

RESCCUE FIJI NEWSLETTER

Restoration of Ecosystem Services and Adaptation to Climate Change

October 2017 ISSUE 1



IN THIS ISSUE :

- Freshwater Management Plans in Ra
- Kadavu Integrated Coastal Management Plan Workshop
- RESCCUE Project: Kadavu Trip
- Mid-Term Review 2016
- Meet a RESCCUE Fiji Project Team Coordinator

Layout and Design

Graphic Artist, Institute of Applied Sciences

CONTACT US

Tel : (+679) 323 2976
Email: korovulavula@usp.ac.fj
www.usp.ac.fj/ias

Postal Address:

Institute of Applied Sciences
Faculty of Science, Technology and Environment
Private Bag, Laucala Campus,
Suva, Fiji

Find Us on Facebook:

Institute of Applied Sciences

Foreword from the Director,

Institute of Applied Sciences,
The University of the South Pacific.



Bula vinaka and warm greetings,

I am pleased to welcome you to the first RESCCUE FIJI Project Newsletter. The Restoration of Ecosystem Services & Adaptation to Climate Change (RESCCUE) project's aim is to contribute to increasing the resilience of Pacific Island Countries and Territories through supporting their adaptation to climate change. RESCCUE is funded by the French Development Agency (AFD) and the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) and implemented through the Pacific Community (SPC). The RESCCUE project operates both at the regional level and in one to two pilot sites in four countries and territories: Fiji, the Northern and Southern Provinces of New Caledonia, French Polynesia and Vanuatu.

The RESCCUE Fiji Operator is the Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS) along with Landcare Research New Zealand, Wildlife Conservation Society, Conservation International and Fiji Environment Law Association. There are two RESCCUE pilot sites in Fiji, namely Ra and Kadavu, and this newsletter will bring you highlights of activities undertaken by the RESCCUE Fiji Team as well as feedback from the communities in the two pilot sites.

Climate Change directly affects the people of the Pacific Islands, including Fiji and increasing awareness of the knowledge acquired from the RESCCUE project is important to all who are likely to use this information to become better informed, and develop their capacities at the regional and national levels, and within the communities of the pilot sites. We hope that you will enjoy reading this first issue of the Fiji RESCCUE project update.

Vinaka, Dhanyavaad and Thank you,

Dr Johann Poinapen
Director, IAS

RESCCUE Restoration of Ecosystem Services and
Adaptation to Climate Change



Pacific Community
Communauté du Pacifique



FONDS FRANÇAIS POUR
L'ENVIRONNEMENT MONDIAL



ABOUT RESCCUE

RESCCUE stands for the Restoration of Ecosystem Services against Climate Change, a regional project implemented by the Pacific Community (SPC). The RESCCUE project operates in two French Territories namely, New Caledonia, French polynesia and two Pacific Island Countries, Fiji and Vanuatu. The overall goal of RESCCUE is to contribute to increasing the resilience of Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) in the context of global climatic and environmental changes. RESCCUE aims at supporting adaptation to climate change (ACC) through development and implementing of integrated coastal management (ICM), resorting especially to economic analysis and economic and financial mechanisms.

The capacity to adapt and be resilient to the effects of climate change has been a major issue for Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs). As the most vulnerable to the effects of climate changes such as ocean acidification, greenhouse gasses emissions and threats to biodiversity, the PICTs need to increase their capacity to adapt and also increase resilience to such changes.

RESCCUE Pilot Site Objectives

- Strengthen integrated coastal management and adaptation to climate change.
- Strengthen the use of economic analysis for integrated coastal management.
- Ensure economic and financial sustainability of integrated coastal management.
- Facilitate learning, dissemination and replication of experiences gained from pilot sites.

RESCCUE Project in Fiji

The operator in charge of the implementation of the RESCCUE project in Fiji under the supervision of both SPC and the Fijian Government is the Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS) of The University of the South Pacific. IAS is supported by Landcare Research New Zealand, Wildlife Conservation Society, Conservation International and Fiji Environment Law Association.

Five Components of RESCCUE

RESCCUE is divided into five components:

Component 1: Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) – supporting ICM implementation through ICM plans, ICM committees, and management activities concerning both terrestrial and marine ecosystems, capacity building and income generating activities.

Component 2: Economic analysis – using economic analysis to support coastal management and policy decisions.

Component 3: Economic and financial mechanisms – setting up economic and financial mechanisms to generate additional and sustainable funding for ICM: review of options (payment for ecosystem services, taxes, user fees, trust funds, quota markets, offsets, labels); feasibility studies; implementation and monitoring.

Component 4: Capitalisation, communication, dissemination of project outcomes in the Pacific – going beyond pilot sites activities in order to have impacts at the regional level, by fostering experience sharing between sites, cross-sectoral expertise, and communication and dissemination of the project outcomes.

Component 5: Project management – implementing and coordinating the project, by providing technical assistance, organising local and regional steering committees, conducting audits and evaluations (mi-term and ex-post), etc.

Funding

RESCCUE is funded primarily by the French Development Agency (AFD) and the French Global Environment Facility (FFEM) for a duration of five years (01/01/2014 to 31/12/2018).

Community-based Freshwater Management Planning Meeting. (Ra Province)



The freshwater management planning meeting took place from 22 March to 12 April 2017. The workshops were conducted in six districts and each workshop lasted for two days. The districts include Naiyalayala, Nasau, Lawaki, Tokaimalo, Nailuva and Nababa all located in the interior of the Ra Province. A total of forty participants were invited from each district. All villages within those districts were represented with key members from Youth, Women, Yaubula Management, Health & Sanitation and Village Development & Income generating Committees.

The meeting was funded by Fiji's RESCCUE project and facilitated by the Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS) team (Pio Radikedike, Tokasaya Cakacaka, Asenaca Vakatalai, Mere Judith Vere and Tomasi Tikoibua). The two key objectives of the freshwater community-based protected areas in Ra Province are:

1. To examine and review past and current initiatives on freshwater protected areas and fisheries management.
2. To identify areas that RESCCUE can address, support and facilitate in strengthening freshwater fishes and invertebrates protected area management.

The program was the first natural resource management awareness meeting to be conducted in all those districts and it was pleasing to see the keen interest of communities in the initiative. Participants were actively involved throughout the two days meeting and that was evident when they developed their individual village management plans. Additionally, some communities have even requested a village level consultation and also declared their interest in proceeding with conservation concepts such as freshwater & forest reserve establishment.

The freshwater awareness trip provided the IAS team an opportunity to learn about environmental degradation especially in remote inland areas of Ra. The team also experienced their traditional way of life and most importantly reach out to areas that have limited knowledge of natural resource conservation.

Integrated Coastal Management Plan Compilation Workshop (Kadavu Province)



A workshop held in Namalata Village, Kadavu on 8–10 February 2017 brought together stakeholders of the Kadavu Province to deliberate on the province's Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) plan. Facilitated by a team from the Institute of Applied Sciences, USP, the workshop participants comprised representatives from the government ministries, chiefs, village headmen and representatives of the 9 districts of Kadavu.

The IAS Team consisting of Pio Radikedike, Joji Sivo and Albert Whippy presented the findings of the Socio-economic Research conducted by the RESCCUE Project Team in Kadavu in July 2016 to the Kadavu Provincial Administrator's office prior to the workshop. The Kadavu Provincial Administrator in return discussed developments progress in Kadavu and some forecasted development plans for the province.

The main objectives of the workshop were to:

- i. Bring together Kadavu Province Stakeholders from government, NGOs and communities to share progress and challenges faced in regard to Integrated Coastal Management [ICM] issues.
- ii. Agree on a common "Vision" towards the development of the Kadavu ICM Plan.
- iii. Identify management option to address the issues.
- iv. Identify roles and responsibilities for ICM Committee / KYMST Committee to implement action plan.
- v. Draw up a Kadavu Provincial ICM Management Plan.

The workshop was officially opened by the Acting Roko Tui Kadavu, Mr Kitone Raibevu who emphasised on the importance of looking after and conserving their resources.

Issues faced by the villages arising from the 'ridge to reef concept' that included deforestation, forest fire, coastal erosion, flooding and poaching were discussed in the workshop. Some

issues were solved, certain ones are pending and there were other emerging issues that needed urgent attention. Stories of initiatives shared by village and communities to address these issues were interesting and these included taking the initiative to begin planting trees, motivating the youth to utilise the land wisely and being productive through planting of more yaqona and dalo. The villages have also assigned someone to monitor these measures closely. Participants also shared on the consequences of development and its contribution to the degradation of coastal resources that is directly affecting the villages and communities.

The trip to Kadavu to carry out the workshop was a challenging one due to the adverse weather experienced on that particular week. The IAS team left for Kadavu despite a tropical depression and flood warnings. As a maritime island, sea transportation is the main transportation mode and getting the participants to attend despite the weather conditions were challenging.

Planned actions to increase communities' awareness of the consequences of unplanned utilisation of available resources were tabled. In addition, actions were aligned to the common vision which is for Kadavu to prosper and develop in a sustainable manner, and manage its resources responsibly for its future generation. The participants through their sharing of lessons learnt provided insight into some of their ancestors' activities with regard to resources conservation, which was sustainable but is now practised by the current generation. In the closing remarks made by the Talatala (Pastor) of the Namalata Circuit at the end of the 3-day workshop, he stressed on the importance of being a good steward of all things created by God. From the workshop, it could be felt that the RESCCUE Project will enhance conservation work currently underway in Kadavu by assisting its communities to prioritise on plans and practices that will benefit them and their environment.

Marine Biological Survey Kadavu Trip



A surveyor rests beside a giant clam in Kadavu waters

The Institute of Applied Sciences field research team conducted the marine biological (transect) assessment in Kadavu from 20 July to 5 August 2016. The survey's objective was to assess the status of village Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) as part of two overall RESCCUE Project objectives:

- to examine and review past and current initiatives on the protected areas
- to identify areas that RESCCUE can address, support and facilitate in strengthening protected area management. More than thirty village MPAs were visited and assessed.

During the survey trip, the IAS team members Mr Tomasi Tikoibua and Mr Pio Radikedike also attended informal discussion with communities and shared ideas in areas where they can improve and enhance their natural resource management approach. According to Mr Tikoibua, the level of commitment shown by the different communities in Kadavu towards their natural resources was enormous. For instance, some community incorporated the initiative of MPAs with clam restoration project with the assistance from the Ministry of Fisheries. While there are some issues surrounding the initiative, the willingness of communities to continue the idea of resource management was encouraging.

Greater access to conservation awareness in Kadavu proved successful, with communities employing different methods of management approach, such as banning the fishing of *Serenidae* (grouper) during its spawning season; introduction of limiting conditions during taboo opening and the relocating and rotating of reserve sites for certain periods.

The survey trip provided the IAS team with an opportunity to revitalise community networks, make new friends, share ideas (culturally and professionally), broaden knowledge and skills in underwater research and spread the message of conservation to various areas in Kadavu.



A surveyor measures out a transect line



RESCCUE PROJECT FIJI Mid-Term Review 2016



Fiji RESCCUE Project Mid-Term Review workshop participants

The Fiji RESCCUE Project Mid-Term Review held at the Institute of Applied Sciences, USP in November 2016 brought together representatives of the Project Fund Donors French Development Agency (AFD), Implementing Agency the Pacific Community, and the Fiji RESCCUE Operators to discuss the progress of the project.

The Fiji RESCCUE Operators comprising the Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS), Landcare Research, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Conservation International (CI), and Fiji Environment Law Association presented on the following aspects:

- Relations between the operator and project beneficiaries are favourable and information flows well between the partners and with government departments;
- Project activity assessment, definition and monitoring reports in a range of areas, including marine-protected-area networks on Kadavu, water resource management, environmental restoration and soil erosion control;
- In March 2016, due to Tropical Cyclone Winston, the Ra Province project activities were suspended for six months pending the findings of the Post Disaster

Needs Assessment and Recovery Framework. As RESCCUE's activities complied with the reconstruction plans and new priorities, they resumed virtually unchanged.

The other RESCCUE project activities being implemented were:

Component 1: Integrated Coastal management (ICM)

ICM is governed at the national and provincial levels in Fiji. The Environmental Management Act (2005) provides for a national ICM sub-committee answering to the National Environment Council. The sub-committee is tasked with defining broad national policy guidelines. A provincial ICM council had been set up in Ra Province. It is jointly administered by the Provincial Administrator and executive head of the Provincial Council or Roko Tui. The provincial ICM plan was adopted before RESCCUE started operations and the management committee meets regularly and oversees plan implementation.

Implementing ICM Plan activities in Ra Province which involved the following:

- Assessing soil erosion;
- Assessing agriculture, which has shown the difficulties that exist in getting the

province's produce to market;

- Reforestation: Conservation International (CI) had started operations before RESCCUE and had helped set up a nursery. Several hectares of eroded slopes have been reforested (1350 hectares in six years) and RESCCUE took over from the Coral Triangle Initiative (CTI) in funding the operations. The community helped plant the trees with follow-up from CI, which regularly returns to check whether the trees were growing well and to replace withered saplings.
- Mangrove planting for shoreline protection: Several nurseries were established after unsuccessful trials by collecting seeds locally in the areas for replanting as well as by bringing in seeds from other sites. There was a seed "shortage" for replanting after Cyclone Winston destroyed part of the mangroves. Planting operations had begun on two sites and will be extended to others.

Developing Kadavu Province ICM Plan is also one of the project's objectives and this work is progressing well. Resource management plans for each of the island's nine districts were defined within the first few meetings with the ICM Plan to be ready by the end of 2017.

Components 2 and 3: Economic analysis and economic and financial mechanisms

Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) developed a Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES) for Vatu-i-Ra, a small island in Ra Province. The island has 28 village communities and a marine-protected area managed by a local management committee. The aim of the PES is to fund marine-protected-area action-plan activities and other activities such as scholarships using funds collected by two dive clubs and hotel operators. The mechanism will be implemented with the future operators using a trust fund that is currently being established. The trust fund will be managed by a committee made up of a community representative, a tour operator and a Non-Government Organisation. It is expected to be registered by late 2016 or early 2017 and implemented in 2017. The legal structure is innovative and could be duplicated on other sites in Fiji.

Regarding other potential funding mechanisms, Landcare Research carried out several prior surveys and economic analysis for Ra Province to determine whether various systems were feasible, but their action plan submitted with the feasibility study stated that yet more feasibility studies are required for some mechanisms. Certain reports produced from these surveys and economic analysis areas are outlined on page 8.

The fund donors and implementing agency responded positively to the review reports and agreed to source funding to support certain RESCCUE activities such as the reforestation in Rakiraki where there was a strong demand from the community to continue the activity.

MEET A RESCCUE PROJECT TEAM COORDINATOR

Tomasi Tikoibua Delana

Tomasi Tikoibua Delana, is currently the coordinator for RESCCUE IAS field activities in Ra. He is a Scientific Officer at the Institute of Applied Sciences (IAS). During his childhood, Tomasi had witnessed the challenges faced by his community to acquire their livelihood needs from natural resources. Hailing from Raviravi Village of Beqa Island, Tomasi spent most of his entire childhood life in the village before moving to Suva. He noted that there was minimal care given to the utilisation of resources or its management. As a result, his village members had to travel further from the village to acquire resources that they need. This motivated him to study environment conservation related subjects at University to obtain the knowledge needed to address peoples' mind-set and approach towards resources management not only in his village but for the Fiji community at large. Tomasi, is completing his Masters of Science Thesis (in Marine Science) at the University of the South Pacific while holding full time employment. He also holds a Post Graduate Diploma in Marine Science from USP and a Bachelor of Applied Sciences in Environmental Studies & a Diploma in Environmental Science from the Fiji National University.

With his involvement with the RESCCUE Pilot Sites Communities in Kadavu and Ra, he noticed that members of these communities have started to realise the importance of natural resources after the event of cyclone Winston & flooding in 2016. Although these greatly affected their alternative source of livelihoods, it also increased their awareness and understanding of their environment and the importance of conservation. Tomasi also found their responses very encouraging in their willingness to take the lead role in implementing some of the rehabilitating



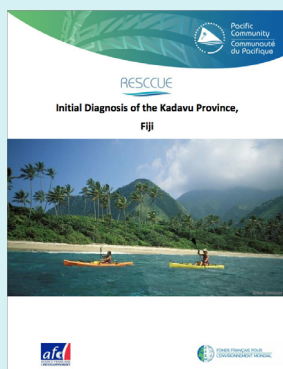
RESCCUE Fiji Ra coordinator Mr Tomasi Tikoibua Delana

initiatives themselves before engaging in RESCCUE project activities. For instance, there has been an increase in the number of coastal villages requesting to undertake mangrove reforestation initiatives, the planting of riparian trees and the establishment of forest and freshwater reserve.

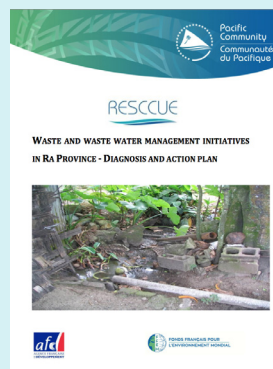
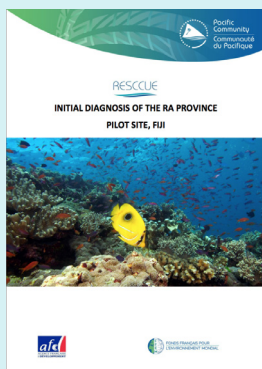
Lastly, Tomasi enjoys his involvement in the RESCCUE project as it encourages the engagement of community members in its activities thus giving them the sense of ownership. Increasingly, it can be seen that the RESCCUE Fiji activities addresses the current as well as the future needs of both the Kadavu and Ra communities.

RESCCUE PROJECT FIJI - ACTIVITIES REPORTS

THE RESCCUE Fiji team had since the inception of the project carried out various diagnosis, feasibility studies and compiled action plans on the five components of the RESCCUE project. A number of those reports are listed below along with summary of their findings. These reports are also available on <http://www.spc.int/resccue/country-activities/fiji/>.



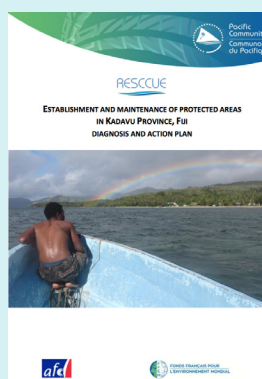
Production of an initial diagnosis of the Ra Province and the Kadavu Province to allow for precise characterisation of Ra Province in relation to RESCCUE's objectives and program of activities. As such, the diagnosis also provides a baseline, against which the effectiveness and efficiency of the project can be evaluated.



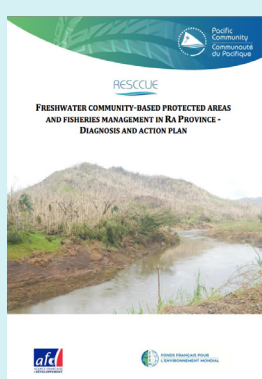
Diagnosis and action plan for the Waste and waste management initiatives in the Ra Province.



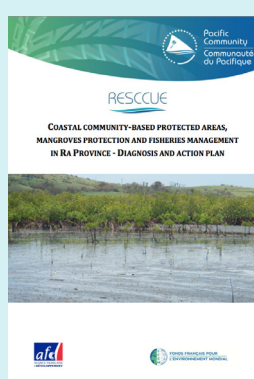
Feasibility study of Economic and Financial Mechanisms for Integrated Coastal Management in the Ra Province.



Evaluation of the current status of the Locally Marine Management Areas (LMMA) and identification of priority actions that need to be undertaken to improve institutional and technical capacity of policing and monitoring "tabu" areas from poachers.



Diagnosis and Action Plan for the Freshwater Community-based protected areas and Fisheries Management in the Ra Province.



Identification of key activities for mangrove restoration and protection of spawning fishing areas within the mangrove ecosystem.



Diagnosis and action plan for the establishment and maintenance of protected areas in the Kadavu Province.

For more information on the Fiji RESCCUE project, please contact:
Dr Isoa Korovulavula
RESCCUE Fiji Coordinator
Institute of Applied Sciences,
The University of the South Pacific
Phone: (679) 323 2976
Email: korovulavula@usp.ac.fj