

Linemon leana ta KIBCA pa rea June. Linemono pia ta ria tinon Kolombangara Dughore beti ria pu tokamai ni vinatana. Linemono leana pia gmuguena KIBCA beti ria tinavete pu ta tavete pa kinopu di ria noda tinago pa kastom. Ria na ropete puaki qavere, pa melaka, igana pa kolo, beti pa sagaru. Tiroa, qetunia beti qetuni hor'kakaha nia linemon hoa.

Welcome to the June edition of the KIBCA news. The newsletter is for the supporters of KIBCA and people of Kolombangara. It's an update on KIBCA's efforts to protect the islands biodiversity and culture. Enjoy our News.

KIBCA ROLLS OUT 2013 SHOLARSHIPS

KIBCA has commenced the role out of the 2013 scholarship program. This year KIBCA has awarded 120 scholarships to children from Kolombangara attending secondary schools and tertiary colleges.



Adrian Ghele of KIBCA hands a scholarship cheque to the Principal of Ringgi High School with some of the 31 recipients from the school

Through the generosity of many donors KIBCA has been able to allocate \$100,000 SBD for scholarships in 2013. This is an increase of \$10,000 from last year.

Contributions to the scholarship program have come from Kolombangara Forest Products Limited (KFPL), the Solomon Island Community Conservation Partnership (SICCP), 4 Nature and private donors.

This week students from Ringgi High gathered to say thank you to KIBCA and the donors for their scholarships.

When asked about the scholarship program, Dilleen Solomon a Form 5 student from Bibiu said, "KIBCA's work and scholarships are important because we want to become a special person in the future and also we want students doing KIBCA's important work".

Form 4 student, Alex Lausaca from Ghatere said, "Having a scholarship is good because it helps us into the future. It helps to make a difference in life for tomorrow's world".

The scholarship program plays an important role, supporting local families with the payment of school fess and in encouraging support for KIBCA's efforts to protect the area above 400m altitude from logging.

Alfred Kaluae a Form 4 student from Kaza spoke for many students when he said that receiving a scholarship was good because it helps lift the burden off your parents.

In 2013 KIBCA has been able to provide a scholarship to all eligible applicants. It is expected that all payments will be completed by June and parents notified in writing. KIBCA wishes all the students well for the year ahead.

ACTING TO PROTECT KOLOMBANGARA

In February over 90 representatives from villages across Kolombangara came together to discuss their vision for a legally protected area on Kolombangara Island.



The many participants at the Protected Areas Workshop at Nusatuva

The meeting and workshop held at Nusatuva was conducted by KIBCA. It was the first in a series of community meetings held to hear from the

community on making an application to protect the 20,000 hectare conservation area under the Government's Protected Areas Act.

The purpose of the meeting was to hear from the community about the conservation area and their ideas for the future. The community was well represented with village chiefs and leaders present including many women and youth.

The participants at the meeting were asked to break into groups and identify the things about the conservation area they considered important. The groups were also asked to identify the threats to those important things.

The different groups shared many thoughts in common when identifying why the Kolombangara conservation area is important. This included the areas plants and animals, the supply of clean water, the need to have an undisturbed place for the future, resource security and cultural sites, including the significance of the islands crater as the source of life for the people of Kolombangara.



Participants at the workshop sharing their views with the audience

Those present also had many common ideas when identifying threats to the conservation area. These included logging and mining, population growth, over harvesting, community disunity, lack of leadership, self-interest, climate change and natural disasters.

Mr. Adam Beeson a solicitor with the Landowners Advocacy Legal Support Unit of the Public Solicitors Office attended the meeting and presented a talk to the community on the Protected Areas Act and its purpose. He also provided opportunity for those present to ask questions about the Act and other legal issues relating to the conservation area.

Letters of support from the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH) and the Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership (SICCP) were read out. The letters expressed AMNH and SICCP's ongoing support for the communities' efforts to

protect the conservation area as well highlighting the local, national, and international significance of Kolombangara's natural and cultural features.

Kolombangara Forest Product Limited (KFPL) was represented at the meeting by Mr. Mayson Nesa. Mr. Nesa addressed the meeting and confirmed KFPL's support for the formal protection of the conservation area under the Protected Areas Act, including the land covered by the KFPL lease that covers nearly three quarters of the proposed area.

KIBCA coordinator Mr. Ferguson Vaghi was very pleased with the how the meeting went. "It is encouraging to see the community pull together and work towards achieving a lasting benefit"

"The large attendance at the meeting and participation in the workshops was very good. I think from the meeting we can see that local people are very supportive of protecting their land. They can see the benefits of protecting their natural and cultural resources under the Protected Areas Act".

Mr. Vaghi stated that this was only the start and there were more meetings to follow. "From here we will be continuing with our consultation with the community to work towards a common goal that has benefits for everyone."

Information on future meetings will be provided to the Kolombangara communities and others interested in the process.

4 NATURE IS FOR KIBCA

In May KIBCA joined with an Australian based organization known as 4Nature in a partnership to benefit the people and environment of Kolombangara. 4Nature is an independent community-based organisation that aims to support the protection of the natural environment both in Australia and abroad.



Mr. Andrew Cox founder of 4Nature

4Nature was established by Mr. Andrew Cox, a former AVI volunteer with KIBCA who worked on Kolombangara between 2010 and 2011. The organisation conducts targeted projects that protect the natural environment in Australia and the South

Pacific. One of 4Natures focus areas is the protection of the forests of the Solomon Islands.

KIBCA has signed an MOU with 4Nature formalizing the partnership. This year 4Nature has donated over \$35,000 SBD to KIBCA's scholarship program and aims to provide ongoing support in the years to come.

NEW VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY

A volunteer position with KIBCA will be advertised through Australian Volunteers International on 29 May. The volunteer position is for a Conservation and Sustainability Program Specialist to work for KIBCA for 12 months. The position will provide the opportunity for someone to work with KIBCA developing conservation and livelihood programs for the island and its people.

Information on the position will be available on the AVI website <http://www.australianvolunteers.com>

CLIMATE ENGINEERING RESEARCH ON KOLO

In April Wylie Carr from the Department of Society and Conservation at the University of Montana USA visited Kolombangara. Wylie's visit was part of a trip to the Solomon Islands to discuss climate change and climate engineering with government, NGOs working in the environment, and local people.

Climate engineering refers to large-scale methods to intentionally alter the climate in order to lessen impacts from climate change. A number of scientists and policy makers in the US and Europe have been discussing this topic for the past few years however there has been relatively little effort to bring in the perspectives of people from other parts of the world.

During his visit Wylie talked with KIBCA staff and other locals to hear from them on climate change and after a short video presentation, record their thoughts on the climate engineering science. The responses Wylie gathered whilst in the Solomon Islands will be shared with scientists in the US who work on this issue.

Whilst on the Island Wylie Carr visited Imbu Rano Lodge and had some time to enjoy the surrounds by doing some bush walking and fly-fishing on the Villa River.

Mr. Wylie Carr was impressed. "Visiting Imbu Rano was one of the highlights of my trip to the Solomon Islands. The setting is unbelievable. It was a truly unique and inspiring experience".

We look forward to welcoming Wylie back to Kolombangara in the future and wish him well with his research into this important topic.



Wylie Carr of Montana USA fly-fishing the upper Villa River near the Kolombangara crater

TRAINING FOR KIBCA STAFF

Over the past few month KIBCA staff have received training in chainsaw use, how to use a GPS, First Aid and had an opportunity to visit Tetepare to see how the Tetepare Descendants Association (TDA) run the conservation and ecotourism programs on the island.

Staff and four community members sponsored by KIBCA took part in a two-day first aid course conducted by the RED Cross in Gizo. The participants were awarded a certificate in Essential First Aid for successfully completing the course.

Chainsaw training was expertly provided by the staff of KFPL and involved classroom learning as well as hands on experience.

Funding for the training program was provided through Australian Volunteers International's (AVI) Community Grant Scheme, a program that is supported by the Planet Wheeler Foundation.



Gillian Bui of KFPL with KIBCA Rangers and Guide during chainsaw training

On Tetepare the Rangers participated in a range of activities including tagging turtles, coconut crab monitoring, monitoring leatherback turtle nesting sites, compliance patrols and learning about and participating in the eco-tourism experiences available to visitors.

For KIBCA Ranger Denis Poli Jack who was visiting a conservation area outside of Kolombangara for the first time it was a rewarding learning experience.

“The visit helped me to learn about conservation, about monitoring and marine protected areas. This will help me with my work as a Ranger on Kolombangara”, said Denis Poli Jack.

As more communities establish conservation areas and eco tourism ventures this type of networking, sharing of skills and ideas will become increasingly relevant and important for Solomon Islanders.



Rangers Denis Poli Jack, Wayne Tefenoli and Donald Saepio take a break from business at Tetepare Island

400 METER ALTITUDE SURVEY

KIBCA is currently working with landowners to survey the boundary of the Kolombangara conservation area. KIBCA Rangers Wayne Tefenoli and Denis Poli Jack have been out in the forest marking the 400m contour. The rangers are marking the boundary so that landowners can see where the conservation area starts. They are using newly acquired GPS equipment and skills to accurately locate the 400m area.

KEEPING THE TRACK CLEAR

With chainsaw equipment purchased through the AVI community grant scheme KIBCA has been able to make big improvements to the walking tracks heading out from Imbu Rano Lodge.

The walking tracks from Imbu Rano to Patu Kolo and to old Mali village have been cleared of fallen trees and obstacles following a big clean up in March.

Recent visitors have praised the work which makes travelling along the tracks much easier and safer. Next stage in the track maintenance program will be

to clear the more difficult and steep track from Patu Kolo to Camp 2.



Moffat taking care of a big log on the track to old Mali village along the Villa River

KOLOMBANGARA RAIN FALL

The start of 2013 has seen a steady fall of rain over Kolombangara. The rainfall gauge at Imbu Rano has received 1363 mm for the first three months of the year. Rain has fallen on 71 days with March having the highest rainfall with 525mm.

MOFFATT GOES ON THE ROAD BY BOAT

Kolombangara conservation area guide Moffatt has accepted a temporary role with the Taiwanese Botanic Gardens. Moffatt is accompanying the TBG team on their botanic specimen collection expeditions throughout the Western Province. When back in Kolombangara Moffatt is still doing what he does best – taking visitors into the conservation area to enjoy Kolombangara’s spectacular walks.

KIBCA EXECUTIVE MEETING 9th MAY

KIBCA held an executive meeting at Vavanga on 8th May. The meeting covered a range of issues.



Chairman Jack Piziki heads the recent KIBCA executive meeting held at Vavanga

Items discussed included the 2013/14 Budget, 400m Contour Survey, 4Nature MOU, Kolombangara Marine and Turtle Program, the Protected Areas Act, Management Plan and Application, Finance and Administration Policy, and the Kolombangara Community Empowerment Strategy. When completed the Minutes of the Meeting will be available on line at www.kolombangara.org

KIBCA WINS LEADERSHIP AWARD

KIBCA has been announced as a winner of the Conservation Leadership Program (CLP) Award. As part of the award KIBCA Coordinator Ferguson Vaghi will be attending the 2013 CLP Conservation Management & Leadership Training Workshop in Calgary, Canada.

Twenty-seven winners from around the world will come together in Calgary for two weeks in late June to participate in leadership workshops, give presentations, and discuss conservation initiatives.



KIBCA Coordinator Ferguson Vaghi is packing his bags for Calgary, Canada

The Conservation Leadership Program is a partnership between BirdLife International, Conservation International, Fauna & Flora International, and the Wildlife Conservation Society. It is working to advance biodiversity conservation globally by building the leadership capabilities of early-career conservation professionals working in places with limited capacity to address high-priority conservation issues.

In addition to the training opportunity in Canada the Award also provides equipment for undertaking environmental research on Kolombangara as well as funding for training in research and monitoring techniques.

The training in Canada will offer Ferguson an opportunity to gain skills that can be applied to a wide range of situations when he returns to

Kolombangara, including the training of local people as part of the CLP program.

Mr. Ferguson Vaghi said he is looking forward to his return so that he can work with the youth on conservation programs that benefit Kolombangara.

“This award provides good opportunity for locals to participate in conservation training and I will enjoy sharing my experiences and new skills when I return”.

KIBCA LOOKING FOR GUIDES

KIBCA is interested in hearing from locals, particularly youth that may be interested in working as a tourist guide. Successful applicants will be trained alongside experienced guides in leading visitors on walks in the Kolombangara conservation area. Applicants must be fit, good communicators and interested in the biodiversity and culture of Kolombangara. If interested please visit the KIBCA office in Ringgi or contact Ferguson Vaghi on 740 1198.

ABOUT KIBCA

KIBCA is a local member-based organisation formed in 2008 to represent Indigenous Kolombangarans and their interests in the conservation of land and marine areas of Kolombangara Island.

KIBCA identifies ways to generate social and employment benefits from conservation activities on the island. Visitor info: www.kolombangara.org

SUPPORT KIBCA

KIBCA invites readers to support the work being done to protect the island's biodiversity and culture. If you would like to provide financial support to KIBCA donations can be made towards assisting the Association's Education Scholarship program or a range of conservation and sustainability programs. KIBCA is also looking for a donation of computer equipment to assist Rangers in their fieldwork. If any readers have a second hand laptop that may be suitable please contact KIBCA.

MORE INFORMATION

If you would like any further information on KIBCA you can visit the website at www.kolombangara.org or visit the KIBCA Office, on the left half way up the main hill at Ringgi. Come in and say hello to the KIBCA staff:

• **Ferguson Vaghi**, KIBCA Coordinator, on 740 1198 or ferguson@kibca.org

• **Adrian Ghele** Administration, on 763 0624 or adrian@kibca.org

• **Sean Court**, KIBCA Technical Officer, on 751 4395 or sean@kibca.org