

South Pacific Islands marine mammal watching capacity building study tour 2008

DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION REPORT TO NZAID



Department of Conservation
Te Papa Atawhai

Photographs: Sioux Campbell, Mike Donoghue and Greg Hopping

Cover photo: left to right

Back row: Lui Bell, Anthony Cocker, Allan Bowe, Taki Hausia, Jerry Agus

Front row: Malama Momoesau, Aroha Inia, Gae Gowae, Mike Donoghue.

Department of Conservation

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Executive summary

One of the strongest arguments for the conservation of cetaceans in the Pacific Islands region is the potential economic benefit that can be derived from marine mammal watching.

The Department of Conservation (DOC) successfully applied to NZAID's Government Agencies Contestable Fund to run a study tour in late March 2008, through which key officials and tourism operators could learn about New Zealand's experiences and receive support to develop or start watching operations in their own countries.

Ten representatives from five South Pacific Island countries participated in the tour, the design and content of which was based on environmental education and social marketing principles. Tour operators and leaders, workshop leaders and presenters were selected on the basis of the quality of their operation, their particular area/s of expertise, their level of knowledge in relation to participating countries and their ability to relate to the participants.

For most participants, it was their first visit to New Zealand and the first time most of them had met each other. For many it was their first exposure to well developed marine mammal watching operations and to the range of information and science relating to the industry. Their feedback about the tour was overwhelmingly positive. They have made written commitments to further achieving its objectives and goal and follow-up is already underway.

RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Hold a workshop on marine conservation interpretation (possibly in conjunction with a related workshop convened by SPREP at some future stage);
2. Provide ongoing technical support and advice from DOC and/or other agency with similar degree of experience;
3. Establish an e-mail group among participants and others involved/interested in marine mammal watching (already completed by SPREP);
4. Run another study tour for Pacific Island delegations not included in this tour.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Department of Conservation's sincere thanks go to everyone who contributed so willingly to make the tour such a success. To the industry operators, accommodation, travel and meal providers, presenters, workshop facilitators and hosts and Department colleagues - you were great. To NZAID and especially Ginny Chapman - without you the tour would never have been possible. And to the participants themselves, whose company and enthusiasm brought the tour alive. Kia kaha!

Sioux Campbell, Chameleon Public Relations Ltd
Mike Donoghue, Department of Conservation

Introduction

One of the strongest arguments for the conservation of cetaceans in the Pacific Islands region is the potential economic benefit that can be derived from marine mammal watching.

The Department of Conservation (DOC) successfully applied to NZAID's Government Agencies Contestable Fund to run a study tour (25 March - 1 April 2008), through which key officials and tourism operators could learn about New Zealand's experiences and receive support to develop or start watching operations in their own countries.

Full details are in NZAID file MOU/13/3/GACF (project 2).

GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

The specific goal of the tour was:

The development of sustainable, well-managed whale-watching businesses in five Pacific Island countries is encouraged, promoted and supported.

Its objectives were:

- Identified stakeholders participate in the tour;
- Key information is received by participants;
- Participants demonstrate they understand the information and how to access further support;
- Samoa, PNG, the Solomon Islands and Niue begin development of whale watching operations;
- Tonga implements an effective management regime for existing operations;
- All operations are established on a sustainable conservation and economic basis showing benefit for local communities.

Several key messages were identified during planning for the tour which were used to reinforce learning throughout. These were:

- You can do it!
- Start small and simple.
- Sound scientific information is critical
- Conservation and economic benefits work together
- Cultural links are important
- NZ will continue to provide advice.

Tour details

The final itinerary is attached as Annex 1. The listed venues and activities were included as detailed with the exception of Wade Doak's presentation in Paihia, due to his late unavailability. This was replaced with a presentation from Mike Donoghue on recent humpback whale research in the Pacific region.

PARTICIPANTS AND PRESENTERS

Tour operators, workshop leaders and presenters were selected on the basis of the quality of their operation, their particular area/s of expertise, their level of knowledge in relation to participating countries and their ability to relate to participants.

Tour participants were selected on the advice of local diplomatic posts. This had the additional advantage of providing opportunities for follow up after the tour.

A list of participants is attached as Annex 2.

For most participants this was their first visit to New Zealand and the first time they had met each other. The group became quite close during its travels and participants were observed readily assisting each other with learning and information provision.

Observation and feedback indicate they also enjoyed each other's company and benefited from the support of each other as well as the two tour leaders. From the perspective of the tour leaders the participants were "right" - they were highly motivated in terms of the tour goal, demonstrated an ability to work collaboratively, were well informed about their own countries in relation to marine mammal watching and communicated well.

Roy Lee was sadly unable to continue the tour after the first day due to the very sudden death of his mother.

RESOURCES

Participants received a comprehensive resource kit. They added to this throughout the tour during discussions, workshops and presentations. An outline of the kit is provided as annex 4.



The tour visits the Whales, Tohora exhibition at Te Papa with Anton Van Helden.

Tour participants at Takahanga marae, Kaikoura.



Learning framework

Two learning methods and styles were used to under-pin the tour in order to maximise its educational benefit. Its basic structure was designed around the environmental education principles of learning in, for and about the environment (eg the field trips, discussions with operators, experts and iwi).

Enhanced learning was promoted following the social marketing principles of accessibility, reinforcement and commitment (eg reflective discussion over dinner each night, discussion with participants during field trips, focussed discussion during workshop sessions/presentations and more formal commitments/action planning sessions where intentions were documented). The key messages adopted for the tour were constantly used and anecdotal feedback shows they were taken on board.

The role of the tour leaders was particularly important in this regard - Mike from a biological sciences viewpoint and Sioux from a social sciences viewpoint. Both leaders also have experience in administering marine mammal permits and working directly with permit holders.

Cultural support

Valuable additional learning support came from the involvement of Barney Thomas, the Department's Pou Kura Taiao (cultural affairs manager) for Nelson-Marlborough, during the South Island portion of the tour and Melino Maka of the Tongan Advisory Council, Auckland, who provided a cultural context for many of the experiences. The significance of culture to the marine mammal watching industry was emphasised and highlighted wherever possible throughout the tour.

**Left to right: Barney Thomas,
Jointly Sisiolo, Jerry Agus,
Anthony Cocker**



Outcomes

The information presented has been gathered from:

- Anecdotal evidence;
- Feedback at presentations, workshops and during field trips;
- A group meeting to reflect on learning and progress;
- A formal session with country representatives to identify issues and document action points (a format for identifying actions and making commitments was supplied as part of the resource kit);
- Tour evaluation forms.

ANECDOTAL EVIDENCE

Whale Watch Kaikoura
vessel



Although the tour schedule itself was very busy, there was plenty of time each day for discussion during meals, while travelling and during field trips. Nearly all the participants were extremely enthusiastic about their experiences on a daily basis and very willing to engage each other as well as the tour leaders in talks on specific issues.

The tour leaders felt there was particular value in new relationships formed between representatives of the same country as well as alliances with representatives from other countries. In all cases where there was more than one representative from a country, even though some people knew each other already, they remarked on the value of getting to know each other better and talked about how they would keep in contact and try to continue to work together when they got home.

Participants said these kinds of things:

"I'm having sensational and genuine experiences."

"The most important thing is the animals."

"I can see now where the possibilities are."

"I'm getting an insight into whale and dolphin watching in real life."

"The interpretation was amazing" (this from an extended trip into the Hauraki Gulf where it took some hours to find the marine mammals but information was constantly supplied).

"I feel like I've been a bubble for ages and since I've been here it's burst."

"The whales are the real Tongans - they're much more Tongan than the people."

WORKSHOP AND PRESENTATION FEEDBACK

The comments made and questions asked by participants at all of these sessions indicated a clear and growing understanding of the issues presented.

Specifically participants asked for future help with and more information about:

- Legislation
- Marketing/promotion
- Research (eg biological/behavioural)
- Managing in-water safety issues (people and marine mammals)
- The logistics of making marine mammal watching work, eg how to add it to fishing or diving operations, transport clients to and from boats etc.
- Business development at a local/community level
- New Zealand's permitting process and how to monitor permits
- Interpretation, particularly around cultural matters. Participants were extremely impressed with the degree to which this is represented in New Zealand.

They expressed particular interest in holding further workshops in Tonga or Samoa on the latter two topics, in conjunction with SPREP.

Group reflection meeting and commitments/action planning session

There was a general (and enthusiastic) desire from participants to keep in touch with each other and continue to receive relevant information from NZ, especially research, via the internet. An e-mail group has subsequently been created for this purpose, which can be linked to an existing e-mail group managed by SPREP. A dedicated session was organised for each delegation with the tour leaders, at which a careful analysis was undertaken of the most important lessons learned and their relevance to each country. Participants then undertook to carry out specific actions relevant to their particular situation.

Participants from Tonga undertook to:

- Investigate a two-tier licence structure, one for watching and one for swimming and/or a licence for dedicated watching/swimming versus incidental opportunities;
- Representatives to work together to pursue embodiment of the existing permit regime into legislation and pursue development of conditions for permits addressing issues such as rest periods, no-go areas and boat operation standards;
- Investigate active permit monitoring along the lines of the NZ approach ("mystery shopping");
- Propose a moratorium on new permits for the coming season pending a full review (this has SPREP recommendations behind it);
- Work further on incorporating interpretation in existing whale watching operations and providing more specific client briefings on what to expect in terms of interaction;

- Improving data collection;
- Work directly with DOC on providing compliance and law enforcement training;
- Seek help from DOC in gaining sample legislation.

(Since the completion of the tour, Melino Maka has met Taki Hausia in Nuku'alofa to discuss next steps. Mike Donoghue visited Eua 8-14 July to provide some practical advice to local skippers on handling boats around whales and to conduct talks and school visits aimed at raising public awareness).

Participants from Samoa undertook to:

- Actively seek more local research on marine mammals;
- Gain more knowledge about conservation and sustainability issues before initiating a watching industry/continue feasibility studies;
- Seek support in gaining survey equipment;
- Investigate the potential of adding whale/dolphin watching to existing businesses;
- Follow up permitting legislation with Cabinet and develop conditions and guidelines;
- Establish a group or committee to promote general education and awareness of marine mammals in Samoa and their sustainable economic value;
- Support ongoing data collection;
- Work more collaboratively within Samoa;
- Maintain and promote cultural integrity.

The participant from Niue undertook to:

- Promote establishment of minimum standards for operators and casual boaties (overseas yachties);
- Promote general education and awareness-raising of marine mammals in Niue, their sustainable economic value and appropriate behaviour around them by boaties;
- Follow-up technical support from DOC and within Tonga on guideline development;
- Promote marine mammal watching opportunities as add-ons to existing marine tourism businesses.

The participant from the Solomon Islands undertook to:

- Try to arrange surveys of dolphin numbers and locations particularly in relation to existing live exports;
- Actively seek more local research on marine mammals in general;
- Seek guidance and examples from DOC on relevant legislation about protected marine areas and regulations;
- Talk to existing dive and fishing operators about the possibility of adding whale/dolphin watching to their businesses once research is available;

- Follow up potential secondment opportunities from NZ for technical advisors within the Solomon Islands Government.

The personal contact with the Solomon Islands delegate has led directly to a closer relationship with the Ministry of the Environment on a number of issues, and a request for technical assistance in conducting surveys for whales and dolphins in Solomon Islands waters.

Participants from Papua New Guinea undertook to:

- Follow up further investigation of marine mammal species, numbers and locations as a priority;
- Collate existing data;
- Then investigate whale/dolphin watching as a new tourism “product” and promote it, either as an add-on to existing marine tourism businesses or as a separate operation;
- Promote general education and awareness-raising of marine mammals in PNG, and their sustainable economic value;
- Promote use and value of existing good conservation/environmental legislation.

The High Commission in Port Moresby has indicated its intention to follow up with both participants in the near future.



Media coverage

A press release was sent to national and local newspaper and radio networks highlighting NZ's role in sustainable marine mammal management in the Pacific islands region. Reported coverage was achieved on local radio stations, through the NZPA, the NZ Herald, the Northern Advocate and Marlborough papers. Mike Donoghue was also interviewed by Radio Australia.

The Northern Advocate story prompted an enquiry from a reader whose family plans to establish a marine tourism business in Niue, asking if he could participate in the tour! He was referred to the Niuean representative for follow up meantime.

Auckland Business School

The tour ended with a one-day session at the Auckland Business School (ABS), which developed further the themes articulated by Prof Manuka Henare, who welcomed the participants at the powhiri on the opening evening of the tour. In his address, he noted the ABS was promoting a “four- bottom line” model for Polynesian and Pacific businesses that was built on the four pillars of sustainability:

- Economic
- Environmental
- Spiritual
- Cultural

He urged participants to take careful note of these elements in the different operations they experienced during the tour. Although Prof Henare had travelled overseas by the time of the ABS seminar, other staff built on this foundation and examined in greater detail many of these themes. A notable feature of this seminar was the engagement of many senior staff and their commitment to maintain a mentoring role in the development of dolphin- and whale-watching operations in the Pacific Islands region.

**Mike Donoghue and operator
Dennis Buurman on
permitting issues**



Conclusion

From DOC's perspective, the tour was a great success. Despite the wide range of previous experience with dolphin and whale watching, (from over a decade of commercial operations in Tonga to no experience at all in PNG and the Solomon Islands), all participants reported that they found the tour to be extremely valuable.

Key lessons learned included:

- The importance of knowing the local environment and its key features and wildlife;
- The importance of building a cultural perspective into any tour;
- The value of a well-managed regulatory environment;
- The importance of understanding the behaviour of the marine mammals targeted in any operation;
- The importance of knowing how to conduct dolphin- and whale-watching operations in a way that minimises any adverse impacts.

The tour also underlined the potential for development of dolphin and whale watching activities in many parts of the Pacific Islands region and the need for more effective management of activities in Tonga.

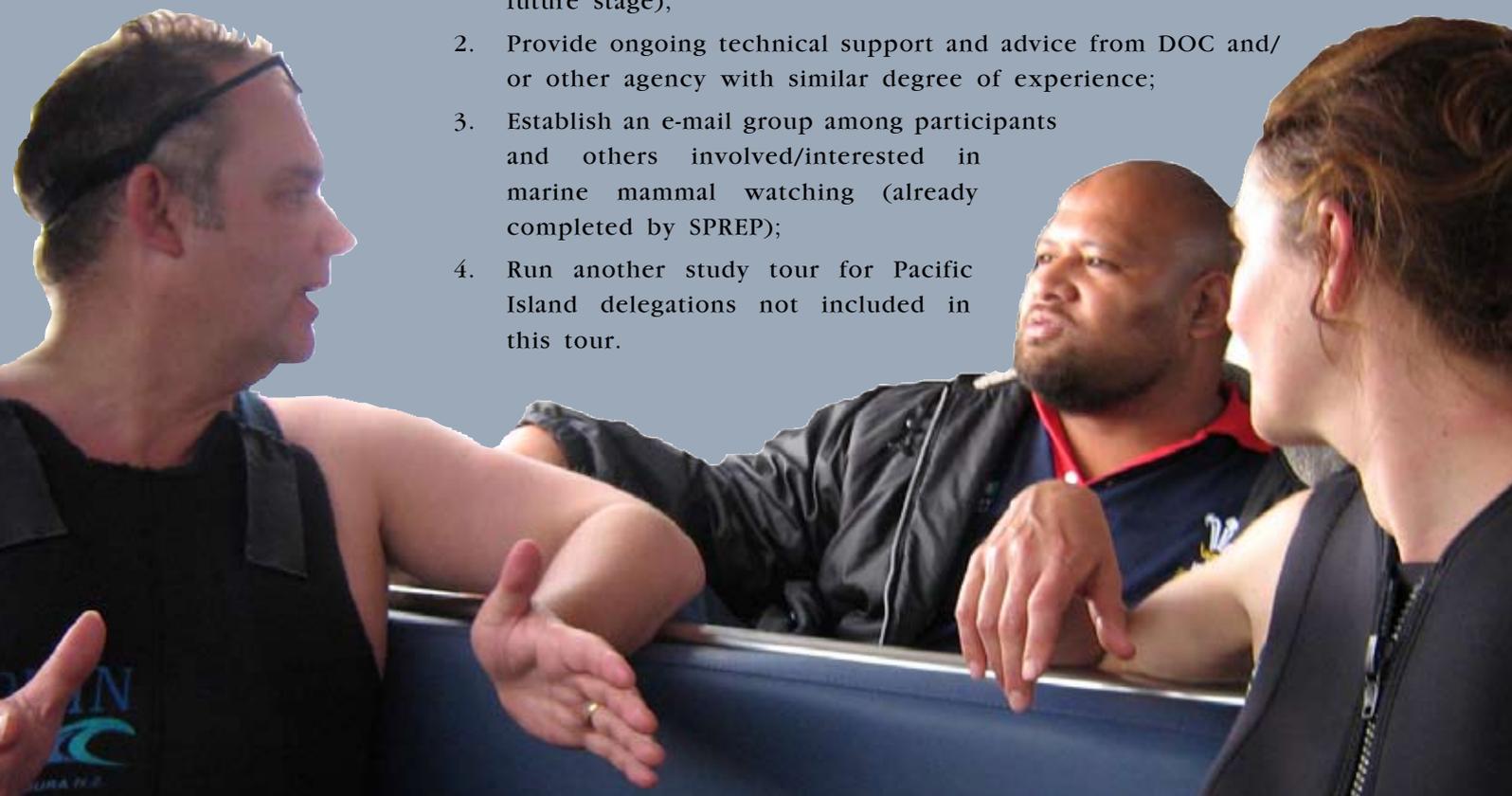
Participants and tour organisers also agreed on several desirable next steps.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Taki Hausia with Dolphin Swim customers.

Participants agreed that there were several desirable follow-up actions to build on the success of the marine mammal study tour, viz:

1. Hold a workshop on marine conservation interpretation (possibly in conjunction with a related workshop convened by SPREP at some future stage);
2. Provide ongoing technical support and advice from DOC and/or other agency with similar degree of experience;
3. Establish an e-mail group among participants and others involved/interested in marine mammal watching (already completed by SPREP);
4. Run another study tour for Pacific Island delegations not included in this tour.



Annex 1: Tour evaluation

Full evaluation form responses are available. A summary is presented below. The sum of the information presented in this report shows the overall tour objectives were also met.

	GG	JA	GH	MM	AB	TH	AC	MI	LB	JS
Own learning points documented	Very clearly	Very clearly	Very clearly	Very clearly	Stated	Very clearly	Very clearly	Clearly stated		
How well tour met learning needs	Very well and more	Most covered	Met all expectations	Most covered	Met all expectations	Met all expectation	Met all expectation	Met all needs		
Most helpful aspects	Field trips / Meeting operators	Field trips	All practical aspects / Input from tour leaders	All practical aspect / Museum	Iwi involvement / Interpretation	All of it	Meeting DOC staff re legislation and scientific session	Coverage of the four wellbeing		
Least helpful aspects	None	Need more hard copy document	None	Marae session	None	None	None	None		
How easy was info to understand?	Most very easy	Very easy but want more in-depth info	Very	Excellent	Very	Very	Very	Very		
Was it the right kind of info?	Yes	More tailored to countries starting from scratch	Absolutely	Yes but more needed on DOC permitting process	Networking very important	Yes	Yes	Yes		
Do anything differently	Nothing	More theory	More time to absorb info and reflect	More time to absorb info and reflect	More time to absorb info and reflect	More time to absorb info and reflect	Another tour for other Pacific Island countries	Better gender balance / Participation of indigenous rep throughout tour.		

Annex 2: Tour Itinerary

Start date Tuesday 25 March 2008

Close date Wednesday 2 April

Note: participants were free to make their own arrangements if they wished to arrive in or leave NZ at other times (the tour followed Easter).

DATE	TIME	ACTIVITY	INVOLVED
Tue 25 March		Arrivals in Auckland	Participants / Mike Donoghue
	1700	Welcome and briefing/orientation including powhiri. Auckland Business School briefing on tour.	Participants / Mike Donoghue / Haahi Walker, Pou Kura Taio DOC Auckland and Prof Manuka Henare, Auckland Business School.
Weds 26 March	am	Presentation/discussion on science/biology/technical issues etc	Participants / Mike D / Rochelle Constantine
	1200	Dolphin and Whale Safaris trip	Participants/ Mike D / possibly DOC Auckland staff
	2000	Dinner near airport hotel. Sioux Campbell joins tour.	Participants / Sioux Campbell
Thurs 27 March	0700	Drive to Paihia via Whangarei (collect resource kits).	All – Sioux and Mike to drive.
	1400	Kings Dolphin Cruises trip.	Participants / Sioux Campbell
	1730	Discussion with DOC staff operators and iwi on development of industry in Bay of Islands and managing behaviour by boaties. (Paihia Hall)	Participants / Mike / Sioux / local DOC staff / iwi / operators.
	1930	Dinner with presentation from Wade Doak	Participants / Mike / Sioux / Wade Doak
Fri 28 March	Early am	Drive to Kerikeri for flight to Blenheim / Drive to Kaikoura	Participants / Mike / Sioux
	1400	Powhiri at Kaikoura marae. Presentation from Ngai Tahu on whale watch operation history, cultural dimensions, conservation/economic benefits	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Ngai Tahu reps.
	1700	Workshop session with DOC's Andrew Baxter on marine mammal permitting in NZ	All / Andrew
	1930	Local dinner. Meet Barney Thomas	All / Barney Thomas (Pou Kura Taio DOC Nelson-Marlborough)
Sat 29 March	0630	Breakfast at Encounter Café	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Barney
	0715	Whale Watch Kaikoura trip.	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Barney
	1130	Lunchtime workshop discussion with Dennis Buurman on setting up a new dolphin/bird watching business.	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Barney / Dennis Buurman
	1330 - 1430	Dolphin watching trip with Buurmans (swimmer trip observations)	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Barney
	18 - 1900	Reflection/learning points meeting at motel	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Barney
	2000	Dinner at Hislops Cafe	As above with Terri (Ngai Tahu)
Sun 30 March	Early am	Drive to Blenheim	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Barney
	9 am	Dolphin Watch	

	1300	Encounters Eco trip. Discussion with Dan and Amy focusing on starting small and what to do if there are less whales/more dolphins	
	1330 - 1530	Future commitments planning session at motel.	Each country meeting with Lui, Sioux, Mike
	16-1800	Meet former whalers (Joe Hebblerley) and Kaikoura DOC staff @ Picton Museum	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Joe Hebblerley, museum staff, DOC staff
		Mike flies to Wellington ahead of tour	
	2000	Dinner at Voyager restaurant.	Participants/ Sioux, DOC staff
Mon 31 March	Early am	Drive to Blenheim / Farewell & thanks to Barney	Participants / Sioux
		Fly to Wellington	
		Guided visit to Te Papa's Whales/Tohora exhibition.	Participants / Sioux / Anton Van Helden
	1230 - 1330	Lunch with NZAID	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Ginny Chapman, other NZAID reps
	1400 - 1600	Seminar with Tourism Resource Consultant and CRESA at TRC offices. Focus is on appropriate tourism development and guidance for island communities	Participants / Sioux, Julie Warren (CRESA) / Antonia Westmacott (TRC)
	1700	Meet the Minister of Conservation at the Beehive	Participants / Mike, Sioux, Gavin Rodley, Steve Chadwick
		Final full group dinner at hotel	
Tues 1 April	am	Fly to Auckland	Participants
		Farewell to Sioux. Rest of day – workshop with Auckland Business School on business establishment and management, related issues etc	Mike Participants / Mike / Linda Bercusson / Melino Maka
	pm	Close of tour. Feedback/evaluation. Final discussions on where to next and what support can be provided. Closing blessing	Participants / Mike
Weds 2 April		Either fly out, join whale-watch operators regional meeting or own time in NZ	

Annex 3: List of participants

SAMOA

Greg Hopping
Troppo Fishing Adventures Samoa Ltd
PO Box 6336 Apia Samoa,

Roy Lee
Dive Fishing Samoa Ltd

Malama Momoesau
Senior Conservation Officer
Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment

PAPUA NEW GUINEA

Dr Gae Gowae
Director of Conservation
Ministry of Forests and Environment

Jerry Agus
Director of Policy and Planning
PNG Tourism Promotion Authority

NIUE

Aroha (Meshu) Inia
Department of Tourism

SOLOMON ISLANDS

Jointly Sisiolo
Department of Forests, Environment and Conservation
Environment and Conservation Division

TONGA

Allan Bowe
Vava'u Whale-Watch Association

Anthony Cocker
Ministry of Tourism

Taki Hausia
Hideaway Resort, Eua

SPREP

Lui Bell (Marine Species Officer)

Annex 4: Resource kit content

Tena tatou katoa!

To Maori they were known as Te Paearahi a Tangaroa - the keepers of the sea trails.

During this study tour you'll learn how to transform the intriguing ancient past and extraordinary evolutionary journey of whales and dolphins into a fun, rewarding business which sustainably serves both people and animals.

TOPICS TO BE COVERED

- Biology
- Boating/marine safety
- Cultural considerations
- Economics
- Feasibility assessments
- Interacting with marine mammals - including codes of practice
- Interpretation and education
- Marine mammal behaviour and conservation
- Marine mammal studies/research
- Marine mammal watching history in NZ
- Marketing
- Rules and regulations
- Sources of advice and support
- Sustainability

The tour is funded by NZAID with the support of SPREP and is being run by the Department of Conservation. The Department is responsible for marine mammal watching operations in NZ, through regulations developed to manage a rapidly-growing whale and dolphin-watching industry. The regulations include a public procedure for applying for permits to take passengers to view and interact with marine mammals. They also prescribe appropriate behaviour for all boats and aircraft near marine mammals.

There is ongoing research into the effects of marine mammal watching activities on the animals, partly funded through passenger fares.

NEW ZEALAND'S MARINE MAMMAL WATCHING BACKGROUND

- Began in Kaikoura in the 1980s with one seal watching operator
- 1988 one operator with a small boat watching sperm whales, dolphins and seals.
- Rapid growth through the early 1990s - boats, shore, aircraft - and an increase in requests for permits.
- Success at Kaikoura led to expansion elsewhere particularly in dolphin watching - Bay of Islands, Hauraki Gulf, Bay of Plenty, Marlborough Sounds, Banks Peninsula, Fiordland and seal watching around NZ.
- Rapid expansion with the number of permits issued peaking in 1997.
- By 2006 around 100 marine mammal watching permits nationally, 70% part-time/opportunistic.
- Most are boat based and target dolphins and/or seals.
- More than half in Nelson and Marlborough.

THE WORLD SCENE

- 1955 one operator watching Gray whales in California (charging \$1 per person!)
- 1991 spread to 31 countries and about 4 million people annually watching
- 1998, 87 countries, including NZ involving about 9 million watchers.
- 1991-1998 approx 12% annual growth. About 10 million watchers in 2000, 11-12 million in 2004.
- Ticket sales making US\$77 million in 1991 with total expenditure of \$318 million.
- Ticket sales rose to US \$300 million in 1998, with total expenditure of \$1049 million.
- Total expenditure in 2000 US\$1250 million.

PRESENTER NOTES

Rochelle Constantine

Dr Constantine's research on the effects of tourism on dolphins began in 1994 in the Bay of Islands (northern New Zealand), a project which continues today to examine population demographics and impacts primarily on bottlenose dolphins. She has studied a variety of cetacean including dusky, common and Hector's dolphins and most recently Bryde's whales in the Hauraki Gulf (Auckland). She is a member of the South Pacific Whale Research Consortium, focusing mainly on the ecology of hump-back whales. Dr Constantine has a strong interest in applied behavioural ecology and believes high quality research is vital to help managers and industry develop successful whale watching operations.

Wade Doak

Wade is famous for Project Interlock, an exploratory programme which began in the late 1970s around cetacean communication. Many of the project's early components were tested in Northland waters, where Wade's fascination and involvement with marine life continues.

During our dolphin games each diver in his sealed-off world became aware that the dolphins were demonstrating new tricks. I was weaving among them with a fluid dolphin drive, my fins undulating together like a broad tail ...A dolphin drew alongside me. By counter-opposing its flippers, like the ailerons of a plane making a spin, it barrel-rolled right in front of my mask. ... I imitated this corkscrew manoeuvre ... my speed was a fraction of theirs, but I found myself rolling wing over wing. Then something startling happened. The moment my spin was complete a formation of six dolphins ... repeated the trick in unison... For the next year I devoured every written word I could find on dolphins and whales. Knowledge of dolphins, I found, was based almost entirely on captive animals.

Former whalers group (Joe Hebblerley)

Joe works with and inspires others through his experiences with a group of former New Zealand whalers. These dedicated men now use their keen eyes to sight and report whales for conservation purposes rather than to hunt. Our session with Joe will be held in a small coastal town (Picton, South Island), once at the heart of a thriving whaling industry.

Julie Warren – CRESA Research Director

Julie specialises in tourism development and strategic management, regional and community development, evaluation and resource management and natural and heritage conservation. She is involved in on-going research into the scope and impact of specialist tourism products, including rural, heritage and urban tourism. Her other tourism related research focuses on integrated planning and management of natural areas.

Dave Bamford - Tourism Resource Consultants

Dave has worked extensively throughout Asia, the Pacific and New Zealand in tourism planning and management including reviews, assessments and feasibility studies for nature and adventure tourism projects. His work is usually strongly linked to protected area management, business and visitor use. He also works regularly with Maori on tourism development that will benefit their communities.

Anton Van Helden, Te Papa Tongarewa (National Museum of NZ)

Anton will share some of his years of experience with whale and dolphin identification, tissue and bone collection in the pursuit of a better understanding of marine mammals in New Zealand. Our session with Anton will be part of a visit to the spectacular Whales Tohora exhibition at Te Papa Tongarewa.

Lui Bell, Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)

Lui is SPREP's Marine Species Officer, responsible for management and co-ordination of its regional marine species programme. He has a long history of involvement with marine conservation issues in the Pacific in both fishing and marine mammal management. In his former position with the Samoa Division of Environment and Conservation, Lui established a marine conservation section. He has also worked extensively in project management and advice including co-ordination of training.

Department of Conservation staff

Various members of staff working with marine mammal watching operations and cultural affairs will join us for parts of the tour.

Mike Donoghue – tour leader

Mike is a senior international relations officer with many years' experience in marine mammal conservation. He represents the Department each year at the International Whaling Commission and has extensive experience working with Pacific Island nations on marine mammal protection issues.

Sioux Campbell – tour co-ordinator and learning support

Sioux runs her own environmental public relations consultancy and often works with the Department, where she was a senior manager in community relations for several years. She has worked extensively in marine education and advocacy within the government sector, non-governmental/community groups and industry.

COMMITMENTS / ACTION PLANNING

This section describes how to use the information gained from the tour at home.

- What actions will you take to develop (or improve) a whale/dolphin-watching business?
- Context - current situation
- Goal (what you want to achieve)
- Objectives (measurable steps to help achieve the goal)
- What strengths, weaknesses, opportunities or threats have you identified? (SWOT analysis).
- How can you overcome weaknesses and threats and capitalise on opportunities and strengths?
- What other issues or concerns do you have? How might these be addressed?
- What other aspects of marine mammal watching operations will need to be incorporated?
- How will you help ensure sustainability
 - financially
 - for communities
 - for the animals?

- What time scale do you propose?
- What support/advice will you need from NZ?

TOUR FEEDBACK AND EVALUATION

Name

Country

Contact details

What did you hope to learn from the study tour?
(List as many points as needed).

How did the tour meet those learning needs?

Which aspects of the tour did you find most helpful?

Which aspects did you find the least helpful?

How easy was it to understand the information provided? (Very, quite, hard to understand)

Was it the right kind of information to encourage, promote and support marine mammal watching in your own country? (Please provide an example whether yes or no, or a mix)

What could be done differently to improve the tour?