

Soggy Paws Adventures 2011 - 2012

Tonga – Niue – Fiji



Soggy Paws CSY 44 – 1981



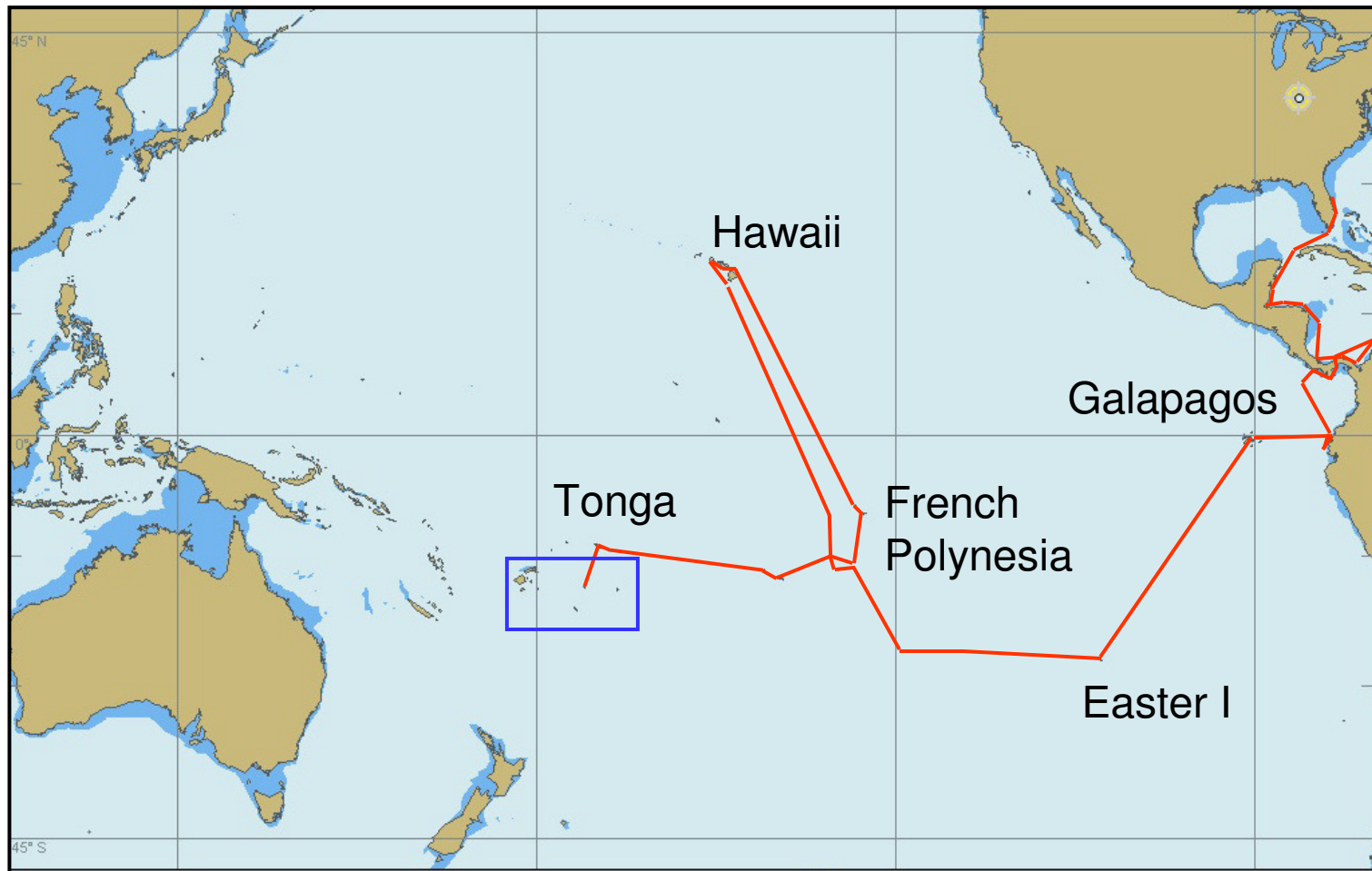
Proud Member of



**Seven Seas Cruising
Association**

www.ssca.org

2007-2011 Overview



Florida to the Panama Canal

**May 2007 to
Sep 2008**

- Mexico
- Belize
- Guatemala
- Honduras
- Panama
- Colombia



Sep 2008 - 2009

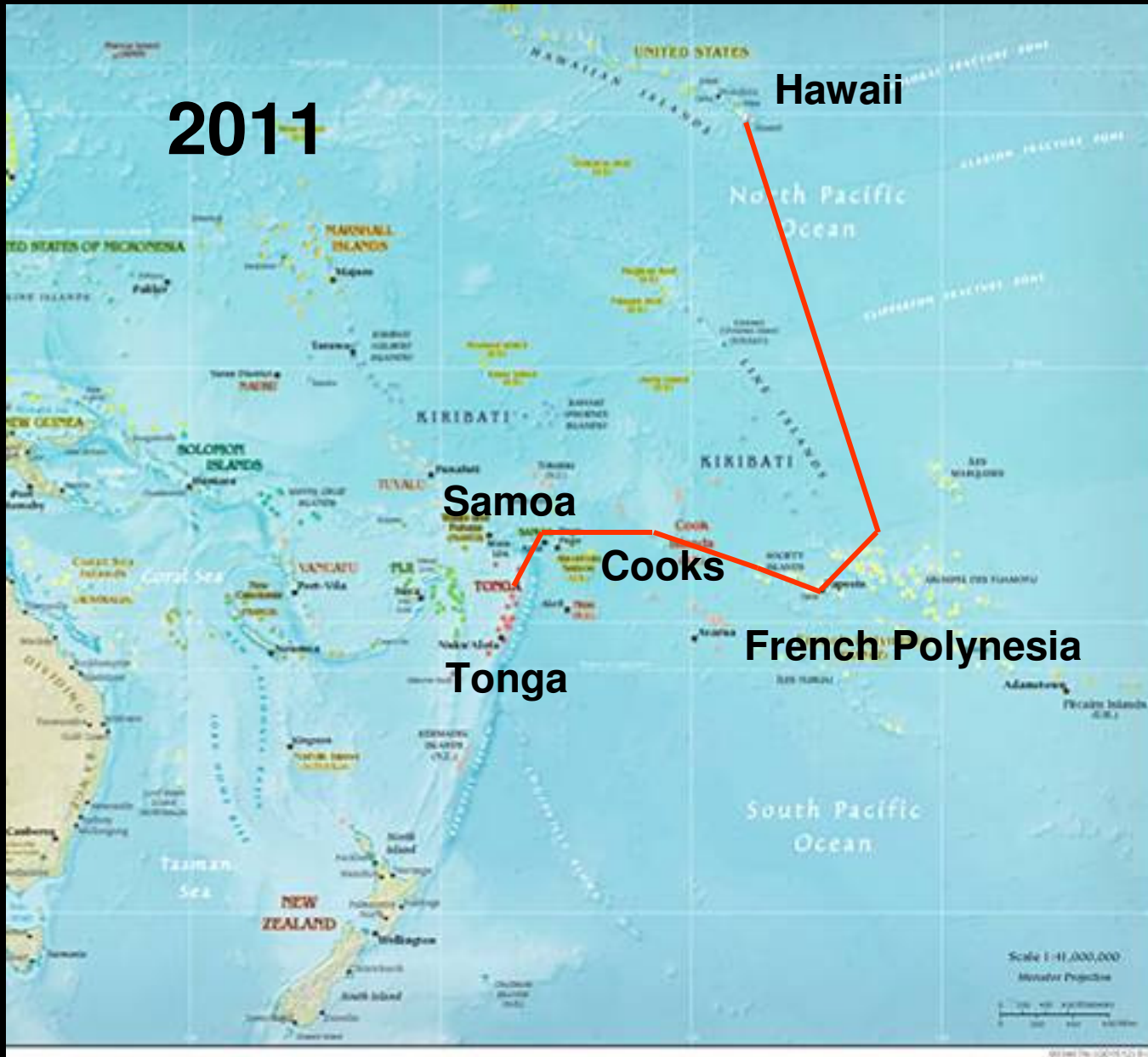
- Pacific Panama
- Costa Rica
- Ecuador
- 3 Trips 'Inland'
 - Chile & Argentina
 - Peru
 - Ecuador
- Haulout and Major Refit



2010



2011



Hawaii

Samoa

Cooks

French Polynesia

Tonga

Tonga During Cyclone Season

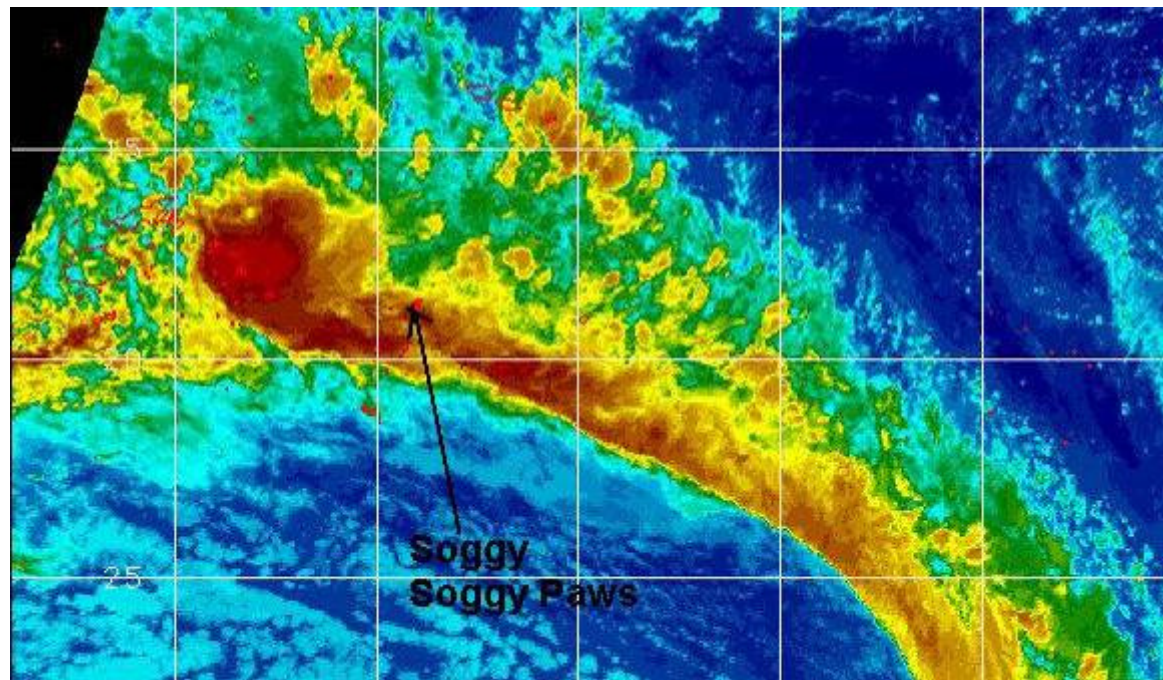
- Cyclone Season Nov 1 – May 1
- Peak season Jan 15 – Mar 15
- Hot and sticky (like FL in July/Aug)
- Many businesses closed
- Few cruisers around
 - Most depart for NZ or Australia ~1 Nov

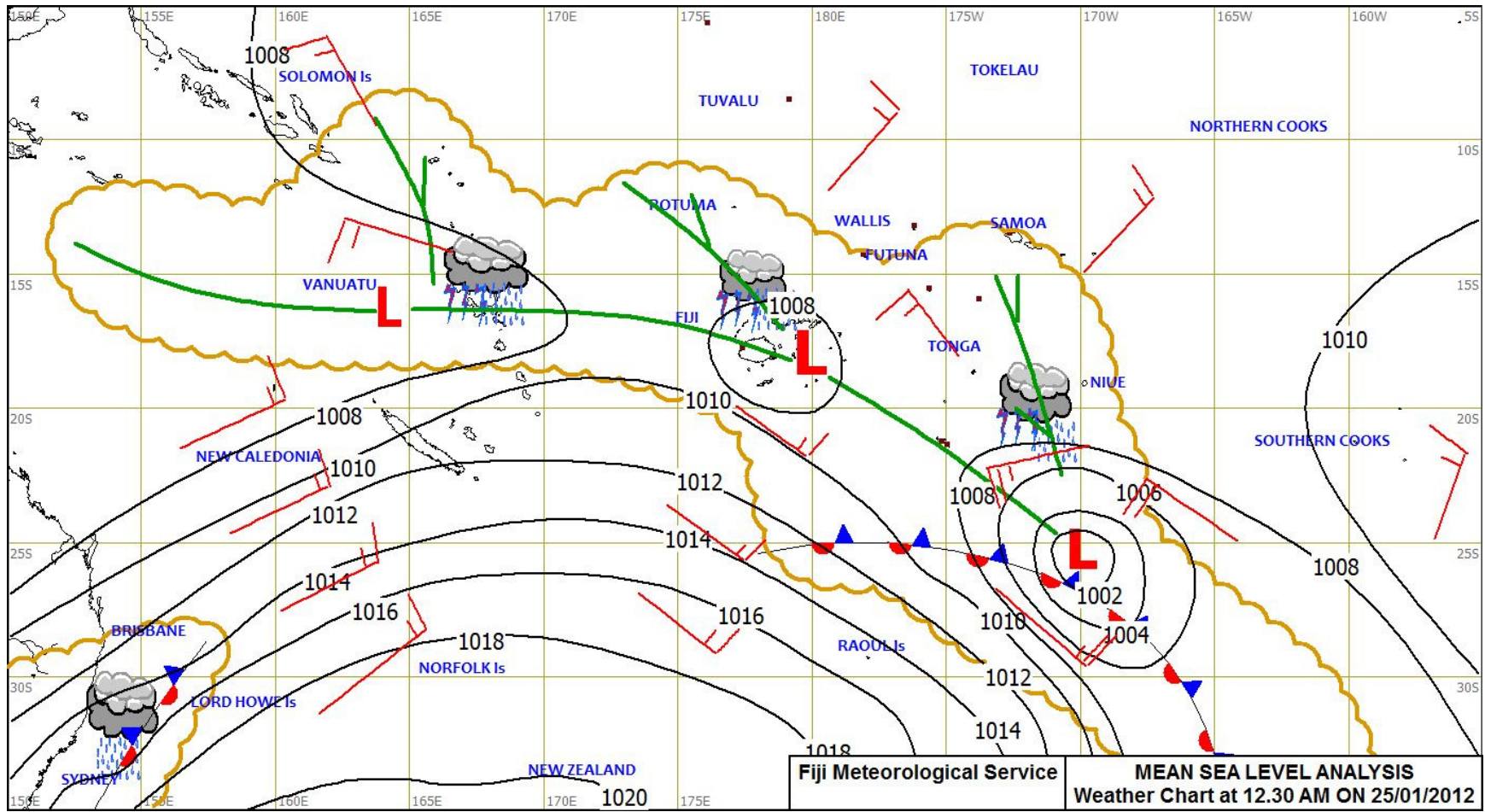
Soggy Paws Cyclone Season Plan

- Gone to USA 1 Nov – 10 Jan
 - Soggy Paws on a Cyclone Mooring being looked-after by cruisers
- Cruise Vava'u Area Jan-Feb-Mar
 - When the coast is clear
- Visit Ha'apai Area April
- Head for Fiji in early May

The Best Laid Plans...

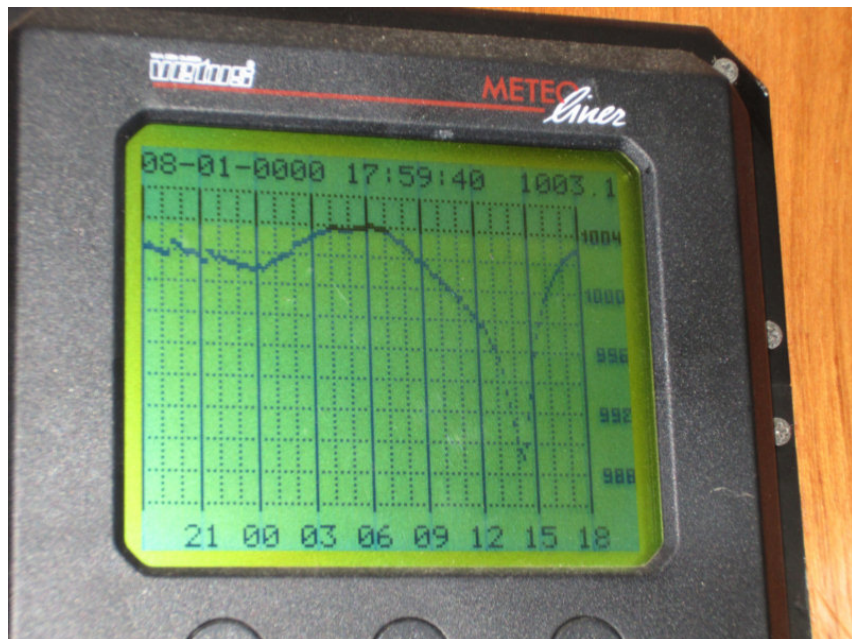
- SPCZ hanging over Tonga Jan-March
 - Squally weather & westerly winds





Surprise Cyclone Cyril

February 6, 2012



Barometer Drops to 990mb in 6 hrs

- At 6am we got the first 50-knot gust
- By 8am 60kts+ and 90-degree wind shift
- 5-6' Seas in the anchorage
- Soggy Paws drags "hurricane mooring"
- Noon--wx back to normal



Soggy Paws

Shango



Sea Flyer





At the height of the storm...

- Dinghy flopping on davits (distraction!)
- Mooring dragging...
(we didn't notice at first)
- Engine started (too late)
- Wind backs into the west
- Caught cross-wise on boat behind us
(Sea Flyer)
- Sea Flyer's mooring line caught between
rudder & skeg

At the height of the storm...

- Dave jumps in the water to assess situation
- Too much wave action to do anything safely
- Sea Flyer mooring line chafed through
- Sherry able to motor clear
 - And motors for next 2 hours to stay clear
- Dave can't get back aboard Soggy Paws
 - no boarding ladder
- Sea Flyer's 2nd mooring line holds
(Thank God!)



Damage Assessment

- 110 watt solar panel mounted on port quarter smashed
- 175 watt solar panel on dinghy davits bent and glass shattered
- Bent stanchions on port quarter
- Stern pulpit mangled
- Extensive fiberglass damage on port quarter.
- Port hole in the affected area severely mangled
- Swim platform on the stern ripped off and mangled
- Monitor self-steering vane ripped off, mounts mangled
- Arch support bent
- Dinghy ripped off davits (but recovered later)
 - 2 holes in pontoons
- 5HP motor ripped off the dinghy and sunk, broken in 2 pieces
- Dinghy gas tank damaged, maybe repairable
- "Soggy Paws" name and hailing port on stern (decal) torn up
- Interior damage to oak trim and wiring in the aft bunk





New Cyclone Season Plans

- Gather up the pieces
- Tape a garbage bag over the hole
- Order repair materials from NZ
- Move into Neiafu town moorings
 - Bigger stronger moorings
 - Dock space, hardware stores & welder in town
 - Better social life & internet
- Repairs & maintenance during the week
- Cruising (wx permitting) on the weekend
- Dive 1 day each week













Fiberglass Repairs

- No fiberglass material available in Tonga
- Ordered from NZ at 2x US prices
- 2 month delivery time
- Retired boat builder hired to do the work in the water
- Finally able to start on repairs Apr 25
- Excellent finished product











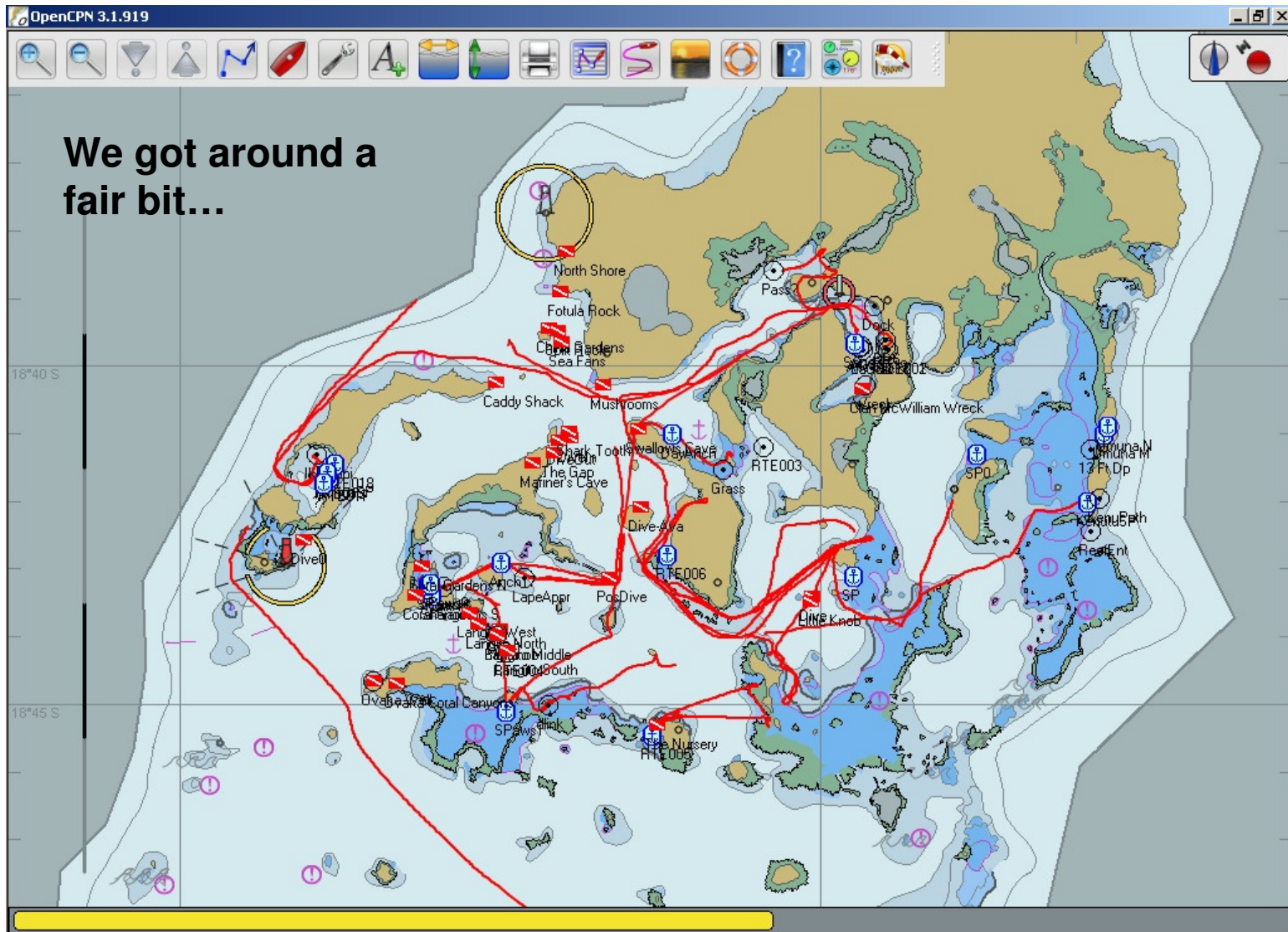




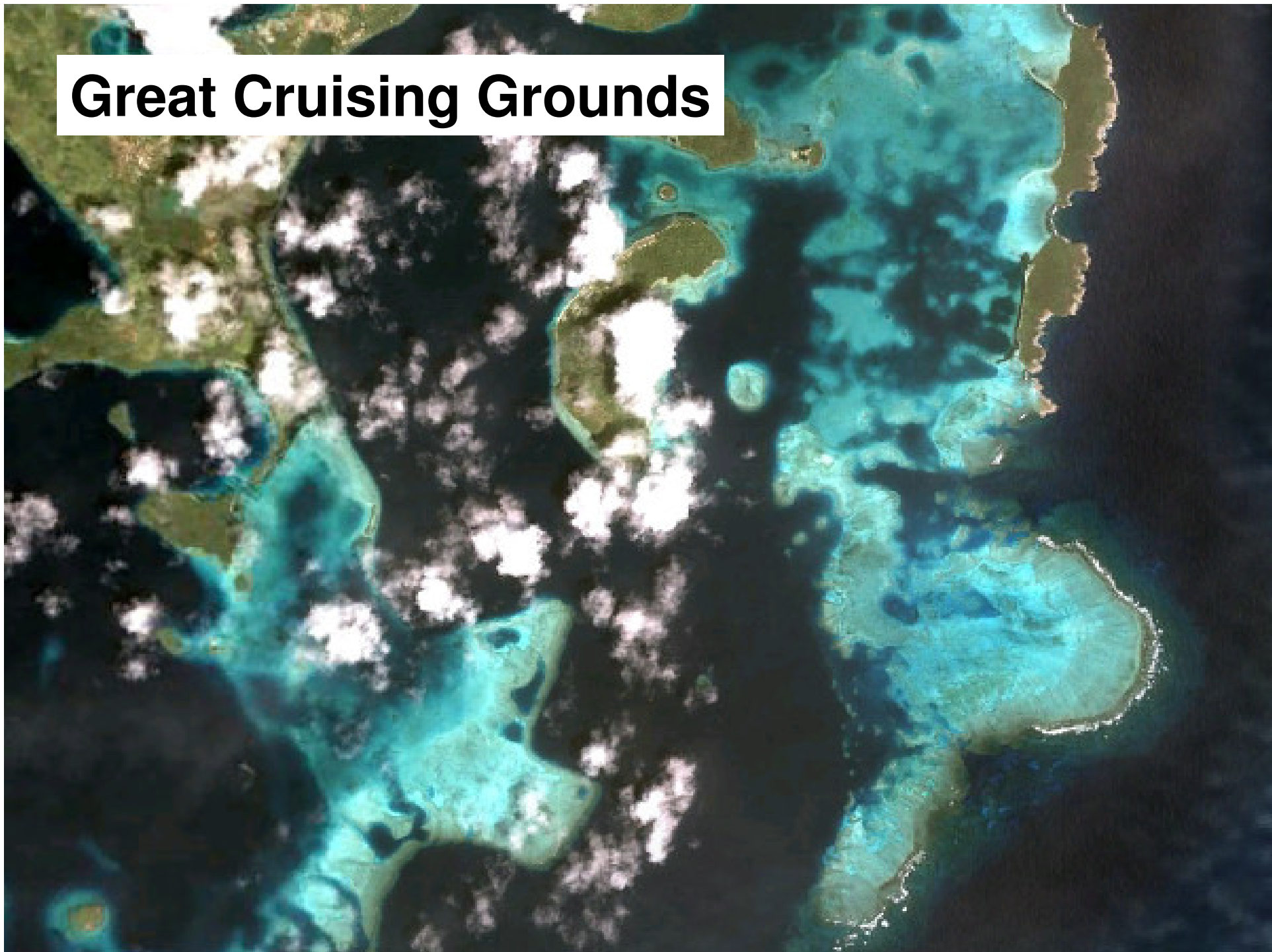
Seaworthy Again!
May 5, 2012



Exploring Tonga during Cyclone Season



Great Cruising Grounds



Cruising





An Inter-Island Ferry







Yoga on the Beach







Diving





It's All About Caves









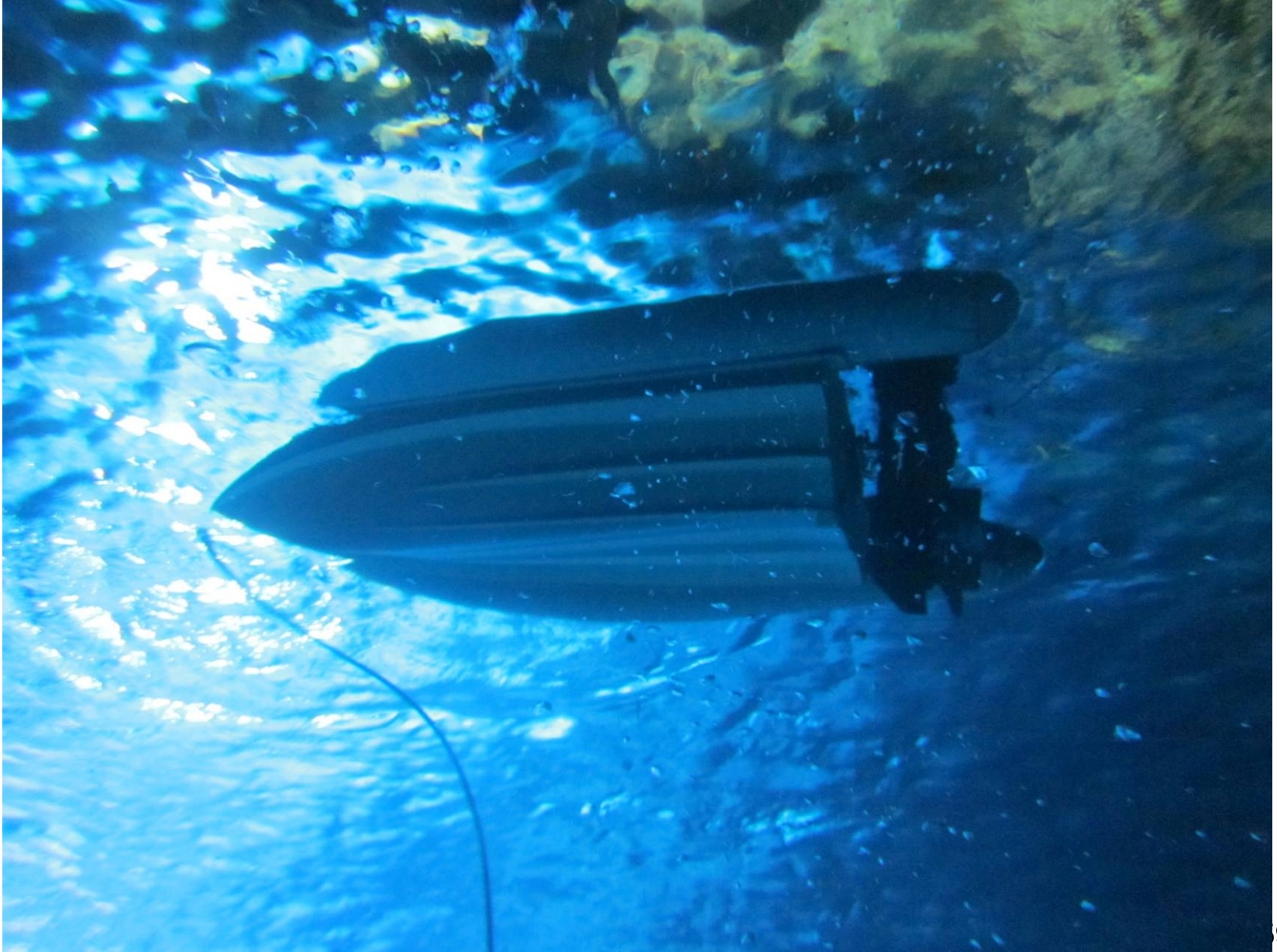
The “Clan McWilliam” Wreck



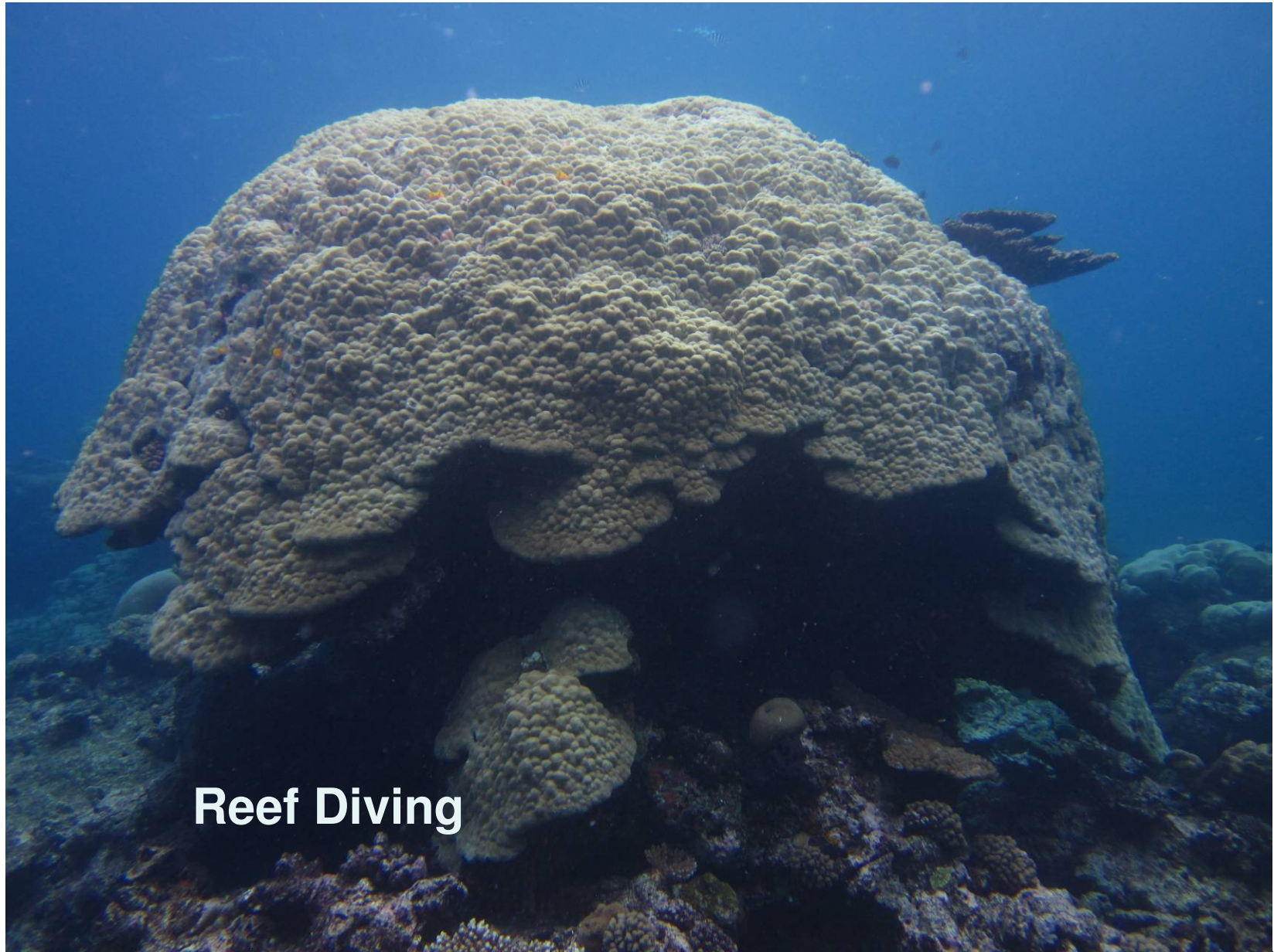


Swallows Cave





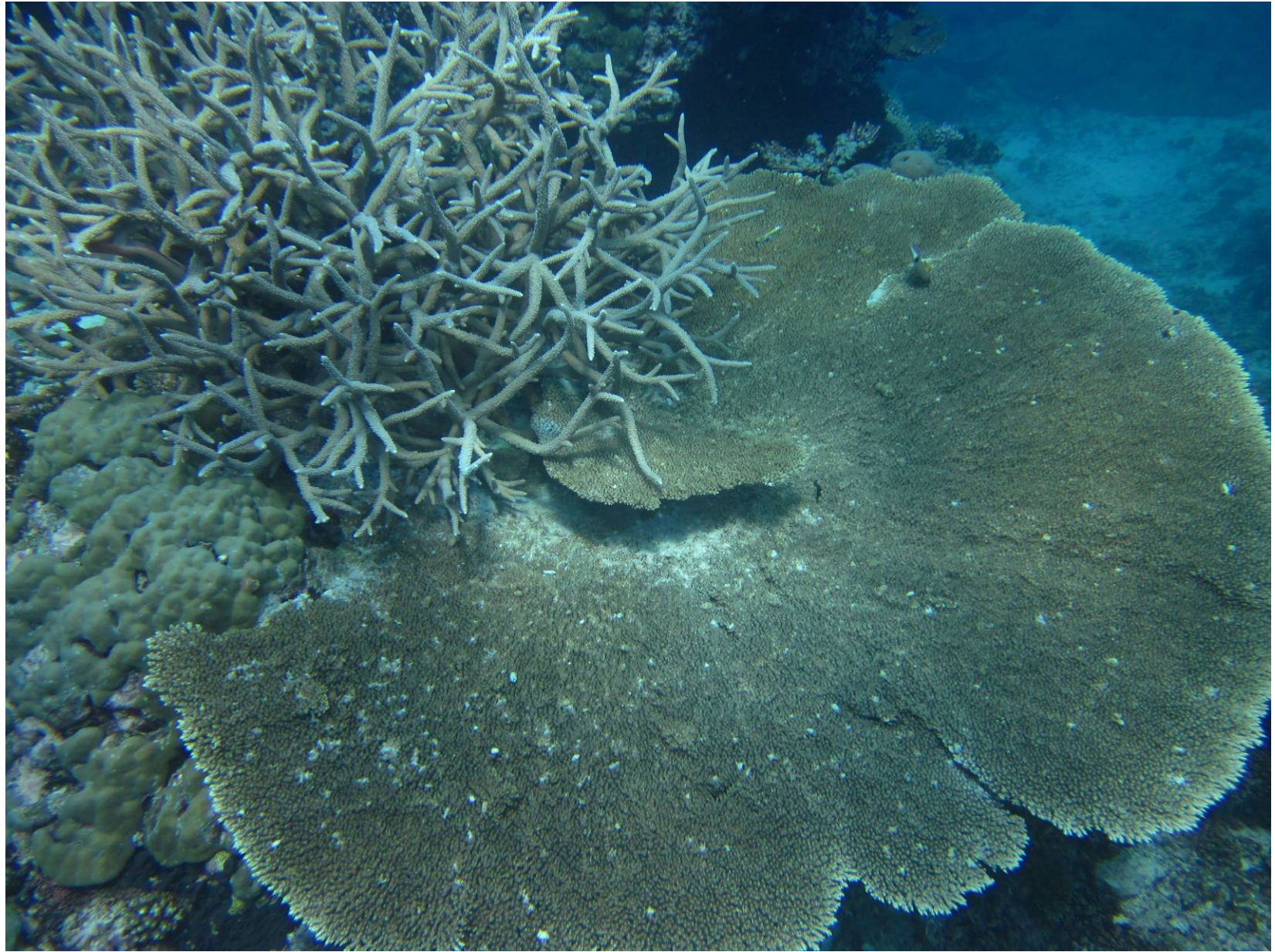




Reef Diving



BIG “Bommies”





Sightseeing



Taro Fields







Family Gravesites





Roger Tries to “High Five” the Whole School

Kava Drying



Women Weaving Tongan Mats







Botanical Gardens



Hiking



Hiking Mt. Talau

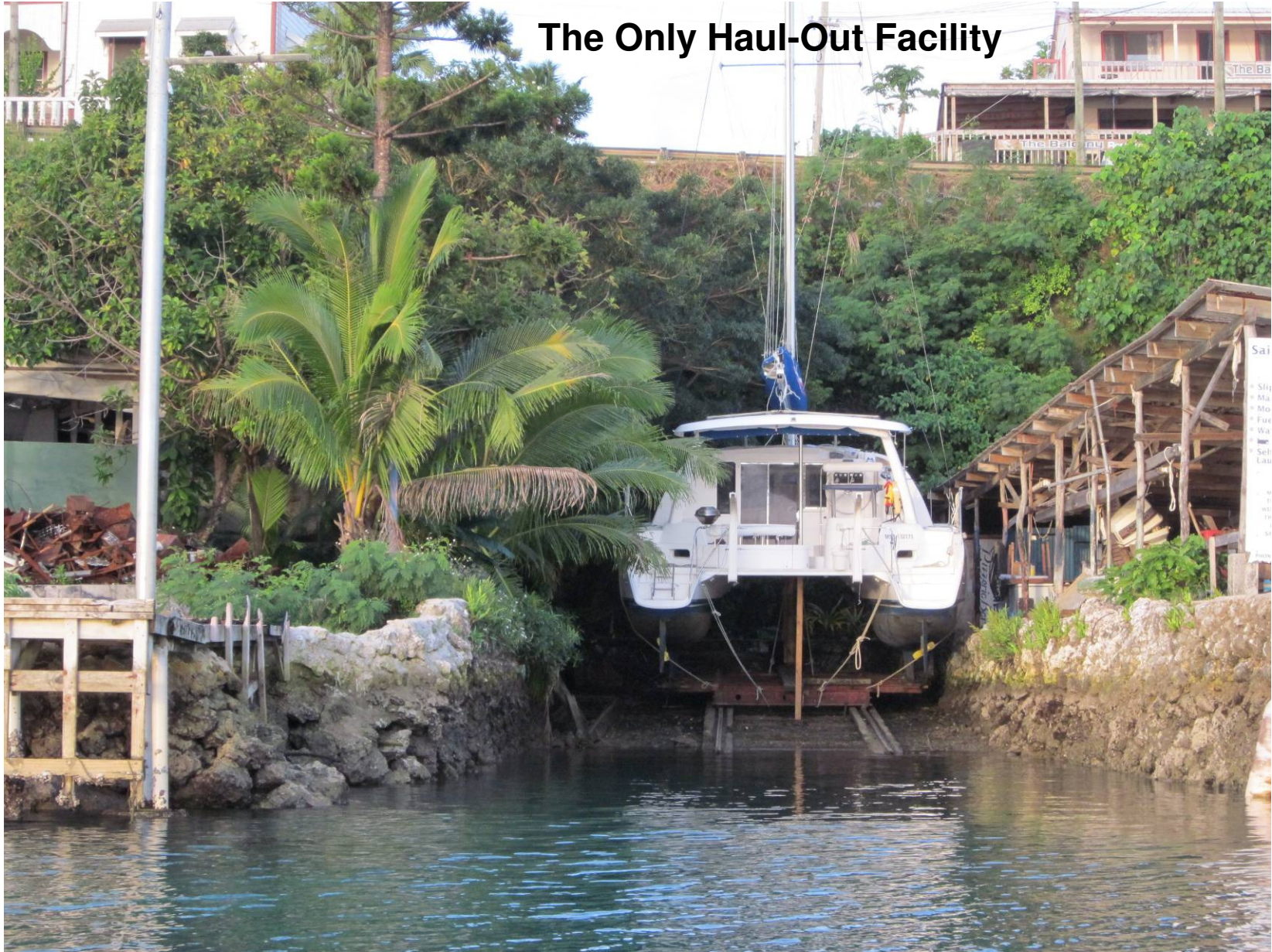


Life Around Town



“Getting Internet”

The Only Haul-Out Facility





French Navy Visits Tonga



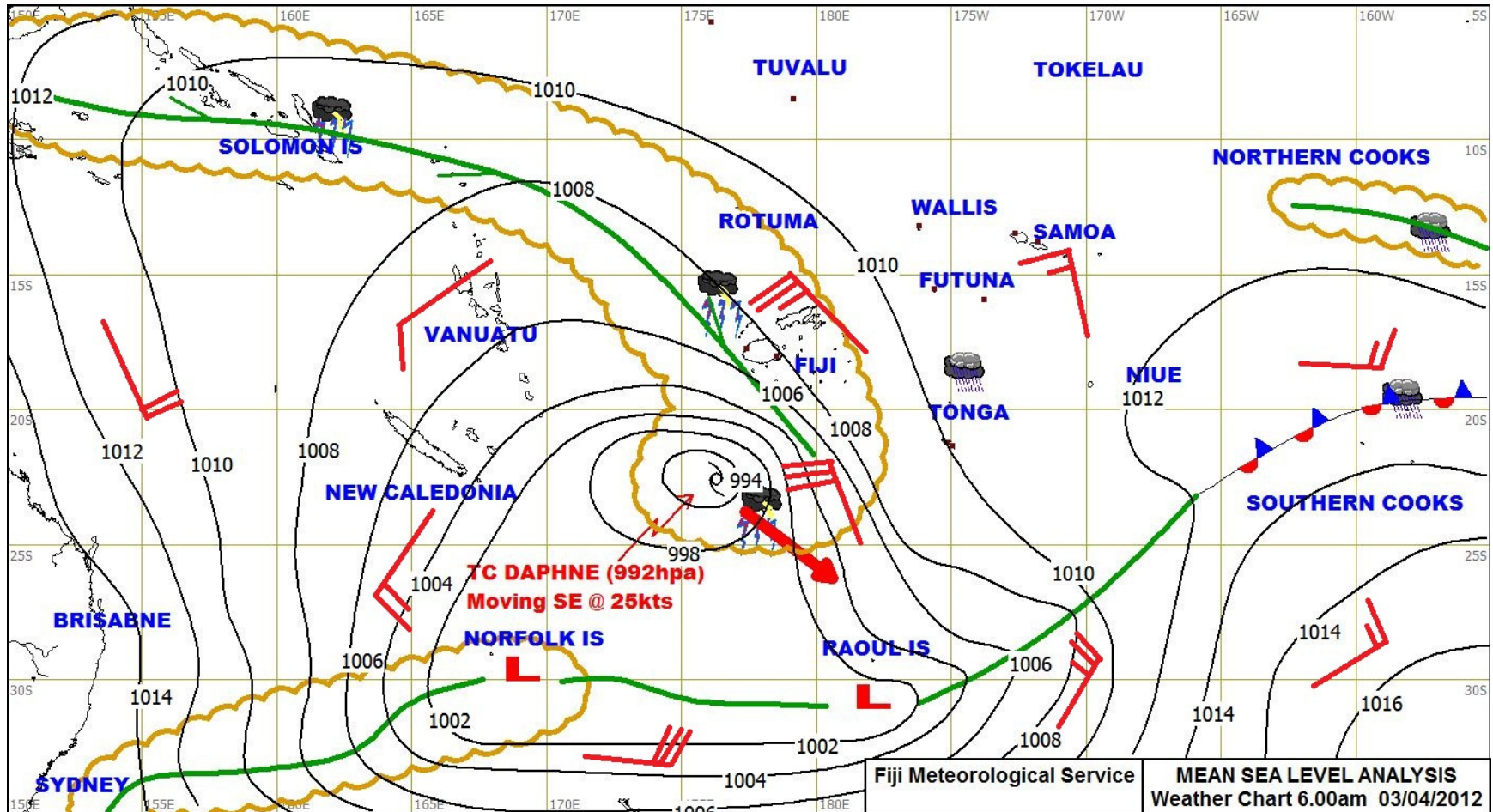


The Local Market

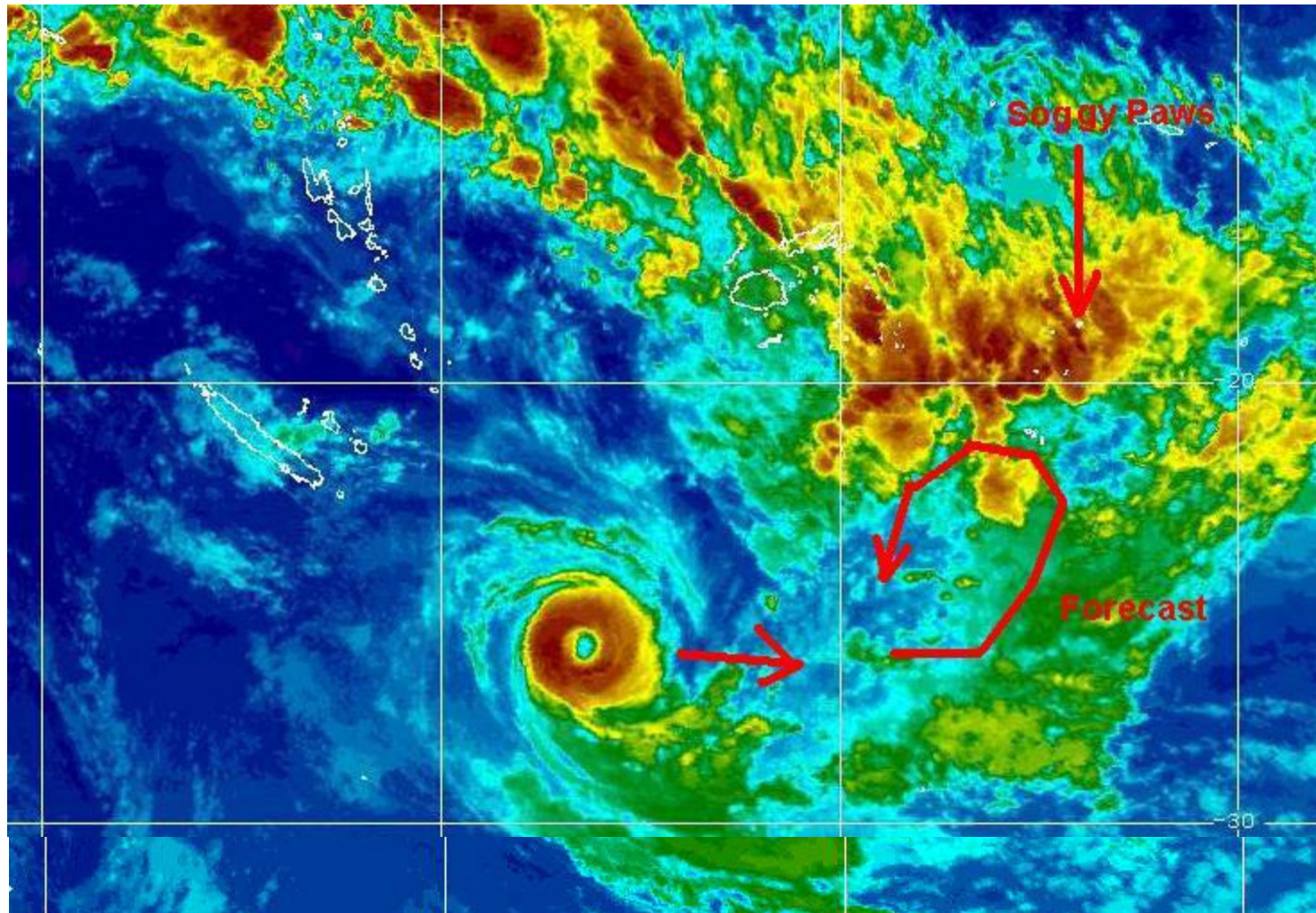




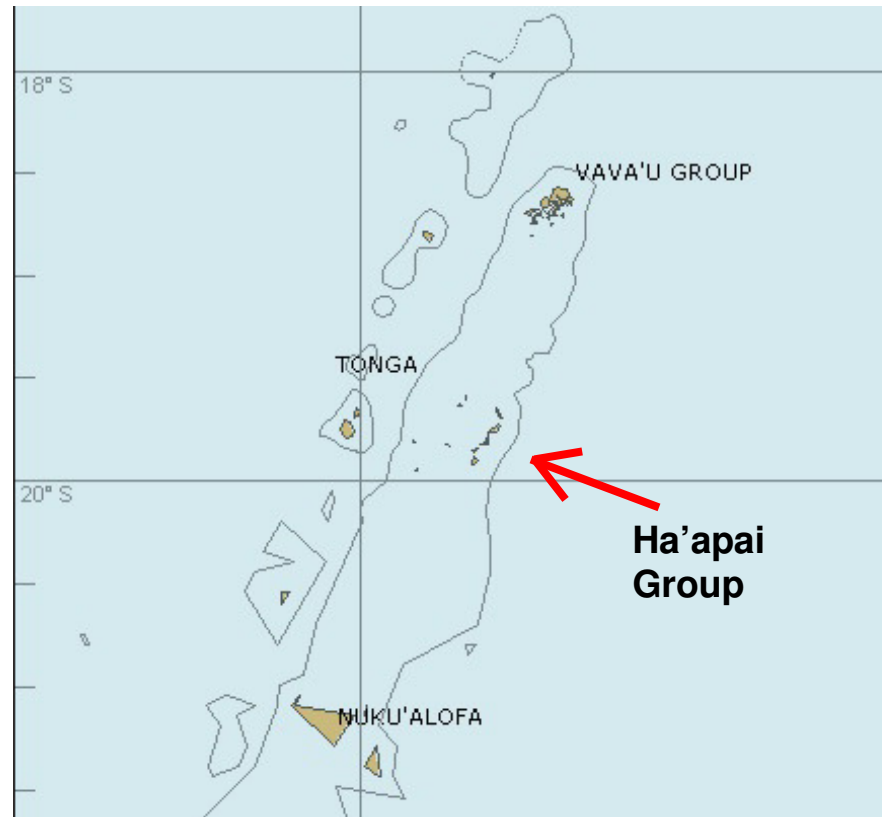
Watching the Weather

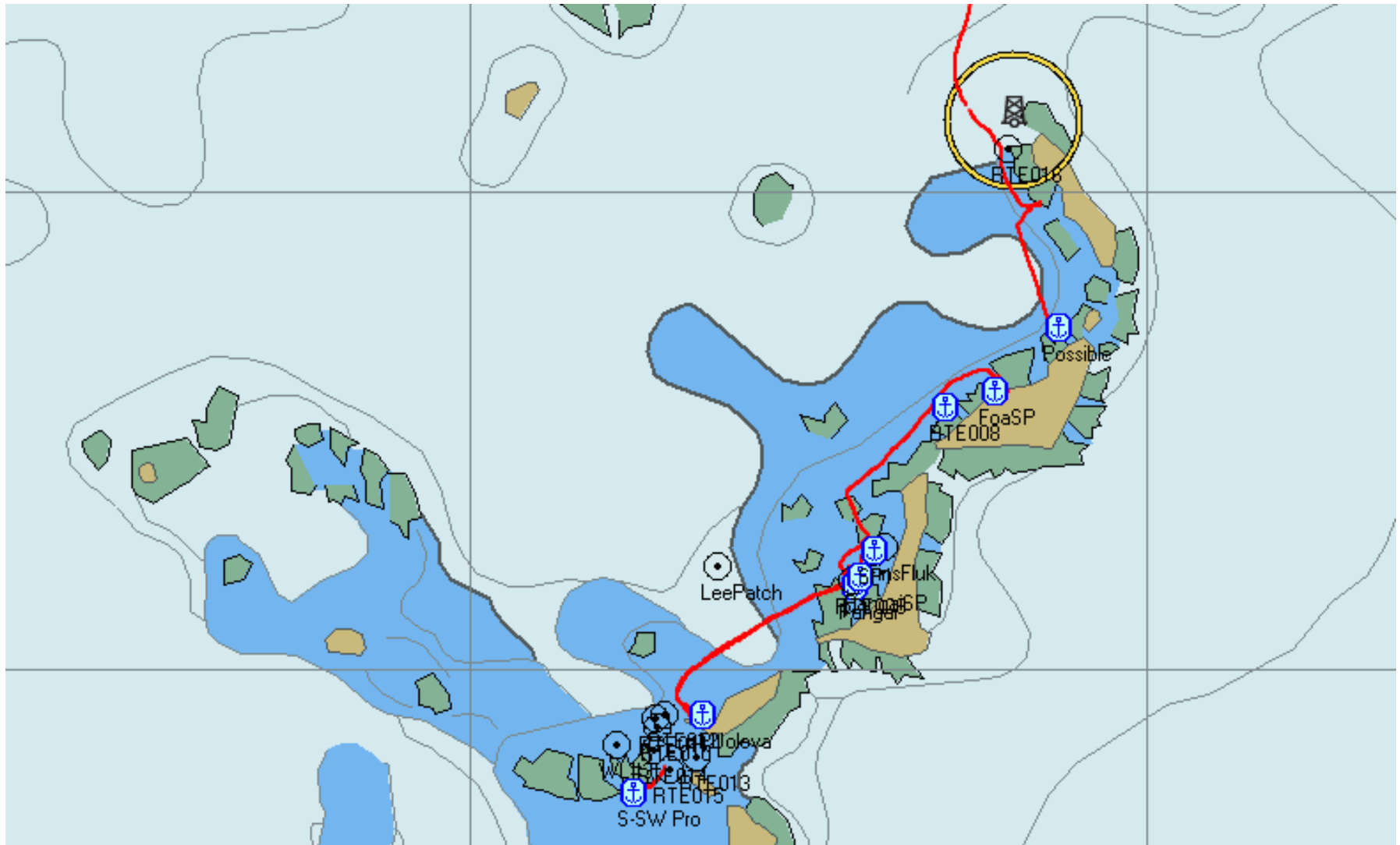


Cyclone Jasmine



Cruising the Ha'apai Group of Tonga (Late May)







Beautiful Beaches!!

Good Fishing





Awesome Diving





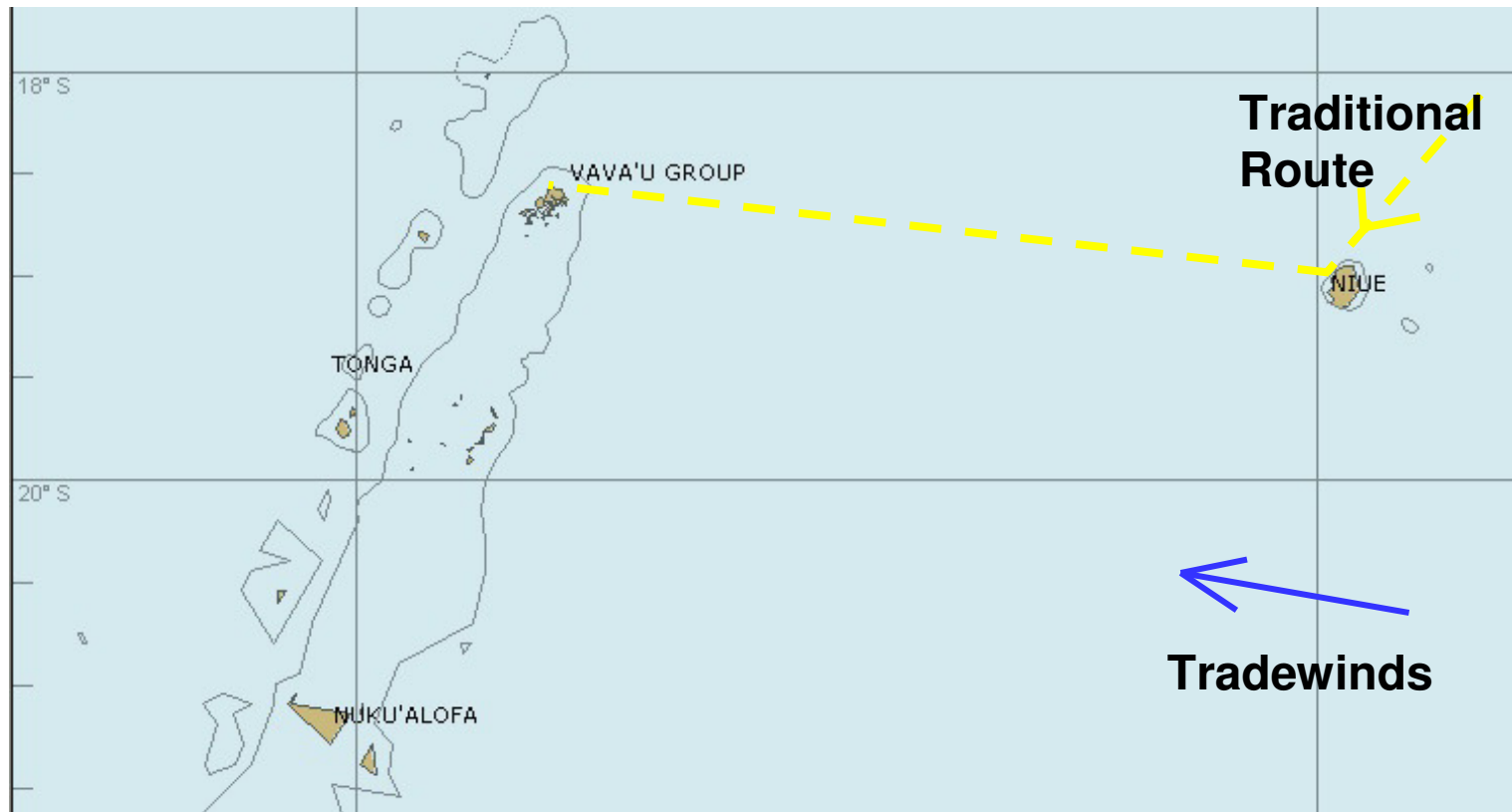




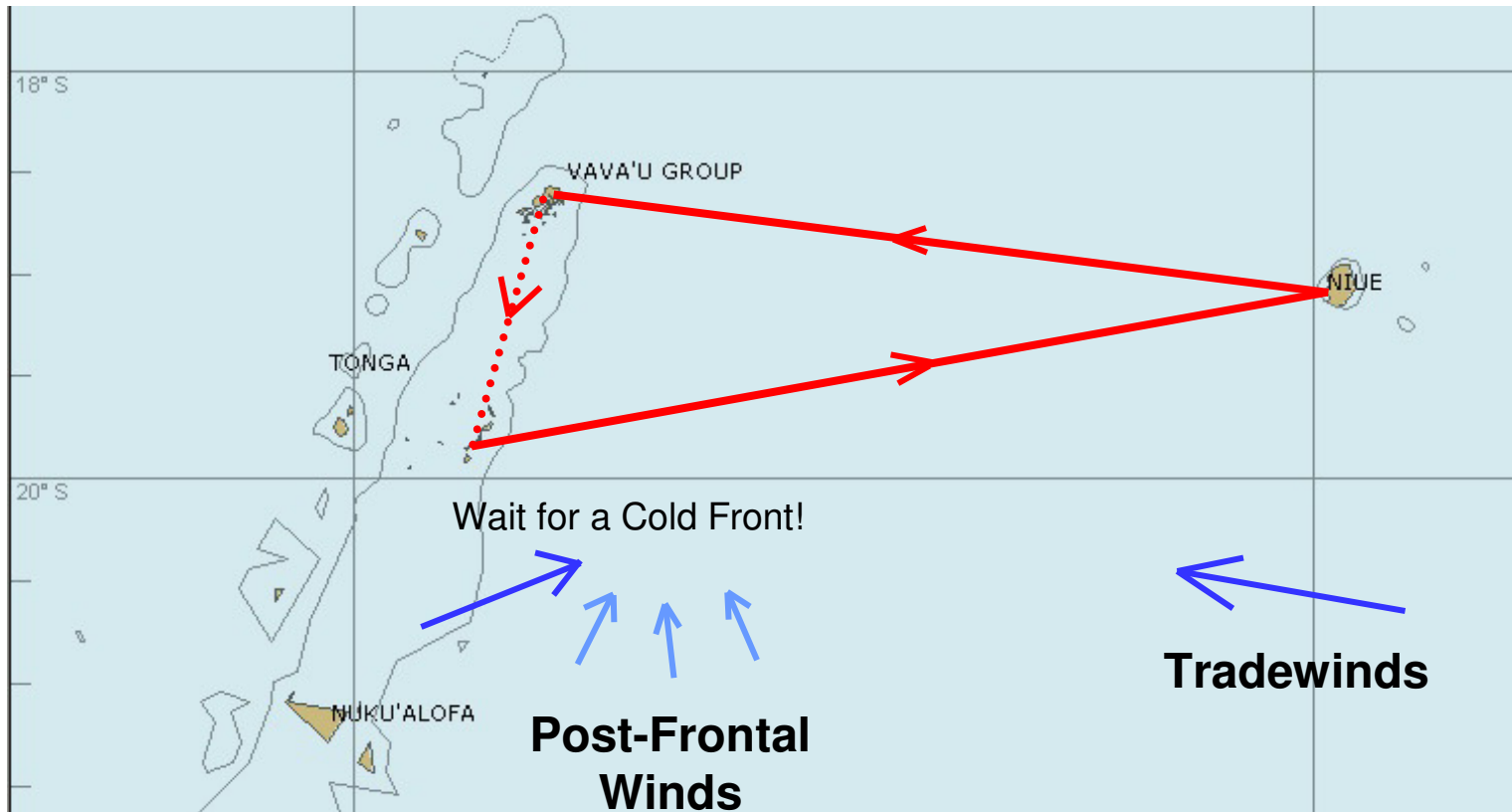
“Why don’t you come with us to Niue??”



Tonga to Niue



Tonga to Niue



Beautiful 2-Day Sail to Niue



Niue



- Self-governing
“in free association with New Zealand”
- Niue citizens are NZ citizens
- Currency is New Zealand dollar
- Population about 1,200 people
- Geology “raised coral atoll”

Niue Ashore



**Rolly Anchorage
Rock Bottom
50-100' Deep**





**New Moorings
being prepared**

The Dinghy Lift

















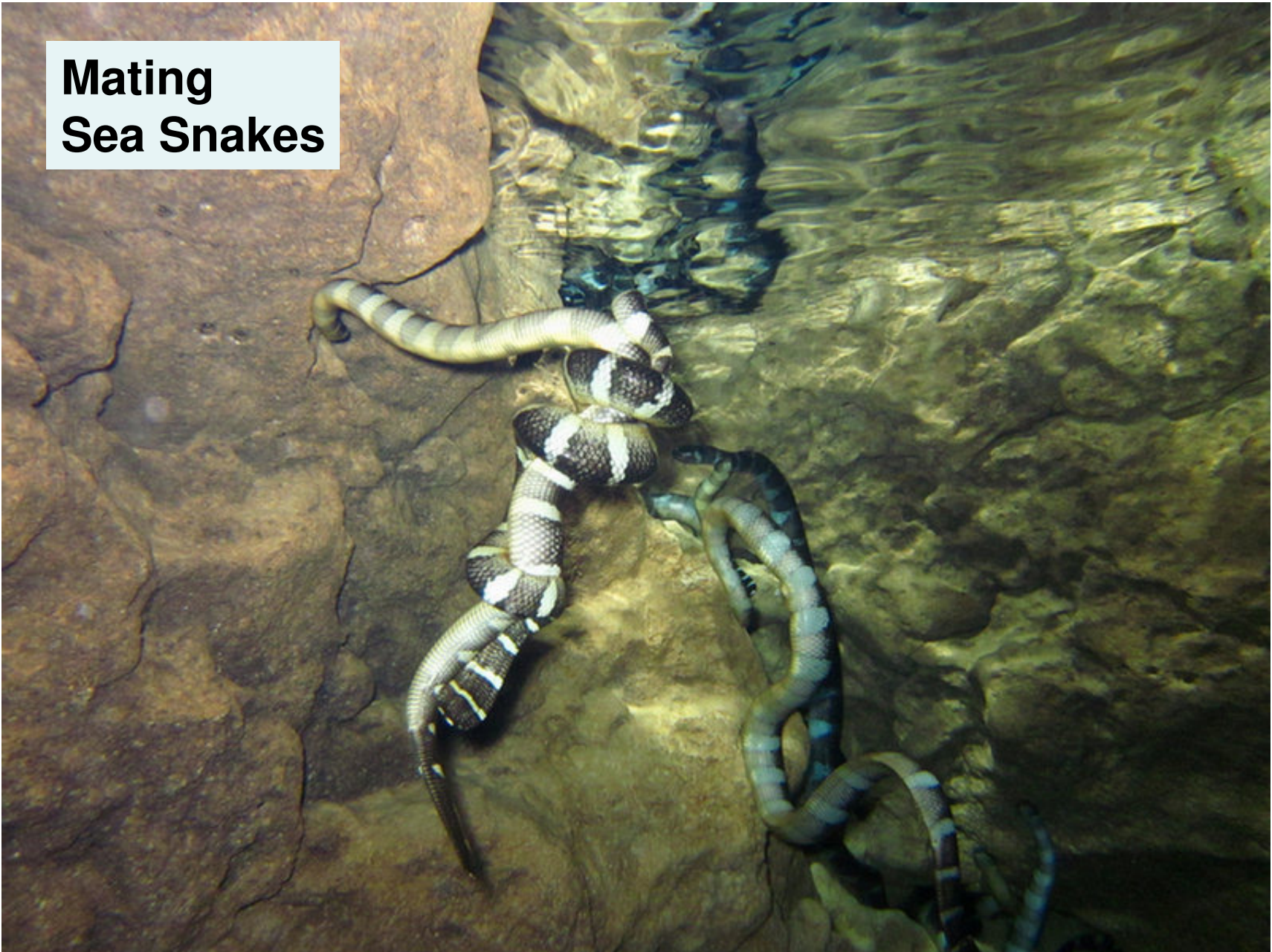
Diving in Niue







**Mating
Sea Snakes**







Sightseeing Niue



Sea Tracks











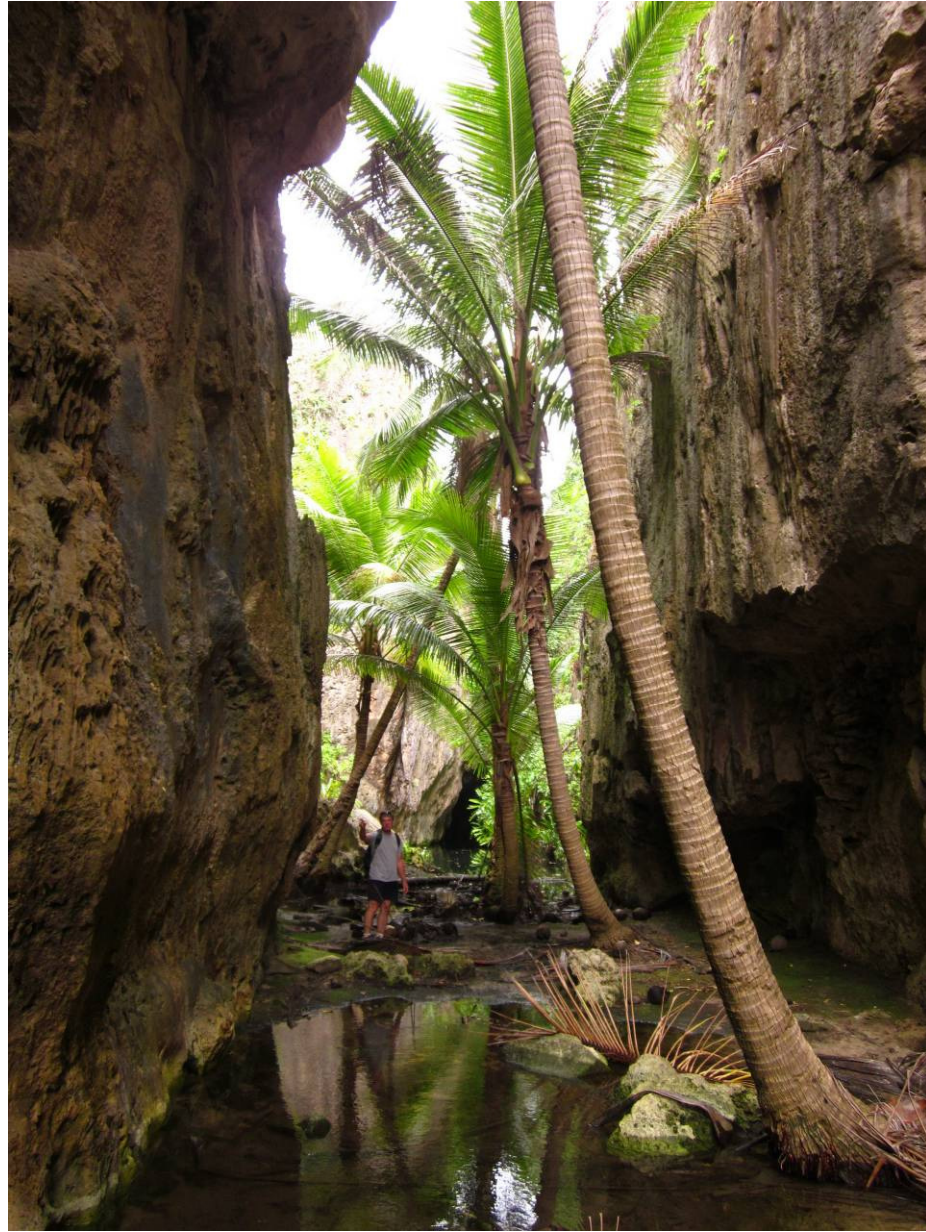






























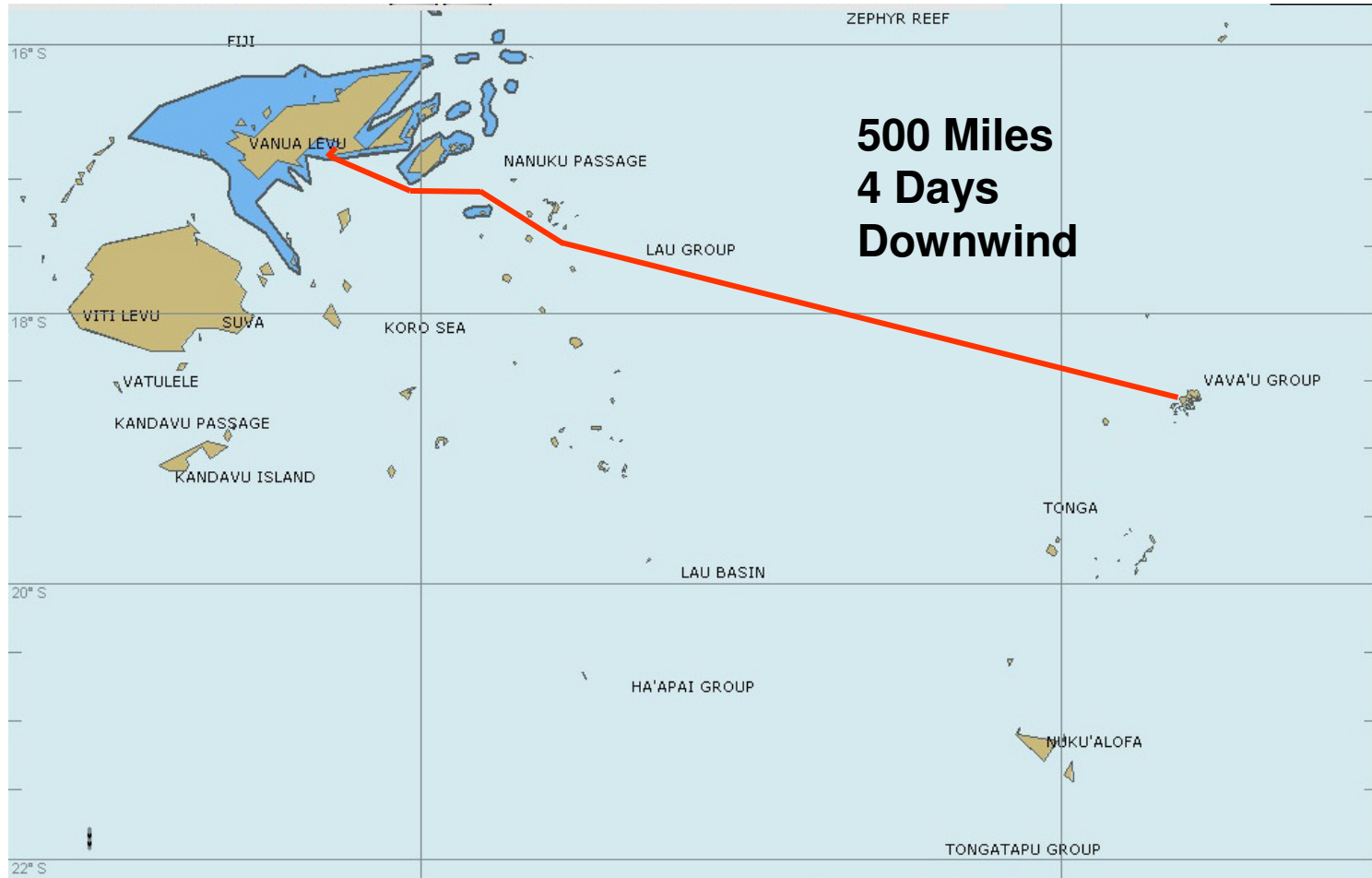




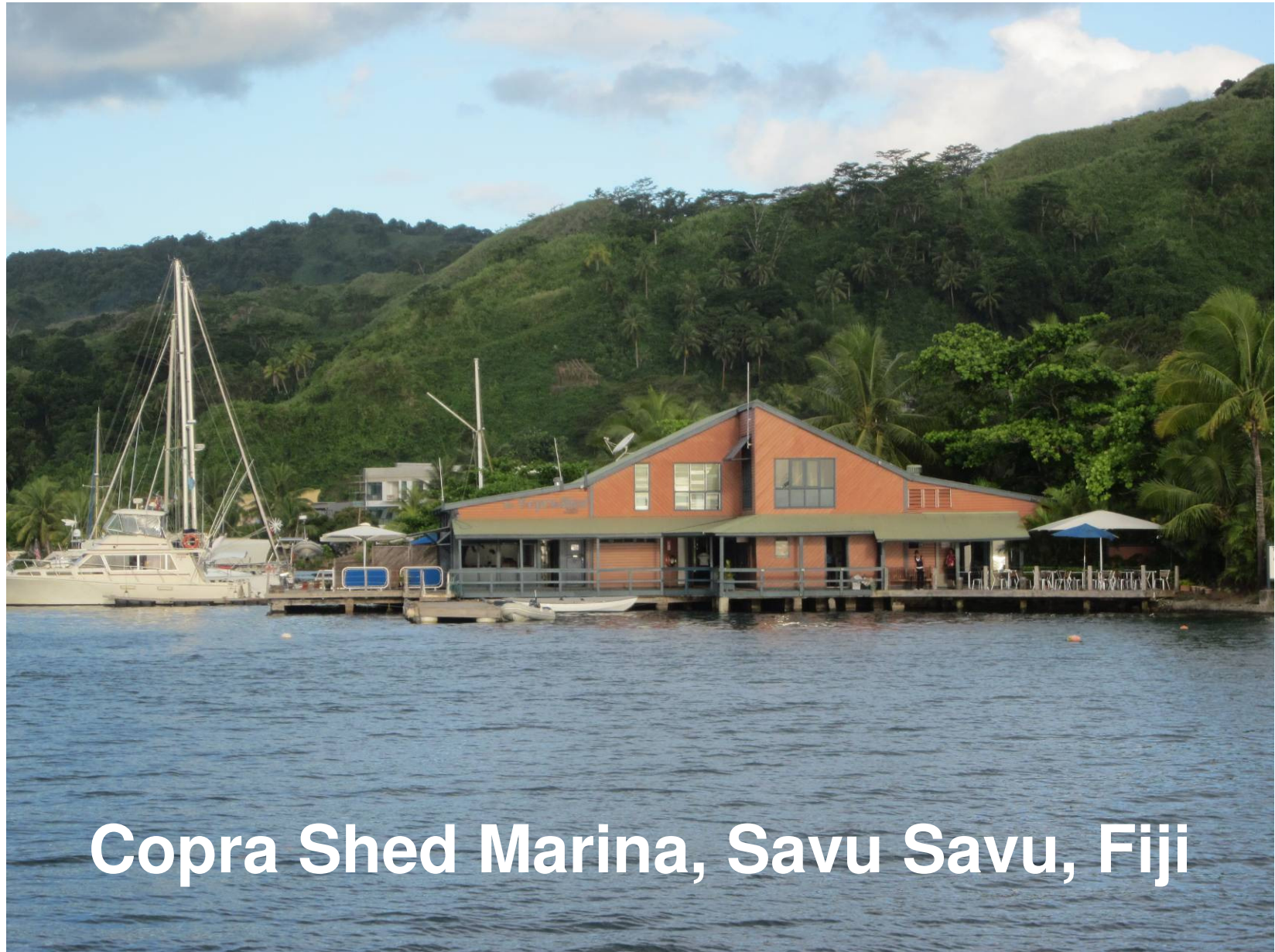


**Drifting
Downwind
Back
to Tonga**

Moving on to Fiji







Copra Shed Marina, Savu Savu, Fiji







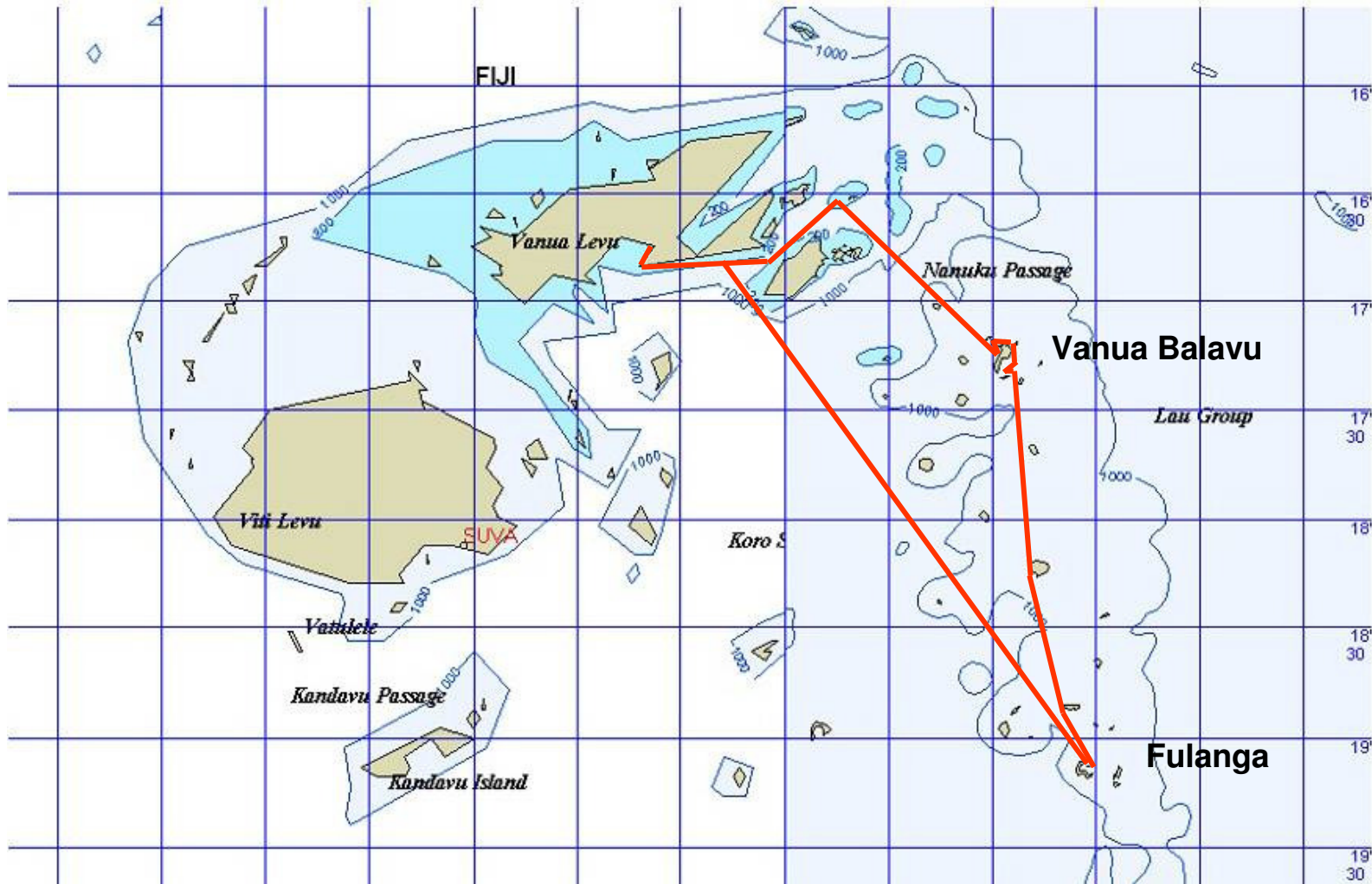
The Other Marina

Reunion Dinner

(the Tonga Folks + NZ Folks)



Cruising Fiji



Challenges

- Poor charts & invisible reefs
- Deep anchorages
- Traditional villages
 - Sevusevu
 - Trading
 - Church Invites
- Cold fronts
- Provisioning



Our First Sevusevu

Sevusevu

“Please May I Join Your Village”

- MUST be done by cruisers if anchoring off traditional villages in Fiji
- Buy kava bundles in the market (\$5-15)
- Request an audience with chief
- Wear ‘formal’ clothes
 - Hats, shorts, bare arms are no-no’s
- Present your kava to chief (through intermediary)
- Bowing heads, Fijian words (prayer-like), a few claps, and voila!
 - Accepted into the village



**Chief
George**

Sunday Afternoon





Challenger in Dakuniba



Hiking to the Scenic Overlook









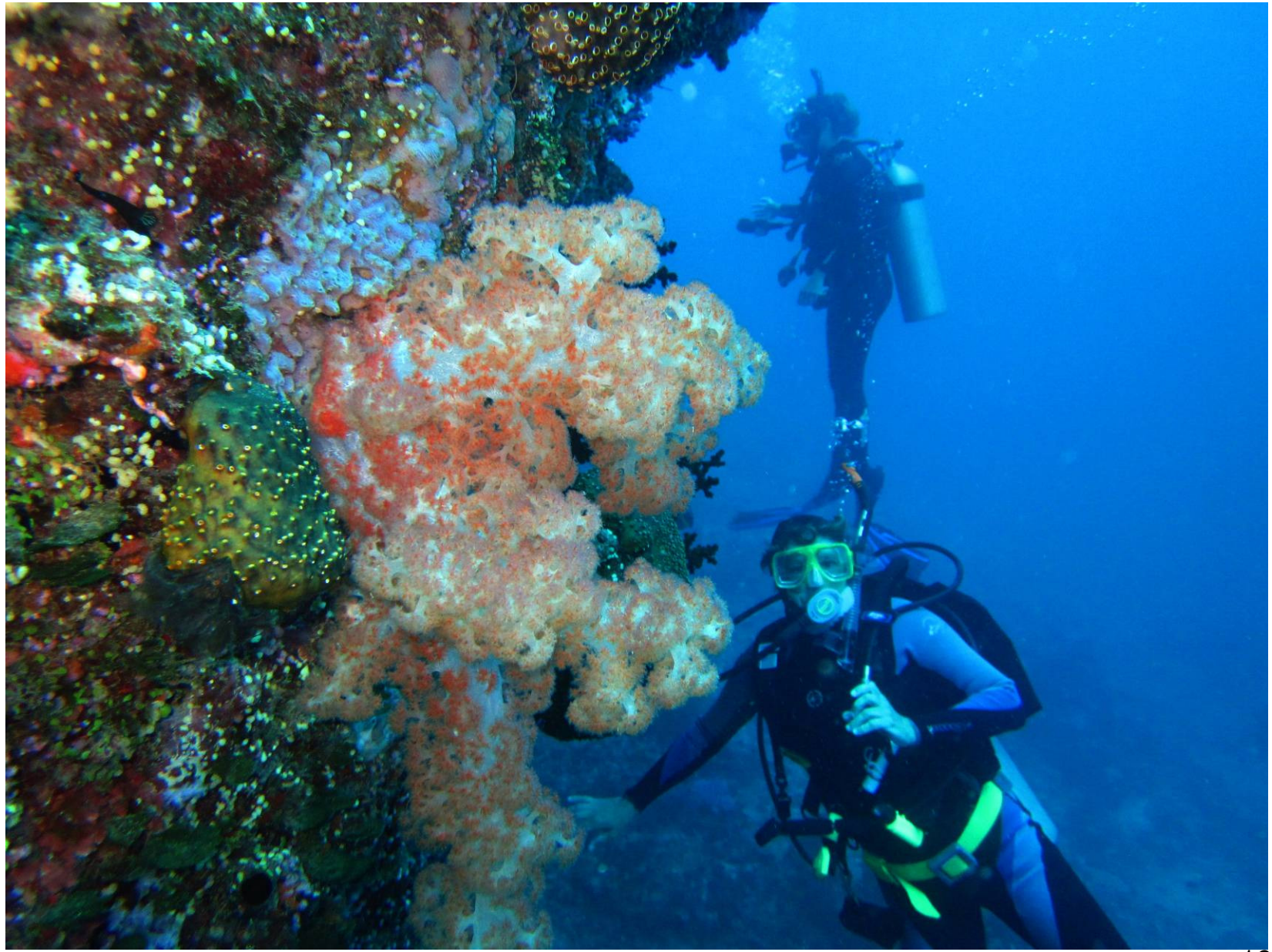
**“Wild Man”
Chris**



Bats in Trees

Diving Rainbow Reef







Budd Reef







**Govt-Supplied
Phone Service**





The View from the Top





Vanua Balavu

(The Lau Group)



Another Sevusevu

Village Tour







Traditional Kava Bowl



“We Follow Soggy Paws”





**The Bay of Islands
Vanua Balavu**







Headed for the Big City



















Village Community Hall







Nursing Station

Our Favorite Anchorage

Clear Water...
Beautiful Sand Beach...
Beautiful Sand Bottom!!!







And then we met the people...











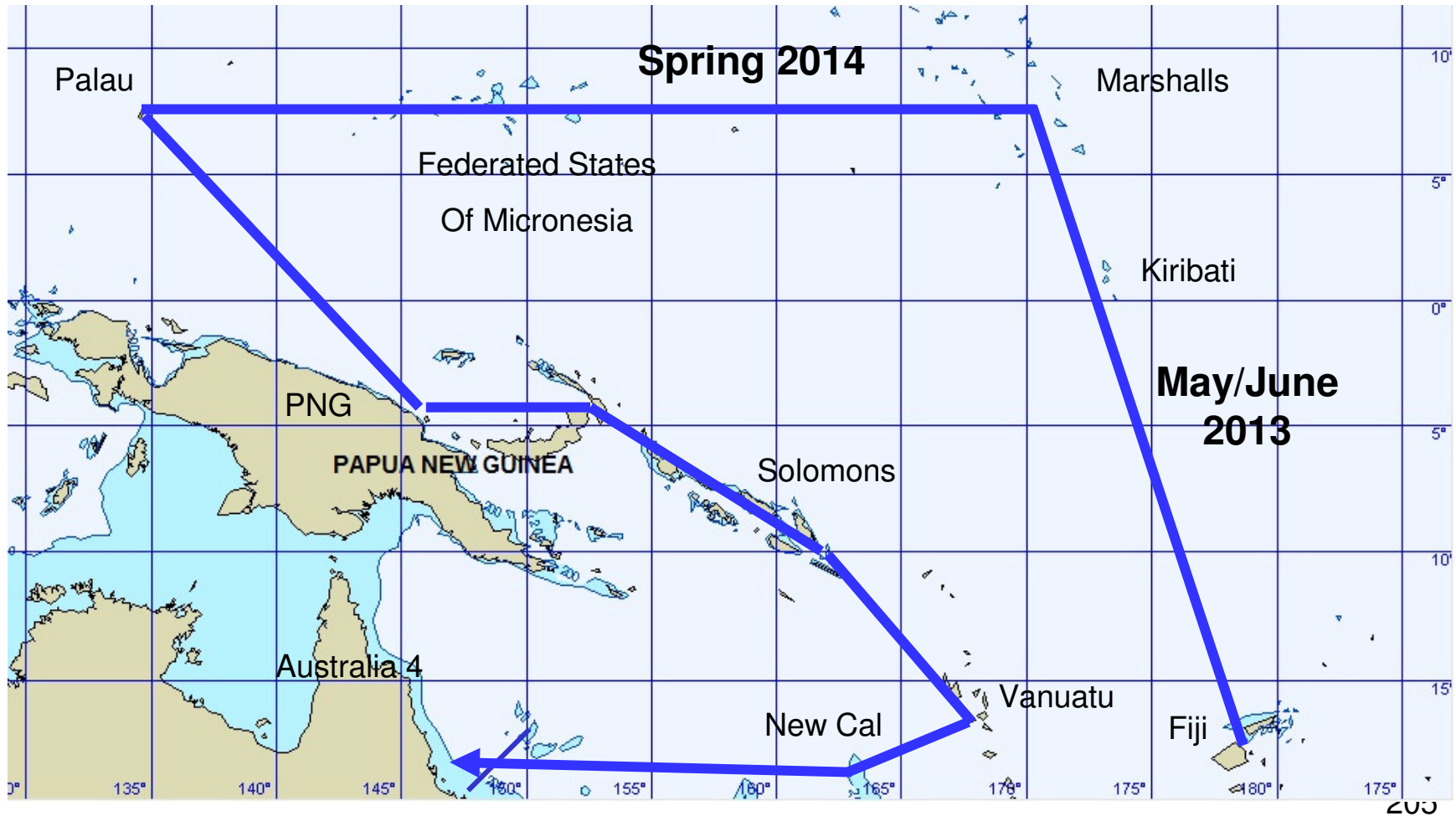




What's Next??

Tonga to Australia via Micronesia

May 2013-Nov 2017, 7550 nm



More here...

<http://svsoggypaws.com>

<http://svsoggypaws.blogspot.com>



ssca.org



The End