



TE IPUKAREA SOCIETY

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

Aroa Kiritimiti e Kia mataora i te Mataiti Ou!

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year to you all, our readers, supporters and partners.

To call 2020 a tough year is an understatement for so many of us. Yet despite the setbacks, we are grateful to have been blessed with a very busy year of action and achievements.

It is thanks to the contribution of our amazing network of volunteers & supporters that our small organisation has been able to continue punching above our weight to do the mahi we believe in and together, contribute to being the change we want to see in the Cook Islands and beyond.

Meitaki ma'ata for all your support this year and we look forward to sharing the year ahead with you!

Deep Conversations

Last night we hosted the local premiere of our new documentary on deep-sea mining (DSM) at the charming Tamarind House.



The event, aptly named 'Deep Conversations' really demonstrated the need for these opportunities for local Cook Islanders to voice opinions and ask questions from Cook Islanders on this issue of DSM.



Despite this hectic pre-christmas time, over 70 people attended the event and engaged in some very stimulating conversation.

Topics ranged from: freedom of speech, genuine youth engagement, the importance of voices outside of government being heard particularly in the Pa Enua and the potential for impacts of DSM on tourism.





A big thank you to our fantastic panel of speakers, and to all those involved in the documentary. Meitaki also to Korero o te Orau for their constant support and to Konini Rongo from Rongokura Productions for her excellent video production skills.

Very soon you can view the doco on our YouTube channel: [Cook Islands Conservation](#)

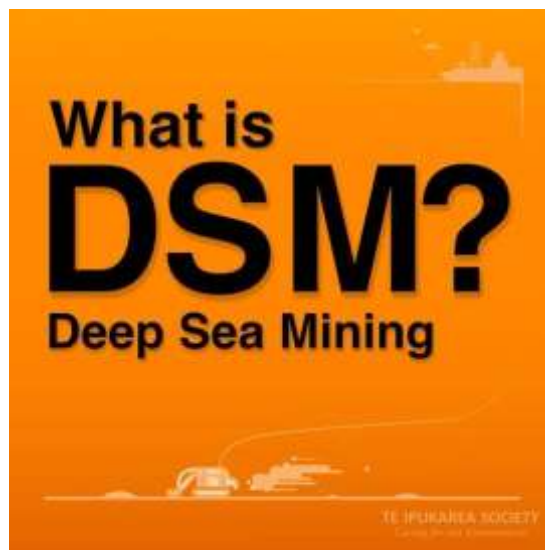


This doco was recently screened for a large international audience at the virtual event #DefendtheDeep run by Sustainable Ocean Alliance.

Alanna was a guest speaker on the Frontlines of the Pacific session hosted by the well respected deep-sea scientist, Diva Amon.

Te Ipukarea Society recently published its Position Statement on DSM [available on our webpage](#). This sets out that supports the call for a global moratorium while accepting that some research will be required through the exploration process.

Also keep an eye on our Facebook & Instagram pages for simple informative posts on environmental impacts of DSM.



Christmas Giveaway

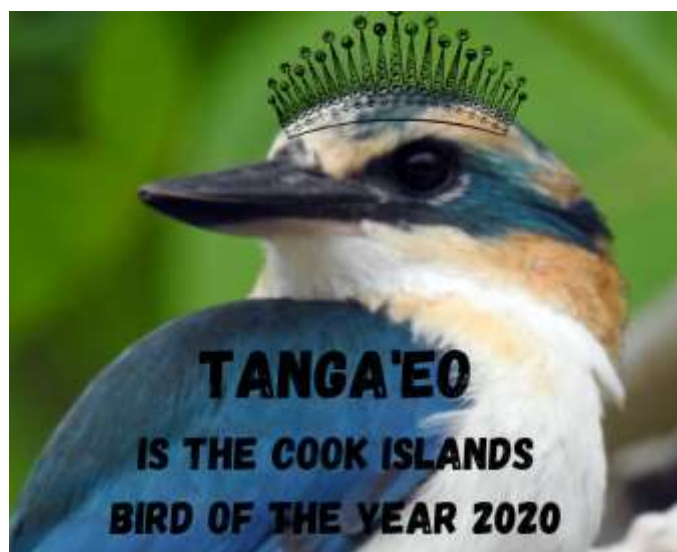


If you haven't already, be sure to enter our competition on Facebook @tiscookislands and Instagram @te_ipukarea_society to win one of these beauties. Simply Like & Follow our page and tag 2 friends.

Our new 1.2 litre insulated bottles are arriving any day now. The cargo ship is sitting outside the reef right now waiting for safe passage! Lucky for you this means our competition is now extended to Tuesday 22nd December.

These will be available for sale at our office and as local sports club fundraisers. This is part of a larger collaborative project with CISNOC, designed to reduce plastic waste in sports events.

Tanga'eo takes the Manu Crown



Our first ever Bird of the Year Cook Islands competition, which we ran in November was a flying success with over 4000 votes cast.

Widely agreed to be the most important election of the year, this hotly contested, battle of the birds had it all. Intense rivalry, cheating and inflated egos, things got quite competitive as people campaigned for their favourite manu.

Feathers got ruffled early on, when we realised that hundreds of fraudulent votes had been cast for two birds, the Kōpeka (Atiu Swiftlet) and the ʻŪoi (Rarotongan Starling).

With the competition being bright and showy, it was the breakneck rise to the top of the pecking order for these two, quiet, unassuming birds that first raised our suspicions.

Thanks to the safe hands of our super volunteer Peter Huckle, we quickly traced the suspect votes to offshore IP addresses in Turkey and Brazil. Peter had corrected and protected the voting system before accusations of cheating could be filed.

We also discovered that those same hacksters had later directed their mischief towards NZ's Kiwi pukupuku. Like the Kōpeka, the little spotted kiwi enjoyed some short-lived glory in the top spot,

having benefitted from illegal voting in the wee smalls.

A tense, last minute rush from the Atiu enuamanu supporters, made for a nail biting finish for second place. This catapulted the Kura (Rimatara Lorikeet) ahead of the Kūkupa to claim the silver medal at the 11th hour.

But in the end, no bird could compete with the mass campaign of the chunky little Tanga'eo run by the passionate Mangaian community.

This kingfisher (which strangely prefers bugs to fish) is found nowhere else in the world except Mangaia and took the crown by an astonishing 1364 votes. Over 900 more votes than the next bird.



Check out our You Tube channel Cook Islands Conservation for all the videos from the campaign, including one interview of our Technical Director, Kelvin Passfield dressed up as a Kukupa to accept the prize on behalf of the Tanga'eo.

Thanks to our Gold Corporate Sponsor Bank of the Cook Islands (BCI) for the loan of Kuki!

You can still learn about the birds at [our webpage](#), and see for yourself what all the fuss was about!

Titikaveka College Exhibition: the photos speak for themselves

Our 2nd environmental photography module, with Year 10 Tereora students culminated recently with an evening launch event and 3 week long exhibition at LBV Muri.



Julian Zehman of Turama Pacific provided technical photographic support to the students, and combined with Te Ipukarea Society's environmental education, the students each produced a photo for the exhibition which they were able to keep.

Julian spoke at the launch about the exciting and fun local career opportunities with photography. *"I think it's really important to share the overall idea that we can have our future here at home"*



Visual Arts teacher, Linn-Magnhild Valderaune or 'Miss Maggie', also spoke at the launch saying that:

"after just one day of learning to use the professional cameras, I could see big stars in the students eyes. They were inspired to run around taking pictures, it was a great experience for us all".

One student, Kiani Hand took a photo of rubbish left behind at the TCA. The description read *"What type of people would throw and leave their rubbish in our beautiful paradise? To me I think that we have to be*

responsible for our environment because if no one will look after it then who would?".

VeiVei Tauakume's image depicted seaweed washed up on the shore:

"The seaweed makes the beach look ugly, but it is natural and not manmade rubbish, so it doesn't cause trouble to our lagoon and sea life. It does makes you wonder if human pollution has had something to do with the amount of seaweed in our lagoon."

You can view all of these [photos on our webpage](#)

This programme is possible through funding from the US Embassy in NZ and will be undertaken across 6 senior schools in the Cook Islands. Next month is Aitutaki!

Spotlight on Volunteers

We have a lot of thanks to give for the support we have received from our community volunteers.

Special thanks these past months goes to Raniera Ellison of Akairo Creative who has helped develop and advise on graphics and our social media campaign for deep sea mining.



Raniera Ellison of Akairo Creations

We also had some great volunteer helpers, Sakiko Okazaki, Anthony Hill and Pouarii Tanner who came and separated glass bottle waste at the landfill. By collecting bottles with paper labels instead of plastic, we were then able to use the crushed glass in our coastal erosion project in Avana.

Check out the [short video](#) of the glass crusher in action at the Rarotonga landfill showing the

ICI workers hard at work and also reminding us to remove lids and separate our rubbish.



We are grateful to Infrastructure Cook Islands for the access to the landfill and for their efforts in all the hard work they're doing to help in this Waste Space.

Tereora Prizegiving & TIS Youth Internship

Te Ipukarea Society was proud to sponsor the Year 12 Biology Prize at Tereora College prizegiving this year. Congratulations to top student Luke Areai for winning this prize!

We are also NOW ADVERTISING for our summer internship. We offer a 2-3 month, paid full time position with flexible terms for a Cook Island school leaver or University student/ graduate with a strong interest in a future career in conservation or science.

This internship provides a great opportunity for a wide range of learning and experience and a chance to learn about working for an environmental NGO. Please contact us at the office if you're keen!

Update on Avana Coastal glass/ coastal protection

The transformation of Avana Harbour has continued recently with our demonstration project for an alternative approach to rock revetment walls to stabilize the Avana area, which is suffering from a great deal of

erosion. Planting additional levels of defence against the impacts of climate change is almost complete.



Beach pea vines (po'ue) were planted directly behind the geo-bags. Next level was vetiver grass. And behind that native trees Tamanu (*Calophyllum inophyllum*), Miro (*Thespesia populnea*), Tou (*Cordia subcordata*) and coconut trees. A big Meitaki ma'ata to the Ministry of Agriculture for the supply of native coastal trees to help boost our coastal resilience.

If you're passing by please check the plants and give them a drink of water – this is a hot summer!



Come and chat to us about becoming a member for 2021. We would love to have you onboard.

Meri Kiritimiti from all of us at Te Ipukarea Society and Meitaki for all the support throughout this 2020.

MEITAKI

to our generous supporters

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