



Fetuvalu Secondary School students learn about wastewater pollution and Composting Toilets

World Water Day, March 22, 2010

Tuvalu takes World Water Day to the children of Funafuti with games and important lessons for all

For World Water Day 2010, Tuvalu's Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM) and Pacific Adaption to Climate Change (PACC) projects joined the Department of Health to create a range of activities to raise awareness among children and their families.

In Tuvalu, several water related issues affect the community. These include water quality, water shortages and wastewater pollution. These issues affect everyone and can be dealt with at a household level through correct household water management.

During the week-long events, the Department of Health took part in awareness raising by highlighting the need to boil water and discussing water quality and hygiene on radio. Information booklets were also distributed.

IWRM and PACC spent the week working with school students by giving presentations and taking questions on topics from water catchment and storage to conservation and maintenance. Fun workbooks were given to the students to reiterate what they had learnt and contained activities they could complete with their families.

IWRM emphasised the dangers of wastewater pollution and introduced composting toilets to address water shortages and reduce pollution.

PACC highlighted the need for clean water, teaching students how to keep their water clean and monitor its quality. H₂S testing used by the Department of Health to assess bacteria levels in water tanks was demonstrated to students.

The highlight of the week was "Primary Challenge". This quiz, modelled on the TV show "University Challenge", had contestants represent their schools and compete against each other in a quiz based on World Water Day. Topics included rainwater harvesting, storage and conservation, clean water, hygiene and sanitation. The event was highly entertaining - members of the audience took part in interval activities and enjoyed the competition, which Nauti primary school won. The event was also broadcast on radio and made into a film.

Due to difficulties in accessing schools on the outer-islands, only children on the capital island of Funafuti took part in the events. However, the day was so successful that outer island primary schools requested materials so that they can reproduce the quiz and activities at home.

For further information contact, Catherine Moulogo: catherine.moulogo@live.co.uk



Nauti Primary school learn about H₂S water quality testing



Primary school students cheer for their team in Tuvalu's World Water Day Quiz



Tony Kuman hands out prizes to students during PNG World Water Day launch.

World Water Day in PNG – “Safe water for a Healthy Papua New Guinea”

The launch of World Water Day in PNG went off with a big splash. Tony Kuman and his team did a fantastic job organising a gathering of distinguished people interested in water quality. The Secretary for the Department of Environment and Conservation, Dr Wari Iamo, opened World Water Day at Port Moresby Grammar School by explaining the role the government and his agency played in this year’s theme: “Communicating Challenges and Opportunities – Safe Water for a Healthy PNG”.

Dr Iamo highlighted the lead role his agency played in the maintenance of ecosystems and monitoring of water use and the challenges faced by PNG and its environment to provide safe water in a time of rapid industrial and agricultural development, high population growth, urbanisation, and climate change.

The water supply sector was well represented with the Managing Director of PNG Water Board, Patrick Amini, emphasizing the priority need for his sector to provide safe quality water to the communities they serve and of the need to keep up with developments in water treatment technology. Billy Imar, General Manager of Port Moresby’s water supplier Eda Ranu, reiterated these comments and described the activities Eda Ranu takes to ensure the city has access to safe quality water. The acting Head of Delegation of the European Union Dr Kay Beese detailed the support the EU was providing to improve the availability and access to safe drinking water in rural communities.

Major water suppliers used the day to promote their agencies and operations. The Governor of the National Capital District, the Hon. Powers Parkop, reminded water suppliers that they needed to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of water service delivery. He urged them to address the quality of their infrastructure and the high levels of water loss.

Support for World Water Day came from over a dozen major commercial enterprises, whose generous sponsorship made the event possible and attracted considerable publicity. A four page World Water Day supplement was included in The National newspaper and there was national TV coverage of the event. The publicity generated by World Water Day resulted in both national newspapers placing follow up news and editorials relating to global and national water issues. In relation to this year’s goal of raising water awareness, PNG’s activities can be seen as a success.



Students listen to speakers at PNG World Water Day.

For further information contact, Tony Kuman: tkuman@dec.gov.pg



Dr Russell Howarth addresses World Water Day participants in Nadi, Fiji. ©SOPAC

World Water Day in Fiji

In Fiji World Water Day celebrations were delayed a week due to Hurricane Tomas. The national celebration was launched in Nadi on Friday March 26th and led by the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission's (SOPAC) Water Programme in partnership with Live and Learn Environment Education. The Econesian Society also launched its own event at the University of the South Pacific in collaboration with the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development.

At the World Water Day launch SOPAC Director, Dr Russell Howarth, highlighted the fact that more time and effort and necessary resources are needed throughout the Pacific to ensure people are provided with secure access to safe water.

"Historically there has remained the problem of poor supply and quality of freshwater resources, a lack of adequate sanitation, and a limited capacity to deal with these issues," Dr Howarth said. "At the national level there are often a multitude of agencies that deal with water and the fragmented management of this resource is compounded with a lack of overarching policy, outdated laws, and poor administration capacity."

Dr Howarth said there needed to be more commitment to water resource monitoring and assessment so that countries had hydrological data at hand to better manage their resources and provide design data for infrastructure projects "especially given climate change and the adaption measures necessary to mitigate its direct effects".

He cautioned that there is no "quick fix" solution and highlighted the work being done by SOPAC and its partners to remedy water issues across the region.

SOPAC and Live and Learn, with funding from Taiwan (Republic of China), provided participating school students and community representatives with user friendly water quality awareness packs that teach people how to improve water quality by protecting and sustainably managing water and waterways. These awareness packs were also sent to other Pacific Island countries.

At USP's Laucala campus, the Econesian Society highlighted water related issues and emphasized the importance of saving water. The event was launched with the theme 'Turn it Off' and 'Keep it Off. Apart from display and information booths setup on site, a survey was conducted to find out how the level water consciousness among university students and staff.



The Fiji World Water Day information booth. ©SOPAC

For further information contact, Tiy Chung: tiy@sopac.org



The Samoa IWRM project bus was used to transport students to the World Water Day event.

Clean Water for a Healthy Samoa

Samoa's theme for World Water Day (WWD) 2010 was "Clean Water for a Healthy Samoa". The day was an ideal opportunity for the Samoa Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) project to raise awareness and build capacity around IWRM concepts. Government officials and stakeholders from different sectors were invited to the opening ceremony and Year 12 science students from colleges around Upolu and Savaii were invited to take part in planned awareness and capacity building activities. Buses displaying the IWRM project signs were used to pick up students early that morning from as far as the Mulifanua Wharf on the eastern side of Upolu Island.

More than 300 people attended the ceremony, including the Deputy Prime Minister of Samoa, the Honourable Misa Telefoni, and the Australian, New Zealand and Chinese High Commissioners. The event was officially opened by the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment's CEO Susuga Taulealeausumai Laavasa Malua who welcomed everyone and explained this year's theme. The keynote speech was given by the Minister of Natural Resources & Environment, the Honourable Faumuina Liuga Tiatia, who focussed on the meaning of WWD and its importance to the Samoan people.

The morning's events ended with an invitation for officials to take part in a tree planting ceremony, which not only marked WWD but also served as the Watershed contribution to the Samoa One Million Tree campaign.

The rest of the day focussed on awareness and capacity building activities for the school students. It started with a presentation from the Hydrology section of the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment's (MNRE) Water Resources Division, the Ministry of Health, and the Samoa Water Authority. The joint presentation addressed challenges and solutions to achieve clean water and enhanced awareness on the relationship between quality of our water resources and our drinking water.

The presentation was followed by field trips that included more tree planting around watershed catchments and a water quality monitoring exercise where students and the public were able to test water quality on five sites around the Loimata o Apaula catchment. Parameters such as turbidity, temperature, saturation, acidity, and dissolved oxygen were tested using portable kits organised for the day.

The day ended with a session where students reviewed and discussed their water tests results and attending schools were presented with World Water Day Participation Certificates to commemorate this special day. It was a very successful day and made possible through the generous sponsorship of the Water Sector Support Program (WaSSP), the Samoa IWRM Project and the tireless efforts of the Ministry of Natural and Environment's Water Resource Division personnel who made sure the venue and sites were ready for the occasion.

For further information contact, Sam Semisi: sam.semisi@mnre.gov.ws



Students planting trees in the catchment area.