

SOPAC GIS training in Tuvalu builds capacity

Written by Administrator

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Twenty-nine Tuvalu government employees successfully completed a 10 day training workshop in the use of Geographical Information Systems (GIS) conducted by technical officers from SOPAC from August 4 to the 17th in Funafuti.

SOPAC provides assistance to 19 island countries and territories in the Pacific region through applied geoscience and technology which includes GIS training.

GIS is a relatively new computer-based decision making tool that stores and displays information in an image such as a picture or a map format. "This allows policy or decision makers to better understand technical data and contribute to providing improved management solutions," said SOPAC Director, Russell Howorth.

The purpose of the workshop was for staff from a number of government departments to learn how to best use GIS in their work. Emphasis in the workshop was on the technical data to support rainwater harvesting, a method of collecting fresh rain water using a roof as a catchment with storage provided in nearby tanks.

Funafuti, the nation's capital, relies on three sources of water, wells, a desalination plant, and rainwater roof catchments, mostly the latter. The use of GIS in the training workshop was to determine through data collected the relationship between rainfall amount, roof catchment area and storage tank volume that would help decision makers decide on the best method of collecting the water.

The training was provided by SOPAC's Mr. Edwin Liava'a and Miss Vilisi Tokalauvere and was introduced into four separate sessions on different computer software related to data management, GIS applications, geographic positioning systems application and data capture, and image rectification.

The GIS workshop was organized by SOPAC with support from the Tuvalu National Adaptation Plan of Action for Climate Change and the Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change Project.

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Photo caption: *Discussing information they have raised on the Global Positioning System (GPS) as part of their training are (l-r) Fakasao Tofinga, Taumili MakaataMeelina (holding the GSI equipment) and Kilateli Epu.*

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