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UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY
Te Whare Wānanga o Waitaha
CHRISTCHURCH NEW ZEALAND

Report on the inaugural

Regional Biosafety (Biosefti) Course

August 15-23

Honiara, Solomon Islands

prepared by Jack A. Heinemann and Paul D. Roughan
25 August 2005

The Course
The Regional Biosafety Course (RBS) was an outcome of the partnership between the New Zealand Institute of Gene Ecology (University of Canterbury, Christchurch) and the Island Knowledge Institute (Solomon Islands) under the direction of Mr. Paul Roughan, National Biosafety Framework (NBF) Project Coordinator for the Solomon Islands. The Course was designed jointly between the host nation and NZIGE and to meet the needs of the Solomon Islands in complying with their obligations under the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety.

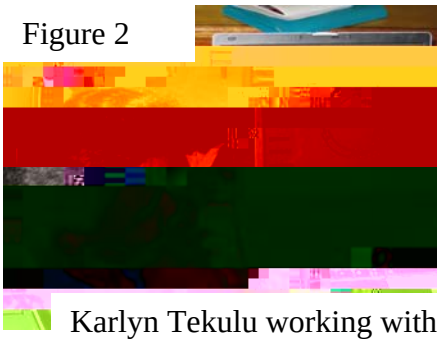
The RBS had a formal enrolment of 15 people (Figure 1) representing the private sector and different areas of the Solomon Islands public sector (including health, foreign affairs, quarantine and legal), non-government organizations and educators.

Funding for the course provided by (in order of contribution):
University of Canterbury (in kind);
NORAD, Norwegian Agency for Development Cooperation (through a subcontract to NZIGE from the Norwegian Institute of Gene Ecology - GENØK);
National Biosafety Framework Project, Solomon Islands (funded by UNEP-GEF);
Invitrogen (donation of laboratory reagents).

Purpose
The Course was a milestone in the UNEP-GEF NBF Project in the Solomon Islands, contributing to the strategic objective of building stakeholder capacity to participate in National Biosafety Framework development. It provided an introduction to modern biotechnology, biosafety and the regulatory requirements of the Cartagena Protocol. It also provided a training experience in the use of a prototype risk identification and assessment tool called the GE Biosafety Forecast Service (Figure 2). A trial version of the Service was used by participants to assess a fictional application of the type that could be received under the Biosafety Protocol. The Service is under development at the NZIGE, in cooperation with GENØK, and is an output of the UNEP-GENØK Capacity Building Package funded by NORAD.

Course faculty and resource persons (alphabetical):
Marina Cretenet, MSc
Joanna Goven, PhD
Jack Heinemann, PhD
Billie Moore, BA(Honours)
Camilo Rodriguez-Beltran, MSc
Paul Roughan, BSc(Honours)

Figure 2



Karlyn Tekulu working with the prototype.

Evaluation
The Course was evaluated by the participants both through the submission of anonymous written comments and verbally in a closed session, with a rapporteur.

The strengths of the Course were:

+ ability to holistically evaluate the impacts of LMOs for decision making by integrating social and scientific issues (Figure 3);

Figure 3

nd making a scientific

built a PCR machine

xpensive gel electrophoresis rig, poured and loaded a gel with DNA from the PCR;

endliness and enthusiasm of the faculty;

– l cul

– advance of the Course;

slig tly longer and allowing more time to work with the Forecast Service.

Ongoing Work

The Hon. David Holosivi, Mi
represented by the Permanent Secretary, Mr. Steve-Daniel Likaveke (Figure 6), said that "This course, through the collaborative efforts of our friends from New Zealand, and the sourcing from UNEP and Norway, promises the pos i
buil n

Figure 6

The Z
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activiti
biotech l
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Dis s
already workshops and a repeat
course would include Vanuatu. That proposed
Solomon Islands faculty from Vanuatu and the
with personnel and supplemented as necessary
Zealand. equipment from New

PS of Forests, Environment and Conse
Steve Likaveke

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hopefully will lead001 1 1 scn 91o5( )e0.0(New)Tom)e6(ala)Tj0j24.Australian 0002 Tc -0.0002 Tw 19.8t