



CONTENTS:

Network News:

- PILN SOUNDBITES

PILN Country Team Updates:

- American Samoa announces new team members
- Guam blogs on stopping Korean spiders from invading / Brown tree-snake update
- Fiji continues to fight termite invasion
- Invasive Species Taskforce of Pohnpei (i-STOP) unveils new strategic action plan

News from the Pacific Invasives Partnership:

- 3rd Pacific Invasives Partnership meeting selected outcomes
- SPREP Vacancy: Terrestrial Ecosystem Management Officer (Apia based)
- Birdlife International Vacancy: Regional Program Development Manager (Suva based)
- Conservation International Vacancy: Executive Director, Pacific Islands Program

Meeting, Conference & Training Announcements:

- Invasives on the Pacific Regional pre-COP 10 meeting agenda (Fiji)
- Last chance for a spot on the ISLA course (Philippines)
- French Symposium 'Ecology 2010' Montpellier (France)
- ICAZ-2010: International Council for Archaeozoology Conference (France)
- 23rd Asian-Pacific Weed Science Society Conference (Australia)
- BIOLIEF 2011: 2nd World Conference on Biological Invasions and Ecosystem Functioning (Argentina)

Funding Opportunities:

- Rapid Response Facility
- United Nations Small Grants Programme under the Second Decade
- JRS Biodiversity Foundation

Marine Invasives News:

- Project to address marine invasives
- Publication highlights lessons learnt in marine invasives
- Marine bio-invasions of Hawaii published

Invasives News and Interesting Links/Websites:

- Weevils tackle the mile-a-minute menace
- Cane toads impacting Jamaica's native biodiversity
- New network for island plant conservation
- Recent review highlights disastrous impacts of predators on birds
- Weather hampers pest eradication on Macquarie Island

NETWORK NEWS:

***PILN SOUNDBITES** is the monthly newsletter of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network – a participant-driven network, reporting on news of PILN Country Teams and also from the Pacific Invasives Partnership. It focuses on invasive species management and biodiversity conservation issues. Previous issues of the PILN SOUNDBITES are available on the PILN webpage at the SPREP website: www.sprep.org/piln. Please feel free to share this issue of SOUNDBITES with your colleagues and networks. Comments and feedback are welcomed, please send them to: posas@sprep.org or piln@sprep.org. Contributions for the August 2010 PILN SOUNDBITE issue are now needed.*

We are currently updating the PILN webpage – <http://www.sprep.org/piln>. We appreciate any comments/suggestions you may have to help us improve the site. Your offer of images and stories would also enhance the site.

PILN COUNTRY TEAM UPDATES:

Many of you have suggested that this is one of the most interesting and valuable parts of your SOUNDBITES. Yet we don't hear enough from you. Let us make this one of the highlights of our learning network and contribute an item a month.

AMERICAN SAMOA: PILN Country Team Coordinator **Tavita Togia** advises of new national team members. We warmly welcome them and look forward to learning more of their interest and expertise to share with the Network

GUAM: **Aubrey Moor** a member of the Guam PILN team keeps a web-blog on spiders intercepted on a ship from Korea (source: <http://quaminsects.net/anr/content/spiders-intercepted-ship-korea>). She wrote:

“A ship delivering housing units and accessories from South Korea for a work force village expected to house up to 18,000 temporary workers was turned away from Guam's seaport in Apra Harbor last week when it was discovered that the ship and its cargo was infested with thousands of spiders. The spider infested cargo was being delivered to support a massive military buildup on Guam. It is predicted that the amount of cargo arriving at Guam's ports will exceed six time the current levels. A corresponding increase in arrival of invasive species on Guam is identified as an unintended consequence in the draft environmental impact statement for the buildup. Guam, like all tropical islands, is very susceptible to ecological and economic damage from newly arrived invasive species because of low numbers of natural enemies (predators, parasites, disease) and an endless summer. Guam's resistance to invasive arthropods has been further compromised by extirpation of insectivorous birds by the brown tree snake. It is thought that the extremely high densities of spiders found on Guam are due to an almost total lack of bird predation and a superabundance of flying insects. Any new species of spiders arriving on Guam may go through an unregulated population explosion resulting in environmental and economic damage”.

James Stanford writes about his responsibilities of coordinating snake sighting responses for the region and conducting outreach and training on biosecurity, invasive species and response mechanisms. Islands that receive direct or indirect traffic (air/sea) with Guam are considered high risks, including CNMI, Fiji, FSM, Hawaii, Marshall Islands and Palau. His response team is spread throughout Micronesia and Hawaii, and they are generally employed in the quarantine, agriculture or other environmental agencies and NGOs. Response training courses can be conducted as requested and be designed to meet specific needs. If you see a non-native snake please call James on his 24/7 hotline +671 777 4477 (HISS). Further information can be obtained from this weblink: www.fort.usgs.gov/Resources/Education/BTS/

FIJI: Fiji continues to take proactive steps to address the latest outbreak of the Asian termite in the northern division of the main island, Viti Levu. This includes the surveying of houses and trees, mapping the areas covered, hold awareness sessions and dusting and treating some of the houses. According to the Australian termite expert, Dr Brandon Peters, the task is considerable given that the termites are now 6 to 18 feet underground. This means the fight to contain and eradicate the termites will take a considerably longer timeframe than previously envisaged and the cost implications will be much higher than predicted. Dr Peters has concluded that the termites may have been in the country for at least 30 years. The negative impacts to the communities include the loss of properties with at least 936 confirmed homes being infested and relocation expenses to house affected families.

POHNPEI: i-STOP unveils its Strategic Action Plan for the next three years. Since the inception of the Pohnpei Invasive Species Taskforce (PIST) group in 2000, excellent progress has been made to deal with invasive species and to formulate its strategic action plan. Transforming themselves from a PIST to i-STOP (Invasive Species Taskforce of Pohnpei) and sporting a bright red octagonal logo emblazoned with silhouettes of species of concerns to the country – the team must be congratulated for such a great job. The three year strategic action plan focuses on two main goals – conserve biodiversity and protect livelihoods from invasives and legislative and funding support for invasive species management. i-STOP has identified ten target species to focus on. Some of the key issues that are highlighted in the SAP include GIS mapping, monitoring and evaluation, species identification, production of awareness materials, media training, public displays, research methods, rapid response, project writing, marine species, legislation. If any PIP members or other experts wish to assist i-STOP, please do contact Kadalino Lorens (Chairman), or the PILN Coordinator (piln@sprep.org).

NEWS FROM PACIFIC INVASIVES PARTNERSHIPS:

3rd Pacific Invasives Partnership meeting outcomes

- *PIP Charter:* The Pacific Invasives Partnership (PIP) agreed on its Charter in Apia, Samoa, as part of a Working Group of the Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands meeting held July 6-9. The Charter outlines the core functions of PIP, membership criteria and commitments, structure and roles and communications and reporting for its members. For a copy of the Charter please contact Dr Alan Tye (alant@sprep.org)

- *New PIP Chair:* Dr Souad Boudjelas from the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) was elected as the PIP chair for the next two years. Souad is well known to many of our PILN Country teams and partners as the Coordinator for our sister organisation Pacific Invasives Initiative based at Auckland University. Her role is to provide leadership and help to engage the PIP members. Assisting Souad is Dr Alan Tye, SPREP's Invasive Species Officer, who will provide staff leadership for PIP. Congratulations to the two office bearers on behalf of the PILN teams.
- *Action Plan 2011 formulated:* The Pacific Invasive Partnership formulated its Action Plan for 2011 at their recent meeting held in Apia (July 6-9). The Action Plan 2011 highlighted key areas where partner organizations and individuals agree to address.
- *More awareness needed at senior government level:* Invasives are the second leading cause of biodiversity loss in the world and yet it appears that this message is still not filtering up to many Pacific leaders. While great work has been achieved at the ground level in many Pacific Island countries and territories on managing invasive species, this is not reflected at the high level where advice is sought by donor partners on where their dollars should be spent. If our leaders raise the importance of addressing invasive species the donor partners would respond positively.
- *Invasives communication strategy needed:* PIP members recognized the need to develop a communication strategy to help mainstream and raise the awareness of all stakeholders on invasive species.
- *How much do invasive species cost?* While the cost of eradicating invasive species is in the billions of dollars in places such as the United States and Europe, the monetary cost of dealing with invasive species in the region remains poorly known. PIP recognizes that in order to convince leaders to take proactive steps to deal with invasives an economic assessment is necessary to demonstrate the cost of managing invasives.

SPREP Vacancy: Terrestrial Ecosystems Management Officer

Applications are invited for the mentioned position at SPREP in Apia. An exciting opportunity to work with a team of professionals to provide technical advice and support to Pacific Island members on terrestrial ecosystem conservation and ecosystem management strategies. Closing date for applications: 13 Aug. 2010. Contact Luana (luanac@sprep.org) for further information or see the employment section of the SPREP website: www.sprep.org.

Birdlife International Vacancy: Regional Programme Development Manager, Pacific Partnership Secretariat, Suva, Fiji

Birdlife International (Pacific Office) is seeking an enthusiastic and experienced person to take up the position of Regional Programme Development Manager based in Suva, Fiji. The overall purpose of the job is to implement and manage the Pacific Regional Fundraising Strategy 2009-2010 and also to contribute to the implementation and management of the Secretariat's Communications, Policy & Advocacy Plans and its Pacific Volunteer Programme. Closing date for applications – 10 August 2010. Contact Sarojni Raj (sarojni@birdlifepacific.org.fj) for further information.

Conservation International Vacancy: Executive Director, Pacific Islands Program

Conservation International is looking for an Executive Director to oversee its work in the Pacific region. The ED will manage a multi-disciplinary team, instilling organization values and behaviours and creating a work environment that attracts, develops and retains the best human talent. The location for the job is currently Apia, Samoa. Closing date is 13th August 2010. Full job description can be obtained by contacting Elva Castino: e.castino@conservation.org

Birdlife International secures funding for bird conservation in the Cook Islands

(source: www.birdlife.org/news/news/2010/07/cook-islands-conservatin.html)

A grant from the Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) will allow Birdlife International to assist the Cook Islands in identifying priority conservation sites. According to Jacqueline Evans from the Te Ipukarea Society, 50 bird species have been identified and 15 are globally threatened with extinction. Eradicating invasive species such as rats is one of the steps being undertaken to assist with conserving these threatened species.

MEETING/CONFERENCE & TRAINING ANNOUNCEMENTS

Invasives on the Pacific Regional Pre-COP 10 meeting agenda

Invasive species will be one of the important issues to be discussed at the pre-COP 10 meeting planned for 16-18 August in Nadi, Fiji. The meeting is organized by SPREP and partners to provide a venue for countries to seek assistance as they prepare for the Conference of Parties meeting in Nagoya, Japan. This is an opportunity to consolidate a regional voice on the importance of invasive species and the need for it to be included in national, regional and global agendas. PILN will be assisting with preparing an invasives brief to assist the countries. PILN Country teams are also encouraged to contact your country representative to the Nadi meeting and assist them with their invasive species awareness.

Last chance for a spot on the ISLA course (source: Dr Jill Keys – DWCT)

This is your last opportunity to apply for a spot in the Island Species-Led Action course 2010; being held in Ilian City, Philippines from 13-22 September. The course flyer and application forms can be obtained by emailing itc@durrell.org. Scholarships are still available for appropriately qualified applicants. ISLA is designed for island species and habitat conservation managers from the public and private/charity sectors, and academic staff from island universities/colleges. This is the last iteration of this very popular course in the Pacific in this round of funding, following Galapagos (2006), Guam (2008) and Fiji last year.

The **French symposium 'Ecology 2010', Montpellier (France), 2-4 September**, will provide a session focusing on biological invasions, titled 'Species introductions: ecological and socio-economical consequences'. The session will address three issues: (i) the effects of climatic change on biological invasions, (ii) the results of biological invasions on ecosystem services, and (iii) the socio-economic part of biological invasions. To submit communications and posters, please go to <http://www.ecologie2010.fr/>

ICAZ-2010: International Council for Archaeozoology Conference

The 11th ICAZ International Conference will take place in Paris next month – 23-28 August and will cover some important invasive issues such as: animals, plants and New Worlds: from exotic trading to biological invasions, a bio-archaeological approach; island faunal translocations. For more information, see the website: <https://www2.mnhn.fr/archeozoo-archeobota/?-SESSION-12->

23rd Asian-Pacific Weed Science Society Conference

The Asian-Pacific Weed Science Society Conference will be held in Cairns, Australia from 25-30 September 2011 providing a forum to share results, information and collaboration amongst agricultural researchers. Registration is now opened, please see their website: <http://www.apwss2011.com/>. Email enquiries to apwss@eventcorp.com.au

BIOLIEF 2011: 2nd World Conference on Biological Invasions and Ecosystem Functioning

November 21-24, 2011 at Mar del Plata, Argentina. The Conference plans to strengthen communication among the international community devoted to the study of biological invasions. A call for registrations and abstracts will be made shortly. Further details can be obtained from website: <http://www.grieta.org.ar/biolief/>

FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES:

Rapid Response Facility

The Rapid Response Facility (RRF) is an emergency small grants programme jointly operated by Fauna & Flora International (FFI), UNESCO World Heritage Centre, and the United Nations Foundation. With a target processing time for grant applications of just 8 working days, the RRF provides rapid support to enable conservation practitioners to tackle emergencies in some of the World's most important sites for biodiversity. To date it has supported 16 rapid interventions in 14 UNESCO designated natural World Heritage sites, responding to the conservation impacts of a range of emergencies such as natural disaster, armed conflict and sudden increases in illegal activity within these protected areas. Those interested in approaching the RRF for emergency funding should see www.rapid-response.org, which provides details on application procedures, funding criteria, and case studies of past RRF grants.

United Nations Small Grants Programme under the Second Decade

Applications for grants under the Small Grants Programme under the Second Decade will be accepted between 1 July 2010 and 1 October 2010. Applications are to be submitted to: indigenoudfunds@un.org during this time period. Applications submitted outside of this time period or to other email addresses will not be considered for funding. The proposals will be assessed by the Bureau of the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues in May 2011 and successful applicants will receive notice thereafter. A list of organizations awarded grants will also be posted on this website. Please note: Project must have a focus on indigenous peoples; all applicants must submit their project proposals in accordance with the Trust Fund Project Proposal Format and include both a summary sheet and a proposal document; projects will be disregarded if the required information is not present; additional information pertaining to the proposal will not be accepted beyond the deadline of submission (1 October 2010). Visit the webpage: http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/unpfii/en/second_trustfund.html for more info.

JRS Biodiversity Foundation

The Foundation is now entertaining the submission of new pre-proposals, July 5 through August 16, 2010. Grants are to advance the field of biodiversity and to provide training within the biodiversity field. Projects that help educate both the public and policy-makers to promote sustainability are highly valued. For more information or to submit a request, please see their website (<http://www.irsbdf.org/v3/home.asp>).

MARINE INVASIVES:

Project to address marine invasives (source: Bernard O'Callaghan – IUCN)

IUCN's Global Marine Programme in partnership with World Maritime University and GloBallast is implementing a project to build consensus in addressing marine invasive alien species. More information can be obtained from Jerker Tamelander (jerker.tamelander@iucn.org)

Publication highlights lessons learnt in marine invasives (source: Tamelander Jerker – IUCN)

A recently published report by IUCN on Marine Invasive Alien Species: recent progress in addressing a growing threat to ocean biodiversity and ecosystems contains interesting case-studies including:

- Degraded ecosystems may be more susceptible to invasions
- New Knowledge: Good news and caution
- Mariculture of non-native species can be profitable but involves a risk
- Marine Protected Areas are common first points of species introduction
- Keeping them out of Paradise
- Commercial and navy ships as well as recreational yachts can spread species
- Enhancing Awareness to enable action

The publication can be downloaded from this web-link: www.sprep.org/att/irc/ecopies/global/464.pdf

Marine bioinvasions of Hawaii published (source: Dr Lu Elderidge)

A comprehensive monograph of introduced and cryptogenic marine and estuarine species of the Hawaiian archipelago was published last year by the Bishop Museum as part of its Bishop Museum Bulletin in Cultural and Environmental Studies. The publication by James Carlton and Lucius Eldredge covers most of the major groups of organisms ranging from fungi, invertebrates, fish, algae and flowering plants. A total of 490 species were tallied of which 301 were found to be introduced and 117 cryptogenic (unknown origin). Report can be downloaded from the Bishop Website:

<http://hbs.bishopmuseum.org/pubs-online/index.html>

INTERSTING NEWS/LINKS/WEBSITES:

Weevils to tackle the mile-a-minute menace

Encouraging news is emerging on a little weevil deliberately released last year to try and control the mile-a-minute menace in Greenwich, United States. Two-thousand weevils were released and they immediately began nibbling on the mile-a-minute leaves. Evidence is also showing the weevils laying their larvae in the stems of the weed. Tests were carried out in China and the USA to ensure that the weevil would only target the weed and other native plants. The results are encouraging but it is still early days according to Donna Ellis from the Connecticut Invasive Plant Working Group.

Cane toads impacting Jamaica's native biodiversity (source: Shyama Pagad – IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group)

The Cane toad is one of the 100 worst invasive species in the world and has been introduced to many island nations in the Caribbean and the Pacific Islands as a biological control agent to combat sugar cane pests. The impacts of this pest to many native fauna have been catastrophic especially to the amphibian eating predators in Australia. Its real impact on island nation's fauna has not been documented until recently in Jamaica. A study by Byron Wilson and colleagues found the death of the endemic Jamaican boa (*Epicrates subflavus*) attributed to ingesting cane toads. Wilson and colleagues warned that endemic predators elsewhere are also at risk, suggestion that efforts to control the population and spread of cane toads may be of even greater conservation concern the previously recognized.

New network for island plant conservation (source: Alan Tye)

The Global Island Plant Conservation Network was formed last month, and has a web site hosted by Botanic Gardens Conservation International at <http://www.bgci.org/ourwork/islands/>

The network is open for anyone to join. The objectives identified by network members include: providing a network of expertise to respond to requests, identifying and addressing island plant conservation priorities, and documenting good practice examples. Actions so far agreed to achieve these objectives include maintaining a list of regional plant conservation experts, a collection of online resources (publications, reports, databases) and an email distribution list for topical information. If you would like to join this network, write to Christoph Kueffer (kueffer@env.ethz.ch) or me (alant@sprep.org).

Recent review highlights disastrous impacts of predators on birds (source: Alan Tye)

A very useful review of the disastrous impacts of predators (rats and other mammals) on birds in the UK's Overseas Territories (islands) has just been published. The UKOTs include the Pitcairn Islands in the Pacific, and several other archipelagos in the Caribbean, Atlantic and Indian Oceans. The review contains lots of useful info that can be used as background for justifying eradication project proposals. A pdf is available either from the SPREP Information Resource Centre (requests to irc@sprep.org) or the author (Geoff.Hilton@wwt.org.uk). The reference is: Hilton GM & Cuthbert RJ 2010. The catastrophic impact of invasive mammalian predators on birds of the UK Overseas Territories: a review and synthesis. *Ibis* 152: 443-458.

Bad weather hampers pest eradication on Macquarie Island (source: ACAP website: www.acap.aq)

The promising start to the poison-bait drop on Australia's Macquarie Island to control rats, mice and rabbits has caused an early withdrawal of the Macquarie Island Pest Eradication team. This means that the island's pesky rodents will have another year to cause havoc before the team returns next year to continue the eradication project.

DISCLAIMER: All efforts are made to ensure that the information presented in the PILN SOUNDBITES is accurate, up-to-date and from reliable sources. Materials within this SOUNDBITES do not necessary imply the views of SPREP, PILN Country teams or PIP. Please contact the PILN Coordinator should you need further information regarding the PILN SOUNDBITES.

Contact for PILN SOUNDBITES: Dr. Posa A. Skelton, PILN Coordinator

SPREP, Apia, SAMOA
Tel. +685 66276, Fax. +685 20231
piln@sprep.org