



*In  
Loving  
Memory*

Lui Bell  
1956 - 2012





was the SPREP Marine Species Adviser for seven years and the driving force for marine species conservation and management in the region. His commitment was a life-long passion that inspired communities and leaders of Pacific nations and territories throughout his long career.

Lui was an outstanding person in every respect, one of those rare people who could relate to everyone whether a village community or the heads of governments and international organisations, and achieve positive outcomes through his interaction with them. He excelled at establishing productive partnerships to achieve regional marine conservation objectives – with the Convention on Migratory Species, NOAA, IFAW, Conservation International and many others.

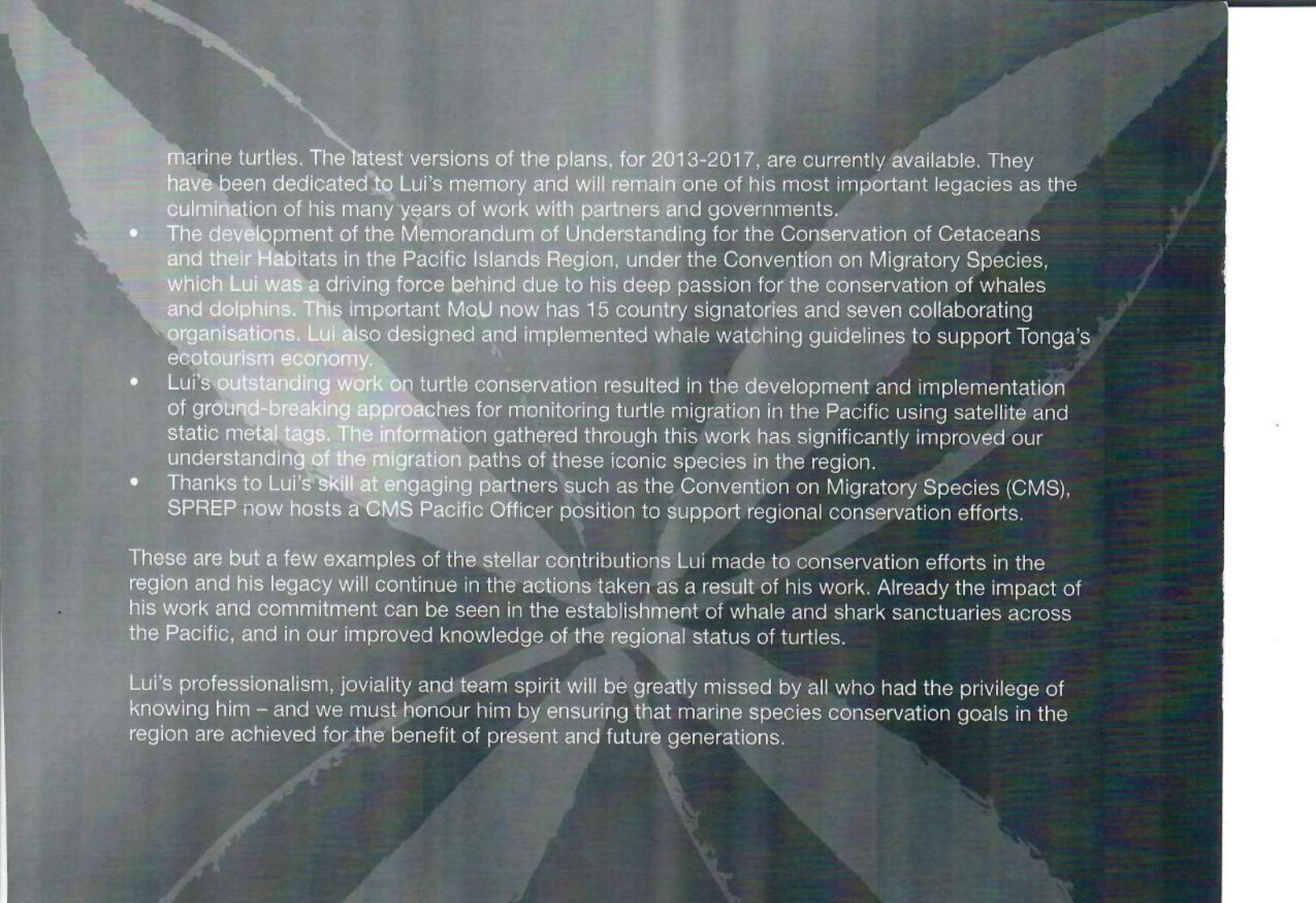
Before joining SPREP, Lui had a long career with the Government of Samoa, working on fisheries, aquaculture and marine conservation; with the Government of American Samoa; with the Forum Fisheries Agency; with the Food and Agriculture Organisation; and with AusAID as an aquaculture adviser.

During his seven years with SPREP, Lui had many outstanding achievements that have made lasting contributions to the conservation of marine species in the region. Many of these achievements were made with limited resources and Lui was a master at making ends meet to achieve major outcomes for his programme.

Notable examples of Lui's achievements include:

- The development and implementation of regional Marine Species Action Plans that provide guidance for Pacific island countries to conserve and manage dugongs, whales, dolphins and





marine turtles. The latest versions of the plans, for 2013-2017, are currently available. They have been dedicated to Lui's memory and will remain one of his most important legacies as the culmination of his many years of work with partners and governments.

- The development of the Memorandum of Understanding for the Conservation of Cetaceans and their Habitats in the Pacific Islands Region, under the Convention on Migratory Species, which Lui was a driving force behind due to his deep passion for the conservation of whales and dolphins. This important MoU now has 15 country signatories and seven collaborating organisations. Lui also designed and implemented whale watching guidelines to support Tonga's ecotourism economy.
- Lui's outstanding work on turtle conservation resulted in the development and implementation of ground-breaking approaches for monitoring turtle migration in the Pacific using satellite and static metal tags. The information gathered through this work has significantly improved our understanding of the migration paths of these iconic species in the region.
- Thanks to Lui's skill at engaging partners such as the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), SPREP now hosts a CMS Pacific Officer position to support regional conservation efforts.

These are but a few examples of the stellar contributions Lui made to conservation efforts in the region and his legacy will continue in the actions taken as a result of his work. Already the impact of his work and commitment can be seen in the establishment of whale and shark sanctuaries across the Pacific, and in our improved knowledge of the regional status of turtles.

Lui's professionalism, joviality and team spirit will be greatly missed by all who had the privilege of knowing him – and we must honour him by ensuring that marine species conservation goals in the region are achieved for the benefit of present and future generations.



Karen Frutchey

I am so sorry to hear this. Hugs to you, Lui's family and the SPREP family during this difficult time. I so appreciated his enduring dedication and happy spirit towards the conservation of marine species. Aloha and peace,

*Karen  
Frutchey*







Lance Laack

Former SPREP Editor and Publications Officer

The world is suddenly a sadder place. RIP brother - you will be missed.

*Lance  
Laack*

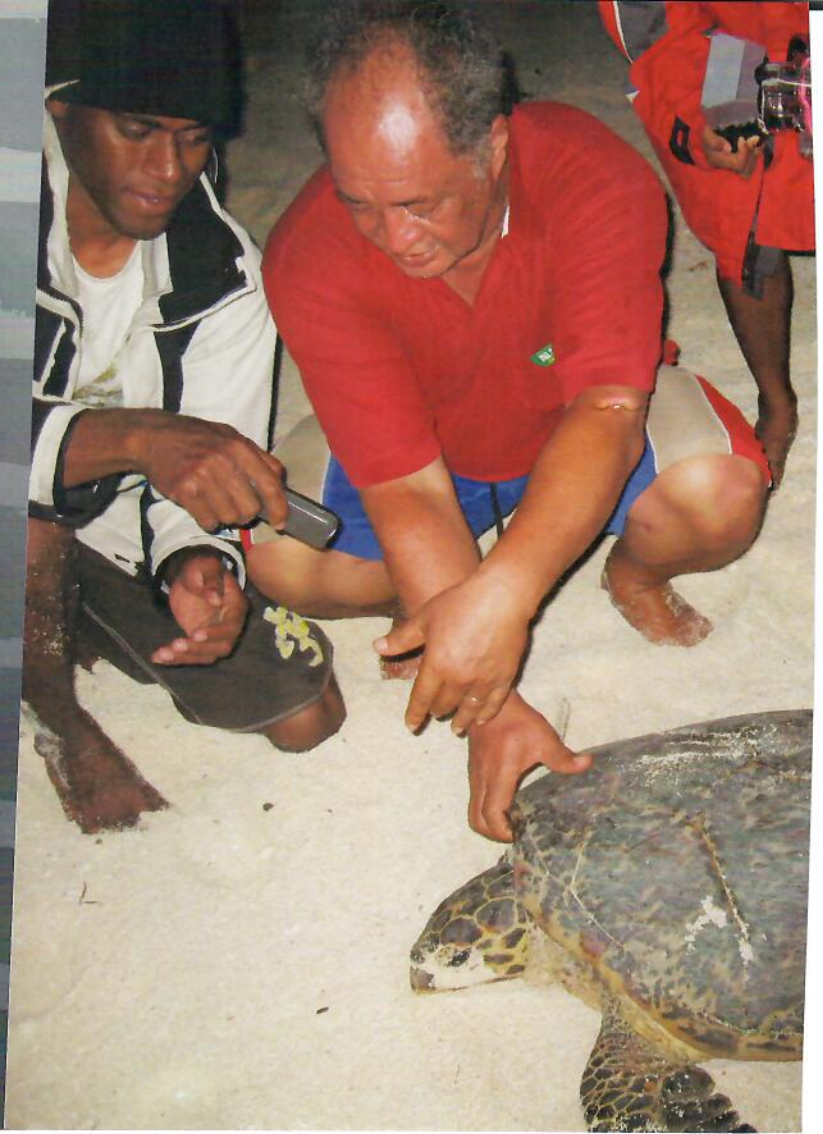


Alissa Takesy

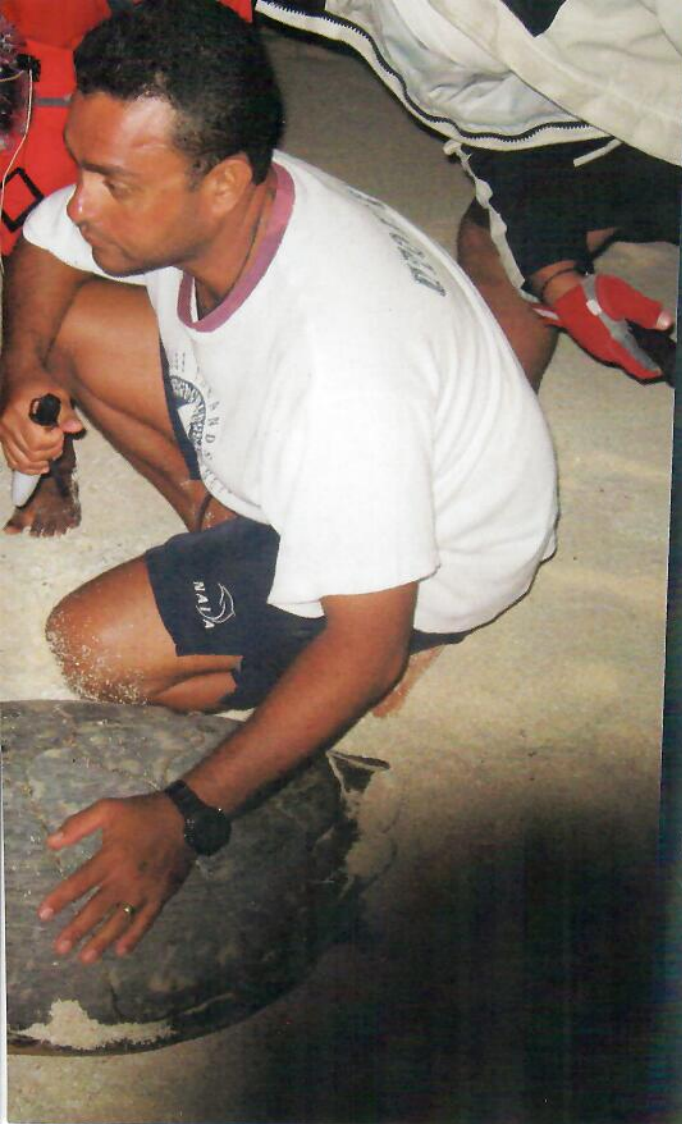
Our sincerest condolences to Lui's wife and children, it was a great honor to learn from him during my MNRE intern days. Our Pacific region has lost a marine champion and fellow islander! Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Fa soifua,

*Alissa*







Joe Brider (National Environment Services, Cook Islands)

This is very sad news; my thoughts are with his family and the staff of SPREP

Sincere condolences

*Joe*

Karen (Dive Vava'u)

What tragic and immensely sad news, please extend our condolences to family and friends, Lui was an inspiration to many of us and his tireless energy for conservation and the Pacific Islands.

Kindest Regards

*Karen*







Olive Andrews

OH Lui. I'm so shocked and saddened to hear that you are gone.

I've worked along side Lui since 2004 and as his direct counterpart for more than 2 years at SPREP. During that time we traveled and worked together, shared countless meal times and belly laughs, and did some great things for marine species.

Lui cannot be replaced as a Pacific champion for marine species. His passion and humility drove countless conservation wins. He will be sorely missed throughout the region.

My thoughts are with you my SPREP aiga, and of course Lui's family.  
Alofa

*Olive*



Schannel van Dijken (Conservation International)

I am shocked and in disbelief. Lui was such a kind patient person, a great source of information and I loved our banter that we had together. He will be sorely missed and I would love to contribute to his card and funds that will go to his aiga. My heart goes out to his immediate, extended and SPREP family for their loss.

With sorrow

*Schannel*

Liz Dovey (ex SPREP and DCCEE Samoa)

So very very sad to hear of Lui's passing. Lui was a wonderful friend, colleague both professionally and in community work, and an amazingly knowledgeable and dedicated Pacific conservation specialist, particularly focussed on marine species. He always had a big smile and made time for a talk to progress some action or another. He leaves big shoes to fill. My sincere condolences to his family and to SPREP colleagues and apologies that I won't be able to make it back to Samoa to share in memories and farewells. Manuia lou malaga indeed, dear friend, and RIP.

*Liz Dovey*



Dr Michael White (Marine Zoologist)

I'm so sorry to hear this tragic news. Please pass on my deepest condolences to Lui's family and friends. Although we didn't get to meet very often, I always found Lui to be a wonderful man; always most welcoming. He will be very sadly missed.

My thoughts are with you all, take care and Blessed be, Michael

My research group 'Honu Cook Islands' also sends its deepest sympathies, M x

*Dr. Michael White*

Aliitasi Petaia

Talofa e, ia Lui, shocking news when I know he was a fit man. Very sad & my thoughts are with his wife & children and especially those who were there when he collapsed. May he rest in peace and in the tranquility of heaven!

*Tasi*



Jenniferr Cruce

Thank you for forwarding on the news about Lui. I am very sorry to hear that he is no longer with us. He was a great inspiration to all of us turtle folks and will be greatly missed. Please let me know if there is anything I can do or if a donation is being collected for the family.

Best,

*Jenniferr*

Vili A. Fuavao (FAO Representative in Samoa and Sub-regional Representative for the Pacific Islands)

It is with profound sadness that I have learned of the demise of Mr Lui Bell, SPREP Marine Species Adviser and the former FAO staff. On behalf of the FAO Sub-regional Office for the Pacific Islands, its staff and my own behalf please accept our most sincere condolences, respectful consideration. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family at this difficult moment.

Sincerely,

*Vili A. Fuavao*





Asterio Takesy

In tears and wounded heart and pain, I express through you good Sir, my deepest sorrow and sincere condolences to the family, friends, and fellow workers of Lui. I do so in behalf of my wife Justina and our three daughters, Alissa, Arlene and Andria who have had the privilege of getting to know this wonderful person, Lui Bell.

I have come to like, respect and admire Lui as a human being, as a man and a pre-eminent marine scientist who stood tall among his peers with humility and impeccable integrity.

His keen sense of humor and respect for others endeared him to so many lives he touched along his life journey. I do not believe Lui ever knew the meaning of fear; but he walked softly and said little. His foot prints spread across the Pacific and indeed the globe. He loved life, lived it well at no one's expense. He was a most generous and kind man. May he rest in everlasting peace.

We share the pain and sorrow of his family, and we join them in their dark hour. May the Good Lord grant them the courage to accept His will. You are all in our prayers.

We shall miss him so.

*Asterio*

Iliapi Tuwai

This is really a sad news to me, since I know Lui well since we were together at USP and later at Fisheries; mostly meeting and working together. A kind hearted soft spoken gentlemen, full of jokes... really miss this guy. I believe most of the friends from Fiji who will hear this will be shocked, since he has made considerable impact on the turtle work in our country.

Please convey our condolences to the family and we will remember them in our prayers.

Please keep safe and blessed PACC and SPREP family.

Warm regards,  
Api. Fiji PACC Coordinator.

*Iliapi Tuwai*





My most Deepest Condolences to Lui's Family at this most sad time. May the Lord's peace and love comfort them.

He will be surely missed. May God rest his soul. He was a true champion for the cause of marine species conservation in the pacific.

Sincere regards,

*Vatu Molisa*

Chloe Schauble

I was very saddened to hear of Lui's death. I had the pleasure of working with Lui in relation to the 2009 international sea turtle symposium run in Australia. His enthusiasm and positive attitude helped enable significant participation from the Pacific region.

Please pass on my condolences and very best wishes to his family and colleagues.

Kind regards

*Chloe*



Liz Dovey

I am so very very sad to hear of Lui's sudden passing. He was a very dear colleague in both my SPREP life and SVDP life, and a leading conservationist, particularly marine, in both Samoa and the wider Pacific and international arena, and a long-standing good friend since first coming to Samoa. He had a huge heart and always had time for everyone, despite his busy workload. A huge loss, both personal and professional.

I wish I could join you all to share in sharing memories and farewells. Please pass on my sincere condolences to Lui's wife and family and my thoughts are also with my colleagues in SPREP who must be in terrible shock. My prayers are with you all.

RIP dear friend.

In very very great sadness

*Liz*

Ana Tiraa

I was deeply saddened to hear of the sudden passing of our dear colleague and friend, Lui. He was such a gentle, kind person with the most wicked sense of humour. It was an honour and privilege to have had worked with Lui. He was a dedicated and hard working man who got things done. He did a remarkable job of highlighting the plight of marine mammals and turtles in our region. Not only did he bring to the attention the issues, he also worked tirelessly to actively address the dilemma these beautiful species faced. The Pacific Island conservation world has loss a great species champion.

My prayers and thoughts are with his wife and family and SPREP colleagues.

God Bless,

*Ana Tiraa*

Joe Horokou (Director of Environment, Solomon Islands)

It is indeed a great loss for SPREP and its member countries. He has been so helpful, but also very hospital person to have worked with.

May his soul rest in peace.

*Joe*



Patricia Zurita (Executive Director Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund and Vice President Conservation International)

I wanted to write on behalf of CEPF to express our condolences to Lui's family and the team at SPREP and assure you that our thoughts are with you all at this time.

I know from John Watkin that Lui implemented a CEPF project developing community based monitoring of turtle nesting beaches from Nakalou Village, Macuata in Vanua Levu, Fiji. He also led an exchange visit in Vanuatu with the villagers involved in the Wan Smol Bag turtle monitors programme which now covers 80% of all islands in Vanuatu and involves approximately 400 community volunteer turtle monitors. Lui will be greatly missed professionally and personally.

We would like to discuss how best to use the CEPF Final Assessment workshop planned for 15-18 April in Suva, Fiji, to remember Lui's contribution to conservation in the Pacific

Yours sincerely,

*Patricia*

Akisi Bolabola

I will surely miss your company when next meeting up with the team for the turtle work here in Fiji. I always look forward to learning from your experiences, and of course on how to getting the work done, in a lesser stressed out manner but rather the fun ways. Now, no more - so long Lui, you will be missed and VINAKA VAKALEVU for your invaluable contribution. Moce mada Lui....

My deepest sympathy to Lui's family and his team at SPREP, especially Nina and Cathy. May the good Lord's peace be with you all.

*Akisi Bolabola*

Tekimwau Otiawa (Kiribati Environment and Conservation Division)

I once knew Lui from our previous communications via email on turtle profile document and finally met him at one of the Marine Species Action Plan Review in March this year. He is a kind and very helpful man.

I will remember him in my prayers

*Tekimwau*



Josef Hurutarau (Solomon Islands))

It is sad to learn of the passing away of Mr Lui Bell. Some of you might know Lui with his involvement in the marine species conservation, especially turtle, dugong & dolphin.

Lui has been here in the Solomons twice to attend Solomon Islands Species Forum and Pacific Inaugural Meeting. He was later invited to assist with the Solomons dolphin survey meeting. You might met him on various meetings and occasions. It is particularly sad when unexpectedly all plans to do programmes with him in the Solomons for early next year come to an end.

May we all stand with his families in prayers and may his soul rest in peace in our God.

sincerely

*Josef*

Alfred Ralifo

My condolences to Lui's family and to the team at SPREP .... It was a pleasure and a blessing to have met and worked with Lui!

*Alfred*

Asuka Ishizaki

I am very saddened and at loss of words to hear of Lui's sudden passing. Lui has always been instrumental in our working relationship with SPREP, and he will be missed very much.

Please send along our sincerest condolences to his family and everyone at SPREP.

Aloha,

*Asuka*







Collin Gereniu

May the good Lord solace his family at this sad time and may his soul rest in peace eternal.

*Collin*





Cecile Gaspar

Lui, your love and passion for marine life will always guide us...

*Dr. Cecile Gaspar*

Dr. Cecile Gaspar (President, Te Mana O Te Moana, Moorea)

Lui was such an exceptional man... we are and will remain daily motivated by him.  
We were ready to send him a new project last week and did highly involve SPREP but we will not give up and continue our efforts.. for him mainly.

Best regards

*Cecile*

Ryan Tierney (Acting High Commissioner of Australia in Apia)

We were very saddened to hear about the sudden death of Mr Lui Bell last night.

On behalf of the High Commissioner, who is currently away on official travel, and all the staff of the High Commission, please accept our condolences and heartfelt sorrow for the sudden passing away of Mr Lui Bell.

The death of Mr Bell is a tragedy for SPREP. His contribution to the campaign to help bring about a Pacific environment that sustains our livelihoods and natural heritage in harmony with our cultures will always be remembered.

Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with the family of Mr Bell and the staff of SPREP at this time.

With Sympathy,

*Ryan Tierney*





Dean Solofa (SPREP 2005-2011)

Lui and I began our first SPREP contracts within days of each other and spent the first few weeks attending the same (dreaded) induction and familiarization processes, and the horror of being elected within a month to the new SPREP Social Club Committee for 2006 (for which he then cleverly manipulated the process to make me President that year). I'd previously gotten to know Lui from civil service life when he was with Fisheries and I with Meteorology under the Agriculture ministry in downtown Apia. I knew him then to be one of the few driven and passionate and also quite forthright individuals in that Ministry, and one whose goals and vision for his work area would be result in success (as he has clearly shown during his SPREP career). I will also join many others who will miss Lui greatly for his constant presence of laughter, competition, sportsmanship, and partnership, encouragement, and fair play at our Tuesday and Thursday Night Squash Doubles club. It was an honor to have been associated with Lui during his time at SPREP, and am thankful for his friendship over the course of these last few years.

My sincere condolences to Lui's family, and to my friends and former colleagues at SPREP. My thoughts with you all.

*Dean*







Taholo Kami

The news has caught us all in the Conservation / marine circle by surprise and also with much grief. Lui was always the gentleman with his Pacific humour and presence in our meetings all over the region. On behalf of IUCN Oceania and the team, we will miss you Lui, and our prayers and thoughts are with Anunisia and the family -

'ofa lahi atu and Walk On Walk Strong!

*Taholo*







Filia Iosefa

Still in shock to hear of your passing away brada! I will miss you bubbly smiles and jovial chats at Squash. Your squash buddies are all thinking of you! Our prayers and thoughts are with you and grieving family. We will carry on the Rabbit tradition and change the winner's title to Lui's "BELL" Rest in peace bro. Much

alofas,

*Filia*

Coral Pasisi (Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat)

This is extremely sad news and my condolences to his family and SPREP. I've known Lui for a long time and he was a very nice person with a very genuine interest in the preservation of our regions precious marine biodiversity. I'm sure his foot print in the region and indeed SPREP will live on for a very long time to come.

Kind regards,

*Coral Pasisi*

Cara Miller

A great Pacific advocate for marine conservation is gone - and it is very sad to know that we will no longer be graced with Lui's passion, humility, patience and ever-present sense of humour. My thoughts and prayers go to Lui's family and friends at this very difficult time.

*Cara*



AusAID Suva

The climate change and environment and the regional organisation teams here at AusAID Suva would like to pass on our sincere condolences over the passing of Lui Bell.

We will miss his insightful thoughts, kind spirit and sense of humour.

Thinking of you all at this time.

*John Marina Rebecca Noa and Tui*

Andrea Stewart (Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade)

We were so terribly saddened to hear the news of Lui Bell's passing. This must be a dreadful shock for all of you. Our thoughts are with Lui's family and with all of you there at SPREP as members of his wider family.

Kind wishes,

*Andrea*



Mrs. Nenenteiti Teariki-Ruatu (Acting Director - ECD on behalf of Secretary MELAD and staff members of ECD)

It is with great shock and sadness to receive the sad news regarding the passing away of Mr. Lui Bell, who is also SPREP Marine Advisor.

On behalf of the Secretary - Ministry of Environment, Lands and Agriculture Development (MELAD) and staff members of the Environment & Conservation Division, I am writing to convey our deepest sympathy, condolence and prayers to Mr. Lui Bell and especially his family in this time of great sorrow. Mr. Bell has been instrumental in assisting Kiribati in getting involved in the Pacific Islands Regional Turtle Monitoring Programme, including providing assistance to help Kiribati in setting up the marine turtle programme. Through his great leadership, dedication and passion he has shown in his work, Kiribati is able to establish and put in place, a baseline data that are vital for enabling the conservation and management framework that Kiribati needs to conserve and manage marine turtles. All these happen because of Lui Bell. Furthermore, Lui has been a great friend, mentor and colleague and one who is always full of laughter and fun to work with. His positive character and attitude to work which he has shown and guide us in tackling the complex issues surrounding 'marine turtle' conservation and management, always helped us to complete what we must do to safeguard and manage marine turtles. We shall greatly miss you Lui Bell and you will always be in our heart and prayers. May you rest in peace and God bless all your loved ones always and especially during these sad moments.

Our prayers are with you David and your staff in this sad time and especially also to Lui Bell's family!!!

Sincerely yours,

*Mrs. Nenenteiti Teariki Ruatu*



Kia ora

Sue called me last night, about 20 minutes after we got home to Coromandel, with this awful news. As you know, Lui was my longest colleague and collaborator in SPREP. He and I go way back to the days when he was still with MNRE. I have always had a great fondness and admiration for Lui - he was my connection to a wonderful network in the region and an untiring advocate for conservation. A quiet achiever and a modest man, with great insight and skill. I shall miss him very much, as I'm sure you all will. Sue seemed to think that the funeral will be today, so I shan't be able to attend, but I shall pen some words that perhaps she or Greg can read on my behalf.

My thoughts are with you all and with Lui's family at this very sad time. If there is anything that I can do to assist you, please let me know.

Kia kaha

*Mike*

Roseti Imo (Forum Fisheries Agency - Solomon Islands) (ex Samoa Fisheries)

Our thoughts and prayers are with your family. Lui was a humble man driven by the will to do a great job, in anything he does - a rare quality these days.....you will be missed by all your (past and present) colleagues at Samoa Fisheries, and also by some of the staff here at FFA that still remember you during your time with the Agency.

*Roseti Imo*

Keith Symington

I only knew Lui for a couple of years ago but found him to be a wonderful, dedicated and very kind person. On a personal level I will miss him, its a loss for the marine conservation community and on behalf of WWF Coral Triangle Programme we all convey our deepest sympathies to Lui's family, friends and the SPREP community.

*Keith*



Rochelle Constantine (PhD School of Biological Sciences)

Oh this is just terrible news. Please send my condolences to his family. The loss of Lui to our whale family is immense, he was a calm pathway through the joys of Pasifika science and he was a most excellent man. I will miss him as I know we all will.

Thank you for letting me know and give yourself a hug from me Sue, you have a long history as friends.

I shall raise a glass to Lui tonight.

*Rochelle*

Willy Morrell

My heartfelt condolences to Lui's family and many friends and colleagues. I am really saddened to hear this news but feel some comfort in the legacy he has left behind for us all.

*Willy*

Jo Taylor-Kupu

I am sitting here in Tonga stunned by this news ....I spoke to Lui not so long ago about some turtles here we are waiting to beach and lay.

I can honestly say with all my heart I have never met a man with so much passion. I listened to him in awe ...I Emailed him with my concerns and happiness ..he always got back to me in record time. I had hoped to work along side him for so many more years to come.

Mu condolences to everyone at SPREP , his wife and his children.His legacy will live on and he is in our hearts ...he was a great man of passion and commitment and I feel privileged to have known him. Rest in peace Lui ...we will all miss you , your smile, laughter and humor.

*Jo and Vini*













JICA Samoa Office

There are no words to adequately describe the shock and sadness we felt upon hearing of the loss of your colleague.

Please extend our heartfelt condolence and convey our deepest sympathy to Lui's family.

With warm regards,

*J.S.C.A.  
Samoa office*

Caroline Machoro (Chair SPREP)

C'est avec une profonde tristesse que j'apprend la terrible nouvelle de la disparition de Lui Bell. J'ai devant moi, une photo de Lui datant du mois de Septembre dernier et je me souviens de quelqu'un qui, dans son comportement, alliait à la fois, présence, discrétion et efficacité. Son départ va représenter une grande perte pour notre Organisation, et, quand bien même nous pourrions remplacer les compétences techniques qu'il a, depuis tant d'années, exercées au sein du PROE, rien ne saurait ses substituer aux qualités humaines que Lui personnifiait au sein de la grande Famille Régionale que constitue le PROE.

Cher David, et cher Kosi, vous traversez en ce moment- même une épreuve terrible. Soyez assurés que, d'aussi loin que je me trouve, je suis de tout cœur avec vous et je partage votre peine. Transmettez, s'il vous plaît, mes condoléances les plus attristées à tous les collègues et amis de Lu, ainsi qu'à sa famille.

*Caroline*





Anne-Claire Goarant

It is a very sad news.  
Our condolences and sincere best wishes are with Lui's family and SPREP's family at this sad time.  
Your action around Lui's family is very kind and supportive, It is for sure important for his family,

kind regards,

*Anne-Claire Goarant*

Dr Michael White

My thoughts are with the family, friends and colleagues of Lui Bell, who passed away very suddenly last night. We'll miss you Lui; you were great. Always kind and very approachable. You were a wonderful host whenever I visited SPREP. As you make your latest journey I wish you 'safe voyaging'. You are truly a Hero of the South Pacific.

With Love and fondest memories, Meitaki Poria e Kia Manuia,

*Michael*



Elizabeth Munro

It is indeed a sad news for us in the Pacific. We have lost another environment warrior who has been a great champion on Marine Species in the region.

I have known Lui for a while now, a person who is passionate about Turtles, Whales and other marine species. We are going to miss his laughter, wisdom and advice at pacific meetings and also his daily and weekly emails that he sends, to keep us updated of Marine species in the region and around the world.

My condolences, prayers and thoughts to Lui's family at this sad time and also to his SPREP family.

Te Atua te Aroa

Aroa nui

*Liz*

Sue Tai (CI)

Lui and I go back nearly 20 years here in Samoa from the time he was in Fisheries, we set up the first marine capacity in MNRE together under the IUCN Samoa MPA project, we worked with him on the Marine Species Action Plans, the IFAW MOU, the Humpback Whale Recovery Plan, Ocean Voices, in Tonga with whale watching and so much more.

Lui was a hero, a good man one of the kindest people I have known. He played good cop on the whales programme when I played bad cop calling out issues with Japan/Pacific Is states and the IWC.

Lui was from Fusi Safata, in Fusi there is part of their history that relates to whales. The story goes that a bad whale roamed the the straits between Savaii and Upolu attacking pao pao and people, the story always sounded to me like a sperm whale. A brave man with bamboo knives attacked the whale, and was swallowed, the whale swam furiously around ending up on the southern coast of Safata, and swam ashore at Fusi with such force that the whale divided the land creating the Fusi Peninsula and his body ended up at Fusi, there is a rock in this village remarkably shaped similar to a whales head and it is believed to be of that whale. Many matai titles relate in the area to this story. I have the titles and more details but the story always remained me of Lui and we joked it was his karma to take care of the whales as a Fusi matai.

Its so sad, Lui was a dear friend, a wonderful conservationist, he never let things get him down, and he will be missed always.



Lui, Mike and I designed a "Pacific Voyagers" concept as part of the Pacific Oceanscape initiative to help renew focus on migratory marine species, I hope we can build and resource this in Lui's name and dedicate it to his memory and work on marine species across this ocean

Sincerely

*Lue and GJ*

Nileema Noble (UN Resident Coordinator & UNDP Resident Representative)

I am so sorry to hear of the sudden death of Lui Bell..

Please convey to Lui's family, UNDP's and my personal condolences. I am sure that there were many friends of Lui in UNDP and am therefore also sharing this email with my colleagues here.

Our prayers and good wishes are with Lui Bell's family at this difficult time for them.

Regards,

*Nileema Noble*

Chad J Berbert (US Consulate)

So sorry to hear. Our thoughts and prayers are with Lui's family and with SPREP at this time. Let us know if there is anything we can do.

Sincerely,

*Chad J. Berbert*

Magele Etuati Ropeti (ex Samoa Fisheries)

Lui, you were a God-given gift to your family, friends and the region. Thanks for the many talents that you have shared with those around you and the wisdom that have helped shape others. Prayers and condolences to the family.

Manuia tele lau malaga uso!!

*Magele*



Haruko Okusu

I am shocked to hear the sad news. It only feels like yesterday when we had Chinese dinner and a good laugh in Rotorua! I was looking so much forward to working directly with you in my new post...I will miss you a lot. My prayers go to Lui's family and friends during this very tough time.

Sincerely,

*Haruko*

Bert Lenten, Officer in Charge Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals  
(CMS Secretariat)

CMS was shocked and sad to hear of the loss of Lui. Lui's friendly, humorous personality and his energy for the conservation of marine and migratory species will be sorely missed.

On behalf of the CMS Team, our heartfelt condolences to his family and colleagues.

*Bert*





Kate Brown

Deepest sympathy to Lui's family - he was such a committed family man. Gave me some great advice about bringing up children and about life, and about getting on with it with out fuss!

Thoughts and sympathy also to his SPREP Family - I can imagine how large a hole he will leave and how hard the next few weeks will be. We are all with you - if not physically definitely in spirit.

Words can't summarise a persons life, but Lui is universally loved and admired. If I think of SPREP I think of Lui outside the building in front of IRC smoking - always the best place to chat to him. I think of his stories about turtle tagging and his lack of interest in meetings or of travelling out of the Pacific! Of his wisdom, the things I learned and sometimes of his grumpiness. He was no fuss and easy to admire. He always walked his own path - (or more aptly - he always swam in his own channel).

I feel lucky to have known him. If we take away anything from this it's that we need to live our life fully and joyfully - much in the way that I believe Lui did.

*Kate*



Kelvin Passfield

Lui, the first time I met you was in the early 1990s when you came to the Cook Islands to write the Cook Islands Marine Resource profiles, while working for the Forum Fisheries Agency. I believe those profiles are still the most complete fishery resource available for the Cook Islands, and a very valuable reference.

I then had the great pleasure to work with you on the Samoa Fisheries Project, with Mike King and the team from 1999 to 2001. That was when I really got to know you and appreciate your knowledge of Samoa and the Pacific, and also your great sense of humour. We had a great time sharing our little office in Apia. You were a vital part of a great team on that project, and I learnt a lot from you.

A few years later, while Ana worked at SPREP, I got to see quite a lot of you again, usually standing outside the office block door for a smoke. We played squash together many times in those years, always a great time playing doubles.

Lui, I will never forget you and your smile and your own particular way of dealing with life's challenges, and how you were always there for your extended family.

To your family, I can never fully realise how devastating this is for you, he was your rock, but I am sure you will be happily reunited in the next life. Until then, rest in peace Lui.

*Kelvin*







Marc Oremus

Lui,

So hard to believe that you won't be with us at the next SPWRC meeting... You have always been very supportive of the projects I was involved in, including lately with the Solomon Islands dolphin project, and for that, I'll always be very grateful. But more importantly, it was always such a pleasure to see you over the course of meetings and workshops. I'll miss you a lot...

Bon voyage Lui...

*Marc*





Donna Kwan

On behalf of the Secretariat of the UNEP/CMS Dugong MOU in Abu Dhabi, just a note to extend our deepest sympathy to Lui's family and to his friends and colleagues in SPREP. We are shocked and deeply sadden to hear of this tragic loss. We will miss Lui's commitment, passion and energy.

We wish you all strength

*Donna Kwan*

Mike King

So sad to hear of Lui leaving us. I have known him for a long time and it was always cheering to have him there as a friend.

He was a kind, gentle, funny, knowledgeable, hard-working bloke and I will miss him not being around.

Best wishes to all his friends and family.

*Mike King*

Kemu Qoroya

Isa, I am deeply saddened when I learned of Lui's passing. Lui was a work colleague and had also become a friend over the years I spent at SPREP. He was passionate about Marine Conservation and I was quite awed with the work he was involved in, using satellite technology to track migratory species around the Pacific. Not only was he passionate about his work, he was also passionate about helping the not have's in his community. I was privileged to be part of his charity work. He is going to be missed by many people from all walks of life.

Faáfetai Tele Lui, for your friendship, your passion, your humility, and for sharing your faith and your life with us. We have lost a Pacific Hero who has championed conservation causes around the region. Our prayers are with you, your Aiga, friends and SPREP family at this difficult time. May you rest in eternal peace my Feleni. Manuia Le Malaga!

*Kemu*

Stephane Ciccione (Director, Kelsonia Observatory of Marine Turtles)

I met Lui in Morea two years ago. He was a really good man.  
Our thoughts for his family and his friends.

*Stephanie Ciccione*



George Petro

I am deeply sorry to hear about Lui's sudden passing. Lui was a friend indeed. A dedicated officer to marine species conservation in the Pacific.

We were planning for some exchange visits early next year for him to bring representatives from various turtle conservation programs from Tonga, Kiribati, Tuvalu, Solomon Islands and Fiji to our Moso community turtle project in Vanuatu.

We've done that once in 2010 with turtle monitors from Dauni Vonu in Fiji and we've been looking forward for the next one in Feb 2013, unfortunately I got the sad news of his sudden passing away.

My deepest condolences goes to his family.

Rest in Peace Wantok.

You will always be remembered.

*George*

Solomone Fifita (ex Pacific Futures 2003 - 2010)

My wife is related to Silila and she and the kids will always visit Lui's family while I am away from Samoa. As what most men would do when their wife's cousins visit, the boot of the car will always be full on their return. My family is therefore very thankful for Lui's cooking and breadfruit trees too. Sometimes I asked the kids, where did these come from and the youngest would yell out ... from the Man with the Beard. My family has also greatly benefitted from Lui's advice on how to be politically correct when there is a 'Ikale Tahi - Manu Samoa showdown in town.

It was in the retreat of 2008 that I became the chauffeur for Lui and Clark. On our 2hrs drive to the Lalomanu area, Lui shared with us that he was the President of the Samoa USP Catholic Students Association and Silila was his counterpart from the Tongan Association. He shared his passion for his work with the Vava'u whale watching association and how he always tried not to be a burden on Silila's family.

The pool table corner of the fale was where Lui will always be found. Not only Tasi, Helen and Amaze will be there, he was more comfortable and always devote his time to the people with oily hands in the engine room of SPREP.

I have said so many on farewells to departing staff and earlier this year, I composed a song and sang it at a funeral of a SPC staff . I wish I can be there with Silila and the SPREP family but here is one special for you Lui:



"How the mighty have fallen!" (2 Samuel 1:27)

*Oh Mt Vaea what can you say  
Over the Net, certainly not the best  
The fautasi looks astray  
His will, oh, home he goes to rest*

*The tale of the eel is known by all  
Fearless, this descendant of Tangaloa  
Lasting deeds are there for all  
All the species in the deep of Katoa*

*The blessings of the Lord  
Be upon you forever more  
Tofa my feleni  
A true son of Samoa*

*'Oi Mt Vaea koe ha ha'o poa  
Ngaluope e moe tala fakaloloma  
Koe fautasi 'ena kuo foefoeloa  
Pule kehea, uisa, ko si'ono kahoa*

*Koe tala 'o e tuna kuo maama loa  
'Ikai ha ofo he koe fua 'o Tangaloa  
Fai e fatongia ke tu'uloa  
Me'amo'ui 'oe 'oseni lolotoa*

*Lalaka moe 'Otua  
Ke 'o'ou ia koloa  
Tofa my feleni  
Toa 'o Samoa*

*Solomone  
Fijita*

Saunoo Matau (ex SPREP 1992-2008)

I am truly saddened to hear my friend and colleague Lui Bell's passing away. He was more than just a friend; he was an amazing person. He was always so kind and considerate.

His passing will not only leave a void, but in the hearts of everyone who knew him. Lui's memory will always remain deep within our hearts.

My sincere thoughts and prayers are with his family & SPREP colleagues.

With deepest sympathy, Manuia lau malaga!

Alofaaga :(

*Saunoo M. J. and Onesemo*

David Sheppard, SPREP

Hail to an amazing life. Thanks you Lui for all you achieved for conservation, particularly for marine species. The whales, dolphins, turtles, dugongs and other marine species of the Pacific have lost their preminent champion and I'm sure they are also in deep mourning right now. Thank you for the way in which you made these achievements, always with a smile, a laugh, and a deep consideration and respect for those you worked with. We will all do our best to follow in your footsteps, seeking inspiration in your example. Thank you my friend.

*David*



Frank Griffin

I just learned about my good friend, Lui Bell's passing. I am still shocked by this news. You were a champion in whatever you did...work, sports, entertaining, having fun etc. Who can forget the many hours of taking a short walk out of our building to have a smoke...a true professional who achieved much with very limited resources...your contributions and achievements will be long remembered my friend...our shared interest in gospel music, especially the Bill Gaither DVD collections...thanks very much for being you and for spending time with us all at SPREP...Rest in Peace my brother...still shocked...

*Frank*

Meapelo Ma'ai

I am most certain that Lui's journey in life has earned him a place among the angels. The streets of heaven are filled with angels tonight. I can hear their celebrations of your arrival. Lui- wish us luck as we try to do our work without you!

My sincere condolences to your wife and children and the rest your Pacific family.

Bless your soul.

*Meapelo*

Clive Hawigen

I am saddened to have learnt about Lui's passing. My deepest sincere condolence goes out to his family and SPREP colleagues.

Lui was a great friend and colleague. I will always remember the smokers' corner. Every morning break we would converge there for toast, coffee and cigarettes. Half the time their stories were in Samoan and being a pukpuk, it sounded alien so I sat there quietly drinking coffee and just hoping that those Samoans would speak English anytime soon. But English came as fast as it went and in those few moments that English became the common language again, it sounded like music to my ears. It was in those sessions, that I would casually asked Lui about his work with turtles and dugongs throughout the Pacific. His response came with passion and it was quite clear that he was very knowledgeable and sometimes intimidating, especially for someone who had half an idea of what he was talking about. In all, his message was quite simple; "Each of us had a role to play to help conserve and protect these very important species and to respect them."

I'm glad I met him and I appreciated what he has taught me and have tried to advocate the importance of looking after these species ever since.... To the dismay of my turtle-eggs-and-meat-eating family and friends.

Your legacy of marine species conservation work lives on.

RIP Lui

*Pukpuk*

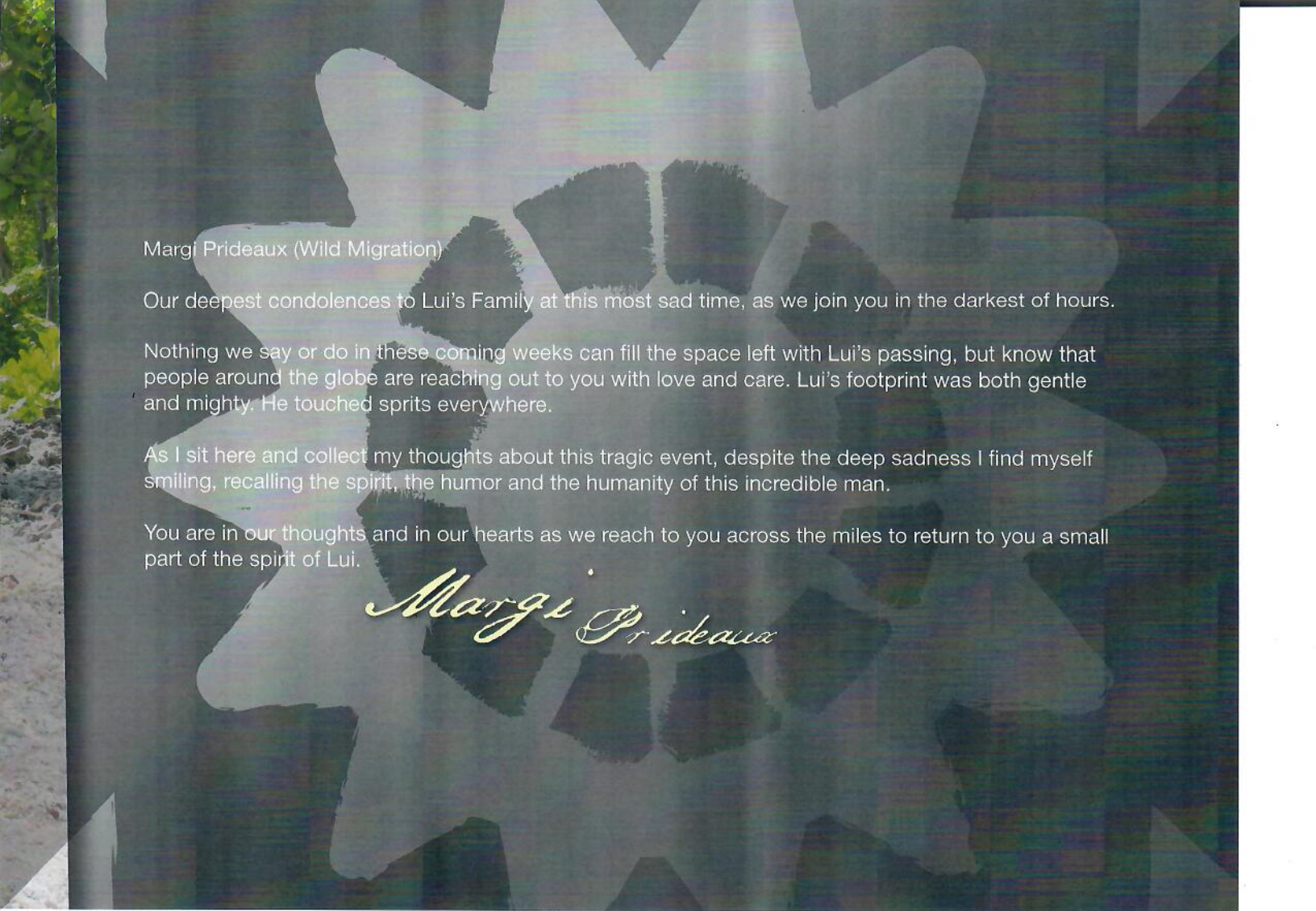












Margi Prideaux (Wild Migration)

Our deepest condolences to Lui's Family at this most sad time, as we join you in the darkest of hours.

Nothing we say or do in these coming weeks can fill the space left with Lui's passing, but know that people around the globe are reaching out to you with love and care. Lui's footprint was both gentle and mighty. He touched spirits everywhere.

As I sit here and collect my thoughts about this tragic event, despite the deep sadness I find myself smiling, recalling the spirit, the humor and the humanity of this incredible man.

You are in our thoughts and in our hearts as we reach to you across the miles to return to you a small part of the spirit of Lui.

*Margi Prideaux*

Ilisapeci Masivesi

It is still hard for me to come to terms with your passing away Lui. Just an hour before you left for the squash court on Thursday 29 Nov, I entered your building to give my daughter's Christmas present to Nina and you stopped me to ask for your present too. These words of yours kept playing back in my mind "remember I need a Christmas gift from you to be under our SPREP Christmas tree tomorrow morning. I will come hunting for it first thing when I arrive". When I heard of the sad news an hour later, my heart sank. Your Christmas present was bought, but now I don't have a receiver...

Lui, you were more than a work colleague to me, you played the role of a dad, always encouraging me to pursue my dream and do the best I can with the limited resources I have. "The sky is the limit", was always your word of advice. As we talked of our various work load, you would again remind me..."Never focus on the negatives my dear. Do the best you can with your two hands and let the Almighty do the rest"....Now as I look back on the good times we shared, I can't thank the Lord enough for your life Lui. I am blessed to have come to know you. You were an inspiration and your advice will forever lead me on this journey of life.

GOD SURELY CREATED A MASTERPIECE AND THAT MASTERPIECE WAS YOU....

Rest in piece my good friend.....

*Ilisapeci Masivesi*



Tepa Suaesi

Dear Lui, While deeply devastated by your sudden passing, the memories of your friendship and services to country and region, is healing a broken heart. My ardent prayers are that you may receive an auspicious welcome by your Lord, and you'll recount with delight before Him, the wonderful cares for His creatures that you've spent all of your precious life. Yours is a shining legacy that can never fade, nor the changes and chances of this earthly life tarnish. How true are these words for your example, as you make your way to the Great Beyond: "Death is not extinguishing the light; it is putting out the lamp, because the dawn has come".

Farewell and God speed, my Brother!

*Tepa Suaesi*

Allan Bowe

Such sad news. Lui will be sorely missed by all the region.  
My condolences to his family.

Regards,

*Allan*

Bruce Jefferies

When I received Stuart Chape's phone call informing me of Lui's death I simply found it hard to comprehend - how could this be? I was sharing a joke with him only a few hours ago. When I arrived at the office the next day the reality hit me. His desk was empty and the shock and grief that was being shown by everybody in SPREP was overwhelming.

I only knew Lui for a couple of years but quickly grew to appreciate his professionalism, humility and, as so many other people have commented, and outstanding sense of humor.  
Kua hinga he totara i Te wao nui a Tane - a totara has fallen in the forest of Tane

The totara is a huge NZ native tree that grows for hundreds of years. When a totara falls it signifies a great tragedy - just as Lui's passing has left a huge gap not only in SPREP but throughout the Pacific.

Kia kaha

*Bruce  
Jefferies*



Gianluca Serra

Dear office and desk companion, I will miss the sparkle of humour and your joke at the right time of the day - often rescuing me from unnecessary concern or indulgence in work-holism.

The sight of your empty desk, still busy of its primeval and fertile chaos, will make me feel sad. Although we had not time enough to get to know each other well, i have the sense that you have lived a meaningful and rich life in all respects - lucky your sons, relatives and friends.

The creatures of the abysses, together with several terrestrial ones, including me, all now pay a tribute of respect to your conservation commitment and will miss a genuine and straight fellow, a gentle soul.

Rest in peace Lui

*Gianluca Serra*

Very sad news indeed. A wonderful man whose spirit has affected us all.

*Anton van Helden*

Tania Duratovic

Very sad news and a loss to all - his family, his colleagues, and the environment he worked so hard to protect.

I first met Lui whilst working on marine species for IFAW. I found him to be a gentle & sincere man, full of love and dedication to protect the environment he cared for so much, & with a good sense of humour, which was often required! He was an inspiration to all who met him, a real champion and just a lovely man who quietly influenced people and made the world a better place, particularly the Pacific region.

I extend my love and prayers to Lui's family & all the SPREP community,

*Tania*

Claire Garrigue (South Pacific Whale Research Consortium member)

What a sad news! Lui was so nice and we love to spent time with him.  
He did so well to help the SPWRC.  
I am profoundly sad to know that we will not see him again.  
All my thoughts go to his family.

A bientot Lui,

*Claire*