



THE IUCN WORLD COMMISSION ON PROTECTED AREAS
OCEANIA
Newsletter No. 7 2011



Wet Sclerophyll Forest (see story)

Courtesy Bush Heritage Photo Wayne Lawler

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1. WCPA OCEANIA UPDATE

From the Vice Chair

Dear all,

Thanks to the wonderful Louise O'Flynn WCPA editor and Kathy Walls, Ana Tira, Hugh Possingham, David Sheppard, Professor Ben Boer, Stuart Chape, and Jason Irving.

Many of you are keen for an update on the IUCN World Protected Area Congress which we all hope will be held in Australia in 2014. You were informed in a Bulletin that Victoria had unfortunately pulled out of hosting this global meeting. The Federal government remains committed and is hoping for a new state partner. There is considerable interest in both NSW and Queensland but such arrangements are not speedy processes and it may be a while before I can give members a definite outcome.

Member Opportunities

As you have been informed there is an opportunity (though numbers are limited) for members to join a 9-3.30 forum on Connectivity Conservation in the Maiden Theatre Botanical Gardens 16th December. You must register so please use the registration form previously sent or contact Alison Totterdell (ATotterdell@greeningaustralia.org.au).

Representations

WCPA has recently written to the NSW government championing the inclusion of protection for geodiversity in the proposed revision of the Environment Protection Act.

The Vice Chair addressed the Regional Directors of the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

News of Members

Congratulations to Gerard O'Neil from Parks Victoria who is the new CEO of Bush Heritage. Doug Humann is leaving Bush Heritage with a fantastic record of achievement and a commitment to keep contributing in other ways. Steve Corbett, previously CEO at Centennial Park is now heading up the Foundation for National Parks and Wildlife- an early task to become a WCPA member. Peter Ogilvie is retiring after a long and distinguished career with the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service.

2. INTERNATIONAL NEWS

MOU FOR IMPLEMENTATION AND ACHIEVEMENT OF CBD 2020 AICHI BIODIVERSITY TARGETS

The Aichi Biodiversity Targets are a set of 20, time-bound, measurable targets agreed by the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity in Nagoya, Japan in October 2010, that are now

being translated into revised national strategies and action plans by the 193 Parties to the Convention. If you are not familiar with the targets they are a vital guide to the accepted world directions for conservation.

In Montreal on 21 September 2011 at a signing ceremony a MoU was signed with 27 of the largest international agencies, organisations and environmental conventions for implementation and achievement of the 2020 Convention on Biological Diversity 'Aichi Biodiversity Targets'. The memorandum creates a task force to provide a platform for agencies to coordinate their activities in support of the achievement of the CBD Strategic Plan for Biodiversity 2011-2020 and its Aichi Biodiversity Targets. Down load them here. <http://www.cbd.int/doc/strategic-plan/2011-2020/Aichi-Targets-EN.pdf>

NEW APP FOR IUCN RED LIST

IUCN's Red List is the most comprehensive source of information on the conservation status of the world's species, one in four mammals, one in eight birds and more than one in three amphibians are at risk of extinction.

Species on the Edge app is a detailed guide to 365 species from the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species™. Inspired by the IUCN Red List Species of the Day initiative and the *Species on the Edge* book, this app features 365 profiles of plants, animals and fungi from the IUCN Red List. Each profile has a description of the species along with its conservation status, geographical location and information on the conservation action required to protect it.

RWANDA'S NATIONAL FOREST POLICY WINS FUTURE POLICY AWARD IN 2011

In the International Year of Forests Rwanda's National Forest Policy was proclaimed the winner of the 2011 Future Policy Award by the World Future Council in September. "Rwanda has sought not only to make its forests a national priority, but has also used them as a platform to revolutionise its stances on women's rights and creating a healthy environment," said Wangari Maathai, Nobel Peace Prize Laureate, Honorary World Future Councillor and Founder of the Green Belt Movement.

Despite continuing population and land pressures, Rwanda is on course to reach its goal of increasing forest cover to 30% of total land area achieving a major reversal in the trend of declining forest cover. Forest cover has already increased by 37% since 1990. Massive reforestation and planting activities that promoted indigenous species and involved the local population were undertaken, and new measures such as agro-forestry and education about forest management were implemented.

Ahmed Djoghlaif, Executive Secretary of the Convention on Biological Diversity and Honorary World Future Councillor states: "Rwanda is an inspiration for the world. The national policy to heal and restore nature, through a border-to-border restoration programme, will create the basis for a healthy and resilient society of the future. This policy is placing Rwanda firmly on the map as a global environmental leader, and I hope many other countries will follow."

WHALES AND DOLPHINS NEED MORE PROTECTED AREAS

A new book, *Marine Protected Areas for Whales, Dolphins and Porpoises* calls for accelerated efforts to conserve marine mammals by protecting a greater area of the ocean. Currently only 1.3% of the ocean is protected but many new Marine Protected Areas are being created. Erich Hoyt, the book's author and IUCN's cetacean specialist, examines current and future developments in ocean protection.

"At least 300,000 whales and dolphins a year end up dead in fishing nets alone, as so-called by-catch," says Erich Hoyt. "Whales in some areas have been found to be emaciated. And scarcely a year since the BP Gulf Oil disaster, it's business as usual in large parts of the Gulf and elsewhere."

The need for greater protection is urgent and the book highlights some positive developments in this respect. The book is a key resource for cetacean scientists and managers of Marine Protected Areas. Since most of these areas promote whale and dolphin watching and marine ecotourism, the book is also useful for finding some of the best places to spot the 87 species of whales, dolphins and porpoises in 125 countries and territories around the world. For further information, visit: <http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/news/?8179/Whales--dolphins-need-more-protected-areas>

CALL FOR INTERNATIONAL SOIL CONSERVATION CONVENTION OR PROTOCOL

Soil, as the primary basis for all terrestrial biodiversity, has until recently been largely ignored in international fora and by national governments. The lack of consideration of soil represents a substantial gap in global policy making on the environment. Soil, as a vital biological resource demands urgent and specific attention on the same level as biological diversity in general. The world has become acutely aware of the global phenomena of air, water and land pollution, climate change, loss of biodiversity, desertification, drought, food scarcity, and soil degradation in its many guises. These phenomena are often linked. The time is now ripe to take an integrated approach to soil conservation, soil security and sustainable use of soil.

Professor Boer has written a paper which sets out the history of research and investigation exploration of such a legal instrument over the past decade, and includes a summary of suggested main features. He believes IUCN should urgently support the negotiation and drafting of a global legal instrument on soil by the community of nations. A recent meeting in Limoges France has endorsed the proposal.

LEADERS DEFINE PATHWAY TO RESTORING 150 MILLION HECTARES OF LOST FORESTS

A core commitment to restore 150 million hectares of lost forests and degraded lands worldwide by 2020 was recently at a ministerial conference in Bonn. New analysis by IUCN estimates that restoring 150 million hectares would be worth US\$ 85 billion per year to national and global economies. At the Bonn Challenge Ministerial Roundtable, a select group of ministers and chief executives of international and non-governmental organisations and companies discussed how to benefit biodiversity and the fight against climate change through concrete restoration activities.

"The restoration of lost forests will increase carbon stocks and result in healthy and resilient ecosystems, which will provide the multiple goods and services people need, and lead to an increase in biodiversity," says Ashok Khoshla, President of IUCN, which acts as coordinator of the Global Partnership on Forest & Landscape Restoration (GPFRL). The landmark commitment in Bonn comes as new analysis shows that more than two billion hectares of the world's deforested and degraded landscapes – equivalent to half the size of Asia – offer opportunities for restoration. This new global estimate is almost double the area previously considered restorable.

The 150 million hectare restoration target directly relates to existing international commitments on climate change and biodiversity. It will contribute to the biodiversity convention target calling for restoration of 15% of degraded ecosystems by 2020, and the climate change convention goal on REDD-Plus, which calls for countries to slow, halt and reverse the loss and degradation of forests. For further information, visit: <http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/news/?8148/Leaders-define-pathway-to-restoring-150-million-hectares-of-lost-forests>

EXPERTS IDENTIFY WORLD'S MOST THREATENED SEA TURTLE POPULATIONS



Hawksbill Turtle Photo: Gary Rinaldi

Top sea turtle experts from around the globe have discovered that 45% of the world's threatened sea turtle populations are found in the northern Indian Ocean. The study also determined that the most significant threats across all of the threatened populations of sea turtles are fisheries bycatch, i.e. accidental catches of sea turtles by fishermen targeting other species, and the direct harvest of turtles or their eggs for food or turtle shell material for commercial use.

The report produced by IUCN's Marine Turtle Specialist Group (MTSG) and supported by Conservation International (CI) and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), is the first comprehensive status assessment of all sea turtle populations globally. The study, designed to

provide a blueprint for conservation and research, evaluated the state of individual populations of sea turtles and determined the 11 most threatened populations and the 12 healthiest populations.

Oceania is vital. Of the 12 healthiest sea turtle populations, five species, such as the Hawksbill Turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricate*) and the Green Turtle (*Chelonia mydas*) include nesting sites and feeding areas in Australia, Mexico and Brazil. Other areas that harbor healthy turtle populations include the Southwest Indian Ocean, Micronesia and French Polynesia. For further information, visit: <http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/news/?8378/Experts-Identify-Worlds-Most-Threatened-Sea-Turtle-Populations>

REBUILDING JAPAN FOR PEOPLE AND NATURE, IUCN

As Japan rebuilds after the devastating impact of the March 2011 earthquake and tsunami it needs to consider nature-based solutions as a key component to recovery and reconstruction efforts, says IUCN. Nature based solutions can provide long term, cost effective and equitable results to both restore and conserve the natural environment, and build and support human wellbeing.

Supporting the services nature provides for human well-being can help protect people from disasters. Clearing forests means less protection from avalanches, landslides, storms, floods and tsunamis. "IUCN wants to share with Japan the lessons learnt from the Indian Ocean tsunami and do things better rather than simply restoring what was there before," adds Jeff McNeely, Senior Science Advisor to IUCN. "IUCN promotes a plan which adapts as lessons are learned, doesn't assume a 'one size fits all' strategy, and avoids further damage to the environment, ensuring that the rescue and relief phases contribute to longer-term environmental and social recovery."

Reconstruction operations on this scale can have a significant environmental footprint, particularly if environmental considerations are not taken into account in planning and managing operations such as clean-up and waste disposal. This exacerbates the vulnerability of communities to future disasters. IUCN urges Japan to monitor and minimise further impacts on nature during the reconstruction phase, where possible. For further information, visit:

<http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/news/?8379/Rebuilding-Japan-for-People-and-Nature-IUCN>

NEW METRIC FOR ASSESSING A COUNTRIES PROTECTED AREA SYSTEM - "PROTECTION EQUALITY"

Lissa Barr and colleagues have recently published a paper that describes a new metric for assessing a system of protected areas. The new metric - "protection equality" - is likely to become a global standard for assessing how well a country is performing with respect to protected area establishment – along with the percentage of the land (or sea) in protected areas. The metric is based on the Gini coefficient, an economic metric for assessing income equality. The metric is independent of the percentage of the area set aside, and measures "representation" - a core goal of systematic conservation planning. In essence, protection equality tells us how evenly a reserve system conserves different habitat types or ecoregions in a country or region. The paper can be freely downloaded from PLoS ONE:

<http://www.plosone.org/article/info%3Adoi%2F10.1371%2Fjournal.pone.0024707> .

NATURE LOSES A HEROINE



Wangari Maathai
Photo: The Green Belt Movement
(on IUCN website)

IUCN is deeply saddened by the loss of Wangari Maathai, one of Africa's foremost environmental campaigners and a great advocate for social justice, human rights, peace and democracy. Wangari Maathai passed away recently in Nairobi at the age of 71. Professor Wangari Muta Maathai was internationally recognized for her persistent struggle for democracy, human rights, and the environment. She was the first African woman to win the Nobel Peace Prize.

In 1977, Wangari Maathai started the Green Belt Movement, encouraging women in rural Kenya to plant trees as a way to improve their lives through better access to clean water, fire wood for cooking and other resources. The movement brought positive

change to women in rural areas and inspired countless other women across the globe.

In 2002, Professor Wangari Muta Maathai was elected to Kenya's parliament and appointed Assistant Minister for Environment and Natural Resources. In 2004, she won the Nobel Peace Prize for her contribution to sustainable development, democracy and peace. For further information, visit: <http://www.iucn.org/knowledge/news/?8329/Nature-loses-a-heroine>

3. AUSTRALIAN NATIONAL NEWS

FORESTS OF EASTERN AUSTRALIA: THE WORLD'S NEWEST BIODIVERSITY HOTSPOT

In a recent publication, "Forests of East Australia: The 35th Biodiversity Hotspot" a team of researchers from CSIRO working with Conservation International documented their analysis of the fauna and flora in two of Australia's World Wildlife Fund Ecoregions. The team found that these diverse and unique coastal forests that stretch from just south of Sydney to north of Cairns more than qualify to be included as part of an elite global club. This is the second hotspot to be identified in Australia. The other is the Southwest Australia Hotspot near Perth. The listing puts eastern Australia on par with places such as Madagascar and the tropical rainforests of Brazil.

The "[Biodiversity Hotspot](#)" concept identifies "exceptional concentrations of endemic species that are undergoing exceptional loss of habitat". The research team found the forests of east Australia easily qualify. The area has more than 2,144 endemic plant species, and about 77% of the original native cover has been lost or degraded. Plants are a good proxy for other levels of diversity, so it's not just our plants that are unique and diverse. Almost a third of the hotspot's frogs and reptiles are endemic. Examples include the spectacular rainforest-dwelling Boyd's Forest Dragon, and the Yellow-Spotted Bell Frog. For further information, visit: <http://theconversation.edu.au/forests-of-eastern-australia-are-the-worlds-newest-biodiversity-hotspot-3935>

RESCUE MISSION TO SAVE CRITICALLY ENDANGERED NSW FAR SOUTH COAST EUCALYPT

A team from the NSW Office of Environment and Heritage (OEH), in partnership with the Australian National Botanic Gardens, recently mounted a logistically difficult rescue mission to save one of the most endangered eucalypts in the country. Located at the summit of a mountain on the far south coast of NSW, the critically endangered *Eucalyptus imlayensis* was first discovered in 1977 at the top of Mount Imlay. In 2007, OEH staff were concerned that no new plants were growing in this small isolated mallee eucalypt population. "When the NSW team called for help, we knew that propagating seed at the Gardens might well help save the *Eucalyptus imlayensis* from extinction," Australian National Botanic Gardens horticulturalist Paul Carmen said.

The good news is they have now successfully propagated 23 seedlings in the Canberra nursery ready to be planted out in the wild. The Mount Imlay operation is supported by funds through the NSW National Parks and Wildlife Service (NPWS) Find it and Fix it program.

BILL TO PROTECT ARAKOOLA FOREVER

On 16 October South Australian Premier Mike Rann released draft legislation that will ban all types of mining, including subsurface mining, in Arkaroola forever. He has also begun the formal process of applying for National and World Heritage listing. Mr. Rann said he would introduce the special purpose legislation to protect the cultural, natural and landscape values of Arkaroola in perpetuity.

"Arkaroola is one of the most spectacular areas in the world. It features unique biodiversity and has an abundance of national and state conservation rated species, and it is also a significant place for the Adnyamathanha People whose connections with this land remain strong". "After extensive consultation showing there was overwhelming support to protect Arkaroola the State Government made the decision to give the area the highest level of protection that can be afforded by the Parliament of South Australia. For further information, visit: www.premier.sa.gov.au

PESTICIDES FOUND AT 50 TIMES SAFE LEVELS

WWF Australia draws attention to a new study which reveals widespread pesticide contamination of catchments draining into the Great Barrier Reef at levels far higher than previously thought and as much as 50 times the level deemed safe. The study shows three dangerous chemicals - atrazine,

diuron and metachlor – were found at toxic levels exceeding, or far exceeding, national standards for contamination of freshwater ecosystems at eight sites along the Great Barrier Reef coast.

The study was prepared by a team of scientists from the Queensland Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM) and published in the Marine Pollution Bulletin. It detected 18 different pesticides at 11 sites and stated that “herbicides pose a real threat to aquatic plants which play a key role in freshwater, estuarine and coastal marine ecosystems, providing vital services to the Great Barrier Reef, such as nutrient cycling, food resources and habitats. For further information, visit: <http://wwf.org.au/23041/Pesticides-found-at-50-times-safe-levels>

“DECISION POINT” LIVES ON

A consortium of Australian universities has successfully bid for two major research centres in the field of conservation. One is an Australian Research Council Centre of Excellence – CEED – Centre of Excellence for Environmental Decisions. The other is a National Environment Research Program hub for Environmental Decisions funded by Australia’s federal environment department – SEWPaC. They run for 4-7 years and will communicate their research findings to the wider policy, management and NGO community through the monthly magazine “Decision Point”. Decision Point is available from: <http://ceed.edu.au/dpoint-news/>. It is an excellent journal with many issues containing research about protected areas.

PARKS VICTORIA AND RMIT UNIVERSITY UNITE ON THREATENED SPECIES PROJECT

In a good example of modern partnership approaches to conservation Parks Victoria and RMIT University commenced the annual fauna monitoring survey at the Wonthaggi Heathlands Nature Conservation Reserve in the first week of October. Parks Victoria has worked alongside RMIT University, their environment and land management students and the Friends of Wonthaggi Heathlands group for nearly seven years to provide a continuous stream of annual results from fauna monitoring at what is known to be a biodiversity hot spot for southwest Gippsland. The heathlands site is home to remnant reptile and frog populations and is an important site as first landfall for some birds that migrate across Bass Strait.
<http://parkweb.vic.gov.au/about-us/news/parks-victoria-and-rmit-university>

TURTLE SURVEYS ON FIELD ISLAND

Gardangarl (Field Island) is a critical habitat for flatback turtles and a key monitoring site in the [Australian National Recovery Plan for Marine Turtles](#). Every year teams of Kakadu park staff, traditional owners and conservation volunteers camp on Field Island over a four week period to study the turtles as they come ashore to nest. Surveying began in the 1980s and has continued annually since 1994. The data collected is pivotal in monitoring flatback turtle populations at a regional and national scale. This year, 71 turtles were recorded on Gardangarl in the survey period, with at least 48 successfully nesting. In 2010, 114 turtles were recorded, a record high in the last five years. For further information, visit: <http://www.environment.gov.au/parks/kakadu/nature-science/fauna-reptiles.html#surveys>

CARBON FARMING IN TASMANIA

Interesting examples of innovative approaches which will be necessary for future conservation include recent examples from Tasmania. Tasmanian grazier Roderic O'Connor, became one of only 14 farmers in Australia to be issued with verified carbon credits that can be sold on international voluntary markets. He expects to sell more than 30,000 carbon offset credits, or units, generated on his property to global companies looking to offset their greenhouse gas emissions. Mr O'Connor can earn as much by leaving native trees on his property standing and being paid for their carbon content, as he would by cutting them down.

The landholder decided not to log any of the 3500ha of native forest on his property that had been slated to be gradually harvested over the next 50 years. “Income as if I had harvested the trees, but I’m also delivering outcomes for the environment and for my family’s farming future.”

Other Tasmanian landholders are choosing to follow the same path as Mr O'Connor. Peter Downie became the first farmer in Australia to bank hard cash for selling his registered carbon credits. He was paid more than \$200,000 when he sold his first 15,000 carbon credits of the 70,000 units he has had assessed, registered and verified to a German property developer and a Japanese wool

processor. Both were looking to neutralise their companies' carbon footprints. For further information, visit: <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/>

4. NEW ZEALAND NEWS

KĀKĀPŌ RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP EXTENDED



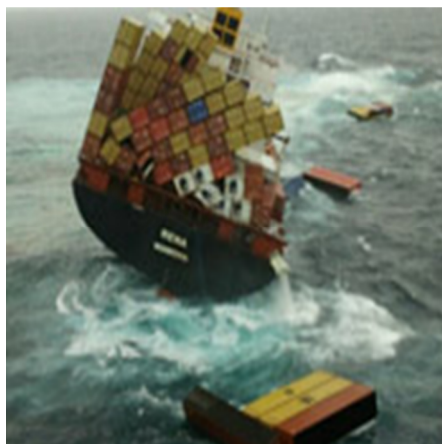
Kakapo
Photo: NZ DOC website

New Zealand Minister of Conservation Kate Wilkinson has welcomed the extension of the long-running Kakapo Recovery partnership between the Department of Conservation, Rio Tinto Alcan New Zealand and Forest & Bird - signed during Sirocco the kakapo's debut in Wellington on 28 September 2011.

"Established in 1990, this is one of DOC's longest-running conservation partnerships. This extension will see DOC and Rio Tinto continue to work together for the next four years," Ms Wilkinson said. "This means a continuation of the Kakapo Recovery programme's important work - including running breeding programmes and maintaining predator-proof sanctuaries - and a strengthening of the wild kakapo population, which has already more than doubled to well over 100 birds since 1990."

"A demonstration of just what can be achieved when the Government, the community work together toward a shared conservation goal" Ms Wilkinson said, visit: <http://doc.govt.nz/about-doc/news/media-releases/kakapo-led/>

NEW ZEALAND OIL SPILL CATASTROPHE



Container ship Rena, aground on Astrolabe Reef. Photo: Maritime NZ.

Early in the morning of Wednesday, 5 October 2011, the container ship *Rena*, ran aground on Astrolabe Reef, some 22 km from the coast of New Zealand's Bay of Plenty. This area boasts spectacular coastal scenery and clear water with islands, marine protected areas, warm temperate reefs teeming with fish, marine mammals and many species of sea birds.

A response to the emergency was mounted by Maritime NZ. The *Rena* began leaking heavy fuel oil the day after she ran aground and an oil slick began moving towards the mainland. Eighty eight containers, with a range of goods, fell overboard during heavy weather as the boat listed on the reef. Some have washed ashore on Motiti Island and on the mainland, some have sunk and a large number have been recovered.



Photo: Maritime NZ

As of 26 October, more than 670 tonnes of oil had been pumped from the *Rena*. Of the approximately 1,700 tonnes that *Rena* was carrying before she grounded, it is estimated that 350 tonnes has spilled into the sea. The remainder is held in several tanks on the ship. Oil continues to leak from the *Rena* and a 5 – 10 tonne slick is currently moving in the direction of Mayor Island, which is surrounded by a MPA.

Teams have been cleaning up beaches and rescuing oiled wildlife, such as little blue penguins and shags. The oiled wildlife treatment and rehabilitation facility is looking after more than 300 penguins which survived the oil spill. There are concerns that the endangered NZ Dotterel, which live on the foreshore, may be affected and 60 have been caught and protected at the facility before they

succumbed to the oil slick. Thus far, over 1,000 birds have been found dead as a result of the oil spill. There are 600-800 people in the response team and over 6000 volunteers assisting with the cleanup of beaches along the Bay of Plenty coastline
.More information www.renaoilspill.co.nz



Some of the wildlife casualties from the Oil spill from Rena. Photo: Maritime NZ.

5. PACIFIC ISLAND & PNG NEWS

NEW REPORT INTO PACIFIC ISLAND BIODIVERSITY AND CLIMATE CHANGE ADAPTATION

After extensive stakeholder consultations and an in-depth literature review, SPREP together with Australian Aid and Conservation International has released a report which considers Pacific Island biodiversity and climate change adaptation: building on nature's resilience. The report offers a solid foundation for the Pacific Island governments to make decisions, attract support and take action in a way that will enable the diverse and critical relationships between the people of the Pacific and their environment to be maintained into the future. To download the report, visit:

http://www.sprep.org/att/publication/000931_PIBioEcoCCAdaptation.pdf

GOOD COASTAL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES IN THE PACIFIC

A report was recently published on good coastal management practices in the Pacific. It looks at the diversity of the Pacific Islands, challenges faced and potential solutions. The report presents 17 case studies of coastal management initiatives from a wide range of countries and territories throughout the Pacific region. The case studies illustrate examples of local, provincial, national and regional scales of actions. Several case studies include the Island Conservation Areas in Tuvalu, Palau Green Fees and the Fiji National Protected Area Committee's approach to achieving national conservation goals. For further information or to download the publication, visit:

http://www.sprep.org/publication/pub_detail.asp?id=1146

6. UPCOMING

OCEANZ 2011, 12 AND 13 NOVEMBER 2011

Find out more at: www.oceanzdiveconference.com

FIFTH NATIONAL WETLAND RESTORATION SYMPOSIUM, 21 - 23 MARCH 2012

Find out more at: www.wetlandtrust.org.nz