



Communications Strategy

Supporting the Strategic Plan 2014-2019

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INTRODUCTION

The Pacific Islands Climate Change Cooperative (PICCC) is a self-directed, non-regulatory conservation alliance whose purpose is to assist those who manage native species, island ecosystems and key cultural resources in adapting their management to climate change for the continuing benefit of the people of the Pacific Islands.

The PICCC is one of 22 Landscape Conservation Cooperatives (LCCs) throughout the United States with the goals of providing scientific and technical expertise to support conservation planning at landscape scales, promoting collaboration, and defining shared goals.

The PICCC occupies a unique niche among conservation organizations due to its focus on biocultural resources and adaptation to climate change. As a boundary organization, it is the responsibility of the PICCC to coordinate information and assistance that connects science, traditional knowledge, and management actions.

The PICCC believes it can best support climate change adaptation by informing specific resource management plans and conservation actions. By facilitating information exchange and activities between scientists, practitioners, and decision-makers, this results in the translation of science into actionable information and on-the-ground implementation. The PICCC occupies the ideal position to bring together a wide range of actors to collaborate, respond to needs, and build capacity to adapt resources to climate change. The goal of this is to deliver specific products and services such as: tools, visualizations, policy recommendations, knowledge syntheses, and best practices.

The PICCC Strategic Plan, which was completed in 2014, serves as a guiding document for all PICCC activities and programs, including Communication. The Strategic Plan outlined a Strategic Direction along with two Strategic Goals:

Strategic Direction: Adaptation implemented for ecosystem functions and human-ecological functions in Hawai'i and the U.S.-affiliated Pacific islands.

Strategic Goal 1: Facilitate Climate Adaptation: The PICCC will support targeted managers and decision-makers in utilizing relevant assessments, tools, and techniques for resource management planning and implementation.

Strategic Goal 2: Foster Partnerships: The PICCC will maintain key international, regional, and local partnerships in order to cultivate the optimal conditions for climate change adaptation to occur.

The Strategic Plan marks a shift to a new paradigm, as the PICCC begins its transition to supporting Adaptation Initiatives throughout the Pacific Islands. Whereas previously the PICCC worked to fund research and science, now the PICCC works to apply scientific information to shape management planning and implementation. The development of Adaptation Initiatives are intended to allow the

PICCC to serve as a catalyst to provide information, expertise, training, and collaboration opportunities that allow partners to achieve climate adaptation goals. From a Communication standpoint, this marks a turning point in the expansion and improvement of opportunities to access information and expertise for all PICCC Steering Committee members, partners, resource managers and decision makers.

**A note regarding Adaptation Initiatives –
Tailored Communications Plans for Tailored Initiatives**

The PICCC Communications Strategy provides an overarching examination of the goals, outputs, tools and tactics that will be utilized during the implementation of the Strategic Plan. It must be noted, however, that each Adaptation Initiative will have an **individualized Communications Plan** tailored to that particular initiative. As each and every AI will likely be different in terms of information, audience, and goals, the tools and tactics must be tailored to reflect these unique efforts.

COMMUNICATIONS GOALS

The PICCC’s Strategic Direction and Strategic Goals inform and directly relate to the Communications Goals and Objectives. Below the two major Strategic Goals are outlined, with specific related Communications Goals and Outputs identified:

STRATEGIC GOAL 1: FACILITATE CLIMATE ADAPTATION: THE PICCC WILL SUPPORT TARGETED MANAGERS AND DECISION-MAKERS IN UTILIZING RELEVANT ASSESSMENTS, TOOLS, AND TECHNIQUES FOR RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION.

Communications Goal 1: Resource managers/decision-makers are aware of Adaptation Initiative opportunities and are communicating with PICCC for assistance

Communications Outputs:

- Key current partners are addressed and capacity is confirmed to implement opportunities and/or influence targeted management plans and actions;
- New partnerships with managers and decision-makers across the Pacific are created, fostered, and managed;
- In partnership with managers and decision-makers, needs for products and services are identified

Communications Goal 2: Resource managers/decision -makers are receiving synthesized information, products, and support to inform Adaptation Initiatives and facilitate local adaptation actions

Communications Outputs:

- Relevant information, products, and services are acquired from both internal and external sources;
- Assessments, tools, and techniques are translated and delivered in a timely manner to inform and address decision-making and resource management;
- Resource managers and decision-makers are trained to utilize information;
- Results of adaptation actions shared to broaden discussion and prompt more robust dialogue, including facilitation of difficult discussions of research implications on natural resources

STRATEGIC GOAL 2: FOSTER PARTNERSHIPS: THE PICCC WILL MAINTAIN KEY INTERNATIONAL, REGIONAL, AND LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS IN ORDER TO CULTIVATE THE OPTIMAL CONDITIONS FOR CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION TO OCCUR.

Communications Goal 3: Engagement and partnership in PICCC is expanded, deepened, and enhanced across the Pacific.

Communications Outputs:

- Representation in PICCC network is improved across US- affiliated Pacific islands;
- Multi-way information exchange network is fostered and supported;
- All partners are engaged, open to receiving information, and sharing relevant information, products, and services of their own

Communications Goal 4: Awareness is increased with regard to PICCC's goals, projects, and contributions across region and broader national network

Communications Outputs:

- Value is demonstrated to funders;
- Collaborations are forged with other LCCs and staff in order to bring increased awareness and improve operational progress;
- Compelling stories and products are created and disseminated ("science to story")

TARGET AUDIENCES

Messaging from the PICCC will be delivered through a number of methods (for more on this see Tools for Communication) to attract the highest amount of interest, engagement, and interaction with various target audiences. Although messaging will be uniform in style, the content must be tailored to deliver the message in the most understandable, impactful, and actionable way possible.

Note that there is often overlap among staff and membership of organizations within the various targeted audiences. Despite this, it is valuable to separate the audiences as much as possible as communication must still take the varying views and priorities into consideration.

Below, the various PICCC audiences are considered:

- **Steering Committee:** Members of the Steering Committee who are presently participating in PICCC activities or who will be formally invited to join in the future;
- **Partners/Affiliates:** Steering Committee member organizations' staff (including those outside the formal representative), partner organizations, and associates; members of the Adaptation Initiative Working Group, the Culture and Communities Working Group, and the Technical Advisory Team; and targeted **non- Hawai'i Pacific partners** (those in the western and south Pacific);
- **Funders:** Primary funders (Congress, Fish and Wildlife Service) and others who support the PICCC staff positions and projects (University of Hawai'i, US Geological Survey, National Park Service);
- **Resource Managers:** Managers in charge of on-the-ground terrestrial and marine ecosystem services management;
- **Decision-Makers:** Planning and management bodies, other government actors;
- **Researchers/Scientists:** Those presently completing PICCC-funded projects and those who will assist on future Adaptation Initiatives;
- **Broader LCC Network:** Specific coordination with other LCC bodies (island-specific partnership with the Caribbean LCC) as well as Network-wide discussions and coordination (monthly calls);
- **Public:** Communities of interest, educators

INFORMATION BEING COMMUNICATED

- Assessments, tools and techniques that assist in decision-making: including vulnerability assessments and scenario planning;
- Synthesis, translation and visualization products that interpret existing science: including climate science assessments, Conservation Planning Atlas, GIS maps, and online viewers;
- Research that creates new knowledge;
- Recommendations and position papers that inform decisions and management;
- Data to monitor and evaluate change

TOOLS FOR COMMUNICATION

Although the PICCC has been employing a variety of tools and tactics for communicating information since its inception, there is still room for improvement. As the PICCC makes the transition from its prior paradigm (funding science and research) to its current and future identity (supporting Adaptation Initiatives and management-driven action), the tools and tactics needed to support this transition must expand as well.

The following tools are currently in place for communication:

| Tools | Timeline |
|---|---|
| Steering Committee (SC) meetings | Quarterly |
| Adaptation Initiative Working Group (AIWG) meetings | Presently quarterly, then twice yearly |
| Other working group and team meetings | As needed |
| Conservation Planning Atlas meetings | Once a month and as needed |
| Webinars for PICCC funded science | Once a month (third Thursday of each month) |
| LCC National Network | Calls once a month for Coordinators, Science, Communications, and Data; other communication as needed |
| Outreach emails to SC and partners | As needed (typically once a week) |
| Reports | Quarterly (for SC) and Annual (for LCC National) |
| Data requests to core team | Fulfilled as needed |
| Current website | Maintained as needed |
| One on one interactions | As needed |
| Inclusion in partner outreach/newsletters | As needed |
| Traditional media: press releases, event outreach, etc. | As needed |
| PICCC Core team attendance at conferences and workshops | As needed |
| Small meetings/town halls | As needed |
| PICCC-sponsored workshops, trainings and symposiums | As needed |

Although these tools are presently being employed by the PICCC, there is continual room for improvement. The effectiveness of the tools above and timeline of use will be evaluated over time for effectiveness and improved to better suit the needs of the PICCC audiences and core team.

New tools for communication will also be developed, tested, and implemented over the next year. These tools aim to better support on-the-ground management actions throughout the Pacific region.

Below these new tactics are listed along with the tentative timeline for implementation:

| New tools | Estimated Implementation Timeline |
|--|--|
| PICCC website | Beta-test: April 2015; Website live for use: May 2015 |
| Broader solicitation/outreach to partners/network in broader Pacific island region | February-May 2015 |
| Solicitation for Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from managers | April- May 2015 |
| Contact management system/database | June 2015 |
| Monthly newsletter (core team generated, “asks” from SC/partners) | May 2015 |
| Social media development/outreach | May 2015 |
| Baseline survey to members and partners regarding present communications and future potential | May 2015 |
| Virtual Public Forum: to expand network, register and identify needs for AI work and evaluate Communications initiatives | June 2015 |
| Uniform, stylized outreach materials (business cards, letterhead, brochures, pamphlets) | June 2015 |
| Development of strong case studies to demonstrate best practices | July-September 2015 |

SYNTHESIS OF AUDIENCE, OUTPUTS AND TOOLS

COMMUNICATIONS GOAL 1: RESOURCE MANAGERS/DECISION-MAKERS ARE AWARE OF ADAPTATION INITIATIVE OPPORTUNITIES AND ARE COMMUNICATING WITH PICCC FOR ASSISTANCE

| Target Audience | Outputs | Tools |
|---|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resource managers ■ Partners and Affiliates | Key current partners are addressed and capacity confirmed to implement opportunities and/or influence targeted management plans and actions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ AIWG meeting ■ SC Meeting ■ Email outreach ■ Contact management system ■ Newsletter ■ One on one interactions ■ Solicitations for EOIs |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resource Managers ■ Decision-makers ■ Partners and affiliates | New partnerships with resource managers and decision-makers across the Pacific are created, fostered, and managed | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broader solicitation/outreach ■ Contact management system ■ Website ■ Newsletter ■ Social media ■ Solicitations for EOIs ■ One on one interactions ■ PICCC Core team attendance at conferences and workshops |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resource managers ■ Decision-makers ■ Partners/Affiliates | In partnership with managers and decision-makers, needs for products and services are identified | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broader solicitation/outreach ■ One on one interviews with managers ■ Solicitations for EOIs ■ Virtual public forum |

COMMUNICATIONS GOAL 2: RESOURCE MANAGERS/DECISION-MAKERS ARE RECEIVING SYNTHESIZED INFORMATION, PRODUCTS AND SUPPORT TO INFORM ADAPTATION INITIATIVES AND FACILITATE LOCAL ADAPTATION ACTIONS

| Target Audience | Outputs | Tools |
|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Researchers/Scientists ■ Steering Committee ■ Resource managers | Relevant information, products, and services are acquired from both internal and external sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Website ■ One on one interactions ■ Virtual Web Forum ■ PICCC Core team attendance at conferences and workshops ■ Data requests to core team |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resource managers ■ Decision-makers | Assessments, tools and techniques translated and | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Press release ■ Initial email blast upon initial |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | delivered in a timely manner to inform and address decision-making and resource management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> release ■ Newsletter updates ■ Website ■ Webinar ■ PICCC sponsored trainings/workshop ■ Data requests to core team ■ Case studies |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resource managers ■ Decision-makers | Resource managers and decision-makers are trained to utilize information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ PICCC sponsored trainings/workshops ■ One on one interactions ■ PICCC core team attendance at conferences and workshops ■ Case studies |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resource managers ■ Decision-makers ■ Steering Committee ■ Partners/Affiliates ■ LCC Network ■ Funders ■ Public | Results of adaptation actions are shared to broaden discussion and prompt more robust dialogue, including facilitation of difficult discussions of research implications on natural resources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Webinars ■ Small meetings, “town halls” ■ One on one interactions ■ PICCC sponsored trainings/workshop ■ PICCC Core team attendance at conferences and workshops ■ Press releases ■ Newsletter ■ Website ■ Case studies |

COMMUNICATIONS GOAL 3: ENGAGEMENT AND PARTNERSHIP IN PICCC IS EXPANDED, DEEPENED, AND ENHANCED ACROSS THE PACIFIC.

| Target Audience | Outputs | Tools/Tactics |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Resource managers ■ Decision-makers ■ Partners/affiliates | Representation in PICCC network is improved across US-affiliated Pacific islands | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Broader solicitation/outreach to partners/network in broader Pacific island region ■ Solicitation for EOIs ■ Website ■ Social media ■ Virtual Public Forum ■ PICCC sponsored trainings/workshop ■ PICCC Core team attendance at conferences and workshops ■ Contact management system/database |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Steering Committee | Multi-way information | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contact management system for |

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Partners /Affiliates ■ Resource Managers ■ Decision-makers ■ Public | exchange network is fostered and supported | <p>targeted outreach</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Newsletter updates ■ Steering Committee meetings ■ AIWG meetings ■ Website ■ Social media ■ Workshop/Conference attendance and sponsorship ■ One on one interactions ■ Small meetings, “town halls” ■ Virtual public forum |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Steering Committee Members ■ Partners/Affiliates ■ Resource managers ■ Decision-makers | All partners are engaged, open to receiving information, and sharing relevant information, products, and services of their own | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Contact management system ■ Newsletters ■ Steering Committee meeting ■ AIWG meetings ■ Virtual public forum ■ Case studies |

COMMUNICATIONS GOAL 4: AWARENESS IS INCREASED REGARDING PICCC’S GOALS, PROJECTS, AND CONTRIBUTIONS ACROSS REGION AND BROADER NATIONAL NETWORK

| Target Audience | Outputs | Tools/Tactics |
|--|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Funders | Value is demonstrated to funders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Annual Report ■ Quarterly Reports ■ Website ■ Evaluation products |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ LCC National Network | Collaborations are forged with other LCCs and staff in order to bring increased awareness and improve operational progress | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ National Coordination Calls: Coordinators, Science Coordinators, Communications, Data ■ LCC Network email lists ■ LCC Network newsletters ■ LCC Network website |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Steering Committee ■ Resource managers ■ Decision-makers ■ Public | Compelling stories and products are created and disseminated (“science to story”) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Press releases ■ Newsletters ■ Webinars ■ PICCC-sponsored trainings/workshop ■ PICCC core team attendance at conferences and workshops ■ Case studies |

POTENTIAL CHALLENGES TO COMMUNICATION

Although improving communications for the PICCC is essential, there must be an acknowledgement of the barriers in the communication of scientific information and the techniques used to communicate that information. Below, just a few of these barriers are highlighted to provide insight into the many challenges faced by the PICCC. Although the solutions are not always immediately available, an understanding of these challenges is critical to the Communications process.

The **broad region and limitations of remote island communication** is a challenge unique to communications efforts within the Pacific islands. The PICCC coordinates with partners and resource managers not only in Hawai'i, but also the western Pacific and the Samoan archipelago. Time differences are vital to consider during the scheduling of meetings, phone calls, or any other form of interaction. In addition, the methods of communication must also be considered when dealing with more remote islands. Often, these islands do not have access to reliable and secure internet and phone connections. This must be taken into account when planning meetings, webinars, and phone conferences. Alternatives may need to be identified for group communication, such as meetings and webinars.

Organizational time limitations will also be a challenge to communication. Each partner and affiliate organization with which the PICCC is communicating has its own timing limitations within the organization. When discussing collaborative actions, these time limitations must be identified and addressed.

The **translation and use of information that is inherently uncertain** is a challenge that all climate change organizations face. As cutting edge climate change science and research will be used to inform the PICCC's Adaptation Initiatives and other on-the-ground adaptation actions, this is a particular concern. However, as with all climate change science and projections, the information used will be the best available and delivered along with the caveat that it is subject to change or amendment as science improves in the future. Management plans that are iterative in nature are best suited to utilize this information, as any changes in information can be identified and addressed.

Finally, a looming challenge for any organization that works with climate change is **the belief held by some that climate change is not a real or not a pressing issue**. This is challenge to be addressed scientifically, politically, and in the realm of public affairs. There remain many decision-makers in key positions of power who still do not believe that climate change exists, or alternatively may understand that climate change exists but do not believe that the United States or other key powers should be doing anything to either mitigate or adapt to climate change. The influence they apply against funding and supporting climate change initiatives is a major challenge to any organization that works in this realm.

EVALUATING EFFECTIVENESS

This Communications Strategy **must be both iterative and adaptive** in approach to ensure that the goals and objectives listed are achieving the desired results. Measuring the effectiveness of the tools and tactics used to share information and facilitate collaboration is vital to understanding the impact of the work that is being done by the PICCC. Although some of these tools and tactics can be measured quantitatively, ultimately it may be difficult to measure the outcomes and the extent to which 1) uptake of information occurs and 2) information is utilized by resource managers and decision-makers in their plans and management actions.

Measurements and assessments of success will be done both formally (surveys and analytics) and informally (conversations and observations). These measures of success should relate back to the Communications objectives, goals, and the broader Strategic plan goals listed above.

Possible evaluative measures of success include:

- Surveys (by phone, Survey Monkey, Virtual public forums) to evaluate effectiveness of Communications Strategy after Year One (baseline survey and once a year thereafter)
- One-on-one interviews and personal communications with user groups
- Website usage tracking through web analytics
- Subscription to newsletter (interest and use vs. unsubscribes)
- Media coverage of the PICCC (news stories picked up, cited)
- Attendance at events: SC and Working Group meetings, conferences, webinars
- Number of new non-Hawai'i Pacific partners engaged
- Self-evaluation
- Evaluation of Adaptation Initiatives by AIWG and SC: future development of evaluation concepts by the AIWG for the Adaptation Initiatives
- Inclusion of data output into management plans
- Inclusion of assessments, tools, techniques within local plans and decisions