

Pacific Peoples' Partnership

TOK BLONG PASIFIK

News and Views on the Pacific Islands

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ECOTOURISM: AT WHAT PRICE?

FEATURES

Fighting Cultural Commodification
The Gender Impact
Reflections From Tonga

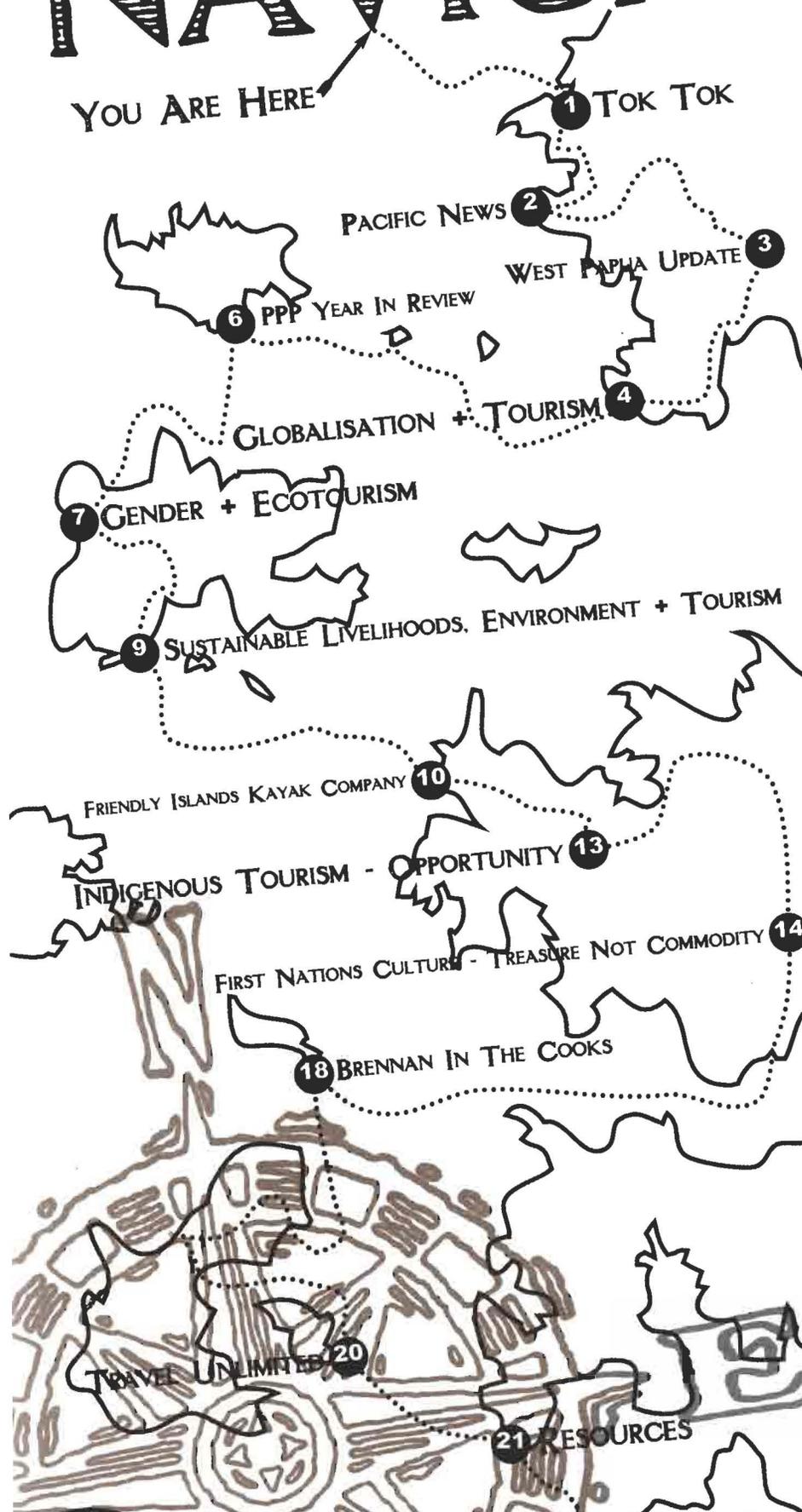
SPECIAL REPORTS

West Papua Mourns Again
PPP Looks To The Future



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ABOUT THE MAGAZINE

Tok Blong Pasifik is a phrase in Pidgin, whose rough translation is "News from the Pacific". *Tok Blong Pasifik* (ISSN: 1196-8206) is published by **Pacific Peoples' Partnership**. Our aim is to promote awareness of development, social justice, environment and other issues of importance to Pacific islanders. Through the magazine, we hope to provide readers with a window on the Pacific that will foster understanding and promote support for Pacific island peoples and their struggles for peace, justice and sustainable futures. PPP welcomes questions and comments about this and any other issue of *Tok Blong Pasifik*.

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EDITORIAL POLICY

Tok Blong Pasifik is produced by the Tok Blong Committee of Pacific Peoples' Partnership. We meet regularly to determine themes and story ideas for our quarterly journal. While the majority of articles for each issue are solicited, we welcome written and photographic contributions to Tok Blong Pasifik. We place priority on contributions from Pacific Islanders and others living in the Islands. Pacific Peoples' Partnership reserves the right to edit all material.

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BY RITA PARIKH

When the United Nations designated 2002 as the International Year of Ecotourism, little did it know of the backlash this would ignite. After all, cultural and ecotourism – tourism that promises culturally-sensitive, nature-based, and environmentally-sustainable tourist experiences – is being touted by national governments and international lenders as the greatest development strategy since the green revolution, a veritable panacea for cash-strapped, resource-poor and highly-indebted nations. Indeed, tourism already accounts for one in nine jobs in the global economy, generating revenues of more than U.S. \$620 billion annually, and ecotourism is the fastest growing of its subsectors. Fully one-quarter of all leisure travel is devoted to ecotourism and it is growing by 10-15 per cent each year.

Yet peoples' organizations across the world, from the Rethinking Tourism Project in the United States to Third World Network in Malaysia, have decried the new tourism push, arguing that cultural and ecotourism have failed

on their promises to enhance the economic, social and environmental health of communities. Instead, as Raymond Chavez argues in the lead story of this special issue of *Tok Blong Pasifik*, they have opened fragile ecosystems to the devastating footprint of foreigners, and indigenous cultures to the commodifying glare of cameras.

To what extent does ecotourism offer economic opportunity to Pacific Islanders? What measures of control do indigenous peoples have over it? How are women being affected by this approach to community development? And what elements need to be considered for cultural and ecotourism to succeed? These are but a few of the questions explored in the pages that follow.

Chavez's critical reflections

on the high price indigenous peoples in the developing world are paying for tourism is set against Virginia Ducette's exploration of one Canadian organization's efforts to enhance aboriginal peoples' control over cultural tourism. Gayle Nelson confronts the differential impact that ecotourism can have on men and women while Susan Marsden offers a museum curator's perspective on the commodifying tendencies of cultural tourism.

Still, with careful attention to these threats, many believe that cultural and ecotourism operations can have a positive developmental impact on the lives and communities of Pacific Islanders. Several contributors from the Pacific, including Sharon and Doug Spence and Naomi Johnson, confirm this belief as they speak to efforts to build environmentally and economically sustainable marine ecotourism ventures.

While the authors differ in their perspectives on the merits and potential of ecotourism, they are all in agreement with one basic element: unless indigenous peoples create, manage and

regulate tourism activities themselves, they and their communities will remain its victims and, like the promise of the green revolution, ecotourism's promise of sustainable development will never be realized.

Photo: Holger Leue
Courtesy Cook Islands Tourism Corporation



PACIFIC ISLANDS TO ACCOMMODATE ASYLUM SEEKERS

Under pressure from Australia, Pacific island countries are beginning to accommodate asylum seekers from the Middle East who are arriving in the region. Papua New Guinea has already accepted its first contingent of more than 200 refugees on Manus Island and Fiji will likely accept between 700-1,000 asylum seekers. Australia has also asked Palau and Kiribati to provide facilities. Australia has come under considerable criticism by church groups and Pacific island nation governments both for refusing to accommodate refugees directly, and for offering sweetened aid packages to Pacific island nations in return for their agreements to house the asylum seekers.

There is heightened concern about the impact on resources of these small island nations that this historic influx of refugees is set to have. Fijian Foreign Minister Kaliopate Tavola, chair of the Fijian ministerial task force handling refugee negotiations, has made it clear, for example, that asylum seekers would not be resettled in Fiji, but merely housed temporarily, until they can be sent on to Australia. In the meantime, little has been said about the rights of the refugees themselves, or of the moral obligations of nations to feed and shelter this group of people.

GOVERNMENT'S CONSTITUTIONAL VALIDITY QUESTIONED: FIJI

Former Fiji prime minister and now opposition leader Mahendra Chaudry has questioned the constitutional validity of the government formed by prime minister-elect Laisenia Qarase following the country's August elections. Although Mr. Chaudry's Labour Party holds 27 of parliament's 71 seats and is entitled to an equal proportion of cabinet seats, Mr. Qarase has said that he would be unable to work with him and did not include any Labour Party ministers in his cabinet.

Foreign Minister Phil Goff says New Zealand will await a final ruling by the Fiji Court of Appeal on whether the resulting cabinet is constitutional. The Commonwealth Observer Group has recommended that Fiji should adopt a common roll system with universal suffrage as opposed to the current ethnic-based electoral system with communal seats that has polarized Fiji's politics, dividing Indo-Fijians and ethnic Fijians.

The August elections were the first since the May 2000 coup that ousted the Chaudry Labour Government. In an ironic twist, coup leader George Speight, who remains in prison awaiting trial for treason, was nevertheless elected to parliament.

Source: ABC Radio Australia News/Fiji Daily Post/Pasifik Nuis

ELECTIONS RUN SMOOTHLY IN SOLOMON ISLANDS

While the recent elections in the Solomon Islands ran smoothly with only sporadic violence reported, people have responded without enthusiasm to the election of Prime Minister Sir Allan Kemakesa. Sir Kemakesa of the People's Alliance Party was ousted as deputy prime minister of the caretaker government only two months ago for allegedly awarding himself thousands of dollars in government compensation intended for victims of the civil war.

The elections were the first since the June 2000 coup, which saw then Prime Minister Bartholomew Ulufa'alu hijacked in an attempted coup and subsequently forced to resign. The Solomons has been in a state of ethnic and civil unrest since 1998 when the Isatabu Freedom Movement of Guadalcanal began to forcibly evict Malaitans from Guadalcanal accusing them of taking land and jobs around the capital Honiara. The Malaitan Eagle Force formed in response to the evictions, which saw at least 20,000 people forced off Guadalcanal. Ethnic fighting between the two groups followed, culminating in the MEF coup in response to what it perceived as the government's inability to resolve the situation.

It is widely acknowledged that Sir Kemakesa's government faces a huge challenge in resolving the Solomon's ethnic disputes, legacy of violence and ailing economy in its four-year term.

Source: Radio Australia, Voice of America

DISARMAMENT BEGINS IN BOUGAINVILLE

Members of the Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the Bougainville Resistance Fighters have informed the Peace Process Consultative Committee that they have initiated a weapons disposal programme, starting in the Bana and Torokina areas. Disarmament, along with autonomy from Papua New

Guinea, were key components of the Bougainville Peace Agreement signed on August 30th, 2001 in Arawa.

The Bougainville Revolutionary Army and the Bougainville Resistance Fighters have been fighting Papua New Guinea's military since 1988 when the people of Bougainville forced the closure of an unpopular copper mine.

Source: The National Post

VANUATU BACKTRACKS ON WTO

Vanuatu has made a sudden u-turn by backtracking on joining the World Trade Organization after being scheduled for accession in November in Doha, Qatar. Director of the Department of Trade, Mr. Roy Mickey Joy, defended the decision saying the government had not budgeted for the joining fee of VT 8 million (approx. Can. \$90,000) and that Vanuatu was unable to meet two of the key conditions for accession. These were the opening of the retail market to foreign investors and the opening of the telecommunications industry to competition. The Vanuatu government has a legally binding contract with Telecom Vanuatu Ltd. for a monopoly of the telecommunications industry until 2012. Mr. Joy said he hoped the decision would not affect the future of aid donations to Vanuatu or Vanuatu's debt servicing capacity.

Non-governmental organizations in Vanuatu have long opposed accession saying that it will lead to the erosion of governmental autonomy and the heightened penetration of multinational businesses into all sectors of island society and commerce.

RAROTONGA AIRPORT SET FOR FACELIFT

Following increasing numbers of tourists to the Cook Islands, Rarotonga Airport may undergo an upgrade costing Aus. \$7.7 million. Airport Authority executive officer Joe Ngamata says a New Zealand-designed concept plan for the terminal has been well received by the authority's directors. However, acting president of the Cook Islands Chamber of Commerce, Ewan Smith, fears that the recent collapse of Canadian airline Canada 3000 will have a major negative impact on the local tourist economy. Canada 3000 had operated special holiday charter flights to the Cook Islands.

Source: ABC Radio Australia News

To be a living symbol of the Papuan independence movement is to live dangerously. Musician Arnold Ap was shot in 1984 while trying to escape from Indonesian custody with a fellow member of his Mambesak cultural troupe. Papuans mourned the death of this *konor* (cultural-spiritual leader) and took to the streets. Thomas Wanggai, once a candidate for the post of Indonesian provincial governor, died in a Java jail cell in 1996. Wanggai had been imprisoned for holding a pro-independence flag-raising; the return of his body to his homeland again sparked protests, some of them violent, by followers who believed he had been murdered in detention.

This November it was Theys Hiu Eluay's turn. The colourful and controversial chair of the Presidium Dewan Papua (Papuan Council Presidium) was found dead under suspicious circumstances, and many were quick to blame covert action by Indonesia's security forces. Eluay, a customary chief of the Sentani people with a fondness for bird-of-paradise head-dresses and plaid blazers, was elected to head the non-violent PDP in 2000. At the time of his death, he was on trial under Indonesian anti-subversion laws for his pro-independence activity. He was invited to dinner by the local commander of Indonesia's notorious Kopassus special forces. Driving home, his car was stopped by non-Papuans and Eluay was abducted, according to a desperate phone call from his driver. The next day Eluay's body was found in the car at the bottom of a ravine. An autopsy found that he had died from obstruction of his breathing passage.

His wife and members of the PDP and his Sentani people blamed Kopassus for his killing. A number of countries and the European Union have called for an inquiry. So far, there has been no statement by the government of Canada.

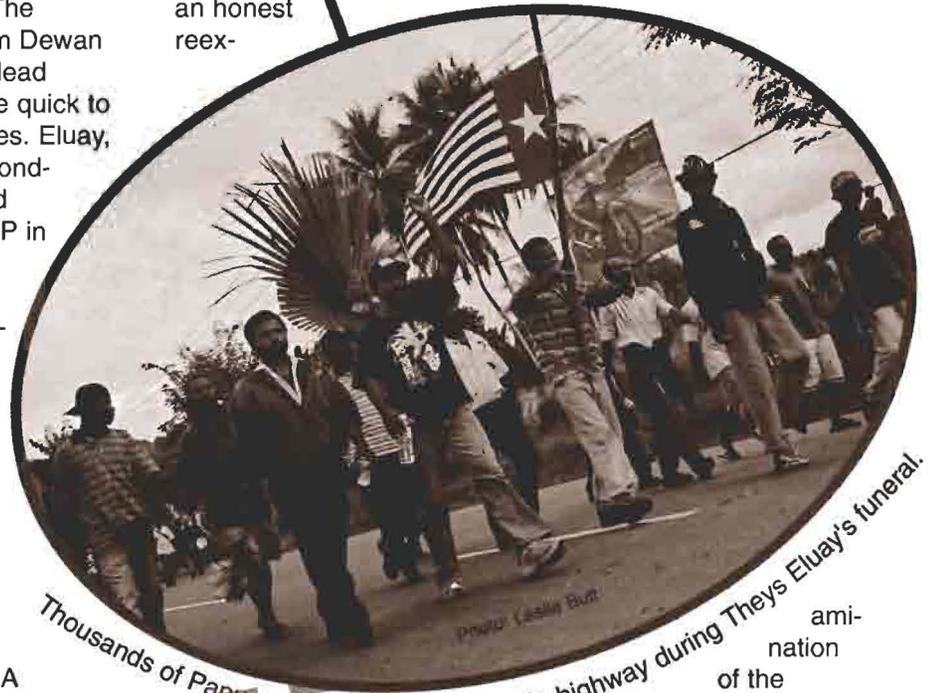
Eluay's death marks another setback for the hopes for peace in West Papua.

The PDP is the most widespread pro-independence organization. It calls for dialogue between Papuans and the government of Indonesia, a re-examination of the historical circumstances under which Indonesia took over West Papua in the 1960s, and a referendum on independence. When charges were brought against Eluay and four other PDP leaders, it marked Indonesia's return to the practice of detaining political prisoners (security authorities ignored President Abdurrahman Wahid's order to set them free) and dealt a blow to the chances for peaceful dialogue. With Eluay's killing, tensions are likely

to prompt more clashes between angry Papuans and the security forces.

Indonesia surprised many when it passed a law recently granting special autonomy to Papua. The law gives the provincial government considerable authority and revenues and the right to its own flag and anthem. It even restores the region's Papua name in place of Irian Jaya.

However, public support for special autonomy is low outside elite groups clustered around the governor's office and Papua's two universities. It is not likely to succeed in the absence of dialogue and an honest reex-



Thousands of Papuans march along the main highway during Theys Eluay's funeral. Photo: Leslie Butt

amination of the historical background. While a new PDP chair, Tom Beanal, has renewed the call for dialogue, it has so far fallen on deaf ears.

If Indonesian president Megawati Sukarnoputri (whose father presided over the annexation of West Papua when he ruled in Jakarta) really sheds tears for the people of Papua, as she said on her last visit, she will have to listen to those people. Her government is already carrying out a dialogue with the Free Aceh Movement guerrillas at the other end of the archipelago, but seems unwilling to do the same with the PDP. That is all the more short-sighted given the PDP's relative moderation, grounded in its church and tribal base. Beanal is respected across Papua, and lacks Eluay's ties to militias like the Pemuda Pancasila. And he is a demonstrated pragmatist. 🙏

GLOBALISATION & TOURISM

for indigenous peoples

Globalisation and tourism have become a deadly mix for indigenous peoples. Tourism's impact on indigenous peoples' way of life and on their control of and access to their resources and environment has become more pronounced with globalisation of the world economy.

For several decades now, tourism has been a major source of revenue for countries, specifically in the Third World. Its growth has been nothing short of phenomenal. In the 1950s, 25 million people travelled to a foreign destination. In the 1960s, this grew to 70 million. By 1997, 617 million tourists had been reported by the Madrid-based World Tourism Organisation to have travelled to foreign countries.

The World Tourism Organisation has even predicted that by the 21st century, tourist arrivals would have reached billions annually. It foresees that by the year 2010, 1 billion tourists would have travelled abroad and by 2020, this would have increased to 1.6 billion.

In terms of revenues, this would easily translate to billions of dollars yearly. In the 1960s, for example, tourism earned 'only' US\$6.8 billion. In 1997, revenues jumped to US\$ 448 billion. By the year 2000, the World Tourism Organization predicts tourism earnings to reach \$621 billion and by 2010, a whopping \$1.5 trillion.

Tourism is also touted as a major source of employment worldwide. According to the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTTC), a grouping of more than 80 chief executives of the travel and tourism industry, tourism employs directly or indirectly more than 260 million. This translates to one out of nine jobs in the world economy generated by the industry. By the coming decade, the workforce is expected to increase by 100 million more jobs, 70 per cent of these in the Asia-Pacific region.

The WTTTC in fact now considers tourism as the world's biggest industry and a 'key 21st century economic and employment driver.'

TOURISM AS EXPORT STRATEGY

It is no wonder, therefore, that cash-starved Third World countries view tourism as a shortcut to rapid development. Its potential to earn billions of dollars easily has resulted in it being viewed as a panacea for debt-ridden countries. But more than this, tourism has become part and parcel of multilateral financial institutions' package for

financial bail-outs for countries in distress.

Tourism is now being pursued as a serious development strategy for the Third World.

The International Monetary Fund has included tourism as part of its Structural Adjustment Programmes.

The SAPs, which are preconditions for the approval of financial assistance, require the indebted country to:

- be integrated into the global economy;
- deregulate and liberalise its economy;
- shift from an agriculture-based to a manufacturing and service industry-based economy; and
- liberalise its financial sector.

In essence, these preconditions link the Third World country to the world economy. The SAP opens up the local economy to foreign investments and multinational corporations, while eliminating subsidies and protection to local industries. Under IMF-World Bank prescriptions, tourism is classified as an export strategy. With its capacity to earn billions of dollars, tourism is being promoted by the IMF-WB as a means for Third World countries to repay their debts.

Third World governments have therefore tried to fulfil their commitments to these SAPs by large-scale investments in tourism-related ventures. In conjunction with financial multilateral institutions and travel and tourism transnational corporations (TNCs), they have launched infrastructure projects such as roads, hotels and tourist-promotion programmes. Worldwide, public and private investments have reached \$800 billion annually, accounting for 12 per cent of total worldwide investments.



Waikiki: Tourist Mecca.

DEADLY

But these IMF-WB conditionalities have proven to be insufficient to integrate and open up Third World economies. The World Trade Organisation has taken further steps to fully liberalise the world economy. The most important international agreement with direct bearing on tourism is the General Agreement on Trade in Services (GATS).

In short, GATS makes it easier for big tourist and travel TNCs to invest in the local tourism industries of Third World countries. Among others, it removes restrictions on foreign corporations' abilities to transfer staff from one country to another; and enables them to use trademarks, create and operate branch offices abroad, and more importantly, to repatriate their earnings to their parent companies abroad.

Under GATS, protection to the local tourism industry would be construed as unfair practice and would thus have to be eliminated.

TNCs now enjoy the same benefits as local travel and tourism agencies. This opens the local industry to competition from giant TNCs, which virtually means effectively transferring its control to them.

THREAT TO INDIGENOUS PEOPLES

But what does globalisation and tourism mean for indigenous peoples? It is already an established fact that tourism had brought pernicious and long-term damaging effects on indigenous peoples even prior to globalisation. The present economic order further exacerbates and hastens these impacts.

For one, indigenous communities, which have otherwise been left untouched by traditional tourism activities, have now been targeted for tourism ventures, most specifically, ecotourism. A relatively new variant, ecotourism is described as environment-friendly, sustainable and nature-based. It came about as a response to the growing environmental awareness worldwide these past decades.

Eager to cash in on this trend, the industry promoted ecotourism as an alternative activity, ostensibly to promote tourism while protecting the environment. This activity "involves visiting relatively undisturbed natural areas with the aim of studying, admiring and enjoying the scenery, wild plants and animals, as well as any existing cultural

aspects," according to IBON Facts and Figures. It includes spelunking, mountain climbing, scuba diving, bird watching, and whale watching, among others.

This tourism sub-sector has met with remarkable success. Today, it has become the fastest growing sub-sector, growing at a rate of 10 - 15 per cent annually. Ecotourism now accounts for 25 per cent of all leisure trips abroad.

It is important to note that ecotourism destinations are more often than not in the Third World. Tourism here has been increasing annually by 6 per cent as compared to 3.5 per cent in developed countries. After all, it is in these areas that relatively undisturbed and preserved natural environments and exotic areas are located. But it is also

in these countries that the majority of the distinct indigenous cultures can be found.

To a large extent, therefore, indigenous communities have become targets of ecotourism in this globalised economy.

In the Philippines, where tourism has long been considered as a major dollar-earner, ecotourism has

Photo: Elaine Briere

Western Samoa: Commercial Potential?

also become a priority. Blessed with a rich biodiversity, the Philippines

has developed ecotourism as a strategy to entice more foreign tourists and increase its share in world tourism revenue. Its Department of Tourism (DOT)'s Master Plan aims to develop 'sustainable' tourism while making the Philippines a leading tourist destination in Asia.

In support of this thrust is the National Integrated Protected Areas System Act (NIPAS) of 1992, which classifies certain areas as protected zones. The DOT has identified 17 protected areas all over the country as suitable for ecotourism. It is important to note that the majority of these areas are territories of indigenous peoples.

In the Cordillera in the northern Philippines, tourism continues to affect adversely many of its 1.3 million indigenous population. Sagada in Mountain Province, home to the indigenous Kankanaeys, is known internationally for its cool climate, rice terraces, and caves. Its people have maintained their indigenous way of life, subsistence economy and sustainable relationship with nature for centuries.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 17

The Year That Was ...

Retrospective by JACK LACKAVICH, PPP Board Member

After what was perhaps the toughest year in its 26-year history, Pacific Peoples' Partnership has found its stride again and is beginning to position itself once more as Canada's leading voice on the Pacific.

With the resignation last year of PPP's long-time executive director, Stuart Wulff, Pacific Peoples' Partnership entered a period of major transition characterized by a loss of corporate memory, fundraising opportunities, and momentum.

Fourteen months later, the dust has settled, PPP has found an able new executive director in Rita Parikh, and the organization is forging ahead with a fresh sense of dedication to its mission.

Rita comes to PPP with considerable experience working on social justice and development issues overseas and in Canada. Rita spent the past decade working with non-governmental organizations, including Inter Pares, OXFAM, and MATCH International, all dedicated to affecting social, political and economic change globally. She is also the chair of the board of Canada's largest retail cooperative, Mountain Equipment Coop. Rita brings to Pacific Peoples' Partnership a broad vision, a creative, facilitative style of leadership, and a deep commitment to people-led development.

In a major departure, PPP also kicked its habit of hiring part-time, temporary project management staff and hired a full-time, permanent programme coordinator—Heidi Tyedmers. This investment in human resources will ensure continuity from year to year and enhance synergy among our various programmes, while building our fundraising capacity.

Heidi recently returned to Canada after three-and-a-half years in Vanuatu with the Vanuatu Cultural Centre where she coordinated an ambitious project for marginalized youth. Her knowledge of the Pacific and of organizational management systems, combined with Rita's knowledge of policy issues in the Canadian NGO sector, make for an excellent team, and is cause for celebration.

In spite of the transitional challenges during the past year, the work and programme of PPP moved ahead, thanks in large part to the hard-working, endless efforts of PPP's committed board and committee members. Together, they launched a highly successful Youth International Internship Programme, sending eight young First Nations people from across Canada

to PPP's Pacific partners in Vanuatu, the Cook Islands, and Aotearoa (NZ). Former board member Gloria Williams coordinated the programme during the transition (while balancing a full-time job!), and also launched the third year of this programme. Based out of indigenous peoples' organizations in the Pacific, our newest set of interns (all 10 of them) are pursuing work placements in everything from coastal resource management and intellectual property rights to youth education through theatre.

Board members also served as a valuable resource for our annual Public Engagement programme aimed at raising awareness in Canada about critical development issues in the Pacific. This project brought 10 Pacific islanders to B.C. where they traveled to First Nations communities, talking about their varying cultures, threats to those cultures, and how cultural revival is rooted in community development processes. This year, PPP was fortunate to have Vanessa Nevin on staff as the project's coordinator and her hard work and creativity continue to be felt during the programme's second phase.

Another cause for celebration is the clearing up of backlog issues of *Tok Blong Pasifik*, thanks to PPP vice-president Elaine Monds and her hard-working Tok Blong Committee. This year marked the first time that PPP was able to draw on "guest editors" who each championed an issue, from the writing and solicitation of articles, to the collection of graphics, photographs, ads and donations. PPP is grateful to guest editors Linda Pennells, David Webster, Leslie Butt, and Rheagan Tarbell for the skill, intelligence and passion with which they pulled *Tok Blong Pasifik* together.

Despite these ongoing programmes, the course ahead remains largely uncharted. This year, PPP will be undergoing a critical organizational development exercise to refine or affirm PPP's vision and mission, and to create a three-year strategic plan to pursue those.

What are the critical issues confronting Pacific peoples today? Where does our relevance as a development education organization lie? What role can we play to shape the character and direction of Canadian Official Development Assistance and foreign policy in the Pacific? How important is Tok Blong to subscribers and members? Is our resource centre relevant? These are a few of the many questions we hope to have answered in our discussions with members, Canadian NGO partners, and our overseas counterparts in the months to come.

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What does GENDER have to do with ECOTOURISM ?

GAYLE NELSON

Many people have heard the term Gender and Development. Some have even heard the theory behind it, which aims to involve all people in development in ways that are fair and equitable and that make sense within their cultural context. Often this is done by looking closely at the roles, responsibilities and relationships that men and women have within their societies and then trying to understand the interaction between those factors and development projects or policies.

This article looks briefly at gender issues as they might arise in ecotourism activities at the community level. It is based on experience gained when I worked in the Pacific at the South Pacific Forum Secretariat, a regional intergovernmental agency. As Gender Issues Adviser from 1996 to 2000, I participated as a trainer in workshops held for rural people setting up ecotourism projects. The South Pacific Regional Environment Program, an organization that encourages participants to consider the gender implications of projects, sponsored the workshops which offered women and men the opportunity to understand why gender roles and relationships are important and how they can influence family or community-run ecotourism projects.

In ecotourism projects there is often emphasis on local, small-scale, cultural and environmental products being marketed to tourists as part of a package. Often tourists stay within households in the local community or in small guesthouses. Meals are often included as there may not be cafes in small villages. In addition, packages may include guided trips through the forest, on rivers or on the sea, fishing, snorkeling and other forms of recreation.

Gender analysis at the design stage of ecotourism projects will look at these activities in relation to their impacts on men's and women's access and control of political, economic, time, and knowledge resources. In an

ideal project design situation, workshops would be held to discuss questions related to gender impacts of a project. After an introduction to what gender and development is and why it is important, men and women in the communities should raise their own questions or adapt the examples below. Responses should be

framed to clarify how the project impacts men's and women's control of, and access to, resources. It is also useful to consider in more detail whether there are differences in impacts on men and women depending on their age, ethnicity or social and economic standing in the community. Some of the questions that clarify gender impacts include:

- How and to what extent are men and women involved in decisions about an ecotourism project?
- What percentage of men and women are attending training sessions?
- How and to what extent are men and women involved in deciding how to use and manage money received from donors (if there is any)?
- What daily work will need to be done to make the project successful, and will men or women be doing each task? (For example, laundry, growing and harvesting food, cooking, cleaning accommodations and public areas, cutting and carrying firewood, collecting water, leading walks in the woods or other field trips, making trips to town to buy supplies).
- If jobs are changing, will men or women have to shoulder more unpaid household or community responsibilities after someone else takes a job in the ecotourism project?
- Will the men and women doing the above jobs be paid?
- How much will women be paid and how much will men be paid for each kind of work?
- Will women and men get to keep their money as individuals or will it be family or community money?
- If it is family or community money, who will be involved and how will decisions be made about how and when to use the money? ↩

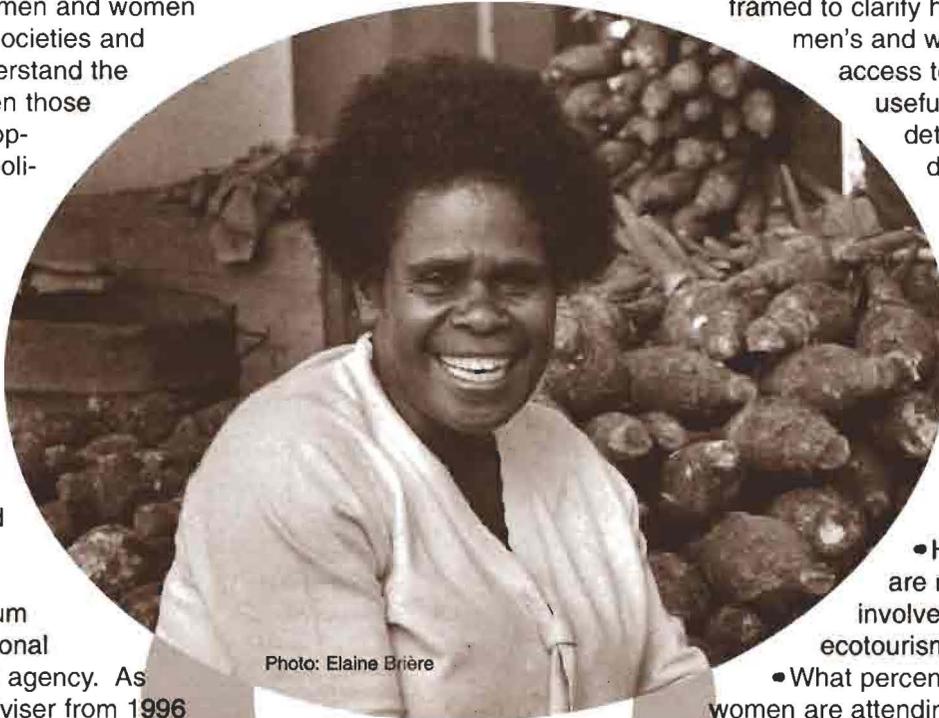


Photo: Elaine Briere

From a gender analysis perspective, one of the most revealing aspects of a discussion on these questions is who provides the resource of time to do what work, and how or if they are compensated by substitution of political (status or decision-making) or economic resources.

For example, in the daily business of ecotourism in the Pacific it is likely that the jobs of cleaning, laundry, maintaining gardens, cooking, washing dishes, and carrying water and firewood will be done by women. As these are considered 'traditional' women's roles they are likely to be unpaid or very low-paid positions. Cutting firewood will be a corresponding low or unpaid 'traditional' role for men. Cleaning the outdoor public areas and cutting grass may fall to either men or women.

These tasks will need to be done in addition to men's and women's regular chores. Consequently while an additional burden of work may be created for both women and men, more of this work is falling on women's shoulders. In turn there may be an effect on women's health through overwork. It may also have negative social impacts if women have less time to spend working in their own homes, caring for and spending leisure time with their children and participating in their communities.

Many women will choose to bear this double burden of work if it means having a chance to earn and control their own income. However, sustainability of ecotourism ventures can be affected because women are not included in decision-making about how a project will work, and in planning the division of labour and pay scales for a project. If, as a result, women are not adequately compensated for their time and cannot share their work, they may just run out of time, energy and motivation to maintain expected standards. Men are often not willing to participate and share in the more mundane housekeeping and

domestic tasks of the venture because they feel these are not 'appropriate' roles for men. The result can be that tourists are disappointed and will not give good references or make return visits. This may then create additional stress between men and women, and cause animosity and even violence if men blame women for lack of project success.

In another example of dividing up project tasks, the work of leading field trips is most likely to be an activity led by men.

Because this is a 'new' role it may be more highly valued than domestic work, both in status (political resource) and in direct compensation. In many Pacific cultures it is inappropriate for women to be out in the forest or on the sea with strangers where it might be perceived that their 'virtue' is at risk.

Because women and men in the Pacific have different responsibilities in relation to the environment, they also have different sets of knowledge about how it is used, its spiritual meanings and its value. Hence, without thoughtful planning to incorporate women and men into the task of guiding environmental and cultural field trips, there is then gender disparity and bias in the cultural view that tourists take away with them.

These are just a few snapshot examples of gender issues that exist within ecotourism at a village level. Many of these issues can be resolved only through extensive analysis and discussion. Moreover, women and men's voices have to be heard and valued equally in this process if the outcomes are to be positive and beneficial.

For the past 12 years Gayle Nelson and her husband Michael Mullins have worked together, and individually, on a range of development and environment issues - both in BC and abroad.

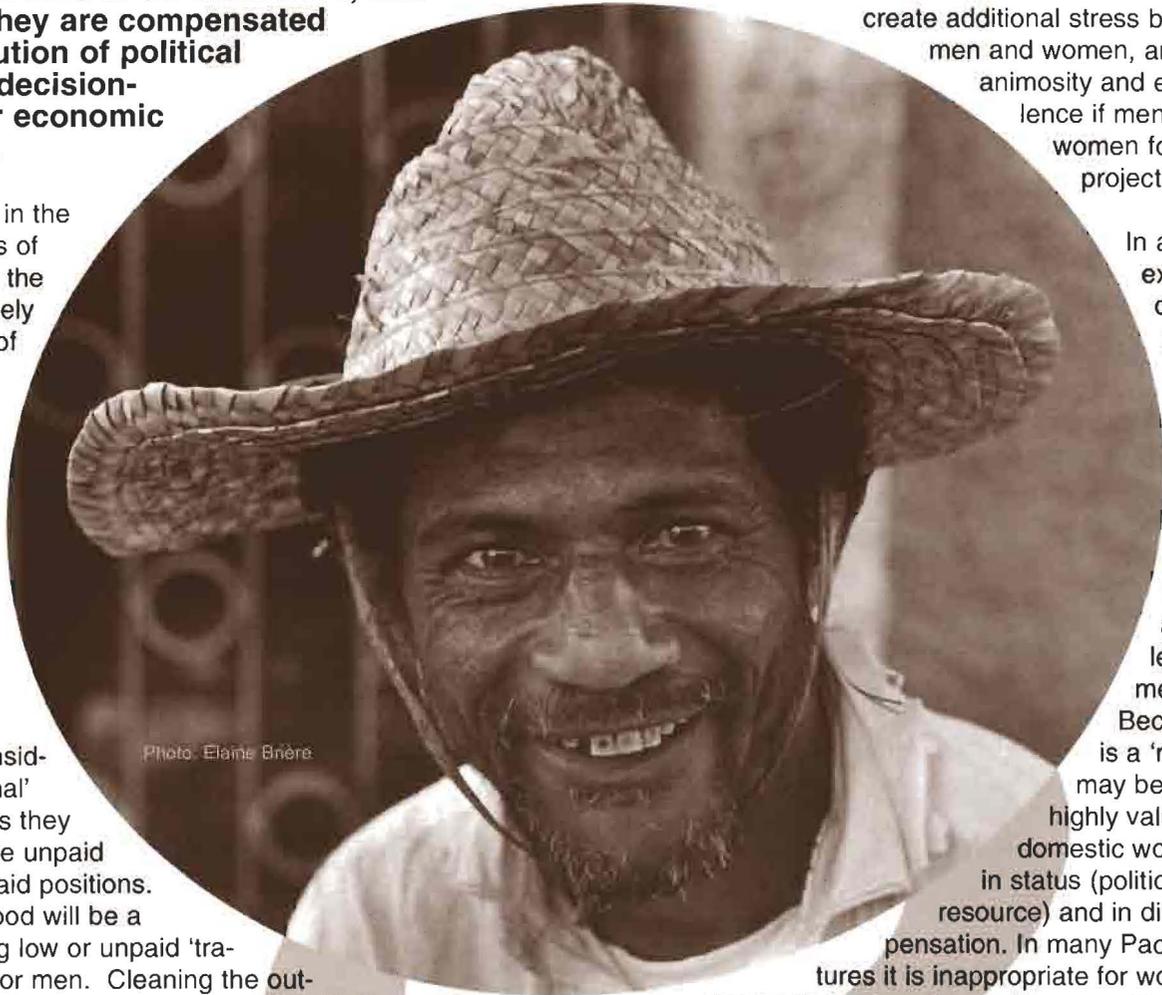


Photo: Elaine Briere

Ecotourism:

Promoting Sustainable Livelihoods and Marine Conservation

BY NAOMI JOHNSON

Imagine kayaking through peaceful mangroves, snorkeling in crystal clear waters, or resting in an airy beach hut, listening to the waves lapping against the shore, surrounded by warm tropical sunshine. These are just a few of the visions with which Pacific Island communities hope to entice visitors and grab their share of the tourism dollar.

Over the last two years, many communities in the Pacific

region have learned to establish ecotourism ventures as an environmentally-friendly way to generate income



through a series of workshops funded by the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Program or C-SPOD.

Marine ecotourism is tourism with a focus on preserving the marine environment, culture, and lifestyle of the communities visited by tourists. It is hoped that marine ecotourism ventures will persuade local communities that destructive activities such as dynamite fishing, using chemicals to catch fish, breaking off coral, sand

mining, and using mangroves as landfill sites are against their own best interests.

According to Apis-Overhoff, SPREP's Wetlands Management Officer, the first step to starting an ecotourism venture is to approach traditional leaders to determine if it is of interest to the village. Once approval is granted, the next step is to assess the natural resources with members of the community. This helps them to decide what might be attractive to tourists, and what they will allow tourists to see and experience. "A lot of communities don't want their lifestyle or their daily activities disrupted, so that has to be taken into consideration," says Apis-Overhoff.

The final steps are to market the product and bring in the tourists. Apis-Overhoff says that most communities will have to do this with the visitors bureau or the tourism office, because most lack marketing skills.

Some ecotourism ventures in the region are already well established. Australian Steve Brown, owner and operator of Ecotour Samoa, works with 10 villages and has

been delivering unique cultural experiences for the last seven years. Brown describes ecotourism as a travel experience that involves elements of adventure, nature, culture, development work, education, and the environment, all of which he says a tourist should experience at some depth by the end of a seven day tour.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 12...

CUSO is looking for Canadians with skills and experience in agriculture, forestry, fisheries, environment, and community activism to work in volunteer programmes in some thirty countries world-wide. Standard contracts: 2 years, plus language training, basic cost of living and benefits.

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The workshops provided delegates with the skills needed to assist local communities in identifying suitable tourism opportunities, and taught them to plan and manage the development of those ventures in a way that is beneficial to both the community and the environment. The "train-the-trainer" workshops, facilitated by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme based in Apia, Samoa, have taken place in Vanuatu, Cook Islands, and most recently in Yap state, Federated States of Micronesia.



Photos courtesy FIKCO

Friendly Islands

Ecological and cultural tourism is the fastest growing sector of international tourism, with an increasing number of travelers seeking destinations that are safe and off the beaten track and which provide opportunities for adventure activities. With its pristine natural environment, beautiful reefs and beaches, migratory humpback whales, warm tropical climate, friendly locals, cultural traditions, political stability, and relatively low number of tourists (just 30-35,000 per year), the Kingdom of Tonga is an attractive destination for such travelers. We believe that



our tourism venture, the Friendly Islands Kayak Company, is helping to meet this demand while being sensitive to both the natural environment and cultural traditions of Tonga.

Based in the scenic Vava'u island group, FIKCO has specialized in guided sea kayak expeditions since 1991. With its newly developed Adventure Centre, FIKCO also offers guided mountain biking, whale watching, snorkeling, and nature/cultural tours, plus free public access to resources on Tonga's history, geography, flora, fauna, marine ecosystem, and culture. The Adventure Centre promotes community education, drawing on the knowledge and expertise of FIKCO's naturalist guides who have presented on such topics as environmental conservation, ethical whale watching, marketing of tourism products, eco-tourism, and employment standards for guides.



The New Zealand and Tongan partners of FIKCO are equally active in the daily operations and management of the business.

The economic benefits from tourism operations such as FIKCO spread throughout the wider community. Handicraft cooperatives, local carvers, villages which provide tourist feasts, transport operators, accommodation owners, suppliers of market garden produce, and retailers all benefit from FIKCO's activities. In addition, the benefits from these activities have direct impacts on local women and their families.

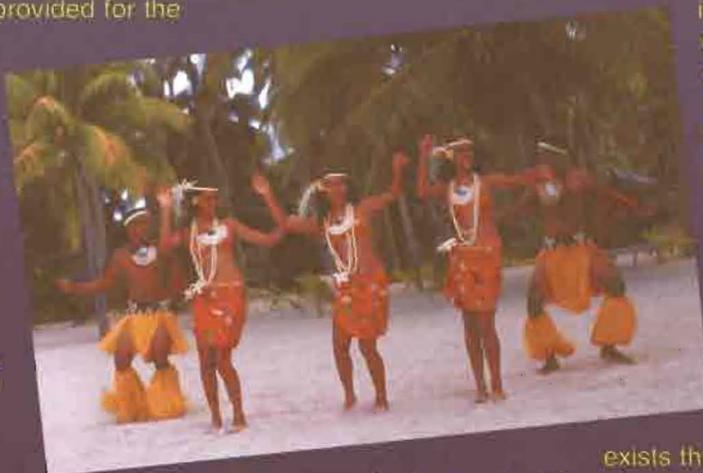
Women produce the majority of the handicrafts purchased by FIKCO guests and they have developed a system whereby different families in a village take turns hosting a feast and supporting one another in the feast preparations. Also, FIKCO makes a conscious effort to employ equal numbers of local men and women. This is not necessarily easy since Tongan women are often discouraged from working by their fathers or husbands, especially if their work takes them away from family responsibilities. Consequently, guiding positions at FIKCO are filled by men while women are hired for the daytime office, reception, and cleaning positions.



At the national level, the socio-economic benefits for Tonga from ecotourism and cultural tourism include the generation of foreign exchange and, ultimately, the

a model for sustainable tourism in

Tourism that is sensitive to local ecology and culture has tremendous socio-economic value for a small developing nation such as Tonga. At the local level, FIKCO has created employment opportunities, provided for the transfer of diverse skills, and promoted community education. FIKCO continues to provide opportunities for training of local people in such areas as adventure tourism, sea kayaking, outdoor leadership, interpretation, environmental conservation, first aid, safe boat handling, marine navigation, office work and accounting. The Tongan partners of the company recently completed a six-month course in office administration, computerised accounting, and small business management in New Zealand, funded by the Pacific Islands Investment Development Scheme.



improvement of living standards. FIKCO, in particular, actively promotes Tonga as a tourist destination through its marketing literature and at international trade shows. In recognition of the benefits of eco/cultural tourism for the Kingdom, the Government of Tonga has received funding from Australia and New Zealand for the development and promotion of nature-based tourism.

To be sure, even nature-based tourism can pose threats to the delicate ecological balance that exists throughout the Pacific. In an effort to protect Tonga's natural and cultural resources, Friendly Islands Kayak Company has developed Minimum Impact Guidelines that are disseminated to their guides

Kayak company

and guests. These guidelines were established with not only international standards and practices in mind, but also following careful consideration of Tonga's unique socio-cultural and environmental features. Effective implementation of minimum impact guidelines in developing countries like Tonga, however, faces inherent challenges.

While a local guide might understand the guidelines, they may not necessarily internalize them. For example, FIKCO's local guides are trained to brief their guests on the importance of preserving the coral reefs and yet they may still occasionally touch and stand on the reefs themselves. Thus, close monitoring of the guides' practices in the field and ongoing education is required. Indeed, there is a strong need in Tonga for more community education in environmental conserva-

tion, particularly in the outer islands, together with stricter enforcement of government regulations. The ultimate goal of such awareness is to foster in the local people a sense of stewardship and accountability in relation to their natural environment.

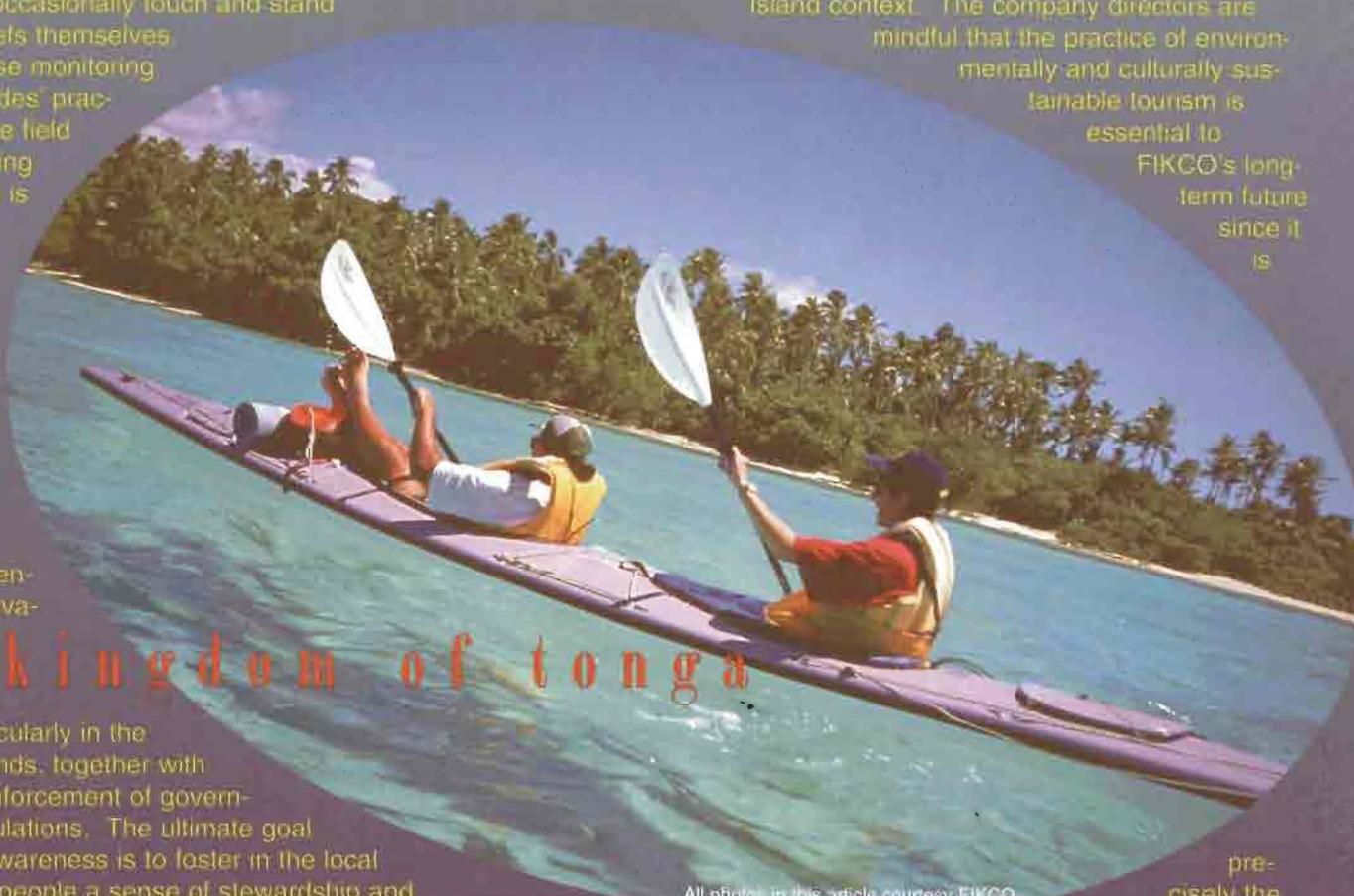
While the potential benefits of eco-tourism and cultural tourism can be far reaching, there is also the risk that tourism ventures will negatively impact local cultures. To minimize this risk, FIKCO educates the guides and guests on cultural protocol, such as appropriate dress and behaviour. However, humility and mutual respect, specifically between visitors and their hosts, are equally if not more important (yet often-overlooked) aspects of cultural sensitivity. Tongans are particularly warm and hospitable hosts. If tour operators and travelers comply with government laws and local customs, the



BY SHARON AND DOUG SPENCE

cultural exchange will be mutually rewarding and tourism will be positively regarded. In contrast, if there is little or no show of respect, tourism has a tenuous future in the host country.

We believe that FIKCO is an example of a small-scale eco-friendly venture that is appropriate to the Pacific Island context. The company directors are mindful that the practice of environmentally and culturally sustainable tourism is essential to FIKCO's long-term future since it is



All photos in this article courtesy FIKCO

precisely the pristine natural features and relatively preserved cultural traditions of Tonga that attract discerning travelers to Tonga. Our mission statement reflects these attitudes and business ethics. In short, FIKCO is about, "The promotion of fun, safe adventure activities within an atmosphere of harmony and unity, specifically between the indigenous people, their natural environment and their guests."

Sharon and Doug Spence are directors of the Friendly Islands Kayak Company Ltd.

the kingdom of tonga

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9...

Brown says the benefits of community ecotourism in Samoa are already apparent, despite the fact that it is still a relatively new industry. "Villages benefit by no longer having to log and over-fish to raise funds, so they're now conserving their natural resources a lot better than they were before," says Brown. "Ecotourism has actually become a fantastic environmental management tool."

The road to building ecotourism in Samoa has not been an easy one for Brown and his village partners. "There were hoteliers who thought we were taking tourists out of their hotels and into communities. And there is still an element of that opposition, which is very surprising," says Brown.

Apis-Overhoff acknowledges that there is often opposition from villagers as well. She stressed at the workshops that many villages are still very traditional and may not be open to an onslaught of tourists. "They are very fearful of losing their culture because of the introduction of western styles," says Apis-Overhoff. "They want dollars, they want things from the West, but they are also fearful of the West and the introduction of things they can't control."

Limay Uera, a project assistant with Nauru's Department of Industry and Economic Development, says that Nauru won't necessarily use what was taught at the workshop just to generate income for communities. "Instead, Nauru could use marine ecotourism as the basis for re-teaching its young generation traditional practices for sustainable reasons, to venture beyond the devastation which our sole revenue earning industry—phosphate—has left behind," Uera says.

Uera says the next step for Nauru is to get interested stakeholders together for a meeting to determine support and enthusiasm for the plan of action developed by each country at the workshop.

Delegate Richard Farris Porter, assistant general manager of the Pohnpei Visitors Bureau in FSM, says the best way to work with communities in his area will be to conduct local workshops and then assist them in securing funding to make the projects a reality. "I hope that with the establishment of marine ecotourism in Pohnpei, we can not only conserve what little natural resources we have but also create awareness of just how fragile they really are," Porter says.

Three months after the workshop's end, Porter has already begun to implement what he learned. "I have been acting as an adviser to individuals who are interested in starting up a marine ecotourism business venture," says Porter. "Most of these projects are in the planning stages, but progress is being made."

Brown stresses that ecotourism really is a sustainable way for communities and families to generate income and use their natural resources in a positive way, taking the pressure off the marine environment. He says he can think of many examples where employment has been created, families have been held together, and cultural aspects have been enhanced as a result of ecotourism.

"We're not just guiding people around because we know the best beach and the best waterfall and a few nice families," says Brown. "We are trying very hard to make a contribution in these villages with regard to their future sustainable development."

Apis-Overhoff says starting small is the way to ensure not only the success of the ecotourism venture but also the sustainability of the overall marine environment. "Each country is made up of small communities. One community will teach another community, and pretty soon the whole island will be like a marine ecotour," she says. "You work with a few communities and eventually you're working with the whole state, and that's the main aim. Little by little, that's the way to go."

Naomi Johnson is a Media Relations Officer for the Canada-South Pacific Ocean Development Program. Her position is made possible through the International Activities office at Saint Mary's University (Halifax, Canada) and is funded by Canada's Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade through the International Youth Internship Program. She is based at SPREP in Apia, Samoa.

C-SPOD is Canada's major regional commitment to the Pacific islands, worth more than \$28-million over 14 years. C-SPOD is funded by the Canadian International Development Agency and coordinated by the Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat and LGL Limited, Canada. Regional partner organizations include the South Pacific Forum Fisheries Agency, ForSec, SPREP, and the University of the South Pacific. All C-SPOD projects are designed to ensure equity and balanced benefits for all Pacific islanders. For more information about C-SPOD go to www.c-spodp.org or for more information about SPREP go to www.sprep.org.ws.



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Indigenous Tourism In Canada- Seizing the Opportunity

BY VIRGINIA A. DOUCETT

In Canada, indigenous or Aboriginal peoples are comprised of three groups – First Nations or Indians, Inuit (formerly referred to as Eskimos) and Metis of mixed blood. Fifty-three different Aboriginal languages are spoken in over 590 communities located across the length and width of the country – in urban, rural and remote settings. As a population, Aboriginal people constitute between 2-3 per cent of the population of Canada.

European contact and settlement has proven devastating to Aboriginal cultures. In recent decades, however, there have been a resurgence of traditional ways, greater efforts to revive languages, and the emergence of economic opportunities for communities that have come to grips with the social problems inherent for those at the margins of Canadian society. One of these opportunities is tourism and, as a consequence, a burgeoning Aboriginal tourism industry is emerging in Canada.

WHAT IS ABORIGINAL TOURISM?

Aboriginal Tourism Team Canada, or ATTC, is a national Aboriginal tourism association in Canada. ATTC defines Aboriginal tourism as any tourism business that is owned and/or governed by Aboriginal people. It covers the full spectrum of tourism products and services – traditional or contemporary – in all sectors of the industry. These include accommodations, food and beverage, transportation, attractions, travel trade, events and conferences, adventure and recreation, and tourism services including arts and crafts. The Aboriginal tourism industry is estimated to be a CDN\$270 million industry comprised of 1200-1500 small businesses and providing up to 16,000 jobs, half of which are seasonal.

There is a lot of room for growth. In global terms, tourism is a US \$ 4 trillion industry. It is estimated by the World

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ABORIGINAL
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TEAM
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Tourism Organization that 1 in 10 jobs worldwide are in tourism. In Canada, tourism is a CDN\$54 billion industry comprising 159,000 businesses that generate more than half a million jobs directly.

By comparison, the Aboriginal tourism industry represents less than .5 percent of the Canadian industry. If Aboriginal people in Canada were to share in the tourism industry in proportion to their population, Aboriginal tourism could be a CDN\$1.6

billion industry employing 30,000 – 40,000 people.

CHALLENGES TO GROWTH

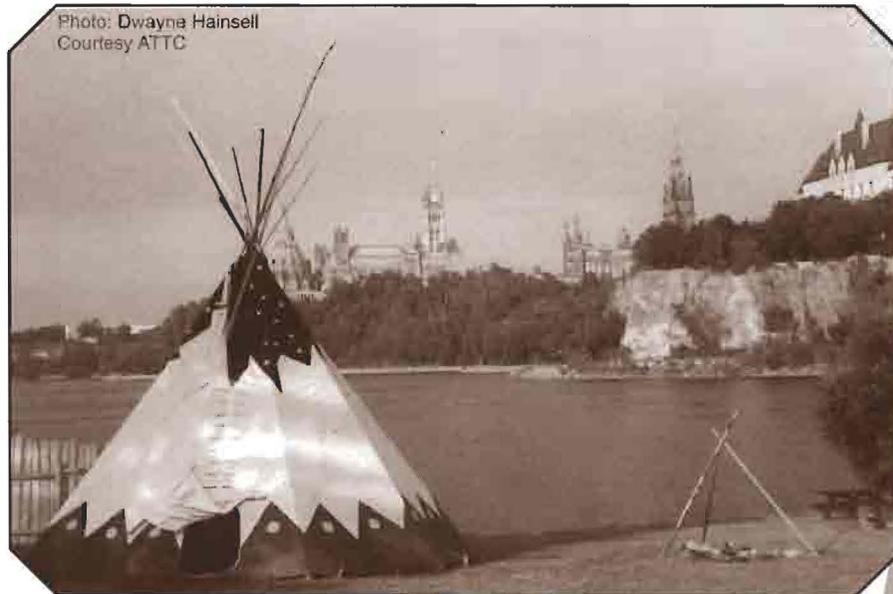
Yet Aboriginal people have lagged in their participation in this rapidly growing industry.

Some of the problems they face are no different than what any small business faces. Others are unique to Aboriginal tourism. For example:

Training is needed at all levels to provide the skills required to consistently deliver a product. However, these tools often are not relevant and accessible to Aboriginal learners in remote, traditional communities.

Access to financing is limited. For those located on reserves, there is an additional hurdle to securing loans with assets located on these lands.

Aboriginal tourism businesses do not make sufficient use of technology. Remote communities may have access to no more than one computer, and the cost of internet access is very high.



Turtle Island Tourism, Ottawa, ON

First Nations Culture: Treasured

A Northwest Coast Museum Curator's Perspective

BY SUSAN MARSDEN

We live in rapidly changing times, the pace of which is sometimes dizzying. For Canada, these times are especially critical as we watch our social and cultural landscape increasingly dominated by economic issues and multinational companies empowered by global economic agreements. As Canadians, we seem to have less and less say in issues affecting the quality of our lives and our social and ethical values. As tourism becomes an increasingly important aspect of our economic agenda, it is clear that here too commerce is an aggressive force often determining the nature of our cultural interaction with our visitors and even our culture itself.

This is especially apparent in the tourism industry's efforts to include indigenous cultures in the spectrum of tourist "attractions", to present cultural experiences as commodities, mass produced, wrapped up, packaged, branded, advertised and delivered to the customer with a smile. In the rush to develop indigenous culture as a commercial product, there has been little or no dialogue concerning the considerable dangers to indigenous societies resulting from this approach.

Commodification poses a danger both to indigenous peoples and to their visitors. For Northwest Coast First Nations, the concept of

Tourism must compete with construction and resource-based industries for economic development support. As well, communities may place a greater priority on improving social conditions or building local infrastructure, than on supporting

respect is fundamental to social and cultural life. Culture is seen as *na xbiisa hlagigyet*, a treasure box handed down from the ancient ones, a container for all that is honoured and respected in society. These words, "treasure", "honour", and "respect", stand against the aggressive, often military, terms used by the marketing sector such as "targeting a market", "strategic arsenal of marketing techniques" and "branding". Reflected in these words is the fact that marketing is often an act of aggression that restricts the range of human self-expression and consumer choice by redefining and dictating the nature of the actual product.

start-up tourism ventures.

Uncertainty over access to lands arising from unresolved land claims can deter prospective tourism operations.

Elders generally welcome the opportunity to share aspects of their culture with others but are adamant that their culture and spirituality are not for sale.

Community members may be reticent to share their culture following unpleasant experiences with poorly informed visitors who arrive with inappropriate expectations.

Operators are often frustrated by the long process required to get tourism products up and running. Training to meet the skill deficiencies noted above and

First Nations are thus subjected to forces that attempt to reduce their identity to the material objects associated with their culture and to "readily-packaged" experiences, making commercial art and short, highly dramatic, and colourful performances the main opportunities for cultural tourism. The effect of this is to foster artists and dance groups who create for the market and whose art can become disconnected from the living culture. Gradually the influence of the market place can redefine the culture itself.

As an example, since the market now sets the cost of commissioned totem poles, many northwest coast First Nations house-groups (landowning groups) can no longer afford to raise their own poles. This strikes at the very foundation of northwest coast society in which



Lloyd S. King Elementary School hand drummers and singers from the Mississauga of New Credit First Nation

developing trusting relationships within a community takes time.

CULTURAL TOURISM

Still, there are clear opportunities. It is the cultural component that holds the growth potential for this industry. Visitors to Canada tend to view Aboriginal cultures as a defining feature of the country, along with Canada's natural beauty. But what is Aboriginal cultural tourism? Is it powwows, tipi villages or arts & crafts?

ATTC considers cultural tourism to encompass all Aboriginal tourism businesses that incorporate an Aboriginal cultural experience. Therefore, a hotel or restaurant or ecotourism trip could provide a cultural experience.

For example, in Vancouver, one can enjoy traditional foods at Northwest Coast Feast House. Guests are treated to an interpretative walk culminating at a reconstructed longhouse where dinner is served in carved boxes. Traditional dancing is also featured as part of a program focusing on the culture of the First Nations people of the region.

The land—and our relationship to it—is an intrinsic part of the cultures of Aboriginal peoples. Tourism experiences which take visitors out on the land, such as ecotourism, are frequently the means by which traditional ways are shared and are therefore another form of cultural tourism in an Aboriginal context.

SEIZING THE OPPORTUNITY

Research indicates that millions of travellers may be interested in an Aboriginal

complex spirit power performances and other ceremonial songs and dances required in the feast. Ironically, the rush to commodify first nations culture is the market's response to tourists' desire to break free of the stranglehold that commerce has placed on

cultural experience. The demand for ecotourism and other nature-based experiences continues to grow, and the strong growth in demand for learning and enriching experiences is a global trend. Taking advantage of these mega-trends in the industry is an excellent vehicle for Aboriginal communities to achieve community-based economic development.

Respect for the land is the basis of traditional Aboriginal cultures and practices. Developing quality, authentic experiences that meet the needs of the market, therefore, can provide benefits to Aboriginal communities that go beyond job creation and dollars, if cultural and ecotourism product development is pursued with the guidance of Elders and other keepers of the culture, and with the support and commitment of the community. These benefits include:

strengthening of local culture so that it may be shared accurately and appropriately with visitors; reinforcement of the need for sustainable use of the land; protection of fragile or sacred places; and bringing youth and elders together as cultural traditions are passed on to young employees, cultural interpreters and the next generation of tourism operators.

The Aboriginal population in Canada is experiencing unprecedented growth. The under-25 age group account for as much as 77 per cent of the population and is reaching working age in increasing numbers. The challenge is to develop employment opportunities for them without diminishing their connection to their land, community and culture. Tourism, particularly cultural and nature-based tourism, represents a means to meet this challenge.

Virginia Doucett is the Executive Director of the Ottawa-based Aboriginal Tourism Team Canada. ATTC is a partnership of business and government whose mission is to influence tourism policies and programs for the benefit of Aboriginal people in Canada. Its vision is to represent Aboriginal people as world leaders in tourism in harmony with our cultures.

human expression in their own cultures. They wish to experience



Guide at Huron Traditional Site
Onhoüa Chedek8e
Wendake, QC

sure Not Commodity

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sary to validate the
housegroup's ownership of
its territory. As well, the
art form is losing the style
and complexity of the
ancient crests which define
the housegroup's history
and power and which the
poles were created to dis-
play. There is a similar
loss when young people
learn more generic songs
and dances such as the
welcome songs that are
usually offered up to
tourists, rather than the

indigenous cultures because they see them as a locus of living spiritual, natural and creative expression. Many tourists, therefore, are not satisfied with art and staged performances and express the desire for a more intimate experience, to experience "real" ceremonies and to meet people in their own environment. As a result, niche tourism markets are growing rapidly among northwest coast nations, ranging from trips to remote villages to floating lodges in pristine wilderness where an ecotourism experience is guided by the First Nations owners of the territory.

Will such intimacy create understanding and perhaps a strengthening of indigenous cultural institutions or will it simply extend the process of commodification deeper into the living culture? Is tourism yet another in a long sequence of attacks on indigenous economic, cultural, social and political institutions, or is it an opportunity for

indigenous peoples to seize greater control over the economic sector and its effects on other aspects of their societies? There are no simple answers but there is clearly an enormous need for broad-ranging and considered dialogue and discussion within indigenous societies as to the nature of their interaction with the tourist economy.

Cultural institutions such as museums that stand at a point of intersection between indigenous peoples and the tourist public must also participate in this dialogue. It is the author's position that museums have an ethical responsibility to resist the pressures to commodify First Nations cultures and peoples, pressures that are often intense and take political form through non-indigenous local tourist associations or economic form through granting agencies. Museums have a responsibility to appeal to the breadth of human nature and not to its lowest common denominator. Museums must work with First Nations and other indigenous peoples to dispel stereotypical notions and to foster understanding and appreciation for the sophistication, complexity and diversity of indigenous societies.

Museums must not only strive to create this intangible context of respect, but also a tangible one, a museum space the function of which is not predefined. In such a context, First Nations individuals and groups can explore and express their diversity and devise new ways to fulfill a broad range of group and personal goals.

Out of indigenous peoples' exploration and practice of their own culture will come opportunities for visitors to meet with indigenous peoples on their own terms, not on terms dictated by the marketplace.

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Visitors need to be challenged to expand their understanding of the world and to meet First Nations where they have chosen to be. This is what visitors themselves seek and is in fact the real impulse that drives cultural tourism and the one that in the end will render it sustainable.

Susan Marsden has worked for Giltksan and Tsimshian as research coordinator and has published several volumes on Northwest Coast oral history. She was the project manager for the new Museum of Northern B.C. and is currently its curator.

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In recent years, tourism arrivals have grown tremendously, caused in part by ecotourism promotion packages advertising Sagada as a pristine community where one can commune with nature. Hotels and inns mushroomed, changing the town's landscape and straining its water resources. Pollution caused by littering and improper waste disposal has now become a major problem for the community.

Apart from environmental degradation, the influx of tourists has disrupted the Kankanaeys' traditions and practices. The solemnity and sacredness of rituals, such as those relating to the agricultural cycle and passage of life, have been affected due to the presence of curious tourists. Caves, traditionally their burial grounds, have been vandalised by graffiti, and some of the bones of their ancestors stolen.

Western influences have also taken their toll on the local community. These include the production, distribution and use of prohibited drugs such as marijuana and hashish. Taboos have been constantly broken by foreign tourists. Tourists, for example, have bathed in the nude in waterfalls, which is frowned upon by the local community.

Joan Carling of the Cordillera Peoples Alliance aptly summed up the effects of tourism on the indigenous peoples in the Cordillera when she wrote:

"The tourism industry has facilitated the further disintegration of the peoples' indigenous way of life.

Cash production for the tourism industry has led to commercialism and individualism in contrast to the indigenous ways of simple living and mutual cooperation.

Likewise, the commercialisation of their culture has led to undignified ways of seeking a livelihood such as allowing themselves to be photographed as souvenirs or to do their indigenous dance for a fee. This practice was never part of their culture."

The pervasive effects of globalised tourism can also be seen in the way it has affected other indigenous peoples all over the world. In the Cook Islands in the Pacific, a 204-room hotel was built on land sacred to the local people. The construction has caused environmental damage amounting to US\$1 million.

In the Russian Federation's Providenskij and Tchukogskij regions, home to the indigenous Tchukchi peoples, the development of tourism in the past years has affected their source of livelihood. Known areas of walrus concentration such as those in Rugor's Bay and the isle of Arykamchechen have become ecotourism destinations. Sightseeing tour groups ride on motorboats to walruses' breeding grounds.

But a rise in such tours has affected the walrus population. Visitor arrivals have caused stress among the walruses, causing a decline in their population. This has in turn affected the quality and quantity of walrus catch, traditionally the Tchukchi peoples' source of livelihood says Kalantagrau Jurij, a delegate of the Tchukchi peoples to the UN Working Group on Indigenous Peoples.

TOURISM'S HIGH COST

Indigenous peoples are paying a high price for tourism. In their desire to cash in on the billion-dollar profits from this industry, governments, specifically in the Third World, and transnational corporations have disregarded the interests of indigenous peoples.

The effects have been devastating. Indigenous peoples have been evicted from their traditional lands, their control and access to their natural resources compromised. They have suffered social degradation brought about by foreign influences and the commercialisation of their culture. Even the rich biodiversity of their natural resources has suffered from pollution and environmental damage, unable to support the growing number of tourist arrivals.

What few benefits indigenous peoples derive from tourism are far outweighed by the damage it has caused them. They have been made to bear the brunt of an industry over which they have neither say nor control.

With globalisation, these threats have been exacerbated. International agreements that open up access to the local tourism industry by big travel and tourism TNCs will only speed up exploitation of the natural resources, culture and way of life of indigenous peoples.

Unless indigenous peoples have direct participation in the planning, implementation, and regulation of tourism activities that affect them, and unless benefit-sharing mechanisms are put in place, tourism can never contribute to their interests. Indigenous peoples will continue to be mere cogs in the wheel of this billion-dollar industry. ☹

Raymond de Chavez is a researcher at Tebtebba Foundation of the Philippines. Tebtebba, "discourse" from the Philippine indigenous Kankanaey dialect, is firmly committed to the recognition, protection and promotion of indigenous peoples' rights worldwide. It works to influence United Nations processes as they affect indigenous peoples' rights and monitors the World Trade Organization, multilateral financial institutions, the UN Convention on Biological Diversity and other multilateral bodies.

The unabridged version of this article first appeared in Third World Resurgence No. 103, March 1999

Photo: Holger Leue,
Courtesy Cook Islands Tourism Corporation



Tourism represents a whopping 51 per cent of the gross domestic product for the Cook Islands. Total visits to the Cook Islands reached a record high of 72,994 in 2000, breaking the 1994 record of 57,293. Approximately 90 per cent of these visitors came for leisure travel – that is, for the natural beauty, the relaxed atmosphere, the warm weather, and the cultural experience. And while PPP intern **Brennan Gohn** is technically not a tourist to the island, her internship is all about eco and cultural tourism.

For the past two months, Brennan has been stationed in Avarua, the capital city of Rarotonga, and has been working with the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation as part of a six-month internship programme funded by PPP and the Canadian Department of Foreign Affairs and International Trade. Her role is to support tourism development and communications initiatives for the Cook Islands Tourism Corporation, while building her skills and experience to enhance her career goals in Canada. What follows are insights and reflections on her first few weeks.

brennan in the cooks...

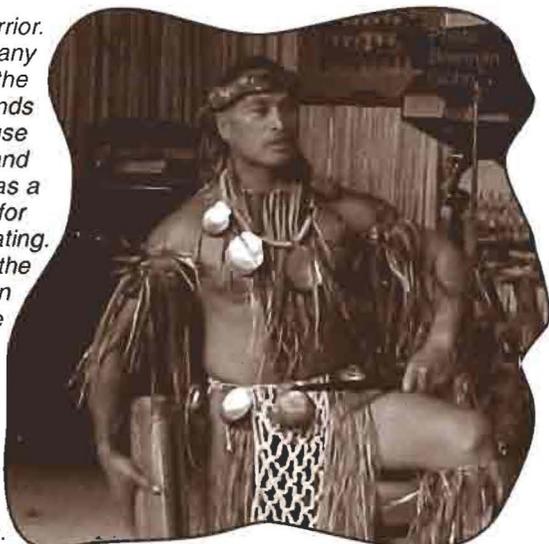
BY BRENNAN GOHN

1 week one: The weather is getting extremely hot and HUMID! We are just getting to the beginning of the summer season, and it looks like we are in for quite an experience with the climate. Last night Rarotonga hosted the annual Food Festival at the Punanga Nui market, and I was asked to be a judge of the best-dressed booth. I had a blast! There were about 40 booths selling all types of food and drink. Hundreds of people turned out for the event that lasted until about 10pm. Tomorrow is Gospel Day and we have the day off of work.

2 week two: Last Friday night was the string band and dancing competition and wrap up to the Super Six League. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Immigration (the people that issued my working visa) asked me early last week to join their team and dance in the competition. With some hesitation, I agreed - thinking that I could stand in the back and maybe no one would notice that I didn't know what I was doing. To my surprise, I was informed at one of our practices that I would be competing all by myself! That's right - I was being asked to climb up on a stage in front of hundreds of people and compete in Cook Islands Dancing!! I was mortified! But, I had already agreed to help out the team, and they had started the preparations for my costume.

Friday night came along, and I somehow managed to find the courage to brave the crowd. I had to dance to three songs - one slow hura, one slow beat drum song and one FAST beat drum song. All I was thinking was to smile and have fun - if they laugh, laugh with them. The ladies that helped me choreograph the dances were there the whole time - reminding me that for the fast dance I had to turn my hips into a washing machine (sounds hilarious, but seriously - this is what they call it). Fortunately - the crowd was awesome - they didn't laugh (at least I couldn't hear them). They cheered me on and I felt great! What an experience! By the end of the night I was presented with the First Place Trophy and a bottle of wine!

Maori Warrior. As with many cultures, the Cook Islands people use songs and dances as a means for communicating. Visitors to the Islands can experience this local custom at one of the many "Island Night" dinners and shows.



3 week three: I'm going to a feast on Friday night for a Maori group from New Zealand that will be here in Rarotonga to learn about traditional navigation in the ocean-going Vaca (canoe). They are going to put down an Umu (underground oven), so that will be exciting to see.

We have the fans going around the clock at home and the air con on all day at work. The odd thing is that even though it has been raining quite a bit, we are facing a serious water shortage here in Rarotonga. The main water supply is derived from a reservoir that is filled with rainwater. Apparently, the rain that we have received has evaporated and many of the local people that live in the uplands have lost their water pressure, or have absolutely no water at all. The tourists that stay in the resorts and accommodations along the beach will not be affected by this water shortage, so that is good for the tourism industry. Some local people (and resorts) have had to call the fire department and buy water from them at 200 dollars a load that lasts a couple of days.

4
Week
Tour:

Today is the first day of Tiare Festival (Flower Festival). Many of the businesses in town (Avarua) have dressed their buildings up with fresh tropical flowers. Everyone is wearing flower pareu clothing and eis (necklace). Sonya and I spent the morning driving around and collecting various types of flowers and greenery for our office. We took branches of Kiko and plaited them around the posts in the front of the Information Centre, and took the rest of the flowers and made a couple of arrangements for the front of our office. The Tourism Corp is a part of the Ministry of Tourism - so we will be competing with the other government offices when the judges come around on Friday. The two banks here in Rarotonga (Westpac and Anz) have gone to great lengths to decorate their establishments. Amy and I drove through town last night (Sunday) and the staff of the banks were carting in tons of fresh flowers for their display. A truck was decorated for the event with Kiko and fresh flowers and is used to promote the event. This truck drives up and down the street here in town, with drummers and singers on it - encouraging people to get into the spirit of Tiare Festival and visit some of the businesses that have dressed up their shops.

Tourism in the Cook Islands is an industry that involves the entire community. In one way or another it touches the life of every person residing on Rarotonga, the largest of the 15 islands. Many of the smaller businesses on the island that are owned and operated by the indigenous people incorporate local culture into the products or services they provide. In this sense, cultural tourism and ecotourism are common elements of each visitor's experience of the Cook Islands.

There is much to see and experience on both fronts. The Cook Islands population of about 18,000 people is comprised of 95 per cent Cook Islands Maori people, according to the 1996 census. Visitors to Rarotonga therefore naturally come in contact with the Cook Islands Maori culture. The culture is recognized as a valuable resource both financially and socially.

While lifestyle in the Cook Islands is somewhat westernized, Cook Islanders live their culture every day, and it is viable and strong.

The language and the culture are intact, and cultural elements are incorporated into the educational curriculum. From primary school through high school, students learn the customs and the traditions of the Cook Islands Maori culture including traditional language, nutrition, songs and dances. This practice helps to ensure the viability of the culture.

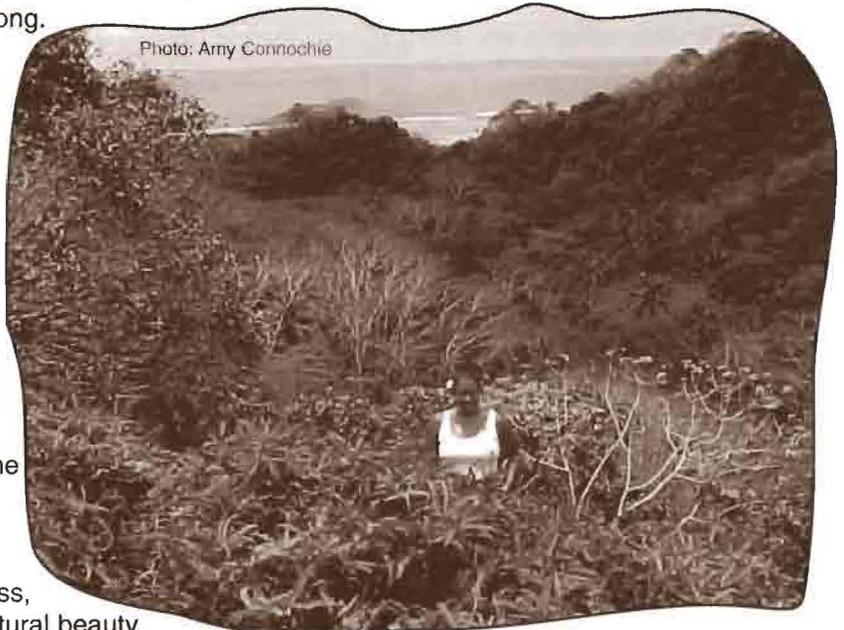
“We face the complex challenge... of achieving economic development in a way which will not significantly affect our environment.”

-Vili A. Fuavao,
former director of
the South Pacific
Regional
Environment
Programme

In addition to choosing the Cooks for its cultural richness, visitors travel here for the natural beauty of the environment and the accessibility of outdoor activities. From snorkeling and kayaking to hiking the islands' many treks, the Cook Islands

offer many ecotourism opportunities. The government of the Cook Islands has an Environment Services branch that supports the protection of Rarotonga's natural habitat through the Rarotonga Environment Act. Vili A. Fuavao, former director of the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme says there is an awareness that Pacific islanders' aspirations for economic development and improved living standards cannot be met at the cost of the environment.

Photo: Amy Connochie



Ecotourism Cook Islands Style - The Takitumu Conservation Area offers guided hikes to explore the lush mountainous interior and tropical treasures of Rarotonga.

“We have lived in close harmony with our island environment for thousands of years and we are well aware of its importance to our way of life. We face the complex challenge, in common with many other countries of the world, of achieving economic development in a way which will not significantly affect our environment,” says Fuavao. “This major challenge must be addressed if our Pacific way of life is to survive.” 🌿

TRAVEL

The Alternative Way!

BY MARIANNE SCOTT

“Life is a book, and those who do not travel, read only a page.”

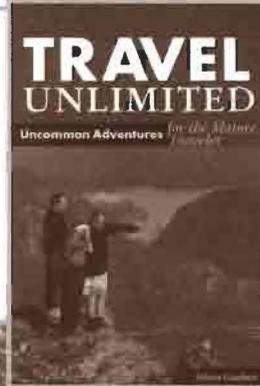
-St. Augustine

T *Travel Unlimited — Uncommon Adventures for the Mature Traveler*, by Victoria writer and long-time volunteer for Pacific Peoples' Partnership, Alison Gardner, sent me dreaming of far-off natural wonders, new cultures, volunteer vacations, and wandering about without schedules. Gardner's book concentrates on what is popularly called "alternative travel," in-depth journeys differing markedly from conventional travel. "While sun and sand vacations will always be with us," writes Gardner, "many people today measure their travel satisfaction by newly acquired skills, stimulation of the little grey cells, and, yes, proudly worn calluses and blisters."

Gardner divides this type of journeying into four categories: ecological, educational, cultural and volunteer vacations. She stresses adventures that respect nature, customs and peoples. These voyages are packed with learning experiences, interact with local culture, or often require some physical effort. Volunteer vacations, for example, enable one to contribute to a cause or experience a region in a "grassroots" kind of way. Gardner, accompanied by family members, volunteered a month in Guatemala's western highlands, working with refugees displaced by earthquakes and civil war. For her, it was an extraordinary encounter for the family, one that "created one of the most stirring holidays my husband and I have taken."

As the book's title implies, all of these holidays are suitable for, but not exclusive to, the over-50 crowd. Why mature travelers? People over 50 make up the vast majority of travelers worldwide, and these numbers promise to expand as the baby boomers move their high expectations into their second half century. Recognizing time is fleeting, they want to learn, experience, and test themselves mentally and physically. For many, the kids are grown and they have the cash.

Alternative travel can take place close to home or on the other side of the world. Gardner describes countries with established, diverse programs, offering reliable operators, safe food and water, security, and a range of prices. You can go kayaking in the Kingdom of Tonga and Hawaii, go eco-cruising in New Zealand's Fiordland, or learn about culture and nature in Fiji, French Polynesia and Papua New Guinea.



Most of these trips are organized by tour operators located in Europe and North America.

Each chapter presents a specific type of alternative travel. Nature explorations include hiking and walking holidays,

cycling, horseback and ranch vacations, kayaking, canoeing and rafting. The section on cultural vacations covers the language, customs, art, music and lifestyles of other regions; train travel providing a "window on culture" is also included.

The more than 200 alternative travel operators are presented in an organized way. Each company's description is followed by the age group it serves, destinations, an explanation of what travelers can expect in terms of strenuousness and comfort (class of accommodation, whether hot showers are available), and cost. The descriptions are complemented by informative sidebars and entertaining essays by first-class travel writers.

This book is ideal for anyone, young or old, literally wanting to experience something off the beaten track. To further round out the options, Gardner offers an alternative travel webzine providing new uncommon adventures at www.travelwithachallenge.com.

*Travel Unlimited —
Uncommon Adventures for the
Mature Traveler*
By Alison Gardner
Avalon Travel Publishing
567 pp., CDN\$30.95 softcover



RESOURCES!

ON CULTURAL AND ECOTOURISM

Aboriginal Tourism Assn. of British Columbia: www.AtBC.bc.ca

AtBC has created an attractive, easy-to-navigate model website for raising the profile of aboriginal-owned and operated tourism. Its goal is to promote individual member operators, accommodation and transportation providers, festivals, and events associated with indigenous cultural and environmental tourism throughout Canada's most western province of British Columbia. E-mail: director@atbc.bc.ca

Adventure Travel Society: www.adventuretravel.com

The ATS is dedicated to promoting natural resource sustainability, economic viability, and cultural integrity through sustainable tourism development. The website offers plenty of food for thought on responsible travel, plus detailed listings of front-line tourism projects to consider patronizing and using as a model of tourism development. Membership on both a professional and individual tourist basis is encouraged.

Clearinghouse for Reviewing Ecotourism: www.twinside.org.sg/title/iye.htm

This site is an initiative of the Tourism Investigation and Monitoring Team formed in 1994 as an independent research and monitoring initiative to provide information for public use and to engage in campaigns for social and ecological justice in tourism and development. TIM-team has been active in the Global Anti-Golf Movement by contributing research and documentation on golf and tourism-related developments worldwide. T.I.M.-team produces the newsletter *New Frontiers* which critically reviews concepts and policies promoting 'alternative' forms of tourism, projected as responsible, sustainable, fair, etc. E-mail: tim-team@access.inet.co.th

Hawaii Ecotourism Association: www.hawaiiecotourism.org

Based in Honolulu, HEA is a nonprofit organization that monitors ecotourism issues and concerns throughout the Hawaiian Islands, and provides links to ecotourism-related information and resources, a membership directory, and a guide to activities and attractions that promote the conservation of Hawaii's natural and cultural heritage. E-mail: hea@aloha.net

The International Ecotourism Society: www.ecotourism.org and www.ecotourism.org/travelchoice

U.S.-based TIES is a nonprofit organization with a goal of encouraging sustainable ecotravel. This group brings together worldwide expertise from the travel industry, international and local conservation organizations, and analysts from many fields including biology, park management, community development, and environmental education. Membership to support the sustainable tourism promotional aims of this organization is available on a professional and individual "ecotourist" basis. Email: ecomail@ecotourism.org

Planeta.com, Eco Travels in Latin America: www.planeta.com

Now in its seventh year of operation, this popular award-winning website focuses mainly on environmental issues and tourism opportunities from the tip of South America to the US/Mexican border. However, in the past year, it has expanded to include a more global thematic and destination focus. With more than 300,000 visitors a month to the website, it successfully blends a wealth of ecological and cultural information and fresh, thoughtful articles with practical development and conservation strategies that will appeal strongly to the sensitive ecotourist.

Responsible Travel: www.responsibletravel.com

Unveiled in late 1999, this is a British-based website whose goal is to change tourism by promoting and campaigning for great travel experiences that clearly benefit conservation and local people. All trips and accommodation on the site have met minimum environmental, social and economic criteria to qualify for membership. Independent feedback is encouraged on how these criteria are being implemented on a trip-by-trip and lodge-by-lodge basis. Email: info@responsibletravel.com

Rethinking Tourism Project: www.rethinkingtourism.org

Rethinking Tourism Project is an indigenous peoples' organization dedicated to the preservation and protection of traditional lands and cultures. Its mission is twofold: community education about tourism and networking among communities to share information and resources. RTP works strategically in the international arena to promote the involvement and leadership of indigenous peoples in international development decisions affecting tourism. RTP is currently collaborating with other indigenous peoples groups developing and signing on to policy statements regarding the International Year of Ecotourism and its effects on indigenous peoples. For more information: Email: info@rethinkingtourism.org. Phone: 651-644-9984. Fax: 651-644-2720.

Travel With A Challenge: www.travelwithachallenge.com. This website and web magazine focuses exclusively on alternative travel, that is, ecological, educational, cultural, and volunteer vacations around the world. Articles are personal and interactive, clearly demonstrating how older travellers (50+ in age) may enjoy the experience of holidays designed to stimulate both body and mind. Email: info@travelwithachallenge.com.

Halliday, Jan and Patricia J. Petrivelli. *Native Peoples of Alaska: A Traveler's Guide to Land, Art and Culture.* Alaska: Sasquatch Books, 1998; 288 pages, US\$17.95. This one-of-a-kind travel and art guide introduces readers to Native Alaskans of today, leading travelers to villages, festivals, museums, tours, historic sites, art collections and dance performances.

McMillon, Bill. *Volunteer Vacations*, 6th edition. Chicago: Chicago Review Press, Incorporated, 1997 (c. 1987); 412 pages, US\$16.95. A classic adventure travel guide which profiles more than 2,000 ways worldwide to have a great vacation while lending a hand to a worthy cause. Vignettes from previous volunteers describe the work they did, the diverse people they met, and what they learned from volunteering.

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