

# PIMRIS



Pacific Islands  
Marine Resources  
Information System

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# NEWSLETTER

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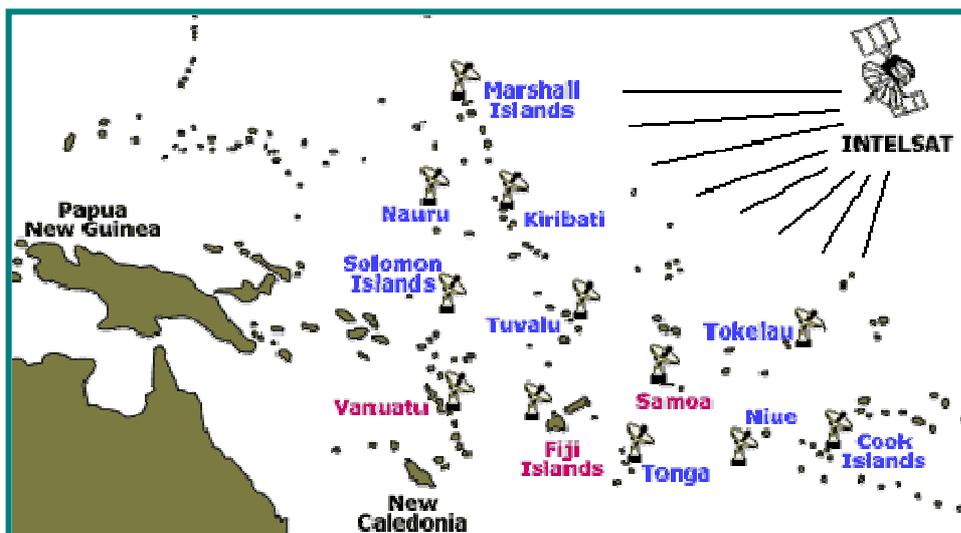
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## Editorial

In this issue of the newsletter we focus largely on PIMRIS itself.

In May the 12<sup>th</sup> PIMRIS Steering Committee Meeting was held, via USPNet to facilitate participation from across the region. These periodic meetings provide the opportunity for all members of the network to collectively review past activities, discuss changes in the region (and beyond) and to plan for the future. In short, they are strategic planning sessions.



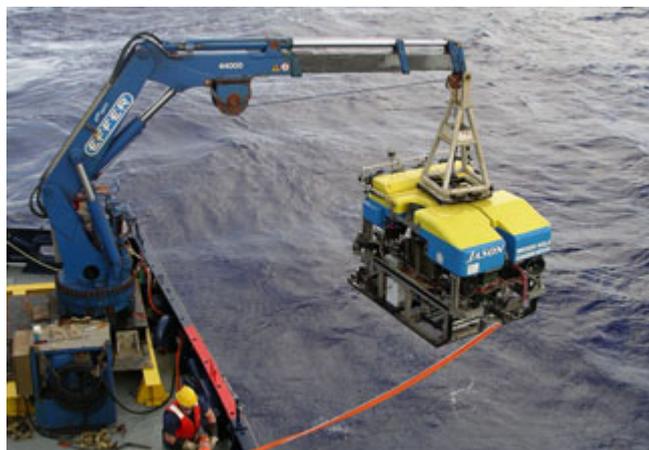
Many organisations in the Pacific are also responding to change by developing new strategies to strengthen regional cooperation and integration. Last year, the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum agreed upon a policy for sustainable use of the ocean and its resources, including several initiatives on information gathering and access (p.12). PIMRIS participants welcomed this recognition of the need for rigorous information systems to support decision-making in the region and adopted a number of resolutions at our Steering Committee Meeting to promote these initiatives. We hope you find the report of the PIMRIS meeting of interest and welcome feedback on any matters outlined. Malo 'aupito,

Chris Nelson, PIMRIS Coordinator

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The crew of the RV Melville prepare to launch the submersible JASON II



--- Opinions expressed in articles included in the PIMRIS Newsletter do not necessarily represent those of any participants. ---

## Directory

PIMRIS is a cooperative network of fisheries and marine resources libraries and information centres in the Pacific. Participants include ministerial libraries and the regional agencies listed below. For additional information contact the Coordination Unit or a specific agency.

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## PIMRIS Coordination Unit Staff

**Chris Nelson** was introduced in the September 2004 issue of this newsletter. He has been PIMRIS Coordinator for just over a year and before that was the Senior Librarian at the Alafua Campus of USP in Samoa. Previous to this he worked at the Australian Maritime College in Tasmania.



**Sushila Lal** joined the staff of the Lower Campus Library in February 2005. She has worked in various sections of the USP Library for over 10 years. In her last position she was in regular contact with staff in all of USP's Centres across the Pacific so she is right at home assisting distant PIMRIS users.



**Susana Macanawai** hails from Samoa but came to the Lower Campus Library from a much closer location – just across the car park, in fact – where she staffed the IJALS Library until it was merged into PIMRIS HQ at the start of this year. She is also active in the Fiji Law Libraries Interest Group.



**Reshni Kumar** is the most recent addition to the PIMRIS staff at Lower Campus, having joined only in May as a Casual Library Officer. Previously she worked at the Fiji Ministry of Education. She is studying for her USP Certificate in Library and Information Studies.

Reshni succeeded **Subhashni Lal**, who resigned to take up a position at the Fiji Institute of Technology. Subhashni had worked at USP for over 5 years, much of this time at PIMRIS. All of her former colleagues at the Coordination Unit wish her well in her new work.



## 12<sup>th</sup> PIMRIS Steering Committee Meeting a summary report

The 12<sup>th</sup> PIMRIS Steering Committee Meeting was held on May 31 (Suva date) at the Audio Satellite Communications Room of the Distance and Flexible Learning Centre of the University of the South Pacific. Conducted via USPNet, the meeting was attended by a total of 16 PIMRIS participants and invited guests. Present in the studio in Suva were (from left to right):



- Chris Nelson, PIMRIS Coordinator
- Sushila Lal, PIMRIS Coordination Unit
- Patricia Kailola, Fisheries Consultant
- Clare Ame, Gillett, Preston & Associates
- Jean-Paul Gaudechoux, SPC
- Rachele Oriente, SPC Librarian
- Emeline Tupou, Tonga Fisheries (on attachment to the Coordination Unit)
- Dorene Naidu, SOPAC

(Not pictured):

- Semiti Ravatu, Forum Secretariat

Attending for part of the meeting were:

- Professor John Lynch, USP
- Sin Joan Yee, USP

Participating via radio satellite rooms at USP Centres for all or part of the meeting were:

- Margo Debye, Acting R&D Manager, Nauru Fisheries & Marine Resources Authority
- Mataitusi Gaumata, Fisheries Officer, Fisheries Division, Samoa Ministry of Agriculture
- Ben Hall, Information Officer, Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency, Solomon Islands
- Sulu Luteru, Library Officer, FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands, Samoa
- Nooroa Roi, Information Officer, Ministry of Marine Resources, Cook Islands

### Opening Address

*presented by Professor John Lynch, Acting Pro-Vice Chancellor, Laucala Campus, USP*

“Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to the 12<sup>th</sup> Steering Committee Meeting of the Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System – PIMRIS to its friends. On behalf of the University of the South Pacific I thank you all for accepting the invitation to attend this meeting and I know that your contributions will do much to ensure the network’s continued vitality. The University is proud of its part in the creation and development of PIMRIS and is pleased to again facilitate participation from across much of the region via USPNet.

“It is no secret that the marine environment is under pressure around the world: issues such as rising sea levels, marine pollution and the over-exploitation of fish stocks are discussed and debated in the global press on a regular basis. Pacific islanders, long reliant upon the sea for sustenance, trade and culture, recognize the seriousness of these threats more than most. Coastal communities have witnessed declining catches for years and are looking anew at traditional means of managing marine resources in response. National governments, largely dependent upon revenues raised from marine resources, are demonstrating greater interest in protecting those resources for sustainable use. Researchers are increasing their efforts to better understand individual species, overall marine ecosystems and the effects humans have had upon them. Educators at all levels are raising awareness of marine issues and training new generations to meet these challenges with innovative ideas and methods. And all of us periodically feel humility and awe in the face of a disaster as devastating as the Indian Ocean tsunami.

“All of the people involved in policy making, management, enforcement, conservation, research, education, extension, fishing, mining, recreation, or simply enjoying the marine environment for its inherent beauty and mystery, share a need for information. Their specific information needs vary, but they all require information that is accurate, appropriate, authoritative, up-to-date, delivered promptly and in a form they can interpret.

“Providing information services with these characteristics to people anywhere within a region the size and complexity of the Pacific is no easy task. Many barriers to information flow in the Pacific were detailed 15 years ago in a paper written just a year after PIMRIS was created. The author was none other than Esther Williams (now Acting Deputy Vice-Chancellor of the University of the South Pacific) and her analysis is worth reflecting upon.

“She divided the barriers into three groups. The first group contained barriers over which information workers have little or no control, including climate, culture, language, politics, legal systems, economics and allocations by governments for information services. A second group of barriers included those over which librarians and information workers have partial control, such as information and communication technologies (ICTs), equipment and budgets. The third group included barriers which information workers can control: information exchange, bibliographic work, interlibrary loans and other forms of library cooperation.

“How many of these barriers to information flow in the Pacific still exist, 15 years later?”

“Realistically, the answer can only be “most of them”. Do not be disheartened by this. As Williams pointed out, the majority of the barriers are outside our control, so we should not waste energy upon them. Instead, we should focus our attention on those that we can control, diminish or even eliminate.

“In the past decade and a half, major technological changes have occurred. Rapid developments in ICTs have transformed the way we can communicate and created the potential for innovative ways of information exchange, facilitating many of the aims and activities of PIMRIS. Many participants have developed websites and are digitizing paper documents to make them more accessible across the Internet or on compact disks. Issues remain, such as uneven access to the technologies, software to be used, database standards and copyright, but these are not insurmountable. Note too that new technologies add to old ones but do not necessarily replace them. Printed materials remain the most appropriate means of sharing information in many areas of the Pacific.

“Information exchange and improvements in access to marine information in the Pacific region can be achieved as these technologies become accessible to all, but another factor remains paramount. Esther Williams concluded her early review of PIMRIS by writing:

*Clearly for any information network to survive in the South Pacific, or any other part of the world for that matter, much will depend upon not only the financial assistance received and technology available but more so on the availability of professional staff and willingness of all involved in the development of a system to communicate effectively, and share and cooperate in this work. This is the PIMRIS mission.*

“Fifteen years on, this remains true. USP is pleased to be facilitating communication between the PIMRIS participants again. The reports you have submitted and your discussions today will help you all to understand the state of marine library and information services across the region and to plan for closer cooperation in the future. On behalf of the University, I wish you all the very best in your deliberations.”

Following Professor Lynch’s address, Sin Joan Yee, Acting University Librarian of the USP, added her welcome to all participants, noted both familiar and new faces, and wished everyone a productive meeting. Chris noted that the meeting had originally been planned for the start of 2005 and explained that the merger of other collections into the Lower Campus Library had forced a postponement until the Audio Satellite Room was again available. He then outlined the agenda for the day.

## Review of Minutes of 2003 Meeting

The Coordinator asked those present at the last meeting to advise of any amendments or corrections to the minutes of the 2003 meeting, noting that all of the recommendations and resolutions recorded had been numbered within the text for easy reference. There being no other changes or comments, the minutes were accepted and the agenda was adopted.

### Matters Arising

A summary of all recommendations and resolutions made at the 11<sup>th</sup> PIMRIS Steering Committee Meeting was reviewed by participants. Those not included elsewhere in the agenda were addressed.

The Coordinator took the opportunity to thank Ganeshan Rao for his work as the PIMRIS Coordinator for over ten years and, on behalf of the network, to wish him well in his new position of Health and Science Faculty Librarian at the Gold Coast Campus of Griffith University in Queensland, Australia.

It was agreed that any recommendations requiring action by all participants on an on-going basis be considered “standard operating procedures” for PIMRIS and incorporated into a revised *Manual for Fisheries Libraries*. Expressions of interest in writing sections for the revised manual were made. It was also agreed that all participants should contribute 2 pages per year to the newsletter, either as full articles or short news items. [*Contributions from other sources are always welcome — Ed.*]



Patricia Kailola outlined the archival preservation work of the Pacific Manuscripts Bureau (PAMBU) based at the Australian National University and encouraged all members to add their names to the mailing list for their newsletter. Joan Yee explained that USP was not a full partner in the project due to the costs involved, but that the USP Library bought selected materials from PAMBU.

Others matters discussed included the importance of keeping operational manuals up-to-date and the importance of sharing all local materials produced. Unpublished reports, meeting papers and other forms of “grey literature” unique to the region are precisely those most likely to be lost if not recorded and shared promptly.

### Country and Agency Reports

All country and agency representatives present highlighted major points from their submitted reports. Where possible these have been incorporated into following sections. [*Articles on each organisation and its library are a continuing feature of the PIMRIS Newsletter, so the full reports will be seen -- Ed.*]

In general, a clear dichotomy remains between the agency libraries (particularly those of SPC, USP, SOPAC and SPREP) and those supported by regional governments. The former are generally larger, well-equipped, have qualified staff and recurrent budgets. The country libraries (with the exception of PNG) tend to lack many or all of these and are thus highly dependent upon the agency partners and aid donors for assistance. While individual libraries have experienced disasters including fire (Tonga) and cyclones (Cook Islands) the most common concern expressed was inadequate support from their respective governments. Without sufficient resources or training, many staff assigned to these smaller libraries are caught in a vicious circle, unable to demonstrate the full value that organised information services can bring to their organisations, with the result that the libraries usually remain a relatively low priority within government departments or ministries.

Chris thanked all of the participants for their reports, encouraged a few to complete and forward them to the Coordination Unit as soon as possible, and noted that the information included would help to demonstrate members’ concerns in submissions to Heads of Fisheries and funding agencies.

A few specific issues raised by the agency reports were discussed. One was prompted by Ben Hall's outline of the FFA policy on confidentiality of reports. Virtually all of FFA's reports are classified as confidential, meaning they are accessible only to FFA staff and senior government personnel. The meeting felt that this conflicted with PIMRIS' goal of improving access to Pacific marine literature, although all participants did understand the need for some information to be restricted for security or commercial reasons. The policy was also complicating efforts to make reports available in electronic form via the FFA website. Several other members advised on confidentiality practices they followed, such as keeping reports under embargo for certain periods and having electronic archives with password-controlled access. Rachele offered to undertake a wider review of confidentiality practices used in other agencies.

In response to a question regarding the Robert Johannes Collection, Chris advised that items are being checked against the USP Library catalogue to determine how many are already held. Full cataloguing of new items would follow. SPC offered help with cataloguing of the collection if needed.



Part of the Robert Johannes Memorial Collection at the PIMRIS Coordination Unit

## Review of Current Activities

### *Publications*

The publishing activities of PIMRIS partners remain strong and diverse. A trend towards electronic publishing is clear, with some participants having ceased their print publications completely (e.g. *FFA News Digest*) while others have retained print versions and made electronic ones available via their websites (e.g. *PIMRIS Newsletter*, *SPC's Fisheries Newsletter*, etc.). SPC has expanded the range of its *Information Bulletins* by the addition of a title on sea safety. Retrospective programs to digitize older print materials are underway at a number of participants and this could be expanded to include regional newsletters. Chris would like to add these to the PIMRIS website and suggested that the USP Library's scanning facilities could be used to digitize these provided copyright clearance is given.

All members retaining print versions of their publications also agreed to check their mailing lists to ensure that other participants receive these regularly. Some members have not received publications on a regular basis. A slip had been inserted in the March newsletter to gauge the extent of distribution problems; further investigations would be conducted. Ways of evaluating the distribution and impact of the SPC information bulletins were also being formulated.

While electronic publishing is cheaper and easier for many participants, several meeting participants noted that not all members have fast, reliable Internet services (or even computers) yet. Ben asked if it would be possible to survey participants on their Internet access to objectively determine the extent of low speed connections or lack of access. The Coordinator agreed to do so and advise on this.

The continuing production of other high quality publications by SPC Fisheries Information Section, particularly public awareness materials, videos and pamphlets was commended. The latest edition of SPC's *Fisheries Address Book* was distributed at the meeting and Jean-Paul advised that an electronic version could be downloaded from the SPC website (and imported directly into Microsoft Outlook, if desired, to save retyping entries). The online version is updated regularly and SPC welcomed advice on changes of staff or contact details promptly so that this directory could be kept up-to-date at all times. In return, he agreed to see to it that entries for all PIMRIS representatives were added.



Rachele Oriente also offered meeting attendees draft copies of *Pacific Islands Marine Resources Bibliography* (a list of bibliographic references held at the SPC Library) and noted that Anne Gibert had completed similar works on fisheries and aquaculture materials held at SPC in 2004.

Chris noted that no stocks of information pamphlets or posters outlining PIMRIS' goals, members and activities remained at the Coordination Unit. He felt that new versions were needed for distribution to member libraries, schools, conventions, fisheries officers, and others to promote the network and encourage requests for information from a wider range of potential users. Jean-Paul offered to produce these once their content had been drafted and approved by members. Members also agreed to consider adding the PIMRIS logo and a statement of affiliation on any print or electronic publications they produced as a further way of promoting the network.

Website development has varied across participants, with some (particularly the FFA) seeing this as a strategic priority for disseminating information. The PIMRIS website was re-designed and links added to agency partners' sites. Links to websites under development in many fisheries/marine government offices of other participants is desirable, but some are reluctant for links to be made until their sites are "finished" and others require high-level authorization within their organizations (which can take time) before links can be made. Those participants developing websites were asked to keep others up-to-date with major changes as part of a commitment to improving communications and information flow between members. Jean-Paul advised that users could be alerted to changes on the SPC website by joining an email list.

As the PIMRIS pages are hosted by the USP Library, all changes are currently made by the USPL webmaster, with some changes requiring the approval of the USP Library Web Committee. The long website address was noted and the possibility of amending this or having a site independent of the USP Library was noted for investigation by the Coordinator.

The meeting recognized that websites alone would not solve all problems of information access in the region since in some countries Internet access remained slow, unreliable or non-existent. Alternative means of distribution, including print and CDs, were discussed. Semiti Ravatu (Pacific Island Forum Secretariat) reminded the meeting that software compatibility would remain an issue, since not all participants will always have the latest versions of software used to create electronic documents.

### *Regional Database (Moana)*

For many years *Moana* has been maintained at the PIMRIS Coordination Unit on a WinISIS database that currently contains around 13,500 records. Over time it has been distributed to most participants but many have experienced difficulties with this software and few retain working copies of the database. The meeting agreed that new software is needed and identified two leading contenders.

Koha, an open source integrated library management system freely available on the Internet has been adopted by four participants (the FFA, SPC, National Fisheries Authority and National Fisheries College in Papua New Guinea). It is MARC-compatible and Z39.50-compliant, which facilitates data sharing with other libraries meeting these international standards.

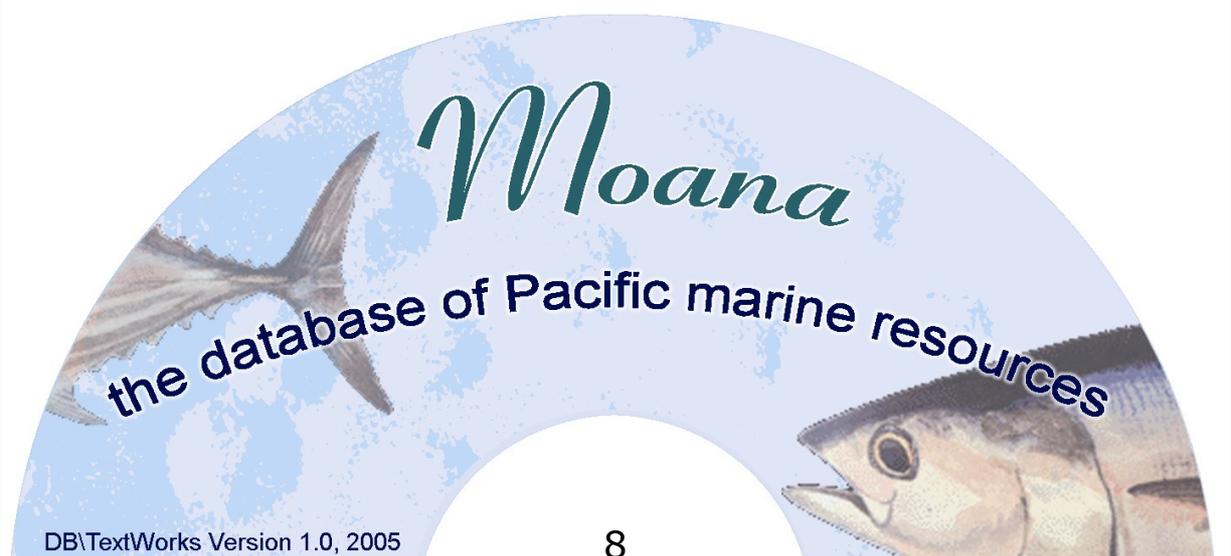
DB\TextWorks is a commercial database management system. SPREP has provided licences for this software to various libraries as a part of its PEIN project and it is already used extensively in Africa by marine libraries participating in the Ocean Data and Information Network (ODIN). The UN body which governs ODIN is planning to broaden this network to encompass the Pacific region.

The meeting felt it would be prudent to give all PIMRIS participants an opportunity to evaluate both Koha and DB\TextWorks. (It also recognized that no single software may suit all PIMRIS members given the differing requirements and characteristics of each library.) It was agreed, therefore, that trial *Moana* databases using both of these softwares would be created for examination by participants. To ensure that members lacking reliable Internet access would not be excluded, the database would be distributed on CD initially, with online access to be explored.

Whichever software is used, it is also feasible (copyright permitting) for *Moana* to be expanded into a virtual library of full-text documents in electronic format, simply by including hyperlinks to whatever documents are available, either on the web or on the same CD used to distribute the database. Chris demonstrated this using a trial DB\TextWorks version of *Moana* under development at the PIMRIS Coordination Unit and Ben Hall agreed to investigate production of a Koha version.

All participants agreed to seek permission within their organizations to have documents scanned so that they could be both preserved and shared more widely in electronic format. It was noted that many of the larger partners are already building digital archives and making these available from their websites or via CDs. Once either version of *Moana* is received by members, they will be asked to evaluate coverage of the database by comparing records with their local collections or country bibliographies. This will help to determine items not recorded in the database as well as documents not held in local collections.

In the meantime, it was pointed out that all of the major contributors to *Moana* (USP, SOPAC and SPC) already maintained web-based catalogues so a majority of records could be accessed now, albeit via individual catalogue searches.



### *Current Awareness Services*

The periodical table of contents service distributed from the Coordination Unit was discontinued in May 2004 by the Acting Coordinator after consultation with the USP Serials Librarian. They felt that the service required too many resources given the small number of recipients benefiting from it. The intention was to replace the photocopies with an electronic service (forwarding tables of contents received by email) but unfortunately licence restrictions have prevented this from being implemented.

Many journal publishers offer free toc deliveries via email and other free current awareness services are available (including the electronic news clipping service commenced recently by SPC Fisheries Information Section). In addition, searches on a range of databases for information on specific research topics can still be done by several PIMRIS agency libraries upon request.

### *Training and Technical Assistance*

No workshops or in-country training sessions had been conducted since the last meeting. These are entirely dependent upon availability of funding, in particular because of the high costs of travel in the region.

There had been two attachments to SPC since the last meeting: William Aruhane (Solomon Islands Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources, May 2004) and Terry Keju (Marshall Islands Marine Resources Authority, August 2004). One attachment to the PIMRIS Coordination Unit had been organized to coincide with this meeting (Emeline Tupou, Tonga Ministry of Fisheries). All of these were funded by the respective governments and SPC.



PIMRIS will continue to provide training and technical assistance in future, to a level dependent upon the financial assistance it can attract from donors. Jean-Paul advised that SPC had secured funding to continue its training activities in 2005/6, but noted that it was easier to obtain funding from donors when it could be demonstrated that the regional governments were contributing to costs as well. He also called for a recommendation that USP provide the Coordination Unit with a budget to facilitate regional travel or attachments. The Coordinator agreed to take this up within USP.

The meeting also noted with appreciation the assistance being given to a number of PIMRIS libraries through the PEIN Project. Although SPREP was not represented at the meeting, it was clear from documentation supplied by Satui Bentin that PEIN was following a pattern of assistance similar to that provided by PIMRIS in the past. Closer cooperation between the two networks thus seemed both feasible and mutually beneficial. Dorene Naidu of SOPAC noted that under the Pacific Plan more collaboration between CROP agencies and regional governments would be expected in the future so this instance was an excellent opportunity for the sister networks. Chris agreed to discuss this with Satui at the earliest opportunity.



## External Relations

The meeting discussed relations with a number of other regional and international organisations which share PIMRIS' interests and goals.

### ***Aquatic Sciences and Fisheries Abstracts (ASFA)***

*ASFA is the largest bibliographic database in the world covering literature on marine, freshwater and brackish water environments. It contains around one million references, from 1971 onwards. Every month thousands of new records are added by partners around the world. (PIMRIS became a partner in 1997.) The database is sponsored by four UN agencies, including FAO and IOC, and is published and marketed by Cambridge Scientific Abstracts. Non-contributors pay annual subscription fees to access the database via the Internet, on CD-ROM or in print.*

Ganeshan Rao, the former PIMRIS Coordinator, completed an ASFA Trust Fund Project to add 430 Pacific records to the database in 2004. Although this was done as a private contract with FAO after his employment with USP ceased, he contributed a significant portion of the payment received to the PIMRIS working account. Ganeshan was also contracted by FAO to provide training on ASFA input to Chris Nelson (the new Coordinator); Lusi Ravuvu (Head of Cataloguing, USP Library) & Rachele Oriente (SPC Librarian) in December 2004. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community was invited to become an ASFA partner in 2004.

Pacific publications reviewed for abstracting in ASFA have thus been divided between SPC and the PIMRIS Coordination Unit since the start of 2005. Both have commenced addition of new records to the database and FAO has asked them to expand their coverage of Pacific materials for the benefit of all users of ASFA. This can only be achieved if new items are received promptly by USP and SPC, so all authors and publishers are urged to send copies of their materials to the PIMRIS Coordination Unit and SPC Library. (If publications are confidential for any reason, it would still be useful to know that they have been produced, even if access restrictions apply.) Both are able to perform searches of the ASFA database for their respective research communities.

The ASFA thesaurus was generally agreed to be the best source of standard subject descriptors to be used for *Moana*, although several members voiced concerns that it lacked descriptors for a number of important concepts in the Pacific, such as women in fisheries and traditional knowledge. Rachele will be attending the 2005 ASFA Board Meeting in Rome in October, so it was agreed that she would raise this then. Participants using the thesaurus are encouraged to send her further terms they would like to see considered for inclusion in the thesaurus. A list of supplementary descriptors for use with the *Moana* database may also be compiled.

### ***International Association of Marine Science Libraries & Information Centers (IAMSLIC)***

*IAMSLIC is an association of individuals and organizations interested in aquatic and marine information science. It began in 1975 with a meeting of American marine science librarians and now has members all over the world, many of whom have formed "local" sections, such as the Pacific Islands Regional Group (PIRG). Membership benefits include access to an email list and other online resources; a quarterly newsletter; search access to a distributed Z39.50 database of marine library holdings; assistance with inter-library loans and document delivery; eligibility to apply for financial assistance to attend regional and international IAMSLIC conferences; and eligibility to vote.*

At the last IAMSLIC Annual Conference in Hobart, October 2004, a proposal to revise the name and membership of the Pacific Islands Regional Group (PIRG) was discussed. It was decided to retain the name, but allow members from neighbouring countries (e.g. Australia, New Zealand). There are 11 members of the PIRG, six of whom are also PIMRIS participants. All of the others were invited to comment upon the relationship between PIMRIS and PIRG and suggest ways in which they can cooperate more closely. Daisy Dalisay from the WorldFish Center in the Philippines sent her regards.

The PIRG Chair is currently vacant and the meeting agreed that IAMSLIC should be urged to conduct elections to fill the position as soon as possible.

IAMSLIC is keen to increase the number of members it has in the Pacific. A “twinning” arrangement whereby libraries in developing nations had their membership paid for by a wealthier “twin” (as discussed at previous PIMRIS meetings) has been replaced by “Sponsored Memberships”. These are granted for 3 years, are non-renewable, and are limited to 10 per year; currently there are none from the Pacific. It was agreed that applications from PIMRIS participants for membership of IAMSLIC (Supporting or Normal) should be supported in whatever way(s) possible.

The 2005 IAMSLIC Annual Conference will be held in October in Rome, immediately following the ASFA Board Meeting. Rachele noted that the 2008 conference is due to be held in the Pacific and encouraged members to consider the possibility of hosting it in one of the Pacific Island countries.

### ***Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) and subsidiary bodies***

*The IOC was established by UNESCO in 1960 to provide a forum for global cooperation in the study of the world's oceans. It assists governments to address ocean and coastal problems through the sharing of knowledge, information and technology and by coordinating national programs. IODE is a programme of IOC that facilitates the exchange of oceanographic data and marine literature, by developing standards, formats and methods for data sharing and building the capacity of member states to participate in the network. Several expert groups, including one on the management of marine information (GEMIM) advise these bodies.*

Suzie Davies, Manager of Library & Image Services at the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority was elected the new GEMIM Chair in September 2004. At the request of IODE, which is broadening participation in its global Ocean Data and Information Network (ODIN), she conducted a capacity survey of marine libraries and information centres in the Pacific in mid-2004. Of around 70 survey forms distributed, only 15 replies were received (6 from PIMRIS participants; 8 from institutions in Australia or New Zealand; one from the College of Micronesia in FSM). She presented an analysis of the survey results at the IODE XVIII conference in Belgium in April.

PIMRIS and PIRG will work together with GEMIM to prepare a concept paper on needs, priorities and strategies for developing marine information management in the Pacific after consultation with stakeholders in the region. This will form the basis of a funding proposal to IODE.

### ***Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific (CROP) and PIROF***

*The CROP was established by the Pacific Islands Forum to assist with cooperative planning and consultation between all stakeholders in the region; PIMRIS reports to the Marine Sector Working Group of CROP as well as Heads of Fisheries. PIROF, the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Forum, was held at the University of the South Pacific in February 2004.*

The major outcome of PIROF was agreement on an integrated framework for action on ocean initiatives in the region. This document provides broad direction for all future activities in this sector, including those of PIMRIS, and all members were encouraged to become familiar with it, particularly initiatives 2.1 and 2.2 (see page opposite).

## **Future Directions**

On the basis of discussions held during the meeting a workplan consisting of 28 recommendations and a further 8 actions, with a proposed schedule for each, was prepared by the Coordinator. Progress towards meeting these recommendations and actions will be reviewed periodically.

## Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy Information Initiatives

PIROP, the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean Policy was approved by Pacific Island leaders in 2002. It consists of a number of themes, initiatives and actions for implementation, including:

### **Initiative 2.1: Identify and prioritise information needs & expand information gathering efforts.**

**Rationale:** *As utilisation of the ocean intensifies the need for an expanded information and knowledge base increases. Significant needs include inventorying and gaining access to the results of research activities, identifying and addressing gaps in the knowledge base, and coordinating future research.*

#### **Implementing actions:**

- 2.1.1 Document the existing information and knowledge base, in part through an inventory of past and current marine research activities.
- 2.1.2 Prioritise information and knowledge requirements and identify significant gaps.
- 2.1.3 Develop mechanisms for coordinating relevant observing and monitoring activities, including initiatives from within the region and access to data and products generated by external partners.
- 2.1.4 Develop regional and national guidelines to monitor and coordinate research, in accordance with UNCLOS provisions.
- 2.1.5 Build capacity to conduct and strengthen the requirements for socio-economic valuation and assessment of resources, of biological processes, and of pollution.
- 2.1.6 Undertake an assessment of the value of the Pacific Ocean (including considerations of subsistence use, ecological services, recreational value and similar factors).

### **Initiative 2.2: Improve access to information and ensure protection for sensitive information, enhance knowledge management and improve the use of information in decision-making.**

**Rationale:** *Regional coordination of access to and sharing of information (including scientific, social, and economic information) will help to make information more broadly accessible and useable. It is critical that management of information within the region be enhanced, and that information be formatted in a way that can support decision-making.*

#### **Implementing actions:**

- 2.2.1 Establish a regional network, with agreed-to procedures, formats and protocols for ocean-related information management and sharing.
- 2.2.2 Ensure PICTs have access to data from global and regional observation systems.
- 2.2.3 Promote development of adequate communications systems for PICTs to access and exchange information.
- 2.2.4 Establish clearinghouses for various types of ocean-related information and establish convenient means to broadly share and distribute information (via websites, PIMRIS, etc.).
- 2.2.5 Enhance knowledge management within the region, including through the enhancement and/or establishment of tertiary and other training opportunities to improve knowledge and information management capacity.
- 2.2.6 Provide technical assistance to PICTs to facilitate the incorporation of scientific and technical information in decision-making.
- 2.2.7 Ensure agencies (including research institutions, CROP agencies and NGOs) report scientific information in a form that is readable and understandable by the public and decision makers.
- 2.2.8 Develop regional protocols and more general processes for the sharing and return of ocean research results to local communities, and the broader region.

*The full text of PIROP and further documentation regarding PIROP can be found on the SPC website:*  
<http://www.spc.int/piocean/forum/New/welcome.htm>

## Oceanographic Research Vessel Visits Region *R.V. Melville*



The *R/V Melville*, an oceanographic research vessel operated by the Scripps Institution of Oceanography, visited Suva in June. The vessel was on a scientific cruise to the eastern Lau Basin as part of the Ridge 2000 Program that is investigating the ocean floor. While tied up at the Suva Dock tours were permitted on board the vessel.

Pictured anti-clockwise from above: The vessel alongside Suva Dock; Chris Taylor, operator of the *JASON II* remotely operated vehicle (ROV); Stacy Kim, marine biologist, beside the *Medea* submersible that buffers the *JASON II* from the roll and pitch of the ship; Will Sellars, Expedition Leader (until a broken hip forced his return to the US) in the control room for the ROVs; a stern view of the vessel showing the hoist used for deployment and recovery of the submersibles; and the ship's banner and gangway.



For further information:

<http://www.mbari.org/expeditions/FijiLau/gear.htm>

## The National Fisheries Authority Library (PNG)

Clare Ame

The National Fisheries Authority is a non-commercial statutory authority established and operating under the Fisheries Management Act 1998. It has two libraries, one at headquarters in the Deloitte Tower in Port Moresby, the other at the National Fisheries College in Kavieng, New Ireland Province.

I am working as the Documentalist/Information Specialist on the Coastal Fisheries Management and Development Project (CFMDP) which is managed by Gillette, Preston and Associates. This project aims (amongst other things) to improve the availability of relevant information to PNG fisheries stakeholders. To achieve this goal I am assisting NFA staff in improving and enhancing the library catalogue and database. We are also producing electronic copies of key documents for eventual publishing on the NFA website and looking for and acquiring PNG fisheries related documents.

The NFA library has a collection of approximately 2900 volumes. Of that around 1600 are PNG items catalogued as the 'P' collection, with a further 100 or so un-catalogued items. These include research reports, technical reports and legal documents (agreements, acts, etc.) all relating to PNG fisheries. We also have a collection of general fisheries and marine related books but most of these are outdated. It is one of my aims to list all the outdated books and request that management cull them and replace them with new and updated books. There is no active acquisition policy in place.

Similarly, periodicals are acquired through donations mainly from other institutions around the region such as FFA, SPREP, INFOFISH, PIMRIS, IAMSLIC, SPC, etc. The library has no subscriptions to any journals at present.

Initially CDS-ISIS software was used to manage the NFA library. Our IT advisor, Dave Burgess, noted that CDS-ISIS was becoming increasingly difficult to use with recent versions of Windows (XP Professional and later) in a multi-user network environment. A more attractive alternative was Koha, a web-browser based system which is significantly easier to learn and more compatible with network situations. Koha is a Unix-based open source product which means it is freely available for download and installation, and the only capital costs required were for a new server.

FFA had recently made the transition to this software for its library collection and we were lucky to have Ben Hall, the FFA Information Officer, in Port Moresby for 4 days to install, configure and demonstrate Koha. Everything went to schedule and by the end of Ben's short visit we had a new web server running on the NFA network with the library system installed and operational and all the existing NFA and College collections converted and loaded into the Koha database. The system is designed with a library administrator interface (to be used by Library staff) and a member interface (for use by all other staff). The server is available to anyone using the Fisheries network, including College users in Kavieng.

Koha is designed to use barcodes for document identification so having some scanners simplifies a number of tasks. Another nice benefit is that there is an ability to associate a URL link with a library document. This means that material that has been converted to PDF can be associated with a library item and users can view it when they find a document of interest. This effectively provides a quick and simple means of referencing the scanned versions of the P collection mentioned earlier.

The 'P' collection is all in hard copy. Given its uniqueness and relevance to PNG, we are making it a priority to digitise it. Scanning is being done in-house using NFA's Canon 4050 high speed scanner. A TIF file is produced, which is then converted to PDF using Acrobat Distiller (Adobe Acrobat v.6). We are now well into scanning our 'P' collection but when this is completed we will still have a long way to go in doing quality checks on the scanned documents, book-marking and associating URL links. When it's ready we will be pleased to have our library catalogue on the NFA website.

## Agency News



### **US\$11 Million to Support Fisheries Management in the Pacific**

The Director of the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA), Mr. Feleti Teo, announced in May that the Global Environment Facility (GEF) has approved a five year, US\$11 million project to assist Pacific island states reform, restructure, realign and strengthen their national fisheries laws, policies, institutions and programmes.

In expressing his warm appreciation on behalf of members of the FFA at the announcement of the project he said, "The development of this project for the benefit of the Pacific island members of the FFA has taken a great deal of time and effort. We are thankful for the funding assistance of GEF and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and are pleased to be able to continue the momentum of work already achieved in an earlier project."

Mr Teo further explained, "As a result of GEF council approval, the Pacific Islands Oceanic Fisheries Management Project will commence this year and will involve a range of activities that will assist Pacific small island developing States (SIDS) manage their oceanic fisheries. The project will be implemented through the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and executed by the FFA with other participating partners; the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) and The World Conservation Union (IUCN)."

In addition to overall coordination of the project, the FFA will coordinate work that will assist Pacific SIDS efforts to reform, restructure, realign and strengthen their national laws, policies, institutions and programmes to take up new opportunities and discharge new responsibilities which the newly established Western and Central Pacific Fisheries Commission creates.

The SPC will take primary responsibility for activities relating to stock assessment and scientific monitoring work that will contribute to a platform of knowledge about the status of regional stocks and the impact of fishing. This work will also support initial phases of ecosystem analysis to characterize the Western Tropical Pacific Large Marine Ecosystem, including a new focus on seamounts which will involve the participation of IUCN. (Source: FFA website, 27 May 2005)

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## Other News from the Region

### **Chile: New fisheries management organisation for the South Pacific?**

Representatives of Australia, New Zealand and Chile are to meet to consider the creation of a new regional fisheries management organisation for the South Pacific Ocean. An agreement could come into effect as early as next year and would partially replace the goals of the Galapagos Agreement, whose implementation remains delayed, according to the president of the Chilean National Fisheries Society, Roberto Izquierdo.

The Galapagos Agreement was established in 2000 by Chile, Peru, Ecuador, and Colombia, to boost offshore fisheries conservation, but it is still pending ratification by Peruvian authorities. Chilean Undersecretary of Fisheries, Felipe Sandoval, said that in August delegations from the three nations would hold a preliminary meeting in Canberra to begin discussions on a new protection agreement for the entire South Pacific. Another meeting in Wellington, New Zealand, will follow in February 2006. The aim is for the three countries to be the founders of a new agreement which other South Pacific island states may join later.

If the Chilean Government goes through with the new agreement, it could strengthen international cooperation to ensure the conservation of offshore marine biodiversity, regulate fisheries operations by Asian and European fleets in this area, and fight illegal, unregulated, and unreported (IUU) fishing activities. In particular it would help to conserve and manage sustainably species such as horse mackerel, swordfish, deep-water cod, orange roughy, alfonsino, and cardinal fish. (Source: PACNEWS 2: Fri 17 June 2005)

### **Tahiti:** Hao to breed tuna

The French Polynesian government wants to adapt an Australian tuna breeding farm operation for use on the Tuamotu atoll of Hao. An impressed President Oscar Temaru made the statement after a recent visit to the farm with Minister of the Sea Keitapu Maamaatuaiahutapu and Hao Mayor Temauri Foster, who is also an opposition member of the French Polynesian Assembly.

“Australia developed the system of raising tuna in captivity in the 1980s when its commercial fishermen were hurt by depleting stocks of fish in the surrounding ocean,” Temaru told reporters. “French Polynesia finds itself in a similar situation today, forcing commercial fishing fleets to spend more time in the distant Marquesas Islands to the north to find big supplies of tuna both for local consumption and exporting.”

In Australia, Temaru said, young tuna weighing 15-20 kilograms are captured by net between December and March and transported in floating cages at a speed of one knot. They are raised for the next three to eight months in circular cages until they reach adulthood. (Source: PACNEWS 1, 21 June 2005)

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## Conference & Workshop Notices

- September 20-24 2<sup>nd</sup> International Congress of Seas and Oceans, Szczecin-Swinoujscie, Poland  
<http://www.wsm.szczecin.pl/iirm/kongres/index.htm>
- October 10-14 31<sup>st</sup> Annual Conference of the International Association of Aquatic and Marine Science Libraries and Information Centers (IAMSLIC), Rome, Italy  
<http://www.nefsc.noaa.gov/nefsclibrary/2005iamslic/2005home.html>
- October 23-28 1st International Congress on Marine Protected Areas, Geelong, Victoria, Australia  
<http://www.impacongress.org>
- Oct 31 – Nov 3 Pacem in Maribus XXXI: Building Bridges towards Integrated Oceans Governance, Townsville, Queensland, Australia  
<http://ioc.unesco.org/ioi/contents.php?id=123>

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