

Preface

The Pacific region is affected by climate change at different levels. According to the 5th Assessment Report by the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), current and future climate-related drivers of risk for small islands during the twenty-first century, include sea-level rise, tropical and extratropical cyclones, increasing air and sea surface temperatures, and changing rainfall patterns, among others.

The future risks associated with these drivers, according to the IPCC, include loss of adaptive capacity and damages to ecosystem services critical to lives and livelihoods in small islands. In addition, sea-level rise is mentioned as posing one of the most widely recognized climate change threats to low-lying coastal areas on islands and atolls. Furthermore, given the dependence of island communities on coral reef ecosystems for a range of services including coastal protection, subsistence fisheries, and tourism, there is high confidence that coral reef ecosystem degradation will negatively impact island communities and livelihoods. Given the inherent physical characteristics of small islands, AR5 reconfirms the high level of vulnerability of small islands to multiple stressors, both climate and non-climate. These elements illustrate the fact that in addition to the necessary measures in the field of environmental mitigation, adaptation approaches are urgently needed.

The above state of affairs illustrates the need for a better understanding of how climate change affects the Pacific region and for the identification of processes, methods, and tools which may help the countries in the region to adapt. There is also a perceived need to showcase successful examples of how to cope with the social, economic, and political problems posed by climate change in Pacific countries.

This book, which contains a set of papers presented at the Symposium on Climate Change Adaptation in the Pacific Region, held in Fiji in July 2016, serves the purpose of showcasing experiences from research, field projects, and best practice in climate change adaptation in Pacific countries, which may be useful or implemented in other countries and regions. A further aim of this book is to document and disseminate the wealth of experiences available today.

This book is divided into four parts:

Part I, titled “Implementing Climate Change Adaptation in Rural Areas and Communities,” entails a set of papers showing how climate change is being handled in urban and rural areas.

Part II, titled “Climate Change Adaptation, Resilience and Hazards,” describes a variety of initiatives showing how Pacific countries are handling many problems associated with climate change and many hazards associated with it.

Part III, titled “Information, Communication, Education and Training on Climate Change,” describes some of the education and information initiatives taking place across the region.

Part IV, titled “Trends on Climate Change Adaptation,” contains some papers outlining some of the operational aspects and their implications for policy-making.

We thank the authors for their willingness to share their knowledge, know-how and experiences, as well as many peer reviewers, who have helped us to ensure the quality of the manuscripts.

Enjoy your reading!

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