



INSTITUTE of ISLAND STUDIES

A Report for the Institute of Island Studies
University of Prince Edward Island

International Small Islands Research:
The Global Context
and
Is there a Role for the Institute of Island Studies?

August 1990



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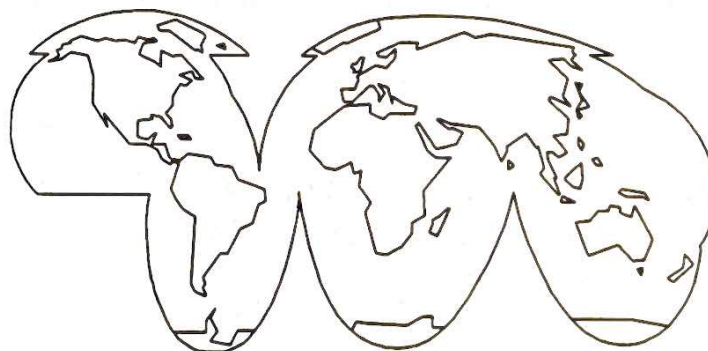
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PREFACE

This document is a report resulting from a short-term assignment by James Ramsay (environmental consultant) for the Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. The report is intended to act as, firstly, a basis for discussion concerning a possible new international role for the Institute - disseminating information globally; and secondly, as a source of information on island-related organisations and activities.

The author's terms of reference (Appendix 1) were ambitious relative to the resources available. Of necessity, the text and recommendations in the report are in outline form.

Much of the value of the document is likely to lie in the appendices, particularly in the lists of island specialists, organisations, networks, and publications. Both the suggestions for a new information centre and the data in the appendices may be of interest to other island-related institutions.

Whilst based on discussion with island specialists worldwide and the staff of the Institute of Island Studies, the views and recommendations in this report are solely those of the author, and should not be taken to represent Institute policy.

James Ramsay

Charlottetown

Prince Edward Island

August 1990



EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report outlines a significant opportunity for the future development of the Institute of Island Studies, University of Prince Edward Island, Canada. It also contains in its appendices extensive lists of island-related organisations, individuals, publications, electronic databases and networks, and other information.

The *opportunity* for the Institute lies in acting as a global *information centre* on one or more aspects of small-island research activities and events. The *activities* of such a centre might include:

- the establishment of an **international Island Collection** at the Robertson Library;
- the convening of **Conferences and Workshops**;
- occasional **Publications**, commencing with a Directory of persons and organisations active in islands affairs;
- publication of an **international Newsletter**;
- establishment of a new **electronic Islands Information Network**;
- publication of an **academic Journal**;
- creation of a **Research Fellow, Associate, or Intern** programme.

These activities could be implemented in sequence, as resources permit.

Benefits for the Institute, the University and the Province would include a raised international profile, increased research and related activities at the University, an enhanced ability to attract research funds and personnel, and the provision of timely, practical information on public policy issues drawn from comparative studies of PEI and other islands.

The **costs** of establishing such a centre would be of the order of \$ 80,000 per year over the first three years.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

NOTE: Brief descriptions of most of the organisations noted below can be found in either Appendix 4, *Organisations and Programmes*, or in Appendix 9.1, *Electronic Databases and Networks*.

ACE	Atlantic Center for the Environment (Massachusetts)
AIN	Arctic Information Network
ASTIS	Arctic Science and Technology Information System
BC	British Columbia
BGCS	Botanic Gardens Conservation Strategy
CAN	Coastal Aquaculture Network
CARIS	Current Agricultural Research Information Service
CARISPLAN	Caribbean Information System for Economic and Social Planning
CCA	Caribbean Conservation Association
CDCC	Caribbean Development Cooperation Committee
CEDREFI	Centre de Documentation, de Recherches et de Formation Indianoceaniques
CEP	Caribbean Environment Programme (UNEP)
CFCDC	Canadian Foundation for Caribbean Development and Cooperation
CIKARD	Centre for Indigenous Knowledge for Agricultural and Rural Development
CMC	Center for Marine Conservation
CNRS	Centre Nationale de la Recherche Scientifique
CTA	Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (Netherlands)
DC	District of Columbia
EAPI	East-West Environment and Policy Institute (Hawaii)
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
EEC	European Economic Community
HIDB	Highlands and Islands Development Board (Scotland)
IBION	Issue-based Indian Ocean Network
ICBP	International Council for Bird Preservation
ICLARM	International Center for Aquatic Resources Management
ICOD	International Centre for Ocean Development
ICSU	International Council of Scientific Unions
IDRC	International Development Research Centre
IIS	Institute of Island Studies

IMO	International Maritime Organisation
IMS	Island Micro-State
INSULA	International Scientific Council for Islands Development
IOMAC	Indian Ocean Marine Affairs Cooperation
IRETA	Institute for Research, Extension and Training in Agriculture (Netherlands)
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources
MAB	Man and the Biosphere Programme (UN)
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NSW	New South Wales
OCA/PAC	Oceans and Coastal Areas Programme Activity Centre (UNEP)
PEI	Prince Edward Island
PIMRIS	Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System
PINA	Pacific Islands News Association
SCAINTP	Standing Committee for Agricultural Information in the Pacific
SCAR	Scientific Committee on Arctic Research
SCOR	Scientific Committee on Oceanic Research
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
SPRI	Scott Polar Research Institute
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
UPEI	University of Prince Edward Island
WCMC	World Conservation Monitoring Centre (Cambridge, U.K.)
WWF	Worldwide Fund for Nature/World Wildlife Fund
UK	United Kingdom
USA	United States of America

Chapter 1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 The Assignment

1.1.1 Terms of Reference

This report to the Institute of Island Studies (the Institute) presents the results of a study by James Ramsay, environmental consultant, on the global context of small islands research, and on possible new roles for the Institute. The study was commissioned by the Director of the Institute, Harry Baglole. The Terms of Reference for the study are summarised below:

- (i) Contact specialists in island studies around the world to build up a picture of key island-related concepts, individuals, organisations, research programmes and publications.
- (ii) Identify existing methods of information exchange in the field of island studies.
- (iii) Determine whether there is a need for a new focal point for island information, a "database", and what form this might take.
- (iv) Outline a plan of action for the creation of such a database.

The full Terms of reference are attached at Appendix 1.

1.1.2 Execution

The assignment was carried out in four phases:

o **Acquisition of Information**

The principal methods used to acquire information were:

- telephone contact with key individuals to build up a contact list;
- written requests for information sent to contacts worldwide;
- personal visits to a few selected organisations (e.g. The International Centre for Ocean Development (ICOD), the Scott Polar Research Institute (SPRI)).

In addition, one small (\$100) sub-contract was let to a specialist in Russian geosciences, in order to obtain information on Soviet Arctic studies.

A list of individuals and organisations contacted is given at Appendix 2. The list was limited by the severe budgetary constraints imposed on the study.

o **Information Review**

A large quantity of written material received. This was reviewed and collated, resulting in the various Appendices to this report.

The most important documents received have been forwarded to the Institute under separate cover.

o **Preparation of Outline Report**

A outline report was prepared and discussed with the Institute's Director.

o **Preparation and Submission of Final Report**

1.2 Report Layout

The remainder of this chapter describes the context of the assignment, including an outline of key concepts in the field of island studies and a breakdown of islands by their geographical location.

Chapter 2 summarises information received on who is doing what, where, in relation to islands.

Chapter 3 lists some of the publications of most relevance to island studies worldwide.

Chapter 4 lists some of the electronic information sources currently available, and discusses the use of computers for information exchange.

Chapter 5 discusses the need for a new focal point on island-related information and research, and describes a possible form for such a centre.

Chapter 6 outlines a plan of action and budget for creating such a centre at the Institute.

1.3 Island Studies - a Contextual Background

1.3.1 Concepts

What is a "small island"? The 1986 Interoceanic Workshop on Sustainable Development and Environmental Management of Small Islands defined small islands as having an area of approximately 10,000 km² or less (6,210 miles²), and a population of 500,000 people or less (Beller, 1987). However, as with micro-states, there is a continuum of island sizes and populations, and any divisions are arbitrary. Hence smallness can best be perceived as a "comparative and not an absolute idea" (Wood, 1967).

Nevertheless, small island states and communities do suffer from similar development problems, and a community of interests can be recognised. Their problems are those of *scale*, *location*, and *transport*. On this basis, Connell (1988) has defined some twenty politically independent Third World island developing countries with less than a million population, and relatively low *per capita* incomes, as "Island Micro-States" (IMS) (Table 1.).

Royle (1989) suggests a universal commonality about all islands: each of them has been subject to extra-territorial political control. Small island economies have been characterised as "MIRAGE" economies - based on Migration, REmittances, Aid, Government and Education - which depend on concessions that are arbitrarily granted and subject to reduction or withdrawal should the sense of responsibility of the metropolitan power weaken (Beller, 1987).

Although Brookfield (1986) has singled out the "transport stranglehold" as the single most important constraint to island development, his viewpoint is principally one of *economic* development. There is a growing perception amongst small islands in many parts of the world that remoteness and "underdevelopment" are resources rather than constraints. Although partially due to the tourism opportunities offered by these attributes, much more important is the **cultural integrity** preserved and assisted by being out of the mainstream.

TABLE 1. *Island Microstates in the Third World* (from: Connell, 1988)

	Popu- lation (mid- 1985)	Area (sq. kms)	Popu- lation Density (persons sq.km)	GNP per capita \$US 1985	Life Expect- ancy (1985)
<u>Caribbean</u>					
Antigua and Barbuda	79000	442	178	2020	73
Bahamas	231000	13940	16	7070	70
Barbados	254000	430	59	4630	73
Dominica	78000	750	104	1150	75
Grenada	96000	345	278	970	68
St Kitts-Nevis	55000	269	204	1550	64
St Lucia	136000	616	221	1240	70
St Vincent and the Grenadines	119000	388	307	850	69
<u>Indian Ocean</u>					
Comoros	454000	1865	243	240	55
Maldives	182000	298	611	290	53
Seychelles	65000	404	161	2770	69
<u>Atlantic Ocean</u>					
Cape Verde	325000	4033	81	430	63
Sao Tome and Principe	108000	826	131	320	65
<u>South Pacific</u>					
Fiji	715000	18272	39	1660	68
Kiribati	61000	690	88	460(1984)	52
Solomon Islands	286000	28530	10	470	57
Tonga	95000	700	151	780(1983)	58
Tuvalu	8000	26	308	570(1980)	60 est.
Western Samoa	163000	2935	55	570	65
Vanuatu	140000	11880	12	530(1982)	54

Sources: World Bank, 1987a:269 (for Caribbean, Indian Ocean and Atlantic Ocean); Pacific Economic Bulletin, 2, December 1986 (for South Pacific).

NOTE: The World Bank population for St.Kitts-Nevis was 43,000 but this appears to be an under-estimate. Other World Bank population figures, notably those for the Comoros, St. Vincent, Grenada and the Maldives, are open to some dispute. The population of Tonga is adjusted to take note of the 1985 Census. The World Bank have 1985 per capita income figures for South Pacific states as follows: Fiji (1710), Solomon Islands (510), Tonga (730), Western Samoa (660) and Vanuatu (530). There is no reason to suppose that these are more accurate than other figures. The South Pacific life expectancy figures are for 1980; they vary little from the available World Bank figures for 1985.

1.3.2 Geographical Units

Canada

Islands are an important feature of the Canadian land and seascape. Although a precise count has never been made, the Canadian Gazetteer Atlas (1980) records names for 1016 individual islands and 129 groups or archipelagoes. These are divided into three regions: Arctic, Pacific, and Atlantic. Each area has unique environmental, economic and cultural features, but collectively they share a number of development-related needs and problems. One recent study of environment and development problems of islands in these three groups is the report by Hanson and Lamson (1986).

Global

There are a number of ways of classifying islands worldwide. A simple division is:

Polar

- Arctic
- Antarctic

Temperate

- Western European
- Eastern North American
- Western North American
- North-West Pacific
- South American
- Australasian

Tropical

- Caribbean
- Pacific
- Indian Ocean

This classification leaves groups such as the Mediterranean islands somewhat in limbo. Additional literature review would undoubtedly identify many other classifications, including those based on geology, conservation values, communications links, and comparative culture.

Chapter 2. WHO, WHAT AND WHERE

2.1 Key Institutions

A limited number of institutions play a leading role in studies and research related to small islands. A very much larger number of organisations are involved in various aspects of island studies and development, with interests ranging from local through regional to global, in various fields.

Key island-related institutions include:

Canada

The *Institute of Island Studies* appears to be the only specifically island-related organisation in Canada which is active both domestically and internationally.

There is a "*Small Islands Research Group*" at the University of Calgary, but this did not respond to enquiries for information. There is also an "*Islands Trust*" in British Columbia, which is thought to be a local conservation and development NGO.

The World

Island Resources Foundation (US Virgin Islands). A conservation and development NGO, particularly active in the eastern Caribbean.

IUCN. IUCN has a Task Force on Island Conservation within its Commission on Ecology, and is completing a major Directory and database on more than 2000 islands worldwide.

UNESCO/MAB. UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme has an Islands Programme, headquartered in the Division of Ecological Sciences, Paris. UNESCO/MAB has recently sponsored the foundation of the International Scientific Council for Islands Development (INSULA), an NGO devoted to sustainable development of islands worldwide (see Appendix 5 for a description of INSULA).

US/MAB. The US MAB Programme has an Islands Directorate, which has concentrated its efforts on the Caribbean.

Small Islands Working Group of the Commonwealth Geographical Bureau. This new working group was set up by participants at the recent Conference on Small Island Development in Malta. In addition, the meeting endorsed the concept of establishing a new Malta-based island research organisation.

University of Bordeaux, Dept. of Island Geography. This university department has many research programmes on islands, including the CNRS/ORSTOM series of atlases of French overseas territories.

Further details of these organisations are given in Appendix 4.

2.2 Other Island-related Institutions

Some of the many other organisations involved in activities relating to islands are listed in Appendix 4.

2.3 Island Specialists

In addition to the Directors of the organisations named above, an interest in islands can be inferred by attendance at island-related meetings. Lists of delegates to recent island-related conferences are attached at Appendix 3 (Interoceanic Workshop on Sustainable Development and Environmental Management of Small Islands, Humacao, Puerto Rico, 1986; Islands '86; IUCN/UNEP Workshop on Island Conservation 1989; Conference on Small Island Development, 1990, Malta).

Chapter 3. INFORMATION ON PAPER

3.1 Newsletters

A preliminary list of island-related Newsletters and other periodicals is attached at Appendix 6.

3.2 Journals

No academic journal devoted solely to islands was identified during this study, with the exception of special issues, e.g. *Ekistics*, Vol. 54, Nos. 323/324.

3.3 Bibliographies

A short general bibliography on islands is given at Appendix 7.1. This is supplemented by an extensive bibliography on Third World Island Microstates from Connell (1988) at Appendix 7.2.

Appendix 8 lists a number of Directories, either specifically concerned with islands (e.g. the forthcoming IUCN Islands Directory), or relevant to islands and island research in other ways.

Chapter 4. ELECTRONIC INFORMATION



4.1 Principles of Electronic Information Exchange

Computer literacy is essential for any organisation dealing with information, principally for three purposes:

- maintaining and accessing the organisation's internal records (people, publications, addresses, accounts, databases of information on specialist subject areas);
- word processing, to create attractive publications to disseminate information;
- accessing external information.

The first two of these purposes are self-explanatory. An excellent introduction to computers for NGOs is given at Appendix 10.1, *Computers for NGOs*, by the Island Resources Foundation. The third purpose, accessing external information, may be a new subject to some readers.

Increasingly, information on all subjects is being exchanged by using computers and telecommunications systems. *Going online* means being able to ask questions and obtain answers in real time on the screen from an electronic database (e.g. an academic abstracting service), which may be in the same building or the other side of the world. *Computer-assisted communications* allow people, at different times and places, to exchange text messages (including documents) through the use of computer terminals (or microcomputers), connected by a communication link such as the telephone system. There is no need for everyone to be available at the same time as on the telephone, or to have a dedicated phone line as with a fax machine.

Materials on going online have been supplied to the Institute separately. An introduction to computer-assisted communications is attached at Appendix 10.2.

4.2 Databases

The records of an increasing number of libraries are available online. Some of these are listed at Appendix 9.1.

4.3 Networks, Conferences and Electronic Mail

Appendix 9.1 also lists a number of Networks, Conferences and Electronic Mail systems relevant to island studies and development.

Chapter 5. A NEW ROLE FOR THE INSTITUTE?

5.1 Need and Purpose

Worldwide, there are many organisations involved in activities relating to island development, or university departments involved in island-related research. However, there does not appear to be any academic journal devoted solely to island subjects, nor any global islands newsletter devoted to, e.g., exchanging information related to development and resource management issues.

This information gap immediately suggests a possible new role for the Institute, as *an Islands Information Centre*.

Given the Institute's and the University's strengths and weaknesses, it would be important for any such initiative to focus on a particular type of endeavour. The Institute has a good record in the fields of island culture, history, and socio-economic development, and this emphasis should be maintained, at least in the early stages. In addition, it would be beneficial for both the Institute and Prince Edward Island to develop a capability in the rapidly growing public policy fields of sustainable development and environmental management.

The geographical scope of the centre should be global, but with an initial focus on the North Atlantic seaboard of both Europe and North America. Given the rapid growth of island-related organisations based in Europe (and other political developments there), one function of the newsletter would be to keep European contacts abreast of news from North America, and *vice versa*.

The centre would also have a useful role to play *vis-a-vis* the Province: providing the information on how other islands do things, and hence assisting the formation of public policy (examples might be a comparative study of the tax laws of the Bahamas, Channel Islands, and Isle of Man, or of land use and planning regulations on islands of similar size).

5.2 Description

Activities of the Information Centre might include:

- (i) Establishment of an **international Islands Collection** at the Robertson Library at UPEI. Consideration should be given to cataloguing the new material using the UDC "Islands Schedule", rather than the Library of Congress classification. In addition, future online access to the collection's records might be facilitated by using UNESCO's internationally-recognised CDS/ISIS software for bibliographic databases.
- (ii) Organising **Conferences and Workshops**, perhaps commencing with a meeting of Directors of Island Institutes to determine research and information needs. One meeting in PEI which has already been broached with the Small Islands Working Group of the Commonwealth Geographical Bureau is a proposed conference on the Demography of Small Island Populations, scheduled for 1993.
- (iii) **Occasional publications**, commencing with a **Directory of Persons and Organisations** active in island affairs. This could be modelled on the Scott Polar Research Institute's new directory: *Britain in the Arctic: a Directory of Interests and Activities* (SPRI, 1990), of which a copy has been forwarded to the Institute. Other publications would include books and monographs on island themes, with an international market.
- (iv) Publication of a **Newsletter**, emphasising island-related research, cultural events, and development and resource management issues.
- (v) Setting up a new **electronic Information Network**, along the lines of PIMRIS (Pacific Islands Marine Resources Information System) at the University of the South Pacific.
- (vi) Publication of an **academic Journal**, possibly quarterly - or at least, housing the secretariat responsible to the international Editorial Board for preparation of the journal.
- (viii) A **Research Fellow, Associate or Intern Programme**, to facilitate the temporary appointment of researchers and others at the Institute. Possible areas of research related to small islands are listed at Appendix 11.

It will not be possible to carry out these activities successfully without increasing the Institute's capability to acquire and collate information. Necessary inputs will include subscriptions to a large number of newsletters and some other journals, reciprocal membership of other island institutes and organisations, subscription memberships, constant telephone and fax contacts, use of various electronic systems, and conference attendance. Extra staff will be required, initially part-time.

5.3 Benefits

In addition to their intrinsic value, the Institute would benefit from these activities through the recognition that would accrue from providing a needed international service.

Benefits to the University of having a more active and internationally recognised Institute would include an enhanced ability to attract both funds and researchers. The Institute's activities would both inspire and inform the academic body, and create opportunities for new joint research projects, academic exchanges, & etc. The types of activities suggested would also assist in building the critical mass necessary for establishing both a Geography Department and Postgraduate studies.

The Province would benefit from the Institute's new venture in several ways: economically, from the spending associated with increased activity at the University; culturally, as the Institute taps into and facilitates increasing numbers of island-to-island cultural exchanges and events; and politically, in terms of both the supply of practical information to government, and a raised international profile.

Chapter 6. PLAN OF ACTION FOR CREATING THE IIS INFORMATION CENTRE

6.1 Phases

Creation of an Information Centre at the Institute should be phased. Activities would reflect the resources available. Each of the items discussed at Section 5.2 above could form the basis of an application to a potential funding agency.

It is recommended that the activities be undertaken in the following order:

1. Increase access to information by:
 - subscribing to newsletters;
 - beginning the establishment of an international islands collection at the Robertson Library.
2. Arrange a meeting of Directors of Island Institutes to discuss international information and research needs.
3. Preparation of a Directory of island-related individuals and organisations. Use this project to acquire necessary computer equipment, subscriptions to electronic networks, and computer experience in-house. Directory would be both hard-copy, and available on disk or possibly online.
4. Publication of first Newsletter, to gradually improve in format and scope.
5. Establish electronic bulletin board on small islands on appropriate network.
6. Initiate steps towards publication of Journal.
7. Set up Research Associate or Internship programme.

6.2 Costs

Resources available to this study did not allow the generation of a detailed budget for the Action Plan. An outline budget is given below:

Item	\$
<i>Capital Costs</i>	
Computer hardware, software, printer, & related costs	10,000
<i>Recurrent Annual Costs</i>	
Literature acquisition	5,000
Small islands specialist (part-time) - salary & benefits	30,000
Travel, workshops, conferences	25,000
Office costs	10,000
Total first year costs:	80,000
Second year recurrent costs (with 10% inflation allowance)	77,000
Third year recurrent costs (2nd year plus 10%)	85,000

When considering these figures it is important to realise that even a limited financial commitment could have very beneficial results, for example in terms of establishing an international presence and identifying long-term opportunities. Readers should also be aware that the Institute already has office space available and, separately, is working on plans to enhance its in-house publishing capability.

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APPENDIX 1.

TERMS OF REFERENCE



INSTITUTE of ISLAND STUDIES

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Small Islands Research: *Is there a need for a global database?*

TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR AN EXPLORATORY STUDY

1. BACKGROUND

One of the purposes of the Institute of Island Studies is to undertake comparative studies of Prince Edward Island and other islands. In pursuance of this objective, the Institute proposes to carry out a project that may lead to its emergence as an internationally recognised reference point on small islands. The project will also help to define the future activities and evolution of the Institute.

The analysis of islands may be divided into two major areas - biophysical, and human (cultural/economic). These two areas are linked by the major theme of "environment", and by their change through time - historically, current processes, future evolution.

Informal contact with a number of international specialists on various aspects of island studies has indicated that there may be a need for a central database on small islands research and related activities. The formation of such a database at the Institute, together with associated information-related exercises such as publication of newsletters and journals, would provide an excellent foundation for a major expansion in "Island Studies" at UPEI, including a significant increase in international ventures.

As a first step, the Institute is commissioning a consultant to review islands research and information activities around the world, and to outline a plan of action for the creation of an appropriate database.

2. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the contract are to:

- 2.1 outline some opportunities for future evolution of the Institute in relation to international studies;
- 2.2 assess the need for an international small-islands database for research, policy and decision-making, and related activities;
- 2.3 generate an outline plan of action for the creation of the database.

3. SCOPE OF SERVICES

Without limiting the generality of the foregoing, the consultant shall, as far as possible within the available resources:

- 3.1 contact island specialists to develop a list of institutions involved in island studies around the world, including key contacts;
- 3.2 contact key institutions on this list to ascertain their mandates, structure, and programmes of activity;
- 3.3 acquire island-related bibliographies and publications lists;
- 3.4 identify and describe existing island-related databases and information networks;
- 3.5 identify key "island" concepts and research topics of current concern;
- 3.6 assess the need for and potential usefulness of a new islands-related database, and whether this should be focussed;
- 3.7 outline a plan of action for the creation of an appropriate database at UPEI over a two-year period.

4. REPORTING

A report in 2 copies plus the original, and/or a copy on diskette (WordPerfect 5.0) as agreed, is expected by 31st December 1989 (*subsequently amended*).

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SMALL ISLANDS RESEARCH

Report to the Institute of Island Studies

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3.4
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