

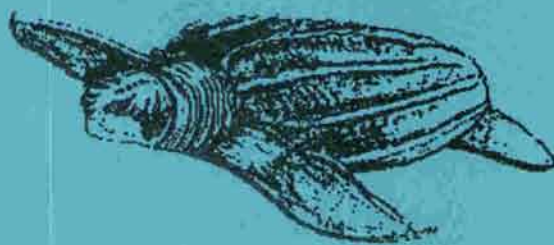
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South Pacific Regional Environment Programme

**Report of the Second Meeting
of the**

**South Pacific
Regional Marine Turtle
Conservation Programme**



Noumea, New Caledonia, 12-14 August 1991

South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
Apia, Western Samoa
August 1992

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Meeting of the South Pacific Regional
Marine Turtle Conservation Programme
Steering Committee (2nd : 1991 ; Noumea,
New Caledonia)

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South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
(SPREP)

**Report of the
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**South Pacific
Regional Marine Turtle Conservation
Programme**

Steering Committee

Held In

Noumea, New Caledonia
12 - 14 August 1991

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Meeting Report

1. Introduction

The second annual meeting of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme (RMTCP) Steering Committee was convened by the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) to assess progress with the implementation of the RMTCP in the period 1990-91, and to determine the work programme for 1992-93.

The RMTCP was originally developed by SPREP and the Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service (ANPWS), and was refined and adopted by the Fourth South Pacific Conference on Nature Conservation and Protected Areas held in Port Vila, Vanuatu, in August 1989. The RMTCP was subsequently endorsed by SPREP member governments at the SPREP Intergovernmental Meeting (IGM) in 1989.

Financial support for implementing the RMTCP came from the Canadian Government (through CIDA/CSPOD), AIDAB, and the ANPWS, and so the programme started in early 1990. The first meeting of the RMTCP Steering Committee was held in August 1990, and a report of that meeting is available from SPREP. The Steering Committee is not a formally constituted body; it is the informal term given to the meeting of people who support and are involved with developing and implementing the RMTCP.

In addition to and part of the RMTCP Steering Committee is a Technical Advisory Group comprising Dr. Colin Limpus, Mr. George Balazs and the SPREP Protected Area Management Officer (PAMO), with others co-opted as necessary.

2. Opening the Meeting

The meeting was opened by the Secretary-General of the South Pacific Commission (SPC), Mr. Antaroi Baiteke, who welcomed the participants and commented on the importance of marine turtles to the way of life of Pacific islanders.

3. Election of Chairman and Adoption of Agenda

The meeting elected Mr. Sylvester Diacke of the Solomon Islands as Chairman and adopted the Agenda (see Annex 1).

4. Meeting Objectives

SPREP's PAMO, Mr Peter Thomas, briefly outlined the background to the meeting and its objectives, which were to:

1. provide a forum where all those interested in or involved with marine turtle conservation in the South Pacific could meet to share their experiences and plan their activities in a co-ordinated way within the framework of the RMTCP;

2. review progress towards the goals and objectives of the RMTCP;
3. assess future activities and prepare a workplan for the ensuing year and;
4. review research, policy and international negotiations for conserving the region's sea turtles.

5. Review of the RMTCP and Overview of 1990-91

The SPREP PAMO briefly outlined the background to the RMTCP and its principal features before summarising the progress made towards programme objectives in 1990 - 91. Highlights of the year included:

1. The temporary employment of Ms. Suzie Geermans with funding from the ANPWS. Ms. Geermans took over the role fulfilled by Ms. Sylvia Spring as the Australian-based RMTCP facilitator, and is based in the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service (QNPWS) with Dr. Limpus. She is working on:
 - a. development of the RMTCP database;
 - b. recording and transposition of the tagging data collected under the programme;
 - c. preparation of regional turtle conservation education materials;
 - d. collation of references and software management for the regional marine turtle bibliography.
2. The completion of three-week training attachments with the QNPWS for two Pacific islanders, one each from Papua New Guinea and the Solomon Islands
3. The implementation of in-country programmes in:
 - a. *Solomon Islands*. A survey of the northern Solomon Islands was conducted in November 1989 to identify important nesting sites. There was also some training of Solomon Islanders in census and tagging techniques. A survey of the Arnarvon Islands was undertaken to assess the changes in the hawksbill population since the last surveys in the late 1970's.
 - b. *Palau*. A public education campaign was underway to improve awareness of turtle conservation issues and to obtain information on customary knowledge of turtles and their use.
 - c. The RMTCP was able to support the work of Dr. Andrew Smith in Yap State, FSM, through the supply of tags.

Although progress was not as rapid as planned in the first year, due to the late arrival of the funding (May), and the lack of planning for the in-country projects, which meant the nesting season was missed in a number of cases. However, momentum was gathering and with the services of Ms. Geermans to assist it was anticipated that the forthcoming year would be highly successful.

6. Review of Activities by Countries and Organisations

Participants provided a detailed account of marine turtle conservation activities in their countries and by their organisations.

6.1 *Solomon Islands*

The Environment and Conservation Division and Fisheries Division, Ministry of Natural Resources, had collaborated to successfully undertake a joint marine turtle conservation programme during the year. Activities undertaken were:

- a. A survey of rookeries and tagging in the Western Province for 6 weeks in November to December 1990. Landowners were interviewed with a standard questionnaire. An expert, Ms. Anita Gordon, instructed the survey team for two weeks.
- b. Dissemination of a nationwide turtle survey questionnaire through the Provincial fisheries officers was undertaken with the results expected in October 1991.
- c. A 10-week nest monitoring and tagging survey of the Arnarvon Group (Isabel Province) through June, July and August 1991 was undertaken. This indicated that the hawksbill population has declined in the past ten years.
- d. Educational activities which included production of 2 posters, talks and slide presentations to communities, and radio programmes, had been completed.
- e. Ten people received some training in tagging and data collection procedures. Fisheries office, P. Romohia, participated in the QNPWS tagging programme on Heron Island in Australia for 3 weeks in March to April 1991.

6.2 *Federated States of Micronesia - Yap State*

Dr. Andrew Smith outlined the progress being made with turtle conservation in Yap State, noting it was the second year of the project to census turtles in the outer islands. The programme consisted of survey and tagging, a head-starting project, surveys of catch and use by the islanders, education, and the development of realistic management options.

The tagging programme had been very successful with large numbers of turtles being tagged. Some early tag returns indicated the turtles were being harvested in nearby waters. Detailed results of this aspect of the programme were being written up and results would be supplied to the RMTCP. The Head Start project had been designed as a way to get local people interested in turtle conservation, and would be phased out shortly. Collecting catch data had been extremely successful on some islands where there had been 100% co-operation, but on others there had been little success. The project had been hampered by a lack of staff resources. There was relatively strong backing for the development of management proposals and legislation at the State level, and a number of recommendations have been made.

Dr. Mike McCoy commented on the situation regarding turtles in other parts of FSM and Yap State. There was increasing pressure on the turtles of Oroluk Atoll and the outer islands of Yap, resulting from poaching by Trukese fishermen who are using boats capable of long distance travel to collect turtles for sale on the lucrative local market (\$250 to \$400 per turtle for special celebrations).

6.3 Papua New Guinea

Some progress had been made with the PNG turtle conservation programme during the year. Greenpeace had funded Ms. Donna Kwan of James Cook University to carry out the Daru market survey. She was accompanied by Ms. Janet Norman who collected tissue samples for genetic studies. The results of this study show that turtles sold in Daru are from the northern and western Australian populations, with some from the PNG population.

The University of PNG is continuing its study of leatherbacks in Labu Tale, a Conservation Area in the Morobe province on the northern coast of mainland PNG. Mr. John Kasu is leading the study with help from the Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC). The DEC has also received assistance from the World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) to review the status of its current Conservation Areas, which will include the turtle conservation areas. Mr. Rai Vui was chosen by the DEC to participate in training under Dr. Limpus at Heron Island, and he will be actively involved in all DEC turtle conservation activities in the future. The DEC is in the process of completing a bibliography of turtle conservation research in PNG from available information, which will be made available to the RMTCP.

The PNG Programme for 1991-92 will investigate turtle nesting on Long Island and the Hermit Islands in the northern part of PNG, towards the end of 1991. Tagging will also be involved. Surveys of the Daru and Port Moresby markets will also be carried out. The programme will also include an education component, and PNG is keen to use the materials being prepared by the RMTCP.

The PNG delegation to the meeting expressed their appreciation of the work of Mr. Peter Thomas, who was instrumental in establishing the RMTCP, and in its subsequent development. The delegation was particularly appreciative of his assistance to the PNG in-country programme and wished him well in the future.

6.4 Fiji

Fiji reported good records of the commercial exploitation of turtles for 1990. In that year 14 tonnes of turtle meat had been sold at an average price of \$2.64/kg, which compared well to the price of top grade fish (\$3-3.50/kg). Some 900 kgs of meat were sold to Japan, and if a further 14 tonnes were estimated as the subsistence take, a total of some 30 tonnes per year was taken commercially. 1 044 kgs of bekko was exported to Japan of which 944 kgs were unworked. This was obtained from the stockpile held in Fiji.

On July 19 1990 a ban on the sale of all raw turtle shell was introduced, and Ministerial approval is now required before turtles can be kept in captivity. It is intended to introduce legislation which addresses the issue of minimum and maximum sizes at a later date. A proposed ban on all sale of turtle meat was thrown out at Ministerial level. A new regulation was introduced from 1 January 1991 prohibiting the export of raw shell, but not worked shell.

Little research had been carried out although information on Makogai and the resort island of Namena was available. Tagging activities had not been undertaken but there were good traces of nesting in the Southern Lau group. The main thrust of turtle conservation work in Fiji should be aimed at halting the sale of raw meat which the statistics indicated could mean up to 12 000 turtles are being harvested a year (28 000 kgs of meat equals approximately 12 000 turtles). Fiji would be looking to the RMTCP to provide 4 tagging kits for the forthcoming year, and turtle conservation education materials.

6.5 French Polynesia

French Polynesia reported a recent change to the regulations which protects green turtles from harvest from 1 July to 31 January and sets a 65-cm size limit. The new regulation recognises the importance of traditional harvesting of turtles. Despite the regulations there is still a problem with the commercial harvesting of turtles. There is also a complete ban on the taking of turtle eggs except for scientific and educational purposes. There is no international trade in turtles, and turtle products in French Polynesia are subject to Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).

The Scilly Islands are a major turtle nesting site in French Polynesia and are protected. In the past there has been a project to raise turtles in captivity to restock outer islands. A tagging project was also underway which ceased recently. French Polynesia was keen to recommence the tagging work under the RMTCP. There was general agreement in the meeting that it would be desirable to support this work given French Polynesia's location in the eastern Pacific, and the likely westward pattern of migration. The RMTCP would seek the previous data from the earlier Scilly Islands tagging project for inclusion in the regional database. It was also considered important to collect genetic material if at all possible from the Scilly Island population.

6.6 Marshall Islands

The Marshall Islands delegate indicated that they had not had the opportunity to initiate turtle conservation activities this last year, but were keen to follow up the recommendations of the SPREP/East West Centre survey of the Northern Marshall Islands in 1988, which called for tagging and census work on Bikar atoll. To this end a project proposal had been submitted to the RMTCP for work in 1992. It was also noted that as in FSM the trade in turtles was increasing in the Marshall Islands, driven by the high prices turtles fetched for special celebrations.

There was also a major problem with the illegal poaching of turtles by the crews of boats from distant water fishing nations, particularly the Taiwanese long liners. It was suggested that the RMTCP should sponsor large signs on some of the remote atolls warning people of the illegality of landing and fishing in the atoll waters. Similar signs could be erected in important ports of call.

6.7 Vanuatu

A postal survey consisting of questionnaires about the presence and harvesting of turtles had been distributed widely throughout the country. Approximately 60% of these had been returned and the results would be used to assist in the identification of priority sites for census and tagging activities under the RMTCP. Under the *Vanuatu Fisheries Act* all turtles are protected, but despite this, harvesting still occurred. Vanuatu is a party to CITES so there is no export of turtle products. It was considered that enforcement of this aspect of the law was effective. Vanuatu was keen to undertake a tagging and census project in November 1990 which was considered to be one of the best times for nesting. Expert assistance was requested for training and guidance during the survey.

6.8 New Caledonia

A four-day survey of the Chesterfield Islands had been carried out in 1990, during which many tracks were observed but only one turtle was seen. New Caledonia had been involved in tagging projects sporadically for some years, and was keen to continue this work in the future with the support of the RMTCP. It was planned to undertake a survey of the Surprise and Huon Islands which had not been surveyed since 1989, in November - December 1991. Support for this survey was being sought from the RMTCP.

The meeting was informed by Dr. Limpus that a tag from a turtle tagged in the feeding grounds of the Great Barrier Reef had been recovered in New Caledonia, which was the first indication that some (perhaps as many as 20%) of the breeding turtles of the Southern Great Barrier Reef may migrate to feeding grounds in New Caledonia. This indicated that the migration of turtles was not one way. It was agreed that it would be desirable to try to collect genetic material from the Surprise and Huon population as well as from the Isle des Pins population.

In view of the potentially important linkages between the New Caledonian and eastern Australian turtle populations, a resolution urging New Caledonia to intensify its conservation efforts was passed.

6.9 Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage

In his presentation to the meeting on the work of the Department, and turtle research directions generally, Dr. Limpus emphasised the importance of the global population genetics study being coordinated by the University of Georgia in the U.S. The use of genetic markers was proving to be a reliable method for determining the population origin of turtles, and had shown that in other parts of the world green turtles belonged to discrete populations.

Australia had now joined this global programme and early results had proved most interesting. Three discrete populations had been identified; the Southern Great Barrier Reef, the Northern Great Barrier Reef and the Western Australian. Genetic sampling had indicated that there was not interchange between the Great Barrier Reef populations and the Western Australia population, and only limited interchange between the two Great Barrier Reef populations. One implication of this was that one rookery could not be relied on to replenish another in the event of loss of one of the rookeries.

Information from the Daru market surveys in PNG indicated that a significant proportion of the turtles being harvested came from the Australian populations. Genetic sampling was a valuable research and management tool, and it would be valuable to begin to collect material from other South Pacific rookeries to help build the picture of population dynamics in the region. It was agreed that wherever possible, arrangements would be made to collect the material and transport it to Australia. The logistics of doing so were discussed at length.

6.10 *National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)*

Mr. George Balazs outlined the activities of the NMFS related to the RMTCP, since the 1990 meeting. Information had been provided to the IUCN Marine Turtle Specialist Group on the work of the RMTCP, and support and advice had been provided to SPREP. Much concern had been expressed in the U.S. over the extent and dramatic increase of Fibropapilloma, a disease affecting turtles in the eastern Pacific and other regions (including Australia). A workshop on the disease had been held, and a \$2.6-million, 5-year research plan which takes an epidemiological approach to the problem developed.

An initiative by the NMFS and the US Fish and Wildlife Service to establish a Pacific Marine Turtle Conservation Committee which would have responsibility for the recovery planning for turtle populations in the American-affiliated territories was reported on. This would build on the success of the Hawaii marine turtle conservation recovery plan, and would be co-ordinated with the RMTCP through common members in Mr. Balazs and Dr. Limpus. Concern was expressed that the two programmes should be complementary and not duplicate activities.

The incidence of turtle meat poisoning in the region was commented on, and participants were urged to send information on these incidents to the NMFS. It was also suggested that a project be developed to provide information on this deadly type of food poisoning.

6.11 *Greenpeace*

The Greenpeace representative reported that a briefing paper on the Solomon Islands turtle trade had been circulated to politicians, non-government organisations (NGOs), media, etc. Greenpeace had continued to urge the Solomon Islands Government to ban the export of bekko to protect the hawksbill turtle.

Greenpeace had funded a one month survey of the Daru market in PNG in October 1990, and had used one of its vessels to conduct a one month survey of 40 hawksbill turtle nesting and turtle tagging activities in Northern Queensland and Torres Strait. The survey had been conducted in conjunction with the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service.

Educational materials had been produced including the supply of 200 T-shirts to the Solomon Islands, 200 turtle stickers and badges to Vanuatu, and funding for the production of 1 000 Environmental Alert booklets on turtles compiled by the South Pacific Action Committee on Human Ecology and Environment (SPACHEE) at the University of the South Pacific.

Publicity had been generated on the Indonesian turtle trade. Greenpeace had produced a report, short film, posters and leaflets to encourage tourists visiting Indonesia not to buy turtle products. Greenpeace is also working with both the Indonesian Government and NGOs to improve the situation facing turtles in that country.

7. Progress with Information and Database

Ms Suzie Geermans provided a report on the development of the RMTCP database.

The information and database requirements of the RMTCP were obtained by modification of an existing database used by the Queensland Turtle Research Project, Australia. The software is called dBXL, which is a dBASE III+ software, and the files are compatible with dBASE IV. The RMTCP database consists of three elements:

1. *General Information Base.*

This incorporates:

- a. A bibliography of marine turtle literature and research including published and unpublished papers, reports and articles pertaining to the South Pacific region, as well as literature on the biology of sea turtles. This bibliography is continuously *being updated and is maintained on PROCITE* software.
- b. Information on legislation regarding sea turtles, including hunting seasons, size restrictions, and penalties incurred for disobeying these regulations.
- c. A list of government and non-government personnel who are involved with marine turtle conservation, and their contact addresses. This list should be updated regularly, and information should be sent accordingly to SPREP.
- d. A file on trade statistics and prices, local consumption and use of marine turtles. Much of this information is taken from past records, as well as current trends in price and consumption figures.

2. *Census Data Base*

This incorporates information regarding specialised census data for each country, such as:

- a. nesting year
- b. locality, beach, latitude and longitude, other geographical information
- c. date of census
- d. duration of census - 1 night, 1 week, 1 month
- e. type of census - rack counts, aerial surveys
- f. census counts

3. *Tagging Information Data Base*

This includes inter-related files such as:

- a. tagging data - tag numbers, date of application, sex (if known) and species.

- b. capture data
 - date of tagging; locality, beach, latitude and longitude;
 - measurements: length, weight.
 - maturity: adult, juvenile
 - method of capture
 - activity: laying eggs, swimming
 - special measurements: clutch counts, emergence.

These files for each country's tagging records will be assembled into one large general database for the region, as well as being kept as individual records. This allows access to all information on any turtle tagged under the RMTCP. This is important, especially in the case of a tag recovery, when the information may not be accessible by the person who accessed the recovered tag. The files regarding such migrations are also linked to the files containing contact addresses, so that all people involved with the turtle can be notified of all information regarding the migration.

This information can be requested at any time by the participants in the programme, and the data is openly shared within the region.

Annex 2 shows the distribution of marine turtles in the South Pacific Region.

A number of issues concerning the availability and release of information in the database were discussed. It was explained that the information would be kept at SPREP on the regional database with a backup on the Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage Database operated by Dr. Limpus. Member countries would receive hard copies of the information relating to their country on disks if a compatible system exists. The issue of publication rights was discussed. It was considered that the conventional approach that the person putting the tags on the turtles would have first rights to publication of data and results should be respected and continued with regard to the RMTCP. A plea was made that everyone involved in the RMTCP make a strong effort to share information.

With regard to tag recovery, it was agreed that there should be an automatic procedure developed, which will ensure that all the parties who should be notified of a tag recovery, are actually notified, e.g. Government agencies and officials. This would include a list of all the formal contact points. It was agreed that there was a strong obligation by the tagger (or the RMTCP), to the person recovering the tag, to send detailed information about the particular turtle and a reward - T shirt and fact sheets etc.

It was agreed to send Ms. Geermans to Hawaii to research the turtle information in the NMFS and other libraries, for the RMTCP bibliography.

8. Progress with Education Materials

Ms. Geermans reported on the work being done with the development of the turtle fact sheet, tag recovery poster and the regional turtle conservation poster. Participants were able to comment on the draft tag recovery poster, and it was agreed it would need to be printed in 2 sizes - large and A4. It was also agreed that the regional poster would be printed in English and as many regional languages as possible. The leaflet however, would be prepared in English only.

9. Progress with Conservation Measures and Traditional Knowledge

The Solomon Islands surveys had attempted to gather information on traditional knowledge, and this would be made available to the RMTCP. Similarly, information from the Vanuatu postal service could be collated and made available.

Progress with legislation had been outlined in the country reports and the need to secure the conservation of the Arnarvon Islands in the Solomon Islands was emphasised.

10. RMTCP Work Programme for 1991-92

The meeting assessed the work programme for 1991-92. This is shown in Annex 3.

11. Meeting Resolutions

During the course of the meeting a number of issues were identified which were considered to warrant special attention in the form of the following resolutions:

A. Resolution on Turtle Exploitation in Indonesia

Recognising that green turtles are highly migratory species and that available tag recapture data indicates movement of green turtles between the South Pacific and the South East Asian Region,

Noting that there are very heavy levels of turtle harvesting and exploitation occurring in the waters surrounding Indonesia, and that the Bali Turtle Market is one of the largest in South-East Asia.

The Steering Committee of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme:

Urges the Government of the Republic of Indonesia to:

- (i) note its concern at the level of commercial trade in green turtles centred around Bali;
- (ii) enter into discussions at the regional level to develop co-operative arrangements for the management and conservation of green turtles in the South East Asian Region; and
- (iii) co-operate with the countries of the South Pacific on inter-regional initiatives for marine turtle conservation and management.

B. Resolution on Regional Co-operation on Turtle Conservation

Noting the resolution of the Fourth South Pacific Conference on National Parks and Protected Areas calling for the endorsement of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme by the 1990 SPREP IGM Meeting,

Further noting the recent progress made with the development of a regional co-operative approach to the conservation and management of marine turtles in the South Pacific region through the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme,

Again recognising the highly migratory behaviour of marine turtles and the cultural and subsistence importance of these animals to the people of the countries of the South Pacific,

Recognising also that the conservation and management of marine turtles require both national initiatives and regional co-operation,

The Steering Committee of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme:

Recommends

- (i) that consideration be given to the negotiation of a regional agreement for the conservation of threatened migratory species, particularly marine turtles, in the form of a protocol to the Convention for the Protection of Environment and Natural Resources of the South Pacific (SPREP Convention) by the Parties to that Convention.
- (ii) that the island countries of the South Pacific region give strong consideration to accession to the Washington Convention (the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora - CITES) which provides for the protection of five out of the six species of marine turtles occurring in the South Pacific.

C. Resolution on Japanese Bekko Trade

Recognising that the hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*) is traditionally valuable for the countries of the South Pacific region,

Noting that Japan is the largest importer of hawksbill turtle scales (known as bekko) in the world and that Japan has increased its imports of bekko from the South Pacific in recent years,

Further noting that Japan recently announced that it will stop importing bekko at the end of

The Steering Committee of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme:

Congratulates the Government of Japan on its decision to end its imports of bek, international and regional conservation and development agencies assist the Solomon Islands to proceed with the establishment of the Arnarvon Wildlife Sanctuary as soon as possible.

E. Resolution on Turtle Conservation in New Caledonia

Considering that New Caledonia and Dependencies is an important breeding ground for the following species of marine turtles:

- Green turtle (*Chelonia mydas*),
- Hawksbill turtle (*Eretmochelys imbricata*),
- Loggerhead turtle (*Caretta caretta*)

Also considering that statutory protection for marine turtles already exists in New Caledonia.

The Steering Committee of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme:

Urges 'Association pour la sauvegarde de la nature neo-caledonienne (ASSNC)' to persevere with its research programme and information campaign for the conservation of marine turtles,

Supports all action taken by ASNNC with the territorial authorities and the research bodies present in New Caledonia to combat poaching and secure the strict enforcement of statutory provisions relating to marine conservation.

F. Resolution on Information on Fiji Turtle Conservation

Recognising that Michael Guinea surveyed the distribution of marine turtles in Fiji in the late 1970s, using his own resources,

Noting that little detailed data on the distribution of marine turtles in Fiji is available in published reports.

The Steering Committee of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme:

Invites Mr Guinea to submit a formal report of his Fiji turtle surveys to SPREP for consideration for publication.

G. Resolution Recognising Peter Thomas

Recalling that Mr Peter Thomas has played a significant and fundamental role in successfully initiating and implementing the Regional Marine Turtle Conservation Programme,

Noting, with regret, that Mr Thomas will be leaving the Programme to undertake professional pursuits elsewhere in the Pacific region.

The Steering Committee of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme:

Resolves that Mr Thomas be gratefully thanked for his substantial contributions to the Programme, and that he be wished continued success in his future endeavours.

H. Resolution Recognising Mr Alan Banner

Recalling that during the early 1970s American Peace Corps Volunteer Mr Alan Banner vigorously worked at the village level on behalf of the conservation of marine turtles in the South Pacific region,

Noting with deep regret that Mr Banner lost his life as the result of a sudden fatal shark attack while swimming ashore to conduct marine turtle conservation duties as Nu'utele Island in Western Samoa.

The Steering Committee of the South Pacific Regional Marine Turtle Conservation and Management Programme:

Resolves that Mr Banner's work be gratefully recognised and remembered.

12. Next Meeting

It was agreed that the next meeting of the Steering Committee would be convened by SPREP in 1993. Although it is desirable to continue the arrangement to link the meeting with the Regional Technical Fisheries Meeting (RTFM) in Noumea, it was recognised that the relocation of SPREP may make this difficult. It was agreed that the venue and timing of the next meeting would be left to SPREP's discretion.

Annexes

Annex 1:

Agenda

1. Introductions and Welcome
2. Election of Chairperson
3. Adoption of Agenda
4. Meeting Objectives
5. Review of RMTCP and Overview of Progress in 1990/91
6. Review of Turtle Conservation Activities by Country
 - a. Palau
 - b. Federated States of Micronesia
 - c. Fiji
 - d. Marshall Islands
 - e. Papua New Guinea
 - f. Solomon Islands
 - g. Vanuatu
 - h. New Caledonia
 - i. Queensland Department of Environment and Heritage
 - j. U.S. National Marine Fisheries Service
 - k. Greenpeace International
7. Census and Tagging Projects - Programme for Future In-Country Activities
8. Progress with the Information and Data Base
9. Research and Related Programmes
10. Progress with Information and Education
11. Progress with Conservation Measures and Traditional Knowledge
12. RMTCP for 1991/92
13. Closing Session

Annex 2:

Distribution of Marine Turtles in the South Pacific

Country	Green	Hawkesbill	Loggerhead	Olive Ridley	Leatherback
AMERICAN SAMOA	N/F	N/F*			
COOK ISLANDS	N				
FEDERATED STATES OF MICRONESIA	N/F	N/F		F*	
FIJI	N/F	N/F	F*		F*
FRENCH POLYNESIA	N/F	N*/F*			
GUAM	N/F	N*/F*			
KIRIBATI	N/F	F	F*	F*	
MARSHALL ISLANDS	N/F	N			
NAURU					
NEW CALEDONIA	N/F	N/F*	N/F		
NIUE					
NORTHERN MARIANA ISLANDS	N*/F*	F*		F*	
PALAU	N/F	N/F		F*	
PAPUA NEW GUINEA	N/F	N/F	F	N*/F*	N
PITCAIRN ISLANDS	F*				
SOLOMON ISLANDS	N/F	N/F	F*	N*/F*	N*
TOKELAU	N/F	N*/F		F*	
TONGA	N/F	N*			
TUVALU	N/F	F*			
VANUATU	N	N			
WALLIS AND FUTUNA	F*				
WESTERN SAMOA	F	N/F		F*	

Index
N = nesting
F = feeding
* = sporadic sightings
= no information

Annex 3:

RMTCP Work Programme and Budget for 1991 / 92

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	MONTH	LOCATION	OTHER CURRENCY	BUDGET US\$
10.5 MARSHALL ISLANDS				
SURVEYS	JUNE/JULY 1-2 WEEKS	BIKAR ATOLL		\$7,500
TAG ESTIMATE		1000 (AUD\$)	\$3,000	\$2,220
SIGNS				\$500
TOTAL MARSHALL ISLANDS				\$10,220
10.6 FRENCH POLYNESIA				
SURVEYS 1991	OCT-DEC	SCILLY ISLANDS BELLINGHAUSEN		\$10,000
TAG ESTIMATE		400 (AUD\$)	\$1,200	\$888
TISSUE SAMPLES		HATCHLINGS, 5 NESTS		\$1,000
SURVEYS 1992	OCT-DEC	SCILLY ISLANDS BELLINGHAUSEN		\$1,000
TAG ESTIMATE		400 (AUD\$)	\$1,200	\$888
TOTAL FRENCH POLYNESIA				\$13,776
10.7 NEW CALEDONIA				
SURVEYS 1991	NOVEMBER	SURPRISE/HUON ISLANDS		\$5,000
TAG ESTIMATE		300 (AUD\$)	\$900	\$666
TISSUE SAMPLES				\$1,000
INTERVIEWS		ISLE DE PINS		
TOTAL NEW CALEDONIA				\$6,666
10.8 PALAU				
EDUCATION CAMPAIGN 1991				\$4,500
SURVEYS 1992		SOUTH WEST ISLANDS		\$3,000
TAG ESTIMATE		1000 (AUD\$)	\$3,000	\$2,220
TOTAL PALAU				\$9,720

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	MONTH	LOCATION	OTHER CURRENCY	BUDGET US\$
10.1 SOLOMON ISLANDS				
SURVEYS 1991	NOVEMBER	OBEANI ISLANDS		\$1,000
	OCTOBER	QUESTIONNAIRE SURVEY & TEMOTU PROVINCE ROOKERY VERIFICATION		
SURVEYS 1992	JUNE/JULY	ARNARVON ISLANDS		\$5,000
	NOVEMBER	OBEANI		\$3,000
EDUCATION TAG ESTIMATE	INFO LEAFLET	(primary schools) 300 (AUD\$)	\$900	\$666
TOTAL SOLOMONS				\$9,666
10.2 PAPUA NEW GUINEA				
SURVEYS 1991	SEPT/OCT	LONG ISLAND WMA		\$4,500
	2 WEEKS OCT	HERMIT ISLAND		\$4,000
		MARKET SURVEY KOKO		\$1,500
		MARKET SURVEY DARU		\$2,000
		SUPPORT FOR J NORMAN		\$1,500
SURVEYS 1992	JUNE/JULY	LONG ISLAND, HERMIT ISLAND		\$9,000
		MARKET SURVEYS DARU AND KOKO		\$3,500
TAG ESTIMATE		400 (AUD\$)	\$1,200	\$888
TOTAL PNG				\$26,888
10.3 FSM-YAP				
SURVEYS 1992	APRIL-JUNE	OLIMARARO GAFERUT ULITHI		\$9,800
TAG ESTIMATE		2000 (AUD\$)	\$900	\$666
TOTAL YAP				\$10,466
10.4 VANUATU				
SURVEYS 1991	NOVEMBER	STH MALEKULA		\$6,000
		STH SANTO		
		SUPPORT FOR EXPERT		\$1,500
TAG ESTIMATE		300 (AUD\$)	\$900	\$666
SURVEYS 1992	NOVEMBER	STH MALEKULA		\$7,000
		STH SANTO ANEITYM		
TAG ESTIMATE		???		
TOTAL VANUATU				\$15,166

TYPE OF ACTIVITY	MONTH	LOCATION	OTHER CURRENCY	BUDGET US\$
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10.9 FIJI

SURVEY 1991	NOVEMBER	NAMENA ISLAND MOKAGAI ISLAND		
TISSUE SAMPLES				\$800
TAG ESTIMATE		200 (AUD\$)	\$600	\$444
	TOTAL FIJI			<u>\$1,244</u>
TOTAL RMTCP BUDGET			\$103,812	

Annex 4:

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