

## Solar energy for homes tuvalu

Tuvalu stands as a beacon of resilience in the face of climate and economic vulnerabilities and despite its status as one of the smallest atoll nations, Tuvalu is taking significant strides to lead the region in sustainable energy endeavours. The Pacific Community's (SPC) Pacific Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (PCREEE) has just wrapped up an impactful 5-day training workshop in Funafuti, Tuvalu, from July 31st to August 4th, 2023.

The Assistant Secretary for the Tuvalu Ministry of Transport, Energy and Tourism, Mr Asela Peneueta, set the tone in his opening remarks:

I urge all participants to carry the key messages from this workshop to friends, relatives, and loved ones. As a sovereign nation striving for freedom, this knowledge is our collective power.

The first three days of the training delved into the operationalisation of Minimum Energy Performance Standards and Labelling (MEPSL) legislation. Over 20 participants, including government officials, business representatives, and consumers, gathered to boost their understanding of the MEPSL components under the Tuvalu Energy Efficiency Act 2016. The training aimed to empower government officials (Energy and Customs Divisions) with the skills needed to efficiently administer and enforce MEPSL regulations. Participants also received training on the requisite procedures for the importation of regulated appliances. The introduction of the Pacific Appliance Database, a regional online tool used by Vanuatu, Samoa, and Solomon Islands, marked a pivotal step towards improved efficiency.

"This training from PCREEE is a significant boost to the capacity of our Department of Energy. It pinpointed areas of improvement and growth," remarked Mr Simona Kilei, the Director of Energy for Tuvalu, acknowledging the programme's contribution.

Following the MEPSL training, a national workshop centred on Sustainable Energy and Business-Start Up, along with a half-day mini-grids training, saw the participation of licensed electrical contractors, solar installers, women, and youth representatives from villages across the nation.

This workshop unveiled the dynamic business opportunities emerging from the Tuvalu Energy Bill and forthcoming energy projects.

Mr Mafalu Lotolua, General Manager for the Tuvalu Electricity Corporation (TEC), emphasised the commitment of the Government of Tuvalu to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 100% by 2030 through the updated Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC). This goal not only sets a promising trajectory for renewable energy and energy efficiency business opportunities but also demonstrates Tuvalu's dedication to sustainable practices.

The FFEKT Women's Group showcased their pioneering Solar Sewing Machine Project during the workshop, offering inspiration to communities across Tuvalu. As the implementation progresses, this initiative exemplifies how sustainable energy businesses can thrive.

As Tuvalu journeys towards scaling up its mini-grids systems, the spotlight shifts to the electrical contractors poised to take on installation, operation, and maintenance tasks. With rooftop solar projects on the horizon, the training presented an invaluable opportunity for private sector players to gain insights into Tuvalu's mini-grids systems.

The training concluded with a site visit hosted by TEC, offering participants a firsthand experience of advanced renewable energy technologies. From solar rooftops and the Off-grid sola-powered Capacitive Deionisation (CDI) systems to the pioneering floating solar PV with 100kW.

innovative solutions like floating solar panels (a first for the PICs) and raised solar installations are being embraced in Tuvalu as the Pacific grapples with addressing the challenge of limited land space.

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Web: <https://kary.com.pl/contact-us/>

Email: [energystorage2000@gmail.com](mailto:energystorage2000@gmail.com)

WhatsApp: 8613816583346

