

Te Au o Te Moana. Samoa January 25 – 30, 2008

*Go to the deepest part of the ocean (our imaginations):
there we will find our treasure (Charles Royal)*



Participants gathered by an outrigger canoe

THE SYMPOSIUM: RESPONSIBILITY FOR WATER ECOSYSTEMS

KEY NOTES: Orientations for the Symposium

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: NO 3.

Responsibilities include ensuring the fulfilment of human potential, inclusive of material needs and non-material aspirations, as well as obligations to support the common good.

The Head of State of Samoa, His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese most graciously agreed to open the Symposium, with the presentation of the paper ‘Water in the Samoan Indigenous Reference’, and be involved to the extent that was possible, given his State responsibilities.

His Highness brought a delightful blend of indigenous reference, intellectual leadership, inspirational discussions with participants and keenness to engage with the knowledge being shared at the Symposium. Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese Efi conveyed his concern with the burden of responsibility in climate change, being fully aware of the impending intimations of what lies ahead for the Pacific.

Peneshuro Lefale , a Samoan Climate Change scientist who is a lead author of the IPCC Report on Island States, and who has responsibility for International Relations for the New Zealand MetService (Meteorological Service), led into presentations following on from His Highness. Some remarks by Isagani Serrano, from the Philippines, provide a warm and eloquent introduction:

It was really delightful to meet a Samoan, Peneshuro Lefale, who is a member of the Interagency Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC). The IPCC was co-awarded with Al Gore, the Nobel prize in

2007. Pene, as we called him, was a lead author of the 2007 Fourth Assessment Report of the IPCC. His plenary presentation on climate change adaptation set the framework and tone of the symposium.

The themes of indigenous reference and Climate Change science were continued by Māori philosophers and scientists bringing further reference to indigenous knowledge and science, with creative pathways for linking indigenous social reference to earth's living systems, with scientific knowledge of physics, oceans and biodiversity.

Charles Te Ahukaramu Royal interwove indigenous philosophy with responsibility in an approach of being nurtured in knowledge of the living universe, and the potential of this to address contemporary social and environmental challenges for long term sustainability. Māori scientist Charlotte Severne, who is the manager of Te Kūwaha, an institute within the National Institute of Water and Atmospheric Research, gave an erudite illustrated presentation on oceans research and mapping in the Pacific.

A point of context that forms the background to the Symposium is that the Pacific encompasses nations where indigenous systems are the mainstream, and other nations, such as Tahiti, Australia, Aotearoa-NZ, where indigenous peoples are working in a context of French and Anglophone state systems. There is a deep asymmetry between traditional systems of land tenure and the Europeans systems of private property which have been brought here.

In this region, our diversity is symbolized by 667 (?) different language groups, and we are separated by categories of 'developed' and 'developing' states, by very sparse systems of transport across our huge ocean, Te Moana Nui a Kiwa. To reach Samoa from the Philippines, a route had to be taken via Thailand, Australia and New Zealand.

Before reviewing themes of the symposium, a feature which has been remarked upon subsequently by two academics who were with us, one in Social Enterprise and Management, Maria Humphries, and a Physicist, Ocean Mercier, was the innovative experience of dialogue across different world views and different disciplines, and including a range from those doing practical working on rivers, to those writing on epistemology! The Symposium was oriented towards traditional knowledge, and infused into that, through presentations and round-table dialogues, were participants bringing science, philosophy, education, management, community development, fisheries managers, farming and film making!

Maria and Ocean noted that it is rare to have the opportunity to exchange knowledge and experience in this way, and to engage with each other beyond our known expertise. Interdisciplinarity invites us into the space of being enriched by new experience, and into the challenge of making space for that which is beyond our knowing.

The richness of these moments and the plans and thinking they inspire must see this as seedlings to be nurtured rather than fully developed in this Symposium.. Initial feedback has been given that horizons for work in environmental education and for coastal and river management were expanded and possibilities for projects are being explored for development. One project involves a community development – science partnership, and another, local management of marine resources as a regional project. A regional network for Environmental Education has been requested.

The address by the Head of State of Samoa marked a ceremonious opening to the Symposium and was followed by a celebratory feast. The New Zealand High Commissioner was welcomed along with guests from the host side, including members of the Ministry for the Environment and Natural Resources, representatives of the South Pacific Regional Environmental programme, the Women in Business organics initiative, The CEO of the Samoa Electricity Company, the Global Green Fund, The UNDP, and local Artists.

During the Symposium we visited the home of our hosts, at Vaialua in the village of Nofoli'i. We were welcomed most graciously by Taimalieutu Kiwi and Tafaoimalo Loudeen with sumptuous food, and presentation of traditional gifts. As guests, these were reciprocated and, we were refreshed by bathing in the freshwater pools which arise from the sea at their 'doorstep, and we did not want to leave behind the storytelling of some of the water traditions of their village which followed. We listened to these as we sat in their traditional round fale (house), drawing in the sight of the lagoon beside us and the sound of the waters breaking on the reef and ocean beyond.

And now a pause to note a few details of preparations and the participants, before proceeding with reflections on the Symposium.

PREPARATIONS

With Te Au o Te Moana two years in preparation, and follow through on the suggestion from Afeafe o Vaetoeaga to hold the meeting in Samoa, Taimalie Kiwi Tamasese and Tafaoimalo Loudeen Parsons worked with a preparatory team in Samoa from mid January. We finalized local networking, supported local preparations and ensured that the hosts of the venue for the Symposium were fully informed of the participant numbers and accommodation requirements.

Early arrivals included the film crew from Borderless Productions, with Deamon Coyle and Victor Grbic also part of the Te Au o Te Moana team. They did marvelous recording of presentations and celebrations and interviews, giving us a record of the symposium and a fabulous research resource for follow-on plans for a film on water in a Pacific location.

Participants arrived from across the Pacific on the 25th, with representatives from Aotearoa-New Zealand, Philippines, Fiji, Australia, Papua New Guinea, Tahiti., and Samoa. Some were unable to come, with apologies from Hawaii, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Palau, Vanuatu. These people wish to continue to with the ongoing project.

There were twenty six participants for the symposium, as well as nine local contributors, along with ten or so local visitors who attended for various sessions. Some, such as Parekawhia McLean, Taimalieutu Kiwi, Tafaoimalo Loudeen, and Maria Humphries, did not give presentations – rather they brought their rich and thoughtful contributions to discussions, reflections, taking care of people and dancing.

In keeping with our hopes for an intergenerational dimension, we had elders and leaders, quite a group of young professionals, a young student, some local young people such as Po'o, and, among the visitors, sixteen year old Keriata and her seven year old sister Te Urunga – both of whom were remarkably attentive throughout the symposium and brought a wonderful youthful presence.

The Symposium was overseen by our Samoan hosts who attended to beautiful surroundings with artistic décor, carefully catered local food, comforts of bedding and air temperature; all the dimensions of hospitality which nourish spirit, mind, body and soul.



On the boat to Savaii



Clowning with local children



Storytelling

We stayed at the magnificent Tofamamao Catholic Centre with a central round meeting building with accommodation buildings arranged from each side in a semi circle around it. Similarly the meeting space was arranged in a semicircle facing the table given to presenters. Tapa cloth was laid on the floor, and in the centre the Tahitian participant, Gabi Tetiarahi arranged rocks and leaves as a symbol of the octopus; Te Wheke. For the second part we embarked on a 2 hour ferry ride to Savaii, and had an informal few days at beach houses by the ocean, and near a turtle reserve, an enticing escape for nature swimmers!

Te Wheke is an inspiring metaphor for the Symposium, with the body representing governance as an organizing theme, the eyes as referring to the two systems of knowledge: indigenous knowledge and European science, and the limbs as the contributions which gave direction to the presentations and discussions, and the creature as a whole dependent on water for life, as we are. Let us see if there are eight corresponding themes in the presentations.

This report cannot do justice to the richness of the exchanges that took place by way of presentations, sharing food and talk, being treated to most gracious hospitality, Samoan worship and dance which elicited feisty responses from Aotearoa, local storytelling and being brought into encounter with some local and regional initiatives in mangrove restoration, water supply, solar energy installation, organic oil production and management of marine protected areas.

Various principles from the Charter for Human Responsibility are inserted throughout, to give suggestions of correspondence with themes and ideas in the discussions and plans.



Te Wheke

1. INDIGENOUS KNOWLEDGE: A SAMOAN REFERENCE

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: NO 8

Lasting peace can only be expected from freedom, justice, and processes for reconciliation which are respectful of human dignity and human rights.

The Head of State is re-known for his erudite articulation of traditional knowledge interpolated into the modern world, and for his keen attention to drawing from the long traditions of the Pacific to gain direction for the future in governance and policy. He prefaced his cosmological approach to water from a Samoan indigenous perspective by introducing the complex juxtaposition of ownership and access to ‘common’ resources such as water, by a question about the price of water when it flows freely in its natural state. When the question was posed to a water management official, the answer was:

Yes, the water is free but the piping that brings the water to you is not.

Concern for the physical environment was identified at a recent UNESCO Pacific Bioethics conference held in Samoa. His Highness reiterated the locus of human responsibility for a healthy environment. He said:

Man has been responsible for much, if not all this destruction. The toxic waste generated by the mass production and consumption of processed goods and modern conveniences must go somewhere. They go into the waterways and into the atmosphere, both key resources for ensuring a healthy environment.

Nothing can substitute for being in the presence of the magnificent story tellers of Samoa, and the Pacific, so I will settle for a quoting His Highness’s reference to traditional stories of grief and responsibility which

can be alleviated through the spirit of true reciprocity. ...so if you took from the environment you have a responsibility to give back. If you have received from another, you have an obligation to return the favour. In the Samoan indigenous reference to conserve the environment is to live the values of reciprocity.

.....An INDIGENOUS MĀORI REFERENCE

The guiding indigenous reference was continued by Charles with his clarity that ‘there is no greater challenge facing humankind than relationships with the living environment and relationships between people’. Indigenous knowledge, being constituted on ‘a woven universe’ of relational dimension of all living systems, enhances the capacity of all of us to respond to this challenge. A guiding principle of indigenous epistemology is:

to build mutually enhancing relationships between people, and between people and the natural world.

...and further elaborated as:

Indigenous knowledge is the product of an intimate relationship between people and the natural world –where the natural ‘speaks into’ human creativity (Royal 2007 ‘Indigeneity: A unique form of responsibility in a globalized world.').

The ‘natural’ speaking into human creativity, and human responsibility, is a doorway for responding to climate change, for research and for management of waterways and coastal resources, for environmental education, and forms a platform where those from diverse knowledge systems can chart a course of shared responsibility in the governance of water.

2. CLIMATE FOR CHANGE

Penehuru Lefale brought us all onto the same page on Climate Change, giving the evidence changes to temperature, and the impact on Oceans and on Pacific Nations and Peoples. One of the most valued aspects of Pene’s research is his capacity to identify the political issues associated with Climate Change negotiations, and in particular to set out in simple terms, the historical North South dichotomy and the way in which industrialization of Northern nations has been at the expense of Southern lands.

An irony is that southern peoples, especially where there are less exploited resources such as in Papua New Guinea and in Ocean resources, particularly the Pacific, are being called upon to provide for carbon trading, as in forest carbon sinks, and in protection of Oceans and marine resources, while also under pressure to engage in 'development'.

Pene's conclusions in a recent paper summarizes the issues:

the science is clear; greenhouse gases from human activities are affecting global climate, and physical & biological systems. More substantial changes are likely over coming decades. There are risks of abrupt and/or major changes - perhaps further in future, but influenced by what happens over the next few decades. Significant changes are expected in the Pacific. Adaptation is important - but without mitigation as well, climate change is likely to exceed adaptive capabilities. The good news is that countries can diminish the risks associated with climate change through a portfolio of adaptation and mitigation measures.

And with regard to the politics:

There is a need to re-engage the US and large developing countries (China, Brazil, India, Mexico and South Africa in particular) in the post Kyoto first commitment period negotiations. A new international treaty without [these nations] would be a meaningless treaty. We need to place impacts/adaptation on equal footing with mitigation. And finally, addressing Perfect Political Dilemmas (PPD) must and should be at the centre of future climate change negotiations. (Lefale 2007 'Climate Change: the Political Challenges')

The phrase 'climate change adaptation' leads into a review of the content of the Symposium which, in the context of the theme of water, followed a trajectory of interest in oceans, local management of marine resources, and in environmental education.

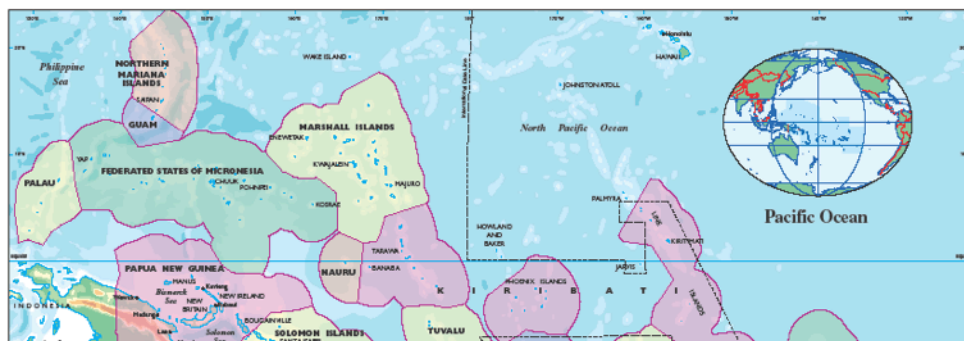
3. OCEANS: SCIENCE AND ENVIRONMENTAL CONVENTIONS

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: NO 7.

Freedom of scientific research implies being guided by ethical criteria such as enhancement of biodiversity, respect for human dignity and non-human forms of life, and regard for the limitations of human knowledge.

The first sequence of presentation gave us regional information on international conventions and oceans. We had a group of scientists from the NZ National Institute for Water and Atmospheric Research, led by Charlotte Severne, who are working with Māori communities on coastal marine and on oceans management. Given the expanded territorial responsibilities under the UNCLOS conventions, scientific research includes ocean floor mapping, classification of the biological environment including habitats, biodiversity, fisheries, minerals exploration, and assessment for economic investment in resource development.

A scientist in the field of international law and regional oceans policies, Clark Peteru, gave us information on international agreements that form a web of obligations to prevent damage and restore environmental ecosystems and waterways. A vivid image is the map of the Pacific as Water Ecosystem Nations. With the 200 mile Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) as significantly expanding territorial responsibility, many Pacific states have huge proportions of territorial waters in relation to land mass. They therefore have massive oceanic responsibilities, with corresponding international obligations to uphold conventions on oceans, fisheries and marine habitats.



EEZ – Ocean Territories of Pacific Nations (red outlines)....

The Liquid Continent, made up of Water Ecosystem Nations, Aotearoa-New Zealand (white outline)

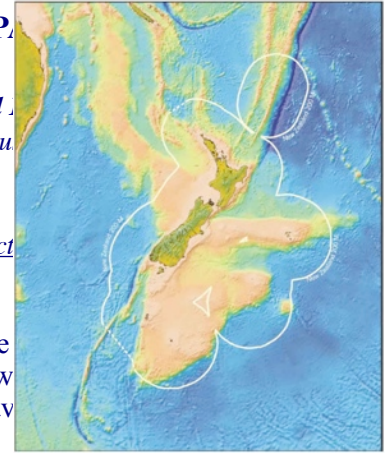
4. ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION: TAKING CARE OF THE PLANET

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: Nos 9 and 10

In reaching decisions ...ethical priorities [must take account] of justice and inter-generational environmental stewardship....

To face the challenges of today and of tomorrow, uniting in action must be balanced with respect for cultural specificities.

The emergence of Environmental Education as a theme corresponds with the 'Take Care of the Planet', and the potential to involve a Pacific wide network initiative. Participants from Fiji, Papua New Guinea and Aotearoa-NZ, gave emphases in environmental education in these different locations .



Mahona Na Dari is a PNG organization, translated Guardians of the Sea, with an explicit mission of intergenerational responsibility and marine conservation, is involved with school programmes and with coastal communities. Anaseini Ban spoke of the first Women in Conservation project to encourage young people and keep alive sustainability in health and food production.

A theme of being informed by traditional knowledge and science takes shape in decision making and planning, with an area of interest for everyone being the management of protected areas. Traditional management utilizes flexible systems for restrictions on resource harvesting to support sustainable use, whereas scientific approaches emphasize legal management tools, often as total bans, or restrictions in designated areas, usually for preservation interests.

Water quality and water supply were emphasised by Marie Fatiaki of Fiji, with an exciting kitset of resources for practical enjoyment. We wanted to be kids in her classes, and have plans to follow on with a Pacific Environmental education network. Community Water Action Plans were a further example of supporting local responsibility for keeping waterways clear of waste and preventing pollution of seas from streams that are used for waste. An interesting approach in this Life-long learning programme is to link environmental quality with human equality – making ethical links between environmental responsibility and social wellbeing.

A Māori initiative has taken shape through making short films in Māori language (with English subtitles) of simple physics experiments, such as making electricity, to support the school science curriculum. In working with Māori language, Māori world views come to the fore and transpose the European concepts, as, for example, the term 'physics' refers literally the study of physical properties. Translation into Te Reo Māori, Māori language, physics becomes studies related to energy, a subtle shift of emphasis through the Māori language term ahu pūngao.

In our region, and in Aotearoa-NZ discourses of environmental responsibility distinguish between Western/European science and Indigenous knowledge, in recognition of the different contexts, intellectual traditions, and approaches of those two systems. To nominate them as 'two' systems is highly reductive and simplified, but will serve the purpose for this account. The distinction marks the difference between systems of measurement and documentation of scientific inquiry that have arisen from traditions built upon a nature-culture split, and indigenous knowledge which is identified as

emanating from a wholistic paradigm, in which systems of nature, social organization, spirituality, and the cosmic universe are interwoven, interdependent and represented as such.

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY. NO 6

The full potential of knowledge and know-how is achieved through valuing different knowledge systems and ways of knowing, sharing them, and applying them in the service of unifying solidarity and a pluralistic culture of peace.

The presentation on environmental education and Māori physics was oriented to working with the interface of western science and indigenous knowledge. As well as the film project, examples included research in the Northern Pacific, Alaska, on the effect of the melting ice cap on whale hunting. The divide between western science and indigenous knowledge was problematized in two aspects. One: through the question ‘ how do we know that a concept in western science is not in indigenous science as well?’ And that there are many situations in which the two systems are working together for outcomes that are both environmentally and socially beneficial. Indeed climate change in many ways in many situations is drawing people together out of concern for *our common future*.

Another approach to the notion of interface between cultures was given by Te Kawehau Hoskins, who reflected on the experience in a school, where a group of Māori parents have worked with partnership as a framework for establishing a Māori – Pakeha collaboration for governance of the school. Although this was established through protocols and guidelines in the beginning, once the new systems and accountabilities became established, the process progressed to operate on high levels of trust and good spirited relationships, made effective through mutual respect, and beneficial outcomes for the children, teachers and parents. It could be described as moving through a ‘rights’ approach to one of shared ‘responsibility’.

5. NATURE and CULTURE: REPLACING SEPARATION WITH INTERDEPENDENCE





'Roundtable' discussion

Traditional Samoan Architecture

We have dwelt on process of knowledge exchange and relationship building for a moment because it makes me recollect an original orientation that the Charter committee in NZ identified in 2004 at the time we convened, to address the nature / culture separation embedded in western liberal philosophical tradition with projects that would in some way restore the nature-culture relationship. We analysed, as others have done, the nature/culture split as being a constitutive issue in the crisis of climate change.

A unique aspect of environmental responsibility and conservation in the Pacific, is the effect of customary land tenure, which continues in collective village titles in many places. While governments have a role in conservation and education for sustainability, care of the environment is a responsibility located in villages where care is integrated with livelihoods. The focus on sustainable use is in contrast to the 'preservation' approach in New Zealand and Australia, which have privatized property rights in land and marine territory, and state ownership of conservation lands and marine reserves. Resource use and development are separated from conservation interests.

Gabi Tetiarahi from Tahiti showed the different ways of identifying land when he referred to the well known indigenous system of identifying and naming of land by its characteristics. For instance, a stream with large eels would be named to communicate this resource. In Tahiti, under the French system, all land has been divided up into numbered categories, rendering information about the environmental and food resources, invisible.

Leaders in the restoration of indigenous knowledge and care for the land from all parts of the Pacific and beyond, have identified a key characteristic of indigenous knowledge systems as constituted on the relationships between all living things on earth and the cosmos. These systems of knowledge hold a key to effective sustainability, which identifies interdependence and the relationships between different spheres, as vital; yet in the main, there are few systems for implementing integrated processes in governance or policy. Indigenous knowledge has been significantly suppressed and undermined, and continues to be under threat. It is for these reasons that the Charter team identified strategies to build on indigenous knowledge as an orienting framework for our Pacific initiative.

One of the background papers circulated for the Symposium by our organic gardener Research Assistant, Laura Beck, came from the book *Panarchy* (Gunderson and Hollings 2002). It provides excellent research in linking local and indigenous knowledge with science, and ventures into the fairly uncharted waters of bringing science and social systems together. Collective wisdom and research in the area of sustainability strongly supports in interdisciplinary exchange of knowledge as a matter of horizontal collaboration, and to bring local, traditional observational practice into partnership with scientific research, suggested as vertical collaboration, to work towards whole of systems knowledge, planning and decision-making.

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: NO 6 AND 9

In reaching decisions, [and actions] we must take into account different ways of knowing and....ethical priorities of justice and inter-generational environmental stewardship, taking into account risks and uncertainties.

We were delighted to hear from those who are working with and supporting traditional knowledge in rivers and coastal regions in different nations, such as Tahiti, Aotearoa-NZ, Fiji, Samoa, some of whom have been doing so for a long time,

We heard of the highly symbolic Whanganui River, is known for the saying by the people of the River 'I am the River and the River is Me' and those, such as Piripi Haami who are dedicated to guardianship of the river, have to contend with the intervention of an enormous power scheme and diversion of its waters, and local government consents to dispose of waste and remove water for irrigation. Here the different approaches are often at odds, due in no small measure to different forms of land tenure, different world views, and a history of government management frameworks which disregard traditional responsibilities for land and waterways

The traditional view of the river as a living organism, and an ancestor to whom its people are genealogically related, is an understanding of the river interacting with the many land systems and human habitations through which it passes from the mountains to the sea. The guardianship approach is jeopardized by policies which have provided for privatized use, degradation and exploitation, and which has its counterpart in challenges for coastal management in all our countries.

Participants were inspired to hear about the Local Management of Marine Areas (LMMA's) network in the Pacific, and made plans for links between the groups working on similar coastal initiatives in Aotearoa-NZ, in the South Island (Te Wai Pounamu – Greenstone Waters) and the North (Te Ika a Maui – the Fish of Maui). Kelly, Anaru and Kimberly and Charlotte in Aotearoa-NZ, Hugh from Fiji, Gabi from Tahiti are all involved in programmes to improve knowledge of coastal resources, explore economic opportunities to local communities, and, with their scientific training, collaborate with their tribal communities to manage their marine environments. This might include improving opportunities for governance and influence in favour of environmental protection, sustainable fisheries, pursue economic opportunities, and, in keeping with tradition, take careful regard for the guidance of elders.

Working with the theme of healing separations between people and nature, land and sea, mountains and oceans through fostering links with living ecosystems, we saw links between rivers and coasts, indigenous knowledge and science. In this region land ownership and access to resources are sources of conflict. We began to see that an orientation of shared responsibility may be a route to peacemaking and collaboration: by engaging in care for land and resources for the wellbeing of present and future generations.



A foreshore of Moana Nui a Kiwa

A freshwater bathe in the ocean!!

6. RESILIENCE AND ADAPTATION

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: NO 5

Development and consumption of natural resources to meet human needs, and the quest for prosperity must be backed by a commitment to sustainability and the principle of precaution, assuring pro-active protection of the environment, careful management of its diversity, and equitable sharing of wealth.

We had the company of a marine scientist from Fiji, Hugh Govan, who has worked in the Pacific region as well as Scotland and Colombia and developed expertise in Local Management of Marine Ecosystems, and who has worked with a team in Fiji who are working in three hundred or so local sites of coastal management. Adaptation and resilience are central to both ecosystem sustainability and social sustainability. We were inspired by examples of local communities working in the confidence of their local knowledge, amplified with scientific information – often described as participatory partnerships for marine management.

Hugh guided us into Adaptation and Resilience as key terms in the mantra of sustainability, and showed how these are basic to effective local management, and that they can be worked with in local communities at low cost, where sustainability does not have to rely on huge funding – which has often been wastefully utilized!

Resilience is the capacity to return to a stable state when the system is disturbed. An example with fishing is how much biomass of a species can be harvested and the species still restore itself, and without irreparable breakdown in the fish food chain. In Pacific nations, resilience is undermined when access to the natural resource base is removed and impoverishment manifests in poor education, ill health, loss of aspiration and limited capacity for adaptation and responsiveness to challenges and change.

Fabulous examples of resilience and adaptation were brought to us by Fiu Mataese from the Samoan Environmental NGO, O Le Siosiomaga, and by Muauasa Joseph Walter, who told us about the installation of solar energy on a Samoan island by the Samoa Electricity Company, of which he is CEO, and of the resourceful strategies of the residents to divert the Company from collecting payments.

We had some most welcome time with Women in Business who are generating support for organic growing in Samoa, through a variety of initiatives including food, coconut oil production and the restoration of traditional weaving of the finest mats (which has become unviable in the monetary economy). Their success and sustainability is strengthened by their bold achievements in securing international trading partners.

7. TENSIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS IN RESPONSIBILITY FOR WATER

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: NO 8 and 9

The exercise of power is legitimate where it serves the common good, and if it is accountable to those over whom it is exercised.

In reaching decisions about short-term priorities, evaluation of long-term consequences must concur with ethical priorities of justice and inter-generational environmental stewardship, taking account of risks and uncertainties

The mountains to sea metaphor for linking fresh water on land with salt water in oceans, took on a troublesome dimension with graphic images from the Philippines of the pressures of extreme poverty, water supply and relentless pollution, carried further by an image of the pipelines that convey water from the mountains to the sea – pipelines of sewage and waste that show systems of depletion at which in turn effect resilience of waterways and human health. Flora Santos had us spellbound with films of people living in bridges, and her own experiences as an activist with people seeking housing and livelihoods. Taking responsibility through communal action could be seen as an antidote to the severance of people from land and water, and local responsibility for re-source that rejoins us to sources of food and water.

The concept of environmental justice was introduced, and identified as involving equitable sharing of water resources, including women and children as beneficiaries, trusting relationships with leaders and community-based management, and beneficial health outcomes. The concept of Climate Justice formed the background to details of the impacts of Climate Change in the Pacific.

Reflections from Gani

The global water crisis is a governance crisis, thus a human responsibility. It's not a problem of water as such. Water will probably be there as always, even in excess at times especially in places considered wet like the Philippines or whenever there's a La Nina event. Sadly, water had been taken for granted until it began to run low. My recollection of science is that water will always come back as in a cycle, no matter how much we deplete its source and pollute its bodies and routes.

Worldwide the corporates are on a roll, taking control of this precious life source wherever they go. In Samoa you see bottled water everywhere, as in many other places on this planet. Governments seem only too willing to oblige, abdicating their traditional responsibility. The mantra since the 1980s has been that privatization is good and we're better off with less government. Water governance is a toss-up between government and the private corporation, as if there is no other option. Governments and their ODA donors seem blind to other alternatives. To them, leaving the commons open to access by anyone automatically leads to tragedies.

They're missing on the drama of the commons. Indigenous peoples, local coastal communities, organizations of municipal fishers, communal irrigators associations, water cooperatives, and others have sustained traditional ways of governing water resources and ecosystems. Co-management, a form of cooperation involving local communities and local governments, is an emerging governance arrangement.

So there's a crisis, some say crisis after crisis, or disaster after disaster. Yes, but then if water ecosystems are indeed being governed so badly, why have we remained standing? The Philippines is a country so badly governed. Water depletion and pollution are so commonplace and worsening by the day, a sure sign of bad governance. In this country good governance models are as islands in an ocean of bad. How come this poor country has not come apart yet? Or why has the world long choking in poverty, inequality and pollution not collapsed as yet?

I wish there's an easy answer. ...It's amazing how people and nature could be so resilient and adaptive.

It's also not easy to resist getting cynical when things just turn so bad and begin to fall apart. Look at all those multilateral environmental agreements (MEAs) many of us lobbied hard to put in place. There's more than a couple of hundreds of them, all meant to help save the environment and build us a more just and fairer world. How come we're still deep shit, and sinking, threatened by rising sea levels, increasing cyclones, coral bleaching and foreshore erosion. Fiu Mataese gave first hand accounts of the pressures of Climate Change, and the pressures for development in the Pacific coming from internal sources, as well as from global economic interests with pressure from Australia and New Zealand and the EU, and the growing influence of China in the region. We were introduced to the pressures for land reform in Samoa to facilitate development interest.

Everyone was enthusiastic to visit the Fiu Mataese's village of Sili, where water projects are based on water as a common good. If the people of the village of Sili agree, this will be a priority visit for our next meeting.

8. INTEGRATED GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT: SYSTEMS RESPONSIVE TO NATURAL AND HUMAN ECOSYSTEMS

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: No 5

.....a commitment to sustainability and the principle of precaution, assuring pro-active protection of the environment, careful management of its diversity, and equitable sharing of wealth.

The Philippines Rural Reconstruction Movement is engaged in a Sustainability programmes, and there is cross fertilization with the practice of community gardens as a metaphor which drew a warm response from everyone, realizing that there are gardens of collaboration, friendships, and companionship which grow in the soil of trust and responsibility and hospitality, and watered from a spring that is forced to the surface by the pressure of rocky structures.

Governance for sustainability is build on participatory partnerships where decisions are made involving all stakeholders – a challenge that can only be met by accountable relationship building and attitudes of humility to learn from those who are working from traditions of resource conservation, and share knowledge available through modern technological for environmental benefit and shared human wellbeing.

We were a group well versed in critique of the dominant systems, perhaps most obvious in NZ and Australia, and seeking forms of governance and management which are formed collaboratively with indigenous peoples of the Pacific. We recognize that the future of this oceanic region depends now on how development proceeds on the surrounding continents, and on our capacity to govern in keeping with the life supporting capacity of our lands and ocean. It seems we are nowhere near such an enormous shift.

WHAT DID NOT WORK SO WELL

CHARTER PRINCIPLE NO 10

.... facing the challenges of today and of tomorrow....

The plans for round table discussions to parallel presentations, with equal time for both, was overtaken by presentation time. Reflection from the organizing committee indicates that for our first meeting it was necessary to invite presentations as part of our respect for the high calibre of participants, and time did not allow for the full balance of contributions and responsive discussion. Our next meeting should be able to build on the knowledge shared and getting to know the group, and work with more time for roundtable engagement.

Having one or two representatives from some countries was noted as being out of balance with the large group from Aotearoa, alongside the possibilities for local Samoan people to be at the symposium. Hopefully it will be possible to resource a better balance of representatives at the next meeting, and this will be taken into consideration for the hosting venue.

In addition to more shared representation, and fuller representation of Pacific countries, the feasibility of an expanded network on responsibility for water will be investigated, reaching to Pacific rim countries, including Vietnam, China, Japan, Canada, US, Peru and Chile. We have contacts in all these countries through the Charter for Responsibility and Environmental networks.

Further opportunity for field visits and exposure to practical initiatives would be welcome.

ONGOING PLANS

(For reference to objectives of Symposium see appendices below)

CHARTER FOR HUMAN RESPONSIBILITY: NO 4

Lasting peace can only be expected from freedom, justice, and processes for reconciliation which are respectful of human dignity and human rights.

In the immediate follow up, areas for continuation which have been identified include:

- An ongoing network / community for knowledge exchange and support for indigenous knowledge. This to be done in recognition of existing commitments, and with the intention of supporting professional and community commitments, rather than causing more burdensome obligations of another group.
- Exchanges of practical knowledge of local management of marine coastal areas. A visit to Fiji is proposed from NZ participants and from PNG, to support projects and build capacity for local decision-making.
- A Pacific network for environmental Education
- Responsibility as a framework for conflict resolution – arose in the context of identifying disputes over rights and entitlements to resources and property. The corresponding ethics of responsibility as articulated in the Charter give scope for a unifying framework. This needs further exploration.
- Renewable Energy water conservation initiatives. Two projects for follow through are:
 - Manufacture and installation of solar energy systems
 - Investigation of a system of household water storage. In Samoa and NZ water supply and electricity are delivered to households through a mixture of government and municipal systems of electricity infrastructure and water storage and delivery, which entails extraction from rivers. Household water tanks would reduce extraction from rivers and provide backup in times of crises, such as more intense weather patterns of drought and cyclones.
- Film documentation was made of all the presentations and local water environments. Funding will be sought to proceed with a short film and a documentary.

- Dissemination of the contributions will be made through publication of an edited collection of the presentations. A CD of the presentations has been sent to everyone and is available on request.

The term Symposium was deliberate to the extent of evoking a small philosophically capable gathering for taking turns at contributing to a topic for discussion while feasting and relaxing. In Plato's original it was a woman's wisdom, that of Diotima, conveyed by Socrates, who brought the most compelling insights on love as a relational ethic,

Several thousand years on we heard of Pacific traditions of male-female dynamics which resonate with those of Plato, with the richly textured interplay of leadership by women and men and an experience of deep responsibility for hospitality calibrated through Samoan tradition, supported as far as possible by the steering committee from NZ, and all most generously made possible through the FPH.

Betsan Martin, Convenor of Te Au o Te Moana.

With the committee:

Charles Te Ahukaramu Royal, Te Kawehau Hoskins, Tafaoimalo Loudeen Parsons, Maria Humphries
Laura Beck



APPENDIX: The Objectives are copied here to give a reference point to the Plans set out above.

OBJECTIVES

- Convene an interdisciplinary forum on the health of aquatic ecosystems that is beneficial to community and environmental habitats of the Region, in a context of Climate for Change.

- Work with an ethics of responsibility in practice, governance and management
- Identify case-studies of integrated management and governance of water ecosystems for a regional network
- Formation of a network supported by a steering group(s) for supporting follow up and implementation
- Develop a methodology for integrating environmental and socio-economic indicators of wellbeing, addressing poverty and capacity enhancement with environmental responsibility.
- Identify conduits for indigenous knowledge and local practice to feed into national and regional environmental policy
- Support an intergenerational sharing of knowledge exchange and capacity for environmental and social responsibility
- Film and written documentation of proceedings