

# The Pacific Tradewinds Quarterly

## SPaRCE Coordinator Says Goodbye

### Inside this issue:

|  |     |
|--|-----|
| Hawaii Lawmaker Donates Supplies to CNMI Schools       | 2   |
| Solomons' Malaita Showing Effects of Rising Sea        | 3   |
| Fiji Considers Geothermal Development                  | 4   |
| Biofuel is Several Years Away in Fiji                  | 4/5 |
| EU Program to Help Pacific Power Utilities             | 5   |
| Mariana's Volcanic Pagan Studied for Geothermal        | 6   |
| Endangered Leatherback Turtle Loosing Ground           | 7/8 |
| Seabird Thought Extinct Found in Papua New Guinea      | 8   |
| Undersea Earthquakes Between New Caledonia, Vanuatu    | 9   |
| Papua New Guinea Landslide Isolates Thousands in Simbu | 10  |
| Classroom Weather Focus                                | 11  |
| ENSO Update  | 12  |
| Get to Know: Nikki Acton                               | 12  |

Friday, April 18th, 2008

I started working for SPaRCE in October of 2005, although, it feels just like yesterday. I have learned quite a bit from this position. Most importantly, I have had the chance to correspond and meet numerous, influential people.

Each school involved in SPaRCE showed a dedication by its teachers to educate their pupils by whatever means possible. I still remember the day when I first got an application in the mail from a new school. It was from Xavier High School, Federated States of Micronesia. The teacher's name was Chris Dwyer. I was so excited to learn who they were, where they were from, and their interests.

My favorite part of the SPaRCE program was the cameras we sent to the schools. The teachers took pictures of the instruments and the students. Those pictures taught me so much about the different cultures.

To all the schools, teachers, and students involved in SPaRCE, thank you for teaching me about your country and yourselves. I will never forget it. Hopefully someday I can travel to your



part of the world.

SPaRCE and the people I worked with have influenced me tremendously. I would like to thank Betty Christian. I always look forward to your emails. Michael Klatt, your friendship and advice helped me along the way. I also want to thank Dr. Scott Greene for keeping me on track and reminding me of my capabilities. Finally, I want to thank Dr. Susan Postawko. You have been a wonderful mentor. I know I will never learn so much from anyone as I have learned from you. Thank you!!!

I am graduating in May and will be moving to Cleveland, Ohio with my fiancée for graduate school. I hope to study environmental public policy, especially renewable energy policy. It has been a pleasure working with you all!!!

-Melissa Koeka

## Hawaii Lawmaker Donates Supplies to CNMI Schools

**Tuesday, March 11, 2008**

By Moneth G. Deposa

SAIPAN, CNMI - Hawai'i State Representative Glenn Wakai has again provided assistance to the CNMI, this time to benefit public schools.

Yesterday, over 300 books and reading materials donated by Wakai were delivered to elementary school principals on Saipan while others will be brought to Rota and Tinian this week.

According to Juan D. Babauta, acting Public School System assistant for procurement and supply, 26 boxes from Hawai'i were received last week by PSS. Fourteen of the boxes contained textbooks for elementary students while 12 were filled with used clothing for the less fortunate families in the community.

"There are over 300 books for our elementary schools on the three main islands and we included two junior high schools as recipients of these books because they accommodate sixth graders -- Rota Junior High and Saipan's Chacha Oceanview Junior High School," Babauta told Variety.

The materials will be a great help for PSS, he added.

A former KMCV-7 reporter on Saipan, Wakai represents Hawai'i's 31st District in the State House of

Representatives. He serves on the committees on education, higher education, agriculture, tourism and culture, and economic development and business concerns. The assistance he provided to the CNMI was made through the efforts of former Representative Absalon Waki, Covenant-Saipan.

"We're very thankful to the former congressman for initiating this very important assistance to us," Babauta said.

He said Triple B Forwarders assisted by delivering the materials free of charge. Ayuda Network was the recipient of the used clothing items but since the group "indirectly" deals with its clients, the donation was provided to the church-based charitable organization Karidat.

"Since Karidat is directly dealing with the clients, we're giving the donation to the group," Ayuda Network director Maria C. Pangelinan said.

Angie Leon Guerrero, Karidat executive director, yesterday accepted the 12 boxes of used clothing items, most of which are for children.

She said beneficiaries will include families at the Guma Esperansa and other clients on Rota, Tinian, and Saipan.

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Pacific Island Report

<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/March/03-11-13.htm>

**"There are over 300 books for our elementary schools on the three main islands..."**  
**Jaun Babauta.**



**Hawaii State Representative Glenn Wakai from the 31st District.**

[http://dkosopedia.com/wiki/Glenn\\_Wakai](http://dkosopedia.com/wiki/Glenn_Wakai)



# Solomons' Malaita Showing Effects of Rising Sea

**Wednesday, April 2, 2008**

HONIARA, Solomon Islands - Minister for Environment, Conservation and Meteorology Gordon Darcy Lilo confirms that effects of global warming are now evident in Solomon Islands.

Speaking in Parliament last week, Mr. Lilo said the effects include coastal erosion, inundation and salt water intrusion of Fanalei and Walande Islands in Malaita Province and the sinking of Hakupa Island in Ontong Java, also in Malaita Province.

Mr. Lilo said climate change will affect Solomon Islands in five main areas.

They are reduced Agriculture productivity and food security, water stress and water insecurity, Rising sea levels and exposure to climate disasters, Ecosystems and bio-diversity and human health.

He said climate change scenarios are pointing to losses in productivity of agriculture which may lead to acute malnutrition in the



**Langalanga Lagoon, Solomon Islands**

[http://tabisite.com/gallery\\_os/solomon/solomlen.shtml](http://tabisite.com/gallery_os/solomon/solomlen.shtml)

immediate future.

Mr. Lilo informed Parliament that sea level rise has led to the shrinking of water table lens in Ontong Java and led to the brackishing of fresh water.

He also informed Parliament that the increases in temperature would cause warmer seas that will fuel more violent tropical cyclones, displacement of people and inundation of small atoll and man-made islands.

Mr. Lilo said climate change would increase the risk of malaria despite repeated 'Malaria Eradication Programmes'.

Mr. Lilo said that because of these, government policies, strategies and programmes must take into account the threats of climate change on the people and the environment.

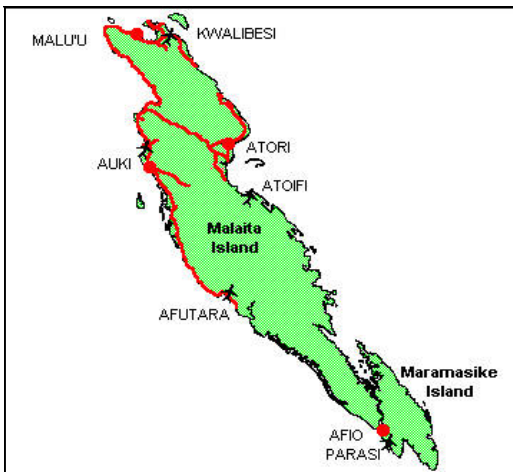
Solomon Times  
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Pacific Island Report

<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/April/04-02-04.htm>

## Maliata Province, Solomon Islands

[http://www.commerce.gov.sb/Gallery/Maliata\\_images/malaita%20web%20map.jpg](http://www.commerce.gov.sb/Gallery/Maliata_images/malaita%20web%20map.jpg)



## Fiji Considers Geothermal Development

**Thursday, April 10, 2008**

SUVA, Fiji - A Sydney-based company has presented a proposal to the Interim Government to harness geothermal power to supplement the country's electricity needs.

The Interim Government is looking at the proposal, which will involve reaching into Fiji's underground hot rocks to provide cheaper power supply.

Interim Lands and Mineral Resources Minister Netani Sukanaivalu says the project is going to have a rippling effect on Fiji's economy.

"Right now we are spending more than FJ\$98 million [US\$66 million] to import fossil fuel to meet 55 percent of Fiji's total power demand, with the remaining 45 percent coming mainly from hydro electric plants," he said. "With the increasing fuel cost in

the world market and increasing power demand in the country, we believe that this is the next best thing for Fiji."

Sydney-based firm Mitchell Morgan Investments presented the proposal on how to carry out the project to a number of senior government officials including Sukanaivalu, Environment Department Director Epeli Nasome, the Department of Energy's Bio-fuel Engineer, Filimoni Vosarogo and Fiji Electricity chairman Nizam Ud Dean and chief executive officer Sunil De Silva.

The exploration work is expected to start as soon as the government grants Mitchell Morgan the license to do their work around Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/April/04-10-11.htm>

**"With the increasing fuel cost in the world market and increasing power demand in the country, we believe that this is the next best thing for Fiji," says Netani Sukanaivalu.**

## Biofuel is Several Years Away in Fiji

**Tuesday, April 8, 2008**

SUVA, Fiji - Fiji has in place a program for substituting imported fuel with bio-fuel but it would be a few years before any production gets under way.

Interim Finance Minister Mahendra Chaudhry says the program is in its early stages and it will take a few years to substitute im-

ported fuel with bio-fuel.

"The policy is there, the preparations for that is being done and we hope that in the next two to three years we will be producing bio-fuel to supplement imported fuel," Chaudhry said.

He added though it was a medium to long-term project but was confident that it would pro-

duce good results in the long run. "Nonetheless we've made a start and we hope that this will bear a result in the medium term and long run," said Chaudhry.

With the recent increase in food and fuel prices, the Interim Government has stressed the need

for people to produce their own crops and limit the reliance on imported products.

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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/April/04-08-16.htm>



<http://www.supatra.com/images/coconut.jpg>

## EU Program to Help Pacific Power Utilities

**Tuesday, March 18, 2008**

SUVA, Fiji – Power utilities in Pacific, African and Caribbean states will soon benefit from a new project to build capacity in energy resource management in the region.

The European Union-funded project Capacity Support for Sustainable Management of Energy Resources in the Pacific region will be implemented by the Pacific Power Association over the next four years.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat deputy regional authorising officer Patricia Sachs-Cornish said the objective of the project was to improve efficiency of power utilities in the Pacific.

Speaking at a signing ceremony with the EU, Ms Sachs-Cornish said utilities in Pacific Island countries faced power losses of around 30 per cent compared to 15 per cent in developing countries.

The \$2.75million project will focus on upgrading the skills of Pacific power utilities to improve their services and enhance energy efficiency.

"It is very important to note that this project will focus on renewable energy, an important intervention area, particularly in providing electrification to remote areas to allow people to participate in development and in improving livelihoods," she said.

The European Commission's head of operations in the Pacific, Robert de Raeye, said the objective of the project was to contribute to the attainment of the Millennium Development Goals by reducing poverty through improved regional co-operation and targeted action for the poor in the energy sector.

Pacific Power Association executive director Tony Neil said the association had already been talking to utilities in Pacific island countries.

Questions sent to the Fiji Electricity Authority were unanswered at press time yesterday.

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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/March/03-18-14.htm>

**"...a biofuel industry in Fiji using coconut as raw material,"**  
**Ratu Jone.**

[http://www.fiji.gov.fj/publish/page\\_5578.shtml](http://www.fiji.gov.fj/publish/page_5578.shtml)

## Mariana's Volcanic Pagan Studied for Geothermal

Thursday, March 13, 2008

By Gemma Q. Casas

SAIPAN, CNMI - Governor Benigno R. Fitial sent a team of scientists to Pagan to study its potential to produce geothermal energy for the Northern Marianas.

Fitial toured at least two geothermal power plants in the Philippines with Dr. James Quick, a former scientist of the U.S. Geological Survey, whom he hired as special assistant for alternative energy recently.

The two went to Mt. Mayon and Mt. Malinao in the Bicol province south of Manila.

"I saw the geothermal power plants owned and operated by Chevron," the governor told Variety.

He said Pagan, a volcanic island north of Saipan, could be developed as a major source of electricity by harnessing its geothermal energy.

Dr. Roy Mink and two other sci-

entists highly recommended by Quick went to Pagan last week.

Mink retired as program director for the geothermal technologies program of the U.S. Department of Energy.

After his retirement, Mink was appointed to the company's board of directors and is also connected with Boise State University and the Idaho Bureau of Mines and Geology.

The governor said if Pagan's geothermal energy could be developed to produce electricity, the CNMI's difficulty in providing a stable power supply will be addressed.

Saipan suffered more than 2,000 hours of power outages in 2006 and 2007 due to the antiquated facilities at its power plants.

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Pacific Island Report

<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/March/03-13-07.htm>

"...if Pagan's geothermal energy could be developed... CNMI's difficulty in providing a stable power supply will be addressed," says Governor Benigno Fitial.

Pagan Island located just north of Saipan is home to one of the many volcanoes that could be used to harness geothermal energy.

[http://www.americangeo.com/Sample%20Mining%20Projects\\_files/image024.jpg](http://www.americangeo.com/Sample%20Mining%20Projects_files/image024.jpg)



# Endangered Leatherback Turtle

## Losing Ground

**Tuesday, April 8, 2008**

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea - Papua New Guinea may be the last stronghold for leatherback turtles, but that image which could be a tourist attraction is fast diminishing with the loss of more and more of these reptiles.

Wenceslaus Magun, Communications officer with the Sea Turtle Restoration Project, said on Friday that the leatherback turtles were among rare Papua New Guinea natural treasures.

Currently, they are decreasing in numbers fast. In the Pacific water, it is reported that there are now less than 5,000 of them in the entire Pacific ocean.

Mr. Magun was speaking following a three-day workshop that brought communications officers from a number of environmental organizations to look at they could develop more effective communication strategies in order to convey conservation issues affecting the country.

He said many communities in Papua New Guinea were either seeing less and less of these turtles come to nest on their beaches or there were none at all.

They blame the great decrease on the number of turtles on increasing number of fishing vessels in the ocean some whom they claim are using illegal fishing methods that are catching these turtles.

A mature leatherback turtle weighs 916 kg and measures 2.7

meters long and is the largest surviving reptile from the era of dinosaurs.

Papua New Guinea is the only place where they come to lay their eggs. They then swim to Indonesia and return to California in United States of America via the East and West New Britain provinces, to await another time when they can return to PNG to nest. Magun said while other natural resources such as gold and copper were irreplaceable, tourism was sustainable and if PNG protected these sea creatures, they would be a tourist attraction in addition to many of PNG natural wonders, including the Queen Alexander butterfly in Oro Province, the bird of paradise in the Highlands.



**Leatherback Turtle**

<http://www.dkimages.com/discover/previews/1545/11692874.jpg>

STRP has since 2006 been conducting community development training programs for villagers with the aim to change their attitudes and mindset on how they look after their resources, including whether they should allow

**"A mature leatherback turtle weighs 916 kg and measures 2.7 meters long and is the largest surviving reptile from the era of dinosaurs," Papua New Guinea Post-Courier.**

**“Currently, they are decreasing in numbers fast. In the Pacific water, it is reported that there are now less than 5,000 of them in the entire Pacific ocean,” Papua New Guinea Post-Courier.**

fishing companies to fish their waters and how should they look after their resources in order to ensure they are still around for their future generation.

The training programs have seen the set up of conservation deeds signed by the communities which has set of rules on how they can harvest their marine resources.

Meanwhile, the other participants at the workshop were from Conservation International, World Wide Fund, Motupore Island Reserve and Sea Turtle Restoration.

The workshop was organized and funded by SeaWeb, an organization that has since its set up in 1995, been working with different organizations mostly through strategic communications and social marketing techniques to mobile decision-makers to protect the ocean.

Papua New Guinea Post-Courier:  
[www.postcourier.com.pg/](http://www.postcourier.com.pg/)  
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Pacific Island Report  
<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/April/04-08-11.htm>

## Seabird Thought Extinct Found in Papua New Guinea

**Tuesday, March 11, 2008**

MELBOURNE, Australia – A rare sea bird, not sighted for more than 80 years and believed to be

extinct, has been rediscovered in waters off Papua New Guinea.

The critically endangered "Beck's petrel", was found in the Bismarck Archipelago, in the south-west Pacific Ocean, north-east of PNG by a British team of scientists

A spokesman for the conservation group, Birdlife International, Nick Askew, says the discovery is important and efforts have begun to find the birds' breeding area and preserve the species.

A reported sighting of a Beck's petrel by an expedition in Australian waters in the Coral Sea two years ago, was rejected by the Australian Rare Birds Committee

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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/March/03-11-10.htm>



This photo of a recently fledged juvenile Beck's Petrel was taken off Cape St George, New Ireland, Papua New Guinea, last August by Israeli othinologist Hadoram Shirihai.

*Photo courtesy of Hadoram Shirihai*



# Undersea Earthquakes Between New Caledonia, Vanuatu

**Tuesday, April 15, 2008**

By Patrick Antoine Decloitre

SUVA, Fiji – There have been over ten recorded undersea earthquakes in the past 24 hours between Vanuatu and neighbouring New Caledonia, including one peaking 7.3 on the Richter scale.

The most powerful quake occurred at 11:46 p.m. local time (00:46 GMT) on Wednesday at an estimated depth of 35 kilometres below sea level, the Colorado-based U.S. Geological Survey said.

The epicentre was located at about 70 kilometres South-West of Tanna island (South Vanuatu) and 190 kilometres East of the island of Maré (which is part of New Caledonia's Loyalty islands group).

This series of undersea quakes has occurred within a timeframe situated between 11:13 and 16:02 GMT Wednesday, at an average depth of 35 kilometres.

In Vanuatu and the Loyalty Islands, tremors were slightly felt, but no damage or injury has been reported.

The Pacific Tsunami Warning Centre (PTWC) based in Pearl Harbour (Hawaii) has issued one single message at 13:00 GMT Wednesday for information only, but no alert.

"No destructive widespread tsunami threat exists based on historical earthquake and tsunami data. However, earthquakes of this size sometimes generate local tsunamis that can be destructive along coasts located within a hundred kilometres of the earthquake epicentre. Authorities in the region

of the epicentre should be aware of this possibility and take appropriate action", the PTWC bulletin stated.

The French High commission in New Caledonia said given the magnitude and the depth of the quakes, the probability for something to occur was "nil".

In New Caledonia's Melanesian region, authorities in the Solomon Islands have on April 2 commemorated the first anniversary of the April 2, 2007 disaster: a magnitude 8 earthquake that triggered a subsequent tsunami in the North of the archipelago, in the province of Gizo.

Over 50 persons died and thousand lost their homes as a result.

In the French Pacific, the French government has recently announced it was stepping up detection and prevention systems for its three Pacific dependencies (New Caledonia, French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna).

The implementation and installation of tsunanimeters and wave height measurers is currently under way with a particular focus on the most exposed islands in case of a tsunami generated near Tonga or Vanuatu, such as the Loyalty Islands and Wallis.

Oceania Flash: [http://newspad-pacific.info/?todo=main&type\\_news=2](http://newspad-pacific.info/?todo=main&type_news=2)  
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<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/April/04-16-15.htm>



**"In Vanuatu and the Loyalty Islands, tremblers were slightly felt, but no damage or injury has been reported,"**  
**Patrick Antoine Decloitre.**



## Papua New Guinea Landslide Isolates Thousands in Simbu

**Tuesday, April 15, 2008**

PORT MORESBY, Papua New Guinea - The Okuk Highway was cut off again early on Saturday at Gera village, a few kilometres east of Kundiawa, Chimbu Province, in one of the worst disasters in the region.

A 150-metre stretch of the highway was cut off with trees, houses and coffee plots sitting on the original highway.

The tip of a huge, moving of land which blocked the highway, covered 20 houses, four church buildings, many food gardens, livestock and displaced more than 2000 people.

Electricity supply into the area was cut off when a power pole was shifted out of position and electricity cables broken.

The Simbu Provincial Government declared Gera a "disaster zone".

Chimbu provincial police commander Joseph Tondop said there were fears of a major law and order problem in the area and appealed to the Government to urgently provide relief supplies before the situation got out of hand.

"This is a double tragedy for the region where the lives of over 2000 people are at stake and the Okuk Highway, which is the economic lifeline of the country, is completely cut off," Mr Tondop said.

He said the displaced villagers were co-operating with police and the public by helping the stranded travelling public.

Travellers and their cargo going into Chimbu or Goroka were changing buses at the disaster zone. So far there were no incidents of har-

assment or stealing because of a heavy presence of police from Kerowagi mobile squad and Kundiawa.

The landslide was triggered by limestone dropping onto the Hima Kopro rocks above Ku and Gera villages last Tuesday.

The rock sank into the soil at the foot of the hill, forcing a massive land area to slide slowly down towards the highway.

Pastor Barme Yopa, a landowner, said villagers from Wamai I Ward 13 within the Tambare local level government were left homeless. He said many of the people affected fled to neighbouring Ku, Dinga, and Womai villages when the earth rumbled.

Two big creeks in the area – Nilguma and Gambagol – sank into the earth and their natural beds were emptied of water.

The landmass was still moving yesterday, in some instances, sending the public running for cover when the tremors got bigger. Meanwhile, in Kundiawa Town, there was a drastic shortage of fuel with the town's two service stations running out of stock. Black marketeers took advantage of the situation by increasing the normal fuel price, especially diesel.

A five-litre container of diesel which normally sells at K17, was sold yesterday for K25.

Other vehicle operators headed toward Minj and stations in the Western Highlands to restock.

Papua New Guinea Post-Courier: [wpireport/2008/April/04-15-00.htm](http://wpireport/2008/April/04-15-00.htm)  
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 Pacific Island Report  
<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/April/04-15-00.htm>



Villagers in Gera, about 10 kilometers from Kundiawa, Simbu Province, survey the huge landslide that cut off a highway and moved houses and whole plantations downhill yesterday. Some 2,000 people were displaced.

*Photo courtesy of The National*

Photo Courtesy: Pacific Island Report  
<http://pidp.eastwestcenter.org/pireport/2008/April/04-15-00.htm>



# Classroom Weather Focus

## Migrating Dust

### OBJECTIVES:

Students will observe and map the migration of simulated dust on the classroom floor.

### MATERIALS:

Blank sheets of paper for each student, pieces of paper of three different colors, hole puncher, pencils

### PROCEDURE:

1. Before school begins, take the three different colors of paper and hole punch them into little circles. Scissors can be used to make little squares if a hole puncher is not available.
2. Take each color of circles and deposit them in three different areas of the classroom. Place at least one color of dots in a pathway.
3. At the beginning of the day, gather the students outside the classroom before they enter and explain that there are dots on the floor for a reason. Tell to walk through the classroom as normal and not to play with the dots.
4. When the students are seated, pass out the blank pieces of paper with the pencils.
5. Tell the students that the dots are representing dust on the planet Earth. Have them draw a map of where the dots are throughout the classroom. Tell them to note on their maps where the different colors are.
6. Tell the students that at the end of the day, they will redraw their maps and compare the two to see how dust can move throughout a continent.
7. Emphasize that the students are not to touch or blow the "dust" throughout the day.
8. Continue with your normal class schedule reminding students not to intentionally move the "dust".
9. At the end of the day, have the students take out their maps of the "dust" from that morning.
10. Ask them to flip the map over and draw another map of where the "dust" is at the end of the day.
11. Discuss the results.

### DISCUSSION:

1. Ask the students who is surprised that the "dust" had moved so much since that morning.
2. Did the "dust" travel beyond the classroom?
3. Ask the students what they think would happen if the "dust" was left on the floor for another day.
4. Ask the students how this experiment represents the global travel of real dust clouds.

# ENSO Diagnostic Discussion

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**WE'RE ON THE WEB!**  
<http://www.evac.ou.edu/>



## **Synopsis:** La Niña is expected to continue for the next 3 months.

La Niña declined to moderate-strength during March 2008 as negative sea surface temperature (SST) anomalies weakened across the central and east-central equatorial Pacific. The latest weekly SSTs are more than 1.0°C below average in areas between 160°E and 120°W. The recent dynamical and statistical SST forecasts for the Niño 3.4 region indicate La Niña will become weak and persist through May-June-July 2008. Thereafter, there is considerable spread in the forecasts, with nearly one-half indicating La Niña could continue well into the second half of the year. Based on current atmospheric and oceanic conditions and recent trends, La Niña is expected to continue for the next 3 months. Expected La Niña impacts during April-June include a continuation of above-average precipitation over Indonesia and below-average precipitation over the central equatorial Pacific.

NOAA Climate Prediction Center

[http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis\\_monitoring/enso\\_advisory/ensodisc.html](http://www.cpc.ncep.noaa.gov/products/analysis_monitoring/enso_advisory/ensodisc.html)

## Get to Know: Nikki Acton



**Nikki at a football game, with The Pride of Oklahoma.**



**Nikki's Cat, Raven.**

**Friday, April 18, 2008**

Hello Everyone! My name is Nikki Acton and I am the new SPaRCE coordinator. I am a meteorology student here at the University of Oklahoma.

I am originally from Missouri, but my love for the weather brought me to Oklahoma about 5 years ago. I enjoy chasing storms during the spring months. I also love playing music. During the fall months I play my clarinet in The Pride of Oklahoma Marching Band.

I am involved in many organizations here at OU. I am a member of Tau Beta Sigma (the honorary band sorority), Alpha Sigma Kappa—Women in Technical Studies, and OUSCAMS (Student Chapter of the American



**Nikki on a storm chase.**

Meteorological Society).

When I have the time, I like to travel to, and learn about new cities and places. My favorite countries I have traveled to so far have been Switzerland and Italy. So, I am excited to get to know about the beautiful islands in the Pacific!

- Nikki Acton

SPaRCE would like to thank those of you who have made this program possible: NOAA Office of Global Programs, NOAA PI-GCOS and especially Howard Diamond. Thank you!