



Australian Government

Kokoda Initiative Nius

OCT-DEC 2011 ISSUE 2



IN THIS ISSUE

- ☒ PNG-Australia Cooperation and Partnership: Annual Report Release & DEC-DSEWPac MoU Signing
- ☒ Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel's Day Celebrated
- ☒ Operation Render Safe on Track
- ☒ Kokoda Initiative Video Documentary
- ☒ Sensing New Heights with GIS
- ☒ Meet Ranger Nuana "Nuxie" Momoa
- ☒ DEC-KTA Leadership Training
- ☒ PNG & Australia Tour Operator Forum



2011

Sep 12	KTA PNG Tour Operator Forum	Port Moresby
Sep 25	KTA Australia Tour Operator Forum	Brisbane
Oct 9-13	DEC-KTA Leadership Training	Port Moresby
Oct 12	PNG-Australia Ministerial Forum	Canberra
Oct 12	Annual Report 2010-2011 Release	Canberra / Port Moresby
Oct 14	GIS Work Package 5 commences	Port Moresby
Nov 3	Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Day	Kokoda Station
Nov 28-Dec 3	DEC-DSEWPaC Planning Meeting	Port Moresby
Dec 1	DEC-DSEWPaC MoU Signing	Port Moresby

The Kokoda Initiative is a Papua New Guinea and Australian government partnership for the sustainable development of the Owen Stanley Ranges, Brown River Catchment and Kokoda Track region. Working together to protect natural, cultural and historic values.

Cover: Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Day. Photo credit Rawena Russell.

Inside: Near Kokoda Aistrip. Photo credit Volker Scholz

PNG-Australia Cooperation and Partnership

ANNUAL REPORT 2010-2011

The Kokoda Initiative Annual Report 2010-2011 was officially launched Wednesday 12 October 2011, marking four years of cooperation and partnership between the governments of Australia and Papua New Guinea.

Hon. Minister for Environment and Conservation Thompson Harokaq'veh officially received the Kokoda Initiative Annual Report from Secretary Dr. Wari Lea Iamo, who is the PNG government chair of the Kokoda Initiative National Taskforce. The launch took place at the Department of Environment and Conservation office in Port Moresby.

"I am pleased to see that the report records achievements of the Kokoda Initiative, these achievements demonstrate how environmentally sustainable development projects can take place in the country.

"I wish to see the excellent cooperative arrangement with the Australian government on the Kokoda Initiative continued and extended," Minister Harokaq'veh said.



DEC Minister Hon. Thompson Harokaq'veh receiving annual report from DEC Secretary Dr. Wari Lea Iamo. Photo credit Pauline Riman

DEC-DSEWPaC MoU SIGNING

A Memorandum of Understanding was signed Thursday 1 December 2011 by Secretary for Department of Environment and Conservation (DEC) Dr Wari Lea Iamo and Australian Deputy Secretary for Department of Sustainability, Environment, Water, Population and Communities (DSEWPaC) Ms. Kimberley Dripps.

"The Papua New Guinea Government has an ambitious and important agenda to protect this country's environment for future generations," Dr Wari Lea Iamo said.

"This agreement is a vehicle for engaging and exchanging valuable information and skills with Australia so that we can achieve this."

The memorandum builds on the existing strong partnership between the two departments. Currently there is substantial cooperation in the areas of heritage including the Kokoda Initiative, the marine environment (Coral Triangle Initiative, turtles and dugongs), the prevention and detection of illegal wildlife trade.



Above: DSEWPaC Deputy Secretary Ms. Kimberley Dripps and DEC Secretary Dr. Wari Lea Iamo after the signing of the MoU. Photo credit Pauline Riman



Singing groups representing communities along the track perform at the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Day celebrations.

Top right: Youths re-enact Fuzzy WuzzyAngel carriers along the Kokoda Track during WWII.

Photo credits: Rawena Russell

Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel's Day Celebrated

The skies were bleak and the silence was eerie as local communities and distinguished guests watched the reenactment of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels carrying wounded soldiers at this year's Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Day at Kokoda Station, 3 November 2011. As they carried six men on stretchers they passed the original site in which the Australian flag was raised on November 3, 1942 marking the day that Japanese troops retreated along the Track.

A quiet stillness swept over the thousands of community members who attended the ceremony, as the Papua New Guinean, Australian and Oro Province flags were raised in remembrance of the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels that provided assistance to Australian diggers during World War II.

Distinguished guests represented the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation, Central Provincial Administration, Australian Defence Force and Australian High Commission. Deputy Central Provincial Administrator, Mr Gei Raga noted the significance of the National Day and the importance of partnership between the Papua New Guinean and Australian governments through such programs as the Kokoda Initiative.

Three trekking groups attended the ceremony including; Historical Kokoda, No Roads and Back Track Adventures. Jim Drapes spoke on behalf of the tour operators and trekkers, encouraging more trekkers to experience the Kokoda Track.

The resonating sounds of "Oro Oro Oro" - the Orokaiva words for welcome greeted several cultural 'singsing' groups as they performed traditional dances in the centre of the memorial site at Kokoda Station. Colourful tapa cloth costumes, exotic feathers and kundu drums elevated the celebrations.

The KTA and local communities organised their second Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Day celebrations, thanks to funding support from the Papua New Guinea government.

It was along the Kokoda Track that the native carriers assisting the ANZACs were affectionately called the Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels - a name that is now used to honour the estimated 50,000 Papua New Guineans who participated in World War II.

The National Day, gazetted by the PNG Government in 2009 by then Minister for Tourism and Culture Charles Abel, celebrates and recognises the some 50,000 Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels recruited throughout Papua New Guinea who worked in places such as the Kokoda Track, Milne Bay and Rabaul and are well remembered for their selfless acts of courage and sacrifice.



Kokoda station memorial plaque depicting Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels.

Operation Render Safe on Track

The risk from potentially dangerous unexploded ordnance or 'UXO' has been reduced at two locations along the Kokoda Track as part of Operation Render Safe, the Australian Defence Force's enduring peace-time mission to find, identify and render safe World War II munitions in the South Pacific.'

The 2011 Operation Render Safe activities in Papua New Guinea involved more than 150 personnel from the Australian, New Zealand and Papua New Guinea Defence Forces. In addition to the activities along the Kokoda Track, Operation Render Safe removed UXO in East New Britain at Rabaul, where personnel discovered the underwater remains of a WWII Japanese submarine.

Earlier this year, the Australian Government commissioned a survey of UXO along the Kokoda Track with input from the Kokoda Track Authority (KTA). In conjunction with its planned activities at Rabaul, and at the invitation of the KTA, a team from Operation Render Safe visited the Kokoda Track on 27 and 28 October 2011 to remove World War II UXO at Myola Dump and Owers' Corner.

A known concern of both communities living along the Kokoda Track and tour operators, UXO can cause injury and death if disturbed. Prior to commencing UXO removal, the KTA raised awareness among communities of these risks by issuing tok saves (community notices) and through its rangers. The KTA has also listened to the concerns of tour operators at tour operator forums.

At Myola, Operation Render Safe personnel burnt out the explosive in two large AN-M65 bombs and made safe a rifle-propelled anti-tank grenade, which enabled it to be retained at the Mortar Dump. They also destroyed 24 containers of hand grenade detonators. At Owers' Corner, five hand grenades were destroyed.

KTA Safety Package Project Manager Brian Boon worked closely with Australian Defence Force personnel in planning and conducting the activity and KTA is grateful to the Operation Render Safe personnel involved in the task.

"A small quantity of surplus explosive material was destroyed at the conclusion of the Myola phase a safe distance away from a group of local village people.

"This gave the people there a better understanding of the danger of the many UXO along the Track and proved a very useful and practical demonstration that I'm sure will be told many times to other village people, and so spreading this safety message," said Brian.

As part of its ongoing work to improve safety along the Kokoda Track, the KTA will continue to work with communities to take further steps to reduce the risk of other known UXO, including measures to prevent the handling of UXO displayed along the track and continued awareness raising.



UXO at Owers Corner on the Kokoda Track before Operation Render Safe. Photo credit Volker Scholz

New Film: Kokoda Initiative - One Journey, Many Stories

Walking the Kokoda Track is an unforgettable experience, and the stories of the people who live, work and trek this iconic route are just as unforgettable.

University of Goroka Yumi Piksa Productions captured on film a hundred hours of community-told stories of the Kokoda Initiative as part of a video documentary project which started in July 2011.

Yumi Piksa film director Mark Eby and camera crew Dilen Doiki and Aaron Inamara walked the track from Kokoda to Efogi and visited Owers Corner recording hours of footage and many interviews.

The results are five short film clips, 4-5 minutes in length and a longer 10 minute trailer, showcasing the impact of the initiative through the voices of the communities and the evocative imagery of the Owen Stanley Ranges region.

"We interviewed people we met and tried to get shots of what they actually did - teachers in classrooms, nurses in hospitals and women's groups making bilums and cooking for trekkers," explains Mark.

These films will be embedded in websites of the Kokoda Initiative partners and used at forums to promote the work and achievements of the Initiative to date. The films are in the final stages of editing and will be launched in early 2012.

Walking and filming was a challenging experience

for the Yumi Piksa team but they were impressed with the natural beauty and tourism success of the Kokoda Track.

"The most memorable experience for me was walking through Templeton's crossing through the moss forest up to 1900, the eco-system there is really unique and the history and the people make the place very special.

"I'm hoping that people who see this will get a feel of how villagers along the track feel about their lives. My goal as a filmmaker is to open a window into something that normally people don't have the privilege to see," said Mark.

As part of the documentary process Yumi Piksa recorded a wealth of information through extended interviews with key community members involved in the Initiative. Not all of this could be included in the short films. Transcripts of these interviews will be incorporated into monitoring and evaluation processes to ensure the voices of the community and their messages about the program are heard.

Yumi Piksa Productions provides opportunities for undergraduate students to learn skills in film making, working with local communities to record their stories in culturally appropriate ways. Engaging them to undertake this project not only supports our own goals of building awareness of the work of the Initiative but also helps us build capacity in the next generation of Papua New Guinean film makers.



Mark Eby filming the Hoi women's group as they prepare dinner. Photo courtesy of Yumi Piksa.

Sensing New Heights with GIS

6

FEATURE



GIS n. abbrev. (*often used in speech*) for: *Geographic* or *Geographical Information System*; any system that captures, stores, analyses, manages and presents data that are linked to locations.

High Resolution DEM Product Generation

High spatial resolution, digital elevation data for slope analysis, drainage delineation and flood modeling are required in order to assess suitability of the Kokoda Initiative Area of Interest and adjacent high-relief hills and foothills for logging, susceptibility of the cleared landscape to erosion, line of sight visualization and to assess the suitability of these areas for different land use.

Land Cover Classification Part 1

This work involves land cover mapping using the combined GeoSAR data set, which includes tiles of 1.25m posted P-band and X-band radar imagery, and in which land cover types, such as forests, plantations and crops, mangroves, clearings and disturbed areas can be easily distinguished. The products were delivered with training workshops on "River Tools", a mapping GIS software used mainly for water for mapping river systems and drainage applications but also useful for other GIS work.

DEC Program Officer Fredrick Ohmana working on GIS datasets.

Photo credit Pauline Riman

When flying between Moresby and Kokoda one can't help but notice the incredible expanse of cloud cover above Kokoda and the Owen Stanleys. Do you ever realise that a hundred thousand miles above the earth a satellite is meticulously mapping out this vast geographic landscape?

The diverse geography and immense rugged terrain of the Kokoda Initiative area of interest is unique. Mangroves, savannah, grasslands, and tropical to high-altitude forest spanning the Owen Stanley Ranges, Brown River Catchment and Kokoda Track region provide an interesting land mass cover, which poses a major challenge in obtaining data especially when there's cloud cover.

Clouds can be penetrated using radar-equipped satellites and airborne equipment which obtain imagery from microwave radiation and allows data to be captured on active land-use and vegetation.

The PNG Department of Environment and Conservation and Australia's Cooperative Research Centre (CRC) for Spatial Information is undertaking this work to provide detailed land cover information to support the land use planning of the whole Kokoda Initiative region.

Ensuring we have high quality spatial information is important for the Kokoda Initiative because it provides an understanding of current land uses and will eventually contribute to a range of assessments, including forest carbon assessment and outlining an area for conservation protection. The project includes training officers in DEC so that future GIS and spatial data work can be undertaken in-house.

DEC officers, Malcolm Keako and Fredrick Ohmana stepped out into the field in September to collect ground data in Central and Northern Province as part of Work Package 5.

An interesting component of the fieldwork includes gathering data samples on all living matter above the soil such as stems, stumps, branches, bark and seeds existing within a given habitat.

For Malcolm the most interesting part of this job is being outside among the elements and obtaining and verifying data acquired from the Radar - checking its accuracy in the assessment of the land cover.

"I enjoy seeing a map refined with the data I collected. It's like seeing a map transform into a much clearer

image. It provides a wealth of information that will benefit many in our program.

"Access to the sample sites is really challenging particularly due to lack of roads and non-availability of helicopter flights for those areas in the high terrains. Trekking seems the only option."

The DEC team have received training with CRC using GeoSAR data to assist them in developing spatial systems, databases and tools to support the Kokoda Initiative's land use planning.

Fredrick Ohmana explains the importance of GIS in assisting future land-use planning:

"Geographic information is the key to better decision-making because everything a community does is related to its geography. Say for instance, if a public facility like health centres was agreed to be built along the track, Digital Elevation Model (DEM) can be used to find out about spatial information like accessibility of the area and centrality of the locations.

"Whether it is too steep or rocky and whether the area is easily reached by other villages. Information like this is vital in planning facilities being built on the track and elsewhere in our Kokoda Initiative area of interest."

The on-going DEC consultation with Australia's CRC is to see that the Kokoda Initiative has access to PuSAR, SAR, GeoSAR datasets - these are GIS hardware and software used for analysing data. Much of the GIS data is obtained from satellite images like Landsat and Grounddata.



Left-right: Malcolm Keako (standing), Fredrick Ohmana, Arthur Ganubella and Brown River community leader using GPS to determine locations on a map. Photo courtesy of DEC GIS Branch

Meet Nuana “Nuxie” Momoa - KTA Ranger

8

PROFILE



Born

Manirunumu village, Sogeri plateau in the Central Province.

Kokoda Initiative program work

I am a Ranger with the Kokoda Track Authority stationed at Owers Corner. Wards 5 and 6 are under my care. Every month I patrol the areas between Owers, Iorabaiwa, Depo and Vesulogo. On these patrols I check the track conditions and I work together with communities to maintain the Track.

At Owers Corner I check trekker permits and make sure porters and tour operators follow KTA rules and regulations.

Connection with the Kokoda Track

My late father Momoa Monobe was a Fuzzy Wuzzy Angel. I grew up listening to his stories of the hardship, worry and exhaustion he faced as a carrier. I was a porter before and I understand how difficult it is carrying a load. I have great respect for men like my father and the Kokoda Track.

Proudest Moment

Travelling to Australia for the first time to do work experience at Booderee National Park in New South Wales is one of my proudest moments.

Vision for the Kokoda Track

During my experience at Booderee National Park I was impressed with how the park was looked after. I want to see the same done for the Kokoda Track because it is a beautiful and special place. I want my children's children to see the beauty I see today and know and respect the stories that come with it.

DEC-KTA Leadership Training

Managers and Australian counterparts working with the PNG Department of Environment and Conservation and Kokoda Track Authority attended leadership training mid-October. The training included practical applications in financial and contract management as well as skills in cross cultural communications.

"I have been able to map out my personal and professional goals as part of this training, and I know that my relationship with my staff, my counterparts and my Kokoda Initiative colleagues will benefit because of it," said James Sabi, Manager Terrestrial Ecosystems Management, DEC.

The leadership training workshop was run by John Jablonka of Cross Cultural Consultants International Development.

DEC's John Michael and James Sabi, and KTA's James Enage and Michael O'Kave attended the workshop.

The leadership training is part of overall capacity building support, funded by the Australian Government under the Kokoda Initiative.



DEC-KTA Leadership Training (Left to right): James Enage, James Sabi, John Michael and Michael O'Kave. Photo credit Rawena Russell

End of Season Tour Operator Forum

More than 50 representatives of Kokoda Track Licensed Tour Operators attended the End of Season Tour Operator Forum in Port Moresby and four representatives attended in Brisbane end of October.

The forum included updates on Track Maintenance, the License Review, KTA Governance Review, Safety Package activities, followed by group discussions.

Some of KTA's achievements throughout the year include

- The allocation of K10,000 to each of the Wards along the track to fund community projects such as upgrading churches, community halls, and funding agriculture businesses
- Program of track maintenance which has helped to improve the traveling route for communities and trekkers
- Upgrade and maintenance of the Kokoda Airstrip through the purchase of a tractor/slasher which ensures the airstrip can be kept in a condition that complies with operating airlines requirements.
- Construction of KTA Office at Kokoda and design work and ground clearing for the Kokoda Airstrip Terminal.
- An online permits system has recently been launched and is currently undergoing testing. This online system will make purchase of permits easier for Tour Operators in PNG and Australia.

Key issues raised included the weight of packs carried by Porters, trekking licenses and permits, creek crossings and bridges, safety for communities, porters and trekkers.

Each year the KTA aims to improve the safety and management of the Track; working with landowners, communities and tour operators is important to the sustainability of their work.

Photo credits:

- Rawena Russell: Cover page, Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Day, Ranger Nuana "Nuxie" Momoa Profile, DEC-KTA Leadership Training
- Volker Scholz: Inside cover, Operation Render Safe on Track
- Pauline Riman: Annual report, DEC-DSEWPaC MoU signing, Sensing new heights with GIS

Text credits:

- Pauline Riman: Annual Report 2010-2-11, DEC-DSEWPaC MoU signing, Sensing New Heights with GIS
- Rawena Russell: Fuzzy Wuzzy Angels Day, DEC-KTA Leadership Training, KTA Tour Operator Forum
- Luke James: Operation Render Safe on Track
- Alison Fleming: New Film Kokoda Initiative One Journey Many Stories

NIUS IS A PUBLICATION OF THE KOKODA INITIATIVE,
A FLAGSHIP OF THE BILATERAL COOPERATION
BETWEEN PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND AUSTRALIA.

Papua New Guinea Government

www.dec.gov.pg

kokodainitiative@dec.gov.pg

Australian Government

www.environment.gov.au

kokodainitiative@environment.gov.au

If you do not wish to receive this publication in future,
contact: kokodainitiative@dec.gov.pg