

Why we need a new journal

THE Pacific region has profound and urgent problems in conservation and land management. The region also has people with world-class skills and training in conservation-oriented biological research. A major problem for effective conservation and management is the inadequate communication among research biologists, conservation managers and administrators.

Pacific Conservation Biology is a new quarterly journal that will promote this communication. This first issue reflects the diversity of conservation research and management issues in the region. The essay by Cox and Elmquist takes a philosophical look at conflicts between Eurocentric and indigenous attitudes to conservation in island nations, with case studies from Samoa. This is a fundamental issue that must be faced if the increasing focus in biodiversity in Oceania is to translate into lasting and effective management. The paper by Richards *et al.* adds to the lore of disappearing frogs — yet another series of rapid and drastic declines of amphibians from relatively pristine and completely protected forests. This illustrates the magnitude of the challenge before us!

Pacific Conservation Biology will provide a forum for (i) discussion about regional conservation problems, (ii) debate about priorities and mechanisms for conservation-oriented biological research, and (iii) dissemination of the results of relevant research or management. The second function is exemplified by Lindenmayer and Norton's essay, which contrasts management strategies for two celebrated inhabitants of old-growth forests — Leadbeater's Possums from south-east Australia

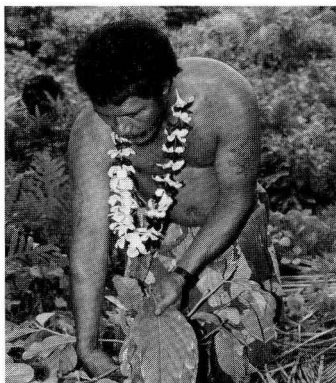
and the Spotted Owl from the Pacific north-west of the USA — and concludes that management of the former is deficient.

Emphasis will be placed on making clear the relevance and management implications of the research. The primary audience is the research biologists, wildlife managers and administrators of government and non-government conservation agencies. To this end, the associate editors are drawn from government conservation agencies, research organizations and universities in Australia, New Zealand and Oceania.

The journal will be more than just a vehicle for research papers, although these are obviously important. Each issue will include a section of news and correspondence and a forum with essays intended to stimulate discussion, together with responses to previous essays. We see the news items as a service for making management or research initiatives more widely known; in this issue, we present information on initiatives for management and research in the South Pacific and in the Wet Tropics of Australia. Contributed papers that present the results of high quality original research or management and reviews of relevant topics, especially those that focus on the region, are welcome. Here we have original papers and reviews addressing questions from ecosystem restoration to genetic variation in bilbies.

Pacific Conservation Biology has been created in response to a need identified by researchers and managers — enjoy it, use it and be part of it!

CRAIG MORITZ, Editor



ON FRONT COVER

Vaitogi Seumanutafa, a resident of Falealupo, Savaii, Western Samoa, gathering medicinal plants in the village-controlled rainforest reserve. Under the Falealupo covenant, villagers are encouraged to continue traditional uses of the rainforest plants from the rainforest preserve.