

CITY OVERVIEW

Apia is the capital and largest city in Samoa. It lies in the central north coast of Upolu Island, the largest of the four main inhabited islands of Samoa. The combined land area of Samoa is estimated at 2,935 km². In 2006 the Apia urban area constituted 21% of the total population (Population and Housing Census) with a continued increase in growth due to improved social and economic services, an efficient transportation system and sale of government land.

CLIMATE CHANGE RISKS AND VULNERABILITY

Samoa is vulnerable to the impacts of climate change and related risks. Apia is particularly vulnerable to extreme rainfall and flooding, prolonged drought periods and sea level rise in addition to frequent tropical storms and coastal erosion.

Apia's vulnerability to climate change can best be determined after all key sectors are assessed of their vulnerabilities and adaptation efforts. In spite of existing adaptation measures and efforts at national and community level, there are still gaps to be addressed in terms of proper land use, planning, information availability and management, resource limitation, public education and awareness and in particular enforcement of existing regulatory provisions.

PREPARING FOR CLIMATE CHANGE

The government of Samoa has taken major steps to address climate change and has made significant progress in terms of policy and regulatory planning, public awareness on disaster management, capacity building, and adoption of international policies and signing of international agreements. A National Climate Change Country Team, comprising of representatives from different government stakeholders, has been established. A first (1999) and second (2006) national inventory of GHG emissions were incorporated in Samoa's First and Second National Communications to UNFCCC. The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment is the lead agency for climate change adaptation and disaster management. It develops the Coastal Infrastructure Management Plans to ensure improved resilience of infrastructure assets and communities from impacts of flooding and coastal erosion. However, there is no data and information on the vulnerability of the city of Apia alone.

KEY ACTIVITIES PLANNED

1. Conduct Vulnerability & Adaptation and GHG emissions assessments for Apia city.
2. Review national climate change policies/plans/strategies to incorporate urban areas.



Apia seafront@UN-HABITAT/ Sarah Mecartney

Population: 40,000

Growth rate: 0.3-0.9% per annum over 1971-2007

Economy: Agriculture, Fisheries, Forestry and Tourism

Political/administrative Structure: Parliamentary democracy with a unicameral legislative assembly

City's role in the country: Commercial centre



The boundaries and names shown and the designations used on this map do not imply official endorsement or acceptance by the United Nations.

Climate Indicators

Mean annual temperature: 27.4°C.

Average annual rainfall: 3,000 mm.

Seasons: The climate is tropical equatorial, with two distinct seasons, a relatively dry (cooler) season between June and September and a rainy season (hot) between October and May.

Relative humidity: 79.1%.



Apia harbour @UN-HABITAT/ Sarah Mecartney

3. Continue to administer and strengthen compliance monitoring and enforcement of Coastal Infrastructure Management Plans and other regulatory provisions.
4. Enhance capacity of the planning sector to ensure adequate knowledge on climate change is acquired to ensure provision of sufficient services.
5. Enhance education and public awareness on climate change impacts and adaptation.
6. Enhance partnership with national, local and international stakeholders in planning, resource management and developing local climate change plans, mitigation and adaptation activities.
7. Develop proper planning on mitigation and adaptation and strengthen efforts in response to adverse effects.

THE NATIONAL CONTEXT: SAMOA

76% of Samoa's population resides in the main island of Upolu, and 70 percent of them reside along the coastal

plains and are at high risk to climate change impacts. Previous findings suggest that the coastline of Samoa will continue to be highly vulnerable to coastal flooding and erosion.

The Government of Samoa recognises that to safeguard the vulnerable islands, relevant mitigation and adaptation measures need to be identified and adopted. Existing national strategic plans that incorporate climate change as a priority include the National Strategy for Development of Samoa 2008-2010. Other relevant documents include the First National Communication Report; the National Adaptation Program of Action; and the National Greenhouse Gas Abatement Strategy.

REFERENCES

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, 2006. Samoa's Second National Communication to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change.

Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment, 2007. Coastal Infrastructure Management Plan. Planning and Urban Management Agency.

UN-HABITAT'S CITIES AND CLIMATE CHANGE INITIATIVE

UN-HABITAT launched the Sustainable Urban Development Network (SUD-Net), an innovative network of global partners, promoting inter-disciplinary approaches to sustainable urban development.

The Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI) is the flagship programme of SUD-Net. The initiative aims to strengthen the climate change response of cities and local governments. Cities are key drivers of climate change due to their high energy consumption, land use, waste generation and other activities that result in the release of the vast majority of greenhouse gases. At the same time, it is cities, and in particular the urban poor, in the developing world, that are most vulnerable to and have the least resilience against, for example, storms, floods, and droughts. Cities need to respond to Climate Change by cutting their greenhouse gas emissions (mitigation). The negative impact of climate change seems however unavoidable and for most cities in developing countries adaptation to the risks is a must.

The Cities and Climate Change Initiative brings together local and national governments, academia, NGOs and international

organizations with the aim to alert cities to the action they can take and by strengthening capacities of cities and their partners to respond to Climate Change. The key components of the Cities and Climate Change Initiative are:

- Advocacy, policy dialogue and policy change
- Tool development and tool application
- Piloting climate change mitigation and adaptation measures
- Knowledge management and dissemination, through, amongst others, the UN-HABITAT partner universities and the partnership with UN-HABITAT's Local Government Training Institutes Network.

The following cities are currently participating in CCCI. In Africa - Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso; Kampala, Uganda; Kigali, Rwanda; Mombasa, Kenya; Maputo, Mozambique; Saint Louis, Senegal and Walvis Bay, Namibia. In Asia and the Pacific - Apia, Samoa; Batticaloa and Negombo, Sri Lanka; Lami, Fiji; Port Moresby, Papua New Guinea; Port Vila, Vanuatu; Semarang, Indonesia; Sorsogon, Philippines; Thanh Hoa, Viet Nam and Ulaanbaatar, Mongolia. In Latin America - Esmeraldas, Ecuador



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Floodprone canal in Apia @UN-HABITAT/Sarah Mecartney