

**PACIFIC ISLANDS SURVEY****Cook Islands and Line Islands Expedition details****May 9 – Jul 1 2011****BACKGROUND**

This 4-part marine survey expedition from Tahiti - Cooks - Christmas Island - Hawaii will take place between 9 May and 1 July, 2011. The focus areas will be the inhabited Southern Cook Islands, the remote uninhabited Northern Cook Islands and the Northern Line Islands.

The survey will cover locations that fall into the following three categories.

1. Areas of pristine marine environment exhibiting abundant high end predators and healthy ecosystems with no intervention by humans.
2. Areas of destroyed marine environment exhibiting diminished marine life, coral bleaching, algae blooms and upset ecosystems as well as areas on land that are the source of these problems.
3. Areas of restored marine environment and carefully managed fisheries in protected areas.

Data Collection will include: videography, visual reef check, manta trawl surface samples, beach surveys, fish samples,



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water samples, CO2 sensor, pH sensor, interviews, photography, written observations.

### **TIMELINE**

Leg 1: May 9 – 14 (6 days) Tahiti to Cook Islands.

Leg 2: May 16 – 27 (12 days) Southern Cook Islands.

Leg 3: May 28 – 14 June (18 days) Northern Cook Islands.

Leg 4: June 15 – July 1 (17 days) Northern Line Islands to Hawaii.

### **DESCRIPTION**

#### **Leg 1: Tahiti to Cook Islands**

**May 9 – 14, 2011 Papeete, Tahiti to Rarotonga, Cook Islands**

Duration: 6 days, sailing distance: 700nm.

Individual contribution of \$1490 required – includes food and accommodation.

This leg will be a direct sail from Papeete to Rarotonga, passing very closely to some of the western Society Islands and southern Cook Islands. Time and weather permitting we plan to drop anchor and go snorkelling or surf a reef break, but not land ashore. Observations and photographic documentation will be done by the crew to support educational blogs and the larger story.

#### **Leg 2: Southern Cook Islands**

**May 16 – 27, 2011 Rarotonga to Rarotonga via Southern Cook Islands**

Duration: 12 days, sailing distance: approx 400nm.

Individual contribution of \$4950 required – includes food,



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accommodation, dive gear, tank refills, expert underwater videography leadership.

This leg is focused on video documentation of underwater and top-side conditions. The team will concentrate their work on documenting a range of habitat conditions, issues and human stories. These will be put into short video communications, a longer documentary, and raw footage stock.

All three will be made available to the Cook Islands NGO's and authorities to support their conservation work. Becky Kagan and David Schott from Liquid Productions will be on board to lead a team of divers and videographers to document our findings both above and below the water. They will also provide active guidance and mentorship to the team.

We will start and finish in Rarotonga which simplifies overall logistics and reduces pressure to "make miles" in our passages. We will also be able to leave surplus gear on land, and locally source additional equipment. The team will spend all days filming, diving and visiting islands with short half-day hops between the islands Aitutaki, Mauke, Atiu, Mangaia, Mitiaro, Takutea and Manuae.

The survey will focus on local marine conservation issues alongside local NGOs and communities. These islands are mostly inhabited and demonstrate either destroyed, restored or managed marine environments.

### **Leg 3: Northern Cook Islands**

**May 28 – June 14, 2011 Rarotonga to Christmas Island via the Northern Cooks**



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Duration: 18 days, sailing distance: 1600nm.  
Individual contribution of \$4490 required – includes food, accommodation, dive gear, tank refills.

During this expedition the team will reach the far out remote islands of Suvarrow, Manihiki, Penrhyn and Starbuck to survey the less inhabited or uninhabited islands. There will be 1-3 day stretches of adventurous sailing between each island. We will stop for much diving, snorkelling, island exploration, filming, interviewing etc.

### **Leg 4: Northern Line Islands to Hawaii**

**Teriana Tabureran**

**June 25 – July 1, 2011 Christmas Island to Hawaii via Northern Line Islands**

Duration: 17 days, sailing distance: 1400nm.  
Individual contribution of \$4490 required – includes food, accommodation, dive gear, tank refills.

This expedition will start with a survey of Christmas Island itself. A point of interest will be how the marine ecosystems have been affected by obstructions to the lagoon interfering with the pattern of currents.

A few short hops of 1-2 days sailing to Teriana and Tabuaeran. The team will stop on these islands to visit local communities and go diving, then a week-long sail to Hawaii.

As Jacques Cousteau believed, 'we must go and see for ourselves'.

This document outlines our intentions as of January 2011. This is



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an expedition of discovery and who knows what we will discover along the way; hence the areas of research, focus issues and methods of delivery of objectives may change and evolve as we learn more over the coming months. We welcome full input from all team members on the detailed planning of this project in the lead up to the expedition – if there is something specific you want to get out of the expedition, or have knowledge and expertise to share, talk to us!

### **CONTACT**

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