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CONFERENCE PAPER ABSTRACT

NAME OF PRESENTERS:	Elodie FACHE (IRD, GRED) Simonne PAUWELS (CNRS, CREDO)
TITLE OF PAPER:	Rethinking indigenous / local ecological knowledge combination in Fiji: On the role of social sciences in tackling overfishing.
THEME:	<i>Theme 3: Diverse Communities - Intangible Heritage</i>
PAPER ABSTRACT:	<p>Since the 1990s, the recognition that indigenous and local communities have developed a holistic knowledge of their environment has been associated with the promotion of the combination of this knowledge with Western ecological science. These recognition and promotion processes are supposed to contribute to these communities' empowerment and to the intergenerational transmission of their knowledge. Yet, social science studies have demonstrated that, in practice, this is not necessarily the case. Schematically, when elements of indigenous / local knowledge align with Western ecological science, they might indeed be greatly highlighted, but often in a simplified and reified form. However, when they do not, they are generally disqualified, and Western ecological science is imposed to fill in what it is deemed to be a knowledge gap, related to cultural loss or unprecedented environmental challenges.</p> <p>In this context, how could social sciences contribute to a rethinking of knowledge combination aiming, particularly in the domain of fisheries management, to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - systematically take into account and value indigenous / local knowledge, whatever its (dis)alignment with Western ecological science, and in all its diversity and complexity; and - ensure that the introduced Western scientific concepts and practices make sense for the involved communities? <p>We offer to open a discussion on this question, with a particular focus on overfishing issues. To do so, we will cross the materials that we have separately collected in different parts of Fiji for the last few years.</p>
BRIEF BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRESENTERS:	<p>Elodie FACHE and Simonne PAUWELS are both anthropologists. Elodie has conducted research since 2007 on "community-based natural resource management" policies and projects. After her PhD research on ranger programs in Indigenous Australia, she has started exploring ridge-to-reef management in Fiji as a postdoctoral fellow at the French National Research Institute for Development (IRD).</p> <p>Simonne is a researcher at the French National Centre for Scientific Research (CNRS). After conducting research in the Tanimbar archipelago in Eastern Indonesia, she has been analyzing for more than 10 years issues regarding kinship, leadership, land tenure, and local knowledge related to <i>balolo</i>, <i>Eunice viridis</i>, in Fiji.</p>