

Linemon leana ta KIBCA pa rea November. Linemono pia ta ria finon Kolombangara Dughore beti ria pu tokamai ni vinatana. Linemono leana pia gmuguen 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 linemon hoa.

Welcome to the November 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 AGM HELD AT VAGHISEA

KIBCA held its 4th Annual General Meeting at Vaghisea Village at Kuzi on Kolombangara Island on Tuesday 13 November. The AGM was attended by sixty community representatives with delegates from all communities on Kolombangara present.



AGM delegates at Vaghisea

The Agenda for the AGM included a report on the past 12 months operations, 2011/1012 Financial Report, Education Scholarship Program, activities planned for the next 12 months and elections for three vacant executive positions.

Sitting Chairmen Donald Saepio resigned from his position at the AGM and will now take up a role as a Ranger with KIBCA. Mr. Saepio who has been chairman for the past four years said it had been a privilege to lead KIBCA from its early beginnings.

"I have learnt a great deal over my time as Chairman. KIBCA has grown from an association with a few

supporters to one with many. The communities now understand and support KIBCA's vision and I think this support will grow into the future," said Mr. Saepio.



AGM in session in the Vaghisea paele

Following a vote by delegates Mr. Jack Piziki of Hunda was elected as KIBCA's new chairman. Mr Piziki in his address to the meeting thanked those present and said that he is looking forward to his time as Chairperson.

"I am happy too much to take this appointment. To work with the executive and to continue to look at ways to improve conservation and livelihood opportunities. To encourage people to help their communities. I look forward to the Chiefs, the KIBCA executive, delegates, and our donors working effectively and cooperatively in protecting the conservation area".

In addition to the election of Mr. Jack Piziki as Chairman the positions of Vice Chairman and Secretary were filled at the AGM. Mr Ghemu Vaghi of Irii was elected Vice Chairman and Mr. Pemby Sovutu of Ghatere elected Secretary. All new executive positions will serve for one year. In 2013 all positions on the KIBCA executive will become vacant and elections held to fill the positions for the next five-year term.

KIBCA's major donor, Solomon Islands Community Conservation Partnership was represented at the AGM by Michelle Alup, SICCP Operations Manager. Ms. Alup said she was very impressed by the effective community based approach of KIBCA.

"Its encouraging to see the support here today for KIBCA and to hear that the assistance SICCP is

providing is being used well and in programs that have a lasting benefit for the community”.

Mr. Donald Saepio in his closing remarks to the AGM thanked the delegates and the community for their support in seeing KIBCA survive and grow stronger over its first four years. He reminded those present that it is only by working together with a whole of island approach that Kolombangara’s natural resources and culture could be protected now and in the future.

WOMEN ROCK THE CRATER

In September a group of seven women took on the rapids and rocks of the Vila River and trekked to Konggu Rano in the heart of the Kolombangara crater. The four women from Kolombangara and three from New Zealand working as volunteers in the Solomon Islands spent three days walking, climbing, rolling, sliding and swimming along the beautiful but tough trek.

The women ranged in age from their sixties to mid twenties and though it may have been a challenging hike for some, all the walkers enjoyed the experience, or at least their memory of it.

It’s the first group of Kolombangara women known to have ventured into the crater in recent times. The group passing old village sites along the river where Dughore ancestors lived many years ago.



The women and guides at Konggu Rano hut in the Kolombangara Island crater

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 Ferguson Vaghi at the KIBCA office in Ringgi.



Moffatt and Wayne – guides on the job and loving it

NEW ENVIRONMENT MINISTER

In October the Solomon Island Government appointed the Hon. Bradley Tovusia, Member for East Guadalcanal as the new Minister for the Environment. The Minister replaces John Moffatt Fugui.

The minister’s position within the Government includes responsibility for the overall protection of Solomon Islands environment and the resources belonging to the Solomon Island people. KIBCA wishes the Minister well in his new role and looks forward to his support.

KIBCA’s HIGH COURT CHALLENGE OVER LOGGING CONTINUES

KIBCA is continuing its fight in the High Court to ensure the forests of Kolombangara are protected from illegal logging activities. KIBCA began the High Court action after the Ministry of Forestry and Ministry of Environment granted approvals to log a large area extending from Ghatere to Hapi, including forests within the protected 400m conservation area.

KIBCA has asked the Court to throw out these approvals. KIBCA has taken this action to ensure that Government Departments as well as logging Companies follow the correct legal procedures when granting logging approvals.

KIBCA also hopes that the case will ensure the Kolombangara conservation area is protected from poor decision making that allows logging companies and individuals to profit at the expense of local communities.

Despite what appear to be delaying tactics from the other parties involved in the case, and their repeated failure to respond to Court orders, KIBCA will continue its case with the support of the Public

Solicitors Office and private donors who want to see the rights of local people, the Islands biodiversity and forests above 400m protected.

KIBCA TAKES ON PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

In September KIBCA was awarded a contract from the World Wildlife Fund for Nature (WWF) to develop a standard template and guidelines for writing management plans for conservation areas. The guidelines and template are intended for use across the Solomon Islands.

As part of that contract KIBCA hosted two successful workshops. The one-day workshops were held in October at Vavanga and Honiara. The workshops were conducted to gather information and receive feedback on the guidelines and were well supported by Government, community associations and NGO's.

Attending the workshops included representatives of KIBCA, WWF, Natural Resource Development Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, Live and Learn Environmental Education, Foundation of the People of the South Pacific International, GERUSA Network, Pamahima Association, Solomon Island College of Higher Education, Public Solicitors Office's Land Advocacy and Legal Support Unit, Ministry of Environment and the Ministry of Fisheries.

The project to develop the management plan guidelines and template is part of the Coral Triangle Initiative for the Solomon Islands and supports the Government's new Protected Areas Act. The Act which came into force earlier this year provides communities with legal measures to protect their land and marine areas, natural resources and cultural sites.

All protected areas declared under the Act require a management plan. When completed the guidelines and template will provide clear direction for communities on how to prepare and write a management plan for a conservation area.

KIBCA Coordinator, Ferguson Vaghi, said the workshop had been very successful in making sure the guidelines would be useful for local communities.

"Communities need help to work their way through the planning process and I think these new guidelines will be very helpful. The protection of our culture and biodiversity and resources that we depend upon is a very important step for the people of the Solomon Islands. Hopefully the guidelines make it a much easier process to follow".

The Management Plan guidelines will be available once feedback from the workshops has been reviewed. For more information please contact KIBCA. Individuals and communities wanting further

information on how to protect their land and marine resources can contact the Ministry of the Environment or the Land Advocacy and Legal Support Unit on 60682 or lalsu@pso.gov.sb.



Workshop participants at Vavanga

KIBCA GOES ON THE ROAD

In October KIBCA coordinator, Ferguson Vaghi, visited Australia and New Guinea as part of a Solomon Island delegation to promote and develop local tourism. The trip to Kokopo in New Guinea, sponsored by the PNG Government, centered on Cultural Tourism and Mr. Vaghi gave a presentation to the workshop on the rich culture and biodiversity of Kolombangara Island.

The Solomon Island Visitor Bureau, which funded the trip to Australia, is assisting local organisations and tourism operators in developing links to international tourism markets. The tourism road show will continue in November and KIBCA will be present at expos in Sydney and Melbourne where it will showcase Kolombangara's natural and cultural attractions.

The trips provide opportunity for KIBCA staff to gain further knowledge and understanding of tourism markets and the potential for Kolombangara Island. This knowledge will be passed on to communities wanting to develop tourism initiatives.

Nature based tourism on Kolombangara has the potential to provide long-term benefits to communities if the islands environmental and cultural attractions are protected and promoted.

KIBCA is available to assist communities or individuals interested in exploring nature-based tourism opportunities.

LOGGING KOLOMBANGARA'S CLIMATE

In September KIBCA downloaded the first data from four climate monitors set up between Imbu Rano Lodge and Mt Veve. The climate monitors were set

up by KIBCA and the American Museum of Natural History in June 2012 and record data every 15 minutes on temperature and relative humidity.

The data is being recorded to assist researches in gaining a better understanding of the islands climate and how it influences habitat and species composition on Kolombangara at different altitude.

The information recorded by KIBCA is part of a long-term program set up by AMNH that will provide important baseline data for future climate change studies. It is hoped this data will be used to gain a better understanding of the direct and indirect impacts of human activity on climate at a local, regional and global level.



Downloading data from a climate monitor at 1750m altitude, Mt Veve cloud forest

KIBCA SEES REDD ON GOVERNMENT TASKFORCE

KIBCA has been invited by the Solomon Islands Government to be a member of the National REDD taskforce. REDD stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (REDD). The program is aimed at mitigating climate change through conservation and sustainable management of forests.

The REDD taskforce will be investigating options for REDD projects in the Solomon islands and in its early stages aims to develop national priorities, raise awareness of the project and ensure communities have a comprehensive understanding of the potential benefits and risks associated with REDD.

A message from the United Nations who is supporting REDD is that forests are more valuable left standing than cut down.

In addition to mitigating climate change REDD projects can provide direct economic benefits to communities and an alternative to the environmental and social problems associated with deforestation. Stopping deforestation and forest degradation and supporting sustainable forest management conserves

water resources, controls soil erosion, reduces river siltation, protects forest foods and other forest products, protects fisheries and marine habitats, preserves biodiversity and preserves cultures and traditions.

Economic benefits of REDD are gained through carbon trading, job creation and livelihood opportunities. Forests covered by REDD projects are assigned a carbon price and these carbon credits can be sold by communities on the world carbon market providing an annual return.

The taskforce held its first meeting in August and KIBCA is represented on the taskforce by coordinator Ferguson Vaghi.

KIBCA AT THE FESTIVAL OF THE PACIFIC ARTS

When the Festival of the Pacific Arts came to Gizo in July, a satellite venue for the main event in Honiara, KIBCA was there to spread the good word about Kolombangara and conservation. Over the two-week period KIBCA had a stall set up at the Gizo festival site providing information on the attractions of Kolombangara as well as the Solomon Islands unique flora and fauna. It proved a very popular stall, particularly with the youth.



Adrian Ghele at the KIBCA stall educates the youth on the natural wonders of Kolombangara Island

2013 SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

KIBCA will offer education scholarships in 2013. Families are encouraged to join KIBCA to ensure their eligibility for the program. Information on the Scholarship program is available from the KIBCA office. Members of the local communities can become a life members of KIBCA for \$5.

KOLOMBANGARA RAIN FALLS UP

The rain gauge at Imbu Rano Lodge has been working overtime to keep track of recent falls. Rainfall for the four months July to October was 1666mm. With rain on 100 of 123 days. Now for the really rainy season.

KIBCA RECIEVES GRANT FOR TRAINING

In October KIBCA received a grant to assist it with providing equipment and training for rangers and guides. Training will include Essential First Aid, GPS and mapping skills, chainsaw use and safety, and cultural site assessment techniques. Rangers and guides will be provided with GPS units, backpacks, wet weather gear and other camping and safety equipment to allow them to safely and professionally carry out their field work and guiding.

The Kolombangara Island Conservation Area Cultural Heritage and Staff Development Project received the grant through Australian Volunteers International's Community Grant Scheme, a program that is supported by the Planet Wheeler Foundation. AVI is working in partnership with KIBCA as part of the Australian Volunteers for International Development program an Australian Government, AusAID initiative.

The grant provides opportunity for local workers to develop and broaden their skills and is gratefully received by KIBCA.

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 islands 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 High Court challenge. KIBCA is also looking to acquire two laptop computers for use by Rangers to assist them with 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

- FEATURE LOCATION - NUSATUVA LODGE AND MARINE RESERVE

Nusatuva Lodge and marine reserve is located a short distance from the Ringgi marine base. Operated by the Koti family it is a great place to stay. Guests have a choice of accommodation in one of three traditional and private bungalows. All bungalows overlook the beautiful surrounding waters and Kolombangara conservation area. For more information contact KIBCA, or the Nusatuva Lodge direct on 7436567.



The views from Nusatuva Island. The magnificent Kolombangara volcano and forests within easy reach.