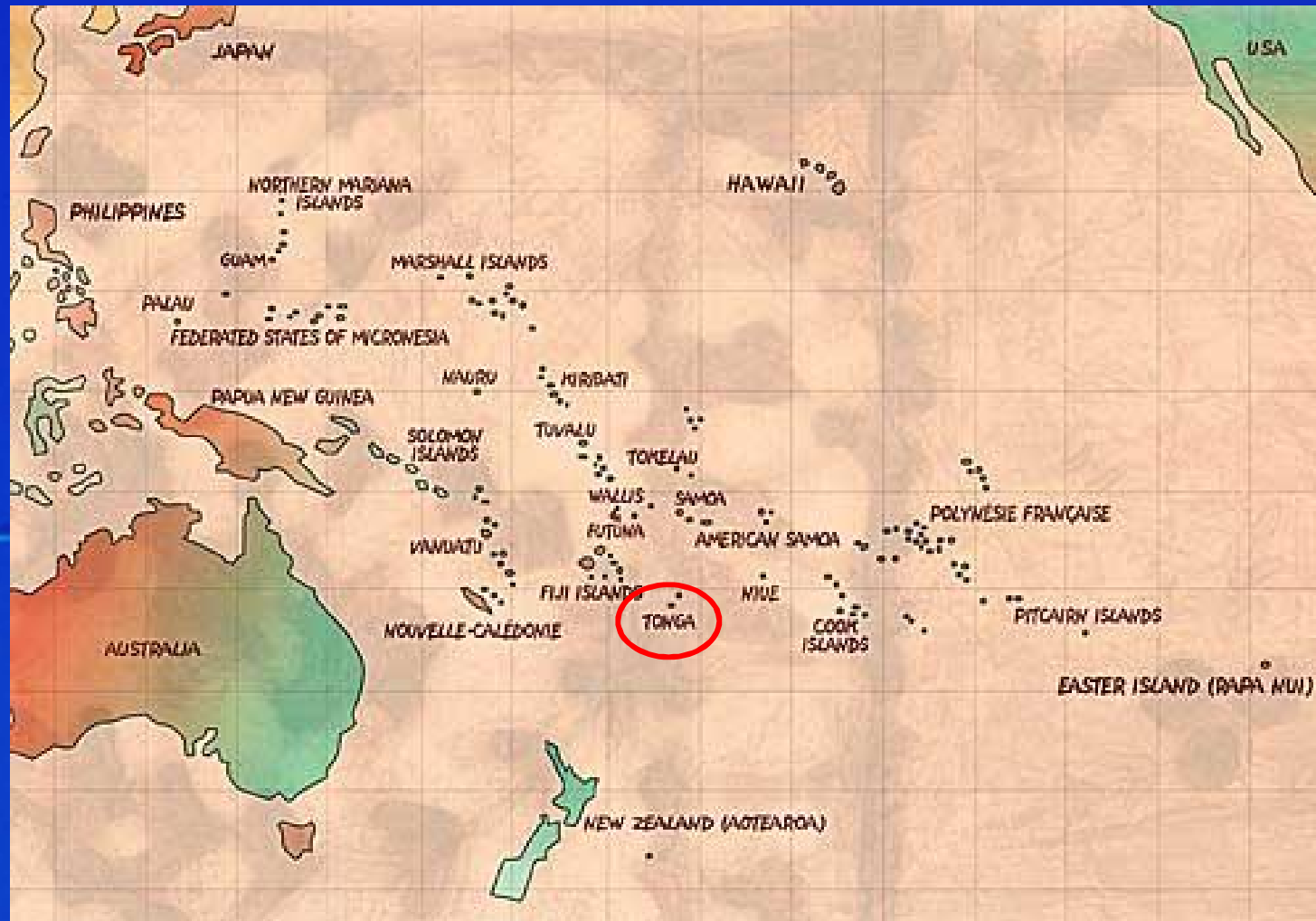


Tonga Case Study - Taki Hausia & Olive Andrews



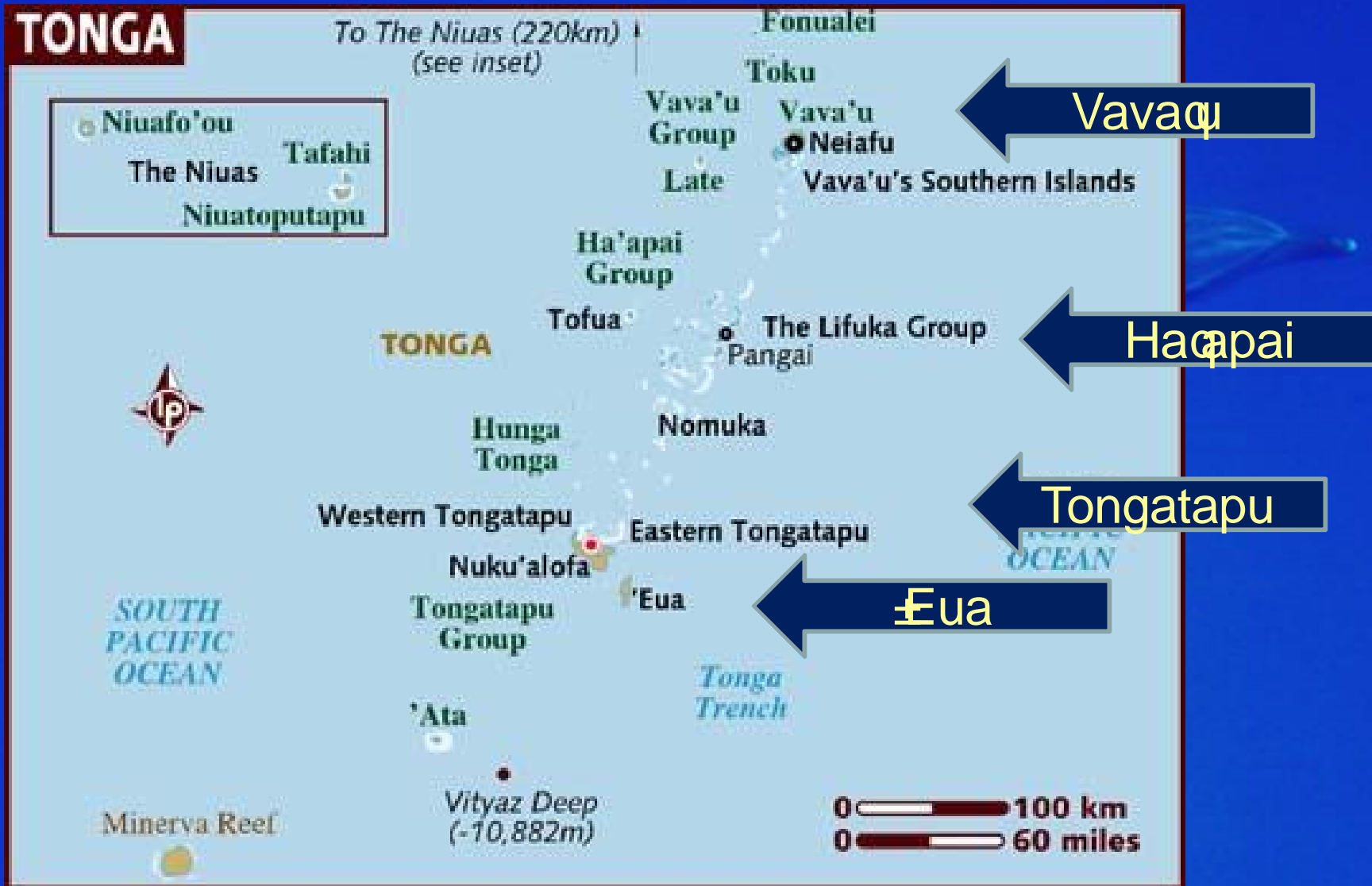
Tonga Case Study

Kingdom of Tonga



Tonga Case Study

Kingdom of Tonga



Tonga Case Study

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In Perspective

- “ Tonga was introduced to commercial whaling by yankee whalers
- “ Significant domestic debate for return to whaling
- “ Socio-economic value of whales as tourism resource the only reason whaling not resumed . whales are worth more alive than dead
- “ Tonga oldest industry in Sth Pacific - Other Pacific Islands look to Tonga as the example of how to manage whale watching
- “ Recent IUCN Endangered listing of Oceania humpback whales . need for understanding of the impacts of swim-with activities on whales

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Conservation of Whales in Tonga

- “ King of Tonga banned whaling in 1978 . est.15 mature breeding females left in humpback population
- “ Annual research effort by South Pacific Whale Research Consortium (SPWRC) since 1993
- “ 1994 Tongan Government requests assistance to manage the development of whale watching from the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Program (SPREP . regional intergovernmental org)
- “ 1996 first Whales Alive/ SPREP operator training workshop - 1st draft guidelines
- “ 1999 Mark Orams evaluation of whale watching in Tonga values a whale at 1 million TOP over its 50yr lifespan
- “ 1999 SPREP recommends cap on licenses in Vavaʻu of 7-9. (In 2005 the Government issues 18)



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Conservation & Management of Whales in Tonga

- “ 2000 - National whale watching Workshop - Vision for Whale Watching (Whales Alive/SPREP/ IFAW)
- “ 2002 whales fully protected by law - Fisheries Management Act
- “ 2003 SPREP/ IFAW National Whale Watching Forum . priority actions agreed by all stakeholders and statement issued
- “ 2004 Tongan Whale Watching Operators Association formed
- “ 2006 report on economic benefits of whale watching in Tonga (TVB, IFAW, SPREP, Operation Ceteces)
- “ 2008 IFAW/SPREP review of whale watching at request of Govt



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NGO Assistance

- “ Annual operator training and public education program since 1996
- “ Facilitate 3 national Workshops for Whale Watching management
- “ Marine Awareness Centre open to public, schools, tourism groups 2000 - 2009



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The South Pacific Whale Research Consortium:

- “ Works across the Pacific Islands region
- “ Long term project in Tonga since 1993
- “ Focused on humpback whales
- “ Photo ID, Genetics and acoustic research techniques
- “ abundance estimate for Tonga est. 1500
- “ Highlighting variable recovery across Pacific region
- “ Informing Govt and industry
- “ Assists management of whales
- “ Involves local people
- “ Public education annually



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Annual Whale Day Celebration Vava'u

- Start of whale season
- Coincide with National Day of Action for Whales in Australia, New Zealand
- Attended by Gov't, industry, community, media



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HRH Princess Pilolevu - Royal Patron of Whales

- Donated TOP \$5000 Tonga Tofua'a Fund
- Asked Gov't to:
 - declare national whale sanctuary,
 - Sign CMS,
 - legislate guidelines



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Industry Growth

- “ First licensed whale watch operation 1992
- “ Now 18 licenses, (2 boats per license)
- “ Operators are experiencing very strong demand
- “ Many booked out well in advance of the season
- “ Significant majority of tourists who visit Vavaʻu, undertake a whale watching trip (between 71 -80%).



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Carrying Capacity?

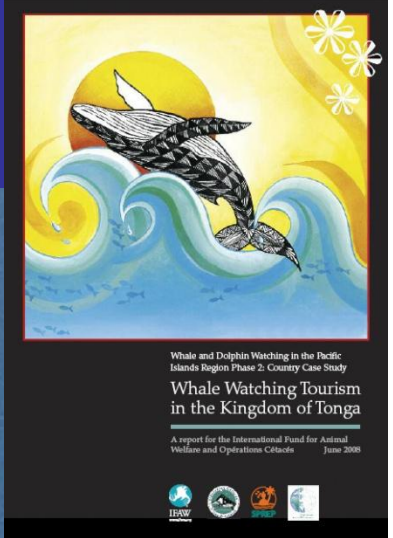
- “ Not enough whales to meet tourism demand in Vavaʻu?
- “ Boats cuing to watch whales
- “ Pressure on mother/calf pairs . targeted for swimming
- “ Industry reputation - increasing negative feedback
- “ High expectations from tourists due to promotional material
- “ Development of the industry needs to be based on Long term research (project endorsed but needs \$\$)



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Value of industry

- “ Across the Pacific Islands region whale watching is growing at 45% per year (Tonga 22% per year 1998 - 2005)
- “ Whale watching industry generated TOP \$3.82 Million in 2006 (total direct and indirect expenditure)
- “ Almost 10,000 whale watch trips in 2006
- “ Compared with 200 in 1994
- “ And 2334 in 1998
- “ **With growth of industry comes responsibility – need for regulation of industry**



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Where are we now

- “ Process involving 3 Govt ministries, operators and NGOs 1996 . 2010
- “ Recent national workshop Nov, 09 . many actions agreed by all stakeholders
- “ REGULATIONS STILL NOT LEGISLATED
- “ Government lacks capacity and funds to implement actions



Private boats



Commercial operators

Tonga Case Study

What's in it for the whales?

- All of this work has been achieved by consistent effort by a core group of people responding to requests by Govt and industry
- Partnerships between Govt, tourism industry and NGOs can work
- What's in it for the whales?? - Tonga has *NOT* joined IWC and whales continue to be important for Tonga's community and economy

Tonga Case Study

Malo aupito

