



Formerly called CASOLINK

A newsletter for Conservation Areas in the Pacific

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SPREP

South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

The Environment Protection Fund: The Cook Islands Experience 1994–1999

Anna Tiraa *SPBCP Consultant*



In 1994, the Cook Islands Government established a distinct, self-generating fund to assist in protecting and conserving the environment. This fund, called the Environment Protection Fund (EPF), is the first of its type in the Pacific and generates approximately NZ\$225,000 per year. Yet the fund has not been without problems and some valuable lessons have been learnt since its inception.

The EPF was established following an amendment to the International Departure Tax Act (1984) by Parliament on 7 September 1994. This amendment states that NZ\$5.00 from each departure tax shall be paid into an account held by the Cook Islands Government, to be known as the Environment Protection Fund. The statute increased the departure tax from NZ\$20.00 to NZ\$25.00 for those aged 12 years and over. The tax for children under 12 remains at NZ\$10.00, none of which go towards the EPF.

Payments designated for the EPF officially began on 1 October 1994. Under the International Departure Tax Amendment, these funds must be spent

on the conservation and protection of the natural environment at such times and in such manner as Cabinet shall from time to time approve. This includes the “protection and conservation of the reef and foreshore, any species of flora and fauna, soil conservation, the protection from pollution to land, sea and air and other purposes covered by the Conservation Act 1986/87” (repealed by the Rarotonga Environment Act 1994–95).

The departure tax levy was identified as a means to generate funds after the realisation that most visitors have a high appreciation for the environment. Many come to the Cook Islands to experience the “green image” of the country, and it was



Many visitors come to the Cook Islands to experience the “green image” of the country.

Photo courtesy of the South Pacific Tourism Organisation.

The departure tax levy was identified as a means to generate funds after the realisation that most visitors have a high appreciation for the environment. Many come to the Cook Islands to experience the “green image” of the country, and it was felt that most would not object to paying the extra fee for a worthy cause.

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Over the last five years, there have been approximately 60,000 departures (visitors and departing residents) annually from the Cook Islands. As the EPF departure tax applies only to those over the age of 12, it is estimated that 75 per cent of departures contributed towards the EPF. This equates to about 45,000 persons yielding an estimated NZ\$225,000 for the EPF per year. Such a constant flow of income into the EPF ensures its sustainability, even with continual capital spending.

Environment Fund Committee

However, in formulating the EPF, no guidelines were established for selecting those projects eligible for financial support. The amendment to the departure tax legislation was broad in its intention and seemed to encourage wide participation. Thus, in early 1995, with cabinet approval, a committee was formed to establish guidelines and to assess project eligibility. The Environment Fund Committee was to operate under the chairmanship of the Minister of Conservation. It comprised six senior officials representing Treasury, Conservation, Ministry of Outer Islands Development, Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Natural Heritage Project and the Special Projects Division (Office of the Prime Minister), as well as a representative from the private sector.

A concept paper entitled “Environment Protection Fund: Guidelines and Criteria” was prepared for the Committee’s consideration by the Cook Islands Conservation Service. It recommended that the fund have set limits, either yearly or over a number of years, and suggested a range of options on limits. For example, 80 per cent of the Fund could be set aside for small grants up to a maximum of NZ\$15,000 per grant, with the other 20 per cent allocated to larger grants up to a maximum of NZ\$50,000 per grant. The paper also suggested project proposals be considered from both the public and private sectors, provided the proposals involved promoting, enhancing, protecting and restoring the environment through education, conservation and sustainable use. Assessment of EPF proposals could be undertaken through a standard format application containing details such as objectives and endpoints, the implementers and the budget.

In its implementation, the EPF required a standard application form to be completed, a secretariat for administering the fund (one person), monitoring of the project during implementation and an end of project report. To be eligible for support from the EPF, proposals for funding needed to include at least one of the following criteria:

- promotion of resource conservation, including the preservation of historical and traditional

sites, as well as socially and biologically important plants and animals;

- promotion of environmental education and awareness;
- protection of important habitats—forests, swamplands, foreshore margins, lagoons and coral reefs;
- reduction of environmental degradation;
- reduction of pollution, including chemical and pesticide misuse, hazardous waste, and solid and liquid waste;
- promotion of the sustainable use of natural resources, both living and non-living; and/or
- encouragement of community participation in relation to any of the criteria above.

Despite encouraging community participation, the Committee did not include representatives from NGOs or community groups.

It was proposed that the Environment Fund Committee meet once a month as appropriate to assess and evaluate projects. However, it only met on a few occasions.

A question of control

In fact, up until 1998 all EPF money was controlled by Treasury¹, and consolidated into the general crown revenue. It is uncertain if the extra revenue from the departure taxes was being directed towards environmental purposes from 1994 to 1998, as no audit was conducted on the use of the EPF component of this consolidated revenue.

The consolidation of the EPF into the general government revenue created concern amongst environment agencies within both government and non-government organisations. Their concern was that the funds were not being channelled to appropriate projects. A prime example of this was the allocation of NZ\$250,000 directly by Government to a project that was not assessed by the Government Fund Committee.

Vigorous attempts were made by the Environment Council of 1997/98 to have the EPF deposited into a separate account dedicated to conservation purposes. In 1998, the Environment Council started legal proceedings against the newly formed Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM) (formerly Treasury) that was administering the fund to establish a separate EPF account. The situation was settled before going to court and in that same year a separate and dedicated account for the EPF was established with the Westpac Banking Corporation on Rarotonga.

¹ In 1996 Treasury was amalgamated with a number of other departments to form the Ministry of Finance and Economic Management (MFEM).

Over the last five years, there have been approximately 60,000 departures (visitors and departing residents) annually from the Cook Islands . . . yielding an estimated NZ\$225,000 for the EPF per year. Such a constant flow of income into the EPF ensures its sustainability, even with continual capital spending.

Management and collection of the EPF

The current process for collecting the EPF is that departure taxes are paid at the Westpac bank and are transferred to the MFEM. An annual budget proposal is prepared by the Tu'anga Taporoporo² and is subject to approval by Cabinet. A portion of this budget comes from the EPF. The appropriated funds to the EPF are distributed by the MFEM into the EPF account held at Westpac bank approximately on a monthly basis. The combined monthly partial payments equate to the annual appropriation as calculated in the cabinet approved budget for the Tu'anga Taporoporo. The Environment Council is the trustee of the EPF Account.

When required, the Environment Service submits written requests to the Environment Council to disperse funds from the EPF account to implement programmes supported by the EPF.

For the 1997/98 budget, Cabinet appropriated a total of NZ\$353,063 to the EPF Account. This allocation supported a number of Environment Service projects, including those implemented outside the Service, such as the Cooks Islands Natural Heritage Trust³ and collection of household rubbish by a private contractor⁴. In addition, the Environment budget received a top-up of NZ\$41,806 from Crown revenue. Funds from Crown revenue are deposited into a separate account from the EPF.

In 1999, the Tu'anga Taporoporo had an approved budget of NZ\$513,977 with NZ\$297,000 coming from the EPF. The difference of NZ\$216,977 came out of Crown revenue. The funds from the EPF supplemented the Environment Service personnel and operational costs as well as some of their work programmes.

Other recipients of the 1999 EPF again included the Cook Islands Natural Heritage Trust and the household rubbish collection service. Their funding requirements are budgeted into the annual environment budget proposal, and they are paid directly by Tu'anga Taporoporo.

The appropriated EPF also includes grant money for environmental projects run by NGOs, public and private sectors. Although these grants are open to any individual or group, whether government or non-government, there is very little information about the scheme and how to apply for support.

Even though the issue of a separate EPF account has been resolved, the Environment Fund Committee established in 1995 has not been revived. In effect, it is the Environment Council which currently assesses and approves EPF funded projects.

Lessons learnt and recommendations

Based on the Cook Islands experience with the EPF, a number of lessons were learned. Other countries that are considering establishing an EPF may wish to consider the following suggestions.

For an EPF to be effective, it is important to establish:

- the need and purpose for an EPF;
- who should be able to access the resources of an EPF and how;
- the areas in which an EPF would complement the Government's environmental activities as well as those being undertaken at the community level. Essentially, how would an EPF "work" and complement existing projects?; and finally
- the areas in which an EPF should be directed or targeted. Should it target only conservation activities or should the EPF have a much wider scope, i.e. include environment management, or development activities that enhance the environment?

² The Tu'anga Taporoporo is a corporate body that comprises the Environment Council and the Environment Service. The Environment Council consists of six persons appointed by the Minister of Environment with the approval of cabinet. The council acts as an advisory body to the Minister of Environment and the Environment Service. It also formulates policies for the Environment Service to implement. The Service consists of a Director and officers which implement policies and programmes consistent with the Tu'anga Taporoporo as approved by the Council.

³ The Natural Heritage Trust (formerly the Natural Heritage Project) collects and integrates scientific and traditional information on the plants and animals of the Cook Islands, and seeks to make such information available to the general public and schools.

⁴ In the Cook Islands there are no rates that pay for the collection of household rubbish.

The EPF mechanism could go a long way towards cleaning up the environment in the Cook Islands.

Photo by Anna Tira'a





Furthermore, when legislation is passed establishing an EPF or equivalent, it should be stipulated that the money go in to a separate account, and not be included in consolidated revenue for possible later dispersal.

Utilisation of the fund should be subject to an annual audit, to ensure that the money is spent on appropriate projects, i.e. those that protect the environment. The EPF should not be used by Government as an alternate source of funds for projects that would be considered a part of Government's normal responsibility.

In the past, there had been discussions about advertising in the Immigration Arrivals forms that part of the departure tax goes towards the EPF. Although this did not eventuate, in order for visitors and residents to be aware of the EPF, perhaps advertising needs to be re-examined.

Conclusion

With some prodding from concerned environmentalists, it took over three years for the full amount of the EPF to be dedicated to the purpose for which it was intended as outlined in the amendment made to the Departure Tax Act. However, given that no other scheme like this exists in the Pacific—a local self-generating fund solely for environmental purposes—credit must be given to the Cook Islands Government of the time for establishing the EPF.

It could be argued that the Cook Islands Government is still indirectly using much of the EPF for general revenue as, for example, in 1999 the NZ\$297,000 from the EPF to support the Environment Service would otherwise have had to come out of Government revenue. However, with approximately NZ\$250,000 being generated annually from the EPF, which is now administered by the Tu'anga Taporoporo, it is likely that spending on environmentally-related projects within the Cook Islands has increased as a direct result of the EPF.

Currently, the Tu'anga Taporoporo is the only body which receives direct funding from the EPF. The structure and purpose of the EPF has steered away from the original concept as envisaged by the now defunct Environment Fund Committee. That concept was that anybody with an interest in protecting and conserving the environment could apply for financial support under the EPF.

Maintaining a specially designated fund for conservation or environment purposes is largely dependent on the commitment of the government to conserve the environment. Government has the potential to encourage and assist communities with their own environment management, and the EPF is one of a number of tools that could realise those aspirations.

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Thanks also to Kelvin Passfield, Jacqui Evans, Wayne King, Joe Reti, Greg Sherley and James Atherton for their comments on this paper. Thanks to the SPBCP for giving me this opportunity to write this paper. *Meitaki maata e kia manuia*

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From the Manager's Desk

Joe Reti *SPBCP Programme Manager*



Greetings to all readers and recipients of the CALL newsletter. You would have noted that we had particular difficulties producing the first three issues of this "new look" replacement for CASOLink last year. We do apologise for the long delay in getting these out to you on time. I have been assured that this will not be repeated this year, so here's hoping for the best.

A key reason for changing the name of the newsletter was to encourage its wider ownership by all projects and people working on conservation issues in the Pacific. So far, projects and officials outside the SPBCP have made little use of the newsletter to inform others of what they are doing. I would like, therefore, to encourage you once again to take advantage of the newsletter to share your experience with the network of programmes and people who are dedicated to protecting biodiversity and natural resources in our region. I am sure we can all learn from each other's experience.

On the SPBCP front, it was sad to lose Sue Miller who resigned from SPREP at the end of 1999 to take up a challenging position as the Manager of the IUCN / Samoa Marine Protected Area Project. Sue, as most of you know, was responsible for the species conservation programme in SPREP and was partly funded by the SPBCP. Sue is not totally lost to the region as she is still working out of Apia and I know many of us will cross paths with her again in the near future. I'm sure you will all join me in wishing Sue success in her new job.

Transition strategies

The development and implementation of transition strategies for all CAPs under the SPBCP will be the top priority for the year 2000. SPBCP staff assisted this process for a few CAPs late last year and others early in the New Year. Good strategies can only be achieved through an extensive participatory and consultative process. A number of CAPs have already completed this process while others are planning for these consultations to take place in the next few months.

As we plan for the transition from SPBCP support to self-funding for the CAPs, it is extremely important to take stock of other developments that are occurring in our region. A number of countries have received assistance from UNDP and UNEP for the development of their National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans (NBSAPs) which I suspect will be the key biodiversity planning and policy documents for these countries. Linking CAPs to these initiatives will therefore be of the utmost importance if the lessons learned through the SPBCP and CAP development are to be sustained and replicated in the years to come. Knowing who is responsible for the NBSAP process in your country will be an important first step in the development of such links.

Meetings, reviews and workshops

The Seventh Meeting of TMAG and the Sixth Multipartite Review of the SPBCP were held in October 1999 as planned. Recommendations from these meetings are reported in pages 16 and 17 of this issue. As was expected, much time was spent on discussions relating to preparing the CAPs for the end of SPBCP support and especially the need to strengthen existing management structures to take over full responsibility for the projects by 2001.

A regional workshop on the Pacific Conservation Trust Fund was also held the same week as the TMAG and Multipartite. The aim of this workshop was to update governments on where we are with the development of the fund and to seek their further support for the initiative. Recognising the need to progress efforts in the development of the fund, a Steering Committee was appointed with a specific mandate to lead efforts in this regard. This Committee will meet in February 2000. You will be informed via future issues of developments in this area.

SPREP's Action Plan

Last but not least, SPREP will soon be conducting national seminars in a number of countries as part of its review of the current SPREP Action Plan leading to the development of the next plan. The Secretariat hopes to submit a draft of this plan for government endorsement during the upcoming Eleventh SPREP Meeting in Guam, 9–13 October, 2000. I hope you will be able to participate in these seminars to make sure that conservation issues in your countries are fully discussed and addressed in the next SPREP Action Plan. The Action Plan provides the framework for SPREP assistance to its member countries and is guided by inputs from people like yourselves who are dealing with environment and conservation issues on a daily basis. Check SPREP's *Focal Point* for information about whether a seminar will be conducted in your country and, if so, when.

With my best wishes for a successful start to the new millennium.

Joe Reti
SPBCP Project Manager

Conservation Area Summaries 4th quarter September–December 1999

News from the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (SPBCP-supported) CAs.

ARNAVON (SOLOMON ISLANDS)

The project's first newsletter, entitled *Arnavon News*, was published and distributed to the communities and other interested individuals and organisations. It is hoped that the newsletter will be published on a quarterly basis.

Awareness visits to the CA were carried out for the Kia, Waghena and Katupika schools. There is a need to have more visual material so that the CA message is conveyed to schools and the general public.

Despite a decrease in poaching, daily patrolling of the CA continues to be carried out by the Conservation Officers.

UAFATO (SAMOA)

Marine surveys were carried out as part of the success indicators monitoring project. The team involved in the indicators project is led by Dr Trevor Ward. Other members of the team consist of Geoff Dews, Dion Ale, Conservation Officer Suiga Tuiavii and CASO Ioane Etuale. The marine surveys involved a household survey to identify the local impacts on marine life and an ongoing bi-weekly survey to monitor the local use of fish and shellfish. In addition, six transects were laid out on the reef and in the lagoon to monitor impacts in these areas.

The CASO attended the 7th TMAG meeting held in Apia, Samoa in October.

The project has purchased a new computer to help with production of the required reports and printed materials for the CA.

Consultants Bill Moore and Apete Meredith completed the feasibility study on the honey

project. Production of honey is being looked at as an income-generating activity. Honey trials have been established and three kilos of honey from the trial was distributed to the community.

KOROYANITU (FIJI)

A newsletter named *Koroyanitu National Heritage Park—Vola Tukutuku (Newsletter)* was published in December in Fijian and distributed to the six communities involved in the project. The purpose of the newsletter is to keep the communities informed of activities relating to the CA and to raise conservation awareness. It will be published on a monthly basis.

Consultations with the Nalotawa community were held looking at potential income generating activities. The community expressed interest in operating a shop to service their household needs and, later, the ecotourism venture.

Work has started on drafting a planting programme and a business plan for the Korobebe community. The socioeconomic survey conducted in Korobebe in the 3rd quarter identified three forms of income for households (farming, lease money and temporary employment).

An evaluation of the CA as part of the SPBCP exit strategy was carried out. Etika Rupeni of the World Wide Fund for Nature helped with the evaluation.

TAKITUMU (COOK ISLANDS)

A community meeting was held on 10 November as part of the CA evaluation. It was evident that further consultation with some landowners needed to be done because of their lack of understanding of the CA project.

The Takitumu Conservation Area (TCA) contributed to the production of an environmental radio show held in November.

As part of the Kakerori Recovery Programme, Technical Adviser, Ed Saul and Conservation Officer, Mataiti Mataiti implemented the rat control programme. The rat population in the TCA had decreased significantly by the end of the quarter. Snap traps were also used to monitor rat species.

Sampling Uafato's lagoon.
Photo by Trevor Ward



TCA staff in their new spacious office.

Photo by Anna Tira



The project has a new office and shop located on the main road of lower Tupapa. Staff moved into the larger premises in November. Their contact details remain the same.

The ex-Prime Minister, Sir Geoffrey Henry, has donated his old beach house to the Takitumu Conservation Area. The CACC have decided to use the funds made from the income-generating activities set aside for CA developments to relocate the building into the CA. The building will be used for plant propagation such as *Morinda citrifolia*, kava and other native plants for later sale.

CASO Ian Karika Wilmott attended a business development seminar in December. The ideas expressed at the seminar may help toward strengthening the project's business ventures.

FUNAFUTI (TUVALU)

The Acting Minister of Natural Resources and Environment, Hon. Teleke P Lauti, formally declared the Funafuti CA to be a conservation area under the CA Act 1999.

Biodiversity Officer Claudia Ludescher finished her contract with the project at the end of December 1999. The Funafuti Kaupule (Town Council) and the Government of Tuvalu has agreed to fund another Australian Volunteer Abroad to replace Claudia.

The CASO was invited by the Ministry of Health as a resource person at their workshop to give a talk on Biodiversity Conservation and the benefits to the Islands. The workshop was aimed at promoting a Healthy Island for the year 2000. The CASO prepared a paper, entitled "Life in Tuvalu: What can you do?" which will be translated into Tuvaluan as an information sheet.

The construction of the Interpretive Centre has commenced. As well as receiving financial

support from the SPBCP and Canada Fund, the Funafuti Kaupule has agreed to contribute funds towards the construction of the centre.

Consultations with the community to assist with the CA Evaluation were accomplished. Government consultations will be carried out in the next quarter.

The Community Awareness Survey was completed and the results have been analysed and presented in booklet format by project staff.

At the request of the Falekaupule (decision-making body), an awareness workshop was held with the landowners on the Benefits of Conservation Areas.

The annual school visit to the conservation area was carried out with assistance from the *HMSS Te Mataili* ferrying the school children to the CA. Thanks to the Commissioner of Police and the Commander of the *Mataili* for their help. The use of the boat was free of charge. The children were taken ashore on each of the islets within the CA to help with the clean-up activities.

The project's bi-monthly bird monitoring programme continued. Project staff have completed an interesting report based on the monitoring results entitled "Funafuti Conservation Area: The Bird Surveys. September 1998–October 1999".

Staff tagged a turtle and the relevant information will be forwarded to the SPREP Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme. Twenty-seven turtles were observed nesting within and five outside the CA this quarter. The data has been recorded into the project's Turtle Track Monitoring Programme.



A case study of ecotourism development Koroyanitu—Conservation Area

Unaisi Tawake CASO, Koroyanitu Conservation Area Project



The Koroyanitu Range, located in North Western Viti Levu, 16 kms from Lautoka City (Fiji's second largest city), has been the subject of various investigations and research. All highlighted the significance of the Koroyanitu area and recommended that the area be used for conservation purposes—and that this is now happening through a new ecotourism project in the area.

Koroyanitu CA covers an area of 21,984 ha of which 2,984 is core conservation area, and the remaining is the buffer zone. There are six villages combined with a populace of 800 people involved in the CAP. These villages are Abaca, Navilawa, Nalotawa, Vakabuli, Nadele, and Yaloku.

Historically, the site is important as it was a fort for the early settlers of Fiji. Today the site is even more important, due to the following:

1. The Koroyanitu area contains the last remaining pristine montane forest of the type found in the dry zone of Viti Levu;
2. The Koroyanitu area is a known habitat of endangered wildlife and of endemic flora and fauna of regional and global importance;
3. It is still very much threatened from the unscrupulous burning of the fringing grassland and also from commercial (unsustainable) logging within the designated conservation area; and
4. The area has the most potential in western Viti Levu for development as a "flagship" for community conservation in Fiji.

The New Zealand Official Development Assistance (NZODA) has been providing assistance in tourism infrastructure to the area since 1989. In 1993, SPREP formally confirmed the area as a candidate for the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme and has assisted the Native Land Trust Board (NLTB) with conservation project management ever since.

The main aim of establishing the Ecotourism Project apart from conservation, is to provide an alternative to forest logging to supplement the income of the landowning units.

Ongoing ecotourism activities include:

- Vereni Falls Lookout
- Kokobula Scenic Viewpoint
- Savuione Waterfall—round trip
- Mt. Batilamu Trek

Key issues

1. Ecotourism development

This is a special skill and initial conservation awareness and training programmes have been under-

taken for the selected representatives of the Koroyanitu community. As a result, the communities have embraced the concept of establishing a conservation area.

Furthermore, this community has engaged itself in a range of income generating enterprises (shares in co-op, village projects, selling artifacts and so on) which would not only generate adequate income but also positively increase their welfare.

2. Ownership

Getting the support of the respective landowning units is just as important. The aim is to clearly incorporate local community members in the project planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation. The main idea is that in years to come, the Koroyanitu community itself will take full ownership and manage the conservation of their resources.

3. Partnership (SPBCP, NZODA, JANPAC)

The project provides the opportunity for joint partnership amongst the agencies and parties involved in the planning and implementation of Koroyanitu National Park and to demonstrate the link between tourism and conservation of Fijian landholdings.

In this context, the project is clearly in line with and reinforces the policy of the Government of Fiji with regard to enhancing the participation of indigenous Fijians in the tourism industry in Fiji.

Support from the Government through policy statements and participation of various departments in the promotion of the Koroyanitu Project is encouraging.

Findings

Although the concept of tourism is relatively new to Koroyanitu, in the report *NZODA Support for Ecotourism in Fiji: Report Review on the Koroyanitu Project*, it states that:

"Good progress has been made towards achieving the environmental objective to conserve, protect and enhance the natural and cultural herit-

Interest in developing the Koroyanitu range for ecotourism purposes has arisen from a combination of increasing pressure by commercial loggers to log out the range and the increasing interest by the landowning units, NGOs and Government for environmental conservation.



Koroyanitu Range.
Photo by Art Whistler

age... however (there is) only limited progress towards achieving the original social and economic objectives”.

This “good progress” is attributed to:

1. Training

The Koroyanitu Project is already benefiting the people. The direct beneficiaries are the landowning units with propriety rights to the Conservation Area and transition areas for their sustenance and use.

Extensive training programmes on sustainable land management and business management have been carried out for the Koroyanitu Project, this being funded by both SPBCP and NZODA.

Women are also benefiting from this project. They have the opportunity to be elected to the Koroyanitu National Heritage Park Board and are also recipients of training in land management and business skills, hopefully securing their positions as decision-makers.

2. Product development and marketing

Janet Bathgate has designed an integrated design package for all marketing and interpretation signs.

3. Infrastructure

Considerable maintenance and improvements have been made to the park infrastructure. NZODA, together with the Japanese Conservation Organisation, have installed new toilets at Abaca.

Lessons learnt

1. Ecotourism is an option or possible “tool kit” to promote conservation.
2. Community ownership and participation in project planning, implementing and management has real potential in improving community welfare.
3. The project should be self-assessed and improved.

Conclusion

Interest in developing the Koroyanitu range for ecotourism purposes has arisen from a combination of increasing pressure by commercial loggers to log out the range and the increasing interest by the landowning units, NGOs and Government for environmental conservation.

As ecotourism is a growth industry around the world, the Koroyanitu Area project has real potential. With financial assistance from various donors including SPREP through the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme and NZODA, it has positively assisted the community in Koroyanitu to manage their resources on a sustainable basis into the future.



Madison Nena receives the 1999 Seacology Prize

Compiled by Anna Tiraa SPBCP Consultant



Madison Nena of Kosrae, one of the four states of the Federated States of Micronesia, received the 1999 Seacology Foundation’s Indigenous Conservationist of the Year Award during ceremonies at Kalaheo, Kauai, Hawai’i. Madison is the Conservation Area Support Officer (CASO) for the Utwa-Walung CA.

The award, also known throughout the world as the Seacology Prize, is given annually to an indigenous islander for outstanding achievement in preserving the environment and culture of any of the world’s 100,000-plus islands.

For over 13 years, Madison was the administrator of Kosrae’s Division of Tourism, where he ensured that government decision-makers always considered the environmental impact of any proposed

development and promoted ecotourism focusing on Kosrae’s unique natural and cultural heritage. In 1996 he left to work more directly on preserving Kosrae’s environment.

That same year, Madison played a pivotal role in the establishment of the Utwa-Walung Conservation Area, comprising several rivers, extensive and diverse mangrove swamps, pristine coral reefs and an abundance of marine resources.

Over an email “chat”, Madison was both thrilled and honoured to receive such an award. Especially so when his conservation work is recognised by Seacology and other international organisations. When asked about how receiving this award will help his conservation work, Madison replied, “I believe this award will get the attention of other donor organisations to support the CA”.

The reaction from the communities he works with has been extremely positive. Their participation and involvement in the project has increased.

Madison conveys his sincere appreciation to Seacology for recognising his conservation efforts in Kosrae and especially the prestigious award given during the ceremony held in Kauai.

Adapted from Pacific Islands Report, Pacific Islands Development Program/East-West Center, Center for Pacific Islands Studies/University of Hawai'i at Manoa

Uafato visits you all

Ioane Etuale CASO, Uafato Conservation Area Project



There is one Samoan custom people always refer to when they are travelling or visiting families and friends. If one departs for Apia, he or she is expected to bring home a *oso* (gift of food), which could be pancakes, soft drinks, mutton flaps, turkey tails or frozen meat for the family meal.

As we approach the Christmas and New Year holidays, many of our families in the Pacific will be hosting a few visitors. Considering the farewell celebrations of the old millennium, and welcoming the new, I believe there will be a lot of small *oso* such as chocolates, whiskey and many other Christmas presents from our relatives and friends residing overseas.

My gratitude and thanks to the initiative of CALL that enables me to visit my fellow environmental brothers, sisters, uncles and aunts in the 17 conservation families in the Pacific Region under the SPBCP umbrella. I am sorry I do not have any pan-

cakes or chocolates for you, but I do have one *oso* for you. I am going to give you a short update of the progress from this side of the family.

However, before I do that, I would like to convey my thanks and congratulations to Papaliitele Dion Ale, who was the former CASO for Uafato and my predecessor. Well done Bro! Malo le galue. Manuia le aiga fou ma ia fua tele le niu!

On challenges and physical power

For those of you I haven't met, my name is Ioane Etuale and I am the new CASO for the Uafato Conservation Area Project. I started work in August 1999. I worked in the print media before I became an environmentalist. I find this new job very challenging. I used to write articles about the importance of our environment, but now I feel like I'm really putting things into practice. I am enjoying the work and hopefully I'll be able to continue until I run out of physical power. So far so good.

Since 1994, SPREP and the Siosiomaga Society have been working very hard to involve the Uafato community in conserving their biodiversity, thanks to the hard work of the former CASO and the OLSSI (O le Siosiomaga Society Inc.), which is the implementing agency.

Uafato's rainforest has the best *lfilele* (*Intsia bijuga*) population in Samoa. The 14 km² Conservation Area continues to “blossom”. There is no doubt about the great deal of awareness, understanding and appreciation for the biodiversity that the local people have gained over the last five years.

Income-generating activities

We have been working closely with the community to develop sustainable income-generating

Ifilele, a tree of cultural importance to Samoa.
Photo by Art Whistler



activities in order to encourage the continued conservation of the resources.

We have completed the feasibility study of a prospective Honey Project in the CA. Honey experts have affirmed the excellent flow of honey in Uafato. It was found that our honey is the lightest in colour, and is of the highest quality in Samoa. Other income-generating potentials that we are working on include ecotourism, handicrafts and carving. We are taking steps—one at a time.

We will be lending the bats a helping hand by replanting the forest. Thus, a small tree nursery will be built in the CA to raise seedlings of *ifilele* as well as other useful plants. Thanks to these animals for doing such a great job, and most of all, thanks to the people for keeping them from the dining table.

One stakeholder that deserves some credit is the CACC. They have been working very hard in ensuring that the CA is a success.

Involving the people

The project uses participatory, grassroots and community-based approaches. Uafato's water supply, which the people longed for, for many years has

now been solved thanks to assistance from the SPBCP.

The community has built an office within the village, this has become the CA centre for all its monitoring and management work. In addition, a CO (Conservation Officer), funded by the O Le Siosiomaga Society, has been appointed from the village of Uafato to assist the CASO in running the project.

We make a good team—the CASO, CO, CACC and the people of Uafato. We are all keen to work to the best of our abilities to sustain our natural resources for the good of the community, including those who are still on their journey to this earth and even those who are yet to be thought of.

Besides all of these conservation efforts, there is something special about Uafato. It is a Holy Land, the land of the god, *Tagaloa*. The ninth heaven where Tagaloa lived, according to the legends, is part of the Uafato CA. But that does not mean you have to take off your shoes when you come to Uafato. Shoes sometimes tend to walk on their own. If by chance, any of the family out there come across a pair of Nike jandals, could you show them the way to Uafato?

Monitoring birds in Uafato Conservation Area

Anna Tiraa and Greg Sherley



On 5 June 1999 the first monitoring bird survey started in Uafato Conservation Area, Samoa by a team led by SPREP's Avifauna Conservation and Invasive Species Officer, Greg Sherley. The primary aim of the monitoring survey is to monitor two key groups of birds regularly—pigeons and doves over a period of time to detect changes in populations of these birds that locals often harvest. To date Dion Ale, the former Uafato Conservation Area Support Officer has assisted with the survey.

At the same time as detecting changes in bird populations, a systematic monitoring method for

pigeons and doves is being developed that can easily be used by local people in other parts of the Pacific. Although the monitoring programme is customised for pigeons and doves, it can also include other observable species such as the common passerines (perching birds).

Why monitor pigeons and doves?

Overharvesting of these birds mainly as a food source is occurring in some Pacific island countries. At the Polynesian Avifauna workshop held in Rarotonga in April 1999, it was recognised that there was a need to develop a method to monitor these culturally important birds. A systematic method for monitoring harvested birds in the Pacific has not yet been established.

Hopefully, another benefit of doing such a survey is that it will generate appreciation and aware-

Uafato from the sea.
Photo by Art Whistler



To assess the population status of other harvested groups of birds and to encourage sustainable harvesting, similar monitoring regimes need to occur on different islands of other harvested bird groups such as seabirds.

ness of pigeons and doves within the local community.

Tracking patterns of change

Local knowledge of the area helped identify a strategic location for monitoring. The chosen site overlooks a catchment. All birds that are heard, seen flying or land within two consecutive half-hour periods are scored. Scoring starts at sunrise or for two consecutive half-hour periods, and again before sunset on the same day and location. Monitoring is done every six weeks. The data collected will be used to determine indices of abundance of birds observed within half-hour periods of observation.

By monitoring key harvested species in Uafato, a frame of reference is established from which future comparisons can be made. Thus, in the future these baseline data should be adequate to track patterns of change as a result of harvesting, cyclones and habitat modification. The monitoring regime will be carried out over at least two years.

Training staff and locals

The programme works closely with local Conservation Area staff. Uafato CASO, Ioane Etuale and

Conservation Officer Suiga Tuiavii are currently being trained to do the survey. The continuity of monitoring, especially when changes of staff occur, is an issue of concern. It would be ideal to give quality training to a number of locals. With this in mind, the method will be documented and incorporated into training courses within the region.

Another area of concern is that there is no data on the harvesting of birds. So that inferences can be made about the impact of harvesting, methods for collecting these data are being investigated.

Within the Pacific region, pigeons and doves are not the only groups of birds harvested. To assess the population status of other harvested groups of birds and to encourage sustainable harvesting, similar monitoring regimes need to occur on different islands of other harvested bird groups such as seabirds.

To increase community understanding and support it is intended that the results and methods are presented and demonstrated to the Uafato village.

Stay tuned to future editions of CALL for the monitoring results.

A decade of working with Pacific communities

Elisabeth Mealey *WWF South Pacific*



It is now 10 years since WWF (World Wide Fund for Nature) established a programme of activity in the South Pacific. Over that decade, the Pacific region has been faced with many complex environmental, developmental and political issues, ranging from the outrage at French nuclear testing to the growth of industrial logging, to the pain of IMF-imposed structural adjustment. Through it all, there has been one constant factor that continues to be the most important tool for Pacific people—customary land tenure.

With 97 per cent of land in this region held under customary ownership, WWF's approach has focused on enabling customary resource owners and local communities to use their forests, land and marine life in ways that are ecologically sustainable, socially beneficial and economically worthwhile. This means committing to a long and often difficult process of combining subsistence living with selling resources for cash and balancing traditional knowledge with modern scientific understanding of resource management.

As the new century is born, there are positive signs that this approach is proving more and more successful. In the Solomon Islands, where the programme has been active for over seven years, local communities are increasingly determined to reject damaging industrial-scale logging and mining projects. This is a major change from the late 1980s and early 1990s, when foreign companies

were more able to persuade communities to trade their forests and marine resources for often empty promises of cash, schools, roads and health clinics.

In charge of their destinies

Now, in places like Michi Village in Marovo Lagoon, where WWF assisted the local people to establish an ecotourism lodge in 1995, the community is totally in charge of its destiny. More and more children are attending high school, their fees paid for by a community-managed fund. Young people employed at the lodge are learning new skills, such as book-keeping and hospitality.

Also in Marovo Lagoon, the people of One village have been working with WWF to rejuvenate their once dwindling marine resources. Two years ago, the community decided to set aside an area of

In Papua New Guinea . . . many communities have opted for development plans that ensure long-term protection for their forests and wetlands rather than the destruction that follows the short-term option of logging and mining.

In the southern island province of Kadavu (Fiji), WWF is working with local landowners as well as national and provincial government agencies to set up the country's first community-run and managed marine conservation area.



People of One village in the Solomon Islands meet to find ways to rejuvenate their dwindling marine resources.

Photo by WWF

reef, banning all fishing and other harvesting of marine resources there. This was a decision taken after much consultation with the whole community—from elders to children. Now, the community has renamed the reef “Repair Reef” because so many fish species have returned. A resource management plan is in place, ensuring that the reef is not over-harvested again.

Similarly, in Papua New Guinea, where WWF has been active throughout the programme's life, many communities have opted for development plans that ensure long-term protection for their forests and wetlands rather than the destruction that follows the short-term option of logging and mining. This has been illustrated most vividly in the Hunstein Range area in northern PNG where a Forest Management Area (or logging concession) was established in an area straddled by the April and Salumei Rivers within the vast Sepik River catchment.

In July 1997, after long discussions with WWF, three Hunstein Range communities (Wagu, Yigei and Gahom) declared their land a Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This in effect makes the collective 220,000 hectares a conservation area where a committee of local landowners makes decisions for the protection and use of the area's natural resources. Much of the WMA overlaps the land that had been formerly declared as the April-Salumei logging concession. As of late 1999, no logging had taken place there.

On the larger scale in PNG, WWF is working closely with the newly formed Ecoforestry Forum to strengthen awareness of community forestry. A number of groups working in community forestry have joined forces to create the Forum and already interest is growing.

Community decision-making

In Fiji, where the programme is headquartered, the emphasis has also been on community decision-making. In the southern island province of Kadavu, WWF is working with local landowners as well as national and provincial government agencies to set up the country's first community-run and managed marine conservation area. The challenge is to use consultative planning processes to resolve potential conflicts between customary tenure and state ownership of marine areas. There is also the need to balance traditional food harvesting from reefs with demands from commercial fishermen and dive operators. WWF hopes that the Ono Island marine conservation area will be officially gazetted in early 2000.

Similarly in the Cook Islands, WWF has had major success through its work with local communities and chiefs to re-introduce **ra'ui**, a traditional mechanism of reef lagoon management. Local people concerned with the dramatic decline in Rarotonga Lagoon's fish stocks had wanted to reintroduce the ra'ui for many years; however, efforts by the chiefs' organisation, Koutu Nui, had failed to gain government backing. WWF helped provide the necessary “third party”, building a bridge between the many stakeholders and bringing the momentum needed to make the ra'ui a reality. Now, after being in place for two years, the lagoon is showing strong signs of recovery. Awareness of the ra'ui is very strong and the Koutu Nui is adamant that the traditional system will stay in place through communal respect, rather than through legislation.

As a new Pacific century begins, WWF hopes to build further on the past decade's work with communities. The hope is that harmony can be found between people and nature and that sustainable Pacific life is an achievable goal. For the next decade, WWF is committed to ensuring that local people, their communities, customs, languages and institutions are at the centre of development and conservation planning.



Reef Surveying. Photo by WWF

Polynesia/Micronesia hotspots

Allen Allison and Lucius G. Eldredge



In terms of endemics, have you ever wondered how biologically diverse our region is? The following excerpt gives some insight to this.

The Polynesia/Micronesia Hotspot is another new addition to the hotspots list, having not been recognised in earlier hotspots analyses. As defined here, it consists of all of Micronesia and Polynesia, and also Fiji, which is generally, considered a transitional area between Melanesia and Polynesia. Although it stretches over an enormous area of some 21.6 million km² of Pacific Ocean (2.6 times the size of the continental United States of America), it is in fact one of the smallest hotspots in terms of land area, covering only some 46,012 km².

This region is biologically very diverse, and has a high degree of endemism among the vascular plants and certain vertebrate groups.

In terms of diversity and endemism, there are an estimated 6,557 native species of vascular plants in the Polynesia/Micronesia Hotspot, of which 3,334 (51%) are endemic. There is also one endemic family, the Degeneriaceae, which is endemic to Fiji, and a high degree of generic endemism in the more isolated archipelagos of the region (e.g. over 15 per cent for Hawaii).

In terms of vertebrate diversity, the terrestrial animal associations of Polynesia/Micronesia include rich arrays of birds, reptiles, land snails and insects, all groups adept at crossing gaps of open ocean, and low diversity but high endemism in

freshwater fish, amphibians and terrestrial mammals.

The native terrestrial mammal fauna consists entirely of bats. Sixteen living native species of bats are known from this hotspot, of which nine (56%) are endemic, all of them fruit bats (*Megachiroptera*). An additional five species are indigenous, but also occur in Papua New Guinea, the Solomon Islands or Vanuatu. Although several species of rats inhabit most islands in the region, they are all assumed to be human introductions dating back to the early Polynesian and Micronesian inhabitants, and later the Europeans.

The marine mammal fauna of this region is quite rich. Thirty-five species of cetaceans are resident within, or at least visit the region seasonally or occasionally. Dugongs (*Dugong dugon*) occur in Palauan water, the only area in this hotspot with a resident population.

As with the terrestrial mammals, amphibian diversity in this hotspot is also quite low. Only three native amphibians are known to occur, all of them ranid frogs of the genus *Platymantis*, and all three endemic. Two of these species are endemic to Fiji, the third to Palau.

Bird diversity in Polynesia/Micronesia is not particularly high, but endemism is very high. Originally there were 254 breeding species in the region, of which 152 living species are endemic and an additional 22 that were endemic but went extinct since the arrival of the Europeans. Counting the extinct species, there were 174 endemics representing 68.5 per cent of the bird fauna, a remarkably high percentage of endemic birds. Included among the 254 breeding species in the region are 37 that are migratory but nest in the region, and another 47 resident indigenous species that are not endemic.

For the reptiles, there are 69 native terrestrial species found in Polynesia/Micronesia. Plus there are five marine turtles which nest on the beaches of these islands, at least three species of sea snakes, and the Indo Pacific saltwater crocodile (*Crocodylus porosus*), which occurs in Palau and has even reached Pohnpei as a waif. The terrestrial species include nine species of snakes and

Endemic to Rarotonga, the endangered Rarotonga Flycatcher.

Photo by Rod Hay



58 species of lizards, mostly skinks and geckos but also including two iguanas, *Brachylophus faciatus* and *Brachylophus vitiensis*, that are endemic to the Fiji–Tonga area; this figure includes seven new species of lizards not yet formally described. Thirty-seven of the 69 terrestrial species or 54 per cent are endemic; when the marine species are included, endemism is 47 per cent.

In terms of fish, although there are a number of species reported from freshwater, most are marine species that can tolerate freshwater habitats. Only one monotypic genus, *Vailima fontinalis*, is known to be confined to freshwater, and it is endemic to Samoa.

Invertebrate diversity in the region is high for certain groups. Particularly impressive are the land snails, a conspicuous feature of Pacific island ecosystems. Of the 13 major indigenous pulmonate land snail families on the Pacific islands, four are endemic to the central Pacific. The Hawaiian Islands have a total of 763 native land snail species, of which a striking 748 (98%) are endemic, and an additional 63 introduced species. The Samoan Islands have 94 native species, of which 59 (63%)

are endemic, and an additional 18 introduced species.

The Polynesia/Micronesia Hotspot has a total of 221 terrestrial protected areas and community-based conservation areas that cover 4,913km², or 10.7 per cent of all land within the region.

The full text can be found in "Hotspots: Earth's Biologically Richest and Most Endangered Terrestrial Ecoregions" editors: Russell A. Mittermeier, Norman Myers, Cristina Goettsch Mittermeier, Coordinator: Patricio Robles Gil, Foreword: Harrison Ford, CEMEX 1999.

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Who and what is TMAG?



The Technical Management Advisory Group (TMAG) was established for the purpose of advising on the SPBCP implementation. The first meeting of TMAG was held in 1993. In fact, there were two TMAG meetings in that same year. The 7th Meeting was held in Apia, Samoa, 25 and 26 October 1999. In order to find out who makes up TMAG, a profile of some of its members are detailed below.

Name: Ernest Bani

Age: 37 years

Who do you work for? Government of the Republic of Vanuatu

Professional background: Natural Resource Management Specialist. Currently the head of Vanuatu's Environment Unit.

How long have you been on TMAG? 5 years

For you, what have been some of the major achievements of the SPBCP?

Settlement of land, economic and social disputes within some of the CA communities. Raising awareness of conservation areas, not only within the communities but also within the tourism and business sectors and the general public.

Name: Mr Faumuina Sailimalo Pati Liu

Who do you work for? Samoa's Department of Lands, Surveys & Environment

Professional background: Agriculture and forestry

How long have you been on TMAG? 3 years

For you, what have been some of the major achievements of the SPBCP?

It has achieved what it set out to do.

Name: Arthur Dahl

Age 57

Who do you work for? United Nations Environment Programme

Professional background: PhD in biology; specialist in coral reef ecology and island biodiversity; former regional ecological advisor for SPC, which used to house SPREP; member of the IUCN and World Commission on Protected Areas and Commission on Environmental Management.

How long have you been on TMAG? Since the beginning.

For you, what have been some of the major achievements of the SPBCP?

Proving that the community-based conservation approach works in the Pacific.

Conserving important national areas and species while improving the life of local people.

Finding culturally appropriate approaches to biodiversity management.

SPBCP note: Arthur is the Chairman of TMAG.

Name: Trevor Ward

Age: 52 years old.

Who do you work for? University of Western Australia, Perth.

Professional background: Marine ecologist

How long have you been on TMAG? 5 years

For you, what have been some of the major achievements of the SPBCP?

Demonstrating that community-based conservation can be effective.

Raising awareness of conservation issues across the Pacific.

Name: Serge Ducasse

Age: 47

Who do you work for? United Nations Development Programme

Professional background: Development mitigation

How long have you been on TMAG? Not long, this is my first meeting.

For you, what have been some of the major achievements of the SPBCP?

17 Conservation Areas in the Pacific.

Creation of awareness for government officials and the general public.

Lots of training (CASOs and the communities).

Leading force for conservation in the Pacific region.

Name: Roger Cornforth

Age: 45

Who do you work for? NZODA (New Zealand Ministry of Foreign Affairs & Trade) as the Environment Specialist.

Professional background: Biogeographer; Coastal Management Programme Manager; NZODA environment planning adviser to Samoa's Department of Environment and Conservation; Project Officer with SPBCP.

How long have you been on TMAG? 3 years

For you, what have been some of the major achievements of the SPBCP?

Piloting and being the principal flag bearer for community-based conservation in the Pacific.

Assisting the development of sustainable income-generating enterprises within a supportive overall CA context.

Piloting and developing new approaches such as participation, long-term donor support, etc.

Bringing to the programme, and from the programme, other work in the region—the learning and sharing of experiences around the Pacific.

Name: Peter Thomas

Who do you work for? The Nature Conservancy.

Professional background: BA (Victoria University, Wellington); MSc. (Resource Management, Canterbury University); 12 years working with NZ Government in nature conservation, national parks and reserves, planning and administration; 15 years (five-and-a-half years with SPREP and 8 years with TNC) working in the Pacific specialising in biodiversity conservation and sustainable resource management programme management.

How long have you been on TMAG? 1 year

For you, what have been some of the major achievements of the SPBCP?

SPBCP has kick-started community-based conservation action throughout the Pacific.

Developed some great “bottom up” models for community-based conservation.

Greatly increased the region's capacity to continue this work through the CASO recruitment and training programme.

Instrumental in increasing community awareness of the need for conservation areas, but I worry that this same level of understanding is not reflected in government commitment to biodiversity conservation in many countries.

Finally, SPBCP has been at the forefront in securing resources and expertise to focus on species protection issues (marine turtles, birds and invasive species) which would otherwise have been neglected in the region.

Other members of TMAG not profiled here include Cook Islander, Fanaura Kingstone and World Wide Fund for Nature, Peter Hunnam.



Key TMAG recommendations from its 7th Meeting

1. Recommendations on the Transition Strategies process

- That SPREP develop and implement a regional transition strategy for ensuring that the achievements of the SPBCP are not lost but are maintained and built on in the immediate future.
- The team responsible for Transition Strategies (combining communities, CA and SPBCP staff):
 - ensures that the CACC structure is appropriate, locally owned and a solid basis for devolution of CA management responsibilities at local or country level.
 - that funding be prioritised towards the building of CA capacity for smooth transition away from SPBCP funding.
 - those new Income-Generating Activities are of a manageable scale. Taking into consideration the natural resources of the CAs with strong linkages with conservation of the CA biodiversity and that they should be designed to return benefits towards the management of the CA.
- To the Multipartite Review, the Transition Strategies for CAs should involve project plans well beyond 2001. The plans should show the phase out of the SPBCP funding and identifying strategic partnerships with national agencies and donors in order to continue implementation of the work programme, including considerations aiming at securing community/groups commitments such as micro-finance options.
- That the SPBCP ensures that the strategies are structured in a way that identifies the transition process being followed and sets the context by identifying achievements and opportunities as well as constraints and issues.
- That in the transition from SPBCP, the Multipartite Review countries integrate the SPBCP CA concept into NBSAPs. The SPBCP should work closely with national agencies to facilitate the sharing of experiences and information amongst those that are more advanced in the development of their NBSAPs. And calls on the local governments to ensure they are taking greater responsibilities towards supporting the CAs management.
- Encourages the SPBCP to circulate the draft Transition Strategies as they become available to TMAG members for review and comments.

2. Recommendation on CAP management

- The SPBCP and CAPs take particular care in reviewing the CACC composition and management structure for their CAs as a key issue to be addressed by the Transition Strategies. CACC structure and composition should ensure that they are the most appropriate for directing the CA towards local or country level self-sufficiency while allowing transparent financial management, fair share/distribution of benefits to stakeholders while providing an adequate forum for community consultations and communications.

3. Recommendation on CA evaluations

- CA evaluation should be appropriately scoped to expedite the gathering of information essential to the formulation of the CA Transition Strategies, noting the need to complete this exercise by mid-2000.

4. Recommendation on the SPBCP programme evaluation

- TMAG recognises the need for a comprehensive Final Evaluation of the programme, its process and lessons learnt and recommends to SPREP the need to develop Terms of Reference and other planning details to guide its implementation.

5. Recommendations on success indicators

- That the success indicators for CAs be selected by the CACC in relation to the on-going monitoring of their natural resource management plans and that SPBCP put emphasis on local training and capacity building for CA site indicators.
- That success indicators be further developed to assist in the process for the final evaluation of the SPBCP programme.

6. Recommendation on training

- That SPREP, in the designing of courses for the USP/SPREP/ICPL Protected Areas Training, responds to the widest range of needs for trained conservation personnel in the region and uses the opportunity to coordinate the delivery of material/courses from other training organisations.



Getting young people interested in the conservation of marine resources such as coral reefs can be a time consuming activity, especially if your target audience's attention is difficult to capture and hold. So, why not tempt their interest with a participatory game? Below are some fun, educational activities suitable for elementary school-aged children. Pass it on to your schools and watch students learn more about corals. As the activities are simple, students can easily teach it to their friends and their friends will teach it to others and so on.

Building a coral polyp

This activity is a contribution from D.K. Hagman, a coral expert.

What you need: Coloured multi-purpose paper cut into small rectangles ranging in size from 6 x 10 cm to 7 x 21 cm (2 x 4 in. to 3 x 8 in.), scissors, transparent tape. Optional—marking pens, coloured pencils, coloured tissue cut in similar sized rectangles.

What to do: Place the short side of a rectangle next to the index finger and roll the paper loosely around the finger. Tape to secure the cylinder and remove from finger. Make numerous incisions into the cylinder 1/2 to 1 cm (1/8 to 1/4 in.) apart. The depth of the incision can vary from 2 to 5 cm (1/2 in. to 1 1/2 in.) as desired. Separate, bend and curl the individual strips to form tentacles. On the opposite end of the cylinder make 4 or 5 additional incisions. Fold back the cut edges toward the cylinder to form the base of the polyp so that the polyp can stand on its own or be secured to some other structure with tape or glue.

An alternate method devised by the students: Hold rectangle or place it on a flat surface. Make incisions (as above) close together on one of the long sides of the rectangle to form the tentacles. Make 2 or 3 incisions far apart on the opposite side to form the base. Starting with the short side of the rectan-

gle, roll the paper into a cylinder and secure with a piece of tape. Bend the strips to form the tentacles and the base as described above.

Optional: A. Use the marking pens or coloured pencils to decorate the polyps with drawings of their algal symbionts or nematocysts. B. Make a similar polyp with a smaller diameter using tissue paper of either coordinating or contrasting colours. Stuff the tissue paper polyp inside the tube of the original polyp to create a polyp with a more complicated morphology.

Other sedentary organisms

Algae, sponges, soft corals and stony corals can be made of diverse paper and styrofoam or scrap material such as toilet paper and paper towel tubes, cupcake holders, egg cartons, meat or produce trays. Each is cut, broken or torn to create the desired shape, paint several coats of a water-soluble paint, before attaching to the reef base (see below).

The models can be made to look more realistic with a little imagination and glue or a glue gun (adult use only!). For example, a coloured pipe cleaner bent into folds makes the ridges of a brain coral or the tentacle of a large-polyped coral; cheesecloth, irregularly splashed with dabs of paint approximates the surfaces of agariciid corals; paper polyps (see above) can be attached to the surfaces of the stony and soft corals, or bunched together on the bottom to make a colonial sea anemone; *Fruit Loops* (a children's cereal that looks like small donuts) can become sponge oscules; a small ball of coloured yarn to which five short "arms" are attached is a brittle star that can then be wrapped around a sponge; two adjoining sections of an egg carton form the valves of a clam. We suggest nowhere candies or other sweets, regardless of their potentially useful shapes, are to be used.

Motile, benthic organisms

Bubble algae, turf algae, starfish, brittle stars, sea urchins, octopus, stingrays and other bottom-dwelling fish can be made of soft coloured sticks of clay or cellu-clay (which is similar to paper mache but easier to mould. Coloured tooth picks can be used for the urchin spines). Once the clay or cellu-clay has dried, the organisms can be painted with tem-

Corals.

Drawing by Mike King. Source: Environmental Education Module, The Oceans and Coastal Areas and their Resources. UNESCO-UNEP



pera paints. Coloured pipe cleaners can also be bent in diverse ways to fashion roundworms, starfish, tubeworms and other mobile animals.

Large reef fishes

Draw duplicate outlines of interesting fishes on plain white paper. Decorate the "outer" side of each outline with coloured pencils or marking pens. Staple the two halves together (do not allow young children to use a stapler by themselves), leaving a space to stuff the fish with paper tissues. Staple the opening shut, then glue a piece of plastic fishing line or heavy thread to the back of the fish for later suspension from a dowel extending above the reef.

Small schooling fishes

Wooden ice-cream sample spoons or the round ends of tongue depressors can be painted and then further decorated with dots or stripes in a contrasting colour with a permanent marking pen. An adult can use a glue gun to connect several fishes to a length of fishing line or heavy thread, which is then attached to one of the dowels.

Reef base

Irregularly-shaped pieces of brightly painted styrofoam packing material can be glued to pieces of stout, painted cardboard to approximate the cracks, crevices and uneven topography at the

base of a reef. Larger pieces placed towards the rear and centre of the model help create a natural mound effect, and increase the visibility of each student's contribution. The cellu-clay (see above) can also be applied over the styrofoam to modify its shape or add texture. After the sedentary organisms (see above) have been attached to the cardboard or styrofoam creations, pale green and white styrofoam "peanuts" can be glued onto any remaining unused spaces to create an algal pavement.

Backdrop and display

A frame that is about 6 ft. high and of appropriate horizontal dimensions to fit under and behind the table on which the exhibit rests can be constructed of 5/8 in. diameter PVC pipe (or equivalent material). A backdrop of blue construction paper, on which a simple reef scene is either painted or glued, can be taped to the frame. The large reef fishes and the small schooling fishes can be suspended from dowels that extend horizontally above the reef at right angles to the frame. "Anchors" for the dowels are holes drilled in the top horizontal support of the frame. If the table is located near a door or fan, the fish move in response to gentle breezes. Blue cellophane can be draped over the dowels, adding to the underwater atmosphere.

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Ra'ui continues on Rarotonga, Cook Islands



In February 1998, the formal body of traditional chiefs, called *Koutu Nui*, designated five specific *ra'ui* sites within Rarotonga's lagoon and its adjacent reef (note: *ra'ui* means a traditional management system whereby access to a particular resource or area is forbidden). The following is an account of events by the President of the *Koutu Nui*, Te Tika Mataiapo Dorice Reid, for one of the *ra'ui* sites just prior to and during the installation of a new *ra'ui* in the village of *Teimurimotia*.

The *Tikioki ra'ui* was lifted on Tuesday, 1 February, 2000 as declared by the *Ui Mataiapo* (chiefs) of *Teimurimotia* (Titikaveka) village. The traditional leaders did not want to go back on their word of

two years ago of lifting the *ra'ui*, even though a public meeting was held at the Kent Hall and many expressed their wish for the *ra'ui* not to be lifted.

The installation of a new *ra'ui* from Akapua River (the previous boundary) followed the lifting of the *Tikioki ra'ui* to the Seventh Day Adventist Church at *Te Puna*. This area is double the size of the previous *Tikioki ra'ui*. It will be "reviewed" in five years and if there are no problems then it will be continued without any other formalities.

Following the installation of the new area, a large gathering of over 100 people waited on the beach for the installation of the *Ra'ui Mutukore*, which means *ra'ui* forever, or Sanctuary. This *ra'ui* is at the Coral Garden along the beach from the shop, "Fruits of Rarotonga". It has been roped off.

Note: The other four *ra'ui* sites have also been reinstalled.

Harvesting sea cucumbers on Rarotonga. Photo by WWF



Ra'ui 2000 calendar

Purchase a beautiful Cook Islands Ra'ui 2000 calendar and support marine conservation on Rarotonga. This calendar is comprised of 12 large paintings by 10-year old school children on Rarotonga depicting the marine environment and the importance of the marine ra'ui (traditional ban on the harvest of natural resources). All proceeds

go to the formal body of traditional chiefs of the Cook Islands that instigated the ra'ui (the Koutu Nui) for future marine education and awareness activities.

Price: US\$10 including postage. Contact Jacqui Evans, WWF Project Coordinator, PO Box 649, Rarotonga, Cook Islands. Ph/fax: (682) 25093. E-mail: wwfcooks@oyster.net.ck

SNIPPETS

The SPBCP family continues to blossom. A big congratulations to Joe Reti and Selesitina Pule'aga on the birth of their son Joel on 9 February 2000.

Another big congratulations to Charles Vatu (CASO for Vathe CA, Vanuatu) and his wife on the birth of their son in December 1999.

The CASO for Rock Islands, Palau, Charlene Mersai has been awarded a scholarship to study at the University of the South Pacific in Fiji. She will be doing a Masters degree in early 2000.

Due to ethnic unrest on Guadalcanal, Solomon Islands, the Komarindi project went into limbo for about six months. Disillusioned by the situation, CASO Nathaniel Lix DaWheya left the project for about one month, but thankfully, later returned to the Komarindi CASO position. Welcome back Lix.

Training courses

An international training course in **'Facilitation Skills for Community Forestry Extension'** will be held from 3–21 July 2000, at RECOFTC, Kasetsart University, Bangkok, Thailand. The closing date for applications is 13 June 2000.

Full details of the courses can be obtained from:

Dr Somsak Sukwong
Executive Director, Regional Community Forestry Training Center (RECOFTC)
Kasetsart University, PO Box 1111, Bangkok 10903, Thailand
Tel: (622) 940-5700, Fax: (662) 561-4880,
E-mail: fcss@nontril.ku.ac.th
[Http://www.recoftc.org](http://www.recoftc.org)

The South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (SPBCP) provides technical and financial assistance to 14 Pacific Island countries to establish and manage a series of community-based conservation areas that demonstrate biodiversity conservation through the sustainable use of natural resources by local people. The South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) executes the SPBCP with financial assistance from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through UNDP.

Common acronyms

SPBCP:	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme
CASO:	Conservation Area Support Officer
CAP:	Conservation Area Project
CA:	Conservation Area
CACC:	Conservation Area Coordinating Committee
SPREP:	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

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