



Finance and Technology Day
The Commonwealth
Role of earth observation data and tools for improving flows of climate
finance: experiences from Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu
Venue: 3rd Capacity-building Hub within COP26 (Blue zone)
4 November 2021
14:45-15:45

Concept Note

Background:

The Commonwealth brings together 54 independent and equal member countries with a shared history to work together to promote prosperity, democracy and peace as well as amplifying the voice of small states and developing countries. Through the Secretariat, the Commonwealth has a strong track record in assisting and supporting member states in addressing the adverse impacts of climate change. In addition to influencing international policies, mechanisms and rules to be more responsive to the development needs of countries that are especially vulnerable to climate change, the Commonwealth Climate Change Programme places a great emphasis on facilitating the capacity development of member countries to access climate finance - providing assistance to enable member countries to enhance and implement their Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) as part of the Paris Agreement. This side event will showcase the work being done under the CommonSensing Project. CommonSensing is an innovative project based on a partnership between Fiji, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu, and a consortium of international partners¹; to provide actionable satellite-based information services and data around disaster and climate risks to inform planning, climate action and increased access to climate finance. The Commonwealth Secretariat through its flagship programme, CCFAH is spearheading the climate finance component of the CommonSensing Project. As part of this process, the CNCFAs in these three respective countries are providing technical assistance in utilizing the geospatial based CommonSensing platform for enhanced access to climate finance.

It is well understood that securing funding from the major international and regional climate funding institutions can be difficult. In part, due to time consuming and complex access requirements, combined with limited resources to produce climate finance proposals in the required format with sufficient evidence, justification, and climate rationale for proposed interventions – identifying climate vulnerabilities, obtaining baselines, estimating change and monitoring impacts.

Within the major climate funds, projects in SIDS are ‘underrepresented’ throughout the stages of project pipeline development, with only 12 per cent of the funding proposal pipe-line in the GCF by October 2020.

Major climate funds, such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), GCF and AF, require strong justification and climate change-focused rationale for approving project proposals. These funds have been explicit about the role of Earth Observation (EO) in this perspective.

¹ The UK Space Agency, United Nations Institute for Training and Research (UNITAR - UNOSAT), Commonwealth Secretariat, Satellite Applications Catapult, Devex Met Office, SensoNomic, Spatial Days and the University of Portsmouth.





The CommonSensing project is an example of the innovative use of EO. It focuses on developing national capacities for longer-term sustainability and business continuity by providing partner countries with the knowledge and skills sets for institutionalizing evidence-based decision-making. This can help to co-ordinate financing for implementing NDC aims, but additionally the project seeks to improve evidence-based decision-making in disaster preparedness and response, as well as assessing climate risks.

Objectives:

The main objectives of this session are:

- To share the experience of Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu in using the earth observation data and information for strengthening the development of climate finance proposals.
- Conduct a live demonstration of the utility of the CommonSensing platform.
- Launch three country reports highlighting the vulnerable sectors that would benefit most from the use of earth observation data for developing climate finance proposals as well as another on sea level rise.
- Raise awareness of the Commonwealth's model of support to member countries through the Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub.

The event will take have three parts to it: the first will be an introduction to the CommonSensing project followed by a facilitated discussion of how the three project countries (Fiji, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu) have progressed in the application of earth observation data and information to strengthen their proposals.

This will be followed by a demonstration of the CommonSensing Platform to all participants with a brief Q & A thereafter.

The third and final part of the programme will be the launch of three country reports as well as another report on sea level rise.

General Structure:

Speakers		
Name	Role	Affiliation/Organization
Diana Hinge-Salili	CNCFA Vanuatu	Govt of Vanuatu/ Commonwealth
Dr Michael Ha'apio	CNCFA Solomon Islands	Govt of Solomon Islands/ Commonwealth
Katherine Cooke	CNCFA Fiji	Govt of Fiji/ Commonwealth
Richard Oates	Technical Architect	Satellite Applications Catapult Ltd

Agenda:

Moderator: Mxolisi Sibanda

Time Allocation	Items	Responsibility
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1445-1448	Welcome remarks	Mxolisi Sibanda, Adviser- Climate Change Section, Commonwealth Secretariat
1448-1458	Overview of CommonSensing	Unni Nair, Head of Climate Change, Commonwealth Secretariat
1458-1513	Facilitated discussion of country experiences	Katherine Cooke, Michael O’Haapio & Diana Hinge-Salili
1513-1523	Demonstration of the CommonSensing platform	Richard Oates, Technical Architect, Satellite Applications Catapult
1523-1530	Q &A	All
1530-1540	Launch of the three country reports	Dr Ruth Kattumuri
1540-1545	Closing remarks	Dr Ruth Kattumuri

Outcomes:

As a result of the event, participants will have:

- Improved understanding of potential use of earth observation data in vulnerable sectors enhancing the rationale and evidence base for climate finance proposals as well as the Commonwealth’s flagship CCFAH programme.
- Raise interest and collaboration among Commonwealth, project countries and participants on the CommonSensing platform.

Relevant Links:

[CommonSensing](#)

[Commonwealth Climate Finance Access Hub | The Commonwealth](#)

