

Pacific – Caribbean Learning Exchange: Climate Change Adaptation Workshop

March 9-16, 2014
Tumon, Guam



Learning exchange participants visit the village of Umatac to conduct a threat and vulnerability assessment. Photo © TNC.

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Executive Summary

From March 10-14, thirty managers (four from the Caribbean and twenty-six from Guam) participated in the Adapting to Changing Climate Workshop held in Tumon, Guam. The workshop was designed to train a team of practitioners on use of new tools being used throughout the Pacific to provide community members and stakeholders with an understanding of climate change concepts and adaptation strategies. Workshop participants gained first-hand experience with facilitating a community-based planning process to improve the resilience of natural and social resources and reduce vulnerability to climate change. Additionally, Caribbean managers provided feedback on the possible modification of the tools for use in the Caribbean.

Background

The Reef Resilience Program works to strengthen and enhance training and capacity building opportunities for coral reef managers to address the impacts of climate change and local stressors to coral reefs. To address this goal, the program organizes multiple Learning Exchanges each year with the objective of providing intensive in-person trainings to coral reef managers in order to improve management techniques on the ground and address site-specific needs of coral reef managers.

Objectives

From March 10-14, four managers working in the Caribbean participated in the Adapting to Changing Climate Workshop held in Tumon Bay, Guam. Twenty-six managers from Guam also participated in the workshop. Objectives of the Learning Exchange were:

- To gain first-hand experience with the Adapting to a Changing Climate tool, build skills, and give feedback on how the tool can be modified and used in the Caribbean.
- To connect with managers in Guam and learn how the tool is being used in the Pacific.

Participants & Facilitators

See the table below for details on participants. The participants included two women from Puerto Rico and Grenada, and 2 men from Belize and St. Vincent and the Grenadines.

PIMPAC regional advisor Meghan Gombos, and the Nature Conservancy's Micronesia Program Director, Trina Leberer, facilitated the workshop. Additional field experts were also invited to share some of the latest science around climate change and potential impacts to Guam. These included:

- John Marra – NOAA Climate Services
- Mark Lander – University of Guam, Water and Environmental Research Institute
- Val Brown – NOAA Fisheries on behalf of Dave Burdick of University of Guam

Agenda Overview

Support for the participation of four managers was provided by the Reef Resilience Program Manager and Program Assistant at the five day workshop. Prior to the workshop Reef Resilience

Program staff sent announcements to specific managers who would be able to use the Climate Change Adaptation Tool in their work to encourage their participation.

DAY 1: Caribbean Learning Exchange participant welcome and orientation

The first afternoon, before the start of the workshop, participants gathered for introductions and an orientation to the island of Guam by Valerie Brown of NOAA National Marine Fisheries Service. This allowed them to make initial connections with other managers from the Caribbean and to get an orientation of the area. The workshop agenda and their expectations were also reviewed.



Caribbean Learning Exchange participant welcome and orientation. Photo © TNC.

DAYS 2- 6: Climate Change Adaptation Workshop

All participants attended the workshop and field work in nearby towns.

DAY 7: Caribbean Learning Exchange participant wrap up and next steps

After the conclusion of the workshop, the Learning Exchange participants, Reef Resilience program staff, and one of the workshop co-facilitators met to review and discuss their notes from the week, how the tool could be adapted and used in the Caribbean, and two other relevant tools. Overall, feedback from the Caribbean managers indicated that the tools were very relevant to the Caribbean and little adaptation would be needed. Two key ways to adapt the CCA tool for the Caribbean given by participants were:

- Since the workshop included climate change predictions for the Pacific, those would need to be developed for the Caribbean.

- Since flipchart drawings in the tool depicted human and natural communities for the Pacific, similar drawings depicting Caribbean species and communities and would need to be developed (can be general for the Caribbean and would be appropriate for diversity across Caribbean)

Further support needed by participants to implement the tool in their jurisdictions was discussed and included:

- A facilitators agenda
- More communication tools for communicating climate change to communities
- More examples of adaptation strategies
- More examples of alternative livelihood strategies
- Alternatives to the Threat Action Model
- More coaching on using CCA tool closer to implementation in community

Participants also discussed ideas of best practices for using the CCA tool with local communities in the Caribbean. These included:

- Clearly define goals, objectives, and messages for the project with the planning team
- Include experts from the region to help explain climate change concepts to the community and include local community experts in vulnerability analysis
- Include experienced facilitators when working with local communities

Overall feedback from the Caribbean participants was very positive and was described:

- Got out of workshop exactly what wanted
- The CCA tool is not highly technical and is easy to use
- The CCA tool deals with evidence and facts on the ground

A discussion of bringing the CCA tool back to their organizations and communities revealed next steps for the participants. In Puerto Rico, the CCA tool will be used to conduct a vulnerability analysis for five communities. In Belize, the CCA tool will be used to implement a climate adaptation plan in eight coastal communities, starting in 3 communities. In Grenada, the CCA tool will be used to conduct a threat and vulnerability analysis with the Red Cross when they are working with communities. In St. Vincent and the Grenadines, a similar CCA Workshop will be held.

An electronic folder that includes all files was developed and shared with participants and includes all presentations, materials, and activities completed during the workshop.

Feedback

“I think it was good to have the participants from the Caribbean as some of them were able to ask specific questions regarding the Guam situation and that helped the Guam participants think a little more critically about possible actions. Also, it was nice to hear about their islands and their challenges and see that Guam may have suggestions, or solutions, to address their



issues. I think the LEAP process is a really important tool since it deals with very localized situations and gets participants and communities to really address and realize how climate change will directly affect them.” (Guam workshop participant)

Lessons Learned and Next Steps

Reef Resilience staff thought the learning exchange was successful and highlighted these contributing factors:

- The partnership approach for choosing participants worked well, other suggestions didn't work as well
- The exchange contributed to work in Guam and interactions worked both ways
- There is a high potential for participants to use the CCA tool immediately
- Exchange objectives were achieved: there is a need for adaptation of the tool to the Caribbean and the exchange was a good way to ground truth
- There is potential to move forward with a climate change adaptation module for the Reef Resilience Toolkit
- The format for the exchange, having a pre-meeting, the workshop, and a post-meeting worked well

Recommendations for future learning exchanges are:

- Contact TNC heads of operating units to discuss potential participants
- Expect travel to be very expensive between the Caribbean and Pacific and budget accordingly (the average flight was \$2920)
- Have participants sign up for newsletter and RR Network

In the months following the exchange, Reef Resilience Program staff will work with the workshop facilitator to adapt the CCA tool to the Caribbean context and work with participants to support the development of their projects.