

The 11th Pacific Science Inter-Congress
in conjunction with
2nd Symposium on French Research
in the Pacific

2-6 March 2009

TAHITI
French Polynesia

<http://www.psi2009.pf>

First Circular (May 2008)



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Pre-Announcement

France, French Polynesia, and the Pacific Science Association are pleased to announce the 11th Pacific Science Inter-Congress, which is oriented around the theme of "Pacific countries and their ocean facing local and global changes". The meeting will be held in Papeete, French Polynesia from 2 to 6 March 2009.

The 11th Pacific Science Inter-Congress will be held in conjunction with the 2nd Symposium on French Research in the Pacific.

The goals of the Inter-Congress are to:

- Assess problems and issues related to local and global changes in countries and territories in the Pacific, and how these changes are linked to geographic location. Issues will be addressed from a variety of scientific perspectives, examining human, social, economic and cultural considerations and emphasizing interdisciplinary approaches.
- Gather together scientists from the whole Asia-Pacific region. This is important because all countries and territories in the Pacific Rim and Basin face similar or linked problems that must be addressed both in the larger countries as well as smaller island states and in coordination with the other.
- Provide an opportunity to young scientists in the Pacific to garner important experience and take part in stimulating intellectual exchanges. Special financial and accommodation conditions will be set up for doctoral and postdoctoral students. A total of approximately 50 scholarship grants of 500€ will be awarded to cover partial travel and accommodation costs for the trip to Tahiti.
- Develop productive exchanges between participants from the countries and territories in the Asia-Pacific region and the communities in French Polynesia, Wallis and Futuna and New Caledonia.



The official language of the Inter-Congress is English.

A simultaneous translation French-English will also be organized.

More information on the Inter-Congress can be found on the official website:

<http://www.psi2009.pf>

The Inter-Congress Secretariat

The Director of the
Research Department
of French Polynésia

Priscille Tea FROGIER

The Special Assistant
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and Technology in
French Polynesia

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About the Pacific Science Association

The Pacific Science Association (PSA) is a regional non-governmental, scholarly organization that seeks to advance science, technology, and sustainable development in and of the Asia-Pacific region, by actively promoting interdisciplinary and international research and collaboration. PSA is composed of both national member organizations (typically National Academies of Science) and individual member scientists. The PSA Secretariat has been based at the Bishop Museum in Honolulu, Hawai'i since the organization's founding in 1920.

PSA facilitates interdisciplinary and international research and collaboration in the Asia-Pacific region, with a focus on key issues and problems in the region in order to engage science in the service of human needs and improving both the environment and quality of life of the region's peoples. PSA serves as a catalyst for scientific and scholarly collaboration; develops scientific capacity within the region; fosters effective communication between scientists, policy makers and the public; actively involves the Pacific Island states in regional and international scientific activities; and promotes the "Science of the Pacific".

Through quadrennial Congress and Inter-Congress meetings and ongoing scientific Working Groups, PSA provides an interdisciplinary international platform for scientists to discuss and review common concerns and priorities in the region. Through our scientific network, PSA links scientists from developed countries with those from developing countries, including the archipelagic and more remote states of the Pacific. PSA facilitates research initiatives on critical emerging issues for the region, such as biodiversity loss, climate change and ocean acidification, emerging infectious diseases, and the social implications of globalization - issues in which science can provide crucial information required by both society and policymakers to make sound and informed decisions. PSA's ongoing activities include:

- Multi-symposia Pacific Science Congresses, held in a different location every four years. Somewhat smaller and more topically focused Inter-Congress meetings are also held in between each Congress.
- *Pacific Science*, the official journal of the PSA. *Pacific Science* is a quarterly journal devoted to the biological, physical, and social sciences of the Pacific Region.

Visit www.pacificscience.org for more information on PSA.

About Pacific Science Congresses and Inter-Congresses

Twenty-one Pacific Science Congresses have been held since the first meeting in Honolulu in 1920. They are the principal meetings of the Pacific Science Association and held every four years. Inter-Congresses are held at four year intervals between Congresses. Ten Inter-Congresses have been held since the first meeting in Kuala Lumpur in 1969. Other venues have included Guam, Fiji, Bali, Taipei, Valparaiso, and Singapore. Inter-Congress meetings are typically somewhat smaller (less than 1000 attendees) and more thematically focused than Congresses.

Scientific content

French Polynesia consists of some 118 high volcanic and low-lying limestone island and atolls with a land area of only 3,430 km² scattered over an ocean area of about 5.5 millions km². As one of the most geographically remote and widely scattered groups of islands in the world, French Polynesia provides a perfect laboratory for the study of biodiversity dynamics and evolution, human-environment interactions, sustainable development and the problems faced by Pacific countries, in particularly small island states and territories, in addressing issues arising from local and global change.

The general Inter-Congress theme “Pacific Countries and Their Ocean Facing Local and Global Changes” is thus highly relevant for French Polynesia, its Pacific neighbour states and the Pacific region as a whole. Assessing, predicting and developing strategies for dealing with such change is critical to the environmental, economic and cultural sustainability of our region.

The overall goal of the Inter-Congress is to take stock of knowledge on the issues of local and global change from scientific, human, social, economics and cultural perspectives, using an interdisciplinary and cross-cultural approach.

The general theme has been broken down into five sub-thematic areas:

- Ecosystems, Biodiversity and Sustainable development
- Climate Change and Ocean Acidification
- Health Challenges in the Pacific: Infectious diseases, non-communicable diseases and health workforce
- Culture and Politics: The stakes of modernity
- Governance and the Economy: Future challenges for the Pacific.

A Plenary Session will be organised for considering existing and potential areas of regional and inter-regional collaboration within the Pacific.

These subjects will be addressed by invited keynote speakers, oral presentations and poster displays.



Session 1

Ecosystems, Biodiversity and Sustainable Development

Knowledge of centres of species richness and endemism are fundamental to strategies for conserving biodiversity and the sustainable management of natural resources; indeed, it is within this context that modern biodiversity science takes place.

The already-noticeable erosion of biodiversity has altered our collective vision of the natural environment and made the economic value of biological capital and ecosystem services more salient to the public and policymakers. Bio-taxonomic knowledge of an ecosystem is an important component of both effective environmental management and to the development of biotechnology. Pacific island environments are unique because their populations are particularly subject to intense speciation mechanisms that integrate the major drivers of evolution: migration, extinction, genetic drift, and natural selection. Oceanic islands are natural laboratories of the biodiversity dynamic, and of the interaction between humans and the environment.

Because of the unique importance of biodiversity in the Pacific Islands and its role in serving human needs, its protection must be integrated into the sustainable development context in the region. Biodiversity plays a critical role in the economies and societies of the Pacific islands, such as forest products, fisheries, and aquaculture (ex. pearl oysters in French Polynesia).

The session will be organised around five sub-themes:

- Biogeography and species evolution
- Connectivity
- Ecological processes
- Sustainable development and biodiversity management
- Coral reef and island resources



Session 2

Climate Change and Ocean Acidification

The Pacific Region is a critical one from the standpoint of climate change and variability, and stands to face some of the most severe impacts of anthropogenic climate change as atmospheric CO₂ increases, sea level rises, ocean acidification intensifies, and climate warms.

Climate modelling and paleoclimate reconstruction offer important and complementary tools for understanding past and future changes. Ecosystems face unprecedented challenges as the oceans become more acidic, human land-use intensifies, and extreme temperature and rainfall events become more frequent.

The aim of this session will be twofold:

- Describe and assess the variability of climate, past and future, in the context of the present greenhouse effect. We encourage both global and Pacific-based studies. Presentations dealing with the interaction between natural and human activities, and models of global warming and its impacts over the next century, are particularly welcome;
- Document the extent, magnitude and future trajectory of ocean acidification in the Pacific region, its impact on marine organisms and ecosystems, and its potential socio-economic implications. Studies dealing with monitoring, experimental perturbations and modelling are particularly welcome.



Session 3

Health Challenges in the Pacific: Infectious disease, non-communicable disease and health workforce

Moving into the 21st Century, the Asia-Pacific region faces several major public health challenges. For the region as a whole, infectious diseases still represent a major threat. The risk of emerging epidemics is high, especially for arboviruses (ex. dengue, Chikungunya, encephalitis) and pandemic influenza; non-communicable diseases also pose serious health challenges. While several efficient networks already exist to characterize epidemiological trends and detect new epidemic waves, preparedness is still an issue in the region. The Pacific Islands face specific additional concerns, including an emerging HIV/AIDS epidemic, as evidenced by a report released by the World Health Organization and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community. The current situation presents an urgent call for increased education and prevention campaigns on sexually transmitted infections, as well as better surveillance, screening and treatment.

Another key challenge for “Healthy Islands” - a model proposed for the Pacific - is the increasing burden of non-communicable diseases. Lifestyle diseases such as obesity, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases are rapidly increasing in both adults and children. The incidence of these diseases has grown dramatically because of changes in diet and a dramatic reduction in individuals’ level of activity. The challenge for public health officials is how to both manage the existing problem as well as to discourage lifestyle factors that negatively impact health. Finally, the ability to protect public health depends on the presence of educated and well-trained public health professionals from the laboratory to the field. It is imperative that the Pacific region be committed to training and educating health workers, developing networks within the international scientific community and building applied research programs designed to meet the needs of the region’s countries and territories.



Session 4

Culture and Politics: The stakes of modernity

Since their first face to face encounter with the West in the 16th Century, the peoples of the Pacific have been ceaselessly and actively engaged in adapting and re-shaping their societies and cultures in response to new cultural, technical and socio-political influences. The peoples of the Pacific are an integral part of global historical processes and they have succeeded, to a greater or lesser extent, in remaining true to themselves while at the same time undergoing change.

But at the beginning of the 21st Century, globalization introduces a new level and intensity of economic change and cultural exchanges - not just in the Pacific, but everywhere. In the face of profound and increasing social change, many island identities and cultures are experiencing a sense of being overwhelmed.

The question of cultural identity has become more acute: local languages are threatened with oblivion; development encourages the absorption of smaller ethnic groups into global or national societies; and many living traditions such as techniques and aesthetic values of material culture are neglected.

In the context of policy-making in the Pacific, the critical question lies in developing new paradigms for governance which bring together a respect for certain fundamental values upon which Pacific cultures are based, while also recognizing the inevitability (and to some degree, the desirability) of social change and development. In other words, the challenge is how to manage globalization more effectively so that ethnic groups can actively participate in the development paths that are open to them. In this regard, social science brings an array of knowledge and tools that can help illuminate how to better facilitate the successful and equitable adaptation of traditional and contemporary Pacific societies to the challenges of the future.



Session 5

Governance and the Economy: Future challenges for the Pacific

Globalization greatly impacts the economic systems, trade agreements and relations between countries and territories of the Pacific Region as well as with the rest of the world. The social economic workshop will consider questions related to global, regional and local interaction, under the following themes:

- The impact of globalization on human migration flows and the resulting financial transfers between countries and territories of the region
- Alternative exchange rate systems and currency unions in the Pacific
- Deregulation, trade liberalisation and competition in the Pacific Islands
- The impact of globalization on economic equity and self-reliance
- The economics of small, open and remote countries
- Governance and public policy in the Pacific region
- The impact of aid to Pacific island states
- The impact of local and global changes on tourism in the Pacific area.



Inter-Congress Organization

This Inter-Congress is a joint endeavour of France and French Polynesia in cooperation with the Pacific Science Association.

The High Commissioner of the Republic and the President of French Polynesia have mobilized their resources to ensure the success of the Inter-Congress.

The New Caledonia and Wallis and Futuna French Communities are involved.

Together, Special Assistants to Research and Technology in French Polynesia and in New Caledonia and the Director of the Research Delegation of French Polynesia are responsible for the planning and running of the Inter-Congress.

Two committees have been appointed to organize and coordinate the event:

- An International Scientific Committee and
- A Local Organizing Committee.



The International Scientific Committee

Members of the International Scientific Committee have been appointed in consultation with the organisers and the Pacific Science Association.

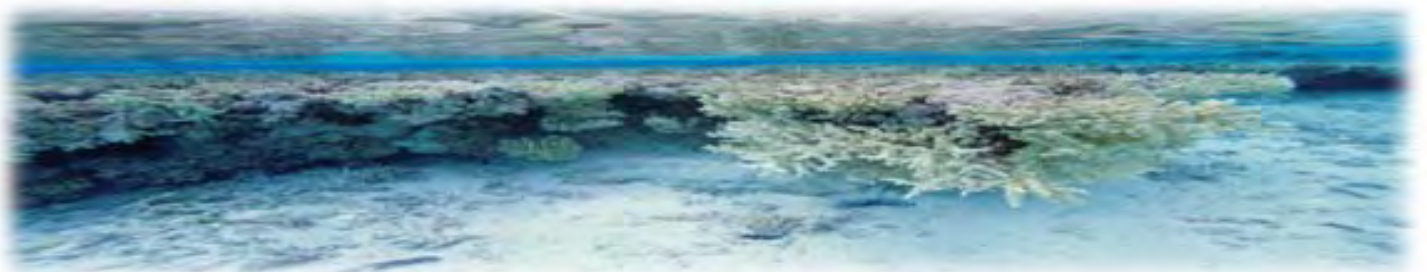
Présidents

- Dr. Congbin FU President of the Pacific Science Association, Chinese Academy of Science, China
- Dr. Fabrice COLIN Institut de Recherche pour le Développement, Nouméa, New-Caledonia

Members

- Dr. Bill ALBERSBERG University of the South Pacific, Fiji
- Dr. Hamid AMIR University of New-Caledonia, New Caledonia
- Dr. Marie-Lise CHANIN Academy of Sciences, France
- Dr. Jean-Claude COCHARD Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer, French Polynesia
- Dr. Julie COLE University of Arizona, Tucson, USA
- Dr. Juan CORREA Pontificia Universidad Catolica, Chile
- Dr. Jacques COMMAILLE Ecole Normale Supérieure, Cachan, France
- Dr. David FIELDING Otago University, New-Zealand
- Dr. Jean-Pierre GATTUSO Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique - University of Paris 6, Villefranche-sur-mer, France
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- Dr. Nancy LEWIS East-West Center, Hawaii, USA
- Dr. Christian MONTET University of French Polynesia, French Polynesia
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- Dr. Serge PLANES Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, Centre de Recherches Insulaires et Observatoire de l'Environnement, French Polynesia
- Dr. Sumonta PROMBOON Science Society of Thailand, Thailand
- Dr. Georges RODERICK University of California, Berkeley, USA
- Dr. Bernard SALVAT Ecole Pratique des Hautes Etudes, University of Perpignan, France
- Dr. Gérard SICLET Academy of Sciences, France
- Dr. Serge TCHERKEZOFF Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique - Ecole des Hautes Etudes en Sciences Sociales - University of Provence, Centre de recherche et de documentation sur l'Océanie, France

- Dr. Rémy TEYSSOU Institut Louis Malardé, French Polynesia
- Dr. Randy THAMAN University of the South Pacific, Fiji
- Dr. Darrell TRYON Australian National University, Australia
- Dr. Makoto TSUCHIYA University of the Ryukyus, Okinawa, Japan



The Organizing Committee

Local Organizing Committee in French Polynesia

A Local Organizing Committee is established under the joint auspices of the High Commissioner of the Republic in French Polynesia and of the President of French Polynesia. Special Assistants in charge of Research and Technology in French Polynesia and in New Caledonia and the Director of the Research Delegation of French Polynesia will be on duty for the committee secretariat.

Co-chairs

- The High Commissioner of the Republic in French Polynesia or her representative
- The President of French Polynesia or his representative

Representing French Polynesia

- The Vice-President of French Polynesia or his representative
- The Minister in charge of Research or his representative
- The Minister in charge of Environment or his representative
- The Minister in charge of Marine Resources and Sea or his representative
- The Minister in charge of Land Planning or his representative
- The Minister in charge of Health or his representative
- The Minister in charge of Cultural affairs or his representative
- The Minister in charge of the Economy or his representative
- The Heads of French Polynesia Departments or their representatives if needed

Representing the High Commissioner

- The General Secretary or his representative
- The Attache to the General Secretary or his representative
- The Windward Islands Administrator or his representative
- The Chief of Staff of the High Commissioner or his representative
- The Heads of State Departments or their representatives, if needed

Representatives of Research Organizations

- The President of the University of French Polynesia or her representative
- The « Centre de Recherches Insulaires et Observatoire de l'Environnement » Director or his representative
- The University of California at Berkeley, Gump station Director or his representative
- The « Initiative Française pour les Recifs Coralliens » in French Polynesia Correspondent or her representative
- The « Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer » Director or his representative
- The « Institut Louis Malardé » Director or his representative
- The « Institut de Recherche pour le Développement » Director or his representative
- The « Laboratoire d'Étude et de Surveillance de l'Environnement » Director or his representative
- The « Laboratoire de Géophysique » Director or his representative
- The « Météo France » Director or his representative
- The Director of the Research Department of French Polynesia
- The Special Assistant in charge of Research and Technology in French Polynesia

Local organizing committee in New Caledonia

- The High Commissioner of the Republic or his representative
- The President of the Government of New-Caledonia or his representative
- The President of the University of New Caledonia or his representative
- The « Bureau de Recherches Géologiques et Minières » Director or his representative
- The « Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique » Director or his representative
- The « Institut Agronomique néo-Calédonien » Director or his representative
- The « Institut Français de Recherche pour l'Exploitation de la Mer » Director or his representative
- The « Institut Pasteur de Nouvelle-Calédonie » Director or her representative
- The « Institut de Recherche pour le Développement » Director or his representative
- The Special Assistant in charge of Research and Technology in New Caledonia



When, Where and How?

The Inter-Congress will take place from Monday March 2nd through Friday March 9th 2009. The timing of the meeting has been selected to maximize the opportunity both for favourable weather and lowest possible costs.

The inter-Congress will be held on the island of Tahiti in French Polynesia.

A simultaneous translation French-English will be organized.

The Inter-Congress venue and seminars rooms and accommodations are within minutes from each other.

Regular shuttles will be set up between each site for fast transportation.

There will be 5 conference rooms at the Sheraton Hotel, each with a capacity of 100 to 400 persons.

Quality accommodations are offered at a range of prices; rooms can be shared.

Various hotels are proposed:

Sheraton Hotel Tahiti	http://www.sheratontahiti.com
Hotel Sofitel Tahiti Resort	http://www.sofitel.com
Tahiti Airport Lodge Hotel	http://www.tahitairportmotel.com
Hotel Manava Suite Resort	http://www.pearlresorts.com
Hotel Meridien Tahiti	http://www.starwoodhotels.com

Preferential rates have been negotiated (see website <http://www.psi2009.pf>).

Finally, accommodations will be offered to doctoral and postdoctoral students at preferential rates (see "Young scientists").

The accomodation provider is VIPfenua: vipfenua@mail.pf

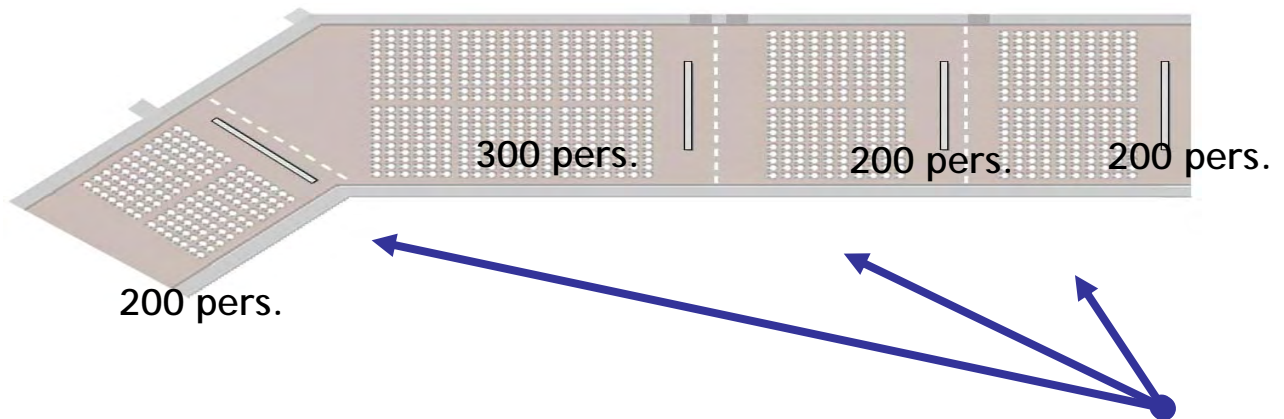


The Inter-Congress Venue



Sheraton Hotel Tahiti Resort and Spa

Inter-Congress meeting rooms at the Sheraton Hotel Tahiti Resort and Spa



The 1,000 person room can be divided into 4 sound proof rooms for parallel sessions.

A fifth over-the-water conference room with a capacity for 200 persons will also be available.

Special arrangements for Young Scientists (less than 35 years old)

The Inter-Congress organizers will award fifty Grants of 500 euros each to young scientists (under age 35). Details and applications will be available and posted soon on the official website. Decisions on the grant awards will be made by the Inter-Congress Scientific Council.

Students are exempted from registration fees by presenting written proof of their identity at time of registration. They will also receive the same meal and other amenities as those enjoyed by regular participants.

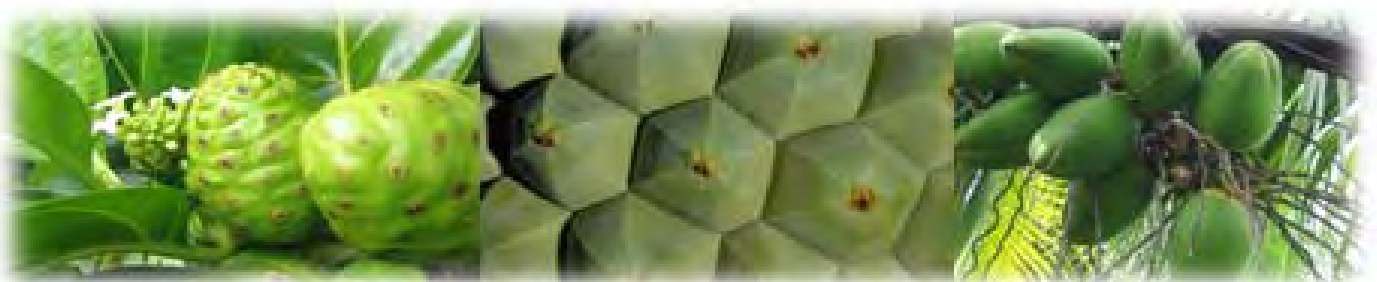
There will be both individual and group-dorm-type accommodation available at three different sites:

- Youth and Sports Institute of French Polynesia (IJSPF) which can host up to one hundred persons in double or group rooms. Students will have priority at this site;
- Hotel trades (Lycée hotelier) located in Punaauia, with 20 rooms. These are very quiet and located next to conference rooms;
- The Cercle mixte in Tahiti, on the district of Pirae.

Bus or van transportation shuttles will be set up between student dorms/hotels, the Inter-Congress site and official reception events.



Youth and Sports Institute



Tentative Schedule

The Inter-Congress will take place over five days, from Monday March 2nd through Friday March 6th, 2009.

General and sub-themes will be presented during the opening plenary session.

Themes will be addressed in five half-day parallel sessions.

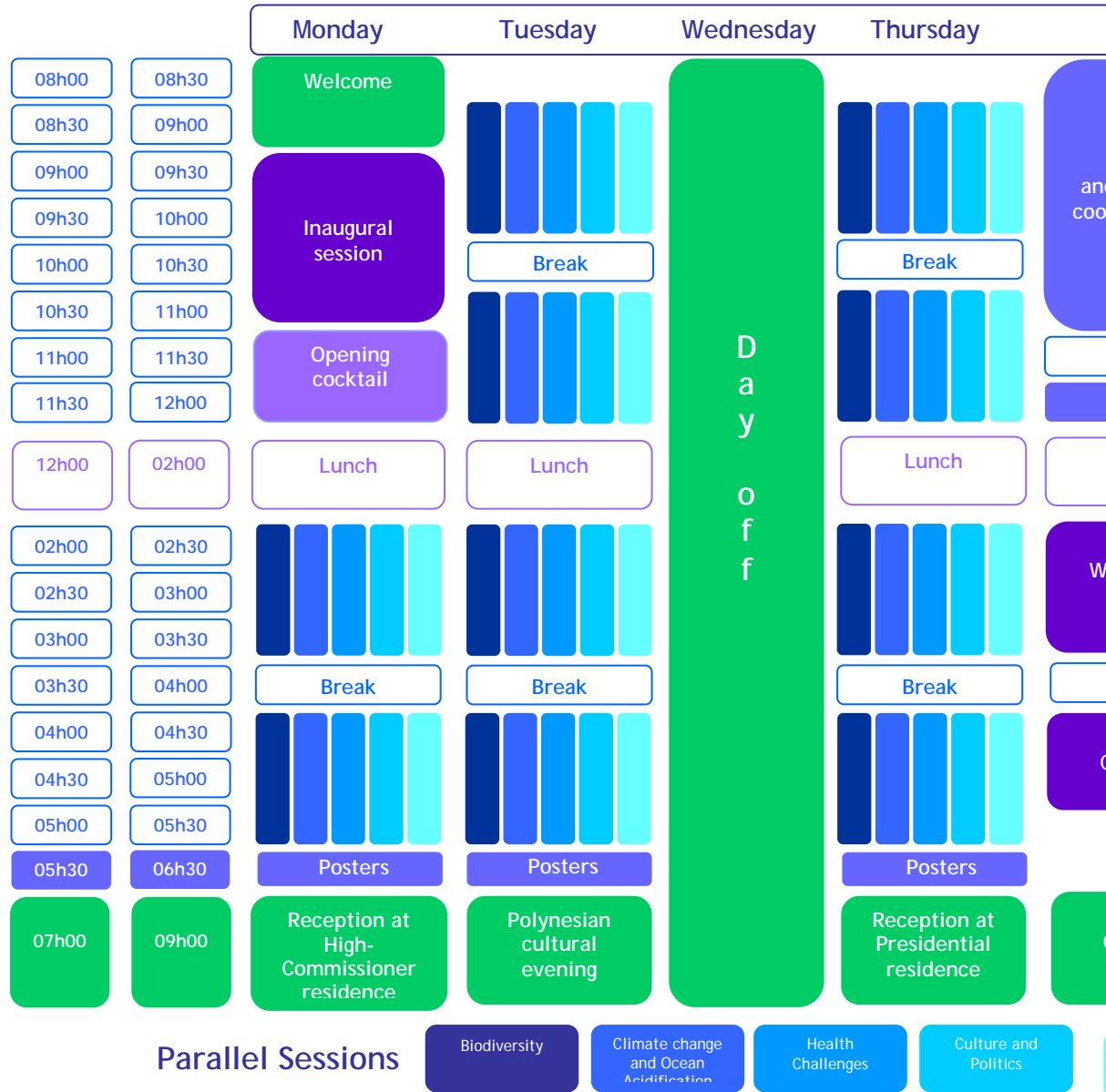
One plenary session will be dedicated to an examination of regional and intra-regional cooperation in the Pacific, and to assess what structures and mechanisms exist as well as what enhancements can be made in these areas.

An Inter-Congress poster session is being organized, with details to be announced soon on the official website.

The final plenary session will be geared to assess the results of the Inter-Congress, and to announce critical resolutions.



Schedule at a glance



Outside activities

● Day of relaxation

Wednesday 4 March is designated as a “free” day (no sessions) in order to facilitate social interaction among participants.

Participants have the option of several tours around Tahiti, relaxation, sports, or study. The Inter-Congress will offer activity packages at discount rates to be announced soon.

● Entertainment

The High Commissioner of the Republic of France and the President of French Polynesia will host several receptions during the Inter-Congress, in order to allow exchange between participants and local authorities.

A Polynesia “culture and crafts” evening will be held in order to introduce participants to Polynesian traditions.

A Closing Dinner will mark the conclusion of the Inter-Congress.



How to get to Tahiti

Located in the centre of the Pacific, Tahiti and the islands of French Polynesia are easy to reach from major continental air hubs as well as several Pacific sites.



Special airfares are offered by our partner, Air Tahiti Nui for the Inter-Congress participants and accompanying person. Without taxes, proposed prices are:

	Participant	Accompanying person
AUCKLAND - PAPEETE	NZ\$ 500	NZ\$ 750
TOKYO/OSAKA - PAPEETE	JPY 70 000	JPY 90 000
LOS ANGELES/NEW-YORK - PAPEETE	US\$650	US\$900
SYDNEY - PAPEETE	AU\$ 700	AU\$850
PARIS - PAPEETE	€ 800	€ 900

For more information please write to transportation@psi2009.pf

Photo credit

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- Joël Orempuller/IRD
- ILM/Tahiti Presse/C. Durocher

