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Climate Change Cook Islands

Office of the Prime Minister

Mitiaro School reforestation



Trees are our best defence against climate change. They provide shade, conserve moisture, improve soil, give us food, building materials and medicine; they are perfect for reducing coastal erosion and land-based run off; and are important habitats for numerous species. A mixed tropical forest is an amazing and diverse. It also fixes the carbon we produce in our daily activities.



Tuesday 11th of October 2016 has been designated as a Tree Planting day for Mitiaro School students and teachers in support of the National Environment programme. This enabled student to bring from home some plants like rauti, tiare maori and so forth. the morning programme started with each classes normal essential learning areas and at 10.30 am, and the Tree

Planting Day Began. The school assembled outside the principal's office and year 5 student Vainearii Nooana said an opening prayer. The school students were divided into four even groups. Each group had a senior boy as a leader. The boys lead their groups off to allocated locations around the school and began to dig holes for each student and his/her plants. After all of the plants were planted, watered and surrounded by rocks to prevent the pigs from digging them up, an extra long play break began.

Students were also asked to water the plants in the early mornings before class to ensure the plants survival. The students were all pleased with their hard-work planting. Everyone was pleased they had contributed to making the environment a cleaner, healthier, more beautiful place.
By Martin Taia from Mitiaro School.

The Pitaka Project- Penryhn



Work on the Pitaka project nursery on Penryhn Island is progressing well. Latest update from the Penryhn SRIC Focal Point Thomas Taime indicates they have already planted the tamanu seedlings for the reforestation of the turtle nesting area on Tini Manu, Mangarongaro Motu. The Island Council barge will take the building materials to Tini Manu, so the construction of the observatory shelter will commence. The hut will serve as a learning centre and shelter for the school and community groups when they work with the onu (turtle) and the replanting of tamanu trees on the motu.



Tamanu seedlings for tree planting on Tini Manu, Penryhn



Transporting materials for the observatory shelter to Tini Manu site on motu Mangarongaro.



Materials on Tini Manu ready for the construction of the onu observatory to begin end of month pending on good weather.

Day for Disaster Reduction 13 Oct- 2016

International Day for Disaster Reduction began in 1989, after a call by the United Nations General Assembly for a day to promote a global culture of risk-awareness and disaster reduction. Held every 13 October, the day celebrates how people and communities around the world are reducing their exposure to disasters and

raising awareness about the importance of reining in the risks that they face.

The Sendai Framework is focused around 4 Priorities:

1. Understanding Disaster Risk
2. DRR Governance and accountability
3. Investing in Disaster Risk Reduction
4. Preparedness for effective response and build back better

EMCI – is very pleased to advise that European Union funded programs for “ Building Safety and Resilience in the Pacific Project is all about delivering those 4 priority areas.

We have just signed a memorandum of agreement with SPC to deliver 21 projects focused around those 4 priorities of the Sendai Framework and today we would like to commemorate International Day for Disaster Risk Reduction, and thank SPC for working with Cook Islands to deliver on the Sendai Framework, by EMCI.

World Food Day 14th Oct

World Food Day is intended to promote healthy lifestyles by encouraging people to eat healthy foods and eat less meat. It was designated as a meatless day, where all products sold at the event were mainly locally grown vegetables and fruits. This event was a collaboration amongst various government ministries and agencies such as Agriculture, Health, Business Trade Investment Board, Marine Resources and SRIC from Climate Change Cook Islands. In his opening speech, the Minister of Agriculture the Hon. Kiriau Turepu reiterated detrimental impacts of climate change affecting agriculture being felt by farmers across all the islands.



‘The sad thing is to see people packing up and leave their islands over frustration of the inability to cope with these drastic changes. Credit and recognition is long overdue for our agriculture warriors who have stood the test and still providing fresh vegetables on

our market on a daily basis'. The day ended with the sale of fresh produce which only lasted an hour when everything sold out.

Pa Enua Adaptation Committee



Ms Shoko Takemoto the Adaptation Fund Specialist from Fiji and Mr Ioane Iosefo from the UNDP Samoa office were amongst those present at the PAC meeting held on Thursday 21st. Melina Tuiravakai gave an update of all the SRIC projects in the Pa Enua. There are 33 projects all together with 8 completed, 18 still continuing with 7 new projects this year. The SRIC communications has been extremely active from the first to the 3rd quarters reaching a total of 2165 likes, and progressively increasing post reach from 6,201 in the first quarter to 273,796 in the 3rd quarter. SRIC also contributed to the SPREP and UNDP Anniversary Book by providing photos from the various projects.

Pukapuka Community Water tanks



The Pukapuka community water tank project kicked off on Monday 24th. This project is a partnership between GIZ-the Government of Germany and SRIC. The team of men began the water tank project by stripping off

eroded and old tin roofs from the water tank sheds. Work supervisor Lucky Topetai says they cannot sit around and wait for the materials to arrive before starting the work, by doing this when the materials arrive all they do is nail the new roofs and timber in place.



Workmen stripping off the old roof, Photos provided by Lucky Topetai

Progress report on Te Hare Natura – Tini Manu

Dr Michael White reported from Tongareva that on Monday 24th the blessing ceremony at Tini Manu for the laying down of the foundation of Te Hare Natura was held.



Four posts erected on Tini Manu for Te Hare Natura Monday 24th (Photo provided by Dr Michael White from Penryhn Island)

Prominent persons from the community were chosen to place a stone at each of the corners of the foundation. At the end of the ceremony they planted five trees along the shoreline of Tini Manu to mark new beginnings, a special place on Motu Mangarongaro.



Putting the posts in place Monday 24th (Photo by Dr Michael White)



Laying down of the stones at the blessing ceremony Monday 24th (Photo by Dr Michael White)

Regional Birdlife Meeting



The Regional BirdLife Meeting was held from Sunday 23rd to Friday 28th. Ana Tiraa, Director of Climate Change Cook Islands was a guest speaker and spoke on climate finance. According to Ana, 'even though there is financial support available under climate change the reality is the complexities in accessing these finances as different donors have their own processes which

makes it difficult and a time consuming exercise. Some NGOs have been accredited to the Green Climate Fund, another pathway that could be considered, but these things does not happen overnight, it takes perseverance, dedication and time to achieve'.



Ewan Cameron was on hand to answer questions on the Green Climate Fund at the meeting.

Kura – Kuriri

Celine Dyer and Melina Tuiravakai is off to COP22 from 7 -18th November and the SIDS pre COP meeting from 3rd – 4th November. They will also be joined by the MP Toka Hagai as Alternate Head of Delegation, Ms Linda Siegele, Ms Diane McFadzien, Ms Nannette Woonton, Mr Kevin Iro and Kaumaiti Travel Tou Ariki. At the last week of the meeting the Prime Minister Hon. Henry Puna with his delegation of three will attend the High Level Segment of the COP.

Willie Tuivaga is off to Suva, Fiji the week of 31st Oct to 4th November.

Aitutaki SRIC Focal Point Ms Naomi Patterson will be in our office from the 1st and 2nd week of November to undertake some training.

Till next time – Kia Manuia