



RESCCUE

RESCCUE ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN KADAVU AND RA (FIJI)

The RESCCUE project in Fiji was implemented under the supervision of both SPC and the Fiji Government by the University of the South Pacific Institute of Applied Science, together with Landcare Research, the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), Conservation International and the Fiji Environmental Law Association (FELA).

Activities ended early November 2018 with a participatory lessons learned workshop held in Suva and the last Fiji steering committee meeting. The stakeholders involved expressed their high level of overall satisfaction with the project outcomes and the strong relations built with provincial authorities, local community networks and priority areas. It was also highlighted that during the three years of project implementation in Fiji, two of the strongest tropical cyclones (TC) ever recorded in the South Pacific hit Fiji, with TC Winston devastating the Ra Province in 2016, and TC Keni causing considerable damage to Kadavu in 2018.

The [final RESCCUE project report for Fiji](#) summarizes all activities and outcomes at the Kadavu and Ra pilot sites. In addition, all RESCCUE Fiji project reports are available [here](#).

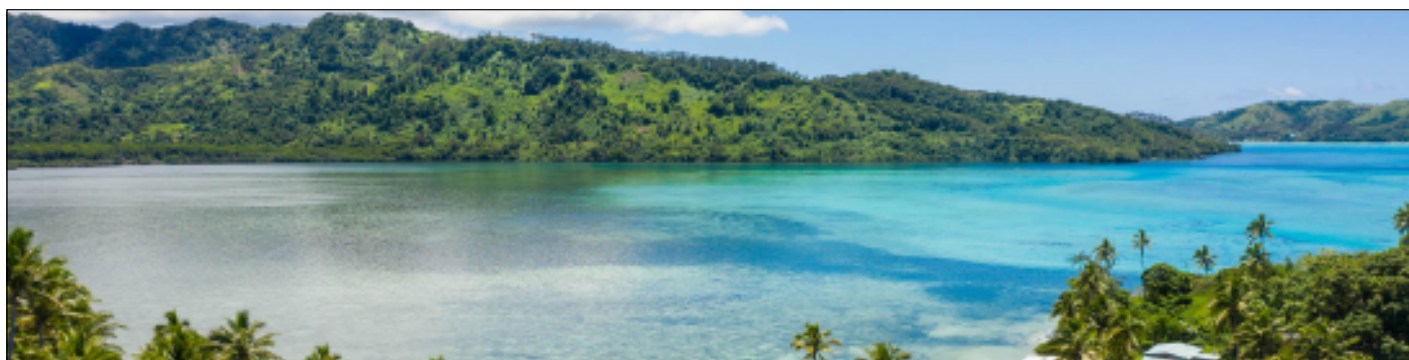


RESCCUE developed its activities in Kadavu and Ra in an integrated coastal management (ICM) and climate change resilience perspective. In line with its overall rationale, the project endeavored to reduce non-climate stressors on the ecosystems so as to increase their resilience as well as the resilience of communities depending on them. Activities were divided in six broad areas synergetic with one another.

INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLANS

RESCCUE supported the development of ICM plans for both the Ra and Kadavu Provinces, in line with the National ICM Framework¹.

[The Ra ICM plan](#) (2015-2020) was endorsed by the Ra Provincial Council in September 2016, and subsequently the National ICM sub-committee of the National Environment Council. It was officially launched by the Prime Minister in August 2018, as the first Provincial ICM Plan in Fiji. As provided by Fijian law, all Fijian coastal provinces shall now develop their own ICM Plan, and will use lessons-learned by Ra pioneers.



Building on the Ra experience, [the Kadavu ICM plan](#) (2017-2022) was endorsed by the Kadavu Provincial Council in September 2018. The plan is currently awaiting the next convening of the National ICM sub-committee where it is expected to be accepted.

Activities undertaken by RESCCUE in both Provinces are all about implementing these ICM Plans.

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AND EROSION CONTROL

The RESCCUE project supported ecological restoration and erosion control in both Provinces across over 30 villages including the installation of community-based nurseries, watershed reforestation, riparian rehabilitation, and mangroves planting. In total, around 62,000 seedlings of different species have been planted in Kadavu and Ra on more than 75 ha (incl. mangrove trees (rhizophora), coconut trees, native fruit and nitrogen-fixing species as well as pine trees).



Ecological restoration and rehabilitation activities in Kadavu

¹The 2005 Environment Management Act provides for a national ICM Plan to be developed. The [2011 ICM framework of the Republic of Fiji](#) calls for provincial-level ICM plans to be developed.

These activities proved their benefits in terms of livelihoods, community involvement and environmental awareness and education, and provided community members tangible and visible achievements

Valuable technical lessons have been learned on restoration techniques from the implementation of RESCCUE activities including the planting of firebreaks of customary taboo trees amongst reforested areas and mixed culture of high value exotic species with native species. These lessons are documented in several IAS technical reports, all accessible [upon demand](#). Two reports providing an overview of the benefits and costs of [mangrove restoration](#) and [afforestation](#) have also been produced.



Mangrove replanting in Navuniivi, Ra Province

Finally, RESCCUE implemented two agroforestry model farms in Ra demonstrating sound land use practices.

WASTE AND WASTE WATER MANAGEMENT

Waste collection does not extend into the rural areas of Ra and Kadavu. A number of waste management activities were therefore undertaken by RESCCUE in Ra – either at individual houses in the case of the construction of composting toilets or at the village level in the case of waste segregation training and incinerator construction. In addition, waste water management was improved in various villages including by set-ting up grey- and black-water disposal areas, installing separation sys-tems and planting aquatic species for processing waste water (phyto-purification).

In Kadavu, the project supported the development of community-based waste and waste-water management plans which will be executed as part of the overall ICM Plan implementation.



Construction of a domestic waste incinerator in Nanukuloa village, Ra Province

SUPPORTING PROTECTED AREAS AND COMMUNITY-BASED MARINE, FRESHWATER AND TERRESTRIAL PLANNING

In Kadavu, two marine biological monitoring practical workshops were conducted in collaboration with Fisheries Department staff to update community members on marine resources management laws and policies, and to train them in monitoring the status of the marine resources in their locally marine managed areas (LMMAs) using tools developed by the Fiji LMMA Network and IAS.



Marine monitoring training in Kadavu

In Ra, following an overview of the [benefits and costs of implementation on Freshwater tabu and protected areas](#), RESCCUE conducted extensive consultations towards the development of community-based freshwater management plans and the establishment of several local freshwater tabu areas. RESCCUE also supported a community-based forest reserve in the highlands of Ra where watershed reforestation took place. Implementation of the plans resulted in the riparian restoration activities mentioned above, as well as other freshwater conservation measures such as cattle fencing and sustainable agricultural practices.



Freshwater tabu area established in Ra Province

SUPPORTING THE DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF INNOVATIVE FINANCIAL MECHANISMS

In Ra, RESCCUE conducted [a feasibility study](#) for economic and financial mechanisms to support ICM. It found that the main opportunity was a marine conservation agreement to financially support the proposed Vatu-i-Ra Conservation Park in partnership with local communities, the tourism sector, and WCS.

RESCCUE supported the development of [the Vatu-i-Ra Conservation Park management plan](#) (also available in Fijian) which was formally adopted by local communities as well as provincial and national authorities in May 2018, thereby [establishing Fiji's largest Marine Conservation Park](#).

In parallel, the project set up [a marine conservation agreement](#) to fund the management of the Conservation Park, through a voluntary contribution scheme:



- Divers and other visitors to the Park pay a voluntary contribution of FJ\$15 (US\$7) that is valid for a year.
- The revenue is then placed into a Trust Fund, with 30% of the fund allocated to support day-to-day management of the Conservation Park. The remainder is used to provide education grants to tertiary students from Nakorotubu District².
- The Conservation Park has a seven-member Management Committee that oversees the park's management. A three-member Board of Trustees oversees the Trust Fund to ensure it complies with the terms of the Trust Deed.

The Marine Conservation Agreement and Trust Fund are fully operational since October 2018. It is expected that the fund will contribute to the conservation of this highly diverse area, protect the cultural and historical values that are important to local communities, and support education and community development in the Nakorotubu District.



Kava cultivation in Kadavu

In Kadavu, RESCCUE conducted an equivalent [feasibility study](#), using results from a [systematic household socio-economic survey](#) conducted in 2016. The feasibility study highlighted the opportunities associated with promoting organic farming certification in Kadavu, and demonstrated the potential for a viable financial mechanism based on the sale of organic kava from Kadavu (primarily to the export market).

However, the currently high Kava demand in Fiji and a significant increase in Kava price following tropical cyclones Winston in 2016 and Keni in 2018 reduced attractiveness of export and organic premium for farmers. Nevertheless, in collaboration with SPREP Pacific Ecosystem-Based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC) project, a “Kadavu Going Organic” Action Plan was developed and is currently being implemented by local stakeholders. The plan will likely require more financial and external support in the coming years.

²In early 2018, the Trust Fund's Board of Trustees endorsed its first education grants to 18 students from the Nakorotubu District.