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MEDIA RELEASE

Tonga Meteorological Services consults Vava'u stakeholders on its 2022-2031 Strategic Plan

(26 August 2021, Neiafu, Vava'u)

The Tonga Meteorological Services has successfully completed a 1-day consultation workshops with selected stakeholders of the Vava'u Group of Islands to plan the development of the Tonga Meteorological Service Strategic Plan 2022-2031.



Figure 1: Participants of the Tonga Meteorological Service Strategic Planning Strategic Consultation workshop on the 25 August 2021, Neiafu, Vava'u.

In a Statement, the Director of Meteorology, Mr. Ofa Fa'anunu stated ***“Traditionally the planning of the activities of the Meteorological Service in the past was very much Regionally driven. With the support of the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Program (SPREP) a series of Regional Strategies were developed to guide the work of Meteorological Services in the Pacific since around the year 2000. Since that time, we have come a long way in terms of the Development of the Met Office. We now have a Legislation (Meteorology Act 2017) that mandates what we do. What’s left is a long-term plan to guide the Development of the MET Service to where we want it to be in 10years time. To complement Regional plans like the Pacific Islands MET Strategy (PIMS) 2017-2026 and the Corporate and Annual Plans of the Department. Its important to plan well and have a structured approach to our development as it will ensure***

that we are working collaboratively and in-sink with our stakeholders. Our approach is to work closely with our Meteorological Offices and Stakeholders in the Niuas, Vava'u, Ha'apai, Tongatapu and 'Eua to Develop this long-term strategy. This work is timely to establish our 10year goals and priorities since the Pacific Islands FORUM Leaders Meeting just approved the Decadal Weather Ready Investment Initiative for the Pacific Islands Meteorological Services tabled by Tonga at the recent FORUM Meeting to the tune of USD166M. Setting our priorities early is vital so we are able to tap into the various regional funding schemes available. The bottom line is finding the appropriate resources to develop the Meteorological function in Tonga. The Strategy we are developing will assist in this important aspect.

The consultation workshop was enriched by the interactive discussions on the Strategy and Meteorological needs of the various Sectors. The focus Sectors during the Vava'u Consultations were the Government Sector, the Private/Business Sector, the Informal Sector and the Academia Sector.



Figure 2: Stakeholders from the Informal Sector discuss their Meteorological, Ocean and Coast Radio priorities. Fakamelino Hall, Neiafu, Vava'u, 25 August 2021.



Figure 3: Vava'u Government Stakeholders consider their priorities for inclusion in the Meteorology Strategy 2022-2031. Fakamelino Hall, Neiafu, Vava'u, 25 August 2021.



Figure 4: Private/Business Sector representative reflect on the needs of their Sector for consideration. Fakamelino Hall, Neiafu, Vava'u.



Figure 5: The Vava'u MEIDECC OIC, Lucy Fa'anunu (Furthest to the right) Deputy Director of Meteorology, Laitia Fifita (in the black vest) Lead discussions of the Academia Sector during the group breakout sessions. Fakamelino hall, Neiafu, Vava'u



Figure 6: Staff of Vava'u Meteorological Center discuss with the Expert Planning Team from Tongatapu the approach needed to compile the Meteorology Strategy 2022-2031, Neiafu, Vava'u



Figure 7: MEIDECC Director of Corporate, Vatulele Tuputupu (left) and the Deputy Director of Meteorology, Laitia Fifita Lead closed session discussions with the Vava'u Meteorological Staff on the Development of the MET Strategy, Neiafu, Vava'u

The Vava'u consultations is the first of 6 consultation Nationwide in the development of the Tonga Meteorology Strategy 2022-2-31. The consultation was attended by 36 participants and funded by the World Meteorological Organization through the Climate Risk and Early Warning Systems (CREWS) Initiative.

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