



SEVENTH MEETING OF THE PACIFIC METEOROLOGICAL COUNCIL (PMC-7)

"AT THE FRONTLINE OF WEATHER, CLIMATE, WATER, AND OCEAN ACTION IN THE PACIFIC"

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"At the Frontline of Weather, Climate, Water, and Ocean Action in the Pacific"

17-19 September 2024, Warwick Le Lagon-Vanuatu Resort, Port Vila, Vanuatu

Agenda Item 24: Other Matters – Open Letter from WMO RA V TCC & RSMT SWFP-SP highlighting Pacific NMHS needs to achieve the intent of WRP and EW4All

Purpose:

To elevate to the PMC the needs identified by WMO Members during recent meetings of the WMO Regional Association (RA) V Tropical Cyclone Committee (hereafter, the "Committee") for the South Pacific and South-East Indian Ocean, and the Regional Sub-programme Management Team (RSMT) for the WMO Severe Weather Forecasting Programme for the South Pacific (SWFP-SP).

Background:

1. The Committee, a subsidiary body of WMO's RA V, is tasked with promoting and coordinating measures to reduce loss of life, damage and economic losses caused by tropical cyclones and their related hazards in the South Pacific and South-East Indian Oceans.
2. The RSMT oversees the SWFP-SP, which aims to strengthen the capacity of the National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) in developing countries, including Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS), to deliver improved forecasts and warnings of severe weather (beyond tropical cyclones) to save lives, protect property, and safeguard livelihoods.
3. The Committee and RSMT held meetings back-to-back in Brisbane, Australia, from 30 July to 2 August 2024, which included an agenda item on the UN Early Warnings for All (EW4All) initiative and the Weather Ready Pacific (WRP) Programme as the main vehicle to deliver the goals of the EW4All initiative in the South Pacific.



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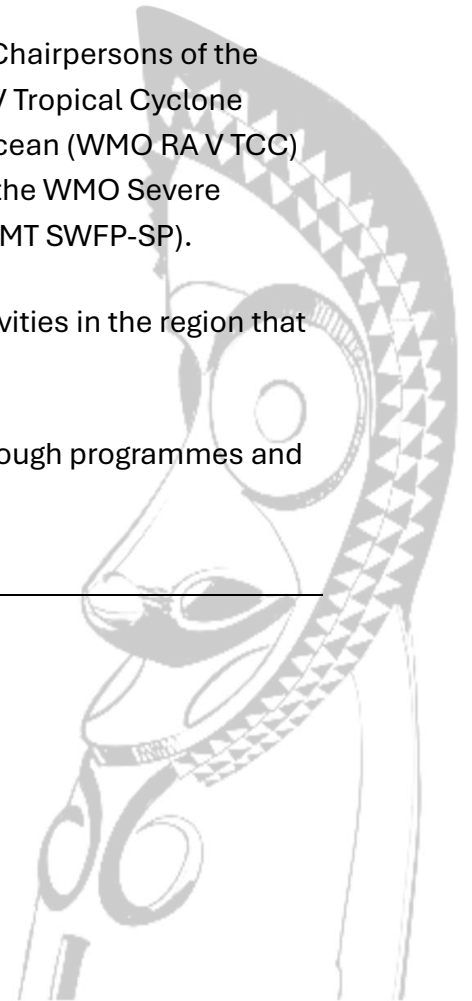
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4. Following a recommendation from these meetings, the Chairpersons prepared an Open Letter on behalf of the Committee and RSMT members, urging the PMC to prioritize the identified regional needs and consider how they can be addressed within existing and emerging frameworks, programmes and initiatives.
5. The Open Letter, presented as an attachment to this Paper, is a follow-up to and reinforces and builds on the needs highlighted in the Open Letter delivered to PMC-6 under Agenda Item 8.3.1 in 2023.

Recommendations:

The Meeting is invited to:

1. **Note the Open Letter** (appended to this Paper) from the Chairpersons of the World Meteorological Organization Regional Association V Tropical Cyclone Committee for the South Pacific and South-East Indian Ocean (WMO RA V TCC) and the Regional Sub-programme Management Team for the WMO Severe Weather Forecasting Programme for the South Pacific (RSMT SWFP-SP).
2. **Acknowledge the support** of WMO programmes and activities in the region that will help to achieve the goals of the WRP Programme.
3. **Prioritise as a matter of urgency** the identified needs through programmes and initiatives such as WRP and EW4All.





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Open letter to the Pacific Meteorological Council (PMC)

From the Chairpersons of the WMO RA V Tropical Cyclone Committee for the South Pacific and South-East Indian Ocean (RA V TCC) and the Regional Sub-programme Management Team (RSMT) for the WMO Severe Weather Forecasting Programme for the South Pacific (SWFP-SP)

3 September 2024

The Pacific is highly vulnerable to extreme weather-, water-, and climate-related events, such as tropical storms and cyclones, which can lead to dangerous sea conditions, storm surges, coastal inundation, damaging winds, and flooding. Additionally, heatwaves and droughts threaten freshwater supplies, agriculture, food security and livelihoods, while sea-level rise threatens entire communities with the potential for some islands to become uninhabitable.

Meteorological, hydrological, and climatological services, in this context referred to jointly as “hydrometeorological services”, are crucial for providing timely and actionable information to respond to these hazards. Early warnings enable actions that save lives, protect infrastructure, and improve management across various sectors.

Given the vast and sparsely populated oceanic region, the coordination of monitoring, forecasting, and warning services is critically important within the Pacific. This is the core purpose of two key WMO Programmes; the **Tropical Cyclone Programme (TCP)** and the **Severe Weather Forecasting Programme (SWFP)**.

Established in 1985, the WMO RA V Tropical Cyclone Committee (hereafter, the “Committee”) as part of the TCP focuses on promoting and coordinating the implementation of measures to minimize the impacts of tropical cyclones in the South Pacific and South-East Indian Ocean.

The WMO SWFP aims to improve the capacity of National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) for forecasts and warnings of severe weather beyond tropical cyclones by implementing a “cascading forecasting process,” which delivers products and services from the global to the regional and national levels.

The Committee held its 22nd session back-to-back with the 9th meeting of the Regional Sub-programme Management Team for the SWFP South Pacific (RSMT SWFP-SP) in Brisbane, Australia from 30 July to 2 August 2024.



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The meetings included an agenda item on the United Nations-led **Early Warnings for All (EW4All)** initiative and the **Weather Ready Pacific (WRP)** Program, identified by Pacific leaders as the main vehicle to deliver the goals of the EW4All initiative in the Pacific. Members were informed on the progress and future plans of both EW4All and WRP and discussed alignment of activities within the region to remove duplication and enhance efficiency of delivery.

During the meetings, Members also reflected on the recent tropical cyclone season, sharing impacts, operations and best practices, challenges, needs, and lessons learned. Based on those discussions the Committee recommended that common issues and needs in the context of EW4All and WRP be elevated, both nationally and regionally, to enhance visibility and action by Member states and supporting entities such as SPREP and WMO.

To action this recommendation, the Chairpersons of the Committee and RSMT have prepared this Open Letter to highlight the following **urgent needs** within the region, deemed critical to address by Members to enhance Pacific hydrometeorological services for the successful delivery of EW4All:

1. **Investment in observational networks:** Enhance and sustain marine, land, radar, and upper air environmental observation networks with more consideration of regional coordination and use of consistent technology for efficiency (including procurement, training, calibration, and maintenance).
2. **Access to high-resolution NWP data:** Improve access to and usage of high-resolution Numerical Weather Prediction (NWP) data, including for wave, coastal and land hazards, via appropriate platforms.
3. **Strengthen Impact-Based Forecast and Warning Services:** Develop, implement and enhance people-centred multi-hazard impact-based forecast and warning services (IBFWS), supported by best practice and fit-for-purpose operational procedures and collaborative inter-agency arrangements.
4. **Address communication challenges:** Exploit existing and emerging low-cost technologies to address the unique communication challenges (including power supply and internet connectivity), particularly across remote islands, for both the receipt of data and dissemination of forecast and warning information.



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- 5. Provision of training for capacity development:** Promote, support, and deliver training activities that meet technical and communication needs (including NWP and satellite utilisation and interpretation, tropical cyclone forecasting, IBFWS, and media training) via a mix of modalities including online, in-person, and attachment training.
- 6. Enhance regional collaboration:** Implement a collaborative platform within the region to enable all Members to participate in routine dialogue between national and regional centres to better facilitate two-way communication of needs and support.

The Committee and the RSMT **urge the PMC** to prioritise these needs and explore how they can be addressed and aligned within existing and emerging frameworks, programmes and initiatives to strengthen the region's resilience and adaptability to climate change and to achieve the UN's vision of "Early Warnings for All".

Chris Noble

Chairperson

For, and on behalf of, the:

WMO Regional Association V Tropical Cyclone Committee for the South Pacific and South-East Indian Ocean

Raveen Das

Chairperson

For, and on behalf of, the:

Regional Sub-programme Management Team of the WMO Severe Weather Forecasting Programme for the South Pacific

