



**Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme**  
(UNCCD PRAIS Project Regional Reference Centre for the Pacific)

**Report of:**

**The United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification Pacific  
Regional Training of National Focal Points on the UNCCD Performance  
Review and Assessment System (UNCCD PRAIS) and the Preparation  
of the 4<sup>th</sup> National Reports to the UNCCD**



**12–16 July 2010**

**Nadi, Fiji**

## ACRONYMS

4NR	Fourth National Report to the UNCCD
NFP	National Focal Point to the UNCCD
NPC	National Project Coordinator
PCP	Pacific Country Party to the UNCCD
RC	Regional Reference Centre
SLMP	GEF/UNDP funded National Sustainable Land Management Project
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SPREP	Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SPREP-BA	SPREP Biodiversity Adviser
SPREP-EO	SPREP Environmental Officer
The Strategy	UNCCD Ten Year Strategic Plan and Action Framework 2008-2018
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCCD-PRAIS	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification – Performance Review and Assessment of Implementation Systems
UNCCDSC	Secretariat of the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP-CO	United Nations Development Programme – Country Office
UNEP-WCMC	United Nations Environment Programme – World Conservation Monitoring Centre

## I. BACKGROUND AND RATIONALE

1. The UNCCD has developed a new monitoring and reporting system to track and evaluate progress of its implementation through its Ten Year Strategic Plan and Action Framework 2008-2018. The new monitoring system called UNCCD PRAIS is an online monitoring, assessment and reporting system. It is being rolled out through a two year GEF-funded project by the UNCCD Secretariat through a contract with UNEP-WCMC.
2. SPREP was appointed by the UNEPWCMC and UNCCD-SC as the RC to assist with the new UNCCD PRAIS implementation in the Pacific region. The key responsibilities of the RC is to train country parties with the function and operations of PRAIS and assist them with the use of PRAIS to produce their 4NRs which are due on 15 October this year.

## II. PCPs DELEGATIONS & REGIONAL PARTNERS SUPPORT

3. The 14 PCPs are: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Micronesia, Nauru, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. PCPs were invited to send three participants each to the training – the NFP, a technical land management officer, and the SLM-NPC of their GEF-funded SLM Projects.



4. Discussions were held prior to the training with the PCPs and regional partners who are helping countries with their SLMs and other land management programmes about the UNCCD-PRAIS training and the preparation of 4NRs, and how it linked to the NAPs alignment with The Strategy and SLMs. The results of these consultations were the SLM NPCs' inclusion in the training funded under the SLMs and participation of representatives of regional partners as additional resource personnel's in the training. The key regional partners invited were UNDP Country Offices, SPC (Lands Division), SOPAC and USP. The regional partners agreed to support the RC through endorsing and engaging the SLM country teams' to support

the development of 4NRs. This understanding and agreement was complimented by the fact that the SLM Country Team is the most active land management network in the PCPs at this stage, and thus provides a more reliable stakeholder platform to support the completion of 4NRs on time.

### **III. LEARNING OBJECTIVES**

5. The general learning objectives for the training were:
  - 5.1. To be able to explain the overall UNCCD 10-year strategy and monitoring framework;
  - 5.2. To be able to use all the various components of the reporting format (PRAIS portal, performance indicators, standard financial annex, programme and project sheets, best practices and additional information);
  - 5.3. To be able to use the communication channels around PRAIS;
  - 5.4. To understand the role and responsibilities of NFPs in terms of reporting to the UNCCD/CRIC; be aware of the roles of the main supporting stakeholders; UNCCD, GM, UNEP-WCMC, RCUs & RCs;
  - 5.5. To develop a schedule and work plan for country reporting; and
  - 5.6. To develop networks amongst NFPs and with the RCs to share learning and experiences and to solicit help while undertaking the country reporting.
  
6. More specifically each participant was expected at end of the training to be able to:
  - 6.1. Explain the UNCCD Strategy and monitoring framework; the UNCCD PRAIS reporting process and format (performance indicators, standard financial annex, programme and project sheet, best practice, additional information section) and communication channels;
  - 6.2. Identify types of services and support required from the RC to assist with the implementation of the PRAIS and completion of the 4th UNCCD reporting process;
  - 6.3. Define the role and responsibilities of the National Focal Points in the preparation of the UNCCD 4th National Reports;

- 6.4. Identify and define the respective roles and responsibilities of other key stakeholders involved in the UNCCD PRAIS project, including regional and global partners such as the UNCCD, the GM, RCUs and others;
- 6.5. Demonstrate with confidence the use of the PRAIS portal and the resources available on the website for the preparation of 4th UNCCD reports;
- 6.6. Help with drafting a detailed work plan for producing the 4th National Reports including national processes for collecting and reviewing the required information for his/her country; and
- 6.7. Help establish relationship and networks with the RC, other NFPs and key partners to facilitate the sharing of information and lessons learnt.

#### IV. RESULTS

##### 7. Attendance:

7.1. All of the PCPs except one were able to send a delegation of either three or two participants or one representative to the training. Niue was not able to send a representative due to flights problems.

7.2. In addition representatives of the following international and regional partners were



present: the UNCCD Secretariat through its UNCCD RCU Asia Pacific; the UNDP through it's two UNDP-COs in Fiji and PNG; and SPC through its Land Division in Suva Fiji. These colleagues provided valuable support as resource persons in some of the specific sessions in particular those to do with the 4NRs country processes. A total of thirty two individuals attended the training – the full detail list is in Appendix 1.

##### 8. Programme:

8.1. The original training programme was designed to take five full days (Refer to Appendix 2). However with the online PRAIS demonstration on the first day, participants were able to proceed rapidly and smoothly to reviewing and practicing the reporting templates online in within the first three and half day. The remaining one and half days were on 4NR plans and financial assistance,

updating NFPs and one on one consultations with each country delegation or representative on any other issues with their reporting processes.

## 9. Activities:

9.1. At the outset the participants were divided into groups according to the sizes and type of landscape and related issues their respective countries closely share as follows:

9.1.1. Small mainly coral atoll islands - Group 1: Marshall Islands & Nauru and Group 2: Tuvalu & Kiribati

9.1.2. Medium islands of volcanic, upraised or atoll islands – Group 3 Cook Islands & Palau and Group 4: Samoa, Tonga & FSM

9.1.3. Large volcanic and upraised islands - Group 5: Fiji & Vanuatu and Group 6: PNG & Solomon Islands.

The groups provided platforms for countries with similar landscapes to share their knowledge and experiences during the practical exercises; in providing daily evaluations and recaps and generating ice breaker activities throughout the training.

## 10. Training Sessions, Knowledge Content & Exercises:

10.1. Each participant was provided with a folder which contained hard copies of the program and as well as the following main documents for the training:

- The Strategy (ICCD/COP(8)/16/Add.1 pp.8-27)
- The Reporting Templates for Affected Countries (ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.2)
- Quick Reference (ICCD/CRIC(9)/INF.11)
- Glossary of Terms (ICCD/CRIC(9)/13)
- The Indicators (ICCD/CRIC(8)/5/Add.1 & ICCD/CRIC(8)/5/Add.2)
- The Roles and Responsibilities for PRAIS
- Relevant Activity Codes & Purpose Codes

Each country delegation or representative was provided with a PRAIS access account for the training. In addition each was provided with the full e-copy set of the training documents and powerpoint presentations at the end of the training. A summary display of the The Strategy and PRAIS system and processes and their relationships was pasted on the walls to assist understanding and referencing of content and exercises throughout the training.

10.2. The participants were able to covered the main components of PRAIS and key supporting arrangements through powerpoint and display demonstrations; PRAIS portal online practical exercise for the reporting templates and as well as plans drafted for developing 4NRs upon returning home. Table 1 below provides the layout of the training content, presentations and exercises in the order that they were carried out.

Table 1: PRAIS training knowledge content, powerpoints and practical exercises.

KNOWLEDGE CONTENT	POWERPOINT NUMBERS	PRACTICAL EXERCISE BY COUNTRIES IN THEIR WORKSHOP GROUPS
Introduction to the PRAIS Project & 4NRs:		
1 - The UNCCD ten year strategic plan and action framework		Consultation in groups on strategies for aligning NAP with the UNCCD strategic plan
2 - The new UNCCD monitoring, assessment and reporting framework or UNCCD PRAIS		Consultations on in-country challenges and strategies for collecting and organising information for PRAIS
3 - PRAIS portal		Familiarisation with the online PRAIS
PRAIS reporting guidelines & templates for affected countries:		
1 - Standard Financial Annex		Filling SFA entries online
2 - Programmes & Projects Sheet		Filling PPS entries online
3 - Performance Indicator Reporting for Affected Countries		Filling at least 2-3 indicator reporting templates online
4 - Best Practice		Filling BP entries online
5 - Additional Information		Filling 1-2 indicators evaluation online
National Plans and Arrangements for Developing 4NRs:		
1 - UNCCD PRAIS Project Roles & Responsibilities		Consultations on updating the address, arrangements with, and supporting the responsibilities of NFP in their countries
2 - National Reporting Processes		Drafting national 4NR implementation plans
3 - SLM projects & UNCCD PRAIS/National Reporting Process		Consultations on SLM support for national reporting processes and alignment of NAPs to The Strategy
4 - Help Desk & Reference Centre Support		Open discussions on assistance to national reporting plans
5 - National Reporting Resources (Financial) Requirements		Preparing applications for funding assistance from the UNCCD to support 4NRs activities

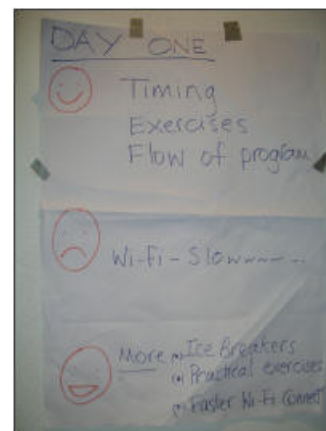
## 11. PCPs' 4NR Plans & Supporting Arrangements:

- 11.1. Country delegations and representatives were able to draft plans for developing their 4th national reports using PRAIS upon their return home from the regional training.
- 11.2. The list of NFPs was circulated to them to update during and as soon as possible after the training. The application form for applying funding assistance for the report was provided to them together with an example of a completed application were provided to the country representatives for guidance. And arrangements were discussed with them on SLMs' support for the development of their countries 4NRs and alignment of NAPs with The Strategy.

## V. EVALUTION

12. Based on the daily evaluations and individual evaluations before and after the training, the following observations were noted by the participants:

- general appreciation of the new PRAIS tools to complete their countries' 4th national reports;
- general appreciation of the need for and value of aligning NAPs with the new UNCCD Strategic Plan 2008-2018;
- demonstration of the linkages between the 4NRs and the SLM projects using the latter to roll out key activities required to complete their 4NRs;
- recognition of the roles of the RCs and NFPs in the context of the 4NRs;
- strengthened collaborations with partners organizations; and
- identified key issues and challenges which may affect the preparation of 4NRs and proposed strategies to address these issues; and have found the new online reporting templates as straight forward and user friendly to work with.



13. In addition they appreciated the following information to support their 4NR arrangements:



- the required procedures for submitting financial requests to the CCD Secretariat and sample letters were shared with them to facilitate their requests
- the process for updating their NFPs contact details which are quite outdated in the CCD website; and of
- accessing the Help Desk information and services to support their use of PRAIS.

14. Table 2 and Table 3 below shows the participants' evaluation of their understanding of the UNCCD and the training's learning objectives before and after the training sessions. Table 2 showed that most of the participants are not aware of the main UNCCD meetings in which PRAIS was developed and almost all of them have no understanding of The Strategy and PRAIS at the beginning of the workshop. At end of the workshop all of the participants are well aware of the The Strategy and PRAIS system. Apart from that the table shows that most countries have not received their letters from the UNCCD regarding the 4<sup>th</sup> reporting exercise and were not aware of the financial assistance released to assist with reporting.



Table 2: Participants evaluation of their understanding of the UNCCD before and after the training. The % given is the % of participants who agree with the answer in the column to the question.

Question	DAY 1		*DAY 4	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1. Did you attend COP8?	8%	92%	-	-
2. Are you informed of COP8?	15%	85%	-	-
3. Did you attend COP9?	38%	62%	-	-
4. Are you informed of COP9?	46%	54%	-	-
5. Did you attend CRIC7?	15%	85%	-	-
6. Did you attend other UNCCD meetings?	38%	62%	-	-
7. Are you familiar with the UNCCD 10-year strategy?	33%	67%	100%	0%
8. Do you know the timeframe of the 10-year strategy?	0%	100%	100%	0%
9. Do you know about the strategy's 4 strategic objectives?	0%	100%	100%	0%
10. Do you know about the strategy's 5 operational objectives?	0%	100%	100%	0%
11. Do you know the strategy's 21 outcomes?	0%	100%	100%	0%
12. Do you know the 14 Performance Indicators for Affected Countries?	0%	100%	100%	0%
13. Did you receive a letter of invitation for engagement in the 4 <sup>th</sup> reporting from the UNCCD Secretariat?	38%	67%	38%	67%
14. Do you know about the release of funds to NFPs for the 4 <sup>th</sup> national reports?	23%	77%	100%	0%
15. Do you know the UNCCD PRAIS portal?	0%	100%	100%	0%
16. Are you aware of compiling information for national UNCCD reporting?	0%	100%	100%	0%

\*Participants were asked on Day 4 at the completion of the training sessions to only response to questions 7 to 16.

Table 3: Participants ratings of their level of understanding of the learning objectives before and after the training. Percentage given is the average of the percentage ratings of understanding participants provided for each learning objective.

LO#	Learning Objectives	Day 1 Ratings (%)	Day 4 Ratings (%)
1	To be able to explain the overall UNCCD 10-year strategy and monitoring framework;	20%	74%
2	To be able to use all the various components of the reporting format (PRAIS portal, performance indicators, standard financial annex, programme and project sheets, best practices and additional information);	18%	86%
3	To be able to use the communication channels around PRAIS;	15%	84%
4	To understand the role and responsibilities of NFPs in terms of reporting to the UNCCD/CRIC; be aware of the roles of the main supporting stakeholders; UNCCD, GM, UNEP-WCMC, RCUs & RCs;	26%	88%
5	To develop a schedule and work plan for country reporting; and	16%	85%
6	To develop networks amongst NFPs and with the RCs to share learning and experiences and to solicit help while undertaking the country reporting	16%	78%

15. Table 3 above showed that at the beginning of the training most participants were not aware of The Strategy and the new monitoring system. And after the training there is a high average range in the level of understanding achieved by the participants from 74% to 88% for the learning objectives.

## VI. LESSONS LEARNED

### 16. Training Arrangements:

- 16.1. Having both the SLM project coordinators and the NFPs attending the training was very useful particularly for those countries that are planning to use the SLM projects to complete their 4NRs. The majority of countries are planning to use the SLM given the close linkages between the SLM and the 4NRs.
- 16.2. The participation of partners organizations (SPC and UNDP Pacific Offices) as resource peoples provided excellent resources to the participants and helped to coordinate regional support for the countries.
- 16.3. Grouping of participants according to the sizes of the islands - big, medium and small was quite effective as it allowed countries to share and appreciate the challenges that are specific to their respective situations.



### 17. Online PRAIS Portal & PRAIS Reporting in General:

Given that this is the first time this new UNCCD online reporting system has been rolled out, the following challenges are anticipated:

- 17.1. Connectivity was a major issue encountered during the training and this may also be an issue at the country level when countries start to enter their 4NRs online.
  - 17.2. Differences in the interpretation of the content of the 4NR requirements may become an issue particularly when different people are completing the report.
  - 17.3. Gathering and collecting information may be an issue particularly in situations where the information is not known or available and where access to the information may be restricted because of internal requirements that limits their release.
  - 17.4. Capacity to prepare the 4NRs maybe an issue that may require in-country assistance from SPREP.
17. Meeting the 15 October deadline for 4NRs may not be realised if the challenges above are not effectively addressed.

## V. FOLLOWUPS

18. The following are key actions for follow up:

1. The NFPs to send official notifications to the UNCCD Secretariat requesting for PRAIS access usernames and passwords.
2. The NFPs to submit official requests to the UNCCD Secretariat for financial assistance to complete the 4th national reports.
3. RC to seek clarifications on some components of the reporting templates with the UNCCD, RCU, GM and UNEP-WCMC.
4. RC to follow-up with UNEP-WCMC and UNCCD a simpler user-friendly manual on the online PRAIS.
5. RC to create an emailing list of all the Pacific CCD and SLM contacts to facilitate information sharing and follow ups.
6. Assist NFPs with accessing and downloading the relevant reports related to land issues in their respective countries that are held at the SPREP IRC.
7. General assistance to countries on their use of PRAIS and addressing problems with connectivity and report completion.
8. Conduct PRAIS training for Niue as required.



## V. ACKNOWLEDGMENT

19. Acknowledgements is due to the presence of the following key resource people: the representative of the UNCCD Secretariat Regional Centre in Bangkok - Mr. Kyungsoo Kim and representatives from two regional partners the Secretariat of the Pacific Community - Mr. Inoke Ratukalou and Mr. Jalesi Mateboto - and two UNDP Country Offices in Fiji - Mr. Floyd Robinson and PNG - Ms Gwen Maru - attended as resource people to the training on areas relevant to the 4th



national report. Appreciation is also due to the PRAIS Support Team for providing the online PRAIS accounts for participants which greatly facilitated PRAIS learning and practice.

## Appendix 1:

**UNCCD PRAIS PACIFIC REGIONAL NFP TRAINING,  
12-16 JULY, 2010, TANOA HOTELE, NADI, FIJI**

<b>Participants Programme - Day 1, July 12, 2010: Welcome, introductions and overviews</b>	
<b>Timing</b>	<b>Objectives and content</b>
8.30-9.00am	Participants Registration
Session 1: 9-9.30	1. <b>Opening remarks and introductions</b> (overview of who is there and why)
Sessio 1: 9.30-9.50	2. <b>Workshop overview and objectives:</b> Summary of what the objectives are of the week and what the schedule is for the week Overview of the 'flow' of the week
Session 1: 9.50-10.45	3. <b>Additional introductory/ getting to know your activity</b>
10.45-11.15	BREAK
Session 2: 11.15-12.00	4. <b>Introduction of the UNCCD Strategy, new Monitoring and Assessment system and relevant COP decisions:</b> New Monitoring framework/PRAIS system (including outline of performance indicators and some reference to impact indicators; best practice and Introduction to the concept of "iterative process") The Performance Indicators (overview and background information on the process of development) Q&A
12:00-13.30	LUNCH BREAK
Session 2: 13.30-15.30	5. <b>2010 Reporting Cycle (4<sup>th</sup> UNCCD Reporting Cycle):</b> Timetable leading to CRIC9 and Introduction to the UNCCD PRAIS project (objectives, approach, timeframe)
Session 3: 15.30-15.45	6. <b>UNCCD PRAIS Roles &amp; Responsibilities (Support provided by the RC-SPREP</b> Introductory remarks then give out the TOR for RCs to individuals) Q&A
15.45-16.15	BREAK
Session 4: 16.15-17.00	Q&A Role of the RC & NFPs Home groups day evaluation and group evaluation – What was good? Not so good? To improve?

**Participants Programme - Day 2, July 13 2010: Reporting Tools**

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Session objectives and content</b>
Session 1: 9.00-9.30	Re-cap of Day 1
Session 1: 9.30-10.45	7. <b>PRAIS Portal overview:</b> Reporting materials, background to the development of the reporting tools, and PRAIS portal
10.45-11.15	BREAK
Session 2: 11.15-13.30	8. <b>PRAIS portal for National Focal Points:</b> Objectives and functionalities; Expected usage of the system by NFPs; How to get username and password; How to navigate the system; Training/help section, electronic forum, etc. 30min free navigation and Q&A
13.30-14.30	LUNCH
Session 3: 14.30-15.45	9. <b>Introduction to SFA and PPS:</b> Roles and Responsibilities for SFA and PPS; The templates and related instructions; Rio Markers & Relevant Activity Codes (RACs)
15.45-16.15	BREAK
Session 4: 16.15-17.15	Practice session: using SFA and PPS in PRAIS
Session 5: 17.00-	Groups evaluations – continuing practices online.



Participants Programme - Day 3, July 14, 2010: Reporting Tools	
Timing	Objectives and content
Session 1: 09.00-10.45	<p>Recap of Day 2</p> <p><b>10. Reporting Templates:</b>            Summary of reporting templates            OO1: Advocacy, Awareness raising and Education (<b>CONS-O-1, CONS-O-3 and CONS-O-4</b>)            OO2: Policy Framework (<b>CONS-O-5 and CONS-O-7</b>)</p> <p>Reflection and analysis of reporting templates</p>
10.45-11.15	BREAK
Session 2: 11.15-13.15	<p><b>11. Reporting Templates: Structure &amp; Examples</b>            OO3: Science, technology and knowledge (<b>CONS-O-8, CONS-O-10 and CONS-O-11</b>)            OO4: Capacity Building (<b>CONS-O-13</b>)            OO5: Financing and Technology Transfer (<b>CONS-O-14, CONS-O-16, CONS-O-17 and CONS-O-18</b>)</p>
13.15-14.30	LUNCH (late)
Session 4: 14.30-15.30	<p><b>12. Reporting templates (Cont'd):</b>            Practical Sessions online</p>
Session 6: 15.30-16.45	Practical session (Cont'd)
Session 8: 16.45-17.30	<p>Review! More than half-way - how are we doing so far?</p> <p>Quick Group Evaluations</p>

Participants Programme - Day 4, July 15, 2010: Consolidation and implications for future work	
Timing	Objectives and content
Session 1: 09.00-09.30	Re-cap Summary of previous day. Any outstanding Qs addressed to whole group
Session 2: 9:30-10:30	<b>13. Additional Information:</b>  (i) Reporting Template (ii) Iterative Process
10.30-11.00	BREAK
Session 3: 11.00-13.00	<b>14. Best Practice:</b>  (i) Overview&Example (ii) Practical Example
13.00-14.30	LUNCH
Session 4: 14.30-16.15	Practical session (Cont'd)
16.15-16.45	BREAK
Session 5: 16.45-17.30	<b>Split groups :</b>  <b>practical session</b> <b>To incl. reflection summary of learning so far, methodologies used and available to use, share with other NFPs and other groups.</b>

**Participants Programme - DAY 5, July 16, 2010: Applying learning and future planning**

<b>Timing</b>	<b>Session Objectives and content</b>
Session 1: 09.00-10.00	<p><b>15. Ongoing support and Lessons learnt:</b>                      Overview of online training materials and knowledge sharing tools (electronic forum, mailing list) Comments on the reporting materials suitability of the approach and so on.                      For NFPs information only: Explanation of lessons learnt process, and how these are going to be collated and used and perhaps inform changes to the PRAIS project.</p>
Session 1: 10.00-10.15	<p>Q&amp;A on how to collect information  <b>16. Tips on process at national level</b></p>
10.15-10.45	<p><b>17. Preparation of Global, Regional and Sub-regional Analysis:</b>                      For NFPs information only: Approach that will be adopted by the Secretariat/GM, any consultative process, envisaged role of the reference centres, etc.)</p>
10.45-11.15	BREAK
Session 2: 11.15-13.00	<p><b>18. NFPs/Country Delegation Planning national level reporting process.</b>                      Work on work plans and design of training – content, methodologies etc.</p>
13.00-14.30	LUNCH
Session 3:14.30-15.45	<p><b>17. NFPs/Country Delegation Planning national level reporting process (cont'ed).</b></p>
15.45-16.15	BREAK
Session 4: 16.15-17.30	<p><b>19. Learning review and workshop evaluation</b>                      Evaluating training                      Wrap up of training, next steps etc.</p>
17.30	<p><b>20. Official close of the event</b></p>

Appendix 2:

**United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification / Pacific  
Regional Training of National Focal Points on the UNCCD  
Performance Review and Assessment System (UNCCD PRAIS)  
and the Preparation of 4<sup>th</sup> National Reports to the UNCCD  
Nadi, Fiji  
12 – 16 July 2010**

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