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SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMME

T O K E L A U

COUNTRY REPORT

SPREP Information Centre  
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SOUTH PACIFIC REGIONAL ENVIRONMENT PROGRAMMET O K E L A UCountry ReportI. POLICY AND IMPLEMENTATIONA. POLICY1. Environmental Control

- (a) Pest Control especially the Mosquito and Rat.
  - (i) Spraying of the inhabited islands with pesticides;
  - (ii) Treatment of drinking water in tanks, with kerosene;
  - (iii) Poisonous cakes placed at places that are not likely to be found by children to attract rats;
  - (iv) Chemicals harmful to rats.
- (b) Conservation week compulsory in schools.
  - (i) Plants are planted to help resist erosion;
  - (ii) Many more plants that are useful for food and handi-craft making are planted.
- (c) Restricted Admittance of Foreign Vessels to call at the Atolls
  - (i) Wrecked travellers at Afafu from Pago Pago resulted in fish poisoning not long after;
  - (ii) New Zealand Naval ships guard Tokelau's Exclusive Economic Zone which was effective on 1 April 1980, from foreign vessels;
  - (iii) Profits of the zone to accrue to Tokelauans;
  - (iv) Prevention of waste disposals at Tokelauan waters.

B. DESIRABILITY(a) Pest Control

- (i) To reduce the mosquitoes which cause diseases, i.e. to prevent malaria, Ross River Fever, besides others which are minor;
- (ii) Prevention of rats which are also disease spreaders;
- (iii) Insecticides and Pesticides are desirable as without the control of pests, there will be our imbalance of the surroundings which is harmful to the inhabitants of the islands.

(b) Conservation Week

- (i) Prevent erosion;
- (ii) Continuity of food supply;
- (iii) Provision of extra industry for the unemployed;
- (iv) Awareness of the needs of such remote and isolated islands.

(c) Economic Zone

- (i) Prevent pollution;
- (ii) Assist the inhabitants in making the best use of the limited resources of fish, copra and handicrafts;
- (iii) Part orientation of the Tokelauans with International Laws, which helps limit its isolation.

C. ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL PLANNING

1. Economic Development and Publicity Section Established

- (a) Buys handicrafts from producers and sells them to secondary customers;
- (b) Advertising and correspondence for the sale of the One Tala Commemorative Coins 1978 & 1979, 1980 to come, as well as handicrafts.

2. Revitalising of the Copra Production

- (a) Replanting Scheme;
- (b) Application of fertilisers;
- (c) Control of Rhinoceros Beetle.

3. Funded Catamarans by UNDP

- (a) Catch is sold. Money received helps on-going projects.

4. Youth Clubs

- (a) Assist Government projects and village projects through the provision of man labour though not by government but by voluntary efforts.

5. Public Service Association

- (a) Safeguard the rights of its members;
- (b) Help the members understand the laws;
- (c) Voice discontents, on behalf of its members, etc.;
- (d) Advise the Councils on provision of institutions to cater for needs of Tokelauans mainly in Tokelau, though it envisages universal applications.

6. Budgetary Advisory Committee

- (a) Examines objectively the relevancies of expenditures according to priorities and needs;
- (b) Consults the Fono and co-ordinates between the Fono and the Public Service.

7. Physical or Regional Planning

(a) Inclusion of the Tokelau Public Service within the Political System

- (i) The important decision making will be a responsibility of the political leaders from the public servants, though the latter advise leaders and Councils on needs of each atoll, and -

8. Design of Development Projects

A. Agriculture

- (a) Raising poultry and pigs introduced by the Director of Agriculture and Fisheries;
- (b) Vegetable trials at a mini-scale:
- (i) Very low fertility of the soil results in humus practices on easily disposable materials acted upon by the elements, or composting process;
- (c) Pest Control by Chemicals :
- (i) Mosquito
- (ii) Rats
- (iii) Rhinoceros Beetle.

B. Fisheries

- (a) Introduction of different kinds of fishing gear to local fishermen through the Co-operative Stores, funded by UNDP;
- (b) Fisheries trainees are chosen from each atoll, to be trained in methods and different techniques of fishing, at overseas polytechs;
- (c) Catamarans funded by UNDP to help the Tokelauans toward a much easier way of getting fish;
- (d) Individual demands on outboard motors are increasing. Those who cannot afford, contribute towards one for the family. It makes fishing easier, although it can be demanding at times.

C. Energy

- (a) Wind generated mills produce enough energy for charging batteries for radio-telecommunication.

D. Water

- (a) Roofs are for water catchments to drink;
- (b) Non-porous rocks allow for wells which are not for drinking but for pigs and poultry;
- (c) Concrete tanks are introduced for storage;
- (i) frames for these tanks were funded by UNDP.
- (d) Each house with iron roofing gets a free steel tank from the Public Service.

9. Area DevelopmentsA. Outer Islands

- (a) Coconut stratification can be seen due to continuity of coconuts being replanted weekly;
- (b) Pulaka Cultivation : It is similar to taro (Cyrtosperma adule) but it is a bit harder.

II. LEGISLATIONA. Environmental Legislation

1. Due to soil infertility very little vegetation can be seen. Little shrubs give a change to the stretching sand. Coconut trees, pandanus trees, bananas and breadfruit are a common sight.

In Nukunonu, the Administration Officer has encouraged the villagers to refrain from pulling the weeds as they preserve the soil from eroding away.

Little patches of taamu and pulaka are grown by many families.

2. The seawalls have been strengthened to hold back the sea, and as measures for erosion prevention.
3. The pigs are fenced in, as they destroy some useful plants around the villages. The Agriculture Department has a piggery which is very successful in Nukunonu.

B. Traditional Legislation

1. The doctors and nurses, with the help of the local women's committees conduct weekly house inspections as well as the surroundings. This practice is done on the habited islands although the outer islands which are not occupied have undisposable garbage, which allow breeding for mosquitoes and rats from small water reservoirs in these.

Drinking water is sometimes treated for wrigglers.

2. Further legislation may be needed, but it may also depend on the understanding and enthusiasm of the people to preserve the environment. Unconscious exploitation needs explanation which probably needs traditional legislation.

ADDENDUM

Tokelau has not committed itself to any international environmental convention or treaties as the New Zealand Government acts and safeguards the rights of Tokelau at international level. As part of the implementation of Tokelau's political development, New Zealand declared Tokelau's Exclusive Economic Zone on April 1, 1980, which then, introduces Tokelau to international laws.

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