

SOPAC NewsUpdate #005, 16 April 2002

- 1) **Interactive Map of the Pacific** – Please find an interactive map of the Pacific, with a number of layers at the following link: <http://www.sopac.org/Map/index.html>. More layers will be added as they become available. At the date of this bulletin the following layers are online: EEZ, Land mass, 12-mile zones, Bathymetry, Plates and Cyclones.§
- 2) **Trainee Attachments from Tonga & Fiji** – Kilisimasi Lutui from the Tonga Energy Planning Unit, Ministry of Lands, Survey and Natural Resources is on a fellowship attachment from 9 to 19 April 2002 to the Community Lifelines Program (Energy and ICT) [see last item in this NewsUpdate]. He is working on the Tonga Energy Databases and getting tips on webpage design. He is also assisting in translating energy booklets for schools into Tongan. Also attached to the IT unit is Fiji's Gander Wainiqolo, for three months. Her hands-on training is a practical requirement towards a Diploma in Information Technology at the NZ Pacific Training Centre.§
- 3) **GIS & Remote Sensing Workshop, Vanuatu** – AusAID is funding a GIS & Remote Sensing Workshop to be conducted this week in Vanuatu for Government departments. The workshop is being conducted by Remote Sensing Specialist Wolf Forstreuter to further update Vanuatu technical officers with the basic terminologies and techniques of GIS and Remote Sensing. A satellite image backdrop was delivered to the Government of Vanuatu last year, and the main objective of the current workshop is to teach the Vanuatu participants how to use this properly for resource management and monitoring.§
- 4) **Pearl Farming GIS Workshop, Cook Islands** – The Remote Sensing Specialist, is also conducting a one-week Pearl Farming GIS Training Workshop for the Cook Islands in the first week of May. The workshop is follow-up work to enhance the basic monitoring system developed a few years ago by Franck Martin (SOPAC) and Ben Ponia (SPC) when Ben was the Director of Research and Economic Development (DREP), in the Cook Islands Ministry of Marine Resources. Ian Bertram, who is now the DREP is further developing the Manihiki pearl farm resource monitoring GIS by integrating the multibeam bathymetry data collected last year by the coastal team and satellite imagery processed by the GIS & Remote Sensing group within the IT unit. SPC is funding the workshop.§
- 5) **El Niño Outlook** – Early days yet to be really certain of the onset of El Niño in 2002, is the conclusion in March as experts continue to be cautious over an outright declaration at this time. "While most opinions see some increase in the likelihood of El Niño since the last advisory dated February 6, most emphasise that uncertainty still exists, though an El Niño in 2002 now seems slightly more likely than not." The situation will continue to be closely monitored and further advisories issued. The latest El Niño Outlook advisory from the World Meteorological Organization is dated 27 March 2002 and is available from this office for passing on if you're interested, or click on this link to get it: <http://www.sopac.org.fj/nuke/article.php?sid=25>.§
- 6) **Old & New SOPAC Corporate Terminology** – The SOPAC Secretariat is in the process of operationalising it's new Corporate Plan for the period 2002-2004. The plan requires a completely new corporate structure from the one that has been in place since SOPAC's complete metamorphosis from a UN Project into a fully-fledged Pacific regional organisation in 1990 (full story in SOPAC News, Number 1, Jan-Mar 2002). In this period of transition a mixture of terms from the old and new corporate structures will be present in every activity report we write for various audiences; this is unavoidable. We ask for your understanding, and we will be happy to answer any questions regarding the status of this plate-tectonic order-of-magnitude change.§

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