

## Late fall 2008 blablaba ... *To our tuvaluan friends*

It has been so long that we dont even remember since when we last chatted with you. What is certain is that, Fanny and I both being workoholic and our volunteers very conciliant, we did a lot and cant remember it all either. We'll try not to bother you with details but instead, as Panapasi suggested, we'll put some of the pictures from our blog: [www.alofatuvalu.tv/blog](http://www.alofatuvalu.tv/blog).

One of the first things which took our time and energy, this summer, felt great : taking over a studio appartment which had been occupied illegally for years by a squatter. A real mess but a true pleasure to redesign and put this whole issue behind. Other nice summer activities included : mixing home made compost and making cuttings to plant on the roof terrasse.

Amongst the many other things we did the last 4 months, what really sticks out is our 3 trips



to Brussels, on « Tuvaluan ground ». Staying with Laima and Panapasi was very uplifting and meeting Nala (and Apisai and Tapu) late september, was a very sweet treat, for Cyril, our general secretary, Fanny and I. The last Belgian trip early november was to launch the newly printed Dutch version of the comic book : « Hallo Aarde ». Thanks to Ademe. (see below)



Before and After, Alofa Tuvalu members advocated Tuvalu's case in many different events dealing with climate change and/or environment issues :



- a 24 hour trip in Brittany where Fanny and I slept in what they called an egg, up a good 10 meters from the ground, in a tree. There, Trouble in Paradise was screened and a conference held. A great opportunity to meet with mayors for small Britton islands. All of them were interested by human waste digesters!

- early september, Gilles Alofa Tuvalu biofuel specialist made the trip to Paris for the monthly « Environment Tuesday » to explain the 2008 demonstrations done in Funafuti. I spent several nights editing video for that event and loved it.





- Meanwhile, in the UK, from september 14th to 28th, Sarah and two of her artists friends organized the « We are all Tuvalu » art exhibition. According to Sarah, « the opening was great – there were many more people through than I thought there would be and everyone was genuinely interested in the issues. »

- early october, the Ashoka Fondation forum invited us to present Small is Beautiful. Many headaches, to understand what is really meant by « social entrepreneur » and how we can fit in the concept when Alofa Tuvalu works for the commongood and does not generate revenus for itself. We give the money we get and our time and dont sell anything !! Maybe we should ☺



- In the US, on october 11th, the Arizona Verde Valley School rewarded Christopher Horner for Humanitarian and Artistic Achievement for the film "Trouble in Paradise" and for Alofa Tuvalu's investment into helping Tuvalu. Chris, an alumni from Verde Valle School, made the trip from California to get the awards and discuss with the students.

- Late october, Angeline and Fanny made the trip to Corsica for Alofa's kids awareness action « Our planet under water big top event » : a full week of workshops where about 3000 comic book were distributed.



The day they returned we left for Brussels for a supposedly press conference at the International Weather Forum after having sent several hundreds of press releases in 3 languages : french, english and Deutsh ! A report was made on Belgian TV by the lady who helped translating the comic book : Jill Peters, a weather forecast presenter.

We also were invited to many associative forums. So... basically, all summer all of us blablabled... Here to the right are Angeline, a long time trainee and volunteer, now a civil worker financed by the education league & Yaily, a volunteer from Columbia, at a neighborhood festival.







Last event of November : another one of Fanny's "big tops" which took place in a town not too far from Paris where around 1000 more kids learned about Tuvalu and how to fight global warming.

Of course we have no picture of the loooooong hours spent in the office or at meetings : writing Ademe reports, numerous funding requests for biodiesel and gasification in Amatuku and for a visual collection about Tuvalu culture and traditions ; exchanging with Sandrine (our ocean specialist from New Caledonia met in Tuvalu) and the Total Foundation for Tuvalu marine biodiversity inventory/book ; with all actors on the Amatuku Biogas issues such as Paul from Sopac, (our partner on this activity), who had financed Sikeli's wages for building/training. The Sopac team took the opportunity of their annual meeting in Tuvalu to check the site. Hopefully their advices will help making this digester function to our satisfaction.

The last marathon which kept us up till early morning for weeks : 5 applications for funding due at the same time. Quite depressing was to realize one more time that most funding requests deal with nothing concrete and use a coded language. Furthermore if from cities like Paris we deal with difficulties finding out how to get to and fill online documents, then the people who are supposedly the beneficiaries of the funds have little chance to be able to submit. I guess most people on this planet share the same frustrations. In the back of my mind, I often have pictures of Molipi, Sarah, Fanny and myself wandering in the dark government building trying to send the EU application Laima had asked us to prepare in 2006.... With torch lights and computers which could not be recharged... An adventure for which I wish we had pictures !

Bad news being often balanced with good ones, we got the Unesco email, pasted below. It has been keeping us motivated for days. Alofa's global scheme « Small is Beautiful » has been selected with 24 other international projects, to be presented in Bonn next spring. It is only recognition and we'll still have to struggle to go further but it is recomforting to know we are not alone believing in helping Tuvalu survive as a nation. Of course we are aware of how many are already involved in this adventure with us. How to forget the spontaneous first financial offers based on just a concept... or the amazing availability of Alofa members all over the world ? Amongst nice contacts whom some of you might know: Keith and Ann Chambers, from Oregon. They have been visiting Tuvalu since early 1973, especially Nanumea, and are now working on a health project which will take them back there for the next few years. For those who do not know their website : [www.nanumea.net](http://www.nanumea.net)

We feel very privileged to have so many friends around and realize we cant please everyone. Even Obama won « only » 52% of American hearts... However this unexpected email from Unesco reassured us on the trueness and feasibility of our vision and mission.

This morning, waking up under a sunny sky after many grey days, was another good omen... What else one could ask for ? Yes I know, a hot bath to fight the chills and forget about the snow outside.. OK, wasting 200 litters of precious water is a luxury which we do not recommand... However we probably use less water here in a week than the average folk in an hour... Hmmm I'm rambling again...

Ke Manuia te Tausaga Fou

Gilliane & the overseas gang

**From Unesco german desk :**

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am very pleased to inform you that the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development organisers - UNESCO and the German Ministry of Education and Research, in cooperation with the German Commission for UNESCO - have selected your project Small is beautiful to be exhibited at the conference, taking place from March 31st to April 2nd 2009, in Bonn, Germany.

The organisers carefully scrutinized all applications and consulted with the International Advisory Group of the conference in order to select your project as one of the 25 Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) projects for the conference exhibition.

Five years into the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, for which UNESCO is the lead agency, the conference aims to highlight the relevance of ESD to all of education, promote international exchange on ESD, especially between countries of the North and the South, carry out a stock- taking of the implementation of the UN Decade, and develop strategies for the way ahead.

As an exhibiting project, you will thus have the possibility to show your activities to the 700 conference participants. Additional information about the World Conference can be found on the conference website: [www.esd-world-conference-2009.org](http://www.esd-world-conference-2009.org).

For the exhibition, you will be provided with one exhibition booth, where you may display posters, publications and roll-ups. Any additional tangible objects are highly welcome. Please bear in mind that languages of the conference, including the exhibition, are English and French; material would therefore have to be provided in English and/or French. We would appreciate if you could send us a pre-version of your exhibition materials; if possible, via e-mail in pdf- format, by 31 January 2009.

At the exhibition booth, you will have a counter, two display racks for publications and a partition wall for posters or pictures. We have grouped the exhibiting projects into the five UNESCO world regions; five projects per region will be shown. Please find attached a list of all selected projects. To provide information about the exhibition on the conference website, we have produced a short presentation text for your project. After confirming your participation in the Exhibition, please have a look at the attached text and send us back a revised version by 10 December 2008.

Regarding participation in Bonn, the conference organisers are able to cover travel and accommodation expenses for one representative of the project. Further details concerning travel and accommodation as well as the exhibition itself will be arranged with the logistic company preparing the conference after you have confirmed your participation in the exhibition. Please note that it is not possible to send more than one person, even if you would pay for the travel by yourself.

Please confirm via e-mail by 1 December 2008 whether you accept this invitation on the basis of the terms above.

We look forward to your contribution to the World Conference on Education for Sustainable Development. If there are any questions remaining, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely yours,

Lina Franken