

Pacific Invasives Initiative

(a programme of the Pacific Invasives Partnership – a Working Group of the Roundtable for Nature Conservation in the Pacific Islands)



The News, February, 2009

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 (PII CT). 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>.

New ISSG Chair visits PII

Piero Genovesi, the newly-appointed Chair of the Invasive Species Specialist Group (ISSG) of IUCN, visited current ISSG Headquarters at The University of Auckland in February. Piero met with the PII Coordinating Team and expressed his wish to continue and possibly strengthen ISSG cooperation with PII and, more generally, do his best to increase ISSG cooperation and support to island programmes on invasives worldwide.

Work on island invasives is seen by Piero as crucial to ISSG's role. Not only because islands host an important proportion of world biodiversity (in Europe, the Canary Islands alone host 14% of European endemics), but also because many lessons that have been learned from island programmes are important to increase invasive work at a more general scale.

Piero made clear that shifting the Chair from New Zealand to Europe will not reduce in any way ISSG cooperation and support to programmes in the Pacific or elsewhere. ISSG will remain as a PII Partner and will continue to provide a base for the Coordinating Team at The University of Auckland. While the core business of ISSG will remain management of information, he said he would do his best to support all ongoing activities and strengthen ISSG support to new programmes whenever this can help.

ISSG Headquarters will now move to Italy (Piero is based at the Institute for Environmental Protection and Research (ISPRA)) with Piero as the initial contact (piero.genovesi@infs.it). The new ISSG Regional Office for the Pacific will be at The University of Auckland with Shyama Pagad as the contact person (s.pagad@auckland.ac.nz).

New PII Coordinating Team member

We welcome Alejandra Torres Chianale to PII and to the Pacific invasive species management family. Alejandra joined the PII Coordinating Team as a Project Coordinator in January 2009. She is from Chile and is an Agricultural Engineer (Pontifical Catholic University of Chile) with a Masters in Environmental Science (Macquarie University, Australia).

Since finishing her studies, Alejandra has worked with different organisations including NGOs and

private and public entities. Before starting with PII, she worked on environmental/social projects with the Weedfree Trust, Keep Waitakere Beautiful Trust and Project Twin Streams in Waitakere City in New Zealand.

How PII can help you - what we do . . .

PII is dedicated to providing you with long-term support. If you are a Government agency, NGO, a community-based organisation, or a PILN Team working on, or planning to work on, invasive species management projects, PII can help strengthen your capacity by providing:

Information – we have access to up-to-date information and research on invasive species and their management. Various types of information can be provided including manuals, guidelines, case studies, etc.

Technical Support and Advice – we have expertise in a number of areas related to invasive species management as well as access to a range of people with expert knowledge.

Specialist Assistance – We have close links with numerous specialists on invasive species through our networks, including; the NZ Department of Conservation, Landcare Research NZ and ISSG. These specialist networks complement the knowledge base of the Coordinating Team.

Peer Review – we can, or can arrange for, review project documents such as proposals, feasibility studies, project design documents and operational plans, prior to application for funding or project implementation.

Planning Assistance – we can assist you with all the stages of project planning from proposal through to monitoring and evaluation.

Training and Skill Sharing – we can offer or facilitate specific opportunities for training in the field or through training workshops and we encourage cross-country skill sharing.

Let us know how PII can help you. Please note that PII is not a funding agency.

PII website upgrade

PII will soon launch a new-look website which we hope will be more user-friendly and give easy

access to the type of support PII can provide to Pacific agencies. It will have information related to invasive species management, the latest news on invasives in the Pacific, and information about the various projects that PII supports. The PII website address remains the same:
<<http://www.issg.org/CII/PII>>

What's in a word?

Monitoring is an essential part of invasive species management and is one of two words that are commonly confused in invasive species management planning and implementation. 'Monitoring' and 'Surveillance' are separate activities and each word has a specific definition.

Monitoring –

Observations of the *same kind*, usually at the *same place*, *over time* to measure how things change over time and/or in response to a management action

Surveillance -

Observations of *any kind at any place at any time* for early detection, identification and assessment of new invasive species or reinvasions.

For more information, visit -

<http://www.landcareresearch.co.nz/research/biocoons/invertebrates/id_surveillance.asp>

Funding secured for development of resource kit

PII has just received funding from The David and Lucile Packard Foundation to develop capacity for invasive species management in the Pacific. A major component of the project will be development of a resource kit for rodent and cat eradication projects.

This will be a practical guide to assist agencies and practitioners assess, plan and implement rodent and cat eradication projects. Development of the resource kit will involve collecting and synthesising good practice information from island eradications around the world into a kit covering project management from planning to implementation.

The resource kit will not be a recipe book, so along with the kit, PII will also be developing a programme to train users on how to use the information in the kit.

The kit will be prepared in modules, with general eradication methodology as the core and add-ins for specific issues. The initial work will focus on rodents (Pacific, black, brown and Asian rats, and mice) and cats. Other potential target species can be included later. The kit will be prepared with input from a team of specialists and will be peer reviewed. To ensure that the material is suitable, we plan to establish a reference group made up of practitioners in the Pacific to get feedback as the kit progresses. As many eradications will occur on

populated islands, community engagement will be an important section of the kit.

PII has been planning a resource kit for Pacific agencies and practitioners for a while now, so it's great that the Packard Foundation has recognized the value of such a resource and PII is grateful for their support.

Planned rat eradication operations in French Polynesia and Palau

The Société d'Ornithologie de Polynésie (MANU) and Palau Conservation Society (PCS) are finalising preparations to eradicate Pacific rats from Teuaua Island, French Polynesia, and Fana Island, Palau. Both Islands are Important Bird Areas with internationally large seabird congregations, Teuaua hosting in excess of 70,000 pairs of sooty tern and Fana thousands of noddys, boobys, and tern species. Planning for the eradications has been developed over a two year period with the assistance of PII, NZ DoC, PILN, Island Conservation, and BirdLife International. Ground operations led by MANU & PCS will occur over a 2-3 week period resulting in the hand broadcast of brodifacoum cereal baits over the respective 5 and 35ha islands. Support for the eradication is high among local communities as the removal of rats is expected to benefit the availability of traditional food sources. Landowners will be trained in baiting procedures and techniques preventing pest reinvasion.

These operations compliment similar eradication operations implemented by BirdLife Partners in Fiji and New Caledonia in fulfilment of a two year regional seabird restoration programme supported by the David & Lucile Packard Foundation.

(Thanks to Steve Cranwell, BirdLife Pacific Programme for this update)

Island Invasives: Eradication and Management Conference

This is a great opportunity for all you working on invasive species management projects to showcase your work. Although it is a year away, we hope you will start planning and fundraising for this conference, organised by the Centre for Biodiversity and Biosecurity (CBB) in collaboration with the IUCN/SSC Invasive Species Specialist Group. The conference will be held at Tamaki Campus, The University of Auckland, New Zealand, 8-12 February 2010.

"Islands" and "Eradication of invasive species" will be the focus of this Conference, with emphasis on the work done and results or learning achieved. Prepare papers, case studies or posters on the work you are doing and submit them for consideration.

For more details, contact Dick Veitch: dveitch@kiwilink.co.nz or visit the CBB website <<http://www.cbb.org.nz>>