

Birds of Makira makes great impression!

A NEW book 'Birds of Makira' (Manu i Makira), was launched at a workshop at Wainoni Catholic Mission Station, Makira last week.

About 60 participants from villages all over the Wainoni region attended the one-day workshop to learn more about their environment.

The workshop was conducted by Tammy Davies, a PhD student from the UK (University of St Andrews and Institute of Zoology) who has been completing her research in the region since 2011. The aim of the bird book is to help foster understanding on the importance of the environment and why Makira is an important place for conservation.

"After discussing the benefits people received from the environment, such as shelter, food and kustom, participants called for increased education and awareness about the importance of the environment.

"Birds of Makira is in local language as well as English and has been distributed to all 74 schools across the province, so I hope it will go some way to achieving that need."

The Premier of Makira-Ulawa Province, Thomas Weape, also attended the



Birds of Makira.

workshop and said "this is one example of the benefits of participatory research - everyone at the workshop learnt a lot and this bird book is a historical achievement which will benefit the people of

Makira."

Makira, like other areas in the Solomon Islands, is an important site for conservation not only to support the local people whose livelihoods



Boy displaying Birds of Makira.

depend on the services provided by the environment, but also to preserve the local wildlife.

Makira is home to 13 endemic bird species, that means they are only

found on Makira, so it is an especially important place for conservation as if these birds are lost from Makira then they are lost from the world.

"Hopefully increasing

awareness of these endemic species will enable local people to feel proud of their resources and want to conserve them for future generations to enjoy."

Daniel Wagatora,

UNDP advisor and also a workshop attendee said "Like other forests of the Solomon Islands, the Makira bush faces many threats, including logging and unsustainable harvesting, coupled with an ever increasing population."

"This workshop and book have increased awareness on the importance of the environment and also initiated a drive to protect the local resources so future generations are also able to benefit from the environment."

Tammy added "I was taken aback by the enthusiastic reception Birds of Makira received! This book would not have been possible without support from Rufford Small Grants and Solomon Airlines, so I'd like to say a big thank you to those two.

"And also pass on my thanks again to all people and communities who have cooperated with this research and who have made me feel so welcome here in Makira."