Dear Members, Partners & Friends,

Kia orana tatou katoatoa! We have a number of events and projects to report on for the month of May. It has been a very exciting month for us here at TIS and we hope you will enjoy reading about our recent antics!

Rarotonga’s First Ever Runway Cycle Event Attracts A Large Crowd

History was made on the 12th of May with over 250 enthusiastic cyclists ditching the bumpy roads and hitting the smooth surfaces of Rarotonga’s very own runway strip. The first ever Runway Ride event, which was organised by the 50 Days for 50 Years cycling campaign kick-started at the early hour of 8.30am. The early morning call along with the thought of having to catch up on missed working hours didn’t deter 250 people from attending what was a pleasant Tuesday morning cruise. Cyclists were able to cycle the length of the runway and back again (4.5km) just under 20 minutes. Other speedsters were able to complete the 4.5km stretch in under 10 minutes. A restricted one hour slot was given for the cyclists before being escorted off by the friendly airport authority staff - well in advance of the next Air Rarotonga arrival.

Thanks to IUCN for providing some funding for this event and congratulations to all that took part!

Some of the 250 cyclists who attended the ‘Runway Ride’ event. – They look so freeeee!

Microscopes Presented to Tereora and Enuamanu Schools

On the 20th May TIS staff Alanna Smith and Liam Kokaua visited Tereora College to present two brand-new stereo microscopes to the school. These microscopes were used only once during our UNESCO Marine Science Camp in April, and are particularly useful for dissecting activities. Jackson Martin, teacher of the year 12 biology class as well as some of the students from the class who participated in the training camp were there to accept the microscopes.
Mr Martin was very grateful for the donation of the microscopes, saying they will definitely be put to good use by students. On the 29th of May, Atiu Executive Officer Teariki Maurangi came to the TIS office to accept another of these microscopes on behalf of Enuamanu School. In total, four microscopes have been gifted by TIS to high schools both on Rarotonga and in the outer islands, with the first one being presented to Araura College in April.

Anti-Purse Seining Stickers Now In Stock

Te Ipukarea Society has commissioned the production of a range of bumper stickers in support for the Anti-Purse Seining movement in the Cook Islands. The stickers were designed by Edna Torea-Allan (June Hosking’s sister), and we would like to thank her for doing such a great job! The stickers come in small (motorbike/bicycle size) and large (car/truck size) and come in a range of designs. The most popular design has been the ‘WTF – Where’s the Fish’, and we have ordered more of these to meet the demand. The stickers cost $1 for small and $2 for large, and are available from the TIS Office, The Mooring, Bite Time, and the Koru Café in Aitutaki. Get ‘em while they last!

Petition Update

The petition against purse seine fishing within the Cook Islands EEZ has been in circulation around the Cook Islands just over a month. Support for the petitions have not only been recognised on Rarotonga, but also within the Pa Enua. Petitions sent out to the Pa Enua have travelled far and wide by either plane or boat have now been signed and returned back to Te Ipukarea Society (even from the islands of Nausau and Palmerston!). A final group effort for collecting more signatures was conducted at the Punanga Nui Markets on Saturday 30th May. We will be presenting the petition to Parliament when they meet on Friday 12th of June (see final page of this newsletter for more information). Petitions around Rarotonga are now being collected from all locations and checked for invalid votes. Over 3000 signatures have been recorded in office so far, and with more petitions to collect, it is clear that overall a good number of Cook Islanders have
shown their support for the anti-purse seine fishing campaign.

**Vaka Voyagers Show Support for Cycling Campaign**

In light of capturing some ‘cool’ people on bicycles to promote the 50 Days for 50 Years cycling campaign, crew members from the visiting vaka’s were caught having a wheel of a time on a couple of island bicycles.

To break the ice from the revealing of the new $5 coin which the vaka crew attended, selfies and colourful group shots were taken of the vaka members to help promote the use of bicycles and carbon reduction within the Cook Islands.

Prime Minister and Minister for Fisheries Henry Puna and Secretary of Marine Resources, Ben Ponia. The discussion was long-awaited for Passfield who had been trying to organise a meeting with Puna for over a year. The Prime Minister didn’t want media coverage of the discussions, and although it was positive to have a face-to-face meeting nothing specific was resolved. One result was that the Prime Minister informed Ponia to take note of Te Ipukarea Societies’ concerns in future negotiations in regards to purse seining, however what practical effect this may have is to be seen.

**Petition Stalls Target Last-Minute Signatures**

Over the past couple of weeks, some dedicated TIS members have been manning stalls around Avarua in attempt to gather signatures from the public before the final petition is presented to Parliament. Carinna Langsford, Tamara Suchodolsky and Teresa Arneric have been the backbone of this mission, assisted by Liam Kokaua. So far the group has set up stalls at three locations. The most successful stall collected over 60 signatures over four-hour period, as well as receiving coverage by NZ Pacific Affairs programme Tagata Pasifika.
Altogether, the combined efforts of the three stalls gathered approximately 100 signatures as well as selling a number of anti-purse seining bumper stickers. Congratulations to our TIS stalwarts for making the effort to gather these remaining signatures, as well as making TIS’ presence felt in the public through displaying our large banners!

Youth committee’s E-waste documentary

E-waste – “discarded electrical goods such as TV’s laptops, DVD players, MP3 players along with a number of other electrical products” has been a quiet topic for some time here in the Cook Islands. But noise about the environmental and health issues associated with e-waste are about to be heard through a 10 minute e-waste documentary put together by members of the TIS youth committee. E-waste has been a hot topic of the youth committee for some time, where members had wanted to raise awareness about what e-waste is and what practical and sustainable solutions there were for dealing with e-waste. The documentary stars year 10 students from Tereora College and year 11 students from Nukutere College, whose brains are picked on e-waste issues. The documentary will be aired on local TV from the start of the 14th June and will be played three times a week before the local news.

And Finally... Your Last Chance to Come and Show Your Support for the Petition!

Now that we at TIS are collecting the remaining petitions around the country, we are now preparing the petition for presentation in just a few days.

We encourage all those who have supported the anti-purse seine petition to attend a gathering next Friday outside the Parliament building around 11am. We will present it to the clerk at 11.30am. Aere mai e tauturu mai ta tatou patoi’anga.

*REMINDER*

All members and intending members that the TIS AGM will be held on 24th June at 4.30pm at the TIS office!

Remember to pop by the office and pay for your membership for the next 12 months before the AGM!

Ka Kite Akaou!