

A word from...



Leslie Jaques OBE
Government of the Pitcairn Islands

“It’s nice to get the opportunity to profile Pitcairn in the current edition of the PROTÉGÉ Bulletin. I am Leslie Jaques and it has been my pleasure to lead Pitcairn’s current Renewable Energy Project on behalf of Pitcairn.

As a Pacific Island, European Union Overseas Territory, Pitcairn works closely with other Overseas Territories in the region, New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Wallace and Futuna both previously under Project INTEGRÉ and currently under PROTÉGÉ benefitting from joint projects and collaboration under the EDF Pacific Regional Envelope.

I have been involved with Pitcairn in various roles since 2003 and my role now is that of an elected Councillor with a focus on International Relations. It has been my pleasure to work with the European Union both in the Pacific Region and in Brussels for most of this time and also to work with our friends and colleagues from around the Pacific Region with SPC.

Pitcairn is grateful to the EU and to the PROTÉGÉ management team for their help and support in all areas of the PROTÉGÉ project. We are proud to be part of the Pacific Family.”

Thank you, Mauruuru, Malo tou ofa

We ended 2020 with a commitment rate of nearly 50% for the project as a whole. The final months of the year were very busy in terms of procurement and contracts with our partners. Our warmest thanks to all of you - the project team, SPC support services, and technical and government partners - for your involvement and vital support! The project is now reaching its cruising speed with a very large number of activities to be implemented while others are still to be developed. PROTEGE is living project. While maintaining our objectives to enhance resilience to the impacts of climate change the project has evolved and is adapting to changes in public policy and the territories’ expectations. So, as agreed with the members of the Steering Committee, during the first quarter we are focussing on working with our lead agencies to review our work programme

and expand the project to civil society partners, while keeping our actions from becoming too thin and diluted, which would slow down the project. We also hope that 2021 will bring solutions to the difficulties brought about by the health crisis, which have made the project much more complex and really slowed down its implementation. In fact, many territorial activities have been blocked or eliminated, especially as it is not possible to bring specialists into the territories or to travel to the outer islands for French Polynesia. That’s without even talking about the cancellation or postponement of regional cooperation activities (workshops, meetings, training sessions, etc.), even though they are the project’s very DNA, since video conferences cannot replace in-person contacts and discussions. Here’s hoping that 2021 will allow us to go back to the Fenua again...

PROTEGE launches activities in Pitcairn



Following a study commissioned by the European Union (EU) as part of the 2017 EU/OCTA Innovations project, the EU agreed to fund a renewable energy project for Pitcairn to replace fossil fuels by solar energy as part of the EDF-11

regional budget. In spite of the health crisis, coordination is working efficiently and is provided by SPC, a working group on Pitcairn and the Korean firm selected for Phase 1, which involves project design. The goal is to connect to the power grid that serves every house and government building on Pitcairn. The final design was submitted and then approved by all parties in early November. Everyone is satisfied with how the process is progressing and the inhabitants of Pitcairn have expressed their warmest thanks to all those involved. The international request for proposals for Phase 2 to design and install the solar energy system will be issued in 2021.

Upcoming activities

- FP 1st meeting of demonstration farm network – 24 and 25 March 2021
- NC Water Forum – March/ April 2021
- WF World Water Day – 22 and 23 March 2021
- WF Demonstration farm launch – 9 February 2021

To learn more

Watch the latest short videos about the project at www.protege.spc.int and on our social media platforms:

- [Intercropping plants video – FP](#)
- [Agroecology farm network – Cattle – NC](#)





AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

First regional demonstration farm meeting - NC / WF: A delegation from Wallis and Futuna made a visit to New Caledonia focussing on agriculture and forestry from 26 November to 4 December 2020.

With three farmers from PROTEGE's agroecology demonstration farm network, two plant-health technicians from the Agriculture Department and one Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Trades and Agriculture

(CCIMA) agent, the delegation and their New Caledonian counterparts engaged in a wide range of meetings and training sessions organised by SPC and the NC Chamber of Agriculture. The visit's final stop was Ouvea, where nearly 50 farmers, local elected officials, and traditional leaders took part in a two-day hands-on training session at the demonstration farm of Randy, a local farmer, to learn about agroforestry and how to restore soil fertility.



Training on Ouvea

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COASTAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Strengthening and developing marine resource management through regulated fishing zones (ZPR) - FP: On 28 October 2020, the Council of Ministers approved the creation of a ZPR in the Arutua Atoll's maritime area in the Tuamotu Islands. It's called the "Roren Regulated Fishing Zone" and came into effect on 1 January 2021. With a surface area of some 19,021 hectares,

i.e. one-third of the lagoon's area, this ZPR is located in the southwestern part of the island and is divided into two parts - a no-take zone designed to protect the life cycle of marine species, particularly groupers (*Epinephelus polyphekadion*) and humphead parrotfish (*Chlorurus microrhinos*), - and an area where only daytime spearfishing and line fishing are allowed.



Overall view of Arutua

© DRM/FP

Following its classification, Arutua became the 12th island with a ZPR. French Polynesia now has a total of 24 ZPRs. This operation received support from PROTEGE.



WATER

Airborne geophysical survey in Poum - NC: This innovative campaign took place in Poum in the northern part of New Caledonia in December 2020. A helicopter equipped with an electromagnetic loop made a sweep of the municipality's landscape looking for water. The aim of the campaign was to identify possible new underground water resources, especially drinking water, in a municipality that is heavily impacted by drought. The lack

of data on the location of the saltwater wedge sometimes leads managers to have to exploit groundwater in a "haphazard" manner, although saltwater infiltration into those resources could be irreversible at a human scale. Better information about the subsurface would also make it possible to locate new useable resources. It will take about two months for the data to be processed and sent to SPC to then be used to produce a precise subsurface map.



Helicopter and its loop

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INVASIVE SPECIES



Small offshore island in Wallis

Work to begin rat eradication operations on Wallis' 14 small islands - WF: Since September 2020, the Territorial Department of the Environment's (STE) invasive alien species team have been consulting with the traditional leaders and villages involved in the rat eradication project. Rats are a on-going threat to biodiversity on small offshore islands since

they attack Wallis' native animals e.g. birds, sea turtles, lizards, and plants. For each island, the meeting takes place with the village chief, neighbourhood leaders, and landowners. The goal of this participatory approach is to have discussions on rats' impact on the small islands and find out what landowners' expect from the project's implementation.



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AGRICULTURE AND FORESTRY

INTERCROPPING IN FP

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Julie GRANDGIRARD

Entomologist, FP Agriculture
Department of FP

Intercropping plants are useful plants sown in addition to the main crop that will provide ecosystem services such as controlling weeds and erosion or attracting useful insects.

Intercropping helps limit the use of fertilisers, herbicides or insecticides. We are working on two kinds of intercropping plants, i.e. cover plants and those that provide shelter for auxiliaries.

Cover plants, particularly green fertiliser, are plants that rapidly cover the ground and help control pest plants and provide nitrogen to the main crop. Shelter plants are plants that will attract and facilitate the propagation of predatory insects such as ladybirds or micro-wasps to help control crop pests. Our goal as part of PROTEGE is to identify and evaluate local species of interest and produce healthy seeds for farmers if such seeds are not available on the local market. We have identified about 20 interesting species that we have begun to evaluate, such as crotalaria and mung beans for green fertiliser and flowering plants and aromatics for shelter plants.

We have particularly begun trials on:

- intercropping Arachis pintoi in banana groves to control pest plants,
- the effectiveness of planting marigolds with cucumbers to host thrips predators and control thrips on cucumbers,
- assessing various green fertilisers in market garden intercropping. ■



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Tamatoa BAMBRIDGE

Manager of Vaihiria Farms

Vaihiria Farms, located in the municipality of Mataiea, is a crop (market gardening and trees) and horse farm spread out over a 48-hectare estate. For the past four years, its products have been certified as organic (Pasifika and European standards). No need to tell you that we love the insects that contribute to our production cycle (well, almost all of them).

As part of PROTEGE, Vaihiria Farms has agreed with the Department of Agriculture to conduct trials on intercropping plants to support organic market farming. Currently we have a collection plot with various green fertiliser species and shelter plants for auxiliaries in order to study their cycles, growth, health status (diseases, pests) and the presence of auxiliaries for various intercropping plant species.

At the same time, we are contributing to a trial on growing marigolds with cucumber plants to control thrips, since marigolds have been classified as a shelter plant for thrips predators. The bottom line is that we are very happy to launch and continue such trials since we are already seeing some effects on limiting pest plants.

“We hope to expand the set-up of the collection plot”

In the end, if the trials are successful in both agricultural and economic terms, we hope to expand the set-up of the collection plot by selecting those plants that have contributed the most to crop stability and to maintaining both biodiversity and insects! ■



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INVASIVE SPECIES

TRAPPING TRAINING IN NC

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Carole WEMA

PROTEGE

Invasive Species agent in NC

The goal of this theme in New Caledonia is to implement culling activities for Rusa deer, wild boar, feral goats, and wild cattle in the three zones of the main island of New Caledonia as well as in the Loyalty Islands.

In order to be able to set up such culling activities, the social structure must be taken into account and a consultation phase with the communities is needed to ensure their acceptance of the project. This involves providing information on the actions to be implemented but also making joint decisions and working together to identify those areas where culling activities can be carried out.

“150 cage traps will be provided to the communities”

We are now holding training sessions on trapping wild boar using snare and cage traps. These training sessions help raise awareness in the local community of the impact of invasive species but, even more importantly, of how to become an active participant in culling in the areas where they live. The training sessions are open to all.

At the end of training, 150 cage traps will be provided to communities on the main island of New Caledonia, and another 20 to those in the Loyalty Islands.

During the initial discussions we had to during the consultations, I was happy to see the communities' motivation and involvement in protecting their resources and forests. ■



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Gilbert M'BOERI

Member of the council of elders of the St Michel tribe “XWA BOKENI” in Thio, NC

Around our tribal areas, in our fields and near our homes, we have been strongly affected by wild boar. For the past 10 years or so, I have seen the impact that deer and pigs have on our mountains as well as in the forest. During the time of our elders, we farmed in fields high in the mountains, but now we have to grow crops within 50m of our homes because of the damage that wild pigs cause to the fields. Even I have had to put up sheet metal as protection around my fields, and sometime our young people go out hunting to kill these animals.

Here in Thio, the community is well aware of the damage caused by deer and wild pigs. We have trappers in our tribes and hunters who carry out operations to control the wild pigs and deer in our forests and fields.

I came to learn about new trapping techniques during a training session given by the PROTEGE project, and my son and I are going back home happy to have taken part in this training, as we were able to learn new techniques, especially for snare traps that don't cost much and are easy to set up. It is a very positive thing that the training is accessible to all because our young people and mothers were able to take part and are going back home enriched by today's experience.

Here in St Michel, we have two small forests and that's why we must guard against an increase in the impact of these two invasive species. Thanks to this training, I believe every participant will be able to share trapping techniques with those around them. It will take a bit of practice to become really familiar with handling and setting up these two types of traps.

Other activities that will be carried out as part of the PROTEGE projects, such as group hunts, will also help control wild boar and deer populations. We in the community need to be actively involved in protecting our environment - in any case, that is what we are trying to do here in the tribal areas of Thio. ■



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FEEDBACK FROM THE FIELD



AGRICULTURE
AND FORESTRY

WF/NC MEETING OF THE PROTEGE AGROECOLOGY DEMONSTRATION FARM NETWORK



Sosefo TOA

Department of Agriculture, Forestry
and Fisheries (DSA) - Wallis and
Futuna

As part of the PROTEGE programme, I participated in a trip to New Caledonia that was very rewarding both for technical agents like me and for the farmers in the delegation.

We visited farming operations, particularly those with agroforestry plots, learned how to control rhinoceros beetles and other harmful insects, followed a training session on Ouvea, etc.

I learned many things that will help me with my work. The farmers who came with us learned more about new techniques. We have some things that are easily available in Wallis and Futuna that we could use better. For example, we learned that certain trees can be used to enrich the soil. I would like to thank SPC and PROTEGE for allowing us to come here for these exchanges and to establish personal contacts.

Such contacts are important, and we hope to continue working with our New Caledonian colleagues. The idea of holding an agroecology training session in Wallis & Futuna was also brought up. ■



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Randy UTCHAOU

Agroecology demonstration farm on Ouvea



I raise laying hens and do market gardening in the Fayaoué district in the middle of Ouvea. My farm hosted the agroforestry training session for the Wallisian and Futunan delegation.

The training was carried out by Mickaël Sansoni (Dumbea) and Guillaume Vama (Isle of Pines). We each have our own farming practices and it's interesting to share them. For example, I cut down invasive species to use as mulch. Mickaël and Guillaume showed us plants that can remove salt from water. The delegation of Wallis and Futuna asked a lot of questions.

I would like to go there to learn about their methods. I wanted to be part of the demonstration farm network for that reason, i.e. to meet professionals, learn new techniques to then use them with what we have, and take time to discuss things. It's better than being in a classroom but two days of training was too short! ■





COASTAL FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

FRIDAY ON SUSTAINABLE FISHING WALLIS AND FUTUNA



Vahai TUULAKI

HEU, Vaitupu village chief

I'm Heu, the chief of Vaitupu village and I came to take part in this workshop on fishing in Wallis as part of PROTEGE because it's an important sector for the people I represent.

I am very happy with today's meeting because it made it possible to compare the vision of scientific experts to our daily lives. We debated the issues, exchanged our points of view and that helped us all move forward, progress.

What I would like to say is that rabbitfish are interesting for our community. We know that there is now a consultancy in NC and FP on rabbitfish farming, and I think that those two territories could share their experience with us, so we can understand the risks and opportunities associated with that activity. That is why I am particularly interested in the species as well as in "ava" because they are fish that could be worthwhile for us. There are other species that are popular in other territories but are not adapted to our local market. In regards to invertebrates, I think giant clams and the other shellfish we saw at the workshop, as well as sea cucumbers, would be of interest for our territory and I would like to see serious thought given to farming such species. ■



Toma TAGATAMAGONI

Fisher on Wallis

My name is Toma Tagatamagoni.

I am a fisher. I make my living fishing. I started with "small" seaside fishing, with a net, then I began to fish further out. I learned to spearfish, fish from a boat, and now, as I'm getting older, I mostly do hook and line fishing. I've been fishing for a living for 17 years now. I began at the seaside, then I started a family. I've had other work, but my love of fishing was too strong, so I came back to fishing, which is now my main job.

As a fisher, the main difficulty I see is not linked to fishing but to selling your catch. When it is good fishing weather, all the fishers go out and then sell their fish at the same time. So I have a hard time selling my fish because the market is flooded.

What I heard at the workshop today is positive, first because aquaculture could help families gain a living, but also it could provide work for young people who don't have any formal qualifications. ■



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2020 PHOTO REVIEW



Agroecology demonstration farm – WF



Managing invasive alien species – WF



Fisheries theme meeting– NC



Fisheries outreach – WF



Regional Forestry Workshop– NC



Aquaculture – NC



Taputapuatea nursery – FP



Sustainable development of honey sector – FP



Water quality – Fautau River – FP



Intercropping plants – FP



Invasive species trapping training – NC



Regional Forestry Workshop– NC



Water safety plan – WF



Atmospheric water generators – WF



Public meeting on status of pearl-farming lagoons – FP



First Regional Cooperation Meeting between WF and NC. Agroecology demonstration farm network



Friday on Sustainable Fishing – WF



Coconut sector – NC