

May Issue # 27 Climate Change Cook Islands Office of the Prime Minister

SRIC CC Training and Awareness on Rakahanga and Manihiki 12 - 26 May 2015

The Rauti Para team of Dr Teina Rongo, Mitchell Tutangata and Celine Dyer landed on Manihiki island on 12 May on their way to Rakahanga island for the Rauti Para Tablet Training and Climate Change awareness under the SRIC CC Training and Awareness Component. The day coincided with the opening of the Manihiki solar project, therefore the team was invited to join in the celebrations as the boat captain and crew were involved with the preparations for the function and unable to take the team to Rakahanga. The following morning on Wednesday 13th May, the team made the open sea crossing to Rakahanga in spite of rough conditions. On arrival the team was greeted by the Mayor and invited to lunch. After lunch a courtesy meeting was held with the Island Council to discuss and confirm arrangements for the program on Rakahanga island. The tablet training commenced on Thursday which was taken by Mitchell Tutangata assisted by Celine. Both young and old turned up for the training with age ranging from 17 to 75 years bringing a total of thirty eight participants from a total population of 77.



***Rakahanga Rauti Para enjoying the tablet training 14 May 2015
(Photo by Celine Dyer)***

The team also visited the school where Dr Teina Rongo spent some time with the senior students working on a reef monitoring project. The initiative is to generate student interest in science subjects by applying classroom knowledge (i.e., science and mathematics) to practical use in the marine environment. Dr Rongo was amazed with the

knowledge the Rakahanga students had on their reef and lagoon systems including the local names of marine species. Within the week, the students managed to build a quadrat which they will use to do reef monitoring to assess the condition of their reefs. The students will choose some sites around the island and with the help of the resident Marine Officer Tuteru Taripo they will continue to monitor their reef system as a science project. The reef monitoring will become a long term science activity for the school, particularly for senior students.



Students assessing the reef substrate within the quadrat (Photo by Teina Rongo) 18 May 2015



Dr Teina Rongo with Rakahanga school students carrying out reef monitoring (Photo by the School Teacher Mr Ross) 18 May.

Tauhunu Rauti Para Tablet Training

Tauhunu was the first village to receive the training on Manihiki island with a total of thirty one people who attended with ages ranging from seventeen to eighty one. The people were grateful for the opportunity to learn how to use the tablet, particularly the Rauti Para who had never used or touched a tablet. To be able to communicate and

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exchange photos on face book with families and friends living overseas was a big achievement and the highlight of the training. Overall, the people were happy that the training was focussed on them and thankful that they could continue practising their new skills on the five tablets on loan to the village.



Dr Teina Rongo presenting the SRIC hard drive containing the teachers resource kit on climate change and disaster risk to Island Council member and Focal Point John McCleod on behalf of Ruamanu School of Tauhunu (Photo by Celine Dyer)

The team also visited the Tauhunu school where Dr Teina Rongo spent time talking to senior students about climate change and areas on their island that they could identify and propose as a school project.

Tukao Rauti Para Tablet Training 22 and 25



Mama from Tukao village at the tablet training 25 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)

There were five Rauti Para from Tukao who attended the tablet training and for these people it was their first time ever to touch a tablet let alone use it. They learned simple operations such as turning the tablet on and off, performing easy tasks like writing their profile, looking up sites on the internet and setting up

their email addresses. People were excited that they had the opportunity to do something like this.



People from Tukao village learning to use the tablet at the Rauti Para workshop 25 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)

About thirty eight people from Tukao village attended the tablet training workshop including the oldest person on the island Papa Tobia pictured below walking to the workshop. The senior students from the school also took the opportunity to practise on their computer skills and assisted the mamas and papas with their training. Government workers also joined in to improve on their computer skills.



Papa Tobia walking to the workshop 22 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Five tablets were left at the Tukao administration for people to borrow and continue with their learning. The tablets will be returned to Rarotonga when the Tere travels to Rarotonga for the Te Maeva Nui Celebrations in July.



Dr Teina Rongo presenting the hard drive containing the teachers education resource kit on climate change and disaster risk to Faiteru Makira on behalf of Tukao School 25 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Rakahanga School Student Received Bravery Award

A normal fishing trip turned into a rescue mission for thirteen year old school student Boys Tarau. On Tuesday evening 12th of May, Boys and his cousin set out on a fishing trip trawling around the island of Rakahanga. It was a calm and humid evening just perfect for this type of fishing. According to Boys, they were half way around the island when his twenty one year old cousin felt sick. They thought it was the normal sea sickness saga, but as time went by his cousin got worse and started getting weak and unable to steer their outboard motor boat. By this time the wind had picked up a little and according to Boys he started getting scared because if his cousin doesn't pull through it means that he would have to get them back to shore, something he had never done before. Boys had never steered a boat in open waters as this was usually done by experienced adults who learnt from their elders through years of watching and listening to their conversations and stories told of how to manoeuvre through the narrow channel especially during rough conditions. Somehow, Boys knew that their only chance to get back to shore was for him to take control of the situation since his cousin was unconscious and needed medical assistance. He was petrified of the situation but remembered what the elders talked about when they were at sea and how they steer the dinghy through the channel in rough conditions. So Boys steered the little dinghy to the opening of the channel and waited for the right wave to enter, and when it did, he guided the little boat

through the channel without incidence. When they got to shore he ran home and raised the alarm and the family rushed to the shore and took the sick boy home where he was nursed back to health. Amazingly, the sick boy was fine in the morning and able to walk around. Thanks to Boys who remembered what his elders taught him, he was able to save himself and his cousin from peril. For his courage and bravery, Boys was awarded a certificate of Bravery by the Member of Parliament for Rakahanga Mr Basil Toka Hagai at a special school assembly on Friday 15th May.



Boys Tarau receiving the certificate of bravery from Rakahanga Member of Parliament Mr Basil Toka Hagai 15 May 2015 (Photo by Celine Dyer)



13year old Boys Tarau doing his school work at Rakuraku School, Rakahanga 18 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Rare chance to ride airport runway embraced



Richard Pokoina from ICT division of OPM gearing up for the once in a lifetime runway race 12 May 2015 (Photo by Te Ipukarea Society)

On 12th May history was made with over 250 cyclists of all ages participating in the Airport Runway Ride. The ride got underway just after 8.30am on the day. The 4.5km runway ride took most people 20 minutes to complete. Despite the early start, the organisers were happy with the popularity of this event. Thanks to the Airport Authority, Triathlon Association, Te Ipukarea Society, Ride Rarotonga, Climate Change Cook Islands and 50th Celebration Committee for supporting and organising this event.

Rakahanga SRIC CC Project

SRIC-CC Outboard motors project in Rakahanga has led to an increase in capability for the respective community to catch fish given the various challenges they have faced (travelling further and staying out longer).

Several benefits are realised through this exercise and these include;

- Economic gain through the sale of fish and part time work in fish processing for youth
- Food security for the community...parts of the fish (mainly fish heads) that are not exported are handed out for consumption in the community and the dried fish product is also

produced and sold to locals for consumption later...the dried fish has a much longer shelf life than fish stored in freezers.

The project is placed well in terms of its sustainability in that the resources are managed and maintained by the Rakahanga Island Administration.

Funds from the sale of fish from exports is also managed by the Island Administration and can be used for developing other areas within this small isolated community.



Dr Teina Rongo presenting the five tablets to Tauhunu village Island council member and SRIC FOCAL Point John McCleod 25 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Mayors and EO's Workshop - 28 May



Dr Teina Rongo talking on climate change at the Southern Mayors and EO's workshop on 28 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)

Climate Change Cook Islands participated in the Mayor's workshop that was held at the New Hope Church from 25 to 28 May. Dr Teina Rongo alluded participants on likely future impacts of climate change in the Cook Islands while William Tuivaga from the SRIC CC Programme gave a summary of climate

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related projects implemented in the Pa Enua to build resilience to climate change.



Rauti Para team of Mitchell Tutangata, Celine Dyer and Dr Teina Rongo 26 May, Manihiki airport.

Mangaia SRIC CC Project

Mangaia home garden project is powering ahead under the leadership of Mia Teaurima. In a recent visit to Mangaia earlier this month Mia held meetings with the Mangaia Island Council and local growers to discuss and confirm commitments from both parties to agriculture projects for the island. Under the SRIC programme Mangaia identified and proposed home gardens that can be developed to provide vegetables for the local market with the excess for the Rarotonga market. The Tamarua water project was also on the agenda for Mia and hope to see some action in this area in the near future.



SRIC Team of William Tuivaga and Mia Teaurima meeting with members of the Mangaia Growers

Pacific Climate Roundtable Conference 11 - 15 May, Samoa

William Tuivaga attended this Conference as the representative from Climate Change Cook Islands, whilst Ann Roi attended a finance training with UNDP in Samoa. Cook Islands was asked to do two presentations which Willie did on the SRIC project and the Mangaia water tank project that was executed by DCD.

Water Quality Report from Manihiki 27 May

Summary of Results:

The vibrio bacteria count at most sites range from very good to excellent. Ngatoka e Hitu had a poor grade, but will be monitored closely in the coming weeks. There is no cause for concern at this point. Enterococci levels throughout the entire lagoon are very low, which is excellent.

Water clarity was also very good throughout the lagoon, despite the recent rough surface conditions, with visibility greater than 9m at all sites.

Our probe has finally been fixed and returned to us, so we look forward to having 20m depth profiles produced soon!

Kura-Kuriri

The next Climate and Disaster Risk Platform Meeting is scheduled for Thursday 11th June at the Women's Centre in Tauae. We have some people from SPC PACTVET running a two day workshop from the 11 to 12 June who will give a brief on the workshop.

We are also planning an Agriculture Forum similar to the one held on fisheries sometime late June or early July.

The SRIC team of William Tuivaga, Mia Teaurima and Ann Roi are off to Atiu on Thursday 11th June for two days to undertake a mid-term evaluation.

Celine Dyer is off to Lao at the end of June for a one week training workshop on vulnerability and adaptation assessment as part of the National Communications process.

More Photos from the North!

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Tauhunu 25 May 2015 (Photo by Papa Williams)



Rakahanga tablet training 14th, 15 & 18 May 2015



Rakahanga Rauti Para tablet training 14,15 & 18 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)



Rakuraku School in Rakahanga (Photo by Celine Dyer)



Mr Moto Piniase the Agriculture officer tends the Tauhunu hydroponics nearly ready for harvest (Photo by Celine Dyer)



School student helping Papa Tobia at the Rauti Para tablet training workshop 25 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)



Mitchell Tutangata working with participants at the Tukao tablet training workshop 25 May (Photo by Celine Dyer)