

Tiunu - June 2019



TE IPUKAREA SOCIETY

*Caring for our Environment
Taporoporo i to tatou Ao Rangi*

Kia Orana, Katou katoatoa, teia te nuti no Tiune 2019.

Welcome to the June 2019 edition of our newsletter. Be sure to check out our new graphic by the talented Edna Torea-Allan which celebrates the TIS corporate members that provide invaluable support for the work that we do.

TIS Talks Worms at Environment Day

Te IpuKarea Society celebrated World Environment Day by participating in the Environment Week expo hosted by the National Environment Service at Maire Nui Park.

The theme for Environment Day was Our Biodiversity, Our Food, Our Health - Te Ao Ora Natura, Te Kai, Ei Ora'anga Meitaki.

Our worm farm stand aimed to teach school children about the full circle of using food scrap waste to turn back into nutrient-rich soil for planting. Children were invited to get their hands dirty while learning about what worms eat and then

use the vermicompost (worm poo) to plant a vegetable seedling to take home.



Titikaveka College students getting their hands dirty in the TIS worm farm/ bug hotel

Worm Farms are full of biodiversity. They are an example of a complex ecosystem where balance is important. Just like the world ecosystem we live in, a worm farm is a biosphere which also needs to be kept in balance.



Some brave and some not so sure!



Students used worm castings as a nutrient rich starter for their vegetable seedlings to take home.

The worms used in worm farms are in fact compost worms, which are different to the regular earthworms found in garden soil. Compost worms are surface feeders and don't burrow deep into the soil like garden earthworms do. If you want to find compost worms on Rarotonga, underneath old puru and pig pen sites are your best bet.



Maja the bug lady – with her juicy Indian Blue worms

A massive thanks to the 'bug lady' Maja Poeschko from the Ministry of Agriculture for providing us with some great big Indian Blue worms. Maja and Mary from TIS also recently helped set up the two new worm bins at the Nautilus Resort to help manage their food waste. Congratulations to the TIS Corporate Gold Member on their eco initiatives, including a new bee hive as well!.

Muri Beach Clean Up



World Oceans Day on Saturday June 8 saw almost 200 people join in on the ultimate clean-up of the ocean side of the four motu in Muri.

We had a volunteer army of local watersport operators and businesses on board which enabled us to transport people to the four motu – including several motorboats, SUPs and even the Oe Vaka!

Celebrated now for 10 years, World Oceans Day is an opportunity to raise awareness of the challenges facing our oceans. It connects people worldwide, and inspires continuing action year-round to protect and restore this amazing resource that we all depend on.

The theme for 2019's World Oceans Day was "Gender and Oceans". And women played a leading role in the morning's beach clean-up of the Muri motu – one of more than 1000 events being held around the globe to mark World Oceans Day.



Taylah Noovao made it her mission to save these tiny microplastics from becoming fish food

The week prior to the clean up day we ran a colouring competition with the primary schools to raise awareness of World Oceans Day. Congratulations to all the artists who got involved – the winning entries are displayed at the TIS office (next door to Bamboo Jacks, Tupapa).



Just some of the many creative entries for the school colouring competition



The unstoppable crew from Oe Vaka and Canoe & Kayak CI – they cleaned up!

A big thank you to Anne Tierney of Muri Environment Care Group, who orchestrated the event and also thanks to the sponsors for their support and donation of prizes including the National Environment Service, Rarotonga Brewery, Rarotongian Sailing Club, LBV, Te Vara Nui, Koka Lagoon Cruises, KiteSup, Ariki, Pacific Resort, and Air Rarotonga.

Tokelau Water Stations

TIS Technical Director Kelvin Passfield has recently been in Tokelau finishing off the installation of filtered, UV sterilised water stations. The project was funded by the Australian Government, under a Global Environment Facility, Small Grant Programme Global Grant for community based adaptation to climate change.



Kelvin and Kees at one of the newly completed water stations in Tokelau



Freshwater for young and all at the Tokelau water station

A big thank you to Kees from Aquaflow Water Solutions for providing the technical expertise for the project. And for the support of the General Managers of the three atolls of Fakaofu, Nukunonu, and Atafu and their plumbing staff, who will be responsible for the ongoing routine maintenance.

TIS represented at Bonn Global Landscape Forum

Charlee McLean, an environmental intern at Te Ipukarea Society, spoke at the Global Landscape Forum in Bonn, Germany this month.

More than 600 people rallied behind a more inclusive and sustainable future, focused on the recognition of indigenous communities' rights and their irreplaceable role in combating the climate crisis.

Alongside the Bonn Climate Change Conference, indigenous leaders and representatives stood shoulder-to-shoulder with scientists and youth in committing to the rights of the world's 350 million indigenous peoples, whose ancestral lands contain 80 percent of the world's biodiversity and nearly 300 billion metric tons of carbon.



As the sole representative of the South Pacific, Charlee conveyed a different perspective of indigenous culture and tradition, sharing her story on the effects that development has had on our landscapes, seascapes and lifestyle.

"Tourism has become one of the most important economic activities in the Pacific islands," she said. "For us Cook Islanders it's our largest income-earner. As a result of tourism our communities, environment, traditions, social structures and cultural practices are faced with multiple challenges.



"One of many is waste management. Rarotonga has only an area of 67.19 square km ... Our landfill is reaching its maximum capacity and the island is running out of space. We are torn between the needs of our people and the needs of our land."

The message at the forum was clear: Indigenous rights are an important solution to climate change. This forum was the first to focus on rights, through sessions on land tenure, activism, gender inclusion, traditions, landscape sustainability and more.

Charlee's presentation highlighted the importance of valuing and integrating traditional Cook Island knowledge and custom. "Our forefathers, pre-colonisation, lived a simple sustainable lifestyle growing their own food and using natural resources from the land to build their homes. They planted by the moon growing root crops such as taro, kumara and maniotā, using natural fertilisers. They practiced natural medicines using plants. They fished the reefs freely without depleting the lagoon observing the customary practice of Ra'ui.

"So I say again, we don't own the land, we are only the caretakers. As indigenous people I believe we hold the key solutions to preserve and to protect our ancestral grounds, communal resources and environment for future generations."

Meitaki ma'ata for reading our newsletter

From all of us at the TIS team

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