

Tuvalu benefits from new Tide Gauge

Written by Zarin Khan

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Tuvalu can now boast of housing a state-of-the-art Tide Gauge facility which will provide high quality sea level, climate and geodetic information that will assist with better planning and preparedness.

This new tide gauge was officially opened today by the Tuvalu Minister for Communication & Transport, Hon. Monise Laafai with support from the Australian Government and the Pacific Community (SPC).

Situated at the new wharf in Funafuti, the tide gauge will monitor weather, tides, sea level and

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land movement providing information in real time to the meteorological office. Tuvalu Meteorological office Director, Tauala Katea said the new tide gauge is a big boost for their office as it will assist with providing much more accurate tracking, assessment, forecasting and warnings.

“We are grateful to have this new tide gauge as it will enhance our work and communication to our people on climate and ocean conditions. This new Tide Gauge has a new dual polarised radar which means that we will receive clearer information for forecasting,” Mr Katea said.

The installation of the new tide gauge has been made possible through the Climate and Oceans Support Program in the Pacific (COSPPac), a program managed by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) through the support of the Australian Government.

Australia’s High Commissioner for Tuvalu, Amy Crago, said the installation of this tide gauge in Tuvalu is another example of Australia’s commitment towards addressing climate change issues faced in the Pacific.

“We now have 20 tide gauges in the Pacific that provide vital information and support in terms of sustainable growth, adaption and resilience,” Ms Crago said.

While the tide gauge will provide climate and ocean related data and information, it also collects information on land movement from global positioned satellites.

SPC’s Manager for Oceans & Coastal Geoscience, Jens Kruger, said that having this information is important to understand how the land is moving in relation to sea levels which is critical as Funafuti is a low lying island that is susceptible to rising sea levels.

“This facility will provide decision makers with critical information needed for any coastal infrastructure or development,” Mr Kruger said.

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The tide gauges provide real time observations and through COSPPac and BoM, SPC is able to publish Annual Tide Predictions which have been of great benefit to local fishermen and women, and related sectors for planning ocean and coastal activities.

This installation is being managed by the Australian Bureau of Meteorology, Geoscience Australia and the Pacific Community.

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