



EBM KUBULAU BULLETIN



VOL. 9. JULY 2009

Ni sa bula vinaka! Welcome to the ninth edition of the WCS EBM Kubulau Bulletin. The bulletin brings together news and results from ongoing activities by the Wildlife Conservation Society within the Kubulau area.

KUBULAU SIGNING CEREMONY

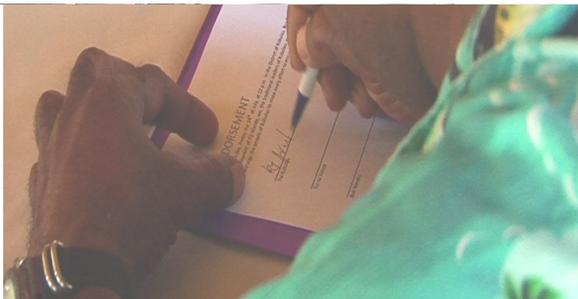
On July 24th the Bose Vanua and members of the Kubulau Resource Management Committee (KRMC) met in Namalata village in Kubulau to sign the Kubulau Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) plan. The signing of the recently developed ridge-to-reef plan meant that the Bose Vanua has endorsed the management actions and rules stated in the plan.

“...Kubulau is the first community in Fiji to have adopted such a plan which takes into consideration the ridge-to-reef concept...”, commented Dr. Stacy Jupiter, Director of the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS).

“The plan contains management rules and actions to help communities better manage their natural resources in Kubulau’s land, freshwater, coastal and marine environments”, said Thomas Tui, Assistant Director with WCS.

According to Paulo, chairman of the KRMC, “the communities have been consulted a lot about this plan but now they can see and use the finalized management actions and rules as their bible for natural resource management in Kubulau”.

From August 13th, the WCS team will be visiting the 10 villages in the Kubu-



Dr. Stacy Jupiter, Director of Wildlife Conservation Society-Fiji, presenting the Kubulau ‘ridge-to-reef’ plan to Tui Kubulau (Top) Tui Kubulau Ratu Apinisa Vuki endorsing the plan (Below).

lau district to conduct a ridge-to-reef management plan road show” said Thomas.

During the management plan roadshow the WCS team will be explaining to communities the management actions and rules and will also answer any questions that the communities might have.

This ridge-to-reef plan has gone through numerous community and external stakeholder consultations. The planned roadshow for the ‘ridge-to-reef’ plan is expected to be held in mid-September.

KEY EBM MESSAGES:

Preservation of functional integrity of Fiji’s ecoscapes through community based management.

- Successful EBM relies on cross sectoral planning and management
- Inland and lowland communities need to manage resources together
- EBM protects habitat for all stages of life
- Improving land and fishing practices helps protect natural resources
- Public health and livelihoods depend on environmental health

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SUMMARY OF EBM MEETINGS IN SUVA

The EBM partnership team had a very busy month of August with two very important meeting that took place in Suva.

The first meeting was the inaugural Fiji Islands Conservation Science Forum (FICSF) which convened from 5th—7th August. Many different NGOs, academic institutions, and government departments presented their conservation science work during this forum. Kubulau work was also presented to the wider Fijian conservation communities. The main aim of this forum was to give the conservationist working in Fiji a platform to present outcomes, challenges, lesson's learnt and future conser-

vation priorities for Fiji.

The second meeting, Ecosystem Based Management (EBM) Regional Initiatives meeting convened from 10th—11th August. EBM project personnel from Indonesia and Palau met with EBM-Fiji project team and other EBM practioners in Fiji to discuss: difference in approach; lessons learnt; challenges; and other issues. All of these outputs and lessons will be incorporated into the 'guide to EBM', which is being developed by the EBM-Fiji partnership to enable a wider-scale sharing and understanding of EBM.



Christovel Rotinsulu (left) from Indonesia and Umair Basilius (right) from Palau during the EBM regional Initiatives meeting.

KUBULAU DECLARES NO-TAKE MPAS

THE GOAL OF ECOSYSTEM-BASED MANAGEMENT IS TO MAINTAIN AN ECOSYSTEM IN A HEALTHY, PRODUCTIVE AND RESILIENT CONDITION SO THAT IT CAN PROVIDE THE SERVICES HUMANS WANT AND NEED.



Participants of the Kubulau district MPAs blessing

On June 12th the *Bose Vanua* (Hierarchy council of chiefs), Kubulau Resource Management Committee (KRMC), Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) Director, Dr. Stacy Jupiter, and other partners met in Kiobo village to participate in a unique ceremony that brought together modern resource conservation principles and traditional governance.

This ceremony was conducted to traditionally bless the 3 district Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as no-take zones for the next 5 years. These 3 MPAs are Namena, Namuri, and Nasue. In addition to these, there are existing 17 traditional tabu areas, one island reserve, and one proposed forest reserve.

The no-take status means that it is illegal to: fish in these areas; collect invertebrates from these areas. However, it is unacceptable to dive using the diving guidelines developed by Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL) and relevant stakeholders. These guidelines include best practices such as: no anchoring in the zones; no diving with hand gloves; no touching of corals; no fish feeding, etc.

According to the recommendations made from on-going scientific work it is sug-

gested that long-term no-take areas, such as Namena which has been a no-take zone since 1990, has higher abundance and diversity of important food fishes. The principle behind setting up MPAs are that in time these areas will act as pools for sustaining marine fisheries stocks.

To further strengthen the protection of these areas, Tui Kubulau has officially requested that the Department of Fisheries prohibit licensed fishing vessels from fishing within the district reserves. From now on, all licenses issued for fishing for 'trade or business' within Kubulau *qoliqoli* will include conditions prohibiting fishing in Namena, Namuri and Nasue.

The *Bose Vanua* is also considering submitting a request to the Minister for Fisheries to gazette one or more of the district reserves as 'restricted areas' under the *Fisheries Act*. Gazetting of the reserves would represent national recognition of Kubulau's commitment to sustainable resource management, and strengthen efforts to stop unauthorized fishing within the reserves.

KUBULAU DVD PRODUCTION

Lights, camera, and action! You might have heard this before in movies and on TV, however, this might soon be a reality for people in Kubulau.

As part of the on-going communications work in Kubulau district, the WCS team is now developing a DVD to support communities adopt the ‘ridge-to-reef’ approach of natural resources management.

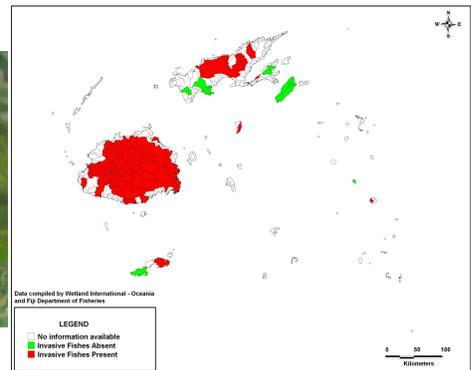
This DVD will document how the Kubulau communities have come together to solve natural resources management challenges and will be used to promote the “ridge-to-reef” concept of conservation.

The DVD is expected to be completed by October and one copy will be distributed to each of the 10 villages in the Kubulau district.

We will be in your district to shoot the community life in Kubulau and to interview key people. So please do not shy away from the camera when you next see us there!

KEEP TILAPIA (MALEYA) OUT OF KUBULAU

Tilapia species were first introduced into Fiji in 1949, when a culture of *Oreochromis mossambica* was initiated at the Sigatoka Agricultural Station as food for pigs. This extremely invasive species of fish, originally from Africa, has taken over most of Fiji’s wetlands and is a severe threat to the existence of local species. As this species has no natural predators in Fijian waters, it can out compete the native species for food and space, essentially forcing out the local species. Now this species is present in all of the major river basins of Fiji and all throughout the Pacific. Wetlands International –Oceania scientists, in collaboration with USP, Department of Fisheries and other NGOs, have recently demonstrated that those river basins in Fiji that contain Tilapia, have on average 7 less species of fishes than those without Tilapia. Those species missing (or in low numbers) from these river basins that have been invaded with Tilapia are the large edible gudgeon species (Vo) and many of the sensitive goby species. We are losing our native species because of this invader!



Tilapia (*Oreochromis mossambica*) on left and map of presence and absence of invasive fishes in Fiji (green indicates absence and red indicates presence).



Some native gobies from Kubulau

FIJI ECOSYSTEM BASED
MANAGEMENT (EBM) = HEALTHY
PEOPLE, PROCESSES AND SYSTEMS

Contact:
EBM Kubulau Bulletin Editor
WCS
South Pacific Program
11 Ma'afu Street
Suva
Fiji Islands

Phone: + 679 331 5174
Fax: + 679 331 0178
E-mail: Infofiji@wcs.org

CHECK US
OUT!

WWW.WCS.ORG/MARINE

EBM LOGO



This “yin and yang” inspired EBM logo represents the interconnectedness of the land (leaf), freshwater (stream) and marine (grouper-like fish) systems with the livelihoods and stewardship of man (cradled hands).

ANY QUESTIONS...?

Please send your questions and letters to the EBM Bulletin Editorial Team, using the contact details above. The deadline for submissions to the next newsletter is Monday 5th September 2009. Please contact the Editor for further details.

TAQOMAKI NI NODA VEIKABULA



The Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) is a U.S. based international NGO, with conservation programs all around the world, including Fiji. Over the past century, the WCS has worked to establish more than 130 parks and protected areas on land and at sea as well as working on threatened species. WCS works to save wildlife and wild places by understanding and resolving the critical problems that threaten key species and large, wild ecosystems around the world.

Our “Ecosystem-based Management” work is funded by the David and Lucile Packard Foundation and the Gordon and Betty Moore Foundation, which started in 2004. It is led by WCS, with the partners of the World Wide Fund for Nature - Fiji, Wetlands International, and the University of the South Pacific. A second EBM site is at Macuata, to the north. This newsletter focuses on the work led by WCS at Kubulau.

ONGOING AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- **Sep 09**-Roadshow of the Kubulau ‘ridge-to-reef’ plan to 10 villages in Kubulau.
- **Sep 09**-Biological survey in Kia.
- **Sep 09**-next EBM Kubulau bulletin.
- **Sep 09**-Kubulau ground truthing survey trip.

KUBULAU EVENTS– SUMMARY

The month of July has been very busy for the Kubulau communities. Apart from the traditional blessing ceremony and signing of the Kubulau ridge-to-reef plan, many other exciting events took place this month.

BUS SERVICE

On Saturday 25th July, Waiqele bus services resumed its services to Kubulau enroute from Labasa town and Savusavu town, two major towns of Vanua Levu. For the last 8 months the communities had to use other expensive means of transport, such as either hiring twin cab carriers or boats to go across to Savusavu to refill their essential supplies. The bus services to Namalata village had been temporarily stopped because of the bad road conditions. “It is a very important service for the people of Kubulau and I’m thankful that this service has resumed”, commented Tui Ni Vanua.

RUGBY UPDATE

Saturdays have been declared a day for Kubulau team building through playing rugby. This particular weekend the district cup went to the village of Namalata as team Kui-Ni-Vuaka won the finals against Qalitu by a margin of 8-0. This team Kui-Ni-Vuaka is made up of players from Navatu, Raviravi and Namalata while team Qalitu had players from Nadivakarua, Nakorovou and Kilaka .

Best of luck to all the teams for the upcoming games!