



## Pacific Regional Invasive Species Management Support Service

Invasive species are the leading driver of biodiversity loss in the Pacific. They have a significant impact on ecosystem resilience leading to a loss of ecosystem services and a reduced ability to adapt to climate change.

PRISMSS aims to assist the Pacific in stepping up on-the-ground management of invasive species.

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## PRISMSS Update

The PRISMSS Team has been busy raising awareness of the contribution that managing invasive species has for increasing island resilience and the PRISMSS as a mechanism for doing so

within the Pacific.

The NZMFAT funded Managing Invasive Species for Climate Change Adaptation project has been supporting the regional mainstreaming of invasive species management in the Pacific.

A side event at the Climate Change COP27 on 12 November hosted by BBC presenter David Eades focused on increasing resilience in Pacific island nations. A summary of the event is available [here](#)

A side-event hosted in the GEF Pavilion at the CBD COP15 in Montreal on December 7 focused on restoring island resilience. The session may be viewed [here](#)

The PRISMSS Team would like to wish you a happy and safe holiday season and look forward to working together again in 2023.



*PRISMSS panel event with the Global Environment Facility (GEF) at the CBD COP15 Partnership Pavilion, in Montreal*



## Protect Our Islands

“Prevent the arrival, establishment and spread of invasive species”

You might notice that we've updated our by-line to reflect the goals of Protect our Islands. This was an outcome of a meeting in Apia in November with colleagues from Marshall Islands, Niue, Tonga, Tuvalu and the SPREP team to work on the implementation strategy for the Protect our Islands programme.

Another outcome of the meeting was endorsement of a [Clean Boats, Clean Ports framework](#) to guide the programme. We'll share more about that in the next newsletter. Thanks to all who took part in the meeting, especially Greg Sherley for facilitating discussions.

Congratulations to colleagues in Tonga who recently responded rapidly to an incursion of giant African snail. This is a great example of public awareness leading to rapid response. Read more [here](#).



*Protect Our Islands planning session with national coordinators from Marshall Islands, Niue, Tonga, and Tuvalu.*



## **Predator Free Pacific**

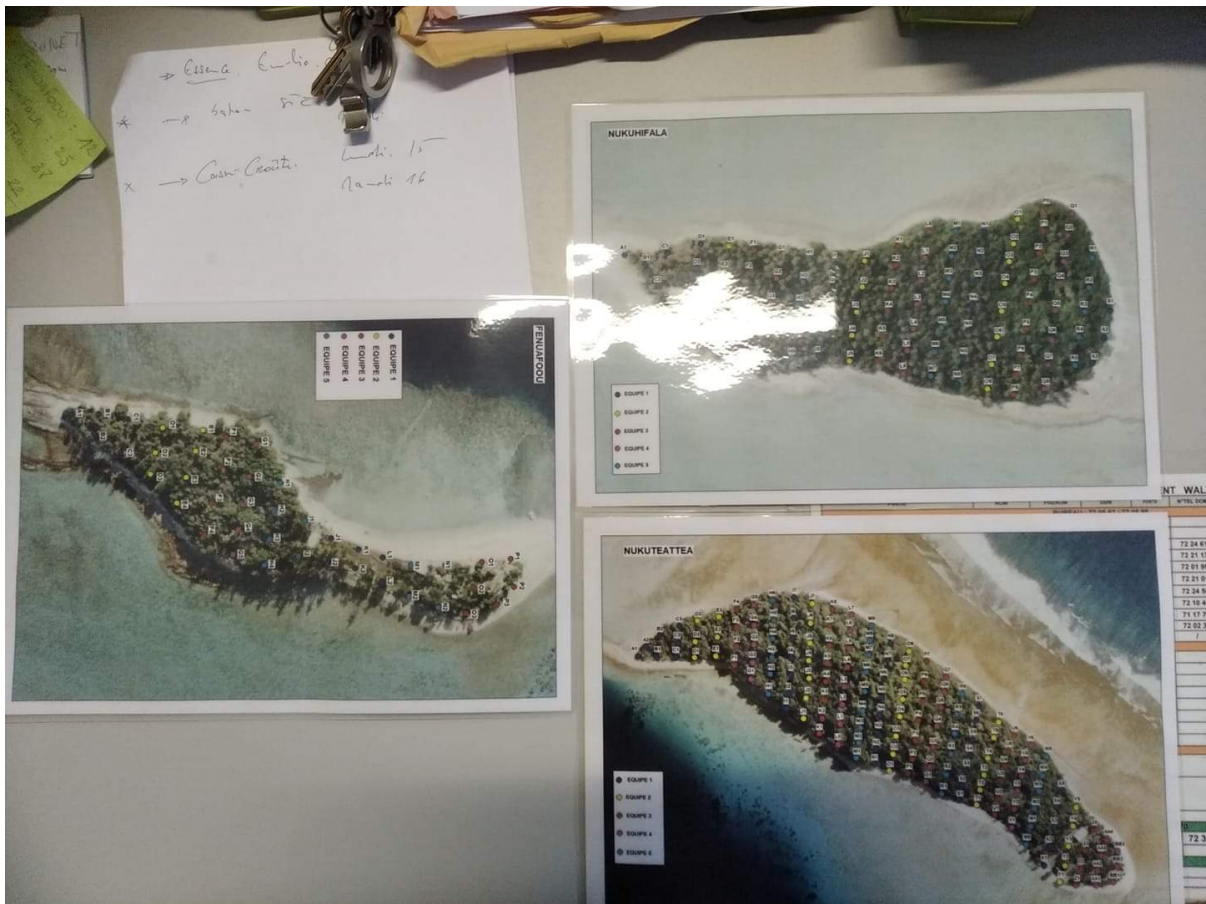
**"Removal of invasive mammalian predators from Islands"**

Momentum towards a Predator Free Pacific is building! Depending on how you count them (Is an atoll one island or many?), we now have another 21 predator free islands in the

Pacific. Only another 24,979 to go

Work this year was dominated by Wallis and Futuna and French Polynesia, with 19 of the 21 islands being completed in these two French territories. Bien fait! Planning for 2023 has also been continuing at pace, with eradications in at least nine countries and territories planned for next year.

From your PRISMSS partners: Island Conservation, BirdLife and the NZ Department of Conservation, we would like to thank you for your enthusiasm and support and wish you a relaxing break with family and friends.



*Bait station GPS layout in Wallis and Futuna for rat eradication operations.*



## War On Weeds

"Management of high priority weeds"

The War on Weeds stepped up a notch in August. The Programme Technical Lead and Regional Project Coordinator visited Vava'u and Tongatapu, in Tonga to deliver training in the Safe and Effective Use of Agrichemicals for Invasive Species Management

and to kick start the eradication programme for the Panama rubber tree, *Castilla elastica*.

Twenty four people successfully completed the training. This included staff from the Department of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries and the Vava'u Environmental Protection Association. Two days were spent in the field in Tongatapu with staff from the Department of Environment, controlling the Panama rubber trees by cutting and stump treating the smaller ones and ringbarking and treating the larger ones.

Staff from the DoE have built a fabulous agrichemical storage shed from a shipping container, which meets all the required standards. Well done Viliami and the Team from Tonga!



*Training for the "Safe and Effective Use of Agrichemicals" for Invasive Species Management to prepare for the Panama rubber tree(Castilla elastica) eradication programme in Tongatapu, Tonga.*



**Natural Enemies -  
Natural Solutions**

"Biological control of widespread weeds"

To round off 2022, we the Natural Enemies Natural Solutions team ran an online workshop seeking to determine the most important weeds in the Pacific region, for which natural enemies should be developed in the future. The workshop was held virtually as a series of three 1-hour sessions to build understanding about:

- The many and varied impacts weeds have, to stimulate thinking about which species will be most problematic, and therefore the highest priorities for action.
- A prioritisation system, the team has been developing for several years, and how to use it.
- What climate change will mean for weeds in the Pacific region, and which species are likely to become even more problematic as a result.

Participants were encouraged to use the prioritisation tool to score their top 5-10 weeds and submit this information. A follow-up session is scheduled for the 19th of January 2023 to share results and discuss next steps. The session can be viewed [here](#)



*Plotting out weeds' distribution during a field visit in Samoa to determine national priority weeds.*



# Resilient Ecosystems - Resilient Communities

"Priority area ecological restoration"

Work has been gathering momentum since the reopening of the borders for the Resilient Ecosystem Resilient Communities Programme, with technical trainings provided for the two French Territories under the PROTEGE project in French Polynesia and Wallis and Futuna in September and October 2022 respectively.

The training workshops and field visits aimed to build in-country capacity for managing several invasive weeds and restore the native forests in Taputapuatea UNESCO World heritage site in Raiatea, French Polynesia, and Matautu and Mt Vele in Wallis and Futuna.

Progress had been made with resources and approaches now identified to manage priority weed species like *Cecropia peltata* (trumpet tree) and *Spathodea campanulata* (African tulip) in their restoration plans. A decision about the acceptance of herbicide use is pending in Wallis and Futuna.



*Site visit on Mount Vele in Wallis, identifying the problematic weeds in the field.*



*Completion of the RERC training for the locals in Raiatea, French Polynesia.*

**PRISMSS Triannual newsletter-  
December 2022**



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