



THE IUCN WORLD COMMISSION ON PROTECTED AREAS  
OCEANIA Newsletter No. 2 2011



Photo Bush Heritage's property "Scottsdale" part of "Kosciuszko to Coast" landscape reconnection project.

#### 1. WCPA OCEANIA UPDATE

- FROM THE VICE CHAIR
- MEMBER OPPORTUNITIES
- REPRESENTATIONS
- NEWS OF MEMBERS

#### 2. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

- NEW IUCN DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL
- THE HIGH SEAS ALLIANCE SETS SIGHTS ON INTERNATIONAL WATERS
- MASSIVE NEW MPA: OASIS FOR ENDANGERED SHARKS AND SEA TURTLES
- CBD SECRETARIAT STEPS UP TO SUPPORT DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS IN JAPAN
- EUROPE CREATES A MAJOR TRANSBOUNDARY RESERVE
- CANADA'S PARK STEWARDS OF THE FUTURE
- BRANCHING OUT: SCOTLAND'S AWARD WINNING PROGRAM

#### 3. AUSTRALIAN NEWS

- DEVELOPING CORRIDORS PLAN TO LINK NATIONAL PARKS
- CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY 2011-12 BUSINESS PLAN
- REVIEW OF 'CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY'
- HEALTHY PARKS HEALTHY PEOPLE CENTRAL
- REMNANT NATIVE VEGETATION INVESTIGATION FINAL REPORT RELEASED
- NULLARBOR WILDERNESS PROTECTION AREA ANNOUNCED
- NEW WAYS TO DISCOVER WA'S NATIONAL PARKS
- ASSESSING DAMAGE TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF BY CYCLONE YASI
- NEW NATIONAL PARK DECLARED ON NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND
- MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR PACKAGE FOR VICTORIA'S FLOOD-DAMAGED PARKS
- 'WILDERNESS TRUTHS' WEBSITE
- REAL BENEFITS FROM GREEN TOURISTS

#### 4. NEW ZEALAND NEWS

- DON MERTON, 1939 – 2011: INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED CONSERVATION PIONEER
- VOLUNTEERS EXCEEDING ALL EXPECTATIONS
- MOUNTAIN BIKING TRAIL SEES CONTINUED ACCESS GRANTED IN ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK
- NEW ZEALAND EXPANDS PROTECTION AROUND SUB-ANTARCTIC ISLANDS

#### 5. PACIFIC ISLAND AND PNG NEWS

- PACIFIC ISLANDS RED LIST - IDENTIFYING THREATENED SPECIES
- INTERESTING LINKS

#### 6. UPCOMING

- INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY (ICCB 2011)

## 1. WCPA OCEANIA UPDATE

Dear WCPA Colleagues,

Great thanks to Newsletter editor Louise O' Flynn for all her work and the assistance of Brian Martin and Peter Coyne.



In early April as Oceania Vice Chair I attended the WCPA Steering Committee Meeting in Switzerland. This was an important 'watershed' meeting and probably the best meeting we have had. The glories of Spring in the Jura one afternoon was a special bonus. The key changes are the move to a much greater integration of WCPA into the rest of IUCN with many staff members of IUCN from different areas attending the meeting. This reflects the Director General's leadership of IUCN to a 'one program approach'. The DG spent a morning with the Committee and explained the approach as seeing each part as complimentary, aimed at cooperation between each

three strands of IUCN – the Members, Commissions and Secretariat – to create a more harmonious and effective organisation.

The appointment of Trevor Sandwith as Director of the PPA has infused new energy and rigour into thinking. Just to take one example a standardised template for Vice Chairs to report has allowed the compilation of global activity report for the Commission which is very impressive. It shows that WCPA's voluntary networks led by the Vice Chairs and the heads of specialist groups accomplish a formidable amount of work world wide. Hot topics were the World Parks Congress and the forthcoming World Conservation Congress in Korea in 2012. I will separately circulate a report on the meeting.

### **Member Opportunities**

In August IUCN will hold an Oceania Regional Forum at the University of Queensland, Brisbane as a preparatory meeting for the World Conservation Congress in Korea in 2012 and to allow IUCN members in Australia New Zealand to have input into both the development of IUCN's global program and the regional program for Oceania. The current thinking is that 23<sup>rd</sup> August will be an open forum and 24<sup>th</sup> -25<sup>th</sup> will be the more formal meeting days. The recently appointed Deputy Director General of IUCN Poul Engberg-Pedersen and new head of the Protected Areas Program Trevor Sandwith will attend the meeting. While numbers will be limited this should afford an opportunity for Commission members to interact with other IUCN member representatives.

The Vice Chair is also exploring possibilities of add on meetings for WCPA Members to meet with Trevor.

### **Representations**

International IUCN WCPA Steering Committee attended by Oceania Members Penelope Figgis (Oceania VC), Graeme Worboys (Mountains and Connectivity VC), Peter Valentine ( Communication and Education VC), Nick O'Connor ( Economic Valuation Specialist Group), Fiona Leverington (Management Effectiveness) and Ben Boer ( WCPA/ CEL Legislative Frameworks Task Force).

### **News of Members**

WCPA has many members who hold senior roles and this is well reflected in the membership of the Climate Change Commission announced in February where Prof Lesley Hughes, Head of the Department of Biological Sciences at Macquarie University has been appointed as a Commissioner and Prof Brendan Mackey sits on the Commission's Scientific Committee.

The recently announced National Wildlife Corridors Committee also includes WCPA members: Bob Debus as Chair and members, Paul Sinclair from ACF and Doug Humann from Bush Heritage.

## 2. INTERNATIONAL NEWS



### NEW IUCN DEPUTY DIRECTOR GENERAL

Dr Poul Engberg-Pedersen has been nominated IUCN Deputy Director General. During 2005-2010, Poul was Director General of Norad, which is the Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation under the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. He led the transformation of Norad from an implementing agency to a policy-supporting knowledge centre for Norway's development cooperation. This included its global initiatives on biodiversity, rain forests, climate change and clean energy.

Poul has worked for the United Nations on refugee issues in Africa, and for the World Bank on governance and anti-corruption. Between 1994 and 2002, he headed a Danish government research centre on development and worked on environmental management and development effectiveness for a Danish consultancy company. Achieving results on the ground has been his ambition throughout his career, starting in Ethiopia in 1977. Since then he has shifted between knowledge development and top management positions. Poul is a Danish citizen. He is 57 and has a PhD in political science and development studies. <http://www.iucn.org/?7011/New-IUCN-Deputy-Director-General-appointed>

### THE HIGH SEAS ALLIANCE SETS SIGHTS ON INTERNATIONAL WATERS

In March 2011, marine scientists and representatives from conservation groups around the world met in Washington, DC, to form a new coalition to protect the 64 percent of the Earth's surface outside of national waters. This is the most biodiverse part of the world's ocean containing some of the most unstudied and unknown species. In all, only 1.3 percent of the world's ocean surface is protected, compared to 12 percent of land. For more information please click [here](http://blog.protectplanetoocean.org) or follow updates on all international marine issues at: <http://blog.protectplanetoocean.org>.

### MASSIVE NEW MPA: OASIS FOR ENDANGERED SHARKS AND SEA TURTLES

A massive new marine protected area around Cocos Island is a beacon of hope for ocean health and human well-being in the Eastern Tropical Pacific, and will offer endangered marine species such as hammerhead sharks and leatherback turtles, as well as fish stocks that are important to local communities, the chance to recover from increasing pressures, Conservation International (CI) said to a decree by the Costa Rican government.



The protected area, called "Seamounts Marine Management Area" (Area Marina de Manejo Montes Submarinos), extending nearly one million hectares - will be five times as large as the existing National Park around the Cocos Islands, currently a fully protected non-fishing zone covering nearly 200,000 hectares and UNESCO World Heritage Site, an area larger than Yellowstone National Park in the United States, and second only to Galapagos National Park in terms of marine protected areas in the Eastern Tropical Pacific.

Green Turtle © Rich Lindie, from the surfbirds galleries.

Located 550 km. (342 mi.) off the coast of Costa Rica in the Pacific Ocean, Cocos Island is just 20 km (12 mi.) in circumference, and is often dubbed "Shark Island" for the abundance of sharks that live in its waters, including white tipped reef sharks, whale sharks, and scalloped hammerhead sharks. The waters around Cocos also support more than 30 unique, marine endemic species, which represents more than 40 percent of the country's known total.

The March declaration formalizes the creation of the new marine protected area surrounding Cocos Island National Park to improve the conservation of this unique oceanic island, conserve an entire marine ecosystem, and protect a group of seamounts (underwater mountains) southwest of Cocos Island.

[http://www.surfbirds.com/sbirdsnews/archives/2011/03/massive\\_new\\_mar.html](http://www.surfbirds.com/sbirdsnews/archives/2011/03/massive_new_mar.html)

### **CBD SECRETARIAT STEPS UP TO SUPPORT DISASTER RELIEF EFFORTS IN JAPAN**

In the wake of Japan's recent natural disasters, staff of the Secretariat of the Convention on Biological Diversity collected financial donations for disaster relief and to show their support for the people and Government who hosted the Nagoya Biodiversity Summit in 2010. The Secretariat's fundraising initiative is one of many expressions of support extended by the biodiversity community to the nation that has set the biodiversity movement's future agenda. For more information, please click [here](#).

### **EUROPE CREATES A MAJOR TRANSBOUNDARY RESERVE**

Austria, Croatia, Hungary, Serbia and Slovenia recently signed a historic declaration to establish a trans-boundary UNESCO Biosphere Reserve to protect their shared nature and wildlife along the Mura, Drava and Danube rivers, "Europe's Amazon".

The declaration paves the way for creating the world's first five-country protected area and, with an overall size of about 800,000 ha, Europe's largest riverine protected area. With rare floodplain forests, river islands, gravel banks and oxbows, the new five-country protected area spans 700 kilometres of rivers and 800,000 hectares of unique natural and cultural landscapes. The area is home to the highest density in Europe of breeding pairs of white-tailed eagle and endangered species such as the little tern, black stork, otters, beavers and sturgeons. It is also an important stepping stone for more than 250,000 migratory waterfowls every year.

The river ecosystem is also vital for the socio-economic well being of the trans-boundary region. It is a major source of good drinking water, natural flood protection, sustainable forestry, agriculture and fisheries. It also has an important role in promoting eco-tourism, awareness raising and environmental education in the region. WWF also hopes that no new hydropower dams will be planned for the area and the gravel excavations will not threaten river dynamics.

[http://wwf.panda.org/wwf\\_news/?199772/Worlds-first-five-country-protected-area-to-conserve-Europes-Amazon](http://wwf.panda.org/wwf_news/?199772/Worlds-first-five-country-protected-area-to-conserve-Europes-Amazon)

### **CANADA'S PARK STEWARDS OF THE FUTURE**

One of the most important issues for the future of conservation is creating the love and relevance of nature to our increasingly urban and technology bound world. Parks Canada is a world leader in innovative social connection programs.

The Palisades Stewardship Education Centre in Jasper National Park offers young people a unique opportunity to connect with the spectacular Rocky Mountains Landscape. The Palisades programs seek to cultivate school students as future stewards for Canada's national parks by offering them the opportunity to participate in educational and recreational programs, whereby fostering an understanding and appreciation of nature and national parks. The programs include classroom courses, fieldwork and mountain recreation and offer an extension of school curricula in subjects such as science and biology. Students may take a Palisade course for credit, with the completed subjects counting towards the students' high school graduation requirements. Due to the success of the program, the Palisades team is exploring the possibility of extending their programs to a 'gap year' after high school courses, and also working with universities. For further information please click [here](#).



### **BRANCHING OUT: SCOTLAND'S AWARD WINNING PROGRAM**

The nature and health link is also a vital to building support for our key natural areas. An award winning program in Scotland is giving people suffering from mental health issues the chance to spend time in nature. Many identify isolation as a major problem. Branching Out brings clients together in the outdoors through a 12-week program in woodlands designed to increase physical activity, team building and social skills. Results so far have been impressive with participants reporting improvements in areas such as self-esteem, motivation, sense of achievement and social skills. Branching Out began in 2007 as a pilot program led by Forestry Commission Scotland as part of its Woods for Health strategy, to encourage the use of woodlands for physical and mental health. Branching Out program manager Kirsty Cathrine, says the program was based on research into the benefits of green space and conservation for mental and physical health. For more information on the program please click [here](#).

## **3. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL NEWS**

### **DEVELOPING CORRIDORS PLAN TO LINK NATIONAL PARKS**

A Federal Government advisory group has been appointed to inform the development of a draft National Wildlife Corridors Plan. The National Wildlife Corridors Plan advisory group will consult with interested stakeholders to facilitate development of the draft plan. The corridors will link national parks and reserves with well-managed private land and guide future government investment in projects to support the protection of the natural environment and biodiversity conservation. The government made a commitment during last year's election to invest \$10 million in strengthening the resilience of Australia's environment to climate change by working with 56 regional natural resource management groups to develop the corridors plan. The advisory group comprises representatives from academia, industry, environmental non-government organisations, natural resource management bodies and Indigenous groups and is chaired by former NSW Environment Minister, Bob Debus. For more information, please click [here](#)

### **CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY 2011-12 BUSINESS PLAN**

Proposals for land care and environment projects from across Australia are invited under the Caring for our Country 2011-12 business plan. The Commonwealth Government announced that up to \$178 million will be made available to fund natural resource management projects with a focus on building natural resilience in ecosystems and farmlands. The Caring for our Country 2011-12 business plan sets aside up to \$66 million for base-level funding for regional NRM organisations, with the remainder for projects that contribute to achieving outcomes in line with the six national priority areas for Caring for our Country. These priorities are:

- Increasing the National Reserve system;
- Biodiversity and national icons;
- Coastal environments and critical aquatic habitats;
- Sustainable farm practices;
- Remote and northern Australia; and
- Community skills, knowledge and engagement.

The Government is seeking one and two year proposals in which project milestones, budgets and deliverables can be completed by June 2013. For more information, visit [www.nrm.gov.au](http://www.nrm.gov.au)

### **REVIEW OF 'CARING FOR OUR COUNTRY'**

As noted in the previous newsletter, a review of the Caring for our Country initiative has commenced. There are now two different ways that you can engage in the review process: by making a submission (by 20 May 2011) or by visiting the Caring for our Country review online discussion forum. The discussion forum is an opportunity for you to air your views and experiences, contribute to existing discussions and catch up with community or industry partners. You can also add comments, videos, pictures and case studies of Caring for our Country. Click [here](#) to visit the Caring for our Country online discussion forum or make a submission by emailing [thereview@nrm.gov.au](mailto:thereview@nrm.gov.au)

## HEALTHY PARKS HEALTHY PEOPLE CENTRAL

In 2010, Parks Victoria hosted 1,200 participants from 37 countries at the [International Healthy Parks Healthy People Congress 2010](#). The event explored the many ways nature contributes to health and well-being. To maintain global momentum, *Healthy Parks Healthy People* (HPHP) Central has evolved to foster better understanding of the links between nature and human health. HPHP Central will serve as an online resource for the Healthy Parks Healthy People global community to learn about and share the latest research, case studies, programs and innovations that focus on the health benefits of human contact with the natural world. To find out more click [here](#).

## REMNANT NATIVE VEGETATION INVESTIGATION: FINAL REPORT RELEASED

With the issue of connectivity across the landscape high on IUCN WCPA's global and regional agenda, it is significant that a recent Victorian report underscores the continuing biodiversity role of the areas outside formal reserves. A comprehensive investigation into the condition of remnant native vegetation in Victoria has highlighted the crucial role fragmented landscapes play in supporting the State's biodiversity. The Victorian Environmental Assessment Council's (VEAC) Remnant Native Vegetation Final Report revealed that Victoria's fragmented landscapes support around 40% of the State's native land vertebrates. A further 45% rely on fragmented landscapes across a major part of their distribution in Victoria. The report also found that public land remnants such as railway lines, water frontages and small bushland reserves are significant contributors to ecological connectivity, providing critical habitat for some of Victoria's most threatened flora and fauna. For more information, click [here](#).



## NULLARBOR WILDERNESS PROTECTION AREA ANNOUNCED

In March South Australian Premier, Mike Rann announced the declaration of the 900,000 hectare Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area. The declaration effectively doubles the total land area given this highest level of protection in South Australia. The Nullarbor Wilderness Protection Area will stretch almost 200 kilometres from the West Australian border across the Great Australian Bight, covering an area more than twice the size of Kangaroo Island, including most of the Nullarbor National Park and part of Nullarbor Regional Reserve. This higher form of

protection for the Nullarbor will help conserve South Australia's natural environment, including the treeless plain and the towering Bunda Cliffs. It will also ensure that these areas continue to provide important habitat for species such as the Australian Sea Lion, Southern Hairy-nosed Wombats and more than 390 species of plants. Many sites of outstanding archaeological significance will also be conserved. The far west of South Australia is an important tourist destination and protecting what makes it special will undoubtedly also have economic benefits for the State. For more information please click [here](#). Photo: Ludo Kuipers/OzOutback

## NEW WAYS TO DISCOVER WA'S NATIONAL PARKS

Keeping relevant to younger generations is the goal of many park agencies. WA's Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) has made information about Western Australian national parks more easily accessible to the public by creating a App to download the most popular trail maps to their iPhone. Once downloaded, users can view detailed maps, photos, descriptions and points of interest, even in remote areas of the State where phone reception is unavailable. Currently, six 'e-guides' can be downloaded from the EveryTrail site for free. To view the EveryTrail website, click [here](#).

## ASSESSING DAMAGE TO THE GREAT BARRIER REEF BY CYCLONE YASI

The Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority (GBRMPA) and Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service marine specialists have undertaken initial surveys to assess the damage caused to the Great Barrier Reef by cyclone Yasi. About 13% of the Great Barrier Reef, from Cairns to Townsville was exposed to Yasi's destructive winds. The affected area represents a 300km stretch of the 2400km-long Reef. "The good news is that the damage to these reefs has been patchy," GBRMPA's assessment coordinator Dr Paul Marshall said. "In some instances, neighbouring reefs and coral structures have remained relatively unharmed. These surviving corals will help the damaged areas to rebuild."

The areas that faced wind gusts of up to 285 KPH were the most seriously damaged, with coral broken and torn from the reef. Branching corals suffered the most, with the remnants being strewn across the seabed floor, while large plate corals were snapped off and dumped into deeper water. The GBRMPA will closely monitor the recovery of the coral and undertake further research into the impact of the recent cyclones and floods on the Reef and the industries and communities that rely on it. The [Great Barrier Reef Outlook Report 2009](#) identified climate change, and its associated impacts, including increased frequency of severe cyclones, as one of the Reef's greatest challenges. "In light of this, the GBRMPA is working with its partners to build the resilience of the Great Barrier Reef ecosystem to aid the recovery of the Reef from climate-related events," Dr Marshall said. More extensive scientific assessments will be released over the coming months. For more information please click [here](#).

## **NEW NATIONAL PARK DECLARED ON NORTH STRADBROKE ISLAND**



The Queensland Government has declared a new national park on North Stradbroke Island. The first stage of Naree Budjong Djara National Park covers one fifth, or over 5000 hectares of the island. By the end of 2011, 50% of the island will be national park, by 2021 this will increase to 75% and by 2026, 80% of the island will be protected. North Stradbroke Island features places of incredible conservation significance and a variety of special habitats including wetlands and endangered heathlands, freshwater lakes, rainforests, old growth forest and woodland that are home to threatened

animal species, including the Cooloola sedgefrog and black-neck stork and the endangered swift parrot and little tern.

Naree Budjong Djara National Park will open up previously unseen areas of the island to visitors to experience its wildlife and landscapes. The park will be jointly managed by the Island's traditional owners, the Quandamooka people together with the Department of Environment and Resource Management. Coinciding with the declaration of the new national park was the Queensland Government's announcement to fast track the end of mining on the island with the largest mine to close in 2019 and all mining to cease in 2025. For more information please click [here](#)

## **MULTI-MILLION DOLLAR PACKAGE FOR VICTORIA'S FLOOD-DAMAGED PARKS**

Victorian Premier Ted Baillieu, has announced a \$19.7 million package for Victoria's flood-damaged parks and reserves. Along with estimated insurance payments of \$42.7 million, a total of \$62.4 million will be invested in restoration and repair of flood damaged parks and reserves. The 'Restoring our Parks package' is to be delivered as part of the 2011-12 Budget, with the immediate priority being restoration of safe access for park visitors. Since September 2010, more than 70 Victorian parks or reserves have been affected by severe storm and flood events. The most severely affected parks include the Grampians; Wilsons Promontory; Mount Buffalo; and Alpine National Parks; You Yangs Regional Park; and parks in the Creswick, Hepburn, Bendigo, Beechworth, Upper Murray and Dandenong Ranges areas. For more information, click [here](#).

## **'WILDERNESS TRUTHS' WEBSITE**

WCPA member Haydn Washington, has created a website on 'Wilderness Truths' that builds on the work he did for his PhD on 'The Wilderness Knot'. The website sets out to examine the 21 myths that have grown up around the term 'wilderness' and consider if these myths are true. The website: <http://wildernesstruths.com/> also has a 'Wilderness Forum' where guests can post information, resources or share their experiences with others.

## **REAL BENEFITS FROM GREEN TOURISTS**

Green Guardians, a new and innovative program delivered in partnership by the Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service, Tourism Tasmania and commercial operators offers tourists an opportunity to contribute while enjoying their guided tour in the wilderness. Tourists will be able to make a real, positive difference to the protection and management of a particular park or reserve by engaging

in environmental conservation projects. Park rangers have been involved in selecting these projects, some of which include wildlife surveys along the Franklin River, collecting and monitoring marine debris in the Tarkine region and wildlife surveys on Maria Island.

Tour operators receive training in undertaking the work and are provided with materials required. The program was officially launched in Launceston on 11 April and has already received a positive response from tour participants. The program, in its pilot stage at present, will be completed during the current shoulder season. Tasmania Parks and Wildlife Service and Tourism Tasmania plan to hold a series of workshops designed to recruit more commercial tour operators to the program to develop new Green Guardian initiatives for the future. For more information, please click [here](#).

#### 4. NEW ZEALAND NEWS

##### **DON MERTON, 1939 – 2011: INTERNATIONALLY ACCLAIMED CONSERVATION PIONEER**



Don Merton with kakapo Richard Henry

New Zealand has lost an internationally acclaimed conservation pioneer with the death of Don Merton in April this year. Don was a senior member of DOC's scientific staff prior to his retirement in 2005 and led the fight to help save the kākāpō and the black robin from extinction. He was also involved in the recovery of many bird species and developed techniques to help threatened species. In 1998 UNEP elected Don to its Global 500 Roll of Honour for his "outstanding contributions to the protection and improvement of the environment."

Don was also named one of "100 Great New Zealanders of the 20th Century" by the NZ Listener and described by Al Morrison, Director General of DOC, as a remarkable conservationist. "It's not many of us who play a pivotal role in pulling an entire species back from the brink - Don did three times. The techniques he developed became the blueprint for much of DOC's work with threatened species," said Mr. Morrison. Don Merton revolutionised methods which brought the black robin back from a single female on a remote island in the Chathams to a flourishing population of more than 200 today. He also led the team responsible for discovering the last kākāpō in Fiordland and managing their recovery through an innovative breeding programme on protected islands. He worked to save South Island saddlebacks from extinction, and used his knowledge to help other species both in New Zealand and across the world. For further information, click [here](#).

##### **VOLUNTEERS EXCEEDING ALL EXPECTATIONS**

New Zealanders profound love of their parks was vividly illustrated in their defence of the parks when mining was proposed on 2009. It is also well illustrated by the amount of time spend volunteering in conservation work. This is exceeding the Government's expectations, with thousands of people wanting to make a difference. Over an eight month period in 2010-11, the Department of Conservation (DOC) estimated that individual volunteers contributed the equivalent of 23,241 workdays to a range of DOC projects around New Zealand. This was 5,000 more workdays than DOC had anticipated. In addition to this, the Department works with over 550 community organisations who contribute thousands of additional hours to conservation projects. Building on the success of its current suite of volunteer programs, the DOC has developed a host of new programs such as the Whangarei shorebird program, which it hopes will benefit from the energy and enthusiasm of volunteers. For further information, click [here](#).

##### **MOUNTAIN BIKING TRIAL SEES CONTINUED ACCESS GRANTED IN ABEL TASMAN NATIONAL PARK**

After a two year trial, mountain bikers have been granted continued access on the Abel Tasman National Park's Gibb's Hill track for the five month winter season. No more than eight riders are allowed in a group on the track and mountain bikers must adhere to the mountain bikers' code which includes a requirement to show respect and consideration to walkers. Approval was given to mountain biking continuing on the track after a Department of Conservation's evaluation of the trial found it had little impact on the track surface and on other track users. Biking trials are now taking place in nearby Kahurangi National Park. For more information, click [here](#).



**NEW ZEALAND EXPANDS PROTECTION AROUND SUB-ANTARCTIC ISLANDS** New Zealand has designated no-take marine reserves around its Sub-Antarctic Islands, totaling 4352 km<sup>2</sup>:

Antipodes Island: the entire territorial sea (out to 12 nm) will be off-limits to all fishing;

Bounty Islands: 58% of the territorial sea will be off-limits to all fishing, and the remainder will be off-limits to Danish seining (a type of seine fishing);

Campbell Island: 39% of the territorial sea will be off-limits to all fishing, with the remainder off-limits to Danish seining. "The Sub-Antarctics are a unique area and not currently widely fished due to their remote location," said Fisheries Minister Phil Heatley. "The prohibition on any future Danish seining is a sensible step." The terrestrial portions of the Sub-Antarctic Islands are National Nature Reserves, the strongest possible conservation status in New Zealand. They have also been honored with World Heritage status. A press release on the new marine reserves is at:

<http://www.doc.govt.nz/about-doc/news/media-releases/subantarctic-islands-to-become-marine-reserves/>

## 5. PACIFIC NEWS

### **PACIFIC ISLANDS RED LIST - IDENTIFYING THREATENED SPECIES**

Island biodiversity in the Pacific is highly vulnerable with 28% of plant and animal species from the Pacific Islands threatened with extinction. This is the latest figure identified under IUCN's Red List of Threatened Species. Of the species assessed, 14% are listed under the 'data deficient' category, illustrating the lack of information available to determine their threat status. To help improve and strengthen the knowledge available on species in the region, the IUCN with its regional partners, brought together local and international experts for a training workshop in February this year held in Fiji. At the workshop, participants were trained in the assessment of species according to the IUCN's globally recognised criteria to assist in determining whether or not a species is threatened with extinction. The results from these assessments will be fed into the Global Red List and will also help to produce a regional Red List for the Pacific Islands. Once developed, the regional Red List will help to prioritise and shape conservation planning and inform Pacific Islanders of the real threats to the region's biodiversity. For more information please click [here](#).

### **NEW FIVE YEAR INVASIVE SPECIES PLAN FOR MICRONESIA**

Micronesian leaders met earlier this month (4-8 April) in Guam to develop its 5-year strategic plan on how to deal with invasive species. Invasive species are the leading cause of biodiversity loss in island countries. Many birds and animals found only on islands are extinct because of predation by invasive species.

The bird population in Guam has been severely decimated by the Brown Tree Snake; a snake that was accidentally introduced to the islands after the 2nd World War. The beautiful Guam Ground Rail (ko'ko) that was once common throughout the islands is now only found in captivity. Late last year 15 of these birds were released to Cocos island as part of the breeding programme. The cost for eradicating invasive species is so great that it often exceeds the national budget of many island countries.

The Micronesia Regional Invasive Species Council (RISC) is made up of Palau, Guam, Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands, Marshall Islands and the Federated States of Micronesia (Yap, Kosrae, Pohnpei and Chuuk).

[http://www.sprep.org/article/news\\_detail.asp?id=916](http://www.sprep.org/article/news_detail.asp?id=916)

## INTERESTING LINKS

IUCN WCPA member and WCPA Marine Coordinator for Melanesia, Hugh Govan offers the following links to other members:

Govan, H., A. Schwarz and D. Boso. 2011. [Towards Integrated Islands Management: Lessons from Lau, Malaita, Solomon Islands, for the implementation of national approaches to resource management](#). Report for WorldFish Centre and SPREP 62pp

Govan, H. 2011. [How can we support communities to build on what they have for a better life? Supplementary livelihoods in the Pacific](#). FSPI Reports, Suva, Fiji

Govan, H. 2011. [Building on what we have for a better life: Asking the right questions to improve livelihoods](#). Workbook. FSPI Reports, Suva, Fiji

## 6. UPCOMING

### INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS FOR CONSERVATION BIOLOGY (ICCB 2011)

WCPA has had a seminar accepted for the December ICCB Congress in Auckland. Our symposium is entitled 'Making the Case for Conservation: Natural Solutions to Climate Change'.

This symposium will document case studies and identify key lessons on where, when and how it makes good sense to integrate protected areas and improved natural resource management into development strategies to maximize benefits for biodiversity, climate change and society and reduce the costs and impacts of expensive infrastructure investments. The results will be disseminated widely through the network of the IUCN World Commission on Protected Areas as case studies and practical guidance to be used in training and outreach materials for protected area managers, conservation practitioners and policy makers to mainstream biodiversity conservation and protection of natural habitats as part of agreed adaptation strategies. The results will also respond to the program of work of the Convention on Biological Diversity.

The 25th annual meeting of the Society for Conservation Biology, Engaging Society in Conservation, will be held from December 5 - 9 in Auckland, New Zealand. Please note that due to the Christchurch earthquake earlier this year, the ICCB 2011 has changed venue and dates. The conference will now be held at the Sky City Auckland Convention Centre.