

Subj: Comes the official word
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Lili was notified today that her visa will be for New Caledonia.

Woo-hoo!

Nouvelle Caledonia is about 250 miles long and 30 miles wide, with a ridge of mountains down the center, two of the mountains mile-high. One percent of the land is arable. A third of the world's supply of pure nickel ore comes from this island-- no wonder France is happy to maintain it as a territory. The Melanesians would prefer independence, but they constitute just 2/5 of the population. The birthrate is high (yay!). Most of the island are Christian, and most of those are Roman Catholic, but there are many Protestants too; a plethora of other religions are also present, including Hindu and Muslim. French is the official language, but about 30 languages are spoken.

I don't know how many of you knew that Lili has had a great interest in

tropical plants and has germinated several such from seed (she has a "Mother Tree" about six feet tall growing in her bedroom). Given this interest of hers you can imagine her reaction to learning today that 3/4 of the plants are unique to the island!

That's today's news and I am outta here!

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