

PILN SOUNDBITES - MAY 2011



Pacific Invasives Learning Network.

Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme

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www.sprep.org

PILN Teams:

- American Samoa
- Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands
- Fiji
- French Polynesia
- Guam
- Hawaii
- Kiribati
- Kosrae
- Marshall Islands
- New Caledonia
- Niue
- Palau
- Pohnpei
- Samoa
- Yap

Pacific Invasives Learning Network

Network News

PILN SOUNDBITES is the monthly newsletter of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network: a participant-driven island network, reporting on news of PILN Teams and the Pacific Invasives Partnership. Past issues are available from the webpage: www.sprep.org/piln. Send comments, feedback or contributions to the PILN Coordinator: posas@sprep.org.

PILN Teams - Updates:

Guam

Legislators discuss invasive species bill

A bill has been introduced for consideration by Guam to allow for the establishment of a Guam Invasive Species Council (GISC). The Council will consist of relevant government departments and non-government organizations with the mandate of creating an Invasive Species Management Plan and act as the lead entity for Guam on invasive species efforts. Another provision of the bill also includes the establishment of a Biosecurity Division under the Department of Agriculture to provide for the inspection, quarantine, and eradication of invasive species contained in any freight, and those already present on Guam. The creation of a Guam Invasive Species inspection fee and fund is another significant component of the bill. Funding generated from this will allow for the recruitment of a Territorial Invasive Species Coordinator, establish and provide staffing for the Biosecurity Division, and suppress and eradicate invasive species present on Guam.

Palau (Ylap Ylap)

The Palau Conservation Society has just released its latest newsletter, *Ngerel a Biib* covering activities that took place late last year. Issues covered in the Newsletter include communities developing management plans for their conservation areas, a five-year moratorium on Hawksbill Sea Turtle, Micronesia Challenge Young Championship internship programme, the Convention on Biological Diversity meeting in Nagoya, Japan and partnering with the private sector to conserve Palau's World Wonders.

Pohnpei (Bejay Obispo)

The Conservation Society of Pohnpei has just released its Newsletter (*SEREHD*) for the month of April. The issues covered in this latest edition include the 10th annual review of the Society, fisheries management meeting, spawning aggregation at Kehpara Marine Sanctuary, false sakau and advancing communication at Conservation Society.

Raising public awareness is seen as an important contribution towards the eradication of the false sakau in Pohnpei. The false sakau is an aggressive colonizer of most habitats and was introduced in 2000. It has since established in 122 known sites, often penetrating interior of forested areas. Removal of the false sakau remains a high priority and 88 per cent of the known sites have successfully eradicated it. There may be other sites that have false sakau present, so the public is encouraged to report them, and to do what they can to prevent further spreading.

Samoa (Faleafaga Toni Tipamaa)

Samoa National Invasive Task Team meets

The first SNITT meeting for 2011 was held on the 6th May at the Ministry of Environment's Conference Room. It provided an opportunity to hear of the latest development on invasive incursions, project updates and activities being planned. Some of the key issues discussed include:

Rapid response project to remove mongoose has successfully concluded with a single specimen caught.

Merremia peltata update – the Forestry Division continues to work on manually removing of this plant from the O le Pupu-pue National Park.

Mynah control project – this is now in its 6th phase with a 7th phase to start soon, which will focus on rural community consultations. So far over 6,000 mynah birds have been killed, but its estimated population is 15,000 birds from the problem area (Apia). Some concerns regarding the feasibility of this project, although it was noted that the objective was to reduce the nuisance level from Apia.

Contributions for our June Soundbites are now needed!

Cane-toad update – Quarantine Division continues to monitor the situation and about five cane toads have been caught since 2009. As a result Quarantine has increased its surveillance and inspection of containers from high-risk areas.

Giant African Snail update – biocontrol is being used as well as information dissemination to farmers and communities. Two areas (one in Upolu and one on Savaii) appear to be free from the snails. Baseline information from Manono and Apolima islands remains insufficient and this was considered a priority action for SNITT. Concerns were also noted on the biocontrol (flatworm) as it also feeds on native snails. There is a high need to assess the population of native snails especially in areas where Giant African Snail is not found.

Rattan eradication project update (James Atherton, Conservation International)



A rattan eradication programme has been underway since 2006 to rid Samoa of this invasive plant. The rattan palm was introduced to Samoa in the early 1990's by the Samoan Forestry Division (then of MAFF) for trial and observation through an FAO sponsored programme investigating its potential as a commercial crop species for furniture production. The palm was planted for trial in three main locations on Upolu Island (Vailima, Papaseea and Togitogiga) but there is a concern over its potential introduction (by man or other animals such as birds or rats) to other parts of the country. Should rattan become naturalized in Samoa it could render agricultural lands unsuitable for cultivation and be a serious threat to our native forests.

The rattan eradication program which is coordinated by MNRE with the assistance of Conservation International and other members of Samoa's National Invasives Task Team (SNITT), has successfully removed all mature rattan plants from Samoa. However, due to the large area of one of the trial sites where mature rattan plants had reproduced and spread seeds (2.5 ha) and the apparent continued germination of seeds, monitoring and seedling removal will need to continue for a few more years until no more rattan seedlings are found. [image source: James Atherton, CI]

Yap (Tamdad Sulog)

Yap has been working on eradicating a number of serious invasive weeds including *Imperata cylindrica* and the Chain-of-love (*Antigonon leptopus*).

Imperata is a weed from the old world that has been introduced to many islands in the Pacific. It depletes nutrients from the soil, making farming difficult. It tends to thrive and out-compete other plants in open pastures and disturbed areas. Yap has been trying to eradicate this grass since 2000 when 60-hectares of land were affected. The Queens College, North Carolina, USA is assisting Yap in this project through GIS mapping. Early this month, staff and students from Queens College mapped the infestation of *Imperata* and found that most of the grass from the 60-hectares have been successfully removed, however, some plants are still present and this will take another 1-2 years to eradicate. Round-up herbicide is used in efforts to control *Imperata*. The eradication work on Chain-of-love has been completed and monitoring and follow-up is taking place. This is to ensure that no new seedlings or plants are given the opportunity to thrive.

Fighting sakau (by Bejay Obispo)



Across the mountains and deep through the Nett jungle of Pohnpei, Bejay Obispo (Conservation Society of Pohnpei - CSP) and Gurney Amor (Division of Forestry) trekked in search of one invasive species called the false sakau (*Piper auritum*). Trekking for hours through the jungle in the heavy rain, the two reached the location where false sakau was thriving. The area was over 300 meters above sea level, and the communities suggested that the false sakau has been thriving for over 10 years.



The sites where false sakau grow are often challenging due to dense jungle, steep hills and slippery paths but these do not prevent CSP and its partners working together to manage them. Involving communities is

important especially their feedback on where false sakau is growing.

The beautiful island of Pohnpei is being overtaken by many invasive alien species. These species are found growing in our gardens and farms, nesting on trees or swimming in our waters. They of course compete with the native flora and fauna of our island.

Conservation Society of Pohnpei's role is to collaborate with the Pohnpei State and other partner agencies to help minimize the spread of invasive species. When invasives become established in an ecosystem, they can negatively impact how the ecosystem functions.

Pacific Invasives Partnership News:

Birdlife International

Keeping islands rat-free for Pacific birds and people

See the latest blog by Elenoa Seniloli about eradicating rats from islands on <http://www.birdlife.org/community/2011/05/keeping-islands-rat-free-for-pacific-birds-and-people-%E2%80%93-with-elenoa-seniloli/>

Micronesia Challenge Launch New Website

<http://www.micronesiachallenge.org> The Micronesia Challenge Steering Committee recently announced the launch of its new website. Feedback on the site is welcome and can be sent to themicronesiachallenge@gmail.com. The Committee is also working on finalizing their Strategic Action Plan.

SPREP

Strategic Plan 2011-2015 available

SPREP's Strategic Plan that was endorsed by its members in PNG last year is now available for downloading from its website (<http://www.sprep.org>).

Ballast Water Management awareness seminar in Fiji (by Anthony Talouli)

An awareness raising seminar on Ships Ballast Water Management was held on the 19th May in Suva Fiji. This is the first of its kind for the Pacific, and it helped take Fiji forward in addressing harmful aquatic organisms and pathogens through shipping ballast water and hull bio-fouling. The objectives of the seminar were to raise awareness on ballast water, highlight the need to develop policies and legal framework, the need to develop an action strategy for the region and emphasizing the important role Fiji has in terms of being the maritime hub for the region. Steps that could be taken by Fiji can have positive impacts for the rest of the region. Some short and long-term actions were identified at the seminar including developing a Fiji National Policy based on existing legislation, engaging other sectors such as Environment, Biosecurity, Immigration, Customs, Navy and Maritime Safety Authority, developing legislation and policies and progress for ratifying the Ballast Water Management Convention. The seminar was attended by participants from government ministries (FIMSA, Ministry of Transport, Ministry of Fisheries, FPCL) and the private sector (Pacific Agency, W&G, Environment Consultants Fiji Ltd).

GLISPA

Progress on Helping Islands Adapt Workshop

It has been a year since the successful Helping Island Adapt workshop was held in New Zealand. Michele Frank is working with GLISPA to coordinate the follow up in the four regions (Indian Ocean, Caribbean, Coral Triangle and Pacific) that attended the workshop. Her role is to work with the regions to identify:

- What progress has been made on the actions;
- Barriers to or opportunities for progressing the actions;
- New actions that would improve regional collaboration and coordination of invasive species in the region.

Michele can be contacted by email at michele@agendatoaction.com.

Pacific Invasives Initiative

Training Report on How to eradicate Rodents and Cats on Islands

The report for the training that took place from 11-15 April in Fiji is now available. Please contact Natasha Doherty of PII for further information (n.doherty@auckland.ac.nz)

Micronesia Chief Executive Summit

The Micronesia Chief Executive Summit will next convene their meeting in Pohnpei from 27-29 July, 2011. Prior to the Executive Summit, the Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council will convene a session on the 25-26th July. For further information, contact the Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council chairman – Kadalino Lorens (k_lorens@yahoo.com)

Vacancies, Scholarships & Consultancies:

CBD Secretariat and GLISPA: The Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) is seeking a consultant (or a team of consultants) to prepare a 16-page document to analyze the status and trends in island biodiversity; review results in the implementation of the programme of work, obstacles and challenges encountered and how to address them, recommendations, suggested improvement and the way forward. Applications accepted electronically before June 6, 2011 to secretariat@cbd.int.

Micronesia Rare Pride Campaign Call for Expression of Interest



join the **MICRONESIAN PRIDE** movement now!

Is your organization interested in using marketing tools to achieve sustainable conservation impact in your community?

Does your organization fulfill at least three of the following?

- Has projects that protect and manage watersheds, mangroves, wetlands, etc.
- Works directly with local community members
- Works on and has projects in Micronesia (Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, RMI, Guam, and CNMI)
- Is able to provide an English-speaking staff member who can be dedicated full-time to running the 2-year campaign?

Do you answer YES to the questions above? Apply to run a PRIDE CAMPAIGN in your community now!

APPLY at: www.rareconservation.org/apply

For priority consideration, apply before JUNE 17 | 2011

LEARN more about Rare: www.rareconservation.org

TO ASK QUESTIONS, contact:
Khanh Nguyen (Ms) | knguyen@rareconservation.org | 1.708.803.2700
Fax: 1.801.880.8444, Call for #1 sign on 2011

RADE 

Rare is collaborating with the MICRONESIAN CONSERVATION TRUST and in support of the MICRONESIA CHALLENGE

- *Is your organization interested in using marketing tools to achieve sustainable conservation impact in your community?*
- *Does your organization fulfill at least three of the following?*
- *Has projects that protect and manage watersheds, mangroves, and/or MPAs*
- *Works directly with local community members*
- *Works and has projects in Micronesia (Federated States of Micronesia, Palau, RMI, Guam, and CNMI)*

- *Is able to provide an English-speaking staff member who can be dedicated full-time to running the 2-year campaign*

If you answer YES to the questions above? Apply to launch a PRIDE CAMPAIGN run in your community now! APPLY at: www.rareconservation.org/apply. For priority consideration, apply before: June 17, Rare is working in collaboration with the MICRONESIAN CONSERVATION TRUST and in support of the MICRONESIA CHALLENGE. Learn more about Rare at www.rareconservation.org. Contact: Khanh Nguyen (Ms) | knguyen@rareconservation.org | [image source: Rare Pride]

Island Conservation: Pacific Regional Director. IC seeks a new regional director to grow and manage conservation program in the Pacific Islands. Please refer to website: http://www.ceaconsulting.com/what/position_details.aspx?client=CEA&jobId=150

Live and Learn Environmental Education – Vanuatu: Live and Learn Environmental Education is currently seeking for a Project Coordinator (Invasive Species) to coordinate the management of the project: Testing & modeling preventative measures to limit the spread and ecological impact of invasive species in Small Island Developing States. This is a five-year project

2012-2013 Fulbright Scholar. The Fulbright Scholar Program and Humphrey Fellowship Program are administered by the Institute of International Education's Department of Scholar and Professional Programs, which includes the Council for International Exchange of Scholars and Humphrey divisions. The competition for 2012-13 Fulbright Scholar grants is now open. The application deadline for most programs is August 1, 2011. U.S. scholars and professionals can learn how to present their credentials at www.iie.org/cies.

Post-doctoral Program Coordinator for Bodega Marine Laboratory at UC Davis' Aquatic Invasive Species Program. A 50% (half-time) post-doctoral position for 18 months starting immediately is open at UC Davis's Bodega Marine Laboratory to coordinate the Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS) program. Requirements: Ph.D. in marine, environmental, or ecological sciences; superb communication (verbal, written, powerpoint, report production) skills; excellent demonstrated ability to collaborate on and lead scientific teams; superb time management and organizational skills; experience with database management. Prior experience in California, with resource management and policy, and relational databases desirable. Applicants should submit electronically a current c.v. and contact information for two references to: Ms. Janet Kukulinsky, HR Analyst (jkukulinsky@ucdavis.edu). Position starts immediately.

PestNet Alert Snippets:

Rinderpest Disease globally eradicated



The World Organization for Animal Health (OIE) declared that Rinderpest, one of the deadliest diseases of cattle and several other animal species, has been eradicated globally. All 198 countries and territories with Rinderpest-susceptible animals in the world are free of the disease. The eradication is the result of two parallel programmes implemented by OIE and FAO: the three-stage 'OIE Rinderpest Pathway,' launched in 1989; and the FAO Global Rinderpest Eradication Programme (GREP) managed in collaboration with the UN International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). OIE Director General Bernard Vallat stressed that rinderpest is the first animal disease ever to be eradicated by humankind, and lauded the

contributions of science, international cooperation and, in particular, veterinary services. Rinderpest, also known as cattle plague, is a contagious viral disease affecting several species of wild and domestic cloven-hoofed animals (animals with a hoof split into two toes), notably cattle and buffalo. Rinderpest is caused by a virus of the family Paramyxoviridae, genus *Morbillivirus*. The mortality rate can reach up to 100 % in highly susceptible cattle or buffalo herds. [Photo credits: Dr. Rajnish Kaushik]

Meeting, conference and training announcements:

These announcements are for the May only. More events can be found on our webpage:
<http://www.sprep.org/PILN/Calendar.htm>

6-8th June – CEPF Mid-term Review – Polynesia-Micronesia Hotspot (Suva, Fiji)

Venue: Novotel Conference Room, Lami, Fiji. Details: James Atherton (jatherton@conservation.org). The overall goal of the mid-term review conference is to provide CEPF and the Regional Implementation Team (Conservation International) with an insight into what has been done well, areas for improvement and to enable an assessment of CEPF's investment gaps and to develop a plan to fill these gaps with the remaining funds and time available.

14-16th June - Pacific Invasives Partnership (Suva, Fiji)

Venue: IUCN-Oceania Conference Room, Suva, Fiji. Details: Dr Alan Tye (alant@sprep.org). The Pacific Invasives Partnership is the premier coordinating body on invasive species in the Pacific Islands. It will hold its first meeting for 2011 at the IUCN-Oceania Office, Ma'afu Street, Suva, Fiji. The meeting will review the current PIP action plan and develop the 2011-2012 action plan. Updates from the partners will also be made.

7-12th June - 11th World Congress on parasitic plants (Italy)

Location: Martina Franca, Italy. The Congress will bring together scientists representing a wide spectrum of disciplines, research approaches, and geographical representation of parasitic plant research. Contact: ipps2011@area.ba.cnr.it

8th June - World Ocean Day (Global)

14-18th June – 22nd Pacific Science Congress (Malaysia)

Location: Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. A special session titled DNA barcoding of Pacific Invasive and Pest Species will be held as part of the 22nd Pacific Science Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. Contact for more information: www.pacificscience.org/congress2011.html

16th June - SPREP Day (Apia, Samoa)

Meeting for SPREP member countries.

20-23rd June – 15th Australasian Vertebrate Pest Conference (Sydney, Australia).

Details: www.avpc.net.au We are soliciting oral papers (15 minutes total) around this topic – eradication, sustained control, biosecurity and quarantine, detecting and managing survivors, the strategies and tools that worked or failed, management of non-target or environmental problems, etc. The emphasis is for projects in the Australasian region but papers from elsewhere will be considered especially if they demonstrate some general or novel problems or solutions. So, if you have a story to tell from your island and its pests send an abstract to the conference organizers at the above website and a copy to the symposium organizers (Elaine Murphy and John Parkes) at emurphy@doc.govt.nz

6-8th July NZ Biosecurity Institute Conference (Auckland, NZ)

Location: Takapuna, Auckland, New Zealand. Details: www.biosecurity.org.nz. Conference theme is: the Northern Gateway: Tomorrow's pests today. It will focus on Northland and Auckland as the gateway to New Zealand for pests. Find out how they are closing the doors on threats to NZ and fighting what is already there. You will hear great speakers and be able to attend field trips that will showcase the innovative/unique programmes going on around the region.

11-16th September - XIII International symposium on biological control of weeds (Hawaii)

Location: Waikeolu Beach Marriott Resort & Spa, Waikoloa on Hawaii's Big Island. Details: http://uhhconferencecenter.com/xiii_isbcw.html. The International Symposium on Biological Control of Weeds is a quadrennial international gathering of scientists and managers working in biological control of weeds. International cooperation is central to the practice of biocontrol, and this forum provides a critical opportunity for colleagues to reconnect, share experiences, and plan future collaborations. The meeting in Hawaii will provide a unique opportunity to take stock of a century of biocontrol in the Pacific and examine emerging issues, including climate change, that affect invasive plant management across the globe. The extraordinary cultural and natural diversity of Hawaii, and its long history in weed biocontrol, make these islands an ideal site for reflection and discourse on the past, present and future of this field.

Spotlight on Student Research: A Call for Submissions

Hi Everyone,

We're trying to increase the interest from Pacific Island nations in this initiative. Can you please forward this to any of your contacts that may be interested or may be able to spread the word further. If the student is from a developing country, submission of an application gets the first 5 applicants a free membership to SCB. The selected student gets a subscription to Pacific Conservation Biology and Registration to the ICCB conference.

Thanks for your help,

Aaron.

As part of the Society for Conservation Biology's continuing drive to recognize the outstanding research being conducted by student members, the Student Affairs Committee (SAC) in collaboration with the Newsletter Editor is pleased to announce the Spotlight on Student Research which will focus on students whose research exemplifies the mission of the Society for Conservation Biology. This profile will feature details of their research, as well as a broader description of their involvement in conservation biology. Those profiled will be competitively selected by a panel of judges based on the quality of their research and their contribution to conservation efforts. One student from each of our regional sections - Africa, Austral and Neotropical America, Australasia, Asia, Europe and North America – will be showcased. Joining a section is free for SCB members, visit <http://www.conbio.org/Sections/> for info.

We encourage all student members to submit an application (for those who are not members, details on joining can be found at <https://www.conbio.org/Join/>). We also encourage anyone who knows of suitable candidates to pass on details of this opportunity. Applications are continually accepted and should be submitted as an attached document in the format shown here: <http://scb-students.wikispaces.com/Student+Spotlight!> to scb.student.spotlight@gmail.com with the e-mail subject "spotlight" followed by the section name. We will notify the results by email and the winner student's research will be profiled on the SCB website and in the SCB newsletter. The first section to be evaluated was Europe (visit <http://scb-students.wikispaces.com/Student+Spotlight!> to read the winner profile). The next section will be Oceania and the deadline for submission of proposals is June 15th with decisions made by June 30th. The Oceania section is pleased to announce that the first 5 students in submitting their proposal that are enrolled in institutions from developing countries (listed [here](#)) and are not already SCB members will receive a free annual subscription to SCB. The winner of the Spotlight on Student Research - Oceania will be awarded a free registration to the next [ICCB conference](#) in Auckland and a free year's subscription to Pacific Conservation Biology.

We will accept the following formats: Microsoft Word, Adobe PDF, Word Perfect, Plain Text, Rich Text Format (rtf). Both text and figures of the submission should be in a single document.

Piero Visconti *Education and Student Affairs Committee*; Nora Bynum *chair Education and Student Affairs Committee*; Luigi Boitani *president of SCB*; James Watson, *President, Oceania Section Board*

Funding opportunities:

Conservation Leadership Programme

BP Conservation Leadership Programme. The Conservation Leadership Programme is offering Future Conservationist Awards of up to \$12,500 to high potential teams who aim to develop their skills through practical conservation projects. <http://www.conservationleadershipprogramme.org/FutureConservationistAward.asp>.

SeaWorld Busch Gardens Conservation Fund

SeaWorld Busch Gardens Conservation Fund. The Fund supports research in one of four areas: 1) Species research, 2) Animal rescue and rehabilitation, 3) Habitat protection, 4) Conservation education. It has no set minimum or maximum grant amount but in the past it has supported projects ranging from \$5,000 to \$25,000 for a one-year term. See: <http://www.swbg-conservationfund.org/grantInfo.htm> No deadline - SeaWorld & Busch Gardens Conservation Fund Animal Crisis Grants. For more information see: <http://www.swbg-conservationfund.org/animalCrisisGrants.htm>.

UNESCO: Pacific Youth Visioning for Island Living 2010 Small Grants

Youth Visioning for Island Living is a capacity building initiative that aims to empower young people in small islands to make a difference. The UNESCO Office for the Pacific states encourages young people and or youth organisations from member countries to submit applications to support a wide range of projects. If you are a young person or a youth organisation and would like to take part in this opportunity, feel free to contact Natalia Pereira (n.pereira@unesco.org)

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.

Invasive news and interesting links and websites

Pacific lionfish invasion catalyses a Regional Ad-Hoc response Committee

The lionfish from the Indo-Pacific that is invading areas in the Caribbean and western Atlantic has prompted the establishment of a Regional Ad-Hoc Committee to coordinate a regional strategy to manage it. Some of the leading agencies and countries assisting with this include ICRI, CABI, USA, Mexico, REEF and NOA. The Regional Ad-Hoc Committee hopes to develop a strategy to guide collaborative responses, with many concrete actions and priorities including a manual of best practices, training of trainers, sharing data and information, regulation statements and creating a list of contacts through a web-portal. For further information please contact Franck Gourdin (franck.gourdin.carspaw@quadeloupe-parcnational.fr).

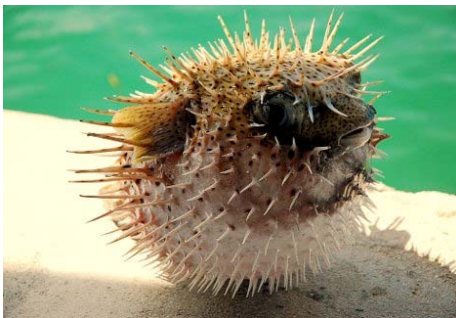
Draft Caribbean Invasive Alien Species Strategy – calling for comments

The draft strategy for the Caribbean Invasive Alien Species is now available for comments on <http://ciasnet.org>, under the section on the home page titled: IAS in the Caribbean. Please send your comments to n.ramnanan@cabi.org no later than June 4, 2011.

Pest alert of the Pacific rat out now!

An animal pest alert for the Pacific rat (*R. exulans*) has recently been produced by the Department of Agriculture and Food Western Australia with the support of the Australian Government's Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics-Bureau of Rural Sciences (ABARE-BRS), and endorsed by the national Vertebrate Pests Committee and relevant state and territory authorities. This national alert is the 10th in a series of brochures targeting emerging animal pest species in Australia. The four page colour brochure features images and a detailed description, information on aspects of biosecurity, distribution, biology and risk management. The alert is available at http://www.agric.wa.gov.au/objtwr/imported_assets/content/pw/vp/rod/animal_pest_alert_pacific_rat.pdf

Mediterranean Sea the world's most invaded sea



More than 900 invasive species have moved into the Mediterranean Sea, many of which have become established and even dominant in the region. As a result, coastal communities of plants and animals are experiencing major shifts and in some cases entire food chains have been altered. Stefan Kalogirou, a researcher at the Department of Marine Ecology at the University of Gothenburg says once species have become established in the Mediterranean it is almost impossible to eradicate them. The problem, he believes, stems from the 1869 construction of the Suez Canal, which created a corridor linking the Mediterranean to the Red Sea and, eventually, the Indian Ocean. Ship traffic through the region continues to be a major vector for the introduction of alien species. Though the

conduit has been open for more than 150 years, surprisingly little is known about how many species are introduced to the Mediterranean or what happens once they are there. Kalogirou's research, part of a four-year study of Mediterranean coastal ecology, found a clear impact on native species. He explains that when alien species either become dominant, like pufferfish, or are piscivores, like barracuda and cornetfish. It is evident that the food chain is being restructured, but the lack of previous studies limited our conclusions. Kalogirou concludes that a better monitoring methodology and detailed risk assessments are essential to protecting Mediterranean ecosystems. [Photo credit: notsooodphotography/Creative Commons]

CRCNPB wins Award for Excellence in Innovation for its Remote Microscope Network

The Cooperative Research Centre for National Plant Biosecurity (CRCNPB) has been recognised for the groundbreaking research it has been undertaking, winning an Award for Excellence in Innovation for its Remote Microscope Network (RMN). The new RMN system, which links field officers with national and international experts, has enabled a dramatic speed-up in the identification of exotic insects and diseases which may pose a threat to crops and the environment in Australia. The RMN is used in conjunction with the Plant Biosecurity Toolbox (PBT), which

includes high quality images as well as information about the distribution. Together they enable field officers to identify pests quickly and accurately, and respond to any threats. This could save millions of dollars in eradication costs and lost market access for Australian producers. See more on you-tube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=epbhdU6kgH4>

Axis deer confirmed on Hawaii

Axis deers have been spotted on the Big Island of Hawaii, raising concerns the invasive mammal could destroy crops, spread disease and damage fragile native ecosystems, state officials said. A coalition of resource managers have spotted the deer in districts as ranging from Kohala, Kau, Kona and Mauna Kea, the Department of Land and Natural Resources said. The animals are native to the Indian foothills of the Himalayan mountains and Sri Lanka. They were first introduced to Molokai and Oahu in 1868, Lanai in 1920, and Maui in 1959, but they hadn't been confirmed to be on the Big Island until now.

New Publications:

Scientific

Reddy, G.V.P., Balakrishnan, S., Remolona, J.E., Kikuchi, R., & Bamab, J.P. 2011. Influence of trap type, size, color and trapping location on capture of *Rhabdoscelus obscurus* (Coleoptera: Curculionidae). *Annals of the Entomological Society of America* 104(3): 594-603.

Panetta, F. D., Cacho, O., Hester, S., Sims-Chilton, N. & Brooks, S. 2011. Estimating and influencing the duration of weed eradication programmes. *Journal of Applied Ecology*, 48: no. doi: 10.1111/j.1365-2664.2011.02000.x

Johnston, M.W., & Purkis, S.J. 2011. Spatial analysis of the invasion of lionfish in the western Atlantic and Caribbean. *Marine Pollution Bulletin*. Article available online 21 April, 2011.

<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0025326X11001718>

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