



# ANNUAL REPORT 2015

OceansWatch



# OceansWatch

## **Vision:**

Sustainable, healthy and resilient Pacific Island coastal communities

## **Mission:**

In partnership with coastal communities we develop conservation plans, sustainable livelihood projects and help communities adapt to the effects of climate change.

## **OceansWatch is:**

OceansWatch is an international not-for-profit organisation that has worked with sailors, divers, scientists and the public since 2008 to help coastal communities to conserve their biodiversity, develop sustainable livelihoods and mitigate and adapt to the effects of climate change.

[www.oceanswatch.org](http://www.oceanswatch.org)

# MESSAGE

## From our Managing Director



In 2014 OceansWatch completed two expeditions to the Pacific. We had one team on sailing yacht Anna Rose working in the Solomon Islands, and one in team on Magic Roundabout working in both Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands.

We had many people in many communities involved in successful projects. We had a new program protecting biodiversity. I have personally been especially proud of the commitment shown by the women in the sustainable livelihood co-operatives who have put their hearts into making money for their families by producing such high quality coconut oil.

As always we could not do this with out the amazing support from the village communities, our volunteers, sponsors, donors and many other people that have worked alongside us.

Thank you

Chris Bone, Managing Director

# Team of 2014

We had a very experienced and well qualified team this year. This included Chris Bone, Britt Basel, Georgia Coward, Lucy Marcus, Sophie Bone, Charlotte Leger and Dr Ray Pierce.



*Britt Basel, M.Sc.* is a socio-environmental scientist that has worked around the world to help marginalized communities adapt to climate change and protect their natural resources. Her experience spans many projects in 38 countries. Britt holds a MS in Human Dimensions of Natural Resources, a MS in Conservation Leadership, and a BA in Anthropology. As a parallel to her scientific work, Britt's photography and articles have been published by National Geographic Traveler, India, The Washington Post, and The Herald Tribune among others. Britt joined the 2014 OceansWatch expedition and piloted the Community-Based Adaptation Planning Process in the villages of Ngadeli and Buma in the Temotu Province.

*Dr Ray Pierce* is the Company Director of Eco Oceania Ltd. He is currently working on a range of Pacific, Australian and New Zealand projects, including surveys and restoration of Phoenix Islands and Kiribati. Ray has 35 years of study internationally and is a specialist in Bird diversity, ecology and management. He is an expert in Mammalian pests. He was Conservation Advisory Scientist for NZ Department of Conservation for 11 years. He has published many papers and reports and frequently reviews other ornithologists work. He joined the 2014 project and carried out surveys of threatened birds and flying foxes in the Temotu Province.



# OceansWatch Projects

## Solomon Islands

### Marine Report

Our 2014 marine programme was successfully managed by Georgia Coward MSc. With competent support from Lucy Marcus MSc. and Charlotte Leger MSc.

We continued our engagement with the Reef Islanders and the management of a network of locally managed marine protected areas within the 35,000ha reef lagoon surrounding these islands.

This year we ran programs in Mola'a with the customary owners of the "Great Reef", and in Ngadeli and Otelo.

We carried out extensive Reef monitoring in Mola'a and Ngadeli and trained 29 Reef Guardians. We mapped the Ngadeli protected area and taught reef awareness at the Fenualoa High School and in the villages.

There are now 3 permanent and 5 temporary protected areas in this network..

We also visited Buma and trained 10 Reef Guardians with additional catch per unit area monitoring. In water monitoring is a risk here due to salt water crocodiles.



Lucy Marcus and Georgia Coward with the Buma Reef Guardians. Photo courtesy of Britt Basel

**“In water  
monitoring is a  
risk in Buma due  
to salt water  
crocodiles”**

# Marine – Devil Rays



Every season we observe a healthy devil ray population within the waters around the Reef Islands. This year we were lucky enough to observe the mating ritual. The female leads a complex dance and the male contenders have to follow exactly. The next in line hopeful male has to move to the back of the line if it makes a mistake.

“Devil Ray mating ritual involves a complex dance competition”



# Our first Program of threatened species and biodiversity conservation

A survey of IUCN red-listed vertebrate species was undertaken on the islands of Vanikoro, Nendo and Tinakula of the Santa Cruz Islands (Temotu Province), Solomon Islands, in September-October 2014. The survey focused on two fruit-bat species - the Vanikoro flying-fox (CR) and Temotu flying-fox (EN) – and three bird species – the Santa Cruz ground-dove (EN), Santa Cruz shrikebill (EN) and palm lorikeet (VU). All five species were located during this survey and with apparently viable population numbers. The Vanikoro flying-fox, known locally as basapine, was found in coconut groves on the island of Tevai at Vanikoro and is reported by locals also to occur commonly on the main island of Vanikoro and less commonly on Utupia. The Temotu flying-fox, known locally as mako, is widespread and moderately common in primary and secondary forests on Nendo and present in low numbers on Tinakula. The Santa Cruz ground-dove known locally as vakavakatia was found on the forested volcanic island of Tinakula where it is moderately common but wary of humans. The Palm lorikeet (VU) was also found only at Tinakula where it is abundant. The Santa Cruz shrikebill known locally as Upulalir was found only in primary forest on Nendo where it was uncommon. **A pivotal finding of the surveys was that Tinakula is rat-free, which explains the persistence of ground-doves there.**



Temotu Flying fox. Photo courtesy of Dr Ray Pierce.

“We observed the Vanikoro flying fox not seen since 1929 and on IUCN red list as Critically Endangered”

# OceansWatch Climate Change Adaptation Program

“The effects of climate change are very real on Fenualoa – The Tuwo graveyard is now underwater”



The OceansWatch Climate Change Program is designed to build awareness about climate change, and with a basis in this understanding help participants to identify:

- What resources are most important to them,
- The challenges currently and historically experienced with these resources,
- How climate change will further impact these resources
- Traditional and innovative adaptation strategies to address these challenges,

Based on this understanding communities develop and implement a Community-Based Climate Change Adaptation Plan.

Our emphasis is on ecosystem based adaptation strategies and traditional knowledge. This year we ran the Climate Change Program in Ngadeli and Buma.



“Homes in Ngadeli village so close to the high water mark”



# OceansWatch Coconut Oil Pilot Project

“This program gives the local women a sense of purpose, teaches them useful new skills and provides them with cash for school fees and food security.”



Charlotte Leger assists the women to scrape the coconuts. Photo courtesy of Britt Basel.

We trialed this project in Buma and Mola'a. Women in each village formed a co-operative and with a bit of assistance wrote extensive constitutions. Coconuts are just about the only thing they have excess of and so to turn these into cash that goes directly to the women will ensure that their children have the opportunity to get full schooling.

Together the communities produced nearly two hundred litres of cold-pressed virgin coconut oil which we bought and have imported into New Zealand to sell.

Until we visit next year they will use the equipment to make oil for their own use and to sell locally.



# Vanuatu Projects in 2014

“Crown of Thorns (COTs) outbreaks represent the biggest biological threat to the Indo-Pacific’s tropical reefs”

During the 2014 OceansWatch expedition to Vanuatu we worked primarily with Southwest Bay. The team of George Coward, Charlotte Leger and Mason Myrmo measured the health of the Community Conservation Areas and carried on building the relationship with the communities and the local schools.

The comparison between the Community Conservation Area (CCA) and the control site at Labo did indicate some ecological effectiveness. Hard coral cover, soft coral cover, giant clam density, butterflyfish density and parrotfish density were all greater within the CCA. This suggests that there is enforcement and community compliance of CCA regulations. Unfortunately the presence of COTs both on and off-transect is alarming. Crown of Thorns (COTs) outbreaks represent the biggest biological threat to the Indo-Pacific’s tropical reefs. Education, awareness and regular removals are recommended to maintain healthy COTs populations and prevent outbreaks.



Charlotte Leger talks to the community about conserving their reef.

# Other Vanuatu Projects



Coral gardening – our team support this valuable restoration project.

Cleaning the beaches – in the past everything would rot. These days plastic can kill marine life.



Rocket stoves – with increasing populations there is less firewood available. These stoves reduce the amount of wood needed and reduce the smoke that causes respiratory problems.



# Fenualoa hit by Cyclone Pam

Cyclone Pam struck in February 2015 and left a huge amount of damage in its wake through the North East Solomon Islands (Temotu) and Vanuatu. Fenualoa Island was especially badly hit and although no lives were lost, many houses damaged or completely destroyed. Fruit trees are gone and the gardens were washed away or covered in debris, there are just root crops left in most instances

OceansWatch New Zealand collected funds for the cyclone relief effort and were guided as to how the money should be spent by their Solomon Islands directors. Funds have been used to pay for a needs assessment of Fenualoa Island finding that the Communities there needed tarpaulins and emergency food. They also need chain saws to clear fallen trees from houses and gardens, seeds to replant and some roofing iron for their water tank catchments.

OceansWatch decided to provide chainsaws, so that villages can make an immediate start to clearing and replanting. All safety gear and petrol will also be provided. We shall supply a chainsaw mill too so that bigger trees can be utilised for re-building supplies. We are also paying for local seeds to be sent from Honiara so that replanting can begin as soon as possible.

As soon as the cyclone season is over and it's safe to depart New Zealand, OceansWatch yachts and cruising yachts supporting our cause will be departing New Zealand loaded with Aid supplies and specialist teams to help our friends get back on their feet again and to develop resilience to future negative climate change impacts.

In 2015, to support community resilience OceansWatch will:

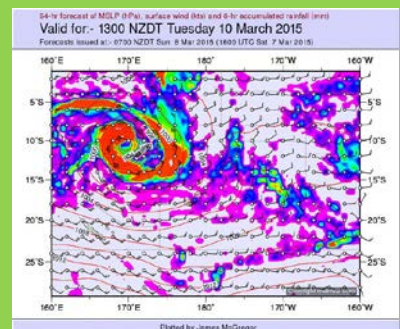
Undertake marine surveys to gauge the effect of the cyclone and to locate the best possible places for resilient marine reserves. We work closely with local resource owners when doing this work as part of our Reef Guardian Program

Undertake Climate Change community needs assessments and adaptation plans to help these vulnerable communities adapt to the effect of Climate Change and climate induced disasters such as Cyclone Pam.

Assists in the development of Sustainable Livelihood projects so that communities can self fund their own adaptation strategies and development.



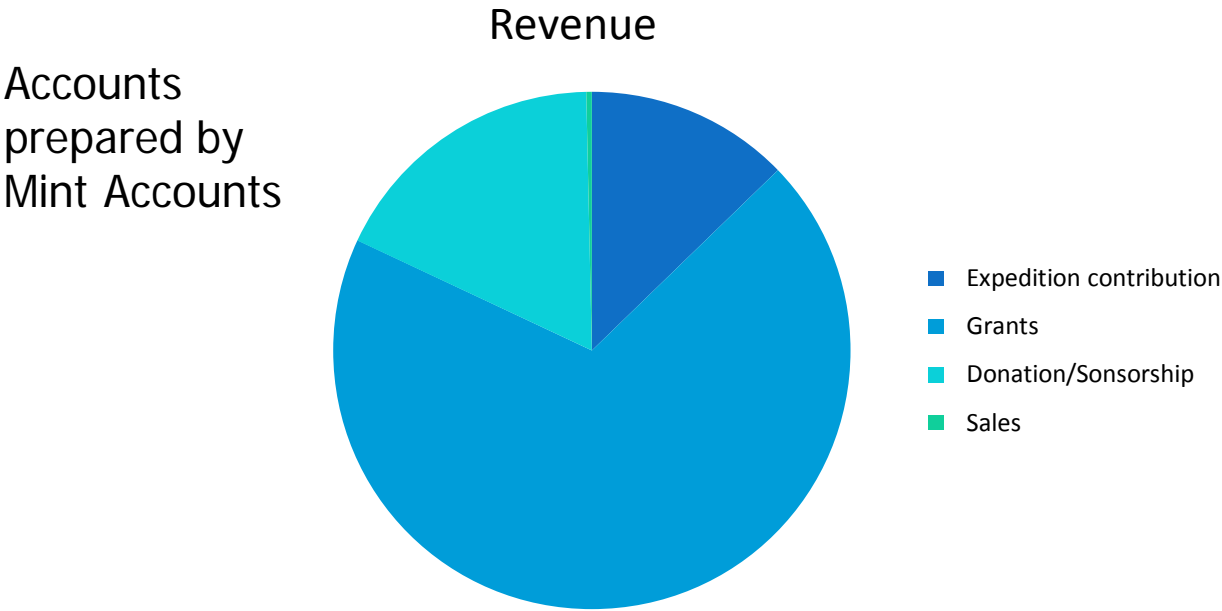
Houses were flattened in the biggest cyclone to hit for many years





# 2014/2015 FINANCIALS

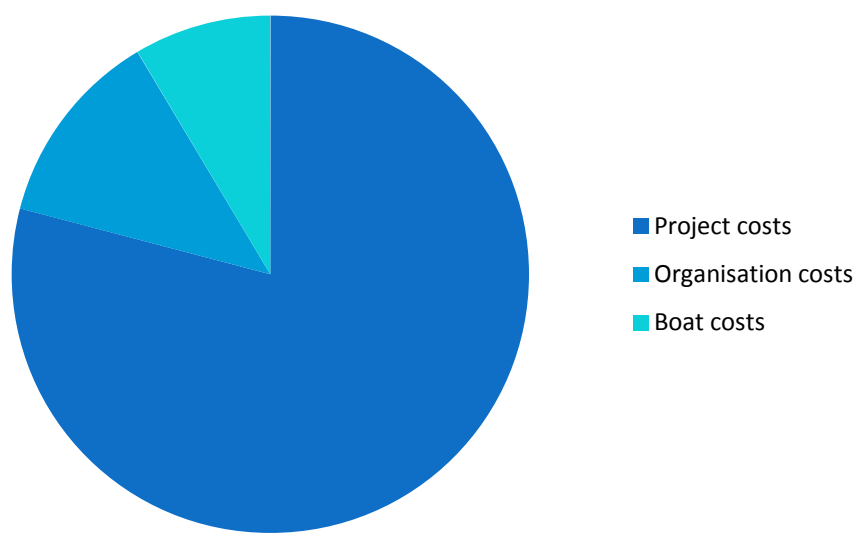
Revenue	
Expedition contribution	\$18,073
Grants	\$98,152
Donation/Sonsorship	\$25,045
Sales	\$489
	\$141,769



# 2015/2014 FINANCIALS

Expenses	
Project costs	\$111183
Organisation costs	\$17339
Boat costs	\$12046.57
	\$140568.57

EXPENSES



# Overseas OceansWatch organisations

This year OceansWatch was successfully registered as a charitable organisation in the UK.

We have a group of Trustees based in both the UK and Europe and are currently developing a base in the Canaries as a place to connect with sailing yachts cruising out of Europe

*Markus Mutter, Benoit Larielle,  
John Pye, Elodie Benollin, Julia  
Alabaster, Rachel Evans*



# Looking forward to 2015

We will carry on contributing towards efforts to conserve some of the Endangered species found in the Temotu Province of the Solomon Islands. This will involve working with locals to create protected areas to protect the tropical forest biodiversity and several Endangered species. There are not many mammals on the islands in the Pacific and this project is mainly focused on Flying fox and also on some birds.





# THANK YOU

Thanks to all of our volunteers and supporters for making all of our amazing achievements possible this year.

*Britt Basel, Georgia Coward,  
Lucy Marcus, Charlotte Leger  
and Chris and Sophie Bone.*



# Ways you can help

Through our website [www.oceanswatch.org](http://www.oceanswatch.org) you can.

- ◆ Make an online donation
- ◆ Sign up for your e-newsletter
- ◆ Like us on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/OceansWatch/220826911008?ref=ts>

- ◆ [Watch our new video](#)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HbxRRIGgv3A>





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