



SPREP

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

PO Box 240, Apia, Samoa

E: sprep@sprep.org

T: +685 21929

F: +685 20231

W: www.sprep.org



The Pacific environment, sustaining our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures.



PACIFIC INVASIVES LEARNING NETWORK

SOUNDBITES | JUNE 2014

*Pacific Invasives Learning Network
Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme.
PO Box 240, Apia Samoa. Tel. +685 21929. Fax. +685 20231.*

The monthly electronic newsletter of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network (PILN) – reporting on invasive news from PILN teams and the Pacific Invasives Partnership. Past issues are available online: <http://www.sprep.org/piln>

WELCOME TO YOUR PILN SOUNDBITES

Bonjour tous,

June has been a busy month for many of our teams. This month saw the 20th meeting of the Micronesian Chief Executives in the State of Yap, FSM, where some significant achievements were made. The announcement by the Palau President of USD1.4 million commitment to combat invasive species in Palau and the region. Tonga followed Palau's commitment with a USD1.5 million to combat invasive species in Tonga and also the region through a regional invasive species project to the GEF6 programme. These are a great start to a Pacific wide-campaign of unity in the fight against invasive species. This clearly demonstrates that only through a regional cooperation we can make some progress towards protection our islands, communities, health, environment and economies. Hope you will enjoy our June edition and best wishes for July..

PILN TEAMS & COUNTRY UPDATES

Palau pledges US1.4 million to fight invasive species



Palau has committed USD1.4 million to fight invasive species in Palau and the region. The announcement was made at the 20th summit of the Micronesian Chief Executives in Yap State, Federated States of Micronesia. The commitment is part of Palau's national allocation under the Global Environment Facility funding. There is strong hope that this commitment will be a catalyst for other countries and partners to join forces on a one-Pacific campaign to prevent, control and eradicate invasive species.

Palau and other Pacific island countries continue to struggle against the harmful impacts of invasive species. Every week there's a new introduction of species to the region and the potential for a them to harm native biodiversity, human health or national economies is very high.

This is an issue that is beyond the capacity and capability of one country or agency, and therefore working together as a region is absolutely critical. The Palau commitment is the first and the right step towards a united Pacific to an increasing threat and problem.

Palau will also be hosting the Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting in July, where an invasive species side-event will be held to consolidate the Pacific commitment to battle invasive species.

Tongan Government to commit US1.5 million to fight invasives



Serious about battling invasive species, the Kingdom of Tonga has pledged their financial commitment of 1.5 million US dollars in the regional fight against invasive species. This follows a commitment made by the Palau President HE Tommy Remengesau Jr earlier this month to combat invasive species in his country. All positive news for the Pacific as it addresses the management of invasive species in the region.

"The government of Tonga is pleased to be able to do this and we look forward to succeeding in the battle against invasives. Resourcing must be in the order of a magnitude far greater than secured in the past if we are to collectively address this issue at national and regional levels", says Mr Asipeli Palaki, CEO for the Tongan Ministry

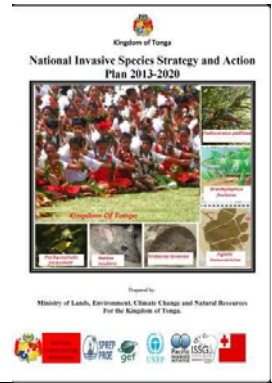
of Lands, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources and the National Focal Point for the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity, Framework Convention on Climate Change and the Global Environment Facility.

"We fully understand the threats that invasive species pose, not only to our economy but also to our food security and way of life," adds Mr Palaki. The Tongan commitment contributes to the Pacific regional project coordinated by the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) on invasive species.

"We congratulate Tonga for their huge commitment. If we are to effectively deal with the invasive species threat to the region then the level of funding that we commit must be commensurate with the scale of the problem that we face, and Tonga has stepped up to help this" said Mr. David Sheppard, Director-General of SPREP.

The commitment was announced at the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) "Capacity Building Workshop for Small Island Developing States to achieve Aichi Biodiversity Target 9 on Invasive Alien Species", in Montreal, Canada.

Minister endorses Tonga's invasive plan



The Minister of Land, Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources, recently endorsed the national invasive species strategy and action plan (NISSAP) for Tonga. A circular regarding this endorsement has been circulated to Cabinet. Mr. Viliami Hakaumotu, the invasive species coordinator for Tonga was pleased with this achievement.

"I am really pleased with this endorsement and I would like to thank everyone that assisted with the development of the NISSAP," says Hakaumotu.

"Without their support, this would not have been possible. This is just the beginning, we now need to ensure that it is implemented," adds Hakaumotu.

On behalf of all invasive species battlers in the Pacific - I would like to congratulate Tonga for this milestone. Thank you also to Bill Nagle and Souad Boudjelas of the Pacific Invasives Initiative for facilitating the process. Congratulations Tonga and look forward to helping with the impl

Hawaii bites:



Invasive Species Coordinator Joshua Atwood received the Pacific Exchange for Emerging Professionals award for 2014 from the Hawaii Conservation Alliance, allowing him to spend three weeks in May/June of this year working with Dr. Joel Miles (Palau National Invasive Species Coordinator) both in Palau and at a number of regional invasive species meetings. The exchange allowed Hawaii to participate in the final workshop of the Regional Biosecurity Plan for Micronesia and Hawaii in Guam, a meeting of the Pacific Invasives Partnership in Palau, and a meeting of the Regional Invasive Species Council and Micronesian Chief Executives' Summit in Yap. Josh also spent time learning about Palau's conservation strategies through meetings with the program manager and government officials, and was able to meet with Palau President Tommy E Remengesau as part of a briefing from the Pacific Invasives Partnership.

Hawaii Governor Neil Abercrombie sent a letter to the Micronesian Chief Executives confirming that Hawaii will join the Micronesian Regional Invasive Species Council as a nonvoting member, and will engage with Pacific partners on the issue of invasive species at a number of regional events, including the Pacific Invasives Forum and the Small Island Developing States meeting this year.

The Hawaii Invasive Species Council approved a \$5.75M budget for state fiscal year 2015 on June 26, 2014. In addition to continuing support for early detection and rapid response programs, the 2015 budget will provide funds for a Little Fire Ant detector dog pilot program, new research efforts under the Hawaii Ant Lab for ant control tools, a multi-agency response and research program for Coconut Rhinoceros Beetle, and support for biocontrol research on *Albizia*, *Miconia*, Himalayan ginger, and *Rubus* species.

New Caledonia - Mt Panie pine a step closer to extinction



A recent assessment by Conservation International researchers has confirmed the status of the Mt Panie kauri (pine) as being critically endangered - this is only a step away from becoming extinct. The pine is a long lived species - over 1000 years, and is only found in one location in the Northern Province of New Caledonia. The researchers identified invasive species (feral pigs and a water-mold) and climate change (increased temperature and altered cloud formation leading to water stress) as major contributing threats to its survival. A feral pig control programme is due to start in 2015. For more information please get in touch with François Tron (ftron@conservation.org) and visit <http://www.iucnredlist.org/details/30978/0>

Experts to assess the presence of flatworm in New Caledonia



New Caledonia invasive battlers are consulting with international experts on the possible presence of the invasive flatworm, *Platydemus manokwari*. The flatworm is found in several Pacific Islands and is a real threat to many endemic and native snails. The first step is to confirm the identity of the flatworm and then prepare an action plan to control its spread. For further information please contact Patrick Barriere (coordpee@cen.nc).

Yap hosts RISC Meeting



The Agriculture Department in Yap, the coordinating sector for the Yap Invasive Species Taskforce, hosted the Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council meeting. Tamdad Sulog welcomed the participants from the five jurisdictions and Hawaii that were able to make it. The three day meeting also gave an opportunity for participants to visit some of the invasive species control areas that agriculture staff are treating.



Some milestones for RISC at the meeting included the participation for the first time of Hawaii (see the Hawaii bite above). Josh Atwood represented Hawaii and provided great assistance to the meeting. The meeting also saw the chairmanship being passed from FSM (national) to Guam. Roland Quitigua agreed to be the next chair and acknowledged the contributions by many members including John Wichep and Diane Vice. Both were not able to attend due to health reasons. Our thoughts to them both and wishing all the best.

PACIFIC INVASIVES PARTNERSHIP & REGIONAL BITES

GLISPA - Global Island Partner prepares for SIDS 3 in Samoa

The Global Island Partnership is gearing up for a big event at the upcoming 3rd Small Island Developing States in Samoa (28 Aug-4 Sept). GLISPA is hoping for a bigger recognition and strengthening of island leadership and support to inspire and encourage great action at the global level. Furthermore, GLISPA hope to catalyze new leadership, commitment and partnerships towards conservation of island biodiversity. GLISPA will be holding a number of events at the conference including a high-level event on building resilient and sustainable island communities through innovative partnerships, island bright spots (featuring one of PILN's bright stars), and supporting the arrival and celebration of the world-wide voyage of the Hokulea. GLISPA is calling friends and supporters to unite in these efforts through sharing your contact if you are planning to attend and getting involved by participating in-kind or providing financial contributions towards the hosting of the events. Please contact Jessica Robbins (jessica.robbs@glispa.org).

Pacific Invasives Partnership prepare for the Pacific Forum Leaders meeting



Members of the Pacific Invasives Partnership have been busy putting together a programme for the upcoming Pacific Islands Forum Leaders meeting being held in Palau at the end of July.

Last year, Micronesian Leaders requested a report on the state of impacts and management of invasive species in the Pacific, which will be presented at the 45th Pacific Island Forum Leaders meeting. A side-event on invasive species will also be held at the Forum Leaders meeting, which will provide the opportunity to present the report and also to reiterate the commitment by the Palau President for a united effort and commitment towards combating the harmful impacts of invasive species to our biodiversity, communities and economies. If you are in Palau on the 28th July, please join us at the Palasia Hotel, Palau.

INVASIVE OPPORTUNITIES

Darwin Initiative - Round 20 Call for Proposals

Darwin Initiative is now inviting applications for - DI Main projects and post projects; and Darwin Plus projects in one or more of the UK's overseas territories. Projects will be expected to commence from 1 April, 2015. Guidance and application forms can be downloaded from <http://www.darwininitiative.org.uk> or email: Darwin-applications@itsi.co.uk. Closing date: Stage 1 - 3 July, 2014.

The Rapid Response Facility (RRF)

Invites small grant applications for UNESCO inscribed natural World Heritage sites, and tentative sites facing emergency threats to their biodiversity. The RRF is a unique small grant programme jointly operated by Fauna & Flora International and UNESCO World Heritage Centre. With a target processing time for grant applications of just 8 working days, the RRF provides rapid support to enable conservation practitioners to respond quickly and effectively to emergencies in some of the world's most important sites for biodiversity. For more information visit – www.rapid-response.org

Craig S. Harrison Conservation Grants – Pacific Seabird Group

The objective of the Conservation Fund is to advance the conservation of seabirds by providing funds or supplies to individuals from developing countries as well as those from elsewhere working in those developing countries primarily in or bordering the Pacific Ocean, (1) for conservation and restoration activities that benefit seabirds in the Pacific Ocean; and (2) to help develop within-country seabird expertise in developing countries within or bordering the Pacific Ocean. Send an email to Verena Gill (verena.gill@gmail.com) and Craig Harrison (charrison@hunton.com), briefly explaining what you want to propose and where you want to do the work. That way, you can get a rapid determination from them of whether your proposal is eligible for consideration for funding. If they determine that your study is eligible, then fill out and send the application form, the proposal/budget, and the letter of reference, as described below, to Verena Gill and Craig Harrison. Please note that applications/proposals may be submitted at any time—there is no fixed deadline for submission. All applications / proposals will be evaluated as they are submitted.

Please pass on this call for applications for the UNFCCC Fellowship Programme for SIDS to potentially interested young professionals employed by SIDS governments. The application deadline is 15 July.

Further information is available at: http://unfccc.int/secretariat/fellowship_programme/items/4429.php

Researcher Risk Assessment (Biological Invasions) Vacancy

It is a 5-year academic post to be based at the DST-NRF Centre of Excellence for Invasion Biology, Stellenbosch University, working jointly with the South African National Biodiversity Institute's Invasive Species Programme.

Advert: http://academic.sun.ac.za/cib/bursaries/RiskAssessmentResearcher_CIB_July%202014.pdf

CIB web-site: <http://www.sun.ac.za/cib>

Application page: http://erpapprd01.sun.ac.za/OA_HTML/IrcVisitor.jsp (Job Ref. NW10/239/0614)

Closing date: Friday 18 July 2014

Enquiries: John Wilson, jrwilson@sun.ac.za; or David Richardson, rich@sun.ac.za

South African National Biodiversity Institute (SANBI) & Centre for Invasion Biology (CIB)

SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme)

SPREP has a number of vacancies and tender opportunities available. Please check out the SPREP's Job Vacancies page for further information. <http://www.sprep.org/Human-Resources/Job-Vacancy/>

SPC (Secretariat of the Pacific Community)

SPC has vacancies and consultancy opportunities. Please check out the SPC's website for further information. www.spc.int/job.html - or contact Christine Croombes (recruit@spc.int).

GLOBAL INVASIVE BITES

Double Trouble - Invasives and Climate Change



Scientists have discovered that the rapid spread of hybridization between a native species and an invasive species of trout in the wild is strongly linked to changes in climate.

In the study, stream temperature warming over the past several decades and decreases in spring flow over the same time period contributed to the spread of hybridization between native westslope cutthroat trout and introduced rainbow trout – the world’s most widely introduced invasive fish species –across the Flathead River system in Montana and British Columbia, Canada.

<http://www.usgs.gov/newsroom/article.asp?ID=3903#.U4dNYyi4On4> [photo: Johnny Armstrong -USGS]

When eradicating invasive species threatens endangered species recovery



Efforts to eradicate invasive species increasingly occur side by side with programs focused on recovery of endangered ones. But what should resource managers do when the eradication of an invasive species threatens an endangered species? In a new study, scientists examine that conundrum now taking place in the San Francisco Bay. Researchers at the University of California, Davis examine the California Clapper Rail -- a bird found only in the Bay -- has come to depend on an invasive salt marsh cordgrass, hybrid *Spartina*, for nesting habitat. Its native habitat has slowly vanished over the decades, largely due to urban development and invasion by *Spartina*.

Their results showed that, rather than moving as fast as possible with eradication and restoration, the best approach is to slow down the eradication of the invasive species until restoration or natural recovery of the system provides appropriate habitat for the endangered species. *For more information see the University of California website or the publication in the PILN publication section. Image by Admrboltz Wikipedia.*

Ninja Turtles are back with some invasives consequences



The link between a Hollywood blockbuster and invasive species is a lot closer than one thinks. The last time the Fab-Four team of Raphael, Michelangelo, Leonardo and Donatello (Teen-age Mutant Ninja Turtles) graced our screen in the 1990s it resulted in an influx of turtle merchandise sold in nearly every country. With it came a spike in live turtle sales increasing pet-trade and subsequently with high numbers of unwanted turtles being released into water bodies where they are normally not found. The red-eared sliders became an invasive species



in many areas. The new Ninja turtles movie is due out in early August - so now is the time to start an awareness campaign to ensure that turtles are

The new Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles movie will be released internationally starting on 08 August. The original movie (1990) was associated with a spike in the turtle pet trade and subsequent turtle releases, especially of young red-eared sliders. Some education and outreach now might prevent red-ears from becoming established in the shrinking number of places worldwide that don't already have them.

INVASIVE SPECIES PUBLICATION

A. Lampert, A. Hastings, E. D. Grosholz, S. L. Jardine, J. N. Sanchirico. Optimal approaches for balancing invasive species eradication and endangered species management. *Science*, 2014; 344 (6187): 1028 DOI:10.1126/science.1250763

UPCOMING EVENTS

2014	Event	Participating Partner
July		
28 Jul - 1 Aug	Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting, Palau	RISC, SPREP, NISC, PII, PILN
August		
11-15 Aug.	Joint Preparatory meeting for CBD, Ramsar and CMS, Nadi, Fiji	SPREP, IUCN-ISSG, PILN

12 Aug.	International Youth Day	SPREP
25-29 Aug.	3rd SIDS Meeting preparatory meetings	
September		
1-4 Sep.	UN 3rd SIDS Conference, Apia, Samoa	SPREP, SPC, GLISPA
1-6 Sep.	World Water Week	SPC
20 Sep.	International Coastal Cleanup Day	
23-27 Sep.	World Maritime Day: IMO Conventions: Effective implementation	SPREP, IMO
25 Sep.	Noumea Convention Conference of Parties, Majuro, Marshall Islds	SPREP
26 Sep.	Waigani Convention Conference of Parties, Majuro, Marshall Islds	SPREP
29 Sep.	Pacific Environment Forum, Majuro, Marshall Islands	SPREP
29 Sep - 3 Oct	7th COP for the Catagena Protocol on Biosafety (Pyeongchang, Korea)	SPREP
30 Sep - 2 Oct	SPREP Meeting, Majuro, Marshall Islands	SPREP
October		
2 Oct.	Environment Ministerial Meeting, Majuro, Marshall Islands	SPREP
6-17 Oct.	12th CBD COP (Pyeongchnag, Korea)	SPREP
20-21 Oct.	BirdLife International - Pacific Programme - TAG Meeting, Noumea, New Caledonia	BirdLife Pacific
27-31 Oct.	16th International Conference on Harmful Algae (Wellington, NZ)	
November		
3-8 Nov.	NEOBIOTA 2014. Biological invasions: from understanding to action. (Antalya-Turkey)	http://neobiota2014.org/
12-19 Nov.	World Parks Congress (Sydney, Australia)	

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