

# Kura Tauianganga Reva

## December Issue # 11

### Climate Change Cook Islands

#### Office of the Prime Minister 2013

##### ***SRIC Adaptation Cold Press Coconut Oil***

Strengthening the Resilience of our Island Communities Programme has received submissions for the cold press coconut oil project for Manihiki, Mauke and Atiu. However, the tender hasn't been finalised until the new year. This project will roll out in 2014.

##### ***Nansen Initiative presentation in Costa Rica***



***Nansen Initiative conference in Costa Rica attended by Ana Tiraa Director of Climate Change Cook Islands, Dec 2013 (Photo by Ana Tiraa)***

Climate Change Cook Islands was invited to do a presentation at the Costa Rica Nansen Initiative consultation earlier this month. Director of Climate Change Cook Islands, Ana Tiraa attended to present the report of the consultation previously held in Rarotonga in May this year.

##### ***Marine Park Research presentation in Fiji***

Dr Teina Rongo gave a presentation of the marine park research findings at the regional conservation conference recently held in Fiji. Many positive responses were received from regional agencies and island countries and states. Dr Rongo

says that the result from the research substantially supports the theory that human activities, the positioning of Aitutaki in the group of islands with the direction of the ocean current has an effect on coral recovery on the Southern islands of Takutea, Manuae, Atiu and Mitiaro. The research report will be published and made available to the public.

##### ***Climate Change & Disaster Risk Management XPO***

As part of the awareness program to promote climate change and disaster risk management, the team has come up with an Xpo initiative. The Xpo is planned for the 15<sup>th</sup> January 2014 that will showcase relevant stakeholders with their involvement in climate and disaster risk management. There will be demonstrations from the Fire Brigade, Red Cross and EMCI to name a few. The objective is to promote awareness in our communities to strengthen resilience to climate change and disasters.

##### ***Trek to the Nira (Needle)***



***Admiring the scenery on the Nira, Dr Teina Rongo and Pua Hunter 17Dec 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)***

The yearn for adventure prompted a lunch time trek up the Nira by these so called fitness and nature fanatics! Did you know the pua nene is endemic to Rarotonga? We encountered these trees half way up the Nira. We saw a few variety of wild orchid and maire. It was also surprising to see mango trees growing near the top of the peak, an orange tree

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and the red double petal hibiscus in bloom even orapapua plants were spotted on the way up. We were lost in trancelike awe by the allurements of the majestic mountains cascading into the valleys whilst reminiscing childhood memories climbing up these peaks. The vegetation somehow seems to have changed with tall pine trees protruding above the tree lines and in some areas one can see the invasive creepers suffocating the trees and vegetation beneath. There is also the distinct clearing of forest to make way for homesteads which are dotted here and there along the hillsides signalling to us that change is inevitable. It is the excitement of discovering different plants, fauna, trees and the sweeping panoramic views that makes a mountain trek unforgettably a priceless experience. The richness of our mountains in terms of the variety of plants makes one ponder what the future holds for these species. Will the mountains hold fast to that aesthetic beauty which we take for granted? Or will it succumb to future human development. A moment of entrancement, then it was back to reality.

As we come to the end of another year all that is left are fond memories engraved in one's mind. Somehow, our tupunas have left us with a rich heritage entwined with their footprints, let us embrace, cherish and maintain this to pass on the legacy for our future generations.



***Shading on the way up to the Nira 17 Dec 2013  
(Photo by Celine Dyer)***

Giant mato trees offered a cool canopy whilst the roots of i'i trees provided for natural footholds on the steep climb.



***Camera break from the steep climb 17 Dec 2013 (Photo by Celine Dyer)***



***An Aitutaki Christmas 2013 by Alanna Smith***

This Christmas I was lucky enough to spend my time in beautiful Aitutaki, where I would swim in the electric blue waters scooping out its rich marine life and work on my tan. However I was shocked to find that my much awaited sparkling waters were more on the milky lime side with a touch of grassy green seaweed to make it near impossible to see what lay on the lagoon floor.

Nevertheless, come Boxing Day the family and I were able to take our boat out into the lagoon to find a



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snorkelling spot and spend the rest of the day to relax and have lunch. Finally, this boat trip would allow me to experience the real Aitutaki lagoon for how I remembered it, clear, clean and colourful. 15 min into our trip I was sure to see the waters clear up, but no, the milky lime colour followed us out for most of our journey. It was not until we passed Akaiami that we found a pool near the reef where the waters finally showed signs of a promising clear snorkelling spot. Having finally arrived at Tokopua, I couldn't stop thinking about how far we had to travel from the main Island to finally reach a clean spot in the lagoon where 'I feel' the sea life are now restricted to. I recall that this was not the case 10 years ago, and to see it completely changed now made me think twice about just how clean Aitutakis lagoon is? From having noticed these changes I was saddened to hear that further, more dredging is set to take place at Aitutakis main harbour and made me question whether Aitutakis priorities are set in the right direction, and whether development is really necessary for the sake of Aitutakis lagoons future? In having said this, Aitutaki still holds a beauty that differs to other Islands, but how much longer this beauty will last for is the real question.

## **Kura Kuriri**

As we welcome 2014 it is certainly another busy year for Climate Change and Disaster Risk Management;

First up is the XPO scheduled on the third week of January on Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup>.

Monday the 20<sup>th</sup> to Friday 24<sup>th</sup> January our team will be embarking on the RauTi Para tablet training project in the Pa Enua Tonga starting with Mangaia. The project will also film, record and document the experiences of the elderly both in terrestrial and marine. We anticipate to complete the Pa Enua Tonga by April this year and move on to the Pa Enua Tokerau by midyear.

We will be producing two newsletters in January the first one to highlight activities and documents put out by Climate Change and the regular January issue.

## **Till next time, Kia Manuia!**

### ***Photos from the Disabilities xmas party 2013 at Papaaroa Beach, Titikaveka***



***Upokoina Nganu a regular attendee at the Creative Centre***



***Roger the Manager for Creative Centre with one of the students.***

Climate Change Cook Islands is happy to collaborate with Cook Islands National Disabilities Council in the effort to build resilience to climate change.

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