

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP PROCESS **KUTA HABITAT AND RESTORATION PLANNING** BY THE WOMEN OF NAVAKASOBU/KOROVULI VILLAGES

Written By:

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9P 0028.03 - Pacific People and Plants: Applying customary knowledge use and practices to support sustainable use and protection of community forests

9P 0027.02 - Fiji Partnership for **Conservation and Development**



WWF World Wide Fund For Nature

CONTENTS

I		Introduction	1
][Project Goal and Objectives	1
III		Workshop Objectives	1
IV		Outputs	. 1
V		Location of Project Community Area (vanua Buca)	2 .
VI	•	Programme	3
	1	Welcome and Opening	5
	2	Introduction	5
-	3	Update	6
	4	Activity – Cause effect exercise	7
	5	Vanua Buca (project community area) - 1978	8
	6	Vanua Buca (project community area) – 1994	9
	7	Activity – Fishbone exercise	10
	8	Enlivening activity	10
	9	Activity – Shared vision	10
	10	Activity – Volunteer activity	10
	11	Activity – Assessment of management options	10
	12	Enlivening Activity	10
	13	Brief on the Fiji Arts Council	11
	14	Activity – Community action plan	. 11
	15	Activity – Community Economics	12
	16	Activity – Social production	12
	17	Brief of the Native Lands Trust Board	12
		17.1 Questions and answers	13
	18	Activity - To prepare a women's MOU on kuta management	
		and use of, ownership contract	14
	19	Talk – Introduction of income generation initiatives	14
·		Talk – Handicrafts for income generation	14
	20	Brief on Land Use Section, Agriculture Dept.	15
	PHOTO	OGRAPHIC SECTION	16 – 20
	21	Field Visit	
		21.1 Plant sample collection	21
		21.2 Water sample collection	21
		21.3 Measuring the extent of pond areas	21
	•	21.4 Preparation and pressing of plants	22
	,	21.5 Pond soil test results	22
		21.6 Observations	23
	22	Evaluation	23
	23	Round up	24
		23.1 Epectations/Actions in Febuary/March	24
		23.2 Acknowledgement of participants by resource people	25
		23.3 Acknowledgement of resource people by participants	25
	24	Closing – Translation of talk and prayer	25

ATTACHMENTS

- Forest area calculation
- 2 3 4 5
- Fishbone exercise (in Fijian) Agricultural/grazing lease conditions (translation and originals)

Agricultural/grazing lease conditions (translation and originals)
4 Community action plan (in Fijian)
5 Women's MOU (in Fijian)
6 Toolkits used (in Fijian)
Attachments are available as a separate report and are available on request from Kesaia Tabunakawai or Jacqueline Hardy at World Wide Fund for Nature, South Pacific Program Office (Suva),
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REPORT OF WORKSHOP PROCESS IN

KUTA HABITAT RESTORATION PLANNING

by the women of AVAKASOBU / KOROVULI 11th to 15th January 1999

The kuta habitat restoration planning workshop is the second of three scheduled workshops, funded by the regional project Pacific People and Plants: applying customary knowledge of use and practices to support sustainable use and protection of community forests and the Fiji Partnerships in Conservation and Development Project in Fiji.

The degraded state of the kuta growing areas/ponds in the vanua of Buca, owned by the villagers of Navakasobu and Korovuli, is of great concern to the women of the two villages. Their concern is reflected in the September workshop report. Finding ways to stop the degradation and reverse it is the step the women wished to take.

This workshop focussed on understanding the degradation process, devising workable solutions and actions that the women can comfortably undertake themselves using much of their local knowledge of the area's ecology. Also using their skill, local materials and gaining support from their own communities, as well as Labasa based government departments, ngo's and private companies.

Project Goal and Objectives:

The overall goal of the project is poverty prevention and alleviation through the effective conservation and sustainable use of Melanesian forests by customary resource owning communities.

The major objectives are:

- To facilitate the wider integration of customary plant uses and practices
- To facilitate habitat conservation and income generation based on local knowledge and needs
- To provide the means for self replications of ethno-botanical activities and outputs

Workshop Objectives: Ш

- To gather socio-economic data and analysis of kuta production
- To produce a refined and complete women's MOU
- To produce a kuta habitat restoration plan for the Nalutu/Buca kuta growing areas
- To initiate product creation for income generation

Outputs:

- Workshop report detailing workshop process in English 1.
- Workshop report detailing workshop process in Fijian
- 5 participatory tools usable in similar workshops in Fijian
- Kuta Habitat Restoration Plan for Korovuli in Fijian
- Kuta Habitat Restoration Plan for Navakasobu in Fijian
- MOU on the documentation of kuta in Fijian (completed)
- Glossary of terms used in community resource conservation and development discussions or activities in Fijian (more terms added)

Programme	9
A (Sept.) (1)	MONDAY 11 ^{1H} JANUARY 99
10.30am	Yaqona ceremony – to Vuni Wesi; Turaga nai Taukei kei Sasa;
10.50aiii	Introduction – Turaga ni Yavusa - Rusiate Musudroka
	Prayer - Talatala, Tabacakacaka Sasa - Lote Rokoli
	Opening Speech - Vuni Wesi, Turaga nai Taukai kei Sasa
11.00am	Introduction – Welcome - Penina Namata
11.30am	Update - Re: September workshop report Kesala
11.000111	Tabunakawai
12.20pm	To produce a kuta habitat restoration plan for Nalutu/Buca kuta growing areas
·	i) Cause and Effect – To examine and demonstrate the role of
	Exercise trees/vegetation in the land ecosystem (to gain an
	understanding of the relatedness of living and non-
	living things in the environment) – Tabunakawai
	Explanation – aim of exercise, demonstration
12.35pm	Morning Tea
12.40pm	ii) Fishbone Exercise – to brainstorm and order solutions to the degraded
	kuta habitat – Namata Explanation – aim of exercise
	- how to do the exercise
-	Break up into small working/discussion groups
1.30pm	Lunch
2.30pm	Groups report back
oopiii	New group selected — to pull together ideas from small group work
3.00pm	Enlivening Activity
3.20pm	iii) Shared Vision – to assist the women to identify what they want for
P	themselves and their kuta resource in the long term -
•	Namata/Tabunakawai
	Explanation – aim of exercise
	 how to do the exercise
	Break up into small working/discussion groups
3.30pm	Afternoon Tea
3.45pm	Continue with Shared Vision exercise
4.00	Groups report back Prayer
4.00pm	End of session
7.00-	Translation of the Agricultural/Grazing Lease conditions; issued by the Dept. of
10.00pm	Lands for crown leases (Volunteer Group)
10.000	- Fish bone Exercise - selected group to pull together ideas from small group work
*	(continued)
	TUESDAY 12 ^{III} JANUARY 99
enteros enteros	
9.00am	Prayer
	Disciplinary exercises
9.40am	Revisit compilation of the Fishbone Exercise; select group (Monday evening) - Tabunakawai
10.00	Revisit group presentations of Shared Visions – Namata
10.20am	iv) Assessment of – To help the women decide on specific actions which management options will be taken to conserve and manage the kuta
	management options will be taken to conserve and manage the kuta habitat and use of kuta – Namata/Tabunakawai
	Explanation – Aim of exercise
,	- How to do the exercise
	Break up into small working/discussion groups
	Groups report back
11.00am	Morning Tea
	Enlivening Activity
11.30am	Brief on the activities of the Fiji Arts Council - Niqa Nakalevu
12.10pm	v) Community action plans - To organise tasks and resources so that conservation
	and resource use decisions are implemented –
	Namata/Tabunakawai
	Explanation — Aim of the exercise
	- How to do the exercise
	Break up into small working/discussion groups
4 20m '	Groups report back
1.30pm	To gather socio-economic data and analysis of kuta production Community To examine sources of income and its distribution
•	i) Community – To examine sources of income and its distribution economics within the household in the community – Namata
	economics within the nousehold in the community – Namata Explanation – Aim of exercise
	Explanation — Aim of exercise How to do the exercise
	Break up into small working/discussion groups
	Groups report back
0.20	Lunch
2,30pm	Luitoi
3.30pm	Enlivening Activity

MONDAY 11TH JANUARY 1999

WELCOME AND OPENING

Brief Of Introduction – Turaga ni Yavusa, Rusiate Musudroka. (English translation of Fijian text)

"The year begins well. This (workshop), straight after a weeklong spiritual renewal, in which the chief has come down to see his land and his people. This is the proper and right path to take and augurs well for the future. Those of you coming from Suva, you have left your families behind to come here. This is a sign of dedication to your work"

Rusiate went on to briefly introduce each of the resource people for the benefit of the Gone Turaga Taukei kei Sasa and the Methodist Minister.

Brief Of Talk – Methodist Church Minister, Lote Rokoli, Sasa circuit, under which Navakasobu and Korovuli Villages fall. (English translation of Fijian text)
"Greeting to all present in particular to those of you coming from Suva. I will read from John 10 – I come so that you may have life and life in abundance.

The *kuta* plant is a gift by God to the land for our use, so you may have life in abundance. A basket woven from *kuta* in the Egyptian style was used by Moses's mother, Miriam, to float Moses down the river Nile in, (when the Romans were on the trail killing off all Jewish boys of two years or under) to save his life. This focuses on the use of the plant to guard and save a life"

Brief Of Opening Talk – Chief Of Sasa, Vuni Wesi, Turaga Taukei kei Sasa. (English translation of Filian text)

"I thank the Lord for his safe keeping enabling our meeting today. It has been only 10 days into the New Year and since our dedication to spiritual renewal. While many are relaxing and on holiday, you have left your families behind to undertake this workshop. This is a sign of dedication to your duty. We are glad that this training/development is being brought to us. We are not used to having this type of assistance provided for us, but we are indeed grateful that it has arrived"

2. INTRODUCTION

A piece of butcher paper headed — Name; No of kuta mats woven in 1998; No of harvesting trips in 1998; and No of people taught to weave kuta in 1998, was passed around for the participants to fill in the information relevant to them. Each participant then wrote her name on a piece of paper, which was then attached to the participants' attire for identification. Once labelled each participant introduced herself.

No of kuta mats		No of people taught
The state of the s	trips taken in 1998	to weave kuta in 1998
2.5 – 2mx1m	4	3
1 - 3.8mx1.8m	2	2
6 – 2mx1m	"	
1 - 3.8mx1.8m	2	4
7 – 2mx1m		The second secon
1 – 2mx1m	2	1
4 – 2mx1m	Nil	1
1 - 3,8mx1.8m	.4 .	1
7 – 2mx1m		
Nii .	Nil	Nil
2 – 2mx1m	1 .	. 2
1 – round mat	Nil .	. 4
1 – 3.8mx1.8m		Ţ,
4 – 2mx1m		
Nil	1	Nil
Nil	Nil	Nil
2 – 2mx1m	Nil	Nil
4 – 2mx1m	Nil	Nil
3 – 2m×1m	1	Nil
2 – 2mx1m	1.	Nil
1 – 2mx1m		
Nil	nil	Nil .
Nil	nil	Nil ·
Nil	nil	Nil
Nil	·nil	Nil
	woven in 1998 2.5 - 2mx1m 1 - 3.8mx1.8m 6 - 2mx1m 1 - 3.8mx1.8m 7 - 2mx1m 1 - 2mx1m 4 - 2mx1m 1 - 3,8mx1.8m 7 - 2mx1m Nii 2 - 2mx1m 1 - round mat 1 - 3.8mx1.8m 4 - 2mx1m Nii Nii 2 - 2mx1m Nii Nii 2 - 2mx1m Nii Nii 1 - 3.8mx1.8m 4 - 2mx1m Nii Nii 1 - 2mx1m Nii Nii 1 - 2mx1m 1 - 2mx1m 1 - 2mx1m Nii Nii 1 - 2mx1m Nii Nii Nii Nii Nii Nii Nii Nii Nii N	woven in 1998 trips taken in 1998 2.5 - 2mx1m 4 1 - 3.8mx1.8m 2 6 - 2mx1m 2 1 - 3.8mx1.8m 2 7 - 2mx1m Nil 1 - 3,8mx1.8m 4 7 - 2mx1m Nil 1 - 3,8mx1.8m 4 7 - 2mx1m 1 Nil Nil 2 - 2mx1m 1 1 - 3,8mx1.8m 4 4 - 2mx1m Nil Nil Nil 2 - 2mx1m Nil 3 - 2mx1m 1 2 - 2mx1m 1 1 - 2mx1m 1 Nil nil Nil nil Nil nil Nil nil Nil nil Nil nil

According to the women on the whole:

- The number of mats woven is a lot less than the number woven in past years
- Harvesting trips taken is a lot less than the number of trips taken in past years
- Reasons for reduction in no. of mats woven is the lack of kuta in the ponds to harvest and the increased demands of time

		leases in the area were issued were discussed with
		the women and a Fijian translation of the lease was
		made by the women.
		- relevant conditions in the lease:
		(8) The leasee shall not remove or dispose of, by sale or
		otherwise any forest produce growing upon the demised
		land without the written consent of the lessor first had been
		obtained and subject to such conditions as to the payment
	•	of royalty or otherwise prescribed by the Forest regulations as the lessor may direct
		(11) The lessee shall not fell trees or clear or burn bush or
		cultivate any land within a distance of 7 metres from the
	•	bank of a river or stream or plant any crops within 7 metres
A Committee of the Committee of		of the centre of any public road or on a slope exceeding 25
	•	degrees from horizontal
		(21) The leasee shall keep clean and open and maintain in
		good condition all drains, ditches, water courses and
-		drainage and sewage systems in, upon or intesecting the
6. Is there		demised land to the satisfaction of the leasor
	- to give sufficient warning before	- current workshop dates have been changed twice
something missing	next workshop so there are no	because of inconvenient timing; time will depend on
from this workshop	clashes in arrangements	the availability of many of the women in the village
to include in the	- to enable children to learn and	as well as the availability of the resource people; as
next workshop?	conserve our culture, protect	and when there is coincidence of available time
•	resources and not to use it	there will be a meeting/workshop; this time may be
	carelessly	known at only a short notice
	- in the next workshop, to have	- by sharing and training you mothers in this
	representatives of NLTB and other	workshop, it is hoped you will be the link, to pass on
	govt. depts. present	what you learn to your children
		- see actions taken in EVALUATION 2

ACTIVITY

PURPOSE

- Cause effect exercise

- To demonstrate and examine the role of trees/vegetation on the land and in the ecosystem (to gain a better understanding of the mechanics of erosion) [Not in CRCD toolkit]

Materials

- 18 x 8 x 2.5 inch block of grass
- 18 x 8 x 2.5 inch box of bare soil
- 1 empty can of tinned fish with holes in the bottom
- 3 empty containers
- Bucket of water

How to do it

- Place 2 the blocks on raised empty kerosene drums side by side at an incline (against the wall)
- Place two empty containers at the bottom of the kerosene drums to catch water
- Fill the third container with water and hold with right hand high
- Hold the tin (with holes in) in left hand and pour water through it (as if raining) while moving the tin around above the grass block, use two containers of water over the grass block
- Repeat the same over the box of soil

Observe -

- Over time how the water slowly seeps into the grass in the grass block; and how it takes time for it to drip into the container below and how clear the water is
- How the water disperses the soil in the box of soil; how it saturates the soil quickly; and how fast it drips into the container below, and how muddy the water in the container is



- kuta habitat restoration planning by the women of Navakasobu & Korovuli villages 11/1 to 15/1 '99

- * Method used for the calculation of forest areas from the aerial photographs is in attachment 1 Forest area loss in project area as in map during the 16 year period between Aug. 1978 and Jan. 1994 is 48%
- * * Professor Bill Clarke and Aliti Vunisea, staff of USP, joined the workshop to observe. Through the Institute of Pacific Studies (IPS) interest, Bill and Aliti did a preliminary survey of known kuta areas in Bua and Macuata in 1996, with a view to proposing a detailed survey in order to map kuta growing areas in Fiji.

ACTIVITY 7.

- Fishbone Exercise

PURPOSE

- To brainstorm and order solutions to the degraded kuta habitat (See CRCD Toolkit, tool 36, page 111 - for how done)

How done

- A briefing was given on the aim of the exercise and how it is done

- Break up into smaller working/discussion groups

- Report Back

Result

- A compilation of group work in Fijian is attached (attachment 2) Also available is a copy of the tool used translated into Fijian

ENLIVENING ACTIVITY

- Fijian song and dance that depicts movements and the perils of food gathering/hunting of local birds and animals (Fijian text of dance songs in Fijian report)

ACTIVITY 9.

- Shared Vision

PURPOSE

-To assist the women to identify what they want for themselves and for their kuta resource in the long term (See CRCD Toolkit, tool 33, page 108 - for how done)

How done

- A briefing was given on the aim of the exercise and how it is done

- Break up into small working/discussion groups

- Report back

Result

- A compilation of group work is in Fijian in the Fijian report. Also

available is a copy of the tool translated into Fijian

10. **ACTIVITY**

- Volunteer Activity - Translation of the crown land agricultural/grazing lease conditions. This is similar to the NLTB ag/gr lease conditions. (English copy and draft Fijian translation in attachment 3)

11. **ACTIVITY** - Assessment Of Management Options

- To assist the women to decide on specific actions to be taken to conserve and manage the kuta habitat and use of kuta (See CRCD

Toolkit, tool 35, page 110 - for how done)

How done

PURPOSE

- A briefing was given on the aim of the exercise and how it is done

- Break up into small working/discussion groups

- Report back

Result

- A compilation of group work in Fijian is in the Fijian report. Also

available is a copy of the tool translated into Fijian

TUESDAY 12TH JANUARY 1999

12.

ENLIVENING ACTIVITY - Revisit Fijian Lullabies
Vula yalo mai, mai tokatoka I ke (Moon come down, come and sit here) 12.1 Memu sucu rube tu, mai vutia vutia e (Your milk is hanging, come and pull on it) (repeat until the baby is asleep)

> (Sitting cross-legged, with baby snuggled in the crook of left arm, gently rock baby and chant. Every rock to coincide with a word as sung. With free right hand wave the moon downwards and at the end of the chant, the tips of the fingers of the right hand should be gently tapping the babies forehead. The moon is being asked to come down and rest on the baby's forehead)

12.2 Moce moce 'o radabea (Sleep sleep o eel) 'O tinamu se la'l sa'ea (Your mother has gone to the forest) Lai gagara kemu veavea (Gone to look for your drooping breast like soft breadfruit) Lesu mai qa mai yamea – e – a (When she returns then you can suck on it) (repeat until the baby is asleep)

> (Sit cross-legged; with baby snuggled in the crook of left arm, and right hand gently tapping the baby's leg, gently rock baby and chant. Every rock to coincide with each word as sung)

15. ACTIVITY

PURPOSE

How done

Result

- Community Economics

- To examine sources of income and the distribution within the community (assessing sources of household income) (See CRCD Toolkit, tool 28, page 97 - for how done)

- A briefing was given on the aim of the exercise and how it is done

- Break up into small working/discussion groups

- Report back

- A compilation of group work in Fijian is in the Fijian report. Also

available is a copy of the tool used translated into Fijian.

ACTIVITY 16.

PURPOSE

- Social Production

- To record numbers of kuta mats woven, to meet traditional obligations, as an indication of the amount of resource used (not in

CRCD Toolkit)

How done

- A briefing was given on the aim of the exercise and how it is done

- Break up into small working/discussion groups

- Report back

Result

- Available is a copy of the tool used translated into Fijian.

Village	Years	Traditional/Social Communal Obligations	Number of <i>kuta</i> mats produced	Amount of kuta used (bundles)
Korovuli	1998	1. Church Groups	4 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	100
		2. Weddings	1 (large mat; 3.8mx1.8m)	250
			5 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	125
		3. Provincial	2 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	50
		4. School	3 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	75
		5. Deaths/Funerals	3 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	75
		TOTAL		575 Bundles
	1996/97	1. Church Groups	8 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	200
		2. Weddings	6 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	.150
		3. Provincial	2 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	50
	•	4. School	3 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	75
		5. Deaths/Funerals	8 (sleeping mats: 2mx1m)	200
		TOTAL		675 Bundles
Navakasobu	1992/98	Methodist Church	50	
		2. Catholic Church	40	
		3. School	10	
		4. Provincial	94	
		5. Government	20	1.

Note:

150 - 180 kuta leaves = 1 handful 5 handfuls green kuta = 1 bundle

5 bundles = 1 sleeping mat (2mx1m) 50 bundles = 1 large mat (3,8mx1.8m)

KOROVULI:

575 bundles collected in 1998 675 bundles collected in 1996/97 = 101,250 kuta harvested

= 96,250 kuta harvested

WEDNESDAY 12TH JANUARY 1999

BRIEF OF THE NATIVE LANDS TRUST BOARD (NLTB) - Aca Buadromo 17.

"Native land is owned communally through the matagali, with members of the matagali as registered in the 'Vola ni Kawa Bula' (VKB). Owners include every mataqali member - children, elders, women and even those members of the matagali still to be born. The right to decide on the land is the same for every matagali.

"Before leasing lands, it is always stressed to those making the decisions to lease lands, that in giving lands for leasing, *mataqali* members need for land to use in future must not be compromised. An important task for the NLTB is to ensure that this does not happen.

Queries on lease to go through Turaga ni matagali. Any wish to lease land, go through Turaga ni matagali who will in turn consult the Turaga ni yavusa.

There are two classes of native lands - Native Reserves and Native Land Outside Reserves. The use of native land outside reserves can be administered by the NLTB without the consent of the landowners; but NLTB prefers and does obtain landowner consent in dealing with native land outside reserves. All the land involved in ALTA (Agriculture Landlord Tenant Act) belong to the second class of native land; most of which are under sugar cane cultivation.

"The use of Native Reserves require the consent of the landowners. The choice of land to include as Native Reserve at the time of reservation was made by the elders of the matagali at Alsis: You are talking about the lack of law to enforce lease conditions, what can we women do to help you hasten NLTB to move to actively monitor and penalise lease holders not complying to lease conditions?

Aca: Write to NLTB about what you are doing and register your concerns. This is the first time I have come across such meetings; attempt by women/a group to actively conserve resources. It might not benefit us today, but it will benefit the future generations of Buca. In the past these sorts of queries (your query/request) was never entertained. The NLTB was created to act on the behalf of landowners.

18. ACTIVITY

 To Prepare A Women's MOU (Memorandum Of Understanding) On Kuta Management and Use Of Knowledge Ownership Contract

PURPOȘE

-To prepare, with support organisations, a MOU that covers concerns by all organisations as well as to ensure that the rights and wishes of the women are respected (See CRCD Toolkit, tool 15, page 67 – for how done)

How done

- A briefing was given on the aim of the exercise
- Review of why it is important to know about IPR (Intellectual Property Rights); examples included in toolkit were discussed
- Update of what happened in Sept.; revise draft of MOU contents
- A participant acted as recorder of comments or ideas
- A list of what the women require of outsiders was compiled from ideas given and discussions that followed
- Clarifications were provided as and when queries arose
- List of ideas/comments collected is to be included in the partly written draft and to be sent to the women for their comments.
- WWF is to include its requirements in the draft to be sent to the women
- A copy of the draft together with a request for them to fill in their requirements for the partnership will be sent to Macuata Soqosoqo Vakamarama and the Macuata Provincial Office with a request to send in their contribution for inclusion and for finalisation at the next workshop.

Result

- A compilation of the MOU (in Fijian) is attached (Attachment 5). Also available is a copy of the tool used translated into Fijian

19. TALK

TALK - Introduction of Income Generation Initiatives – Namata
"In this few days of the *kuta* habitat restoration planning workshop we have come up with some ideas we think will help make our restoration aim possible.

"At this point in time, if we do all what we say we will do, to achieve this there is no doubt in our minds that you will see once again the beautiful, healthy *kuta* you still remember. Some of you came up with this thought in the vision or dream exercise on Monday.

"When the land produces abundantly and all obligations (vanua/lotu etc.) are met it is time to look at ways in which this resource can help generate income for the household. We know that your kuta is bounded by traditional taboo not to sell. All we ask today is to consider these questions:

- 1) How long are the off cuts of a finished mat? From fingertip to elbow or longer?
- What do you do with these off cuts?"

(Answers to the first question ranged from 'shorter' to 'sometimes we do not through away just the off cuts, but whatever is left after weaving'. Answers to the second question ranged from 'burn' to 'pleating of sting to carry firewood with, basket handles and or to use for future mats')

"It is the off cuts/left over strands that are usually thrown away or burnt that is of interest to us, and that we ask you to focus on. May be we can turn this into small gift baskets for locally produced soaps and oils for tourists; table mats. Beads, earrings etc. The production of handicrafts is the special field of the Secretary of the Fiji Arts Council. Niqa Nakalevu, the Secretary to the Fiji Arts Council will talk on what the FAC can offer to turn these wastes into income generating items."

TALK - Handicrafts For Income Generation - Niqa Nakalevu
Craft Fairs: The Fiji Arts Council organises craft fairs sponsored by the Central Manufacturing
Company since the 1980s. The Western Craft Fair, Northern Craft Fair and the National Craft
Fair, are all yearly events for the FAC.

The aim of the FAC Craft Fairs are to bring the crafts people together to exhibit and sell their crafts to the viewers. Also:

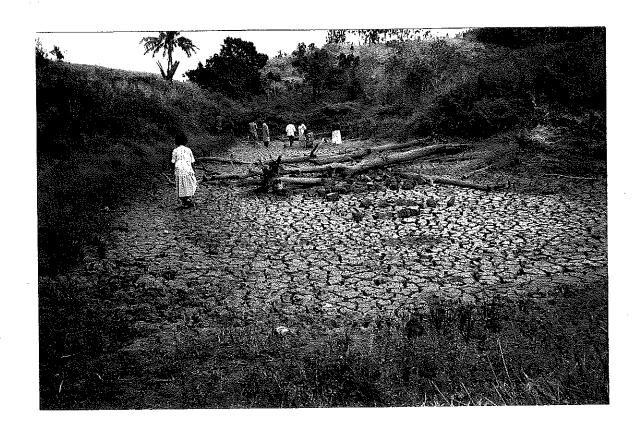
To share their views and experiences

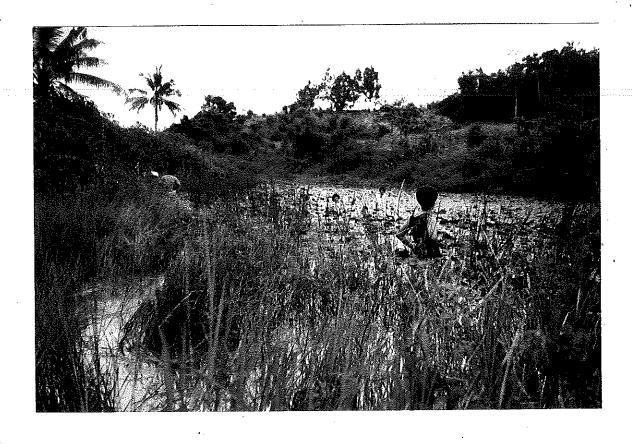
kuta habitat restoration planning by the women of Navakasobu & Korovuli villages
 11/1 to 15/1 '99

Top: Wakaverevere No. 1 – on September 23rd 1998 (@ P. Namata) Bottom: Wakaverevere No. 1 – on January 14th 1999 (@ J. Hardy)









- kuta habitat restoration planning by the women of Navakasobu & Korovuli villages - 11/1 to 15/1 '99

Top: Namadrai No. 2 – on September 23rd 1998 (© J. Hardy) Bottom: Namadrai No.2 – on January 14th 1999 (© J. Hardy)





Top: Harvesting *kuta* mixed with grass and shrubs (Kinisimere, Anaseini, Melala and Timaleti) in knee high water in Namadrai No. 1 (© J. Hardy)

Bottom: Telaite and Sereima, harvesting in chest high water in Wakaverevere

No. 1 (© P. Namata)

(January 14th 1999)







Navakasobu Group – Alisi, Telaite, Akosita, Kuini, Basilisa and Sainimili January 1999 (© J.Hardy)



- **Kuta habitat restoration planning -**by the women of Navakasobu & Korovuli villages
11/1 to 15/1 '99

21. **FIELD VISIT**

21.1 Plant Sample Collection

Purpose

- For confirmed identification of plants by the herbarium

There is a need to know what plants grow in association with kuta in the kuta habitat. For this reason, plant specimens were collected from the ponds and immediate edges. The ideal specimen must have good undamaged leaves, flowers and fruits, with enough leaves to show compound or simple nature of leaves. This was kept in mind when collecting samples. The samples were collected in a plastic bag.

The plants collected are as follows (in their local names):

1. Lalawaivou

6. Wabosucu

12. Guinea grass

2. Dredrokodruma 3. Taria

7. Latava

13. Vaini/oni

8. Sinu

14. Vadra 15. Kaile

4. Sakalave

9. Koronivia blue grass

16. Guava

5. Cogadrogadro

10. Mocemoce

17. Navua sedge

21.2 **Water Sample Collection**

Purpose

- To test kuta growing water for traces of fertilisers

Background

- In describing the quality of kuta, the women recall kuta in the past as reaching between 2 and 4 metres high. Today it is seen and described as short and smallish. With the sugar cane and vegetable farms surrounding the ponds, it is thought fertiliser contamination in the pond may be a part-contributing factor. The water samples were

collected for testing at USP.

Materials Method

- Empty bottles of mineral water

- Without rinsing the bottle after use (drinking content), fill one bottle with the water from the middle of the pond, and the second bottle from the upper end of the pond. Samples were taken from Namadrai (3) and Wakaverevere (1) which are surrounded by cultivated fields. Water samples were sent for testing to the IAS.

- Is being awaited

Result

21.3 Measuring The Extent Of Pond Areas

21.3.1 Namadrai (1): section 1 - 22.5m x 15m = 337.5m2 section 2 - 37.5m x 15m = 562.5m2

section $3 - 15m \times 15m = 225m2$ TOTAL AREA = 1125m2

Namadrai (2):

Also known as drano Usa, on the other side of the road to (1). Measurements of this pond were not taken, although it

is estimated to be about 4 times as large as (1).

Namadrai (3):

Again measurements were not taken, but it was estimated to be about twice the size of Namadrai (1).

21.3.2 Wakaverevere (1): $90m \times 15m = 1350m2$

Wakaverevere (2):

 $18.75m \times 7.5m = 424.125m2$

Wakaverevere (3):

 $60m \times 22.7m = 1364m2$ TOTAL AREA = 3138.125m2

Distances between Wakaverevere (1), (2) and (3) (the connecting water ways, were also measured):

(1) and (2) = 15m

(2) and (3) = 8.84m

(3) and upward = 12.68m

21.3.3 Laulevu: The area of Laulevu was determined using the aerial photographs. In 1978 (January) it was 1.94ha and in 1994 (August) it was about 1.37ha. A reduction of more than a half hectare.

21.3.4 Yasua:

Measurements for drano Yasua were not taken, however filled with water the pond was estimated to be about 3 and a half times the size of Namadrai (1).

Each of the ponds lead into one and another and/or they drain into a natural waterway.

21.6 Observations - Jacqueline Hardy

The group visited a group of ponds collectively known as Namadrai (which consist of Namadrai (1), Usa, Nawiwi, Kavisa and Namadrai (3)), and are all located about 1km up the Naduri Road from its junction with the Seaqaqa – Labasa Highway. Also visited was the four linked ponds known as Wakaverevere, and Laulevu.

At Namadrai (1), in September '98, the last visit, the ground was solid to walk on, this time there was a water level which rose from about calf high, deeper depending upon how far into to the middle of the pond you ventured. This area was overgrown with high grasses and sedges, which was intermingled with *Kuta*, the height of the *Kuta* ranging between 1 and 4 metres (approx.). At this location the samples of the plants which live in association with *Kuta* were taken, and photographed, see section 21.1 for the list of the plant species collected.

Across the Naduri Road from Namadrai (1) is the pond Usa, which also has *kuta* intermingled with the high grasses and sedges. However here the water level was higher and the area it covered was larger, almost 4 times larger. The group then walked past an abandoned house to overlook the pond Nawiwi.

Namadrai (3) was then visited, just a short walk down Naduri Road, towards the junction with the Seaqaqa – Labasa Highway. Namadrai (3) was approximately twice the size of Namadrai (1), but largely consisted of open water. Water Lilies dominated the surface of the pond. The floating island (raised peat platform), which was clearly visible on the last visit due to the low water level, was almost completely covered with water, only the tip and a small patch of grassy vegetation could be seen to show its existence. Also all of the large remains of the felled trees were not visible due to the high water level. Two photos, one showing the pond in September 98 and another showing the pond in January 99, shows how the pond can change over just 4 months.

Drano Wakaverevere was the next pond visited and is located on Kadavu Road just off the Seaqaqa – Labasa Highway. Wakaverevere is a series of four ponds linked together by small channels, the ponds were also measured, and the measurements can be seen in section 21.3. The first pond on the last visit in September had clumps of *Kuta* growing on its eroded banks, as the pond had a low water level. On the visit in January 99, the water level in the pond was higher, covering the eroded banks, and the small clumps of *Kuta* had grown and were showing their tips about 1 foot above the water level (the water level being shoulder high on the average size woman). This is shown through the photos of the pond in September 98 and January 99, which can be seen on first page of photographic section of this report.

Wakaverevere (2), the second pond had no water in on the first visit (Sept. 98), just the remains of felled trees, on the second visit in Jan. 99 the pond had a water level of waist height at the sides and shoulder height near the middle. *Kuta* grew at the sides of the pond, but at the centre of the pond Water Lilies dominated the vegetation. The dramatic change in the state of the pond is demonstrated in the photos of before and after rain (Sept. 98 and Jan. 99). Wakaverevere (3) and (4) show the same differences, the vegetation has grown, and the ponds have water in them, instead of being dried up.

Laulevu was the last pond visited, and it was the largest and within walking distance from Navakasobu Village. It was noted in the last report that the ponds are located next to the Goat Farm, part of the Seaqaqa Agricultural Research Station, and that they had been altered through the creation of a mound of earth for animal crossing. Last Sept. 98 the pond was almost completely dry, with water only in one part of the pond (the deepest part), with the remaining part of the pond being visible only through the eroded bed. Young *kuta* was only seen intermingled with grasses and sedges next to the eroded pond bed. However in January 99 the entire pond was full of water, including the part of the pond which had been cut off from the main. Along the edges of the pond was where the *kuta* grew, with the tips of the stems poking out above the water level, giving little indication as to the amount of *kuta* present below the water level, in the central parts of the pond though Water Lilies dominated the vegetation. (Photographs of Laulevu in Sept. 98 and Laulevu in Jan. 99 can be seen on the front and back of this report).

Drano Yasua was not visited on the day of the field trip, but from earlier New Year Dunking visits, it was noted that the pond was large, perhaps three and a half times the size of Namadrai (3), with Water Lilly being the dominating surface vegetation. No *Kuta* could be seen from the vantage point used.

FRIDAY 15TH JANUARY 1999

22. EVALUATION - Translation

No	Question	Re	sponses/No. of Responses/Comments
1	What did you think of the	*	Good workshop – 7
	workshop?	*	I'm thankful – 3
		*	I've learnt the importance of land and natural resources that I took lightly before – 4
			It introduced new ideas and thinking - 2
		*	We can see the truth about ourselves as landowners - 1
		*	There was good harmony and co-operation – 1

- 3. Adding three more articles to the legend as told during the workshop
- 4. Lamination of action plans for the two villages and return
- Type out letters drafted during the workshop to NLTB, Land Conservation Board, Fijian Affairs and Macuata Provincial Office. To send back to you for your signature and posting
- Sending water samples to the Institute of Applied Sciences, USP. The result will be conveyed to you at the next meeting
- 7. To confirm handicraft production training in Suva and get back to you with details

These are some of the things that you have committed yourselves to do:

- 1. Acting on your action plans, carrying out tasks as set out in the action plan
- 2. Letters to NLTB, Land Conservation Board, Fijian Affairs, and Provincial Office to be signed on receipt and posted out.

23.2 Translation Of 'Acknowledgement Of Women Participation By Resource People' – Namata

"Radinivanua, Ladies of Buca. It is the last day of our workshop and this afternoon we depart for Waisali Forest Reserve. Like before, we would like to thank Radinivanua our host and each and every one of you participants for your hospitality and making our stay and enjoyable one.

"Thank you for your contributions to the program allowing us to contribute to your dreams an document again your knowledge of the way you think best to restore your *kuta* ponds. Such a privilege, for us, is an honour.

"As before, we leave with some tasks we all agreed we must do in Suva and you here in the village; as outlined by Kesaia. These tasks when done will draw us nearer to achieving the aim of the workshop. We hope we will all do these tasks diligently.

"On eof our first tasks is to check with out resources how much is available and see how many we can afford to bring to Suva for the broadening of the horizon of *Kuta* crafts from the off cuts. We will talk to the Fiji Arts Council and get back to you through *Radinivanua*, with the results. Thank you so much for making this a successful workshop."

23.3 Translation Of 'Acknowledgement Of Resource People By Participants' – Alisi Musudroka

"On behalf of the participants I wish to thank all of you for being here for this second workshop. We have come to know a lot of new things, especially when we are always told to be good for noting except in the kitchen.

"We are glad that you have extended an invitation to those that we needed to explain and help us see what to do and where to go in this development process. We think we will try the new things we have learnt because it is relevant and suits us. It will be of much use to our restoring/using wisely of our *kuta*.

"We hope that our workshops will bear good development fruits. We hope too that you will not forget us and will be there for us to follow up on what we have requested of you"......

24. CLOSING – Translation Of Talk And Prayer

"Thank you for this educational workshop on the protection of our natural resource *kuta*. For you teachers today is the end of your task, we carry on the planned work from here. I am vas of Baguette village, in Savusavu (mother originally from Baguette) and my grandmother was a fine craftswoman who weaved fine *kuta* mats. She always made sure that I return to school every year with a new *kuta*. Up till now, I like and prefer the feel of *kuta* on my back.

"The prophet Joel said 'Rejoice 'o land I am with you.' We have just started our spiritual renewal last week. Each person needs to be spiritually renewed. The rest will follow. This is the beginning of land renewal.

"The workshop is about 'restoration' which means to increase, multiply and renew. Only God can renew. If we want the land to be renewed, to know that God is present. The reason we lose something is because we lose God and when we lose God we are fearful. Our loss is due to fear. We need to be renewed to take us back to where we were."

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