

Course Announcement

Pacific Islands Community-based Conservation Course (PICCC)

SPREP and USP are pleased to announce that the Pacific Islands Community-based Conservation Course (PICCC) will be on offer in 2007.

The Community-based Conservation Management Course has been offered over the past years through collaborative partnerships between the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP), The University of the South Pacific (USP), the International Centre for Protected Landscape (ICPL), World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and the Foundation of the People of the South Pacific International (FSPi) . The course is intended to provide professional development opportunities for conservation practitioners throughout the region and will be offered for the fourth time since its inception in 2001.

The course will provide participants with the practical knowledge and skills required for the sustainable management of Conservation Areas (CAs) and other forms of protected areas. The course will be integrated in the USP curriculum and provides conservation practitioners with the opportunity to further their education in conservation management including the possibility of acquiring post-graduate qualifications through the university's academic structure.

Course Aim and Objectives

The aim of the course is to build and improve the capacity of conservation practitioners; community representatives, government technical officers, NGO technical officers, training personnel in the management of community-based conservation projects and sites for the sustainable conservation and management of natural resources.

The specific objectives of the course are to give participants the ability to:

- Be familiar with the various approaches to conservation management, including the role of Conservation Area systems in protecting biological and cultural diversity and in supporting communities to do so;
- Identify and address, at the local level, the major natural and cultural threats to sustainable conservation area establishment and management;
- Use a range of participatory planning and consultation tools in support of conservation area management and the development of community-based conservation action plans;
- Examine the need for enterprise planning; describe the basic themes and processes of business planning; as well as gain practical experience with a range of basic business skills;
- Gain practical experience with a range of interpersonal and communication skills including how to generate public support and how to understand the role of partners in education programmes;
- Apply main steps in project cycle management, know how to develop grant proposals and use project monitoring tools.
- Describe the major biodiversity and conservation conventions and strategies, their inter-linkages and their relevance to the Pacific Island countries.

Course Venue and Structure

The course will be held at the Laucala Campus of the University of the South Pacific in Suva, Fiji. The course structure includes;

- Phase 1
(March/April 2007) 4 weeks of teaching, practicals and field work in Suva Fiji
- Field Projects
(May – Sept 2007) Field Project work in participants home country
- Phase 2
(Oct/Nov 2007) 3 weeks of teaching, field work and project write up and presentations in Suva, Fiji.

Teaching Methods

There will be some direct teaching, interspersed in most sessions with activities – individual, paired or group exercises of varying lengths.

Presentations, discussion and reviews will reinforce the active learning component. Taught elements will be illustrated by case studies and examples from the member countries and from other regions. There will be field visits to bring issues to light and to provide opportunities to rehearse skills. These visits will include a 3-4 day excursion to provide practical, in-field and in-the-community experience in applying the principles and skills learned during the course.

Selection Criteria

Participation at this course will require on-going commitment. The participation of personnel who are involved in conservation management at the “hands-on” level will be encouraged. The following criteria will be used by SPREP and USP when selecting candidates for the course:

- Adequate qualification/s and experience of each applicant to implement and transfer to others what was learnt at the course;
- Existing work programme of applicant – should allow the participant to taken the additional load of preparing and writing up a project back home during the project phase of the course
- Interest level and motivation of the applicant - has the applicant shown initiative in his/her own area of work in issues relating to community-based conservation management?
- The applicant must be currently or planning to be involved in assisting with the management of a conservation area which involves training others;
- There needs to be sufficient guarantee that the applicant will return to apply the newly learned skills after completion of the course.
- Gender equity is a factor in the selection of participants for inclusion in this programme and women are encouraged to apply.

Course information and application forms will be distributed to SPREP National and Institutional Focal Points and other stakeholders in the region during the month.

Those interested in applying and/or wishing to find out more about the course please contact the following persons;

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