

## Hunter-gatherer data information sheet/questionnaire

Be sure to put reference number and page # after each entry.  
[2 points for each quantitative entry, 1 pt for other.]

### I. Description

**1.1 Name of group and language family:** Rapa nui Easter Island

**1.2 Location:** It is located on a tiny island in the South Pacific near Chile.

**1.3 Population size (local group, breeding):** The population size was estimated to be around 3,000 in 1862 before slave traders took numerous islanders eventually leaving only about 111 people in 1877 (2, p. 179). As of 2000 it was estimated to be about 3,500 (1).

**1.4 Home range size (yearly, life):** The island is triangular shaped with sides of 11, 18, and 16 km which equals out to 166 sq km or 64 sq mi. (2, p. 23)

**1.5 Density (person/km<sup>2</sup>):**

**1.6 History:** Most evidence points to the inhabitants coming to the island from Polynesia, though some showed possibility of a relation to South America instead. It is now accepted that they are derived from Polynesia, however, until substantial evidence shows otherwise (2, ch 2). The circumstances by which they arrived at the island is a mystery. Polynesia is known for very skilled navigators and sailors so it is thought that it could have been a purposeful departure from the island for new land. It is not unheard of for unhappy inhabitants of one area to set out to look for another area in which they might reside. There is also the possibility of an accidental landing there perhaps by being blown out to sea or a lucky group of ousted individuals happening to find the island (2, ch 4). Other interesting factors involve myths told by the inhabitants about prophetic dreams that led the founders to the island (2, ch. 3; 3, ch. 3).

### II. Environmental Features

**2.1 ecotype:** The island is volcanic in origin ( 3 peaks total: Terevaka, Poike, and Rano Kau). Numerous caves caused by lava flow cause rain to drain underground leading to the arid environment in many parts of the island. No permanent streams are found on the island although during heavy rain there may be temporary streams flowing. (2, p. 26)

**2.2 temperature:** The mean annual temperature is 60.9 degrees F with slight variation between seasons. The coldest months, July and August, have temperatures averaging around 74 degrees F and the warmest months, January and February, average about 74 degrees F. (2, p. 28)

**2.3 rainfall:** Rainfall is irregular throughout the year with an average of 1,198 or about 47 inches, although, there is much variation between the years. The wetter months are March and June while droughts occur in several months including September which is most commonly a dry month. Rain also seems to fall much more on the center of the island than the coast because of climatic reasons. (2, p. 28)

### **III. Economy**

**3.1 Main carbohydrate staples (% of energy in diet):** The inhabitants were thought to have very strong teeth that allowed them to crack the nuts of the palm trees thought to have grown there before the deforestation took place. Explorers reported banana trees, sweet potatoes, and sugar-cane (perhaps used for a source of water in the arid land)(2, p. 94).

#### **3.1.1 return rates upon encounter**

**3.1.2 resource abundance, density** Although soil in the land is quite fertile, the high temperature and humidity cause evaporation and rapid chemical weathering of the soil leading to lack of surface water. Because of this much of the island is not suitable for much plant growth. The explorers stated that only enough of the land was cultivated to support the inhabitants (about 1/10) (2, ch. 4).

**3.1.3 sharing patterns of carbohydrate-** Food is never bought or sold and is always thought of as a gift. They share readily, even foreigners. (6, 90)

**3.2 Main protein lipid sources (% energy, % protein-lipid)** It was thought that the first settlers relied on fish, turtles, birds, and shellfish before their crops could grow. Chickens and the Polynesian rat (now replaced by the British rat) were also brought over and flourished. However, no large mammal food sources dwell there. During long droughts they may have relied on cannibalism. (2, ch. 4)

#### **3.2.1 return rates upon encounter**

**3.2.2 resource abundance, density** Protein sources are hard to come by because of the limited fauna dwelling there. This is the result of the isolation that Easter Island has endured. (2, ch. 2)

**3.2.3 sharing patterns of protein-lipid sources-** same as 3.1.3

**3.2.4 Search Party/Pursuit group size for major protein-lipid resources.**

**3.3 Dietary intake: (calories per capita)**

**(seasonality)**

**3.4 Special tools and foraging techniques:** Bananas were cut using obsidian stone (found on the volcanic island) by cutting around the branch and then twisting the banana off. Because of the few bones found on the island this was what they used for most tools. (2, p. 94)

### **3.5 Storage:**

### **3.6 Sexual division of production (% calories, % protein-lipid by males and females)**

### **3.65 Cooperation during production (% time in cooperation, % calcs produced cooperatively, do men hunt solitarily or together, etc.)**

### **3.7 Age divisions of production (production by children and elderly):**

**3.8 Non-foraging economy:** Stone carving and wood carving were prevalent. Isolated location didn't allow for trade. (4)

### **Time use:**

**3.8.1 Men's food acquisition work: (hr/day)** Men were responsible for planting the gardens, fishing, and building the stone structures (moai). (4)

**(seasonality)**

**food processing**

**tool work-** used obsidian and other stones for almost all tool work

**housework**

**3.8.2 Women's food acquisition work-** Women harvested crops and handled most domestic chores. (4)

**(seasonality)**

**food processing**

**tool work**

**housework**

**3.8.3 Children and Elderly food acquisition work**

**food processing**

**tool work**

**housework**

**Food sharing patterns:** Same as above- food is seen as a gift and is not to be bought or sold.

**3.9.1 Percent meat kept by nuclear family of acquirer**

**(by game size)**

**3.9.2 Percent collected kept by nuclear family of acquirer**

**(by package size or resource)**

**3.9.3 Kin bais (close kin fraction/non-relative fraction)**

**3.9.4 Other specified sharing patterns**

**3.10 Food taboos:** It is taboo for women, or perhaps just menstruating women, as well as fisherman to go into yam plantations or they may rot. (3, ch 3)

#### **IV. Anthropometry**

**4.1 Mean adult height (m and f)** – In general they are a large statured people. I only found information on men who explorers claimed many of were about 5 ft 11 in and most were at least 5 ft 6 in. (6, 75)

**4.2 Mean adult weight (m and f)**

**4.3 Age specific child weight or height**

**4.4 % wasted/stunted, nutritional status**

#### **V. Demography and Life History**

**5.1 Major causes of mortality (0-5, 5-60)** Starvation often hit because of droughts and many explorers carried diseases that erupted as pandemics such as tuberculosis and small pox. (6, 43)

**5.3 Juvenile survival rate (0-1, 0-15 m and f)**

**5.4 Adult survival rate (15- 55, 15-70 m and f)**

**5.5 Age first birth (m and f)**

**5.6 Completed family size (m and f)**

**(range and variance, percent non-reproducers)**

**5.7 Inter-birth-interval (f)**

#### **Marriage and parenting**

**5.8.1 Age first marriage (m and f)** Infant betrothal was not uncommon (4)

**5.8.2 Mean number of "divorces" (age 15-50, m and f)** Divorces were frequent and could be initiated by either party over just about anything (4).

**5.8.3 Polygyny (%males, % females, mean and range of spouse #):** Generally marriages were monogamous although some wealthy men could afford more than one wife. (4)

**5.8.4 Arranged marriage, bride purchase, evidence of coercion:** Marriages were generally arranged (4)  
(kin preference)

**5.8.5 Percent of time spent in childcare**

**Sex ratio**

**5.9.1 ratio at birth**

**5.9.2 juvenile ratio (age 5-15)**

**5.9.3 adult ratio (age 25-40)**

**5.9.4 sex biased homicide/neglect:**

**Warfare/homicide**

**5.10.1 Percent adult male deaths due to warfare**

**5.10.2 Outgroup vs ingroup cause of violent death (ratio)**

**5.10.3 Percent children killed before age 10:**

**5.10.4 Reported causes of in-group and out-group killing** – 2 big groups of the island that specialized in either fishing or agriculture often fought, killing members of the defeated tribe that were children or aged (6, 10). Also exploiters from other islands killed while collecting slaves and raping women (6, 10). Long droughts leading to few plots of cultivated land often led to inter-clan violence (6, 8)

**5.10.5 Percent females in residential group captured by raiding**

## **VI. Social Organization and Interaction**

**6.1 Residential group size:**  
(seasonality)

**6.2 Mobility pattern:** Mostly sedentary since the island is rather small (all).  
(seasonality)

**6.3 Political system: (chiefs, clans etc, wealth or status classes):** Ten patrilineal clans were set up before coalescing into the two big groups (6, 10). The famous statues, moai, were built in honor for those of hereditary leadership. However, later these leaders were replaced by the warrior class formed from fighting of land. (6, 8)

**6.4 Post marital residence:** Ambilineal (4)

**(first marriage, mid-life)**

**6.5 Territoriality? (defined boundaries, active defense)** – Ten patrilineal clans were set up before coalescing into the two big groups. Boundaries and defense of the boundaries is seen throughout all these stages (6, 10).

**6.6 Social interaction divisions ? (age and sex)**

**6.7 Special friendships/joking relationships**

**6.8 misc. social relations.**

## **VII. Ritual/Ceremony/Religion**

**7.1 Time allocation to ritual, ceremony and religion:** The islanders traditionally believed in about 90 different gods. Such ceremonies as those to sanctify houses or bring rain were held.

**(seasonality)**

**7.2 Specialization (shamans, etc)**

**7.3 Passage rituals (birth, death, puberty, seasonal)** – Both boys and girls were secluded on an island for months and then given a feast as a mark of puberty **(4)**

## **VIII. Other interesting features, anecdotes, etc.**

Explorers originally thought that men greatly outnumbered women and children, however, they simply didn't realize that many of the women and children didn't come out of their hidden homes that are in caves in the ground (6, 27).

**References (list and label references with numbers: 1, 2, 3...)**

**1)**[http://www.ethnologue.com/show\\_language.asp?code=rap](http://www.ethnologue.com/show_language.asp?code=rap)

**2) Easter Island Earth Island – Paul Bahn and John Flenley**

**3) The Eight Land – Thomas S. Barthel**

**4) [www.everyculture.com/Oceania/Easter-Island-Marriage-and-Family.html](http://www.everyculture.com/Oceania/Easter-Island-Marriage-and-Family.html)**

**5) The Modernization of Easter Island – Douglass Porteous**

**6) Inventing Easter Island – Beverly Faun**