Niusleta Introduction:
This newsletter was started with the intention of improving information sharing and communication between the coral reef stakeholders of Vanuatu in order to assist in improving the management of the nation’s coral reefs and associated activities.

**Reef Check Training Workshop a huge Success!!!!**

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Rob and Glennis Ferguson, who will be monitors in the Maskelyne Islands doing a dry run of Reef Check during the training in Pango Village.

**First National Reef Check Training Workshop**
The first Reef Check (RC) Training Workshop for Vanuatu and Coral Reef Information Sharing Roundtable discussion was a unanimous success! The following American Peace Corps and JOCV volunteers and their working locations were participants in the RC training:

1. Latham Wood
   - Anelghowhat, Aneityum
2. Anna Prizzia
   - Port Resolution, Tanna
3. Susan Gaydos
   - Lainda, Ambrym
4. Michael-Koffman
   - Mabana RTC, Epi
5. Nick Taylor
   - Nerengman, Mota Lava
6. Jessica Kahler
   - Krab Bay, Malekula
7. Robert and Glennis Ferguson
   - Uluveo, Maskelyne Island
8. Adam Kane
   - Paketal RTC, NW Malekula
9. Melissa Simpson
   - FSP Youth Drop-In Center, Luganville, Santo
10. Brooks McRoberts
    - Vetumet RTC, South River Erromango
11. Dean Albert
    - Efate/Pango
12. Michelle Kalpoi
    - Efate/Pango
13. Soichiro Ide (JOCV)
    - Lakatoro, Malekula
14. Alexi Kulda
    - Lakatoro, Malekula
A local RC training team was comprised of the following members:

Mike Lameier  
-Coordinator of RC Vanuatu

Chris Bartlett  
-Resident Marine Biologist of Nguna-Pele MPA

Dore Tamara and Kalmet Kolau  
-Nguna-Pele MPA Staff

Jeana Goodard  
-Marine Biologist for Wan Tok Environment Center

5- Day Summary

Day 1:
Morning- Workshop Overview, Introduction to Reef Check and Background and coral reef information
Afternoon- Classroom substrate I.D. presentation
Evening: Turtle tagging with Smol Bag’s Vanua-Tai-Resource Monitoring for Nguna

Day 2:
Morning- Classroom substrate I.D presentations
Afternoon- Substrate pointing activity in small groups in the field

Day 3
Morning: Fish and invertebrate classroom training/ dry run with fish cut outs
Afternoon: Field training; fish, invert and size estimating stations

Day 4
Morning: Half surveys-2x 20 m practice transects, surveying fish, inverts and substrate
Afternoon- Materials handout and organization

Day 5
Morning: Substrate I.D. test, data collection and transfer and logistical wrap-up
Afternoon- Coral Reef Information Round Table Discussion

Post Training Activities

Participants were provided with the necessary surveying and training materials: slates, paper, pencils, field guides, tape measures, sinkers, training manuals and presentations. They will be expected to return to sites at to and train a local counterpart and conduct surveying and reporting at least tri-mesterally. Peace Corps will collect data, transfer it to Peace Corps’ coral reef monitoring database and then send it back to the communities and the national coral reef monitoring network data- base at the Department of Fisheries. From there the information will be used locally and will be forwarded to the Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network in order help improve knowledge, education, awareness and management of coral reefs at the local, national and international levels.
Reef Check Training Helps Pango’s Marine Protected Area

Following a Community-Based Coastal Resource Management Workshop in November 2004, Pango landowners and community leaders decided to select a MPA committee and establish a marine protected area including 4 separate sanctuaries in which all fishing is prohibited. Two of this workshop’s participants were from Pango village and will be working with the MPA’s committee to set up a monitoring and reporting program to ensure that the community can appreciate the results of the management. Dean Albert and Michelle Kalpoi, an ex dive master participated in the workshop and received the necessary skills needed to assisting in monitoring the health of their communities newly formed MPA. Reef Check and the Fisheries Department will be working with Pango in the development of the MPA.

Coral Reef Information Round Table Discussion

The afternoon of Day 5 of the workshop was set aside to have a discussion with local coral reef stakeholders from various sectors. The discussion’s theme was: “How we as coral reef stakeholders can collaborate to advance management Vanuatu’s coral reefs and related activities”

The participants were:

Muriel and Oliver Navarro- Coral Reef Initiative for the South Pacific (CRISP)
Jason Rubani- Fisheries Statician/Management and Policy Sector
Linda Kalpoi- Director of Vanuatu Tourism Office
Peter Whitelaw- President of Efate Scuba Operators Association
Mark Kalatop- Treasurer of Wan-Tok Environment Centre/Peace Corps language trainier
Michelle Kalpoi- Pango MPA
Soichiro Ide-JOCV- Fisheries Department Lakatoro, Malekula
Alexi Kulda- Fisheries Department-Lakatoro, Malekula
Susan Gaydos Peace Corps volunteer-Lainda, Ambrym
Chris Bartlett - Resident Marine Biologist of Nguna-Pele MPA

Dore Tamara and Kalmet Kolau - Nguna-Pele MPA Staff
Mike Lameier- Coordinator of RC Vanuatu
Jeana Goodard- Marine Biologist for Wan-Tok Environment Center
Participants were given an opportunity to introduce themselves discuss their role and work within their organizations. The following was discussed:

- Muriel and Oliver from CRISP discussed their organizations’ work in assisting Vanuatu communities integrated coastal resource management and their pilot sites. Contact information: Muriel Navarro navarro@vanuatu.com.vu
  http://www.spc.int/crisp/documents/brochures/crispoverview20p_eng.pdf

- Soichiro representing the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA) discussed the coastal resource management and shellfish mariculture and replanting project that they are working on with Department of Fisheries. Contact Information: Mitsuihiro Fujimaki: Fujimaki.Mitsuihiro@jica.go.jp

- Jason Raubani as a representative of the Department of Fisheries discussed:
  - 15 year ban on the export of Green Snail
  - The exploration of the possibility to ban the export of trocha.
  - The new aquarium trade management plan and the Department of Fisheries’ effort to seek funding for the implementation and consultation of stakeholders
  - The drastic need for improved communication and collaboration with other organizations associated with the aquarium trade industry
  - Contact information Depart.of Fisheries at 23119\JasonRaubain: 3Jraudibani@gmail.com

- Linda Kalpoi and Peter Whitelaw, as representatives from the Tourism sector discussed:
  - The extreme importance and value that coral reefs have the countries tourism industry and local communities
  - During this “Year of Tourism”, there is a lot of interest in coral reefs and possible collaboration in improving associate management issues
  - Using coral reefs for tourism activities is an excellent source of alternative income for communities near tourism center
  - Coral reefs are becoming so threatened that even the people of Vanuatu can not even enjoy their own marine life
  - The possibility VTO and Tourism Development Officers to work with the Dept. of Fisheries in seeking funding for the implementation of the aquarium trade management plan
  Contact Information: Linda Kalpoi: gmanager@tourism.vu
  Peter Whitelaw: sailaway@vanuatu.com.vu

- Wan-Tok Environment Centre (WTEC) representatives discussed that:
  - Their organization is supporting the development of stagnant Community-Conservation Areas (CCA) by assisting communities in starting income generating activities and management plans;
  - WTEC’s 2 project areas are environmental awareness in schools and MPA development in Malekula
They like many other organizations are facing difficulties with funding
Contact Information: Roy Hills/WTEC: Roy.hills@positiveearth.org

- Mike Lameier representing Reef Check and the Vanuatu Coral Reef Monitoring Network discussed:
  - The Vanuatu Coral Reef Monitoring Network’s history and present situation
  - Reef Check’s background and presence in improving coral reef monitoring and management in approximately 80 countries
  - The successful completion of the first national RC training
  - Present and future coral reef monitoring locations
  - The effort to get funding to use Reef Check to expand and strengthen the Vanuatu Coral Reef Monitoring Network
  - The move of Kalo Pakoa to the South Pacific Commission in New Caldonia
  - The effort to restructure the Department of Fisheries and establish a permanent government funded position for a National Coral Reef Monitoring Network Coordinator/ Reef Check Coordinator
  - The success of the round table discussion and the need to continue to improve upon communication and collaboration between all coral reef stakeholders. This will be partly accomplished by creating a Vanuatu Coral Reef Monitoring Network newsletter, which will be used to keep all stakeholders informed about coral reef activities and Network meetings
  - Contact Info: Mike Lameier: mike.lameier@gmail.com
  - www.reefcheck.org

TOK-TOK BLONG TANK YU
Mi wantim telem wan bigfala tank yu tumas to go long olgeta following pipol:

- Reef Check Founder Gregor Hodgson blong sartim wan gudfala program we ol man round long world in save yusum blong letemap manejmen long koral rif. DA!
- Peace Corps Vanuatu, especially Glenda, Richard mo Rob blong givim mifala enuf mone blong runim workshop ia. DA!
- Department of Fisheries mo Environement Unit blong saportim ol environmental conservation Pis Kops long ol aileen. DA!
- Olgeta participants we I bin kam mo participat gud long ol sessions mo ol no drunk tumas long kava long naet. DA!
- CRISP-Muriel mo Oliva blong kam aot long Santo I kam long Vila blong miting. DA!
- Pango Council Blong Jif, Pango PWMU mo community blong hostim mifala long wik ia. DA!(Especially Elda Tom Blong mekem wan Numba wan parti blong closing!!!! DA bigwan!!!!)
- Chris, Dore mo Kalmet blong Nguna-Pele MPA blong ol presentesens mo saport blong yufala. DA!
- WSM blong gudfala saport blong yufala. DA!
- WTEC mo Jeana blong givhan bigwan tumas blong prepare blong workshop. DA!
- Jos Hill blong olgeta training materials mo presentations we yu in developim mo letim mifala yusum- tank yu bigwan. DA!
- Helen Sykes blong soem mifala wan niufala wei blong mekem ol tape measure blong yusum long aileen. DA!

Mo last but not least Papa God, blong mekem everi samting long laef blong mifala I gat rison mo purpose. DA!
ANNOUNCEMENTS

Congratulations Kalo!!!!!!

- Kalo Pakoa, Vanuatu’s Principal Fisheries Officer in charge of Policy and Management, who has been a dedicated member of the Fisheries Department since 1995 has taken sabbatical leave for 2 years to take a position as a Reef Fisheries Officer with the South Pacific Commission in Noumea.

Congratulations Russel !!!!!

- Russel Nari, who has been a dedicated Deputy Director of the Environment Unit since 1994 has been appointed as the Director General of the Ministry of Lands and Natural Resources. His position as Deputy Director will be advertised for replacement.

Tank yu tumas AUSAID and Congratulations Reef Check Vanuatu!!!!!!

- AUSAID has approved a budget for Reef Check Vanuatu to run another training workshop. Members of Community Conservation Areas associated with Wan Tok Environment Centre, Mystery Island, scuba operators on Santo and Efate and Peace Corps Trainees will be participating in the workshop.

Mystery Island gets an introduction to Reef Check

While doing site development for Peace Corps Vanuatu in Aneityum for community Timer and Tourism projects, Reef Check Vanuatu coordinator Mike Lameier gave some community members who are interested in monitoring the health of their beautiful reefs around Mystery Island a taste of Reef Check. After going through a short informal training session, the Mystery Island team and Mike then went out and completed a practice survey. Check out the “Data Station” in this issue to see what the coral coverage survey results were.
Photo Gallery

Workshop participants measuring the shell of a critically endangered Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) named Erroi, which was tagged and released during the workshop.

Participants of the Coral Reef Information Round Table Discussion

Muriel Navarro, CRISP coordinator for Vanuatu giving her presentation at the Round Table discussion.
Data station

Mystery Island Data

During a Reef Check benthic or substrate survey, data points on the reef are recorded every .50m and 160 points are taken. This gives us a sample of the reefs coverage and then we can get a general idea about the rest of the surrounding reef. The data from Mystery Island shows that about half of this reef is covered with live hard and soft coral. For more information about Reef Check Survey Methods, please see: http://www.reefcheck.org/methods/instructions.asp

Ah yes, mi luk olsem rif blong Antion I Numba Usan!!!
Workshop Data From Pango

**Benthic Cover**

*Site: Eslasfir Sanctuary- Pango MPA*

*Date: May 15 2005*

- **HC:** 51%
- **RC:** 41%
- **RKC:** 9%

**Mean Fish Numbers per 50m transect**

*at Eslasfir Sanctuary- Pango MPA*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Fish Type</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Butterflyfish</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sweetlips</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Snapper</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barramundi cod</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grouper*</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Humphead wrasse</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parrotfish</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Surgeonfish</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rabbitfish</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moray eel</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Man, mi luk olsem olgeta long Pango!!*

*O gudfala hard koral long rif long Pango!!*
The data shows that this particular reef area is overfished, although the hard coral coverage is pretty high. *Lucky, se Olgeta long Pango I gat wan MPA, so bae yumi luk ol numba blong ol fish mo invertebrate I kam antop bakagin*
The Mystery Wrasse

**PSEUDOCHELINUS OCELLATUS**

*(Randall 1999)*

**Depth:** Below 60 meters  
**Location:** Deep reefs along Western and Southern Efate  
**Habitat:** Coarse coral rubble, storm battered reefs and gentle seaward slopes.  
**Food:** Small crustaceans and mollusks  
**Size:** 5 cm  
**Abundance:** Common in deep reefs. Solitary or in pairs.  
**Habits:** Extremely secretive

What is one of the most seldom seen fish in Vanuatu? Certainly the Mystery Wrasse must be on top of the list. This fish was not even known to science until 1999. So named the Mystery Wrasse because of its secretive behavior and scarcity to aquarium keepers. Prior to it being found in Vanuatu it was only known from the Marshall Islands with any regularity and a few specimens collected in Australia. Although common in the waters around Efate it is not seen by divers and few are collected for aquariums. Mainly because it only inhabits reefs at depths below 60 meters where most recreational divers do not venture. Secondly, because it is a small fish and cryptic in nature. Most specimens are less than 5cm. Since they are always hiding in small crevices, only a trained observer can spot one. It is a hardy fish adapting to aquarium life easily. On Efate it is found all along the Southern and Western reefs in the deeper waters. They are a solitary fish but occasionally found in pairs. But never more than 2 are seen together.