



# IUCN Oceania

The Pacific Centre for Environmental Governance



In the Pacific Islands, it is necessary to engage with conservation issues across a variety of scales, from local to regional. Local communities are central to the Pacific way of life, and vital to the attainment of sustainable development in the region. IUCN is working with countries and partner organisations in promoting and supporting effective environmental governance through technical assistance and capacity building.

## What are the initiative's goals?

The mission of the centre is to work with countries and partner organisations to promote equitable and sustainable use of natural resources, conservation of biological diversity, maintenance of ecological integrity and social harmony in the Pacific Island Countries.

## Importance of initiative in the Pacific

Despite the growing number of inspiring success stories, overall environmental trends in the region remain negative. To date, the overall performance of government agencies has been inadequate to effectively address the region's pressing environ-

mental concerns. The capacity of most Pacific Island Countries with respect to conservation has been limited by a range of factors, including the limited availability of financial, technical and human resources. Efficient, equitable and sustainable management of natural resources requires supportive governance frameworks at local, national and regional levels.

The Pacific Centre for Environmental Governance (PCEG), a virtual centre of excellence in environmental law, environmental policy, environmental economics and leadership, will play a leading role in supporting effective environmental governance in the Pacific Island Countries.

### **Activities Completed/Planned 2009**

Activities aim to strengthen the capacity of all stakeholders and decision-makers at all levels in order to make informed decisions. Enabling environments will be promoted at all levels for effective, transparent and accountable decision-making. This will include laws and policies that reflect the local and regional environmental, economic and social context.

**Environmental Law/Policy Programme** - The Environmental Law Programme in collaboration with other partners and IUCN members completed a number of publications topics of which include: fisheries enforcement and compliance; recommendations for integrated coastal management decision-making; and marine protected areas legislation and policy gap analysis. These and other publications are available on the IUCN Oceania website.

A series of training workshops covering a wide range of topics for Pacific Island Countries were organised by IUCN Oceania in collaboration with partner organisations, and with the support of the US Embassy and the British High Commission. Topics included: Developing Effective Environmental Legislation in the Pacific Context; International Best Practices in Environmental Law; Climate Change and the Law; Train the Trainers; Human Rights and the Environment; Legal mechanisms for Protected Area management; and Supporting community-based resource management and community-based conservation. IUCN Oceania added value to the work of its members and partners in the following areas: protected areas law and policy; locally managed marine areas, integrated coastal zone management, forest conservation, environmental impact assessment and pollution control.

We also helped establish and assist with the operation of the **Fiji Environmental Law Association** which aims 'to protect the environment and promote sustainable natural resource management through law'.

**The IUCN Commission on Environmental Law (CEL)** has increased membership to over 70 members from Australia, New Zealand, Fiji, Papua New Guinea, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.

**Environmental Economics/Policy Programme** - The Programme recently released a report titled "*Economic Costs of the 2009 Floods in the Fiji Sugar Belt and Policy Implications*". This report is the outcome of an empirical study conducted - in the first half of 2009 - in partnership with the Fiji Government Department of Lands & Survey (FLIS) and funded by the European Commission with in-kind contributions from IUCN Oceania and FLIS. It serves as a starting point for future studies in risk management.

Consultation services were provided to a SOPAC/UNISDR project which examined the relationship between poverty and disasters using Fiji as a case study. The report was presented at the Pacific Disaster Platform meeting held in Nadi in May. More information can be found on [www.pacificdisaster.net](http://www.pacificdisaster.net). Staff offered consultation services to a study on the impacts of, and adaptation to, climate change in Melanesia. The project was part of the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation initiative to help understand better adaptation strategies suited to local circumstances. The report is currently under review by the Bishop Museum.

**Activities Planned** - PCEG has a number of environmental law/policy and environmental economics/policy related activities underway for 2009. We will be working on the governance components of the IUCN water, energy and species programmes. We will also be working closely with regional partners including SOPAC, SPREP, SPC and various Pacific Island Governments. An example of this partnership is the development of a number of information briefs for Pacific Island Governments on topics including Ecosystem-based Adaptation (EbA) for Climate Change, Reducing Emissions from Deforestation Forest Degradation (REDD) in Developing Countries and Invasives.

PCEG will also be contributing to the broad global and regional environmental governance policy issues related to biodiversity conservation and human livelihoods. More specifically, including topics such as the Pacific 2020 Challenge, climate change, disaster risk management, trade and environment, and greening of economies.

Membership has increased for the **Pacific Resource and Environmental Economists Network (PREEN)**. This network of mostly Suva-based environmental economists was established in 2008 and now has almost 20 members. The outcome of a PREEN meeting held in February is a planned practitioners' workshop scheduled for September. The workshop will focus on reviewing past, current and planned economic analysis work in the region. A synthesis report of the workshop proceedings will be submitted as a contribution for TEEB Phase II.

The **IUCN-USP public lecture series** with the theme "*Getting Development Right - Investing in Natural Capital*" was launched by the Director General Julia Marton-Lefevre during her visit to the Suva-based office in June. A number of upcoming lectures are in the pipeline.

To learn more:

Visit: [www.iucn.org/oceania](http://www.iucn.org/oceania) for the latest news on activities or to download publications.

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