

# SPREP and ANZ launch Turtle Bag in Samoa

The message was simple: say no to plastic bags; use the Turtle Bags. Drawing on the link between floating plastic debris and the deaths of sea animals, this reusable alternative to plastic bags was launched on 1 August by the Samoan Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology, Hon. Faumuina Liuga.

Based on the popular Green Bags initiative in Australia, the Turtle Bags are an attractive, viable and affordable alternative to plastic bags in supermarkets.

The Turtle Bags are a joint initiative of SPREP and ANZ Bank Samoa as part of the Pacific Year of the Sea Turtle.

A key element of the Turtle Bag initiative is the establishment of the ANZ Save the Turtle Fund. For every bag sold, ANZ Bank Samoa



*Director of SPREP, Asterio Takesy, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister for Trade and Commerce, Hon. Misa Telefoni, Minister for Natural Resources, Environment and Meteorology, Hon. Faumuina Liuga.*

will donate SAT1.00 towards the Fund, that will be distributed to community based turtle conservation initiatives in Samoa. The Fund will be distributed towards the turtle nesting season in Samoa, in late November.

This initiative was made possible through the support of AQM, a local supermarket and distributor who is storing and distributing the bags, Pacific Forum Line (PFL) who shipped the bags to Samoa free of charge, and the Samoan Broadcasting Corporation (SBC) as Media Partner.

The launch was also attended by the Prime Minister of Samoa, Hon. Tuilaepa Sailele Lupesoliai Malielegaoi, members of the

diplomatic corps, and private sector.

This initiative aims to highlight the role of public-private partnerships to promote sustainable development. The establishment of the Fund marks the growth of corporate philanthropy in the region, and the critical role of the private sector in environmental stewardship.

SPREP is currently working with its partners to expand the Turtle Bag into other member countries.

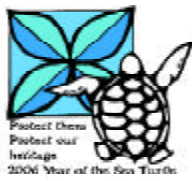
For more information contact Tamara Logan, SPREP Education and Social Communications Officer, [tamaral@sprep.org](mailto:tamaral@sprep.org), or Mark Ricketts, SPREP Solid Waste Officer, [markr@sprep.org](mailto:markr@sprep.org)

**In this edition we feature:**

- ❖ Launch of Turtle Bags
- ❖ Tri-nation agreement to protect leatherbacks
- ❖ WWF-Fiji wins Hibiscus award
- ❖ Palau fights poaching and launches tracking programme
- ❖ Update of Turtle Satellite Tracking Programme



*Turtle Bag partners and 'ambassadors'*



## 2006 Pacific Year of the Sea Turtle



# Tracking turtles

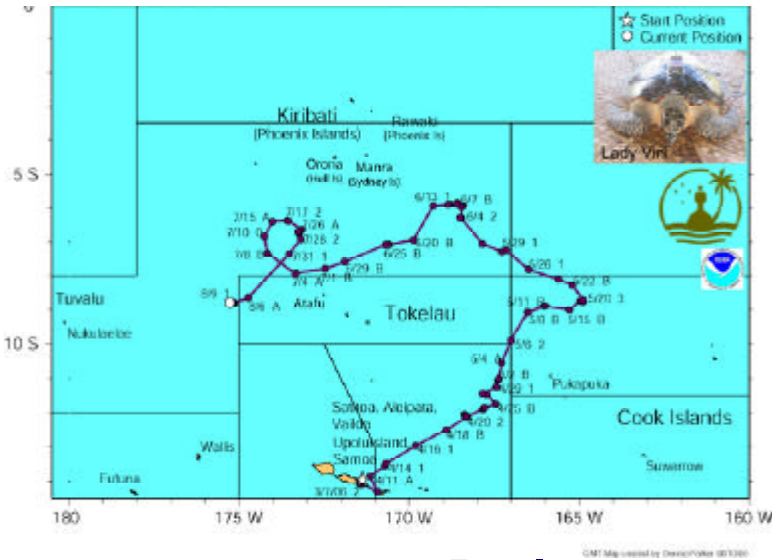


Four SPREP members will participate in a regional satellite turtle tracking programme coordinated in collaboration with the Marine Turtle Research Program, NOAA, Hawaii. Turtle satellite tagging in Samoa was conducted in March with the remaining three other localities, French Polynesia, Fiji and Tonga planned for November/December to coincide with the peak nesting seasons in those places. The programme will target nesting turtles which migrate after nesting.

## Lady Vini's journey

The latest update confirms that Lady Vini has travelled through the EEZs of six different countries and territories and seems to be heading towards a seventh EEZ. This tracking clearly demonstrates that turtle stocks in the region are a shared resource and that their conservation requires regional cooperation.

For more information contact SPREP Marine Species Officer, Lui Bell, [lui@sprep.org](mailto:lui@sprep.org)



GMT file created by OceanProber 08/12/05



Roman Mongami and Dilioulomekang

## Palau to track turtles

The Marine Turtle Conservation and Monitoring Program will tag and track four turtles in a bid to learn more about migration and feeding patterns of turtles in Palau.

The Palau turtle team will mount three more satellite transmitters on green turtles from the main and southwest islands of Palau. Through satellite tagging, the team hopes to learn more about the movements of this critically endangered species.

For more information contact Joshua Eberdong [Joshua\\_Eberdong@yahoo.com](mailto:Joshua_Eberdong@yahoo.com)

On 27 July, Coordinator, Joshua Eberdong and a Marine Turtle Conservation and

technician at the Bureau of Marine Resources, Roman Mongami, attached the first transmitter to 'Dilioulomekang', a hawksbill nester with the help of the Koror State Rangers.

Dilioulomekang was then released from the Rock Islands, swimming south. Sadly, on return to Dilioulomekang's nest one day later it was discovered that all of her eggs had been taken.



The Palau turtle tagging team with Dilioulomekang

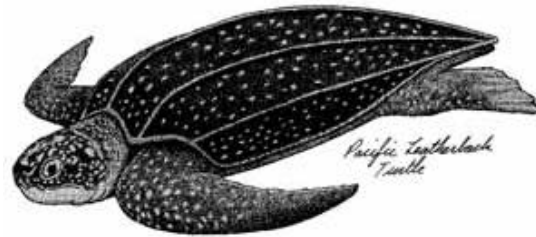


# Indonesia, PNG and Solomon Islands agree to protect endangered leatherbacks

In an unprecedented move, three countries have made an historic agreement to save the critically endangered leatherback turtle across the Bismarck and Solomon seas.

Indonesia, PNG and the Solomon Islands have formalised their commitment to protect the leatherback through signing the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on the Conservation and Management of Western Pacific Leatherback Turtles.

The MOU was signed at a ministerial meeting held in Bali on 28 August by the Minister of Forestry of the Republic of Indonesia, the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Forest, Environment and Conservation of the Government of Solomon Islands, and the Ambassador of Papua New Guinea to Indonesia.



The partnership aims to build expertise and collaboration across borders, through the promotion of sustainable development principles, management plans, monitoring of leatherback turtle populations, awareness and public education, and research.

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## Turtles 'talk of the town' during Hibiscus Festival, Suva



Turtle defenders and icons, former Miss Hibiscus queens, celebrate their win

The combination of turtle conservation, previous Hibiscus queens and a turtle float constructed of 80% recycled material proved to be the winning formula on 28 August 2006, as the FINTEL sponsored WWF float won second place and 'Best overall float'!

With the Ministry of Fisheries as a partner, the first Hibiscus Queen, Ms Liebling Marlow (1956) and former Queen Eta Qereqeretabua

(1962), along with many dedicated staff and incredibly creative volunteer designers, WWF was able to advance turtle awareness in Fiji with the cause being highlighted in radio talk backs, local newspapers and TV interviews.

The Hibiscus Festival is the largest public social event in Suva City and was an opportunity to highlight the plight of the sea turtles. Prior to the opening of the festival, the Hibiscus Icons (Marlow & Qereqeretabua) revealed banners that advocate for the protection of turtles as cultural icons in Fiji. These banners are in English, Fijian, Hindi and Rotuman.

For more information contact Penina Solomona  
[psolomona@wwfpacific.org.fj](mailto:psolomona@wwfpacific.org.fj)



## Samoa's Pearl promotes turtles



Photo: Mere Tugiri, SPREP

Miss National University of Samoa (NUS), Pearl McFall, wants the Samoan public to know the importance of protecting marine turtles. Pearl is a contestant in the 2006 15th Annual Miss Teuila Festival, held from September 3 - 9 in Apia, Samoa.

This year's theme is: Samoa - South Pacific Paradise. Pearl says that conserving this Pacific icon is all part of ensuring that Samoa is a paradise or pearl of the Pacific (Penina o le Pasifika) in every sense of the word. Costumes are an important part of a Miss Teuila pageant and Miss NUS intends to let her costume speak her conservation message.



### Introducing Emma Kabua: Marshall Islands' Turtle Conservation Officer

Emma Kabua has been recruited as the Turtle Conservation Officer of the Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, MIMRA. Ms Kabua recently graduated from the University of the South Pacific with a degree in Marine Biology.

Emma will support the formulation of the RMI turtles Management Plan. Her work in the future will also include cetaceans and other marine mammals.

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Turtle Talk is produced by SPREP as part of the Pacific Year of the Sea Turtle. Please send contributions for the December edition by 7 November to [tamaral@sprep.org](mailto:tamaral@sprep.org)

## Upcoming events

### Turtle Survey Country Attachment

SPREP will facilitate a training programme to build capacity of relevant officers in turtle conservation skills.

Through an attachment programme, officers from SPREP members will be trained in turtle nesting survey work in other Pacific island countries with active turtle programmes. The first training attachment, involving four officers from two SPREP countries, is planned for the next nesting season peak in November.

For more information contact SPREP Marine Species Officer, Lui Bell, [luib@sprep.org](mailto:luib@sprep.org)

### Year of the Sea Turtle Coordinator

SPREP is currently finalising the position of the Year of the Sea Turtle Campaign Coordinator. The Coordinator will start in late September for a period of six months.

For more information contact SPREP Marine Species Officer, Lui Bell, [luib@sprep.org](mailto:luib@sprep.org)

## Pacific Year of the Sea Turtle Campaign Coordination Committee

- ❖ American Samoa (Ruth Utzurrum)
- ❖ CI Pacific (Sue Miller-Taei)
- ❖ Fiji (Manasa Sovaki)
- ❖ IFAW (Rebecca Keeble)
- ❖ IOSEA (Stephanie Dunstan)
- ❖ JCU (Mark Hamann)
- ❖ Marine Turtle Research Program, NOAA (Dr George H. Balazs)
- ❖ PNG (Vagi Rei)
- ❖ Queensland Parks Authority (Dr Colin Limpus)
- ❖ Samoa (Malama Momoemausu)
- ❖ Solomon Islands (Tia Masolo)
- ❖ SPC (Lindsay Chapman & Brett Molony)
- ❖ SPREP (Lui Bell, Dominique Benzaken, Tamara Logan)
- ❖ USP (Kenneth T. MacKay)
- ❖ WPRFMC (Irene Kinan)
- ❖ WWF Pacific (Penina Solomona)

For more information please visit the Year of the Sea Turtle web site

[www.sprep.org/yost](http://www.sprep.org/yost)

