



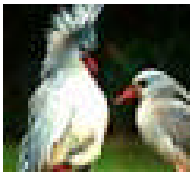
# Protecting the uniqueness of island biodiversity

Islands cover more than one sixth of the Earth's surface, half a billion people, more than half the world's marine biodiversity, high levels of endemism and they support critical habitats that connect many of world's migratory species.



Inhabited islands, and Small Island Developing States (SIDs) in particular, rely on biodiversity for livelihoods and sustainable development and close links exist between culture and environment that are reflected in traditional knowledge and management of island biodiversity.

Smallness, fragility and isolation have led to the highest rates of extinction.



In order to significantly reduce the rate of biodiversity loss there is a global imperative to address the conservation challenges of island biodiversity.

Vulnerability is increasing as a result of increasing population, overexploitation of culturally and economically significant species, and unsustainable development.



The ecological characteristics of islands and their capacity constraints mean that regional cooperation is an essential element in any strategy to conserve island biodiversity.



Small size also provides opportunities to integrate the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD), and existing Programmes of Work, and make rapid progress to slow the rate of biodiversity loss in a way that truly reflects the ecological connectivity and which responds to local needs and capacity.



The Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) is an intergovernmental organisation that works to protect and improve the Pacific Islands' environment, and promote sustainable development and cooperation



# Island Life

## Protecting Pacific Island life

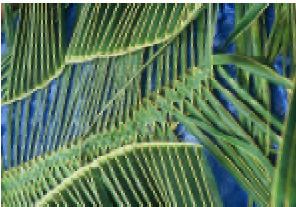


### Global significance

The biodiversity of the Pacific region is globally significant from both a terrestrial and a marine perspective.

The Western Pacific has the highest marine diversity in the world with up to 3,000 species found on a single reef.

The Pacific has extremely high levels of endemism.



### Disappearing species

The Pacific has more globally threatened species per capita than any other region.

Extinction rates in the region are among the highest in the world.

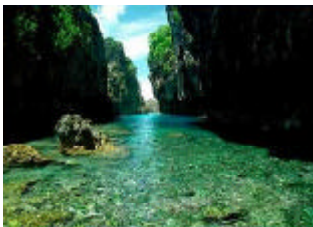
There are at least 858 species with a high probability of extinction in the medium term future.



### Disappearing forests

More than 70% of the forest cover in the Pacific is no longer in its natural state.

On some islands, native forest cover is being removed at up to 4% per annum.



### Disappearing marine resources

Marine resources are being over harvested and degraded in many islands and ecosystems.

### Dependence on the environment

Pacific islanders remain highly dependent on biological resources for survival. Fishing and agriculture are still the mainstays of the economies of most PICTs.

The fisheries industry contributes approximately 11% of the GDP of all PICTs.

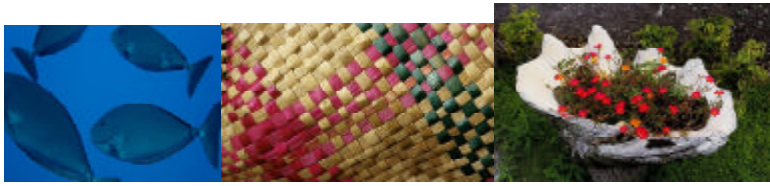


### Major threats

The major threats to Pacific biodiversity are human-induced and include invasive species, habitat alteration and loss, destructive harvest techniques and the over-exploitation of natural resources.

Invasive species and habitat degradation are the two major threats affecting three quarters of all threatened species. For example, on Guam the Brown Tree Snake has extirpated nine bird species and three skink and two gecko species.





# Island Life

## Protecting the uniqueness of island biodiversity

### What is the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work?

The Island Biodiversity Programme of Work is a set of priority and supporting actions to implement the objectives of the Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) in islands. It will be adopted at the Eighth Conference of the Parties (COP8) to the CBD in Brazil, March 2006.

The Programme of Work recognizes that all islands, and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) in particular, rely on biodiversity for sustainable development, have close links between culture and environment, have special concerns and particular vulnerabilities, limited land area, high levels of endemism and extensive coastal and marine biodiversity.

### What makes this Programme of Work special?

Deals with island biodiversity in an integrated way

Applies to all islands

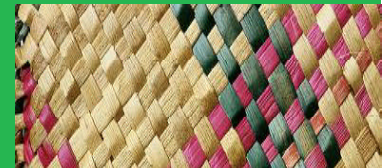
Creates new political and ecological connections and partners



## The Five Goals

of the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work

- ❖ Conservation of island biodiversity
- ❖ Sustainable use of island biodiversity
- ❖ Address the threats to island biodiversity
- ❖ Benefit-sharing and maintenance of island genetic resources
- ❖ Increasing capacities and financing for the Implementation of the Programme of Work on Island Biodiversity



### Why do we need this Programme of Work?

**Island** people rely on biodiversity

**Island** biodiversity is globally significant

**Islands** are most vulnerable

**Islands** are different from continents

**Islands** provide opportunities







# Island Life

## Island Life Dialogue at the Conference of Parties (COP8) of the Convention of Biological Diversity, March 2006

The uniqueness of Pacific Islands' biodiversity will be highlighted at the Eighth Conference of Parties (COP8) of the Convention of Biological Diversity (CBD) in March 2006. A key focus of this meeting is the adoption of the Islands Biodiversity Programme of Work.

The COP meeting provides an opportunity to showcase the successful community stories that highlight the Pacific's ability to meet the Programme's aim of achieving a reduction in the loss of biodiversity by 2010.

### Format

This is a practitioner event that will run for one day.

### Goals

- ❖ Facilitate new and lasting networks and partnerships between islands.
- ❖ Highlight the uniqueness of islands in relation to the CBD. To achieve the goal of reducing biodiversity loss by 2010 on islands, new networks and partnerships must be formed.
- ❖ Demonstrate methods and practices to address biodiversity related issues.
- ❖ Promote the sharing of best practice within and among islands.
- ❖ Improve the profile of local level issues at the COP.

### Who will be involved in the Island Life dialogue?

Practitioners - storytellers and champions with compelling stories to tell.

Implementation partners will start to identify issues and areas of common interest.

Governments, communities and civil society organizations.

### Why?

This event is an opportunity to share and reinforce the existing work undertaken on islands and will start to bridge the geographical and political barriers to forming partnerships.

It will also focus attention on the technical and financial assistance needed to implement the Island Biodiversity Programme of Work.

### When?

Tuesday 21 March 2006  
at the Community Tabua

### Next steps - how to get it adopted and implemented

Governments support its adoption along with strong guidance to the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and development partners to fund its implementation;

Participation by Heads of Government and Ministers in COP8;

Participation of local conservation partners/success stories in dialogue during COP8.

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