



Troubled Waters: The role of practice-led research in understanding and documenting heritage loss

SARA PENRHYN JONES, BATH SPA UNIVERSITY

PROF. LORNA M. HUGHES, GLASGOW UNIVERSITY



Arts & Humanities
Research Council

NEW MEDIA ACTIVISM:

UNCCC 2009, 2010, 2011

SPANNER FILMS/
ONECLIMATE



61,944,208

In December 2009, the Age of Stupid team set off by train and boat to the UN Climate Summit in Copenhagen. Our mission: most important

- BY SHOW** | **BY STRAND**
- #1 THE STUPID SHOW ARRIVES**
Live from the Bella Center in Copenhagen... its a few hours!
 - #2 IT'S EASY, STUPID**
Climate science, cutting carbon, and being happy.
 - #3 A TECHNICAL WRITE OFF**
When Skype and a couple of laptops destroyed our internet broadcast.
 - #4 LOOPHOLES & FORESTS**
With 2000m high, satellite expert (Satko) and physicist by the Day!





‘The Tongan coat of arms says that God and Tonga will be your inheritance, but it looks like it’s only the heavens we’ll see, because we’ll no longer have a place to call home.’

SIONE TAALO FULIVAI, TONGA
INTERVIEW, DURBAN (2011)



‘The total landmass of all our islands is 300 square Kilometers... we have a coastline of 644 Kilometers. The Maldives is simply a coastline.’

MOHAMED ASLAM, ENVIRONMENT MINISTER (MALDIVES)

INTERVIEW, CANCUN (2010)



‘The way that I see it, the future for my people is ... disappear.’

**CLARE ANTEREA, *PACIFIC CALLING*, KIRIBATI
INTERVIEW, CANCUN (2010)**



02:34

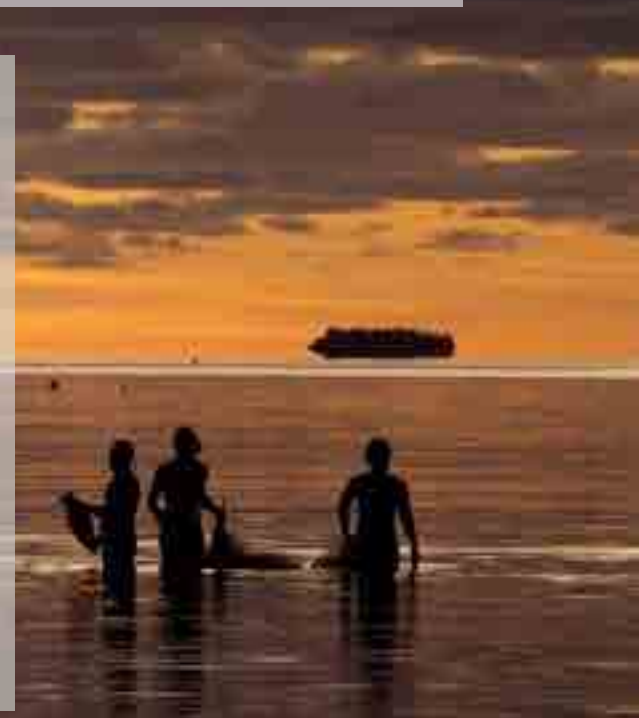
HD





TROUBLED WATERS, STORMY FUTURES: HERITAGE IN TIMES OF ACCELERATED CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Coleg Cymraeg**
 - **National Trust**
 - **National Library of Wales**
 - **Cornish Audio Visual Archive**
 - **University of Exeter**
- Kings College London**
- Monash/ Bath Spa**



**Funded by the Arts and
Humanities Research Council UK**



Arts & Humanities
Research Council



**Dr Bryony
Onciul**



**Dr Anna
Woodham**



**Prof. Kate
Rigby**



National
Trust

Our land:
for ever,
for everyone

Love the coast...

94%

of people agree that

'It's important to me that Britain's coast is kept beautiful for future generations to enjoy'

90%

of people agree that

'It's important that the planning system works to protect the beauty of our coastline'

70%

of people agree that

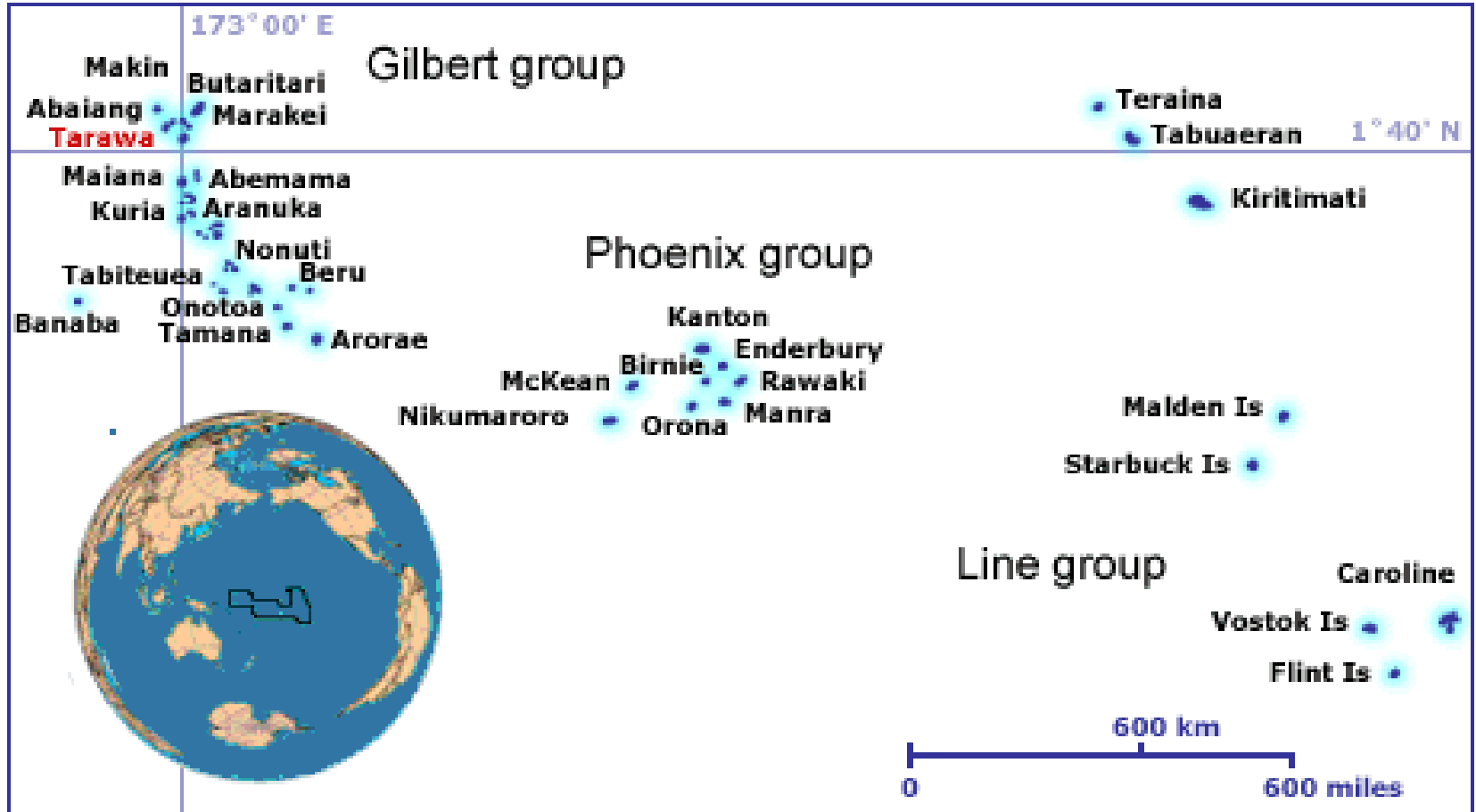
'I am concerned about the impact of climate change and extreme weather for our coast' ^[1]

NATIONAL TRUST- SHIFTING SHORES 2005

CLIMATE CHANGE

- **Durgan**
- **Porthdinllaen**
- **Kiribati**







HISTORIC SITE



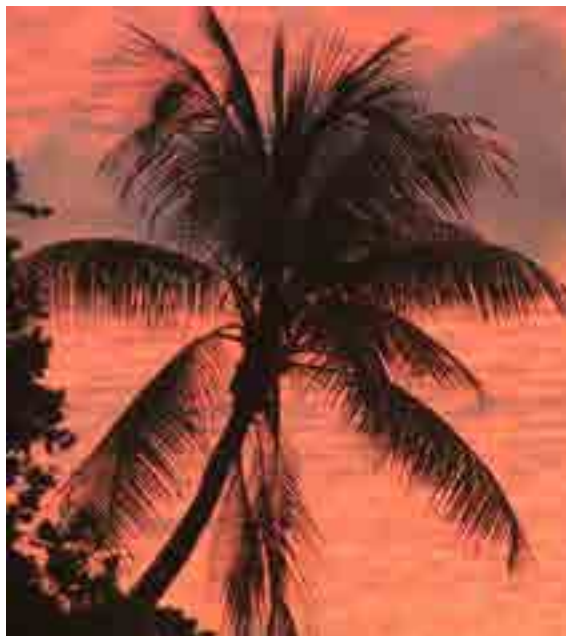
Natan Itonga, Cultural Officer
Cultural Centre and Museum of Kiribati



WHAT IS HERITAGE?

HERITAGE AND WATER









**This entire country
is about to be
wiped out
by climate change.**

**It won't
be the last**



SINKING NATION





PROF. LORNA HUGHES,

Leads the Humanities Advanced Technology and Information Initiative (HATII), the home department for Information Studies teaching and research at the University of Glasgow

TROUBLED WATERS: EXPLORING ISSUES IN ARCHIVING DOCUMENTARY HERITAGE

National Library of Wales: Responsible for documenting the heritage of Wales; keeping collections in trust for the nation, and making them accessible.

Collaboration: Developing a methodology for documenting and archiving multimedia records of Welsh communities threatened by climate change, and archiving these materials.

Research questions:

- What are the archives created by this sort of encounter?
- How can they be made accessible, and re-used?
- What are the ethical issues?
- How does a National Library interact with a 'living' archive, and the communities who create it?
- What are the technical issues in accessing hybrid material?
- Where does archive management become cultural mapping?

TROUBLED WATERS: SCOPING THE CONTENT

Content that will be generated by communities under threat from climate change:

- **Audio (oral histories, songs, music)**
- **Video (diaries, oral histories, performance)**
- **Text (personal papers, diaries, ethnographic materials)**
- **Artistic works (paintings, drawings, sculpture)**
- **Photographs (historic, contemporary)**
- **IT (computer hardware and software)**
- **Intangible heritage: stories, customs, ideas, etc...**



‘Cyberspace is not an uncontested domain. The digital medium contains an ideological base – it is a site of struggle.’ (Michelle Pickover)



Kahn, R and Tanner, S (2014) Building Futures: The Role of Digital Collections in Shaping National Identity in Africa (chapter in African Studies in the Digital Age)

CONCLUSION- THE ROAD AHEAD

- **Defining and archiving heritage is an evolving conversation with the relevant community**
- **There is space for a multiplicity of ‘truths’, and inclusivity is essential**
- **Strategies must be flexible, co-operative, and locally/culturally specific**
- **Creative, practice-based, trans-disciplinary & participatory action approaches may work best**
- **Such an archival project may have intrinsic social importance for the here and now**
- **We should be prepared to continuously expand/adjust our own sense of ‘heritage’**

WWW.CORDDIRDYFROEDD.ORG

Prof. Lorna M. Hughes:

lorna.m.hughes@gmail.com



Sara Penrhyn Jones:

s.jones3@bathspa.ac.uk

