



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

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

Malo ni Invasive Battlers

YOUR PILN SOUNDBITES for September was compiled from the Solomon Islands. Invasive species continue to be recognised as a major issue by our Pacific Leaders during the month of September (44th Pacific Islands Forum Leaders and the 24th SPREP Members meeting). Well done to everyone of you for your part in maintaining interest and attention on invasive species. Some significant milestone for September includes our Island Biosecurity Training, welcoming the four Environment (Biosecurity) officers from Tokelau and a big fa’amalo (congratulations) to Tavita for being awarded the 2013 National Parks Service Pacific West Regional Director’s Award for Natural Resource Management in a Small Park.



9th PACIFIC ISLAND
CONFERENCE ON
NATURE CONSERVATION
AND PROTECTED AREAS

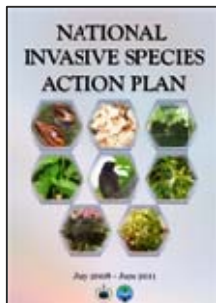
2-6 December 2013

PILN TEAMS AND COUNTRY UPDATES

PILN

The Island Biosecurity Training was held at SPREP from the 24-27th September with participants from Papua New Guinea, Vanuatu, Kiribati, Tonga, Samoa, Cook Islands, Tokelau and French Polynesia. The Training focused on boosting internal or domestic biosecurity measures to reduce the spread of invasive species to outer islands. The training focused on pathway identification, surveillance, incursion response and communication. Excerpts from participants’ presentations and one-to-one interview sessions are given below to give you an insight into what’s happening in the selected countries. We welcome Tokelau to our PILN family and hope that we assist Tokelau to build their capacity to protect their islands.

Samoa



Source: Czarina Iese and SNITT members

Invasive species are one of the key themes under the country’s national biodiversity strategy and action plan (NBSAP). The formation of the Samoan National Invasive Species Task-Team resulted in the National Invasive Species Action Plan – listing invasive species of priorities and key issues with actions to address them. The task-team is led by the ministry of environment with support and participation by other government agencies, non-governmental organisations and interested stakeholders. Some of the priority invasive species for Samoa include rubber trees, Merremia vine, Giant African Snail, Myna, Yellow Crazy Ants and seaweeds (Dead-man fingers and brown kelp).

Internal biosecurity training were conducted for some of the Government staff during an invasive species project for the Aleipata District. The two invasive species that Samoa would not like to see arrive and establish are the Mongoose (*Herpestes auropunctatus*) and the Cane toad (*Bufo marinus*).

The National Invasive Species Action Plan provides the document that binds the various agencies to work together on invasive species priorities for Samoa. Samoa is one of the countries participating in the Global Environment Facility invasive species projects and some of its activities will include harmonising incursion response to invasive species.

Cook Islands



Source: Pavai Taramai (Deputy Director, Biosecurity Service)

The Cook Islands has a strong Biosecurity team based in Rarotonga. For the outer islands biosecurity measures are provided by 13 officers (former Agriculture staff) as well as involvement by Island administrators. Biosecurity is supported by a number of legal instruments including the Cook Islands Biosecurity Act 2008 and the Quarantine Operational Manual 2012 to name a few. Others are currently being drafted.

During an invasive species incursion the Biosecurity Service in the Cooks can restrict the movement of items between islands, as demonstrated recently with the outbreak of the Oriental Fruit-Fly. Incidentally, Cook Islands recognised the Oriental Fruit Fly as one of the worst Invasive Species for the country. The fly attacks up to 170 varieties of fruits and vegetables causing millions of dollars annually. Two plants (*Merremia peltata* and *Mikania micrantha*) were seen as the next worst invasive species for the country.

French Polynesia



Source: Christophe Brocherieux and Marie Fourdrigniez

The Environment Code listed 31 sites for protection since 1952. A list of species was added to the Environment Code in 1995, which included 165 plant species, snails, turtles, birds and fish. In 1996, species of concerns that threatened biodiversity were added including 35 plants and 11 animals. French Polynesians have been undertaking activities including manual removal of invasive species, developing awareness information and undertaking research on biocontrol for some of the species of concerns to French Polynesia. The country is now implementing an invasive species programme focusing on the declared species in the Environment Code. Of species of high concerns to the country include the Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*), *Leucaena leucocephala* and *Miconia calvenscens*. A couple of species that French Polynesia is on the look-out for and hope not to ever have include the mongoose (*Herpestes auro-punctatus*) and *Clidemia hirta*.

French Polynesia (Société d'Ornithologie de Polynésie – Manu)



Source: Caroline Blainvillain

SOP-Manu is one of French Polynesia's leading local non-government organisation that works to save critically endangered endemic birds of the country. According to Caroline Blainvillain, French Polynesia is facing an ecological crisis attributed to the impacts of introduced invasive species. Of the 29 endemic birds of French Polynesia, 20 are threatened and 6 are at a critical level. Some of the species are down to just 10 birds, whereas others are so restricted to a single island - becoming vulnerable to any introduced predator or to disasters like cyclones or fire. SOP-Manu are helping by protecting the vulnerable islands from rats and little fire ants, undertaking regular trapping for rats, inspection of goods brought from other islands, working with local communities to raise awareness on invasive species.

Tokelau



Tokelau had a strong presence at the Biosecurity Training with four recently appointed Environment officers attending their first capacity building training. Biosecurity measures for Tokelau are back on track with these new appointments and establishing an Environment Division. The link between Samoa and Tokelau through trade and shipping route means that the two countries will need to work closely to ensure that the environment is protected.

Tokelau highlighted the Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*), Singapore daisy (*Sphagneticola trilobata*) and Yellow Crazy Ant (*Anoplolepis gracilipes*) as serious battles they are facing. Fruit-flies, Giant African Snails and the Taro Leaf Blight are problem species that they would like to keep out.

Vanuatu



Source: Lilly Fatdal (Invasive Species Coordinator)

Vanuatu is currently implementing the Global Environment Facility Invasive Species project and has established a national invasive species technical advisory committee. Other activities undertaken by local partners, such as Live and Learn and Biosecurity Vanuatu are also contributing to this national effort.

Activities included awareness programmes targeting communities, field trials on treatment of invasives, biosecurity legislation, and monitoring the spread of some invasives. Vanuatu identifies three serious invasive pests including the Common Myna, the Little Fire Ants and the Merremia vine.

Tonga



Source: Viliami Hakaumotu and Kalaneti Minoneti

Tonga has been active in undertaking invasive species activities having recently completed its national invasive species strategy and action plan, as part of its activities under the Global Environment Facility invasive species project. A survey of one of Tonga's islands for invasive species was undertaken recently and some invasive species were caught. Tonga identified three serious invaders the Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*), *Solanum torvum* and *Cordia alliodora*

due to their distribution throughout the country. The country is on the lookout for the African tulip and Wedelia as invasive species that they would not welcome.

Kiribati



Kiribati has recently appointed a new invasive species coordinator for the Global Environment Facility invasive species project, Keebwa Teremita. Some of the tasks that he is looking forward to achieving include revising and updating the country's national invasive species strategic action plan, improving biosecurity facilities and inter-island biosecurity. There is also a plan to work closely with island council to develop bylaws which will help safeguard islands. This will necessitate working with agriculture personnel as the main implementors of the bylaws. Three invasive species that are of concern to the country include the Black Rat (*Rattus rattus*), fruit rot (*Colletotrichum gloeopiriodes*) and the mango fruit fly (*Bactrocera frauenfeldi*). Kiribati would like to keep the Giant African Snail and other fruit-flies out of the country.

PILN – catching up with Island Biosecurity Training participants



Moeumu Uili (Samoa)

Invasive Alien Species – what it means to you?

M: Bad – not good!

An example from your island?

M: Myna, Merremia and Rats

Why did you choose these?

M: They are the most destructive species. They are species we are currently working to control and they have negative impacts on our native species.

How did you find the training?

M: Very important. I was involved in a similar training but that focussed on community. The training helps expand my knowledge make link with my work and how to improve. A great refresher.

What was the best part?

Know other participants and other countries. Also learning about other invasives that we should be looking out for.

What will you do differently when you go back home?

Will use the tools provided to improve my work. The training has helped put a 'balance' to my work that we need to devote as much time and energy to invasive species as we do to protecting our native biodiversity.



Christophe Brocherieux (French Polynesia)

Invasive Alien Species – what does it mean to you?

C: Undesirable – takes over and displaces native species

An example from your island?

C: Miconia

Why did you choose this?

C: People know this invasive in French Polynesia

How did you find the training?

C: Enjoyed it very much

What was the best part?

C: Meet people from other islands and know their issues

What will you do differently when you go back home?

C: I'm more alert now and I now know what to do when there is a new incursion.



Caroline Blanvillain (French Polynesia)

Invasive Alien Species – what does it mean to you?

C: End of biodiversity!

An example from your island?

C: Black Rat

Why did you choose this?

C: They caused extinctions to our biodiversity

How did you find the training?

C: Fantastic

What was the best part?

C: Learned about my own country and also about species out there ready to come to my country.

What will you do differently when you go back home?

C: Include more officials with my work and collaborate closely with government agencies.



Marie Fourdrigniez (French Polynesia)

Invasive Alien Species – what does it mean to you?

M: Threat to ecosystems causing ecological disturbance

An example from your island?

M: Miconia

Why did you choose this?

M: 70% Tahiti is covered by this species not allowing any undergrowth.

How did you find the training?

M: Good

What was the best part?

M: Good to have two sectors to attend the training – especially Quarantine and Environment. It is also good to now the challenges and to collaborate.

What will you do differently when you go back home?

M: Better view of my work. Be prepared especially for invasion. I'm also very interested to learn that there are other invasive species coordinators in the Pacific facing similar issues to me. I hope to keep in touch with them.



Pavai Taramai (Cook Islands)

Invasive Alien Species – what does it mean to you?

P: something new that come in like weeds and they take advantage of new environment.

An example from your island?

P: For agriculture – the Oriental Fruit Fly; for the environment the African tulip.

Why did you choose these?

They are bad invasives that are hard to control.

Monica Gruber (Training Facilitator) – New Zealand

Invasive Alien Species – what does it mean to you?

M: One of the threats to biodiversity; not many people aware; a battle of heart and mind; people become detach from the environment; not about people but people taking action.

An example from your island?



M: Rats

Why did you choose this?

M: They are everywhere; they are hard to get rid off; and they have big negative impacts

How did you find the training?

M: Needed more time. Training was comprehensive. I think everyone got something out of it.

What was the best part?

M: Learned about the different countries – their differences and similarities. It reinforces the importance of communication.

What will you do differently when you go back home?

M: TIPS process very good. People need simple processes and tools.



Kelekolio Perez (Tokelau)

Invasive Alien Species – what does it mean to you?

K: Harmful and destructive to the environment.

An example from your island?

K: Myna bird

Why did you choose these?

K: Eat eggs of native species

How did you find the training?

K: Interesting – important learning tools. This is the first training for us

What was the best part?

K: Biosecurity is new for us so this was good as we get to see what the back of biosecurity process looks like.

What will you do differently when you go back home?

K: The field tools – TIPS – communicating and interacting with other people and making link training with my work.\

Fiji: Bounty nets 21 American iguanas in Qamea in the past months



Twenty one female American iguanas have been caught in Qamea in the last 2 months after villagers have reported sightings in Niubavu and Namata estate. Inoke Koli, the Temporary Biosecurity Officer in Qamea who has been involved in capturing and monitoring the American iguanas since 2010 said that there have been numerous reports from the past month by villagers of the species around the coastal areas. But none have been caught due to the agility of the species who are termed to be good climbers and excellent swimmers. The 21 captured American iguanas had a clutch of 924 eggs amongst them. This is the period when they are easily spotted as they move around more when looking for a mate and laying eggs. The breeding season for the American iguana is usually from June to September.

With no natural predators, the American iguana population continues to grow exponentially after its introduction in 2000. At the end of the 2013 breeding season there are likely to be in excess of 10,000 iguanas on Qamea and will exceed one million after the 2016 breeding season. There have been new sightings in Dreketi Village located on the south east end of Qamea Island, an area where this species have never been sighted or recorded before. This shows that the species have increased their ranges due to their increasing population. In June this year, Biosecurity Authority of Fiji together with NFMV launched the bounty for the American iguana in Taveuni with a captured adult valued at \$10, \$5 for juvenile and 50c for an American iguana egg.

The bounty has not received a lot of response from communities with only 21 iguanas caught in the last 2 months. With the numbers of iguanas growing close to a maximal rate, NatureFiji-MareqetiViti and Biosecurity of Fiji are working on other proposals to get iguana detector dogs and hunters to assist in eradicating the American iguana.

[Source: NatureFiji-MareqetiViti – Tuverea Tuamoto]

American Samoa [source: Tavita Togia]

Latest updates from American Samoa:

- Initiate the endemic Samoan Swallowtail butterfly (*Papilio godeffroyi*) restoration project with local and off-island partners (ASCC and USGS-Hawaii)
- Initiate the Healthy People Healthy Park Program with the American Samoa Department of Education
- Identified and selected 15 Tamaligi stream monitoring plots and forest inventory plots within the Faga'alu and Nu'uuli watershed to study the effects of an invasive N-fixing tree on a Samoan stream food webs as well as the response of wildlife to tamaligi removal. This is a collaborative effort with Dr. Flint Hughes of USFS and Dr. Nico Dauphine of ASG-DMWR.
- Field crews killed 300 lopa trees in Vatia village using herbicide.
- Submitted two funding proposals to the National Park Service's Natural Resource Protection Program. A Big Faafetai Tele to Dr. Jill Key and Bill Nagle of PII for their editing work which improved our proposals.
- Gave away 500 native tree seedlings to promote the planting of indigenous native tree species

PACIFIC INVASIVES PARTNERSHIP (PIP) – NEWS

24th SPREP Members Meeting

The recently concluded 24th SPREP members meeting held in Apia, Samoa saw excellent outcomes for invasive species management throughout the Pacific. The Pacific Islands Capacity Development Strategy that was prepared by James Atherton on behalf of PII and PILN was endorsed by SPREP members to assist build the capacity for invasive species management in the Pacific countries.

The meeting also endorsed the Secretariat and its partners to develop a project proposal for the GEF-6 biodiversity funding on invasive species.

A special event was held to celebrate a recent agreement between Island Conservation and SPREP and was attended by SPREP members and partners.



New Invasive Banners launched

New invasive species banners were launched during the 24th SPREP meeting. The three banners include the Pacific Invasives Learning Network, a general invasive species management and a GEF-PAS Invasive Species project banner. The banners were unveiled during the Island Conservation and SPREP special event.

The banners are portable and can be taken everywhere to promote invasive species work and support for actions to stop them.

VACANCY AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES

Opportunity for the Nature Conservation Conference

Do you work on ecosystem management in Pacific islands or work with Pacific Island managers? We invite you to share your knowledge of best practice for island ecosystem management by completing this short survey at <http://www.islandecosystemmanagement.com>.

Tell us about your project(s) and how they have benefitted the natural environment and your community. Not only will you be contributing valuable information to better ecosystem management in the region, we will also be awarding the Grand Prize to the best project based on impact and success. The Grand Prize will include travel, registration and accommodation to the 9th Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Area

(www.sprep.org/pacificnatureconference), to be held in Suva, Fiji, from December 2-6, 2013. As well as the Grand Prize,

all entrants will go into the draw to win one of 20 t-shirts which will show everyone that you are playing an important role in ecosystem management in the Pacific.

This project was commissioned by the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) and is implemented in partnership with the Wildlife Conservation Society, Alluvium Consulting, Sustainable Island Innovations, Edith Cowan University, and Hodge Environmental. The project aims to develop effective guidance and communication materials on island ecosystem management, based on marine and terrestrial case studies of ecosystem based adaptation (EBA) and ecosystem based management (EBM) within Pacific islands. Information gathered will be developed into best practice management case studies and guidelines. Contact Dr Stacy Jupiter (www.wcsfiji.org) for further information

Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF)



The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) announces call for proposals in the East Melanesia Island Hotspot. The CEPF East Melanesian Islands Regional Implementation Team is pleased to announce a call for proposals for biodiversity conservation projects by non-governmental organizations, community groups, private companies and other civil society organizations working in the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. Letters of Intent for small grant projects (up to US\$20,000) should be submitted by email to cepfeastmelanesia@iucn.org by 17:30 (Washington DC time), on Monday 14th October 2013. Lols for large grant projects (over US\$20,000) should be submitted by email to cepfgiants@conservation.org by the same deadline. Late applications will not be considered.

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

Craig S. Harrison Conservation Grants – Pacific Seabird Group

The objective of the Conservation Fund is to advance the conservation of seabirds by providing funds or supplies to individuals from developing countries as well as those from elsewhere working in those developing countries primarily in or bordering the Pacific Ocean, (1) for conservation and restoration activities that benefit seabirds in the Pacific Ocean; and (2) to help develop within-country seabird expertise in developing countries within or bordering the Pacific Ocean.

Send an email to Verena Gill (verena.gill@gmail.com) and Craig Harrison (charrison@hunton.com), briefly explaining what you want to propose and where you want to do the work. That way, you can get a rapid determination from them of whether your proposal is eligible for consideration for funding. If they determine that your study is eligible, then fill out and send the application form, the proposal/budget, and the letter of reference, as described below, to Verena Gill and Craig Harrison. Please note that applications/proposals may be submitted at any time—there is no fixed deadline for submission. All applications/proposals will be evaluated whenever they are submitted.

Biocontrol Workshops opportunity

A number of biocontrol workshops are planned for 2013/2014. If you are interested in attending please contact Lynley Hayes (hayesl@landcareresearch.co.nz) **no later than the end of September 2013**. An indication of interest is all that is needed at this stage, not a definite commitment. Dates and venues for all workshops will be finalised once expressions of interest have been received.

Basic Training in Biological Control of Weeds, Lincoln, December 2013

A 2-day introductory workshop on biocontrol covers as many aspects of the underlying philosophy and current projects, and augment indoor sessions with practical activities in the field. If your organisation contributes to or supports our research in some way then there is no charge for this course, and it is ideal for new staff. If not you may still be able to attend, if there are places available.

Advanced Training in Biological Control of Weeds, Lincoln or Auckland, March/April 2014

A 2-day workshop builds on the introductory one, and aims to bring people up to speed with new developments since

they undertook basic training, and it covers some topics in more depth. In conjunction with the basic course, the aim of this training is to give people the skills and confidence to manage their own biocontrol programmes. This course is ideal for people who have undertaken a basic training course 2 or more years ago or for people who have had considerable experience working with biological control in the field. If your organisation contributes to or supports our research in some way then there is no charge for this course. If not you may still be able to attend, if there are places available.

Assessing the Impact of Biocontrol

If there is sufficient interest we could again hold our 2-day workshop on assessing the impact of biocontrol. It is likely that we will need to charge \$500-\$1000 per participant (excluding travel, accommodation and meals) to cover the costs of running this workshop.

Plant Identification, Lincoln, December 2013

This 1-day workshop aims to give people the confidence and skills to identify plants, especially weedy ones. Participants are taught how to identify any plant they come across using basic botany skills and plant identification keys (including the interactive keys for grasses, the recently-developed key for weeds, and an unreleased key to New Zealand flowering plant genera). All levels of experience with identifying plants can be catered for, and participants are encouraged to bring any material they would especially like to work on. The cost of this course is likely to be about \$500 per person (excluding travel, accommodation and meals). This course will be run back to back with the Basic Biological Control of Weeds course.

Biosecurity Bonanza, May 2014

We will continue to offer our highly popular Biosecurity Bonanza next May. The venue is still to be decided but likely to be Auckland. Again we will have concurrent sessions covering the latest in our weed, insect and mammalian pest research, and there will be no cost for attendance.

SPREP (Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme)

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

The Oregon Invasive Species Council is currently seeking a person to fill the role of coordinator for the Council. The Council is comprised of 17 members representing various state, federal, local government entities, as well as non-profit and business groups. The OISC was created in Oregon statute in 2002, where its mission is "to conduct a coordinated and comprehensive effort to keep invasive species out of Oregon and to eliminate, reduce, or mitigate the impacts of invasive species already established in Oregon." To that end, the Council meets a minimum of 3 times per year to discuss current trends in invasive species issues and make recommendations to legislatures, agencies, and other parties to limit their impact to the state of Oregon. For more information regarding the Oregon Invasive Species Council, please see www.oregon.gov/oisc.

The coordinator position is funded and awarded by the state of Oregon using competitive contract system where interested parties place bids for the 2-year contract. Maximum monthly total compensation for this position is \$6,250 with maximum for the contract set at \$150,000. The full RFP is attached.

In short, duties of the Council Coordinator will include, but not be limited to:

- Overseeing all Council activities, including annual meetings of the Council and its three subcommittees; arrange meeting locations other logistics; publish meeting agendas and minutes.
- Maintain a website dedicated to the Oregon Invasive Species Council, which includes a top 100 list of worst invaders to keep out of Oregon, and risk assessments for various species.
- Participate and maintain a council blog, as well as facebook and twitter accounts
- Playing an active role in invasive species legislation in the state of Oregon; meeting several times per year with key legislatures and politicians in the Oregon and U.S. federal government
- Collaborate and participate with other invasive species councils from surrounding states in the Pacific Northwest as well as the U.S. National Invasive Species Council
- Assist with a statewide reporting hotline for invasive species; direct incoming reports to appropriate experts in the field (see <http://oregoninvasiveshotline.org/>)
- Manage Council financial accounts, including an emergency invasive species control fund

- Draft press releases regarding council activities
- Bring fresh, creative ideas to fund invasive species prevention, detection, and control in the state of Oregon; and helping Council members implement those ideas

Experience with Oregon state government is a major plus. At a minimum, candidates should have a good grasp of invasive species issues facing the economy and environment of Oregon and the Pacific Northwest. The RFP is open until October 10. To submit a proposal, go to <http://orpin.oregon.gov/open.dll/welcome>

Aloha,

The Kōke'e Resource Conservation Program is now accepting applications for a fall internship position. Closing date in October 15, 2013. Please distribute to anyone you think would be interested. Applications should be submitted through postal mail or email along with a resume and 2 letters of recommendation. Intern would need to start at the end of October, start date negotiable. An commitment of 8 consecutive weeks required. Applicant must be willing to also do remote camping. Questions please contact us at 808-335-0045 or rcp@aloha.net.

Cherith Andrade

Kōke'e Resource Conservation Program, 808-335-0045

INVASIVE NEWS GLOBAL

Siam weed control continues on Cocos Islands

Department of Agriculture and Food staff have returned from the Cocos (Keeling) Islands where they continued highly successful work to control Siam weed. In addition to weed control, the team helped boost the Islands' biosecurity, encouraging the shire to recognise Siam weed (*Chromolaena odorata*) as a threat to newly-established agricultural enterprises on the island and the environment. Department development officer David Atkins said the department had been involved in weed control on the Cocos Islands since 2010, conducting three to four visits each year.

"Siam weed is recognised as one of the world's worst tropical weeds," Mr Atkins said.

"The success of the department's Siam weed program on the Islands has been recognised with the Commonwealth and Western Australian Governments extending the program for a further 12 months.

"Senior technical officer Brad Rayner, biosecurity officer Terri Jasper and development officer Andrew Reeves recently returned from the Islands where they advised the shire to include weed control activities in future contract operations and ensure a Siam weed free area around site works and equipment storage areas.

"This arrangement is expected to significantly reduce the risk of Siam weed being transported back to mainland Western Australia on machinery after it is used on the Islands."

Murdoch University legume trials to assess the Cocos Islands' potential for agriculture also benefited from weed control on the trial site, which was previously heavily infested with Siam weed. Mr Atkins said economic benefits of the department's weed control efforts included the promotion of local employment and training in weed control techniques.

"The removal of Siam weed also appears to have resulted in health benefits, with locals reporting a reduced incidence of asthma caused by Siam weed," he said.

"The pollen load of Siam weed is considerable because the plant flowers several times during the year.

"A survey has been initiated to quantify health benefits resulting from Siam weed reduction and demonstrate a clear link between the weed control program and health improvements."

Department staff also presented biosecurity information to Year 9 and 10 students as part of the school curriculum and helped raise the profile of the department within the Island community. Funding for the department's Siam weed control on the Cocos Islands is provided under Service Delivery Arrangement by the Department of Regional Australia, Local

INVASIVE SPECIES PUBLICATIONS

- Craig M. Costion, Ann Hillmann-Kitalong , Steve Perlman , and Will Edwards, 2013. Palau's Rare and Threatened Palm *Ponapea palauensis* (Arecaceae): Population Density, Distribution, and Threat Assessment. *Pacific Science*, 67(4):599-607. 2013.
- Anthony J. Geneva, Aaron M. Bauer, Ross A. Sadlier, and Todd R. Jackman, 2013. Terrestrial Herpetofauna of Île des Pins, New Caledonia, with an Emphasis on Its Surrounding Islands. *Pacific Science* (2013), vol. 67, no. 4:571 – 590 doi:10.2984/67.4.8

UPCOMING EVENTS

2013	Event	Participating Partner
October		
7 October	World Habitat Day (United Nations)	
16 October	World Food Day (United Nations – FAO)	
17 Oct.	International Day for the Eradication of Poverty (United Nations)	
23-27 Oct.	2 nd International Congress on Biological Invasions. Qingdao, China.	www.icbi2013.org
November		
14-17 Nov.	Asia-Park Congress. Japan	SPREP
20-22 Nov.	AWMS Annual Conference. Massey University, Palmerston North, NZ.	
25-29	Pacific World Heritage Workshop. Suva, Fiji	UNESCO
December		
2-6 Dec	9 th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas. Suva, Fiji	
9-13 Dec	Wrap-up meeting of 9 th Pacific Island Conference on Nature Conservation & PAs.	
	20 th Biennial Conference on the Biology of Marine Mammals. University of Otago, NZ	
13 Dec	Fiji Invasive Species Taskforce	FIST

Disclaimer: Articles contained within this or other PILN Soundbites do not necessarily reflect the views of PILN teams, SPREP or the Pacific Invasives Partnership. Contact the PILN Coordinator for further information (posas@sprep.org).