Building capacity in energy auditing in Palau

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The Secretariat of the Pacific Community, in close collaboration with the Palau Energy Division and the National Development Bank of Palau (NDBP), conducted a two-day energy audit training session this week (5–6 March 2012) in Koror, Palau.

The training was attended by 30 participants, including staff of the Palau Public Utilities Corporation, NDBP staff, and technicians and builders from 11 local construction companies.

Its goal was to strengthen knowledge and skills in energy auditing and energy efficiency and conservation practices focusing on building energy efficient houses and providing more efficient electric appliances, such as lights, air conditioning and refrigerators.

In her introductory statement at the training, Karla West, Programme Manager of the Energy Loan Programme at NDBP, emphasised the need to build the capacities of the local contractors in Palau to support energy efficiency initiatives in buildings.

'We are grateful for the technical assistance provided by SPC, as the training will assist contractors to carry out energy use assessments and will enable them to perform energy audits for existing homes,' said Ms West.

NDBP currently manages three home loan subsidy programmes: an energy efficiency loan subsidy programme for new homes, a programme promoting the installation and use of renewable energy technologies in existing homes and businesses such as hotels, and an upcoming energy efficiency programme focusing on retrofitting existing homes. These initiatives were developed in partnership with several development partners, including the International Union for Conservation of Nature – Oceania Regional Office, the United Nations Development Programme – Global Environment Facility funded SEDREA (Sustainable Economic Development through Renewable Energy Applications) project and the European Union funded North Pacific ACP Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Project (North-REP) that is implemented by SPC. William Thorp, North-REP’s Energy Specialist in Palau, is optimistic that there will be a quick uptake of these services.

The Palau energy audit training is being conducted by the Energy Programme of SPC’s Economic Development Division through the funding support of North-REP and the SPC–REEEP (Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency Partnership) Pacific Islands Energy Efficiency and Appliance Labelling Project.

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