

## March Issue # 25 Tau'i'anga Reva Office of the Prime Minister

### **UNFCCC ADP 2-8 Consultation - Geneva**

The UNFCCC ADP 2-8 consultation recently held in Geneva from the 8 - 13 February gave small island states such as the Cook Islands the opportunity for input into the 2015 Agreement of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. The Cook Islands associates itself with the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) in putting forward the views of these small islands. Considering the importance of Loss & Damage to our small island states, AOSIS called for a separate chapter for Loss & Damage to be included in Article X in the Geneva Text based on AOSIS position that these issues are separate and should be treated separately in the new protocol. The new proposed chapter for Loss & Damage includes an international mechanism on the premise that the Warsaw International Mechanism is assured continuity and evolve into a stronger process under the protocol. On the issue of finance, AOSIS inserted a reference to 1.5 degrees Celsius everywhere 2 degrees Celsius is mentioned in the finance section thus reflecting AOSIS position that the quantum of finance should be linked to its long term global temperature goal of 1.5 degrees Celsius. For the Cook Islands the AOSIS additions to the agreement is reflective of our views on the matters of Adaptation, Loss & Damage and Finance. Next phase of the process is the negotiating of the text in June to ensure it is cemented in the new agreement.

### **Vaine Tini Kuki Airani - Te Toka Ti'ava' o te Basileia (The Cornerstone of the Nation) 4 - 8 March**

The fragrance of the flower eis and the colourful pareu dresses greets and welcomes one to the AOG church hall for the opening of the Vaine Tini Conference which was from the 4th to 8th March.

This conference was particularly special dedicated to the women of the Cook Islands for their contribution to the development of the nation for the past fifty years. It was refreshing to hear the humour of representatives from the Pa Enea vaine tini which added fun with a sense of pride of being a Cook Islander woman. Women and climate change is growing and gaining momentum in Cook Islands under the leadership of Ana Tiraa (Director of Climate Change Cook Islands) where most practitioners at the forefront and grassroots levels are women.



*Vaine Wichman (President of CINCW), Nga Papatua, Aunty Mau Munoko, Niki Rattle and Mama Orometua (Photo provided by CINCW)*



*Group photo of the Conference opening (Photo provided by CINCW)*

### **Sixties plus and climate change**

It was bound to happen, yes, the Sixties Plus invited Climate change office to a luncheon presentation on climate change at one of their lunches which was at the Sunset Resort last month.

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*Sixties Plus ladies listening intently to Dr Rongo's presentation on climate change (Photo by Ted Nia).*

The group of retiree women of the Cook Islands embraced this new concept which was unheard of in their working days. And yes, there were lots of inquisitive curiosity to where climate change will lead us as a nation, and what mechanisms are in place to cope against the adverse impacts of climate change. The climate change office has a Climate & Disaster Compatible Development Policy (Kaveinga Tapapa) in place to guide our actions and preparations against the adverse impacts of climate change.



*Women from the Sixties Plus listening to climate change presentation by Dr Rongo (Photo by Ted Nia).*

## **SRIC CC has done it again!**



*Phew! looking relaxed after the audit week William Tuivaga, SRIC CC Manager, George Waqainabete Auditor from Ernest & Young, and Ana Tiraa, Director Climate Change Cook Islands (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

After a hectic week with the auditor from Ernest & Young, SRIC CC were ecstatic to be awarded with an unqualified report. This is the second time in a row that the SRIC CC project has been audited and both times have received an unqualified report. Congratulations to Willie and your team for a job well done! The week long process ensured that assets acquired under the SRIC CC project were accounted for and that all UNDP procedures were followed at the procurement and implementation of SRIC projects. According to Willie the SRIC CC goes under audit every time it spends over \$600,000.00. The SRIC CC project focuses on the Pa Enea and currently they are involved in water projects, home gardens, dried fish, cold press coconut oil, health and other upcoming projects in the Pa Enea.

## **Platform meeting 17 March**

The first Platform meeting for this year was held on Tuesday 17th March at the Vaine Tini headquarters at Tauae. A number of women from Pukapuka, Nassau and Palmerston island who travelled for the women's conference took time off their busy schedule to participate in the meeting. SPC EU GCCA PSIS Project manager at MMR Teariki Rongo reported that the new biologist who replaced Tina Weir is Teuru Passfield who just graduated with a Bachelor of Science degree majoring in Marine Ecology from Auckland University. Teuru will be continuing the work with pearl farmers that was started by Tina. Teuru has arrived in Manihiki and is settling in, hopefully a report from Teuru will be received for the next platform meeting. MMR is planning to move the water quality training to Penryhn Island with a team leaving for Penryhn at the end of the month. Technology transfer plays an important role in data collection, recording, reporting, useful for future planning, continuity and sustainability of projects particularly in the Pa Enea.



*Platform meeting Tuesday 17 March at the CINCW, Tauae (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

William Tuivaga reported from SRIC CC that Ann-Marie Roi has been employed as the finance officer to replace Michelle Foster and Teina Rongo as the Pa Enuia Project Manager replacing Robert Matapo. All other projects under SRIC CC are on target with their deliverables. Health reported that the bulk of funds received from SRIC CC was spent on purchasing supplies. They are investigating the possibility of investing in electric mister rather than depending on diesel operated equipment. Health is also researching in sand fly control for the islands of Mitiaro and Aitutaki.

### ***Welcome Daniel to Climate Change Cook Islands***

Daniel Lin was providing Technical Assistance in mainstreaming climate change adaptation and disaster risk management into existing agency plans as well as policy frameworks. A resident of Hawai'i, Daniel has worked extensively throughout the Pacific in matters relating to policy, climate, education, and culture. He holds a Masters in policy from Harvard University and professional affiliations with Pacific Resources for Education and Learning (PREL), IUCN, and UNESCO (Samoa, Bangkok, Jakarta, Paris). Additionally, Daniel is a crew member of the Hawaiian voyaging canoe, Hōkūle'a, and is a contributing photographer for National Geographic. Daniel was here for two and a half weeks and we welcomed

Daniel to the Cooks, we hope you enjoyed your time here with us. Aere ra, kia manuia.



*Daniel Lin at work (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

### ***50days 50years cycle initiative***

Around forty four pairs of cyclists turned up for the Valentines' Day Round Raro cycle initiative.



*Valentine's day round Raro cycle (Photo by Ana Tira)*

Since the launch of the project more people have come out on their bicycles either cycling to work or school. Come on everyone it 's not too late to join! You can either cycle or walk! Bicycle safety is also an important aspect of cycling so a free safety maintenance workshop will be held on 9th April. If you want to learn how to change your tyres, grease your bike and be visible on the road then this is the workshop you must attend.

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*Kids going to school in Mitiaro 2014 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

Another exciting event is planned for cyclists on 21st April. There will be a mini cycle race commencing at 4:30pm leaving from the market heading out to Oo'a back to Black Rock and coming back on the back road finishing at Te Atukura.



*This kid in Pukapuka riding his bike home Jan 2015 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*

## **Development Partners Meeting 11 February**



*Participants at the Climate Change side event, Penryhn Island Hostel (Photo by Ana Tiraa)*

**The Good, the Bad and the Ugly of climate change was the catch phrase for the climate change side event at the Development Partners Meeting.** Governments, both local and national, as well as private sector, civil society, regional and international organizations all have roles and responsibilities in managing, adapting and responding to climate change threats, including weather and climate related disasters. But sometimes roles and responsibilities are unclear to all involved. Recognising the comparative advantages of parties to address climate change means they are in better positions to respond appropriately. The climate change event addressed the roles and responsibilities of the various actors in responding to climate change threats, including how to strengthen decision-making processes at all levels. The Cook Islands Geo Portal by Emergency Management Cook Islands (EMCI) was also launched. The Geo Portal Project is designed as an information centre for disaster risk response and management. The side event was well received by our local counterparts and overseas practitioners.



*Mana Etches presenting the Geo Portal at the Climate Change DPM event 11 Feb 2015 (Photo by Ana Tiraa)*

## **Climate Change in the Cook Islands, From Concern to Actions**



*Participants at the USP climate change forum 4 Feb (Photo by Ana Tiraa)*

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The first of a series of climate change forums hosted and organised by USP Cook Islands commenced on 4 February 2014. This event coincides with the Cook Islands 50th anniversary and the Cook Islands USP 40th birthday. The moderator of the session was Prof. John Hay, who along with Rod Dixon organised this excellent event. The session was well attended with over 50 people in attendance. The key note speaker was Ana Tiraa, Director, Climate Change Cook Islands. She provided an international perspective and national overview of climate change. Ana gave some insights in to the controversies surrounding the international climate change debate. She also presented some national examples of work being carried out in response to climate change.

The oral presentation of six panellists followed. Prof. Martin Parry, gave a global overview of adaptation actions. Arona Ngari Director of the meteorological service, nicely summarised anticipated changes in the climate of the Cook Islands. The Secretary General of the Cook Islands Red Cross, Fine Tuitupou-Arnold stressed the importance of communities and people in responding to disasters. Tangi Tereapii, Director of the Renewable Energy Division gave an exciting presentation on the renewable energy programme in the Cook Islands. Rita Mateara, the General Manager of the Crown Beach Resort, spoke on what climate change means to tourism. Finally, Patrick Arioka, Senior Policy Advisor for the Ministry of Agriculture talked about the new agriculture policy for the Cook Islands, which includes climate change as a cross cutting issue. Dr Teina Rongo, Climate Change Advisor, Climate Change Cook Islands, rounded up the night with a passionate presentation to launch the report: **"Using Local Knowledge to Understand Climate Variability in the Cook Islands"** by Ana Tiraa.

### **Kura Kuriri**

We welcome Ann-Marie Roi to our office. Ann just returned from a two year study in New Zealand and she will be looking after the finances.

Dr Teina Rongo doubles up with SRIC CC programme and SPC EU GCCA PSIS .

We are co-hosting a forum on fisheries in the face of climate change with USP Cook Islands on Tuesday 28 and Wednesday 29th April at USP from 630pm - 8pm. We extend an invitation to everyone to come and hear what our local fishermen have to say about our local situation regarding inshore and off shore fisheries.

Our Raut Para team will be taking the tablet training to Manihiki and Rakahanga in May.

### **Till Next Time - KIA MANUIA!**

More photos!



*Atiu candidates at the Vaine Tini Conference 4-8 March (Photo provided by CINCW)*



*Pukapuka Lagoon Jan 2015 (Photo by Celine Dyer)*