

DISCUSSION DOCUMENT ON HOW TO DEVELOP THE WALLACEA FOUNDATION

Dr Tim Coles, Project Director, Operation Wallacea

Introduction

The Wallacea Foundation has been formed to provide a focal point for biodiversity research and conservation management in the Wallacea region. The main strength of the Foundation is the strength of the Steering Committee membership with politicians and academics drawn from the highest levels in Indonesia. The Foundation is aiming to establish a centre for Wallacea biodiversity research in Makassar University using a traditional adat house. This centre is intended over time to become an information resource and focal point for research activity within the region.

The difficulty is that at the moment the Foundation is a long way from achieving those objectives and the Foundation steering committee members are already overstretched with many other commitments outside their roles on the Foundation. Formation of the Foundation has been a significant task and a real platform now exists to highlight the Wallacea region in the international arena. The Operation Wallacea Trust was in the same situation shortly after it was established in 2000. The Trust had leading British politicians, and academics but lacked funding, executive staff and an office base. Over the last 7 years though the Trust has had to learn how to move from this base to a functioning organisation (see attached briefing note on the Trust) with minimal funds. This document has been drafted to summarise the lessons learned and how these can be applied to the Foundation in the early years of its activities. .

Note the document has been drafted from an outsiders viewpoint and without detailed knowledge on all the activities that the Foundation may already have established. The document is offered in the spirit of providing helpful advice based on previous experience and is designed to evoke a discussion rather than provide a definitive set of actions for the Foundation..

Establishing bi-annual meetings of the Steering Committee

In the case of the Trust this was an essential first step. It ensured 'buy in' from the Trustees since they were meeting twice a year to discuss progress and it provided a series of target dates by which certain activities had to be achieved, thus ensuring steady progress.

Enlisting support for provision of an executive staff

From the start the Trust had voluntary support from Operation Wallacea to provide administrative assistance and prepare papers for the regular Board meetings. Operation Wallacea continues to provide this service free of charge to the Trust. In order to draft detailed discussion documents for the Foundation's committee meetings and then follow up on agreed actions, a senior figure would be needed who understands the science and could present arguments on a level required by the Committee members to discuss and make a decision. For example one option might be for the Operation Wallacea Trust and the Indonesian Yayasan to help with this by offering the services of Dr Edi Purwanto for a few days each year in order to provide this input and convene the meetings. Dr Purwanto heads up the Wallacea Trust in Indonesia and is an outstanding manager and scientist with a very strong publication record of papers and books on various aspects of biodiversity and environmental management.

Determining the objectives and how these will be achieved

At the start the Trust had an overall vision of where it could contribute, but the more detailed objectives have been set in 3-year programmes with the Trustees reviewing progress against achieving these objectives at their bi-annual meetings. At the end of each 3-year period a new set of objectives is agreed.

If this approach were to be used by the Foundation then possible objectives to be achieved over the period to 2010 could be:

1. To establish the Wallacea Foundation at Makassar University with a small core staff

This objective is already agreed but requires fundraising in order to achieve. The Foundation has identified the person needed to lead this fundraising push and achieve this objective. Agreements are in position with Hasanuddin University for a site to be used for the new centre

2. To establish the Centre for Eastern Indonesian Marine Sciences in the Wakatobi

This would be done in conjunction with the Trust Yayasan running the base but with a management Board chaired by the Wallacea Foundation and with input from the Coral Reef Research Unit at Essex University and Operation Wallacea directing the scientific effort. Publications coming out of the Centre would need to be reference the Wallacea Foundation. The Centre would need to be self-funding with funds received from Operation Wallacea either during the main Op Wall research season or as western university training courses run at other times of year. A pricing structure that allowed Indonesian university students to complete marine biological training at cost recovery prices only would be implemented so that greater usage of the Centre could be made out of season. In addition the Centre would be used to help the Bupati with providing facilities for the first few ecotourism visitors to the Wakatobi (when it is not worth new tour operators setting up facilities), until numbers reach a level where other tour operators can provide those facilities. In addition with Edi running the Yayasan that manages Hoga you have the perfect person in position to make the applications for various contracted aspects of COREMAP in the Wakatobi, Buton and Kendari. Edi recently successfully bid for a \$750,000 World Bank environmental training programme for government staff in SE Sulawesi. To have a self-funded, heavily utilised research centre that is leading to a number of papers in peer reviewed journals should be easily achievable within the 3-year period under this arrangement.

3. To agree scientific collaborations in the Wallacea region with at least 10 academic institutions

This is based on the concept forwarded in an earlier email that there is a clear niche for an organisation like the Wallacea Foundation to provide academic counterparts and support in ensuring the myriad permits were obtained and samples exported, to a range of universities who have funds to work in the Wallacea region on biodiversity and conservation management issues. Operation Wallacea would therefore become one of many institutions working in collaboration with the Foundation. Each of these institutions though would pay a fee to the Foundation for provision of the permit and sample export consultancy and would also be required to lodge data and reports at the Wallacea Foundation centre in Makassar. All publications arising from these collaborations would also cite the Wallacea Foundation so a substantial publication output from the Foundation could be established fairly quickly. Operation Wallacea would be happy to provide the manpower to establish the initial academic contacts with UK, Canadian and American universities, so that this target could be achieved within the 3-year time frame. Moreover Op Wall would donate 25% time from Steve Oliver to assist with the admin required to complete the permit and export applications on behalf of the various collaborators. Once the amount of work rose beyond the point where a 0.25 FTE could achieve then the Foundation would have the funds available from these other collaborators to fund the admin costs.

4. To produce a scientific journal with publications produced from research carried out by the Foundation

Each of the collaborating scientists would be required to contribute a 4 - 6 page summary of their research. Operation Wallacea has just completed a similar exercise for its various sites and participating academics and the resulting publication (which will be forwarded to the Foundation when printed) has produced a strong document showing how Op Wall is helping in both science and conservation management. The Wallacea Foundation could produce an annual review of all the research in the Wallacea region with its various collaborative scientists. The document would be prepared in Indonesian and distributed widely throughout the Wallacea region to government departments and NGO's. This document would significantly help with establishing the Foundations influence throughout the region.

5. To complete DNA bar coding of 25% all vertebrates within the Wallacea region

As discussed to work with Guelph University and others on the bar coding initiative and to

set the objective of the Wallacea region of the World being the first region to completely bar code its vertebrate fauna, would give the Foundation a distinctive role. All Foundation collaborators could be required to provide genetic samples from species captured and definitively identified. Operation Wallacea could help with samples from SE Sulawesi on fish, amphibians, reptiles and mammals. The bar coding initiative is a well-funded international initiative and the Foundation is uniquely placed to contribute to this initiative. To complete bar coding on 25% of the vertebrate species in the Wallacea region should be achievable in the next 3-year period.

Conclusions

Setting specific objectives for the next 3-year period would give the Foundation a distinctive role in the Wallacea region biodiversity research. Outcomes rather than processes are used to assess most of the objectives suggested above. Achievement of these objectives will demonstrate that the Foundation is a serious player in the region. Nothing does more to attract funding from sponsors and donors than visible success in the stated objectives, so a more ambitious set of objectives could be set for the following 3 years with a strong likelihood of attracting the funding needed.

The Operation Wallacea Trust and Operation Wallacea would be able to provide some material support to help the Foundation establish the admin support needed to run bi-annual meetings of Committee member to set and review progress against objectives, to establish the Centre for Eastern Indonesian Marine Sciences, to develop scientific collaborations, to launch an Annual science report on research in the Wallacea region and to provide identified specimens to help with achievement of the bar coding initiative.