



# Coral & Fish Program PNG 2020



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# ABOUT CI

Mr Ian Gowrie-Smith is a self made man whom now owns a number of properties around the globe, is the proud owner of one of the last freehold atolls in the world, [The Conflict Islands](#). These islands are an extraordinary rare jewel at the epicenter of the worlds best diving and recognizing their ecological and environmental importance Ian, or IGS as he is known, decided to set up the Conflict Islands Conservation Initiative in 2017. He wished to preserve the islands for future generations to enjoy, and conserve the island's natural beauty and protection of its species.

*"We don't have an option to do nothing, if we don't do anything, these islands will deteriorate to the point where the world class corals and bio-diversity will perish." Mr Ian Gowrie-Smith*

On behalf of IGS and CICI we would like to welcome you as you become part of a group of people who have dedicated their time to help conserve and protect the habitat of Milne Bay, Papua New Guinea. Papua New Guinea is an incredible country with a rich history and incredibly diverse culture. There are more than 800 cultural groups and languages. In some areas still relatively untouched by time. Milne Bay is known as a very peaceful province. Located in the pristine waters of The Coral Sea, the Conflict Islands comprise of 21 untouched islands and boast one of the most extensive biodiversity and coral reefs in the world. Once you arrive at the pristine Conflict Islands, you will be staying either on the Undersea Explorer, our research vessel or camping on one of our uninhabited islands, Irai.

The waters around Conflict Islands boast a third of the world's species of marine fish, from tiny ghost pipe fish to huge manta rays and pilot whales. The 21 **uninhabited** tropical islands surround a spectacular lagoon and are currently under consideration for a World Heritage Marine Site. Among the group of islands, Irai Island has been found to have the second-best coral in the world with the most number of species noted in a single dive – a diver's absolute dream!

The main island, Panasesa, is open to travelers from cruise ships and features a Main House, six beach front bungalows and runway capable of landing short-haul flights ([www.conflictislands.com](http://www.conflictislands.com)). Cruise ships started visiting Panasesa Island in 2016. Activities on offer include diving, kayaking, sailing, boating and nature encounters.







# THE RESEARCH

## CORAL CONSERVATION IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA



### PROJECT OUTLINE

As climate change is creating a huge shift in coral abundance and diversity, the need to assess the health of our reef is paramount to conservation here at CICI. Without the reef-building coral, there will be a dramatic shift in coral reef inhabitants and functional groups, which will impact food chains (including humans!) within the Milne Bay province, PNG. Hence, gaining more knowledge of these animals is all part of your program! This project is going to assess the reef-building coral and reef fishes around the Conflict Islands through the development of a long-term survey program. Participants will record the health and persistence of the reef building coral and fish inhabitants around key islands, including recording species, coral growth and reproductive output within habitats. Participants will learn skills in scientific methodology, including:

- surveys on reef fishes and functional groups,
- coral health and disease,
- recording lateral growth in coral,
- recruitment of coral and fishes within habitat and
- coral gardening and fragmenting techniques.

This program is a great opportunity to gain experience in marine conservation and is ideal for upcoming, current or post marine science students or any one with a passion for marine conservation.

### RESEARCH AIMS:

- **Create a baseline dataset on the abundance and diversity of corals and important reef fishes at the Conflict Islands**
- **Record reef substrata and topography around CI Atoll**
- **Record any adult/ juvenile coral and their growth rates**
- **Record benthic surveys along 50m transects to determine substrata and health of habitat and inhabitants presence/ absence**
- **Create coral gardens for future growth in damages areas within the CI atoll (Coral gardening and fragmenting)**
- **Engage local communities through education sessions at neighboring island groups to show the importance of healthy coral habitats for coral reef communities**

# IN THE FIELD

## TIME IN THE FIELD

### ITINERARY (Subject to change, weather dependant)

**DAY 1** Arrive in Alotau and that night depart on Undersea Explorer for trip to Conflict Islands.

**DAY 2** Island orientation, gear familiarization and data summary and practice.  
Species identification guide and methodology run through  
Afternoon diving and activities!!!

**DAY 3–12** Data collection and analysis, including in-water and microscope analysis

**DAY 13-14** Community Education, Sunset speeches and certification, followed by a beach bonfire

**DAY 15** Departure Day Arrive Alotau 6am, Airport transfer 8am

### WHAT TO EXPECT

THIS IS NOT A HOLIDAY! Expect expect to spend a lot of time on the water, expect to get a lot of sun, and expect to have a lot of fun!!! Your days will be filled with either running transects for surveys, recording data or collecting fragments for coral gardening. You will have some free time to enjoy yourself, go diving and snorkeling or just relax on the islands. Additionally, you will get a chance to visit our Turtle Nursery and visit an isolated island community where the group will focus on education and awareness in marine conservation. On this day, you will have access to local tours, sightseeing activities and possibly get a ride in a traditional outrigger sailing kenu. Please ensure to bring small denominations to help support these villages through buying local produce, souvenirs and please bring donations for the schools, such as pencils, books and play things (NO PLASTICS).

During your program you will be asked to assist the staff and will be given a cleaning and cooking roster. There is no phone network and no Internet connection, so it is a great time to get in touch with nature!



### ACTIVITIES

Volunteers will have access to the following activities:

- Snorkeling
- Kayaking
- Stand-up paddle boards
- Diving with our local dive master, for certified divers
- **PADI diving courses available for anyone wanting to learn how to dive.**





# ACCOMMODATION

## ABOUT YOUR HOME IN THE FIELD

For most of your time you will be either based aboard our research vessel, the Undersea Explorer (UE), or at our base camp on Panasesa Island.

The Undersea Explorer is a 24m long, 8 cabin

Panasesa Island has housing accommodation, including dorm rooms, toilets and showers and a basic kitchen and lounge room for lectures, training and relaxing times. Please note that the electricity is limited and therefore we need to be conservative with our use of power and hot water on the island. Quick showers are necessary!

Please make sure you are comfortable with these arrangements before booking.





## POWER

On board the Undersea Explorer, there is 240/220 voltage, using the Australian style power point as pictured. If you move on to the islands, you will not have access to power unless there is a generator provided, which is not guaranteed.

Outages are common. \*Please keep in mind that we are on an island and both internet and electricity can be interrupted based on weather conditions.



## SIDE NOTE ON ALCOHOL

Strictly no alcohol or illicit drugs are permitted on the islands. You are not permitted to bring your own alcohol. Anyone found to have brought their own alcohol or to be in possession of illicit drugs will have their program position canceled immediately.

# FOOD

**SPECIAL NOTE TO VEGANS AND VEGITARIANS:** *Please be aware that it is often difficult to accommodate strict vegans. It may be possible to get meatless meals but vegans may have a problem avoiding animal products altogether.*

Food is also basic, please be aware we try to cater for specific dietary requirements, but this is difficult given our remote location. If you do have gluten or other requirements we suggest that you bring a supply of suitable foods with you. We will provide 3 basic meals a day. All food is provided throughout your program, soft drinks will be available for purchase for AUD\$3 a can. Any islands expenses can be placed onto a tab and can be paid by eftpos at the end of your trip.

## TYPICAL MEALS

**BREAKFAST:** cereals, toast and a selection of fruit.

### LUNCH & DINNER

Buffet Style, stews, curry and rice, pasta dishes, wraps salads, bbq, and stirfrys, on occasion local dishes.

### BEVERAGES

Water, tea, instant coffee and juice are provided  
Soft drinks and coconuts are also available for purchase

## INCLUSIONS

- Airport transfer between Alotau airport and the UE
- Travel between Alotau to the Conflict Islands
- Travel to research sites
- All food
- All accommodation on the Island
- Laundry facilities (once a week)
- Research Equipment
- All activities (except diving)
- In-country orientation and training
- Boat travel between islands and to neighboring Islands
- Use of kayaks, SUP's, snorkeling equipment
- End of trip bonfire
- Certificate of completion

## NOT INCLUDED

- Return flights to Alotau
- Accommodation in Port Moresby or Alotau (if you have a long layover)
- Travel Insurance
- Soft drinks
- Scuba Diving and Courses
- Additional tours
- Souvenirs
- Any additional food, for dietary requirements
- Entry Permit/Visa



# COMMUNITY AWARENESS & EDUCATION

## HOPE FOR A BETTER FUTURE

One of our main goals here at CICI is to  
help create a better future for all.

On each CICI program, we visit a different community group to present our donations and our education programs. Part of your program will be to design an activity for either children or adults to take part in for education in marine/habitat conservation. We will spend one full day visiting a local village where you will have the opportunity to pass on any donations, take part in traditional activities like weaving, coconut husking and presenting your own informal presentation.

Depending on the island we visit, you may have the opportunity to go on a local tour. This may be in the form of a traditional sailau, visiting a skull cave (part of PNG headhunting history), snorkeling on a sunken plane wreck from WWII or learning traditional cooking or weaving.

Our goal on these visits is to provide education about what CICI's objectives are and to get the surrounding communities involved, interested and engaged. Without their support, our conservation efforts would not work. We need to show our support for the local communities by undertaking these awareness days where we can tell stories and discuss with the community what is important to them and to us. Together we can make a difference!!



# TRAVEL, SAFETY & VISA

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL TIPS

# PNG FACT FILE

**COUNTRY:** Papua New Guinea **Capital City:** Port Moresby **Area:** 462,840 km<sup>2</sup>

**POPULATION:** 7,059,653 (2011)

**LANGUAGES:** Papua New Guinea has over 300 languages spoken through out the country, within our staff we have 5 different languages, not including English and Tok Pisin (Pigeon)

**CURRENCY:** Papua New Guinea Kina (PGK)

**TIME ZONE:** AEST (UTC+10, +11)

**INTERNATIONAL CALLING CODE: +675**

**HUMIDITY:** 70%–90%

**TEMPERATURE RANGE: 26-38° C**

**RAINFALL:** 0–500 mm



## CULTURAL AWARENESS

**Do your research** about Papua New Guinea and the Milne Bay region before arrival. Learn about the Papua New Guinean culture and people.

For example, the chewing of Beetle Nut is very common throughout Papua New Guinea, causing the red teeth that locals are known for.

Be respectful of other people and their culture at all times and be a good ambassador for your country, this means dressing appropriately and not showing too much skin, especially when in swim wear. Papua New Guinea is predominantly Christian in religion, but traditional religious and ancestral worships still exist in some places, especially in the villages of Milne Bay.

Papua New Guinea is an incredible country with a rich history and extremely diverse culture. There are more than 800 cultural groups and languages in Papua New Guinea and some areas still relatively untouched by the western world.



## VISA REQUIREMENTS

[illegible]

If you are staying for more than 30 days, then you need to apply for your visa before entering. You are considered as a tourist entering on a planned itinerary. You need to send your passport with the application form (attached) to your nearest embassy so they can grant the entry and place your entry permit sticker into your passport and send it back to you. This also makes the airport transition smoother.

[illegible]



## SAFETY

If you are required to spend a night in Port Moresby, do NOT take a taxi from the airport. Arrange an airport pickup with your hotel prior to arrival. Most hotels in Port Moresby offer this service free of charge. The best hotel accommodation is right near the airport.

The Conflict Islands are located 80 nautical miles away from the main town of Alotau, so you will spend minimal time in town on the day of your arrival and departure, but like all places, theft can be an issue. You should also take caution when walking around, and if we are in town at night don't walk alone and stay on the main streets and beware of pick pockets. The level of major crimes in Alotau is much less than in other areas of Papua New Guinea, and is known for its people being kind and peaceful. For women, it is best to dress conservatively while on the mainland, try to avoid very short shorts and tank tops.

Once you arrive at the pristine Conflict Islands, you will be very far from any of the troubles of the mainland. Please check with your doctor about vaccinations for Papua New Guinea, but it is recommended that all your routine vaccinations are up to date. There is malaria on the mainland of Papua New Guinea, **however not on the Conflict Islands**, therefore it is up to you if you choose to take anti-malarials during your program.

## TRAVEL INSURANCE

You will not be able to participate in the Conflict Island Conservation Initiative until you have provided a copy of your current personal travel insurance covering you for Papua New Guinea. Any divers who wish to participate in scuba diving during their time need also to have dive insurance. We recommend DAN Diving insurance.

The reason we insist on medical coverage and travel insurance is due to the remote area in which we are located; We are 100kms from our nearest town and 5 hours via speed boat. In a life threatening emergency, you will need to be evacuated via helicopter which is expensive - so make sure you are covered.

## RESPONSIBLE TRAVEL

We advise you to get online and find out as much about PNG and the Milne Bay history before embarking on your travel. Learning about the culture before your arrival will help you feel comfortable and be more aware of the future experiences you will obtain during this amazing trip. We will be able to help you learn some of the more common phrases, however the diverse amount of languages means we don't expect you to learn them all.

### Environmental sensitivity:

*Take only photos, leave only footprints and kill nothing but time...*

When living on our remote islands, please consider the type of cleaning products used for personal use. Make sure you take all rubbish (and then some more) from the island on every trip you make. We have only pit style toilets, so only biodegradable products are to be put inside, all other items are to be taken off the island and rubbish bins will be provided for this in the toilet area.

## TRAVEL ARRANGEMENTS

Your volunteer program will begin in Alotau, Milne Bay Province. You will be required to arrange your own travel to Alotau. Daily flights are available from Port Moresby to Alotau.

When booking flights, we recommend that you book using Air Niugini ([www.airniugini.com.pg](http://www.airniugini.com.pg)) to depart from Sydney, Brisbane or Cairns on **FRIDAYS**, as there is a connecting flight through to Alotau from Port Moresby- which means no layover in Port Moresby! If there is a delay, Air Niugini will cover the cost for any overnight accommodation in Port Moresby and other associated costs.

**DISCLAIMER:** This will not be the case if you use two different airlines for your flights, so we recommend you use Air Niugini, for all flights. As all our programs begin on a FRIDAY and finish on a FRIDAY, it is the most convenient travel arrangement. Air Niugini has an international baggage allowance of 23kgs + 16kgs of dive equipment.

You will be met by one of our staff members at Gurney Airport in Alotau, where you will be transferred to our research vessel, the Undersea Explorer. If you need to do any shopping locally or wish to walk into the main town this can be arranged.

You will be allocated your air-conditioned cabin on the Undersea Explorer, where you will be sharing with another volunteer.

An EFTPOS machine is also available on the island so you can draw your kina (local currency) for the trip on the island.

Once you have booked your flights, please send us your travel itinerary so that we can arrange your airport pickup. If you require any assistance in booking flights or travel arrangement please email us.

# DATES & PRICES

## 2020 TRIP DATES

This is designed as a 2-week or 4-week program, run during the wet season for it's calmer seas. The total trip cost is **\$1950** per person for **14 days**. There is a maximum of 14 interns on each trip. You will require to put down a **\$400 non-refundable deposit** to secure your placement in the program after acceptance. The balance is required to be paid in full one month prior to commencement.

The available dates are:



TRIP	DATES 2020
1	12 <sup>th</sup> May to 29 <sup>th</sup> May
2	29 <sup>th</sup> May to 12 <sup>th</sup> June
3	12 <sup>th</sup> June to 26 <sup>th</sup> June
4	26 <sup>th</sup> June to 10 <sup>th</sup> July
5	10 <sup>th</sup> July to 24 <sup>th</sup> July
6	24 <sup>th</sup> July to 7 <sup>th</sup> August
7	7 <sup>th</sup> August to 21 <sup>st</sup> August



## HOW TO BOOK

BOOK NOW!!

Go to [www.cici.net.au/apply-now](http://www.cici.net.au/apply-now), fill out the application form and submit with your CV and National Police Check for the best chance of getting selected for this unique experience!



# SCUBA DIVING



## Costs

**Discover Diving:** \$150 for first dive \$100 very dive after

**Open water course:** e-learning prior to arrival \$495

**Advanced Open water course:** On island \$525, with e-learning prior to arrival \$395

**Dive in Deeper Package:** with e-learning prior to arrival \$720

**Fun dive with rented gear** \$50 per dive

**e-Learning:** \$220 fee straight to PADI online. Must have credit card to pay.



**PADI eLearning™**

**All participants undertaking diver training, get FREE gear hire and FREE diving for the duration of your program**

Now you can do your **PADI** certification here with CICI as part of your program. Through The Conflict Islands PADI 5 Star Resort, you can do your **PADI Open Water Course** or if you are already certified you can take your skills to a new depth with the **PADI Advanced Open Water Diver Course**. You can also package them up and do them both during your program with our **Dive In Deeper Package** including both the open water course and the Advanced open water courses.

# VOLUNTEER PACKING LIST

## SUGGESTIONS ON WHAT TO BRING

### EXPEDITION PACKING CHECKLIST

#### GENERAL

Photocopies of your passport, flight itinerary, and credit cards in case the originals are lost or stolen; these copies should be packed separately from the original documents

Passport and/or visa (if necessary)

Copy of all Travel Insurance Details

Diving Certifications

#### CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR FOR FIELDWORK

Reef shoes, booties, or sandals (corals can be sharp and cut your feet)

Casual shoes

Bathing suits

Fishing or Gardening type gloves

Quick-drying, lightweight shorts (two or three pairs)

Loose-fitting, quick-drying, comfortable pants

Quick-drying, lightweight shirts (two to four)

Lightweight, long-sleeved, quick-drying shirts to prevent sunburn (one or two)

Rain gear

Hat with wide brim

Thin socks for mosquito protection

Neck gaiter or light scarf for sun protection

#### FIELD SUPPLIES

Small daypack/dry bag

Insect repellent spray with DEET for mosquitoes

Sunscreen (waterproof with SPF 50+)

Lip balm with SPF

One water bottle able to hold at least one liter

Polarized sunglasses with a strap

Alarm clock or watch/phone

**Headlamp or flashlight or torch with extra batteries**

#### PERSONAL SUPPLIES

Personal toiletries

Hydrolytes

Antibacterial wipes or lotion

Bandaids

Personal first aid kit and medications

Spending money

#### DIVE/SNORKELING EQUIPMENT

2 or 3mm wetsuit

mask, fins, snorkel

BCD (If own one)

Dive computer (If own one)

Regulator (If own one)

\*\*\*Tank and weights will be supplied and it is **recommended you bring your own gear**. Snorkeling gear will be provided free of charge\*\*\*

#### CLOTHING/FOOTWEAR/GOODS FOR DONATION

The local people of PNG do not have very much and do not ask for handouts, they will always want to give you something in return, so if you have anything that you think would be useful to someone in a remote community, please do not hesitate to bring it along for donation.

#### Suitable items:

sunglasses	footwear
clothes	old phones
school equipment	reading books
(books/pens/pencils)	games
sports equipment	coloring in books
speakers	



# PLANNING CHECKLIST

## PLANNING CHECKLIST

### IMMEDIATELY

- Make sure you understand and agree to the Conflict Islands Conservation Initiative [Terms and Conditions](#) and [Participant Code of Conduct](#).
- Make your apply through CICI's website, [www.cici.net.au](http://www.cici.net.au)
- Once accepted, pay your deposit.

### 6 MONTHS PRIOR TO EXPEDITION

- Email all of your completed paperwork.
- If traveling internationally, make sure your passport is current with + 6 months until its expiry and obtain a visa for entry to PNG if necessary.
- Complete any diving certificates you wish to use on program.

### 90 DAYS PRIOR TO EXPEDITION

- Pay any outstanding balance for your program.
- Book travel arrangements (see the Travel Planning section for details).
- Email through all flight and travel insurance details.
- Join face book group (CICI interns and volunteers) to meet other people who have been on the program and those who may be your new travel buddies.

### 30 DAYS PRIOR TO EXPEDITION

- Review the packing list to make sure you have all the clothing, personal supplies, and equipment needed.
- Leave copies of your photo ID and flight reservation number with a parent, relative or friend.

**READ THIS EXPEDITION BRIEFING THOROUGHLY.** It provides the most accurate information available at the time of your *Conflict Islands Conservation Initiative* project planning, and will likely answer any questions you have about the project. However, please also keep in mind that research requires improvisation, and you may need to be flexible. Research plans evolve in response to new findings, as well as to unpredictable factors such as weather, equipment failure, and travel challenges. To enjoy your expedition to the fullest, remember to expect the unexpected, be tolerant of repetitive tasks, and try to find humor in difficult situations. If there are any major changes in the research plan or field logistics, *CICI* will make every effort to keep you well informed before you get into the field.

## FINAL CHECKLIST

- Registration form
- CV and Cover Letter
- Copy of Passport
- Police Clearance
- Current travel Insurance
- Current Dive Insurance (if applicable)
- Signed copy of PADI Waiver
- Signed copy of CICI Waiver
- Signed Copy of Code of Conduct
- Flight and hotel details

### RESOURCES

#### PROJECT-RELATED MEDIA

- CONFLICT ISLANDS CONSERVATION INITIATIVE: <https://www.cici.net.au>
- THE CONFLICT ISLANDS: <https://www.conflictislands.com>

#### IDENTIFICATION GUIDES

- Coral Finder Indo-Pacific (Russel Kelly, BYO Guides) <https://www.byoguides.com/coralfinder/>
- Corals of the World ( Charlie Vernon & Mary Stafford-Smith) <http://www.coralsoftheworld.org>
- Reefbase.org [http://www.reefbase.org/global\\_database/dbr2,60,PNG,4.aspx](http://www.reefbase.org/global_database/dbr2,60,PNG,4.aspx)
- 'An assessment of the status of the coral reefs of Papua New Guinea' (M. Huber, 1994, ScienceDirect)

#### VISA INFORMATION

- PNG IMMIGRATION & CITIZENSHIP SERVICE AUTHORITY: <https://www.immigration.gov.pg/>
- ONLINE APPLICATION: <https://www.ica.gov.pg/>

#### SOCIAL MEDIA

- FACEBOOK: <https://www.facebook.com/CICIPNG/>
- FACEBOOK GROUP: <https://www.facebook.com/groups/cicipng/>
- INSTAGRAM: [https://www.instagram.com/cici\\_png\\_/](https://www.instagram.com/cici_png_/)