

# Living in the ring of fire: glimpses of the long run of environmental experience in the Pacific Islands

Tuesday 17 March 6.30pm – 8.30pm

## Speaker (public lecture)

**Edvard Hviding**

University of Bergen

## Speaker (book launch)

**Edvard Hviding**

University of Bergen

**Kirin Narayan**

Australian National University

## Location

### The auditorium

Australian Centre for China in the World,  
Building #188,  
Fellows Lane, ANU

**Light refreshments will be provided**

## Registration required

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This lecture is free and open to the public

ANU Public Lecture Series information:  
[anu.edu.au/publiclectures](http://anu.edu.au/publiclectures)

Presented by

ANU Pacific Institute,  
ANU College of  
Asia and the Pacific



## Experience in the Pacific Islands

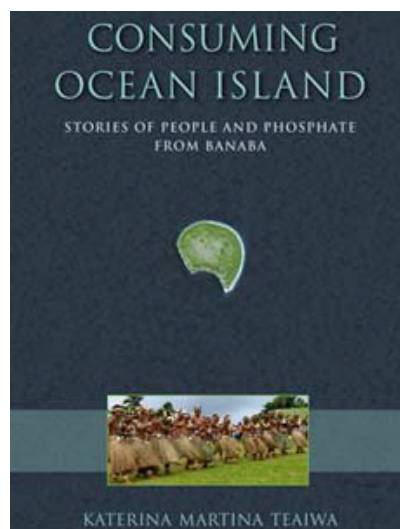
Contrary to stereotypical popular views of island life in the tropical Pacific as characterized by environmental splendour and idyllic equilibrium, the actual foundations for everyday life in the islands include many elements of unpredictability and instability that may pose harsh challenges for long-term human settlement.

In this talk Edvard Hviding, Professor of Social Anthropology at the University of Bergen, Director of the Bergen Pacific Studies Research Group, and Coordinator of the European Consortium for Pacific Studies (ECOPAS), examines how Pacific Islanders'

long-term experience of living with such volatile environments is manifested in world views and folk tales about origin, creation, movement, danger and malevolent agency that allow for a certain interpretation of environmental instability. Prof Hviding's talk will be preceded by the following book launch:

## Consuming Ocean Island: Stories of People and Phosphate from Banaba

Consuming Ocean Island tells the story of the land and people of Banaba, a small Pacific island, which, from 1900 to 1980, was heavily mined for phosphate, an essential ingredient in fertilizer. As mining stripped away the island's surface, the land was rendered uninhabitable, and the indigenous Banabans were relocated to Rabi Island in Fiji. Katerina Martina Teaiwa tells the story of this human and ecological calamity by weaving together memories, records, and images from displaced islanders, colonial administrators, and employees of the mining



company. Her compelling narrative reminds us of what is at stake whenever the interests of industrial agriculture and indigenous minorities come into conflict. The Banaban experience offers insight into the plight of other island peoples facing forced migration as a result of human impact on the environment.