

NATIONAL TRUST OF FIJI ISLANDS

Our heritage in trust

October Issue, 2009

Bula and Welcome to our second newsletter for 2009



The INTO Congress and 13th International Conference of National Trusts was held in Ireland from 13th – 17th September 2009, hosted by *An Taisce* The National Trust for Ireland (ATNTI) and was attended by the Elizabeth Erasito, Director, National Trust of Fiji.

The theme for the conference was “Heritage of the World in Trust: Conservation in a Changing Climate”. An exciting outcome of the conference was the signing of the ‘**Dublin Declaration**’, a document which is expected to be presented to world leaders at the Climate Change forum in Copenhagen this November.

The Declaration calls on world leaders to reach agreement in Copenhagen on greenhouse gas reductions (limiting global average temperature rise to less than two degrees Celsius); to agree to promote policy frameworks at national and international levels that encourage investment in low carbon technologies; and to support measure which protect heritage sites, both in the natural and built environment.

This was the first gathering of the National Trust movement since the establishment of INTO in December 2007 and the plenary presentations, working sessions and site visits provided excellent opportunity for networking and positive interaction for National Trust leaders around the world.

Simon Molesworth, Chairman of INTO clearly articulated the role of National Trust around the world. “National Trusts can set the standards for sustainable property custodianship, ensuring we have a neutral carbon footprint: we can be responsible exemplars in a world facing great change. How we respond to this new world order will vary from country to country as climate change manifests itself in differing ways around the globe”.

“This conference is an opportunity for National Trusts to learn from each other about enhancing their work and promotion of heritage. In the UK, the National Trust owns, operates and protects hundreds of heritage sites, and is responsible for ensuring that so many UK citizens get actively involved in their protection, including maintaining pathways on important walk-ways and keeping coastlines litter-free. Meanwhile, heritage groups from Uganda, Ethiopia and Taiwan are growing tourism around local heritage and the principles of sustainability.

National Trust of Fiji’s mission is to consolidate, enhance and reinforce the role of the National Trust of Fiji in the conservation, protection, sustainable management and research of Fiji’s natural and cultural heritage for the benefit and enjoyment of the peoples of Fiji, the Pacific Islands and the World

Here in Ireland, An Taisce has given children and teachers the tools to reduce their carbon footprint – all the while saving thousands of euro each year – through the Green Schools programme.

This is a shining example of something which could be replicated in other countries” he said.

An inspiring address was made by 16-year old transition year student, Eamonn Hayes from Ballina, Co. Tipperary who delivered a keynote address to the conference. “It is obvious to me that many adults pay no attention to preserving our natural resources and the environment. It is because of this that I have agreed to share my experience and concerns with those attending the International Conference of National Trusts. I hope that those who hear my speech – including people like the Minister for the Environment and Local Government, John Gormley, and former President, Mary Robinson – can spread the message that the world is not just for this generation.

“Melting ice-caps, spreading deserts and flooding may seem like far-away problems, but if we don’t take action now, they will be a reality for every citizen of this world in generations to come. Do you want your legacy to be a damaged world that you pass onto my generation, and the generation after me?”

Presentations were also made by Mary Robinson, Director of Realising Rights, who looked at the impact of climate change on human rights; Richard Moe, President of the US National Trust for Historic Preservation, who spoke about conserving and improving our existing built resources to combat climate change, and Dame Fiona Reynolds, Director General of the National Trust for England, Wales and Northern Ireland, who presented a paper on how the current economic climate offers challenges and opportunities for the heritage movement.

The conference was officially opened by the Minister for Environment, Heritage and Local Government, John Gormley TD. It was funded with the support of the Department of Environment, Heritage and Local Government and the Getty Foundation.



Delegates at the Conference at Dublin Castle

POWPA FUTURES WORKSHOP

The CBD Programme of Work on Protected Areas (CBD/POWPA) Futures Workshop was held on Jeju Island, Republic of Korea, 14 – 17 September, 2009. A total of 84 participants from all over the world attended the workshop. Fiji was represented by Kasaqa Tora, NTF Project Officer for Protected Areas. The meeting was jointly organized by IUCN/WCPA, the CBD secretariat and the Ministry of environment, Korea and the Korea National Park Services, and included the support of UNEP, the Netherlands, Canada, Finland and Conservation International. Korea Protected Areas (MEE) Management Evaluating and Effectiveness was also launched during the workshop.



Left: Kasaqa with participants
Right: Laval tubes, a historical site

A field trip was organized by the Korea National Park Staff, the sites declared as Natural World Heritage by UNESCO 2007. Jeju volcanic island and Laval tubes became the first Natural World Heritage site in Korea and is now treasured by the entire world

Site Updates

Sigatoka Sand Dunes National Park eco work shop theme “Local Heritage in Young Hands” staged on the 1st – 3rd September, 2009 looked at responsibilities in our children towards our environment, both terrestrial and marine. The objective of the workshop was to introduce awareness, sense of care and protection of our local



Above: Lesson tree drawn by Alfred

heritage and our environment now and in the future. The students visited Fiji’s forgotten guns of the Second World War, the Momi Gun Battery, and the Tavuni Hill Fort. The children were over whelmed to visit the Yanuca Islands Marine Centre, where the children were informed that coral reefs are our local heritage too thanks to



Above: Students showing their certificates after the Eco Workshop

Mereoni Mataika who coordinated the program. Team building exercises were part of the activity program. Thanks again to the **British High Commission** for funding the three days eco workshops held during the two weeks school break.

Levuka Community Centre staged its two weeks holiday program on the theme “Discovering Levuka, the Sea, the Land and its People”. There were a total of 41 students who attended the program. The children had the experience on outdoor activities, a historical town tour, making tree. Huggers, making a Sea world model and picnic at Devokula

Below: Sea world model and a tree hugger made by the participants



The ranger exchange program for the National Trust has helped the site rangers gain more experience and self confidence in site management planning. **Waisali Rainforest Reserve** ranger Mikaele Namusu had a learning experience for two weeks at the Sigatoka Sand Dunes. Making tree huggers and conducting an eco workshop are some of the activities he will conduct at Waisali Rainforest Reserve Park.



Above: Blooming orchids in the reserve

Navilawa village will soon open its new Lodge, accommodating visitors wishing to overnight at the village.



The lodge is self contained and comprises of: 3 bedrooms (two of the bedrooms have single bunks while the third has a queen sized bunk, kitchenette with cooking facilities, lounge area, flush toilet and shower, laundry area

Yadua Taba ranger Pita Biciloa is undertaking a PICCC course at USP. Pita's project is on Yadua Marine Protected Area.

Momi Gun Battery was teeming with students attending the eco workshop



held at the Sigatoka Sand Dunes National Park. This was the first time the students visited the Gun Battery and were excited to explore the two guns at the site. Structures and memory sometimes combine to remind us that certain places are special. Such places are historically significant and they were built to protect Fiji.



Students at the look out, looking directly out to Navula Passage and Momi Bay

Bouma project coordinator was part of the team that went to Qamea Island to look into the existence of green iguana found on Qamea, Matagi and Laucala islands



Bouma coordinator Sipiriano holding the alien iguana found on Qamea Island

SPECIES

The Nanai (*Raiateana knowlesi*)

Matokana Village – comes under the Vanua of Nasikawa, A hill fortress in rainforest country some 2000ft above sea level, almost at the peak of the mountains which divide the Sigatoka watershed from that of the Navua. The South Pacific Regional Herbarium, Institute of Applied Science, Fiji Museum and the National Trust of Fiji hiked for seven hours to reach Matokana Village in the Nadroga/ Navosa Province to witness the appearance of the Nanai (*Raiateana knowlesi*), a species of cicada which appears only once every eight years.



A young cocoon frees it self from an adult

Their life above ground lasts just a few weeks; early on when the eggs are laid deep in tree branches and later on as young nymphs within the first year, before falling and burrowing into the ground for next 7 long years. On the eighth year, on which 2009 lies, and believed to be around the beginning of wet season, rising temperatures signals the Nanai to move upwards above ground. Millions of Nanai emerge during this season but only for one to two months.

It is a brief and noisy invasion of the forests, but an event awaited eagerly by Fijians who consider the Nanai a delicacy for gourmets. And in some local villages like Matokana, they know their coming heralds the start of an eventful year; yabaki ni sautu, a year of plenty, good crops and abundant fruiting.

Alien Iguanas Threaten Garden Island

Green Iguana (*Iguana iguana*) has recently been identified on Qamea, Matagi and Laucala Islands just off Taveuni. A team led by the Ministry of Environment returned to Suva on Tuesday (8th September) with two live specimen of this large lizard after 3 days of search, subsequent to reports of sightings from the local community. The Green Iguana is a



common pet species in its native Central and South Americas, while wild animals are hunted as a source of food being referred to it as "Bush Chicken". One of the specimen have been taken to Kula Eco Park for further research and promote public awareness on threats of smuggling unwanted animals and plants into the country.

Although called green iguanas, these animals are actually variable in colour. The adults become more uniform in colour with age, whereas the young may appear blotchier or banded between green and brown.

To find our more about this alien iguana that has being found on our shores, log into goggle Animal diversity Web; *Iguana iguana* information.

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and don't forget there is more information about us and our project sites on our website.....www.nationaltrust.org.fj.

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**Fiji's natural and cultural heritage is
valued and protected for future
generations.**