



"Greetings to all our friends in the Pacific!

This is our second bumper issue of the Pacific Network of Planners' (PNOP) newsletter. This issue is jampacked with recent events and all sorts of interesting articles from the Pacific. We try to always make these relevant to all the Pacific nations.

Again, we acknowledge the Pacific Magazine for permission to reproduce relevant articles.

We want to hear from you, and invite all our readers to submit letters, ideas, articles and other material that you would like to be included in future newsletters. If the PNOP is to reflect the Pacific, then we need your contributions and conversation. We hope to use these PNOP Newslines as a vehicle to start some dialogue amongst our kindred spirits in the Pacific.

We hope you enjoy this fantastic issue,,

Alicia Yon
Editor

Pacific Islands Forum, Samoan Prime Minister's Speech, August 2004

The Honourable Prime Minister of Samoa, Tuilaepa Sailele, recently made a speech at the Pacific Islands Forum held on 5 August 2004 in Apia. The key message focused on the Secretariat as an 'implementer' and highlighted the following:

1. When Forum Leaders met in April this year, they agreed on a new vision and a new direction for the Forum. The new vision and the decisions and directions that came with it have been, and continue to be, pursued by the Secretariat with a great deal of energy and purpose.

2. Since the meeting, the Hon. Prime Minister has actively consulted with Leaders in almost all Forum Country members on the key issues concerning the region. These consultations have resulted in a focused agenda for the Leaders' meeting, based on the region's priority concerns.

3. The Hon. Prime Minister has also visited Geneva, in order to open a new Forum office, which will represent the members' particular interests at the WTO; and to participate in consultations with the EU regarding the launch, in September, of the Economic Partnership Agreement negotiations, an important development for the whole region.

4. A framework for the development of a Pacific Plan had been prepared. The Forum has also initiated work on a revitalised Communications Strategy as part of its awareness-raising.

5. The Pacific Plan is to be a dynamic and multi-layered process. Initially, it will look at vital sector-by-sector cooperation, harmonising processes and procedures, and the means by which the best cooperation among regional organisations might be guaranteed.

6. It is important that the people of the Pacific must feel a strong sense of ownership in the design and implementation of the Pacific Plan.

7. The Pacific Plan will help to promote broader cooperation through the sharing of resources and policies, and through partnerships with neighbours and beyond, and through changes in the organization, aligning it to the Forum's new priorities – of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security.

8. Better, more intensive engagement with the wider world begins with closer engagement with each other and it is the Forum's objective to further this objective.

Courtesy Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat
[online] <http://www.forumsec.org.fj/> [Accessed 2004 September 12]

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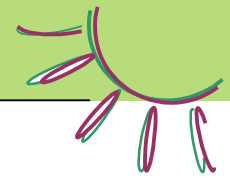
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35th Pacific Islands Forum Communiqué, Apia 5-7 August 2004

This article includes excerpts only from the official Forum Communiqué.

The 35th Pacific Islands Forum was held in Apia, Samoa, from 5 - 7 August 2004. It was attended by Heads of Government and Delegations from Australia, the Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, Kiribati, Nauru, New Zealand, Niue, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Republic of the Marshall Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu. Delegations from New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Timor-Leste also attended the formal session as observers.



Pacific Islands Forum Leaders, Auckland, New Zealand

At the opening of the Forum, the Prime Minister of New Zealand, Rt. Hon Helen Clark, addressed the Forum delegates as the outgoing Chair of the Thirty-Fourth Pacific Islands Forum and acknowledged the Prime Minister of Samoa, Tuilaepa Sailele Malielegaoi, as the incoming Chair of the Thirty-Fifth Forum. The new Secretary General of the Forum, Mr. Greg Urwin was also welcomed.

The main focus of the Forum was the framework for the 'Pacific Plan', a key outcome of the Special Leaders Retreat in Auckland, New Zealand in April this year. The Pacific Plan was identified as being the main instrument for promoting the new vision for the Pacific region (and Forum), also agreed at the Retreat, as follows:

"[We] believe the Pacific region can, should, and will be a region of peace, harmony, security and economic prosperity, so that it's entire people can lead free and worthwhile lives. We treasure the diversity of the Pacific and seek a future in which its cultures, traditions and religious beliefs are valued, honoured and developed. We seek a Pacific region, which is respected for the quality of its governance, the sustainable management of its resources, the full observation of democratic values, and for its defense and promotion of

human rights. We seek partnerships with our neighbours and beyond to develop our knowledge, to improve our communications and to ensure a sustainable economic existence for all."

It was expressed that the Pacific Plan should be a dynamic and multi-layered process in the context of a deeper level of regional cooperation. It should also look at vital sector-by-sector cooperation, at sharing resources and at harmonizing, where possible, policies, processes and procedures, through partnerships with neighbours and beyond. In this context, the Forum

Leaders deliberated on how the Plan should help and be aligned with the common interests of Forum nations - also the Forum's new priorities - of economic growth, sustainable development, good governance and security.

Notwithstanding this, however, the Leaders expressed the central issue for determining the levels of cooperation to share resources and align policies to be the ability of the Pacific Plan to deliver real and practical benefits for the Pacific peoples. The Forum Leaders approved the Terms of Reference for the preparation of the Pacific Plan noting the extensive but necessary consultation process.

The Plan Taskforce, managed by the Secretary General, is to be made up of senior officials of member countries and key regional organisations.

The main economic growth issues featured in the Forum agenda related to transport, fisheries, tourism and mobile phones. In particular, the Leaders considered the results of the Pacific Regional Transport Study (PRTS) and expressed support for the need to develop practical solutions that link improvements in the transport sector to other key economic areas, such as fisheries, that are essential to a viable transport system. The Leaders also agreed to adopt the Forum Principles on Regional Transport Services.

HIV/AIDS was identified as a serious problem to all island communities, featured in the Forum agenda as one of the issues under the sustainable development banner. In this respect, Leaders endorsed the HIV/AIDS Regional Strategy and tasked the Secretariat of the Pacific Community with developing a detailed implementation plan for the Strategy for distribution to members by the end of 2004. Leaders also welcomed the completion of work by the South Pacific Geoscience Commission on the Environmental Vulnerability Index and reaffirmed its importance as a tool for measuring and managing national environmental vulnerability of countries and the need to incorporate such a



tool in future sustainable development processes. Climate change, climate variability and sea level rise were also noted as issues and Leaders affirmed their commitment to participating at the High-Level segment of the 10th Session of the Conference of the Parties in Argentina.

Good governance and regional security issues also featured prominently in the Forum agenda, partly because they are seen as the pre-condition to successful economic management and sustainable development. It was acknowledged that security issues also cover much broader concerns for the Pacific Islands, ranging from food security, access to clean water, natural disasters, environmental degradation, and the challenges of globalization to employment and economic development.

In particular, Leaders commended the significant progress made by the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI), in particular through strong support and involvement of the countries of the region, and noted the challenges that lie ahead and the need for the region to remain focused and engaged in the nation building and reform effort in Solomon Islands, to ensure that the troubles of the past few years do not recur.

Leaders also strongly supported Nauru's request for Forum assistance under the Biketawa Declaration recognising Nauru's economic crisis and the threats this posed to its security and national stability, and also Nauru's commitment to reform. In this regard, the Secretary General was tasked to work with the Government of Nauru as a matter of high priority, to develop a proposal on how the Forum could assist, and consult with Foreign Ministers before advising the Leaders.

Some external relations matters were also discussed. In particular, Leaders agreed to enhance their bilateral efforts to facilitate travel within the region and noted that the Secretariat will continue to investigate options to address the concerns raised by member countries.

Courtesy Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat

[online] <http://www.forumsec.org.fj/> [Accessed 2004 September 12]

CAP Annual Business Forum, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia 4 – 7 July 2004

On behalf of the PIA Queensland Division Roger Brewster attended the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) 2004 annual conference and business meeting in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia on 4 - 7 July 2004 as the official CAP representative.

Over 300 delegates attended the CAP Forum and the themes of sustainable development, affordable housing, place making and heritage are familiar ones to most planners. A strong commitment to implementing them was evident in the group and in government announcements.

Most of the papers were Asian oriented in theory and practice, except for an analysis of Caribbean hot tropical climate housing.

Interestingly the preferred solid masonry approach was similar to a Malaysian research study – quite different to the lightweight materials promoted in some Australian studies.

Roger gave a presentation on the Pacific perspective to the last plenary session and drew on material used at the 2003 Pacific Forum to review the current aid and planning situation in the small island states.

All the CAP regions, including Africa, Americas, Asia and Europe attended the biennial CAP business meeting. Roger and Alicia Yon represented the Pacific region.

The PIA initiatives in the Pacific were well received and formation of the Pacific Network of Planners was applauded as a cooperative venture. The first newsletter was published just prior to the Forum and was posted on the CAP website.

The Canadian Institute of Planners (CIP) report noted that their assistance in Africa relies on an internship program on a multi-year basis to work directly with national agencies. The intern programs thus gain credibility with national governments, NGOs and aid donors. The CIP assistance model is one that could be followed in the Pacific.

An important CIP effort is directed towards the July 2006 World Urban Forum (WUF) in Vancouver, for which CIP is part of the organizing committee. It is proposed to hold the next major CAP Forum in conjunction with the 2006 WUF. A funding strategy is needed to start now to get representatives from all the CAP members and affiliates to the event. This has implications for our region to assist the Pacific nations to be involved. It was stressed that the WUF should be more than a talkfest – “a WUF without *action* is like a dog with a bark, but no bite”.

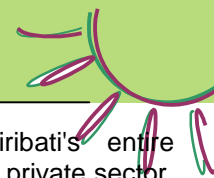
Mr Bosire Ogero reported that the East African region held two workshops during the year, involving more of the surrounding nations in its activities to form professional planning bodies. Their experience has strong parallels to the Pacific network.

An important CAP initiative is development of a policy and strategies in relation to Women in Planning. It was resolved to continue this initiative and Prof Roxana Hafiz (Bangladesh) agreed to be the new Coordinator, assisted by regional coordinators, including Alicia Yon for Australia/Pacific, Pamela Ayebare in East Africa and Carol Archer in the Caribbean.

An international conference is to be held on 14-19 August 2005, hosted by the University of Technology Jamaica on “Built Environment Issues in Small Island States”. It will have relevance to the Pacific Small Island States and participants from the PNOP were encouraged to attend. This would be a major focus for PIA assistance in 2005.

We were encouraged to seek CAP membership for a Pacific grouping of planners, possibly based on Fiji and/or Samoa.

The meeting agreed that the CAP Executive would investigate the formation of a Commonwealth Action Planning Directive to look at what had been done in the Pacific Region and what CIP



had done, with a view to facilitating similar initiatives in all CAP regions. A CAP international directorate would aim to gain significant donor sponsorship and direct assistance programs.

In summary, the reinvigorated CAP has reached a threshold of self-confidence and members are enthusiastic about its future. It is becoming more pro-active in regional planning networks and giving assistance to the Commonwealth developing nations. The strong support given the whole event by the Malaysian government was a significant recognition of its perceived value.

This has important implications for the future involvement in CAP by PIA and action in the Pacific region for future planning assistance to PNG, Timor Leste and the Small Island States. The Pacific Network of Planners is a first step in becoming involved in the UN Habitat supported Pacific Urban Agenda, to facilitate planners and graduates to work and/or provide voluntary assistance in short and longer term overseas projects, on invitation from the recipient nations.

By Roger Brewster

CAP Australian Representative

Kiribati

Twenty-five years of independence, is there really a cause for celebration?

Out on the west coast of Betio, not far from the causeway that links it to the other sandy islets of the atoll of Tarawa, are remnants of guns placed by the occupying Japanese to repel an expected American invasion.

The invasion came on 20 November 1943. It became one of the bloodiest landings the Allied Forces had staged. In four days, about 8061 soldiers and civilians were killed, wounded or missing.

Almost 70 years later, the guns of Betio are rusty and battered. They've been partly restored as a tourist attraction.

Now, years after independence from Britain, the people of Kiribati and their leaders have other enemies.

They are already in Kiribati and make one wonder whether the 25 years of independence is really a cause for celebration.

Enemy number one is the terrible overcrowding in the capital, Tarawa. About 37,000 people live in South Tarawa where government offices and the main port are located.

With 2324 people per square km, South Tarawa is one of the world's most densely populated places.

Overcrowding causes bad social and economic problems. There's land degradation and the stress that too many people put on the atoll's fragile water table and sewerage capacity.

With just under half of Kiribati's entire population at Tarawa and its sparse private sector, there are hardly any jobs.

Official statistics put unemployment at a mere 2% but most of the 40,556 people supposedly in a job in 2000 were just performing mainly unpaid village duties.

Kiribati's main exports are mainly copra and fish, both items hit often by low world prices. Previous governments didn't get much by selling fishing licenses to foreign fishing fleets.

Economists say the economy averages a low 1.5% growth, far too low to keep pace with the needs of a fast growing population.

Kiribati is alarmed about global warming and sea level rise. Already islanders are complaining about the contamination of underground water tables and eroding shorelines. Just a small rise of the sea level will be catastrophic.



Another terrible enemy is HIV/AIDS. By the beginning of this year, 42 cases had been detected and the number is rising.

The figure may appear to be insignificant in the global context, but health experts say that for a country of not quite 90,000 people, and 70% of them young people, the HIV/AIDS rate has reached explosion status.

As President Anote Tong hosts the Silver Jubilee independence celebrations, not all of Kiribati's affairs were doom and gloom ones.

Prudent management of a trust fund established with phosphate sales has built the fund up to around A\$400 million. Interest from the fund balances the national budget and leaves the country virtually debt-free.

Kiribati's greatest resource is its people and the export of labour is a fast growing business. Nearly 2000 seamen, graduates of the country's Maritime Training and Fishery Training Centre, work aboard foreign cargo ships, Japanese fishing boats and cruise liners, and remittances are a big source of income.

According to the Kiribati statistics office, remittances grew from AU\$3 million in 1985 to AU\$10.43 million in 2000.

President Tong talks of making more money from fish by forming a tuna fishing cartel with other Pacific Islands countries. If he could possibly do that, the cartel would be linked with local fish processing factories.



He wants to attack the atolls's waste problems and overcrowding in South Tarawa.

It appears he will be able to secure a reliable air link from Tarawa to Kiribati's eastern-most Christmas Island (Kiritimati).

President Tong told Islands Business:

"There's always been the comment that Kiribati has a very bleak chance of economic survival. I have always resented that. What should we do? Jump in the sea? We must never accept that kind



of assessment." Nor would his people let him. Not so long ago in the maneaba (meeting place) of the Kiribati Protestant Church headquarters at Antemai on Tarawa, the church's youth held a weeklong workshop. Issues covered were on the president's 'to tackle' list: HIV/AIDS, global warming, and alcohol abuse, among others.

During a break, the maneaba reverberated with the melody of young voices as they sang and acted a Christian chorus. They sang about being friends of Jesus in order to ward off the devil.

That is one of the challenges before President Tong and other leaders of Kiribati: finding the 'Jesus' in them to fend off the encroaching tentacles of today's enemies.

By Samisoni Pareti, September 2004

Journalist, Pacific Magazine

Solomon Islands Planning Update

CAP members may recall the training held for planners in the Solomon Islands in July 2003, led Prof Jon Talbot. Jon's visit coincided with the arrival of the Australian backed Regional Intervention Mission the Solomon Islands (RAMSI) designed in the first instance to restore law and order in the Solomons, and in the longer term, institute good government.

The training was successful, but it became apparent that beyond that, the planning system itself is in great need of reform and if good governance is on the agenda, planning should form a part of that process.

As a result, Jon revisited the Solomons this year (August 2004) to gather support for a bid to the Commonwealth Fund for Technical Cooperation, to begin the process of creating a planning system relevant to the needs of the Solomon Islands. In this respect, he was successful and Mr Donald Kudu, the Permanent Secretary with responsibility for land issues and himself a trained planner, has agreed to become part of a team to oversee the creation of a new system.

At time of writing, the partners in the process are Mr Kudu, representing the government of the Solomon Islands, Buddley Ronnie, representing

the planning profession and CAP. Invitations have also been extended to a member of the UN Habitat programme and the Pacific Network of Planners to become involved.

In the first instance a bid will be submitted for an experienced person to undertake a review of the planning system and how a reformed system should operate. The current system, like many in the Commonwealth, is based on a modified version of the UK 1932 Town and Country Planning Act, whose principal purpose was to prevent suburban sprawl in the British countryside. The Act was first modified for use elsewhere in Trinidad and Tobago and versions of this legislation are now in use in many Commonwealth countries, including many Pacific nations.

The review will not seek off the peg systems from elsewhere but begin with an appraisal of what planning in its broadest sense can achieve in a country like the Solomons. It will therefore have to consider issues such as the scope of planning, perhaps moving away from the narrow land use only approach inherent in British planning, planning on customary land, including villages, National Park legislation, instituting greater emphasis on plan making (there is no development plans at the moment), and enabling citizen participation.

If the bid is successful, it is intended to submit a further bid to ensure resources are in place to draft new legislation. A revised system must also, unlike in the past, have suitable secondary legislation, to make the system understandable and be written in English and Pidgin, the language most people speak.

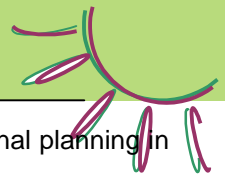
A third phase will involve training for the new system for all stakeholders, not just planners themselves. Ideally, a further bid will involve a review of the new system and identify ongoing training needs. In all, it is anticipated that reform of the planning system in the Solomons will take place over a number of years.

Beyond that, it is recognised that many of the issues surrounding planning in the Solomons are not unique. In the Pacific and elsewhere, planning has not really delivered all that it should, in part at least, because of the inappropriate systems set up in the post colonial era. The effectiveness of such systems has received rather less attention than it should have done.

The Solomon Islands is a very poor country, which up until last year, had reached rock bottom. The RAMSI intervention has rooted out corruption and this year, the economy has grown over 5%, after several years of negative growth.

Good planning is an essential element of good governance and the time is right to create a modern, appropriate planning system there. CAP itself spent a number of years in relative decline. Now the organisation is there, it is time for CAP to start to make a difference.

By Prof Jon Talbot, July 2004
North East Wales Institute UK



South East Queensland Regional Planning Reforms

The Queensland Government, in Australia, has introduced reforms to its regional planning process for South East Queensland (SEQ), in order to manage the rapid population growth that is expected in the region over the next 25 years. It is estimated that by 2026 the region will be home to 3.7 million people – up from 2.5 million in 2001, which will be more than a quarter of all the nation's population growth over this period, making SEQ the fastest growing region in Australia.

In order to manage this unprecedented population growth, the Queensland State Government has established a new 'Office of Urban Management' (OUM) to develop a Regional Plan for SEQ. The Plan will identify a clear 'urban footprint', regional landscape areas and will ensure good quality agricultural land and areas of high scenic amenity and environmental significance are protected. A draft Regional Plan for SEQ is expected to go on public display for comment in October 2004.

The OUM will implement a number of strategies aimed at achieving the Government's priority to "*manage urban growth and build Queensland's regions.*" The OUM will focus on:

- ✓ coordinating the preparation and implementation of the SEQ 2021 Regional Plan;
- ✓ encouraging natural resource investment planning and management;
- ✓ coordinating regional, social and economic planning;
- ✓ identifying and coordinating future key regional infrastructure needs to support regional settlement strategy;
- ✓ communicating regional infrastructure needs to local governments and agencies for implementation; and
- ✓ providing advice on the preparation of Planning Schemes and Priority Infrastructure Plans.

Having the cooperation and collaboration of all levels of government, and sectors of the community is crucial to the success of developing and implementing a regional plan. The new regional planning arrangements will build upon and strengthen the existing collaborative arrangements for regional planning in SEQ. In order to develop the Plan, the OUM is currently working with the 18 local governments in the region, through the South East Queensland Regional Organisation of Councils (SEQROC), and with business and community groups.

Amendments to Queensland's major piece of planning legislation, the Integrated Planning Act 1997 (IPA), have been introduced into Parliament through the Integrated Planning and Other Legislation Amendment Bill 2004 to give force to these regional planning reforms. The Bill, which is expected to be adopted shortly, gives effect to the

Government's commitments to regional planning in South East Queensland by:

- Establishing the SEQ Regional Coordination Committee (RCC) to advise the Government through the Regional Planning Minister on implementing the regional plan;
- Requiring the Regional Planning Minister to prepare a regional plan, including requirements for consultation with the RCC and the community generally;
- Requiring State agencies and local governments to account for the regional plan in their planning and development assessment activities; and
- Establishing functions and powers for the Regional Planning Minister to ensure effective implementation of the regional plan, including extending powers of direction about making planning schemes, and Ministerial call-in powers.

Regional planning existed in Queensland prior to these planning reforms, with Regional Planning Advisory Committees (RPAC) having been established under the IPA. RPACs were established to manage regional planning in the more populated regions of Queensland, particularly along the coastline, through the development and adoption of regional planning policy documents. These policy documents are given effect through local government planning schemes, as the State Government requires new planning schemes to reflect regional planning interests. However, under the current arrangements, there are no regulatory provisions to ensure that these regional interests are not adversely affected.

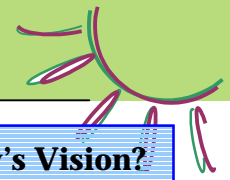
The proposed legislative reforms to the IPA will give the Regional Planning Minister the power to ensure regional interests are protected, and ensure the Regional Plan is implemented.

By Georgina Taylor
Town Planner

Young Australians, Ready, Willing and Able to Assist

The Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) program is an Australian Government initiative which seeks to place young Australian professionals (18-30 yrs), throughout the Asia Pacific, on short-term assignments (3-12 months). AYADs exchange skills and knowledge with local counterparts to strengthen the capacity of overseas host organisations. AYADs also develop linkages and networks between partner organisations in Australian and those in development countries, and gain overseas professional development experience.

Youth Ambassadors work in a broad range of areas that include health, environment, rural development, gender, governance, justice, education and infrastructure development.



I had the privilege of working in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam for 9 months in 2000 as an AYAD volunteer. This was a once in a lifetime experience that I will forever treasure and I know that the team that I worked with were also appreciative of my assistance and the friendships that we formed. Involved in environmental monitoring and State of the Environment reporting, I was able to exchange my knowledge with my Vietnamese colleagues and enhanced my own skills incredibly from the experience. The adventure also inspired me to come back to Australia and undertake a Masters degree in Development Studies so that throughout my career I can continue to assist in overseas projects.

There are opportunities for your organisation to take advantage of this program. Most important is that there are minimal costs imposed on the Host Organisation. The Australian Government pays for all transfers, the volunteers are provided with a living allowance, and there is an In-Country Manager that assists both the Host Organisation and the Volunteers during the assignment.

AusAID (Australian Agency for International Development) are now calling for applications from Host Organisations in the Asia-Pacific region which would appreciate the assistance of a young Australian professional for a period up to 12 months from September 2005. Applications close in January 2005, and the Commonwealth Association of Planners (CAP) team in Planning Institute of Australia (Queensland Division) is more than happy to be a Partner Organisation with those organisations that require planning assistance.

The application process involves the completion of a form which can be downloaded from the AusAID website stating the position description for the volunteer and the requirements of the Host Organisation. All AYAD assignments are assessed on a number of aspects including:

- Increased development focus in line with the identified AusAID country priorities
- Capacity building and skills and knowledge sharing with local counterparts
- The Host Organisation's capacity to provide adequate support for an AYAD to achieve tangible development outcomes
- Job description, work plan and assignment duration aligned to achieve sustainability.

The CAP team in the Planning Institute (Queensland) is more than happy to assist in finding a suitable candidate for volunteers from our contacts with young planners around Australia. Let us know that you are interested in the program and we can assist in the preparation of applications and identifying a suitable Youth Ambassador candidate.

For further information on this program, please visit the website www.ausaid.gov.au/youtham

Alternatively, contact the Commonwealth Association of Planners team in PIA Queensland.

By Sonia Kirby
Town Planner

So, what is your community's Vision?

Do you know what future your community wants? For many planners involved in strategic planning and local area planning it can often be the case that the plans get prepared to comply with the deadlines imposed upon us without actually stopping to think about who these plans are actually being prepared for. Without gaining an idea of what the subject community wants at the initial stages of the planning process, it is easy for planners to prepare plans that do not necessarily deliver the living environment desired by the local community.

Community Visioning is a relatively new planning tool that is being applied in communities around the world, predominantly in the USA, Canada, and more recently in Australia. It is a process that involves extensive community participation in devising a 'vision' for the future of the subject area. Given the participatory nature of the exercise it is an excellent opportunity to learn about what the respective communities want to see for the future of their living environment. It is about knowing up-front the desires of the community and devising solutions to attain these outcomes.

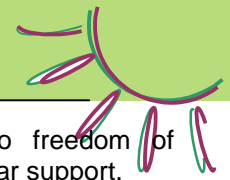


The general community visioning process involves facilitating members of communities through a process of defining the vision for their local area, their lifestyle, their community. The process can be community led or facilitated by a local governing authority.

The defining characteristics of a visioning exercise are that it relies heavily on the active participation of local residents, and is not simply a consultation process whereby the municipality prepares the document and calls for public comment. Instead, the community are asked to respond to some key questions:

- Where are we now?
- Where are we going?
- Where do we want to be?
- How do we get there?

In visioning exercises the final vision statement should accurately reflect the sentiments of the community input from workshops, charettes,



surveys, etc. The outputs of the process usually include a Vision Statement, an Action Plan, and often a mechanism for measuring progress in implementation of the Plan. These then assist the planners to respond directly to the needs of the subject community as opposed to imposing a plan on the community which may not deliver the desired outcomes.

The experiences with visioning have resulted in some fantastic planning outcomes, as are demonstrated in Portland, Oregon and some smaller communities in northeast United States.

Not only has this assisted in land use planning, but it is often found that the active involvement of the community continues, and local residents then become more active in assisting the local authority in the implementation of the Vision.

For further information on Community Visioning and how it can be applied in planning, visit the following websites:

www.communityvisioning.com

www.sustainable.org/creating/vision.html

By Sonia Kirby
Town Planner

Westminster in the Pacific: A 'Policy Transfer' Approach

The 'Westminster model' of government was often said to be inappropriate for the countries upon which it was foisted at independence. When decolonization came to the South Pacific in the 1960s and 1970s, there were efforts to adapt 'Westminster' to local circumstances.

Nevertheless, introduced institutions, and their incompatibility with indigenous ones, are still often blamed for political and economic problems in the region. Concern about the appropriateness of introduced institutions has become pervasive during the 1990s, as aid donors, the World Bank and the Asian Development Bank have become convinced that 'institutions matter', and have been promoting a single vision of 'good governance' across different countries in the region.

A 'Westminster' system of government is characterised by the selection of ministers from the legislature, to which they are responsible. In British, Australian and New Zealand colonies in the Pacific, independence was achieved by transferring executive power from a Governor or High Commissioner to a local executive, responsible to a local legislature.

However, the mechanism of 'transfer of power' can overshadow other features of 'Westminster' and their continuing presence or absence, and appropriateness in the South Pacific region. Political parties, for example, are often weak or absent. The rule of law is often challenged by the claims of custom, or personal and clan ties. The separation of powers is often difficult in small states. Property rights are often unprotected against the claims of traditional owners. Some

human rights, particularly right to freedom of movement, do not have much popular support.

'Transfer' of 'Westminster' constitutions in the Pacific may involve borrowing as well as coercion. Voluntary transfers, in which governments perceive a domestic problem and go looking abroad for answers, are distinct from coercive transfers, typified by the constitutions the US imposed on Germany and Japan after the second world war, or the conditions set by the IMF or the World Bank.¹

These are at opposite ends of a continuum, and there is a middle ground, for example when countries adopt reforms for fear of being left behind by others, or to adjust to external events outside their control.

Constitutional transfer involves the transfer of law, which raises the concern of what is called the 'reception of laws' from one country's legal system into another, and the appropriateness of these laws to the receiving country, or even if the appropriateness of transferred laws is necessary.²

Transfer has typically involved vertical movements, from international organisations to national governments, as well as lateral ones from country to country. In these transfers, constitutional processes as well as content were transferred. The idea of a participatory process, and the use of outside experts were transferred between countries.

There was also transfer from the 'international community': multilateral organisations like the UN, or the Commonwealth that set informal standards. Standard setting by international organisation provides an indirect method of transfer. The rules are not imposed, but are required if you want to join a club: the Commonwealth, the EU or the UN. It is a characteristic technique of governance, which is the achievement of order without a central authority. It has been adopted by the South Pacific's own regional organisation in its process of peer review of accountability standards. Members agree to standards themselves, and then report to each other about their success in achieving them.

Some form of adaptation in the transfer process is typical. Nevertheless, there is a large amount of simple copying, particularly in legislation. With transfers at independence, colonial bureaucracies and legislatures were already in place almost everywhere, requiring the constitution to simply reframe the relationship between them, and add new elements. In a sense the bulk of the institutional transfer had already taken place.

There are a number of factors which can help facilitate or constrain transfer, from micro level institutional and personal constraints and opportunities, to the grander operation of social forces, and historic compromises. In between lie contextual conditions, such as differences in levels of resources, and skills, as well as the character of

¹ Dolowitz and Marsh, 'Learning from Abroad', 13-14.

² See page 4 of the full version of this paper at http://rspas.anu.edu.au/papers/melanesia/discussion_papers/la_rmourwestminster.pdf



already existing institutions in place, and the complexity of the thing being transferred.

The transferability of a constitution will be determined by the presence or absence of an appropriate Grundnorm - the pre and extra constitutional premises on which the written constitution is based, including for example minimum shared values, political preconditions, and settlements between political groups (classes, regions, ethnic or gender-based groups). In the absence of such settlements, the constitution, whatever its content, may not stick.

Alternatives to Westminster: some politicians in the Pacific were given a chance to consider alternatives to Westminster, but generally chose against it. In PNG, there was some support for a Presidential system but a parliamentary executive was seen as more participatory, and under control by the elected legislature. Other alternatives were said to be abstract, and difficult to imagine.³

In the Solomon Islands the most sustained attempt to construct a more 'appropriate' alternative to Westminster took place before independence, but was later rejected by the legislature in favour of a more conventional 'Westminster' system. The alternative system for a Governing Council had executive functions distributed among five committees. All members of the Council sat on one or other of the committees, which also included some senior public servants. The Council sat in public, as a legislature, while the committees sat in private as executives. The system was said to be less divisive than Westminster, it did not need political parties, it provided opportunities for learning, and embodied Melanesian traditions of consensus.

This model was not, however, entirely innocent of transfer, as it was said to have been adapted from models in British local government, and the island of Jersey. The Governing Council system ran from 1970 to 1974. Politicians criticised it for secrecy and failure to provide leadership, and it was replaced by a more Westminster style of government by a Chief Minister and Council of Ministers.

In conclusion, constitutions, like states, face two ways – inwards and downwards to the societies they govern, and outwards and sideways to each other, and the 'international community'. In some parts of the Pacific, 'Westminster' has succeeded almost irrespective of its context. Thus Westminster spreads by a process of replication, almost independently of the underlying conditions in which it finds itself.

The deliberation and rejection of alternatives in Solomon Islands shows how this is not an automatic ineluctable process, but a result of deliberate choices by MPs. Westminster succeeds not because of its internal virtues (which are somewhat arbitrary), or its appropriateness to local conditions (which may not matter). It succeeds because it was there first.

The full version of this paper can be found at:
http://rspas.anu.edu.au/papers/melanesia/discussion_papers/larmourwestminster.pdf

Article courtesy of Peter Larmour

Planning Education

More than ever, the Asia-Pacific region needs bold creative people with the skills and commitment to make a difference in our rapidly changing world. Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University offers a range of postgraduate degrees in planning, urban development, environmental planning and sustainable development through its School of Social Science and Planning.

The School offers Masters (one-and-a-half years full-time, three years part-time), Graduate Diploma (one year full-time) and Graduate Certificate (six months full-time) degrees in Social Science in the Environment and Planning, International Development, and International Urban and Environmental Management programs.

The International Urban and Environmental Management program focuses on urban and environmental management issues in the developing world and transitional economics with a focus on the Asia-Pacific region. Subjects are designed to equip students with the concepts, skills and tools required to work on the urban and environmental problems of cities in the developing world and to lay the framework for the sustainability of human settlements into the future.

It caters for practitioners or those who intend to work for government in developing countries, NGOs, multilateral and bilateral international development agencies and consultants. The program provides a multi-disciplinary study with comparative analysis of global urban and environmental issues and international development theory and practice.

The distance education options mean that the program is accessible from anywhere in the world. The program can be studied by on-campus mode or distance and online learning, and all students have access to teaching staff on campus and through the internet. RMIT's distance learning through the internet includes interactive chat rooms so you can meet and collaborate with fellow students and teaching staff online. The university also has special intensive weekend workshops and tutorials arranged for distance students on campus and at selected locations in Asia.

For more information visit:
<http://www.rmit.edu.au/SSP>

**By Cathy Lee nee Zerk
Town Planner**

³ Interview in Hong Kong 14 April 1999.



CAP Australian Profiles

It is always good to be able to put a face to a name. The CAP Australia team has decided to introduce ourselves to all our friends and colleagues in the Pacific through the PNOP Newsline. Within each PNOP issue we will profile one of us until you have met the entire enthusiastic team back here in Australia.

In this issue, meet Megan Praeger.



Megan is a qualified town planner with over three years private consultancy based working experience with Humphreys Reynolds Perkins Planning Consultants in Brisbane. She graduated from the University of Queensland

in 2001 with a Bachelor of Regional and Town Planning Degree with first class honours.

She also studied Brazilian Portuguese at the Institute of Modern Languages and is currently undertaking her Master of Social Science (International Development) Degree by correspondence from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology. Megan's key areas of expertise are in statutory and strategic land use planning and the coordination of development applications. She has assisted in the preparation of strategic and local planning instruments (including codes, policies and local area plans) for several urban and rural local government areas under the new Integrated Planning Act 1997 for Queensland. She has also been involved in the preparation of an environmental impact statement for a significant development in Queensland's valued coastal environment, including the preparation of environmental management plans. She has also helped coordinate and execute various community consultation exercises.

Watch this space for more on our CAPtivating team!

Pacific Island Planning Needs Assistance Responses

The first PNOP Newsline included a questionnaire on planning assistance needs to follow up on the 2003 CAP regional Forum. Responses so far have been received from Samoa, PNG and Vanuatu.

The few responses have made it difficult to determine any commonalities in the type of assistance desired by planners in the PNOP. Nevertheless, it was a useful exercise, which elicited a request for assistance in the zoning of Port Vila. This will be the first project facilitated by the CAP secretariat.

Direct assistance will be complemented by the Australian Youth Ambassadors for Development (AYAD) Program, described above by Sonia Kirby.

It is intended to encourage our PNOP partners to seek AYAD involvement in suitable projects, including the Port Vila zoning, with the PIA acting as the Australian Partner Organisation.

By Roger Brewster
CAP Australian Representative

French Foreign Minister Wants French Territories To Better Integrate In Pacific

French foreign affairs minister Michel Barnier and French Polynesia's President Oscar Temaru have, during talks last week in Paris, touched on what is termed "the insertion of (French) territories and French Polynesia in their regional environment".

A spokesman for the French ministry of foreign affairs said on Friday French Polynesia's new autonomy status (that was endorsed by French Parliament in March this year) allows it to "develop an active regional policy, in a coordinated way with the French State".

Barnier and Temaru met on Thursday last week. The French foreign minister said the Pacific region "was one of the priorities of French foreign policy". During talks last week, Barnier and Temaru also touched on French Polynesia's request to have access to Kiribati's fishing waters.

Temaru is also believed to have mentioned his intentions to ask the United Nations to re-enlist French Polynesia on its list of non-sovereign countries to be decolonised.

While taking part as an observer last month in the Pacific Islands Forum leaders summit in Apia (Samoa), Temaru also raised the issue.

"The prospect of the United Nations' general assembly was of course also on the agenda", the French spokesman confirmed.

Back in Tahiti at the week end, Temaru told local media he was "thrilled" to have found in Barnier such an "attentionate" counterpart.

In July this year, on his first official visit in France, Temaru met French minister for overseas countries and territories, Brigitte Girardin. But attempts to meet her again last week failed. Temaru's minister for finance, Emile Vanfasse, however managed to meet close advisors from French Prime minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin's office, the daily *Les Nouvelles de Tahiti* reports.

During the same trip last week, Temaru also signed a memorandum of understanding with French telecom giant Alcatel to test, for the next six months, a new mobile phone network technology that allows mobile Internet, video, e-mail and more generally high bandwidth data transmission.

The new technology's real life experiment in French Polynesia, which opens the way for such applications as tele-medicine or tele-teaching for remote communities, will be provided free of charge by Alcatel. **Pacific Magazine News 13 Sep 04**