

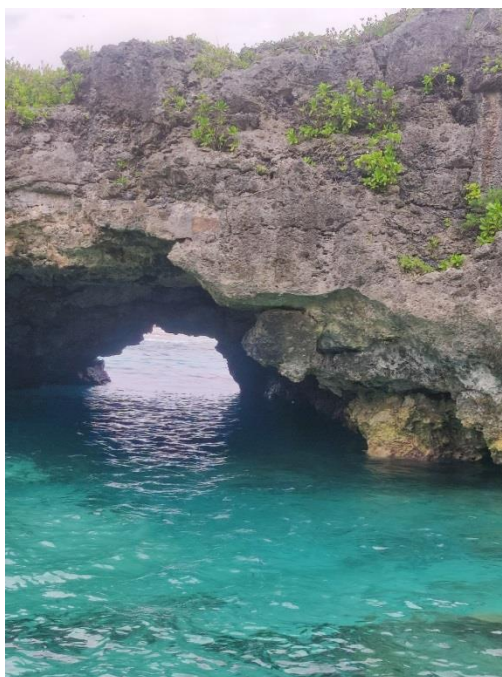
## Niue dxpedition by SP5EAQ

I was active from Makefu, Niue as E6AQ for 18 days in October/November 2024. The QTH was a cottage right by the ocean about 80 m from the cliff facing West. It was the only SSB activity on the 80-10m bands. I flew to the island from Auckland, NZ. The challenge was to convince the carrier to let me take an extra piece of luggage containing a lightweight GP7 antenna (design SP7GXP). It weighs only 7kg, but Air Zealand does not allow any excess baggage on this route. After a discussion at the airport, I was allowed to take the antenna for a significant fee. I landed the day after Constitution Day, not expecting the holiday to be extended to three (and then unofficially to seven) days. This resulted in closed shops and most of all offices. Fortunately, I had already booked a callsign and permission to start transmitting immediately upon arrival. An unexpected problem was buying food. The only open place was a gas station, where I bought eggs and a box of butter (no bread). This was my food for the next few days.



GDXF flag hanging on delta wire

I raised my multiband vertical dipole in the evening and made my first contacts. From dawn the next day I worked full time. Very good conditions on 10 meters, on this band I made most QSOs. The bane was QRN on 40 meters (S7-S9 noise) and bad conditions on 80m (where I used a h.m. delta antenna fixed to a palm tree). The advice of Europeans to use BOG or Beverage antennas for reception turned out to be useless. The island, which was an atoll millions of years ago and was then uplifted by tectonic movements, had a bedrock of super-hard coral. In practice, even driving a nail and connecting it electrically to a completely non-conductive ground was impossible.



A window to the Pacific



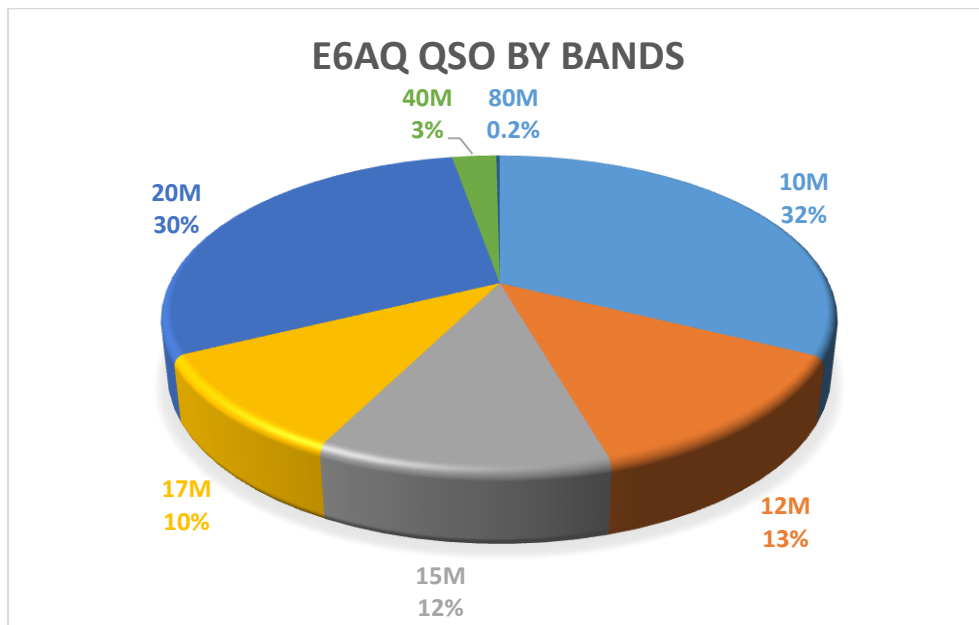
GP7 multiband vertical designed and manufactured by SP7GXP

The following weekend I entered the CQ WWDX Contest on 10-meter band (plus a few QSOs on other bands to provide a multiplier for the stations requesting QSY). My signals from the South Pacific were not enough strong to create a pileup, so I decided to call other stations. I had turned off the Internet for the contest (as usual I entered in the non-assisted category) and therefore it was extremely hard to get through the strong signals of the other contestants. I managed to make several hundred contacts, but at the cost of fewer QSOs than I would have operated outside the contest.



Dxpedition setup

In 18 days I made 5k QSOs working exclusively on SSB. My activity was somewhat disrupted by power outages and sometimes rapid propagation changes. During the day, from noon to dusk, there was no propagation on any of the bands used. The dxpedition was expensive mainly because of the extra baggage and the need to rent a car locally. Niue is an island with no public transport. It is large (it takes an hour to drive around it), sparsely populated (6 people/km<sup>2</sup>), beautiful in terms of landscape (impressive cliffs and rock forms), and full of abandoned houses and wrecked cars (since 95% of the population left for New Zealand when the island became an associated state with NZ).



### E6AQ QSO BY COUNTRY

