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CONSERVATION ADVISORY SCIENCE NOTES

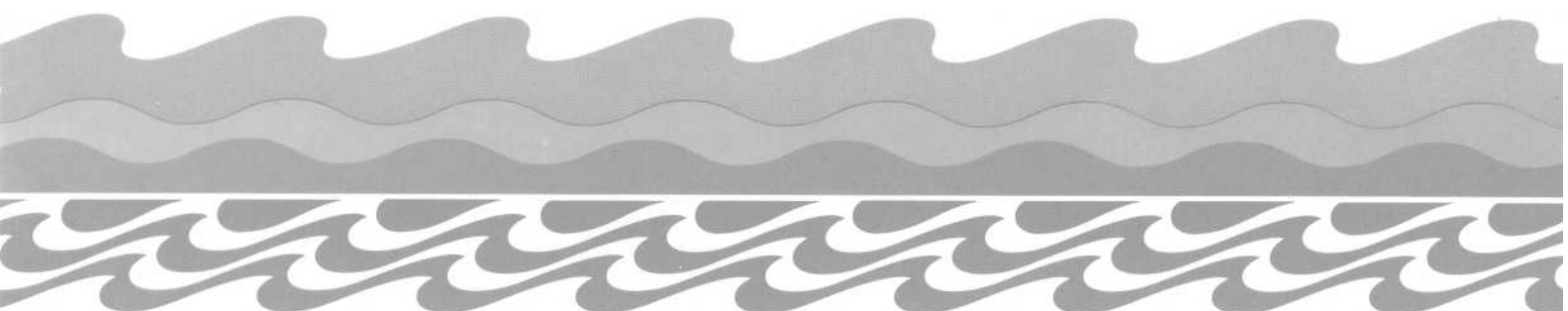
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COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY IN THE SOUTH PACIFIC

(Short Answers in Conservation Science)

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**FIFTH SOUTH PACIFIC CONFERENCE
ON NATURE CONSERVATION AND
PROTECTED AREAS
NUKU'ALOFA, TONGA, 4-8 OCTOBER 1993**

**Report prepared for Commonwealth Science Council (London)
and New Zealand Department of Conservation.**

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Summary

The Fifth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas was held in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, on 4-8 October 1993. It was attended by over 130 participants, from the countries of the region and agencies involved in nature conservation. Its theme was: "Community involvement in conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific". It provided an unparalleled forum for review of progress in the region, sharing of experience and ideas, establishment of contacts and planning for the future. This report is a distillation from Geoff Walls' participation in the conference on behalf of Commonwealth Science Council (London) and New Zealand Department of Conservation. The fundamental conference message is that empowerment of local communities in conservation of biodiversity, in a way that gives them a sustainable economic base, is the key to future progress.

Keywords: South Pacific, Conference, Nature Conservation, Biodiversity, Communities, Tonga, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), Commonwealth Science Council (CSC), New Zealand Department of Conservation.

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BACKGROUND

There are some twenty-two island states and territories in the South Pacific region, scattered over a vast ocean area roughly the size of Africa. Most have land areas of less than 1000 square kilometres, and without exception they face pressing environmental problems.

Superpowers, huge multinational companies and a host of smaller agencies and entrepreneurs from outside the region are competitively interested in the South Pacific for its natural resources or its potential for tourism, waste dumping, product sales, weapons testing or strategic operations. They have the capacity to impact on the fragile small-island ecosystems and their traditional cultures to a massive degree, and in fact this is happening. Exacerbated by rising human populations and changing lifestyles, it is resulting in the rapid loss of the region's natural biological diversity and is undermining the ability of the island environments to support their traditional societies.

Faced with this situation, responsible decision-makers in countries throughout the region are registering concern. They realise that urgent action is needed to safeguard the special natural resources of the region and ensure a sustainable future for its people. They recognise the importance of local communities in conservation, and the valuable role external conservation agencies can play in facilitating conservation at a local and regional level. They are increasingly working together.

The South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP), currently based in Apia, Western Samoa, has been established to stimulate and co-ordinate efforts to conserve the biological diversity and natural resources of the South Pacific. It is the leading environmental agency for the region, and has produced the following key documents:

- Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region (1989, to be updated late 1993)
- 1991-1995 Action Plan for Managing the Environment of the South Pacific Region (1993)
- South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme: Global Environment Facility (GEF)/United Nations Development Programme Project (UNDP) Document (1993).

As one of its activities, SPREP is responsible for organising major regional environmental conferences, at approximately four-yearly intervals. The conference in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, which is the subject of this report, is the fifth such : the first was held in Wellington, New Zealand, in 1975; the second in Sydney, Australia, in 1979; the third in Apia, Western Samoa, in 1985; the fourth in Port Vila, Vanuatu, in 1989.

Commonwealth Science Council (CSC) has development and conservation projects operating to varying degrees in the Commonwealth countries of the South Pacific. Most relevant in this context is its Biological Diversity and Genetic Resources (BDGR) Project, aimed at conservation and sustainable development of natural resources for the enhanced wellbeing of people. At present there is very little activity within this project in the region, although it is quite active elsewhere in the world.

New Zealand Department of Conservation has increasing links with SPREP conservation activities in the South Pacific, mainly in the role of advice and facilitation. It is involved with design and operation of surveys and monitoring programmes, establishment of protected areas, and recovery programmes for threatened plants and animals.

Geoff Walls attended the Nuku'alofa conference for the following reasons:

1. To represent Commonwealth Science Council, having been New Zealand National Coordinator of the BDGR Project, with South Pacific responsibilities, since 1986.
2. To strengthen New Zealand Department of Conservation representation at the conference.

Travel costs of this attendance were provided by CSC, whilst NZ Department of Conservation contributed salaried time and support services.

THE CONFERENCE

Venue, Organisers. Sponsors

The conference was primarily held in the assembly hall of Queen Salote College in Nuku'alofa. This airy building, within walking distance of most of the town and alongside the tombs of Tongan royalty, provided a good environment for the plenary sessions and workshops. Smaller groups tended to work in less formal surroundings elsewhere in Nuku'alofa.

The conference was organised by SPREP, in conjunction with the International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources (IUCN) and the Tongan government. It was sponsored by IUCN, Australian Nature Conservation Agency (ANCA), the Australian International Development Assistance Bureau (AIDAB), the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES), The Australian Department of Environment, Sport and Tourism (DEST), the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (SPBCP), funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF) through the United Nations Development Fund (UNDP), the New Zealand Maruia Society, the US AID Biodiversity Support Program, and the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF).

Who Attended

Most of the twenty-two countries of the South Pacific region were represented, by delegates from government agencies, representatives of non-government organisations or individuals. Representatives of the major international funding agencies with interests in the South Pacific were also present. In all, there were over 130 conference attendees: the full list is appended to this report (Appendix 1).

Conference Theme and Objectives

The conference theme was:

"Community Involvement in Conserving Biodiversity in the South Pacific Region"

It was chosen to reflect the urgency of biodiversity conservation in the region and to highlight the integral role that local communities have in conserving that biodiversity.

The principal objectives of the conference were:

- to review and demonstrate the value of community involvement in conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific region;
- to develop strategies to increase effective community involvement in conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific region;
- to clarify future directions for biodiversity conservation in the South Pacific region.

Conference Format

The conference followed the Provisional Agenda (appended to this report with the conference theme and objectives: Appendix 2). It consisted of an opening ceremony, introductory regional reviews, plenary sessions addressing a series of key issues (a key issues paper followed by case study presentations), several stand-alone workshops, presentations by representatives of sponsors and by observers, passing of resolutions, various task-group working sessions, some associated events and a closing ceremony. Presentations and discussions were conducted largely in English, but also in French, with simultaneous interpretation.

More detail on sessions is as follows:

(a) **Regional review**

The last four years' progress in conservation in the South Pacific region was reviewed. Chief developments have been:

- ratification of the Apia Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific, now in force and providing a legal framework for the conservation of the region's ecosystems and ecosystem components (both terrestrial and marine);
- ratification by various South Pacific nations of the International Convention on Biological Diversity (Biodiversity Convention), now in force;
- ratification of the SPREP Convention and its associated protocols on dumping and pollution emergencies, now in force;

- progress in individual countries towards implementation of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region, notably development by several countries of National Environmental Management Strategies;
- development of the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme (SPBCP), a 5-year programme funded by GEF, taking its functions from the Biodiversity Convention and aimed at protection of key conservation areas and the involvement of local communities in conservation.

Much has been achieved in identification and enhancement of traditional conservation management methods, financial incentives and guidelines for conservation, community awareness enterprises, public consultation, training, facilitation and co-operation between agencies (both government and non-government). There are now far more resources available for these activities, and the opportunity for considerable future conservation progress in the region.

(b) Plenary sessions (key issues)

Six key issues for conservation in the region were explored in depth.

Each began with a key issue paper, followed by a series of case study presentations. The issues covered were:

1. People in conservation.
2. Local conservation area ownership and management.
3. The role of non-government organisations in conserving biodiversity.
4. Funding mechanisms for biodiversity conservation.
5. Conservation policy and legislation.
6. Future directions for biodiversity conservation.

These sessions made up the majority of the conference, and provided many insights and models for conservation practice based on a wide range of experience.

(c) Workshops

Each plenary session was followed by a workshop on the same general topic. Because of the size of the conference, workshops were divided into groups, which worked on specific topics and reported back to the plenary. They provided the opportunity for contributions from every participant, and inspired excellent co-operative recommendations and lateral suggestions for SPREP and other agencies or individuals to use in conservation in the South Pacific. These were shaped further by a conference draughting committee and presented,

discussed, modified and adopted as appropriate during the plenary resolutions session (see (e) below).

(d) Statements by observers and representatives of sponsors

A latter session was devoted to short statements from observers and representatives of sponsor agencies. These proved to be punchy, enlightening and useful. They contained perhaps the most impassioned contributions to the conference.

(e) Resolutions

Presentation, discussion and adoption of 17 proposed resolutions comprised the session prior to conclusion of the conference. This session contained the most lively and contentious debates. The full text of the proposed resolutions, most of which were founded on workshop recommendations and suggestions, is appended to this report (Appendix 3).

(f) Revision of Action Strategy

The process of revision of the Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific, produced by SPREP in 1989, was furthered at the conference. A basis for this had been established by Samuelu Sesega (Division of Environment and Conservation, Western Samoa), working on contract for SPREP. A small working group took this further at the conference, acting in consultation with participants and plenary.

Draft revisions of the mission and objectives were presented to the conference and debated. They are far-reaching and visionary in scope. They are still being worked on, in the expectation of a revised Action Strategy being produced by SPREP later this year.

(g) Associated events

On the first two evenings of the conference, social events were organised. Prior to, during and after the conference, various parties of participants made excursions around Tongatapu to visit natural and historic features, see conservation efforts in action and take advantage of being on the island. These events made the conference more enjoyable, colourful and interactive for participants.

CONCLUSIONS

1. The conference provided the best possible opportunity to gain an overview of what is happening with nature conservation in the South Pacific, and to get an update on the progress of the last four years. It also provided the forum whereby SPREP and the agencies and initiatives represented at the conference could review their progress, exchange experience, make contacts and plan for the future. Thus it amply fulfilled its stated objectives. **There is no doubt this was a key gathering for contributing to the future of conservation of biodiversity in this part of the globe .** Participation was both an honour and a positive contribution to the region.
2. The fundamental conclusion from the conference is that local communities have a prime role in biodiversity conservation. This is not just true for the South Pacific region, but elsewhere in the globe too. **What is important in the South Pacific is that the western style of protection of land has its limitations; it can exclude local people and negate their traditional methods of protection .** Protected areas cannot coexist with communities that are hostile to them. In the South Pacific many communities are facing crises of self-preservation in the face of limits to natural resources and exploitation and influence from outside interests. The challenge then is to accommodate local people in the process of conservation biodiversity, in a way that utilises their knowledge and skills and provides them with a sustainable living. It is encouraging to see progress in this, but much more needs to be made if the South Pacific's natural biodiversity and traditional communities of people are to thrive. The situation demands both urgency and sensitivity.
3. There is a growing wealth of knowledge and expertise in biodiversity conservation resident now in most South Pacific countries. There is also an increasing resentment within those countries of the imposition of conservation and development programmes from abroad. They would prefer to initiate and run their own programmes. However, there is definitely a role for outside help, in the form of advice, research, facilitation and resources. **Especially needed are knowledge, skills and resources for survey, monitoring, selection and design of protected areas, pest management, restoration and recovery of threatened biota, training and education. Both Commonwealth Science Council and New Zealand Department of Conservation can offer a great deal in these spheres.** For both agencies the potential this presents is perhaps the major message from this conference.
4. SPREP is the leading environmental agency in the South Pacific. It has a well established co-ordination and facilitation role; it is the focus of a comprehensive regional network of agencies (both government and non-government) and individuals; it has access to information and resources on a large scale. **Any involvement by either CSC or New Zealand Department of Conservation in conservation advice, research or management in the region should therefore be initiated and operated in consultation with SPREP.**

5. **The future of biodiversity conservation in the South Pacific is in our collective hands.** It could slip through our fingers. It is both complex and simple. It requires resources, but not necessarily vast amounts of money. There is a great deal of traditional and latter-day knowledge to be tapped. Many efforts have been made to work on people's consciousness, their minds, to stimulate conservation in the region. But it may be, as a farmer from Fiji suggested, that the key lies in touching their hearts. **It certainly depends on empowerment of local people, of the island communities of the South Pacific.**

APPENDIX 1: List of conference participants.



South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

FIFTH SOUTH PACIFIC CONFERENCE ON NATURE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTED AREAS

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

4 - 8 October 1993

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APPENDIX 2: Conference theme, objectives and agenda.



South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

SPREP/5th SP Conf. Nat. Cons. and Prot. Areas/WPI

4-8 October 1993

Original : English

**Fifth South Pacific Conference on
Nature Conservation and Protected Areas
Nuku'alofa, Tonga, 4 - 8 October 1993**

Provisional Agenda

Working Paper Number 1

CONFERENCE THEME AND OBJECTIVES

The theme of the conference is "Community Involvement in Conserving Biodiversity in the South Pacific Region".

The theme was chosen as it:

1. reflects the urgency of biodiversity conservation in the region
2. highlights the integral role that local communities have in conserving biodiversity in the region.

The principal objectives of the conference are:

- * to review and demonstrate the value of community involvement in conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific region;
- * to develop strategies to increase effective community involvement in conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific region; and,
- * to clarify future directions for biodiversity conservation in the South Pacific region.

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

Saturday 2 October

1.00 - 5.00 pm **Registration**, Conference Venue - Queen Salote College Hall

Monday 4 October

8.00 - 9.00 am **Registration**, Conference Venue - Queen Salote College Hall

9.00 - 10.00 am **Opening Session**

Opening Prayer by the Rev Dr 'Alifaleti Mone, Secretary of the Free Wesleyan Church of Tonga. Hymns by the Queen Salote College Choir. (See copy of Service attached for order of Devotions).

Opening address by Dr Samuela Ma'afu Tupou, Honourable Minister of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources

Address by Dr Vili A. Fuavao, Director, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Meeting Arrangements - election of Chair, election of Drafting Committee, Agenda adoption etc.

Official photograph

10.00 - 10.30 am **MORNING TEA**

10.30 am - 12 noon **Regional Review**

Conference chair

Summary of country reviews - includes significant progress or activities on nature conservation since 1989. Presented by Adrienne Farago, SPREP.

Discussion about country reviews

Status and distribution of protected areas in the South Pacific. James Paine, World Conservation Monitoring Centre, United Kingdom.

12 noon - 1.30 pm **LUNCH**

1.30 - 3.00 pm **Report on current initiatives**

National Environmental Management Strategies. Neva Wendt, SPREP

South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Program. Iosefatu Reti, SPREP

International Union for Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources: European Community - Protected Area Initiatives. P.H.C. (Bing) Lucas, Chair, Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, IUCN

IUCN/CNPPA Marine Protected Areas in the South Pacific. Prepared by Graham Kelleher, presented by Richard Kenchington, Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority, Australia

3.00 - 3.30 pm

AFTERNOON TEA

3.30 - 5.00 pm

Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region - principles for a proposed revision. Presentation of consultant's recommendations. Prepared by Samuelu Sesega, Division of Environment and Conservation, Western Samoa

7.00 - 9.00 pm

Function hosted by Samuela Ma'afu Tupou the Honourable Minister of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, Tonga, at the International Dateline Hotel

Tuesday 5 October

Plenary Session I People in Conservation

Chair: Samuelu Sesega, Western Samoa

8.30 - 10.00 am

Key Issue Paper

People in protected areas in the South Pacific. Iosefatu Reti, SPREP

Case Studies

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander involvement in natural resource management in Australia. Prepared by Kevin McLeod/Steve Szabo, presented by Mike Hill, Deputy Chief Executive Officer, Australian Nature Conservation Agency, Australia

The conservation of biological diversity in the coastal Low lands of Western Samoa - village liaison. Samuelu Sesega, Division of Environment and Conservation, Western Samoa and Dr Geof Park, Department of Conservation, New Zealand

Community involvement for the proposed 'Eua National Park Plan of Management. Uilou Samani, Environment Officer, Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources, Tonga

Arnavon Islands Marine Conservation Area Project, Solomon Islands. Tanya Leary, The Nature Conservancy, Solomon Islands

10.00 - 10.30 am **MORNING TEA**

10.30 am - 12 noon **Workshops**

Discussion on key issue - People in protected areas in the South Pacific

Report back to Plenary with recommendations

12 noon - 1.30 pm **LUNCH**

Plenary Session 2 Local Conservation Area Ownership and Management

Chair: Bradley Punu, Niue

1.30 - 3.00 pm **Key Issue Paper**

Local conservation area ownership and traditional management. Robin Connor, Rachel Houlbrooke, Francis Tarihao, Solomon Islands Development Trust, Solomon Islands

Case Studies

Forest conservation initiatives of villages in Western Samoa - Falealupo/Tafua. Clark Peteru, O le Siosiomaga Society, Western Samoa

Montane cloud forests in Micronesia: status and future management. Herson Anson, Director, State Forest Service, Pohnpei, Federated States of Micronesia, and Bill Raynor, The Nature Conservancy, Federated States of Micronesia

Komarindi Project. Moses Biliki, Director of Conservation, Solomon Islands

Hakupu Tapu Forest and Wildlife Reserve. Bradley Punu, Secretary to the Government, Department of Community Affairs, Niue

3.00 - 3.30 pm **AFTERNOON TEA**

3.30 - 5.00 pm **Workshops**

Discussion on key issue - Local conservation area ownership and traditional management

Report back to Plenary with recommendations

6.30 - 8.30 pm **Function** hosted by SPREP

Wednesday 6 October

Plenary Session 3 **The Role of Non-Government Organisations in Conserving Biodiversity**

Chair: Julita Tellei, Palau

8.30 - 10.00 am **Key Issue Paper**

The role of non-government organisations in conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific. Caroline Sinavaiana, Le Vaomatua, American Samoa

Case Studies

The response of Pacific Christian churches and their communities to the conservation of biodiversity. Prepared by Peter Salamonsen, Pacific Conference of Churches, Fiji, presented by Sister Marina Edith Tu'inukuafe RSM, Coordinator, Diocesan Commission for Justice, Peace and Development, Nuku'alofa, Tonga

The role of women in nature conservation in Palau. Julita Tellei, Palau Resource Institute, Palau

Time consideration for establishment of protected areas on native comunally owned lands. Birandra Singh, Director, National Trust for Fiji, Suva, Fiji

Atu Atu Te Natura Case study. Jaky Bryant, Atu Atu to Natura, French Polynesia

10.00 - 10.30 am **MORNING TEA**

10.30 am - 12 noon **Workshops**

Discussion on key issue - The role of non-government organisations in conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific

Report back to Plenary with recommendations

12 noon - 1.30 pm **LUNCH**

Plenary Session 4 **Funding Mechanisms for Biodiversity Conservation**

Chair: Moses Biliki, Solomon Islands

1.30 - 3.00 pm **Key Issue Paper**

Funding mechanisms for protected areas and conserving biodiversity. John Waugh, IUCN, United States of America

Case Studies

Eco tourism as a funding mechanism. Prepared by Trevor Sofield, Hong Kong Polytechnic, Hong Kong

The Profitable Environmental Protection Project - will conservation pay its own way?. Dr Nora Devoe, Foundation for the Peoples of the South Pacific, Vanuatu

The Komarindi Catchment Conservation Area model - resource rent. Peter Thomas, The Nature Conservancy, New Zealand, and Graham Worboys, NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service, Australia

Helping conservation pay: village microenterprise development in the Solomon Islands. Annette Lees, Maruia Society, New Zealand

3.00 - 3.30 pm

AFTERNOON TEA

3.30 - 5.00 pm

Workshops

Discussion on key issue - Funding mechanisms for protected areas and conserving biodiversity

Report back to Plenary with recommendations

Evening

Meeting of the South Pacific Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas (CNPPA) : IUCN. Venue: Conference Room, Ramanlal Hotel

Thursday 7 October

Plenary Session 5 Conservation Policy and Legislation

Chair: Nicola Paine, Australia

8.30 - 10.00 am

Key Issue Paper

Protected area and biodiversity conservation policy and legislation in the South Pacific Region. Nicola Paine, Commonwealth Environment Protection Agency, Australia

Case Studies

Tokelau - village traditional rules relating to biodiversity/protected areas. Suia Pelasio, Environment Officer, Office of Tokelau Affairs

Conservation Policy and Strategy Development in Papua New Guinea. Gaikovina Kula, Department of Environment and Conservation, Papua New Guinea

Constraints and opportunities of rising legislation as a tool for community involvement in biodiversity protection. Bernard Moutou, SPREP

Supporting traditional conservation laws through legislation - a case study from Isabel Province, Solomon Islands. Raewyn Peart, Maruia Society, New Zealand

10.00 - 10.30 am **MORNING TEA**

10.30 - 12 noon **Workshops**

Discussion on key issue - Protected area and biodiversity conservation policy and legislation in the South Pacific Region

Report back to Plenary with recommendations

12 noon - 1.30 pm **LUNCH**

Plenary Session 6 **Future Directions for Biodiversity Conservation**

Conference Chair

1.30 - 3.00 pm **Key Issue Paper**

Future directions for conserving biodiversity in the South Pacific Region - an overview. Vili Fuavao, Director, South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

Workshops

Discussion on recommendations of future directions for biodiversity conservation

3.00 - 3.30 pm **AFTERNOON TEA**

3.30 - 5.00 pm **Workshops**

Discussion on recommendations of future directions for biodiversity conservation (continued)

Report back to Plenary with recommendations

Evening **Meeting of Non-Government Organisations**

Friday 8 October

- 8.30 - 10.00 am Statements by representatives of sponsors and by observers
- 10.00 - 10.30 am **MORNING TEA**
- 10.30 - 12 noon Revision of Action Strategy for Nature Conservation in the South Pacific Region
- 12 noon - 1.30 pm **LUNCH**
- 1.30 - 3.00 pm Presentation and adoption of workshop recommendations and resolutions
- 3.00 - 3.30 pm **AFTERNOON TEA**
- 3.30 - 5.00 pm International Park Merit Award - IUCN/CNPPA
- Venue for next conference
- Closing ceremony
- Evening **Slide/video presentation** (if participants are interested)

Saturday 9 October

Field trip (optional) around the island of Tongatapu

Updated: 30 September 1993

APPENDIX 3: Conference resolutions.

**FULL TEXT OF
THE RESOLUTIONS PROPOSED TO THE FIFTH SOUTH PACIFIC
CONFERENCE
ON NATURE CONSERVATION AND PROTECTED AREAS**

held in Nuku'alofa, Tonga,

4-8 October 1993

PEOPLE IN PROTECTED AREAS

Resolution Number 1

Recognising the substantial commitment by government and non-government organisations to the development of partnerships between conservation bodies and local people;

Noting the variety of approaches to the development of such partnerships, which have been trialled in the South Pacific region.

Recognising that there are nevertheless certain principles underlying all such approaches to community participation, such as the need to build mutual trust and respect, the need to give priority to listening to local people, and the need to have relevant site specific information.

Urges the SPREP Secretariat to develop, in close consultation with governments and non-government organisations, a set of principles to guide these organisations in their efforts to develop effective partnerships with local people, and;

Requests all organisations working in the field of conservation area development, including donors, to use such principles in their work.

Resolution 2

Recognising the strong commitment to environmental protection in most Pacific Island communities, but;

Aware that communities have a legitimate demand for an improvement in their material standard of living;

Mindful that limited resources are available to government and non-government conservation bodies to assist communities to satisfy such demands;

Agrees that it is appropriate that incentives should be provided to communities to assist them to manage their lands and waters for conservation, but;

Urges that any such incentives should be appropriate to the situation of community concerned. This requires that they provide ongoing benefits and be directly linked to the communities decision to conserve areas.

Resolution 3

Recognising that the development of long-term arrangements for a community-based conservation area is a process that requires sustained effort over a considerable period, but;

Noting that ongoing activities or new proposals often pose an immediate threat.

Urges government and non-government organisations seeking to develop proposals for community-based conservation areas, to ensure that mechanisms are put in place to avoid immediate threats to the area concerned.

LOCAL CONSERVATION AREA OWNERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

Resolution 4

Noting that traditional resource management rules have been an important factor in sustaining culture and the natural environment for generations;

Noting the loss of such knowledge and practice may contribute to environmental degradation;

Urges government and non-government organisations to work within the established community / village structure, and;

Further **Urges** such organisations to recognise these traditional resource management rules which contribute to sustainable use of resources, and assist communities with the application of these rules.

Resolution 5

Recognising the importance of education and training for ensuring conservation and sustainable use of these resources:

Noting that education should build respect for traditional knowledge and management practice.

Further noting that education which does not address traditional knowledge can make things worse by eroding respect for the old knowledge and the elders who have it.

Considering that existing education and training programmes in such areas requires strengthening and extension to other areas.

Recommends that:

- educational syllabuses stress the need to teach students traditional environmental knowledge, and ensure that sufficient education materials are available;
- communities are provided with full information and processes about the potential impacts on their environment and lifestyle of new projects, before they are asked to make decisions about whether such projects should proceed;
- any project that aims to provide sources of income for communities within conservation areas, should incorporate necessary training for local people;
- strengthen the capacity of non-government organisations through development of training programmes in critical areas where necessary;

Urges SPREP, member governments, international and local non-government organisations to implement these recommendations.

**THE ROLE OF NON-GOVERNMENT ORGANISATIONS
IN CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY**

Resolution 6

Recognising the importance of non-government organisations in assisting with the conservation of biodiversity.

Calls for improved communication, information exchange and dialogue between non-government organisations and government.

Urges that governments involve non-government organisations in the development and implementation of environment policy.

Resolution 7

Recognising the growth and expansion of non-governmental organisations, and the wide range of goals, approaches and capacity of such organisations.

Considers that there should be improved coordination between non-government organisations at all levels, in order to reduce duplication of effort and competition, and to promote accountability. Such accountability is necessary for non-government organisations to earn and maintain public trust.

Notes the willingness of the Pacific Council of Churches to work towards the facilitation of a program of environmental education and to enhance appreciation of the environment at the local level.

Urges SPREP, member Governments and non-government organisations to work closely with Church organisations to further conservation and environment programs in the Pacific.

FUNDING MECHANISMS FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Resolution 8

Recognising that as the wider community derives significant benefits from conservation areas, it is appropriate that the wider community contributes to maintenance of these areas on equity grounds.

Urge that SPREP should coordinate with national governments the development of strategies involving local people, all levels of government and international organisations, to ensure independent long-term sustainability of natural resources.

Urge member governments to consider innovative funding mechanisms.

Recognises that trust funds would be of great benefit in the region and should be established at the local, national and regional levels to take most advantage of different funding sources and strategies.

Urges that SPREP should investigate options for the establishment of trust funds to support conservation initiatives which have strong community commitment.

Resolution 9

Recognising the potential income to be derived by South Pacific Island people from intellectual property rights in traditional environmental knowledge and biodiversity.

Recommend that SPREP should encourage member countries to sign and ratify the Biodiversity Convention, and should assist with the development of implementation legislation.

[**Opposes** any changes to the existing interpretation of the Convention which may undermine sovereign ownership of intellectual property rights in the region.]

CONSERVATION POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Resolution 10

Noting the considerable work that has been undertaken in the development of NEMS, RETA's, EIA processes, the environmental legislation reviews, and IUCN guidelines for environmental legislation, such as for marine protected areas.

Urges member governments when reviewing their protected area legislation to take into account traditional management systems and the concerns of local communities.

Considers that national legislation should provide a framework for management of conservation areas, within this structure, local communities should have the responsibility to develop their plan of management, in consultation with interested parties. Management plans would provide for appropriate enforcement.

Resolution 11

Noting international conventions which promote the conservation of biodiversity, such as the Apia Convention, Biodiversity Convention, CITES, and the World Heritage Convention;

Recommend that countries give consideration to ratification of these Conventions.

FUTURE DIRECTIONS FOR BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION

Resolution 12

Recognising that the South Pacific Region Environment Program Conferences play an important role in raising awareness of biodiversity conservation and its implementation and management,

Recommends that such meetings continue to be held on a 4 yearly basis.

Resolution 13

Recognising the positive contribution of the World Conservation Monitoring Centre to the documentation of conservation areas in the South Pacific

Recommends that further collaboration be continued with SPREP, IUCN, International NGO's and national agencies to assist in the production of a revised directory of Protected Areas in the South Pacific for the Sixth South Pacific Conference on Protected Areas and Nature Conservation.

APPRECIATION OF THE CONFERENCE

Resolution 14

The Fifth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas:

having met in Nuku'alofa the capital of the friendly islands of the Kingdom of Tonga;

appreciative of the welcome and support provided by the Royal Family

having enjoyed the hospitality and friendliness of the people of the Kingdom of Tonga

thankful for the untiring efforts of the principal, staff and students of Queen Salote College

expresses its gratitude to the Government of the Kingdom of Tonga for hosting the conference

Resolution 15

Expresses its appreciation, and gratitude to the following organisations for their generous financial and other assistance in the support of the Fifth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas:

- South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme
- United Nations Development Programme (GEF)
- Australian Nature Conservation Agency
- Australian International Development Assistance Bureau
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species Secretariat
- Australian Department of Environment, Sport and Tourism
- International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
- New Zealand Mauria Society
- World Wide Fund for Nature
- United States AID Biodiversity Support Programme
- South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

APPRECIATION TO PACIFIC ENVIRONMENTALISTS

Resolution 16

The Fifth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas:

appreciative of the long-standing and enthusiastic commitment of Mr Sione Latu'ila Tongilava, Secretary of the Ministry of Land Survey and Natural Resources of the Kingdom of Tonga,

acknowledging the contribution of Mr Bing Lucas, Chair of the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas of the IUCN, and Mr Muliagatele Iosefati Reti, Vice-chair of the CNPPA,

expresses its utmost appreciation, on the retirement from their positions, for their contribution to biodiversity conservation in the South Pacific region.

Additional Resolution to Plenary Session 6
Future Directions for Biodiversity Conservation

Recognising that the sea is the primary environmental linkage and major source of resources in the South Pacific and consequently that conservation and sustainable use of the marine environment and its resources is vital to the culture and well being of local communities.

Noting the global conservation significance of marine ecosystems of the South Pacific Region and that SPREP is a major partner in IUCN's programme for the establishment of a global representative system of marine protected areas.

Recommend that donor agencies support the efforts of SPREP, governments and non-government organisations to ensure that local communities play the major role in the establishment and management of marine conservation areas and other strategies that result in the wise and sustainable use of the marine environment and resources of the South Pacific.