

Disaster Workshop for Vanuatu

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A five-day workshop to determine the economic cost of natural disasters in the Pacific will be held in Vanuatu from November 29th through December 2nd. The workshop has been organized to support Pacific island countries towards a clearer understanding of the economic impact of disasters.

“This information is of major importance in helping to organize recovery and rehabilitation efforts,” said Paula Holland, SOPAC’S Manager Natural Resources.

The Pacific is one of the most natural disaster prone regions of the world. Since the 1950s, Pacific island countries have reported 207 disaster events, affecting nearly 3.5 million people and costing in excess of US\$6.5 billion.

The Government of Samoa estimated that shortly after the Tsunami in 2009 the direct economic impact was close to US\$127 million or 5% of that country’s GDP (2008 figures).

“What is essential for recovery funding is a consistent process that determines the cost of a disaster, and one that allows for comparisons of like disaster over time,” said Ms. Holland.

The workshop is being jointly organized by SOPAC and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN-ESCAP), the International Strategy for Disaster Reduction (ISDR), IUCN and the European Commission for Latin America (ECLAC) with the support of the World Bank and the United Nations.