



This summary of recent activities by people and agencies involved in the Pacific Invasives Initiative (PII) is collated and circulated by the PII Coordinating Team. Feedback is welcomed – contact either the people directly involved in projects, or the PII Team PII@auckland.ac.nz. For further information visit our website <http://www.issg.org/cii/PII>.

Cooperative Initiative on Invasive Alien Species on Islands (CII)

Small Island Developing States asked for a cooperative approach to address the impacts of invasive species on islands. As a result, CII was launched as a global initiative by the New Zealand Government and the Invasive Species Specialist Group of IUCN at the April 2002 Convention on Biodiversity Conference of Parties (COP6). Much global work on invasive species has been done under the CII umbrella, including development of PII, which was established in 2004 as the Pacific Programme of CII.

PII Partners discussed the need to take the PII model to other island regions at the Steering Group Meeting in July 2007. Efforts by PII and others, including the Global Island Partnership (GLISPA), are now underway to develop a CII node in a new region. Meetings to further this were held by PII during October with the CBD Secretariat and TNC in Auckland and with TNC and GLISPA in Alotau. Support for a global meeting to establish CII programmes in other regions is being sought.

Project progress

Mynas

Tokelau: The Fakaofu team has been able to destroy nests and eggs and stop the myna population increasing, but with a new nesting season under way, urgent action is required to capture the birds. Staff of Taupulega Fakaofu and the Tokelau Department of Economic Development, Natural Resources and Environment are coordinating a review of the Operational Plan before further action is taken.

Cook Islands: Volunteers from Taporoporo`anga Ipukarea Society are observing nesting sites of the endangered, endemic Mangaia kingfisher to quantify the effects of mynas on the kingfisher. This is difficult work and it will be some time before definitive results are available.

Weeds

Papua New Guinea: PII facilitated a successful Project Design Workshop for the *Mimosa pigra* management project near Madang. Participants came from Government, NGO, industry and education sectors and actively contributed to the process. A design was drafted and will be completed by February 2008 to take to funding agencies. This was a good test of the PII Project Development Process and the workshop was positively evaluated by participants, most of whom had no previous project planning experience.

Weed data management system: Following discussion at PILN 2007, PII is coordinating a skill sharing workshop with Te Ngahere, Palau, TNC and USDAFS to develop a system that can be used across the Pacific.

Rats

Reinvasion or eradication failure? PII has worked with the Faculty of Science at The University of Auckland to produce a sampling protocol for determination of rat genetics for eradication and reinvasion work. This will be available on the PII website shortly.

Consumption of rat baits by crabs: PII has initiated a review of rat/crab bait-take interactions which are an important issue in some projects. It appears that crabs can consume considerable amounts of bait which increases the amount of toxin in the environment and the cost of a project. The review will be available early in 2008.

What is in a word?

“Eradication” has a very specific definition for invasive species management: *All individuals must be put at risk at once; Reinvasion risks must be near to zero; Individuals must be removed faster than they breed; Anticipated benefits must outweigh risks and costs; Approaches and techniques must be socially acceptable.* Unless all the above are met, the project is likely to be “Control”, not “Eradication”.

PII outreach

PII Coordinating Team and Partner representatives contributed to several important Pacific meetings over the last months. These meetings gave Pacific invasive species practitioners the opportunity to renew contacts, meet new people and exchange information. The willingness of workers to cooperate with each other was strongly evident.

PILN 2007

PII contributed to the First Annual Meeting of the Pacific Invasives Learning Network held at Gump Station, Moorea, French Polynesia in September. PII strongly supported the formation of PILN which was launched in Palau last year and some PILN teams are already involved with PII-supported projects.

The Moorea meeting brought together almost 70 invasive species workers (13 teams, partners, collaborators, advisers) from all over the Pacific; east to west and north to south. Information on projects was shared, new projects were discussed and, perhaps most importantly, personal contacts were made.

Attendees were inspired by an opening presentation from Te Pu `Atiti`a Association, a local NGO which works to foster Moorean culture and is conserving local medicinal plants. *Maururu roa!* to `Atiti`a for affirming the necessity to include local communities in invasive species projects. Thanks to all who gave freely of their knowledge and a special thanks to Jill Key for organization.

Unfortunately the cost of these meetings and travel time are now issues and a decision was made by PILN teams to hold full meetings every two years and thematic or other meetings in alternate years.

More details at –

(www.sprep.org/PILN/topics/PILN-2007AM.htm).

8th Pacific Islands Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas

The PII Coordinating Team participated in the Conference in Alotau, Papua New Guinea, in October. The number of enthusiastic young conservation workers from PNG, many of whom had walked for

hours and some for days, to get to Alotau provided a focus on working with communities. The purpose of the Conference was to review the Action Strategy and, with some difficulty, that was achieved. A new subtitle '*Empowering local people, communities and Pacific Institutions*' was added to the Action Strategy reflecting the strength of conference participants.

But the real value of the Conference could be seen in the networking that took place. Alan, Souad and Bill took opportunities from birdwatching at 4.30am, to walks at 6am and all day through to cocktails at night to engage Partners and collaborators and make new contacts. A PII/PILN side event on climate change and invasive species was well attended and the importance of that topic is signaled in one of the four Objectives of the new Action Strategy – "*Manage threats to biodiversity, especially climate change impacts and invasive species*".

More details at (www.sprep.org/Roundtable).

French Polynesia Invasive Species Strategic Action Plan Workshop

PII contributed technical resource persons to this workshop which was held in French. A total of 18 people from 13 French Polynesia agencies participated, together with 5 external resource people. Action plans were drafted for two priority areas (governance and bio-security) and three other areas (communication, invasive species inventories, reform of the invasive species committee). Since the meeting, steps have been taken by the FP Invasive Species Committee to amend quarantine regulations and tighten border control.

PII Coordinating Team changes

Karen Johns (PII Community Participation Advisor) accepted a position with Manukau City Council in September. Her positive contribution to the PII team will be missed, but we wish her well in her new job.

Corinne Ebisu (from Hawai`i) has temporarily stepped into the breach as PII Programme Support Officer. She is keen to use her experience to assist PII in building capacity for invasive species management in the Pacific.

For contact of a general nature, please email PII@auckland.ac.nz.