

NAURU

DROUGHT

Considering the size of Nauru having an area of 23 sq km the occurrence and impact of a drought will easily and seriously affect the whole island. The Government recognizes this and this is reflected in the NSDS priority to ensure sustainable livelihoods and encourage domestic production and utilization of marine resources at subsistence level. This is complemented by policies to improve reliable and accessible water supply through rain and groundwater sources.

To arrest land degradation and restore land and soil productivity, the NSDS prioritizes the rehabilitation of mined out land, which is the primary responsibility of Nauru Rehabilitation Corporation (NRC). To date, funds were recently secured to start the rehabilitation. The scheme to produce or create new soil from biodegrade substances is ongoing and is being promoted amongst the community around the island. However, there is no substantive program to arrest land degradation on the coastal fringe of the island by addressing the sand erosion which is occurring on the western side of the island where boat channels were introduced but without a sand retaining wall to keep the sand from draining into the ocean.

In terms of contingency arrangements for drought preparedness, Nauru is seeking to augment household water storage capacity by securing funding from donors for the

procurement and the rollout of 18,500 litre tanks. Recent assessment indicate an immediate demand for 450 household water tanks. Donor funding for 150 tanks had already been provided, with the rollout half completed. Officials are now working to secure funds for another two projects to fund the purchase and rollout of another 300 household tanks.

Also included in this program is the construction of a 300ha catchment on the NW of the island and to be completed by 2015. In the meantime projects addressing the water situation are at various stages of implementation:

- a) Installation of 45 Plastic Water tanks X 6,000 litres for 15 communities were just completed, which were donated from the Japanese grass root fund.
- b) There are four RO (Reverse Osmosis) plants on the island but only three are still in operation but one specifically for the IOM and another for the Meneng Hotel. The remaining two are for the rest of the population but one is out of order as it is in need of repairs.
- c) One desalination plant in need of major repairs and operators are indecisive whether to maintain or to replace it with the purchase of another RO.
- d) UNDP's water project to tap into the underground water system; via NRC have yet to be established.
- e) Most houses have tapped into the underground well and are using it for all domestic purposes except for human consumption.
- f) Houses still without tanks after the distribution of the 150 AusAID tanks still numbers in the hundreds and the government continues to work with possible donors to secure funding for the rollout of additional phases of household water storage tank program.
- g) Nauru has only one water delivery truck. This truck is capable of transporting 6,000 liters at a time. Given Government financial constraints, government is working to secure donor for an additional water delivery truck and thereby remove a supply constraints.

Afforestation and reforestation initiatives to encourage drought -resistant and fast-growing species is being pursued through NRC where a national nursery is also planned to test and develop species that can adapt to Nauru's climatic conditions.

In regards to legislative measures and policy incentives to encourage forestry development in dry lands, this is an area that Nauru requires considerable technical assistance from donors.

Nauru's climate and weather information, forecasts, monitoring and early warning systems are done through Air Radiation Measurement (ARM) is monitoring the weather situation on Nauru, with limited capacity for early warning functions. Nauru does not have the resources nor the capability to undertake sophisticated applications such risk-mapping, remote-sensing, agro- methodological modeling, integrated multi-disciplinary crop- forecasting techniques. And computerized food supply demand analysis.