systems”***

1. INTRODUCTION

The Tourism Component through this NAPA 4 programme tries to ***“increase the adaptive capacity and resilience of the tourism sector to the adverse impacts of climate change.”***

The lead implementing agency for the Tourism Component is the Samoa Tourism Authority which is the national tourism office and also the coordinating body for the tourism sector in its product development, destination marketing and research statistical programmes in Samoa.

This programme assisted the Tourism Component with the formulation of the National Tourism Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Samoa, 2012 – 2017 and has since guided the work of the sector on strengthening its capacity to identify the impacts of climate change on tourism resources and subsequently establish relevant standards. The period reported, is January – June 2013.

It is important to note that during this period, the Tourism Component Work Plan for January to December 2012 is on hold to await approval by the National Steering Committee.

2. PROJECT PROGRESS

2.1 Activities Implemented

Output 5.1 National Tourism Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Samoa, 2012 – 2017

The NTCCASS has been launched in 2012 and the process for its formulation was reported in previous progress updates.

Output 5.2 Trainings, Education & Awareness

One of the fundamental needs identified during the formulation of the NTCCASS document, is awareness and education of climate and weather information as well as requirements relating to Development consent processes and Environmental Impact Assessments.

Furthermore, the Tourism Component Work plan for the progressing Financial Year planned collaborative training workshops with the PUMA, DMO and Meteorology divisions of MNRE to build the capacity of tourism officials who will be responsible for delivering the information and planning tools to assist with implementation of climate change adaptation activities for the tourism sector. It is however ideal that these workshops are taken out to the tourism business operators and tourism stakeholders.

The Tourism Component was able to implement two of the trainings planned for its tourism officials in the period reported.

i) EIA Guidelines Awareness Training for Tourism Officials was conducted on April 15th 2013.

The following lists training objectives for the EIA Awareness training for tourism officials:

- To promote good EIA practice as part of sustainable development advocacy
- To raise understanding of the EIA legal framework and its requirements; and
- To provide practical advice to those assisting or preparing EIAs

The presented information is outlined as follows:

- Definition of EIA and its Implications on the Tourism Sector
- Emerging Issues in Practice
- Regulatory Matters – Planning & Urban Management Act
- EIA Regulations, International Principles, Processes, Screening and Scoping
- Assessments and Impact Analysis
- Mitigation and Impact Management, Consultation, Reporting, Audit and Determination, Compliance
- PUMA Processes – Triggering the assessment, Quality of Submissions and desired format of reporting
- Highlights & Summary

□ **Summary of Presented Information**

○ **Introduction and Overview**

Seven tourism officials participated in this training from the Planning and Development as well as the Policy and Advice Divisions of STA. The Samoa Hotels Association also sent one of their staff to attend. (Please refer Annex 1)

Participants learnt of the encompassing definition of the environment. It was also noted that the impacts on the environment include not only its physical and biological components but also includes various social and economic factors.

The EIA process as part of the Development Consent were explained as a planning tool which tries to assess both positive and negative potential environmental impacts of any given project was also noted by the participants particularly the role of the Planning and Development staff who deal with offering advice in the planning stages of tourism developments.

There were also comments on the processes of the EIAs being long and complex and recommendations to further simplify. It was explained by the PUMA staff that the EIA process tries to identify risks and mitigation measures, at most occasions it is the developer which is the hurdle to fast tracking as there is no time period given.

○ **Regulatory Matters**

The Planning and Urban Management Act was presented and explained in detail and the participants learnt of the requirements under PUMA to ensure sustainable development.

Discussions were around the threshold for EIA as part of the Development Consent and it was explained that the threshold is not in the law but is upon the PUMA Board to decide on this matter with a range of \$5,000 to \$50,000.

Information on what triggers the decision to conduct an EIA as well as the consequences of not conducting an EIA was also provided for the participants.

○ **Theory**

The international principles of EIA as well as the stages in the process were provided for the participants. The EIA Process stages include screening, scoping, assessment and impact analysis, mitigation and impact management, consultation, reporting, audit and determination and lastly compliance

This information was very useful which directly assists in advising new and existing tourism developments on the importance of satisfying the set criteria for sustainability of new and existing tourism developments.

○ **Highlights and Summary**

The participants learnt of the importance of quality EIAs that will assist with better decisions and is also an important tool for business risk considerations.

The information provided through this training was very useful and there is hope that there will be an opportunity through this programme to provide the same workshop for the tourism industry members for their information for sustainable tourism development.

ii) Climate, Weather and Geo-science Awareness Training for Tourism officials conducted on June 6th, 2013.

A total of twelve tourism officials participated in this workshop from the Divisions of Marketing and Promotions, Corporate Services, Research and Statistics as well as the Planning and Development Division. The Samoa Hotels Association also assigned one representative to this workshop. (Refer Annex 2)

The following are training objectives for the Climate, Weather and Geo-science Awareness Training:

- The Climate Early Warning System as a disaster preparedness tool and how tourism needs can be tailored into the system
- Climate and weather information available to identify what best suits our sector's needs with their planning and development and daily activities
- Available information and products with regards to the geophysics of Samoa particularly the tsunami early warning system
- Brief overview of the geology of Samoa in relation to climate change

□ **Summary of Presented Information**

○ **Weather Forecast**

Participants were very interested in the new proposed city forecast. This provided sufficient text information alongside the visuals which further helped to simplify the weather message. A further suggestion requested the inclusion of the tide table to the city forecast for the information of tourists at the Samoa Tourism Information Fair.

A relative comment was also made to resorts in Fiji and the availability of daily weather updates and also requested that this information is provided through the Samoa Hotels' Main office for dissemination to their members.

○ **Tropical Cyclones**

The information presented on the forecast of tropical cyclones was very appropriate and well received particularly the terminology in relation to the local conditions.

Discussion was mainly on understanding the terminology and the best way forward to try and understand from a layman's perspective. It was also suggested that during the reading of tropical cyclones forecast to it will helpful to also include the villages or areas around the winds locations.

It was noted from discussions that the Advisories and Warnings are vital tools for the tourism sector to plan an Action & Procedural Booklet for the hotel and beach fale operators in response to different stages of Tropical cyclone warnings and other hazard warnings as well. However, given the time constraints in the workshop programme, it was left to be further discussed in the near future.

○ **Climate Science**

The participants were also very fortunate to have received the presented information from Professor Yuriy who was invited by the team to talk on the science behind climate information. There was discussion on how much traditional knowledge is used in understanding climate and as much as it is important particularly in Samoa's context, traditional knowledge is to be validated scientifically. However, with reference to historical and statistical data, this is very much used for analysis by the technical experts.

Output 5.3 Environmental system for tourism resource management – data collection, storage and analysis

This activity is proposed under the Work Plan that is currently on hold through membership in the Global Sustainable Tourism Council's Early Adopters Programme to assist in the initial assessments for the tourism sector in Samoa. It is anticipated that through this activity, baseline assessment will be developed to assist in the process of sustainable tourism certification for Samoa as a sustainable tourism destination.

Output 5.4 Information system for tourism resource management – data collection, storage and analysis

The full resourcing of the Tourism Climate Change Resource Center that was developed under the Tourism Component of this Programme is also an activity that is included in the Work Plan to be approved by the NAPA 4 National Steering Committee.

Output 5.5 Monitoring and Evaluation

The Tourism Component had developed a Monitoring & Evaluation template which assisted with the monitoring of its activities not only under this Project but other parallel programmes as well. (Refer Annex3)

Output 5.6 Project Administration

The Tourism Component Project Coordinator continues to be paid under NAPA 4 and for the period reported, the two workshops that have been held and coordination of activities for the NAPA 5 GEF funded tourism project on "Enhancing the resilience of tourism – reliant communities" were duties which have also been assumed as part of the coordination duties of this position under the Tourism Component.

The project document for the NAPA 5 tourism project titled “Enhancing the resilience of tourism – reliant communities to climate change risks” was officially signed between the Government of Samoa and UNDP as the Implementing Agency of GEF in country in May 2013.

3. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

(a). Governance

The challenge with regards to the governance aspect of our component is the Project Document or the guiding document for this Programme which lists the following activities for the Tourism component.

- 5.1 National Tourism Adaptation Strategy 2010-2015 developed by Climate Change Tourism Task Force
- 5.2 Capacity in EIA (Environmental Impact Assessment) of tourism development strengthened by the Climate Change Tourism Task Force
- 5.3 Standards for tourism infrastructures improved
- 5.4 Standards for tourism services and transport developed
- 5.5 Standards for nature tourism services developed
- 5.6 Pilot to:
 - (i) conduct compliance audits in tourism plant
 - (ii) tree propagation (i.e. planting of 100,000 trees)
- 5.7 Information System for tourism resource management data collection, storage and analysis established by the Climate Change Tourism Task Force

The challenge that our component had faced was in trying to justify that under the original Work Plan for the programme, it was clear that the NTCCASS although the main, was not the sole activity of the Tourism Component as was also the case with other sectors in this programme.

It was also noted that we had reviewed some of the targets since implementation in early 2011 to better reflect the priority needs of the sector in terms of climate change adaptation to include Education, Training and Awareness Programmes, hence the activities had been revised accordingly.

Request was also made through the lead implementing agency, MNRE for the remaining funds for the Tourism Component and with four months remaining of the year, it was unclear whether the Work Plan activities indicated will be implemented.

(b). Finances

At the closure of the period reported, the Tourism Component was unable to implement any activities as its Work Plan was seeking approval from the Steering Committee of the Programme, hence the little spending reflected on the ledger.

(c). Sustainability

The Tourism Climate Change Project through this programme had been established through the funding assistance of the Samoa – Australia Partnership for Development Programme. It will be sustained through the assistance of the NAPA 5 GEF/LDCF resources for which US\$1.95 had been approved and officially signed in May 2013 between the Government of Samoa and UNDP.

This assistance will look at implementing a part of the National Tourism Climate Change Adaptation Strategy for Samoa, 2012 – 2017 mainly at the selected 6 Tourism Development Areas focusing on small – scale tourism operations and the communities reliant on these operations.

Furthermore, this assistance will provide support to small-scale beach tourism and accommodation operators on vitals areas like shoreline protection, water resources management, design & management of facilities to withstand storms, diversification of tourism sites & activities considering increasingly varying weather conditions.

The Project Coordinator position established under NAPA 4 will also be continued under NAPA 5.

Assistance from the CCCPIR GIZ funded project has also been indicated to address the 5th Objective of the NTCASS which looks to “Raise awareness at the national, sector and community levels about the need to promote and support climate change adaptation measures”. (Refer Annex 4)

Additional to the funding support indicated, the Samoa Tourism Authority on behalf of the Government of Samoa has been providing support financially and in-kind through staffing and resources required for project support and payment for activities that were needed urgently for the project given the Work Plan for the Component was on hold during the period reported.

4. CONCLUSION

We acknowledge the funding assistance from the Government of Australia through the Samoa – Australia Partnership for Development Programme which has enabled the tourism component implement what is was able to do with the funds made available in the given time – frame.

Prepared by Project Coordinator _____
Amiaifolau Afamasaga – Luatua

Date: ____/____/____

Approved by Chief Executive Officer _____
Papalii Matatamalii Sonja Hunter

Date: ____/____/____

ANNEXES

1. Climate, Weather and Geoscience Awareness Workshop Report for Tourism Officials
2. EIA Training Programme and Participants List
3. Monitoring and Evaluation Framework template extracted from the NTCCASS
4. Climate Change Projects
5. Tourism Component spending (extracted from Ministry of Finance updated ledger August 2013)