



The WWF-Pacific (Fiji) Great Sea Reef Programme is a multi-partner, multi-donor initiative and has funding support from the governments of Australia, New Zealand and the United States of America, the Packard Foundation, Le Cordon Bleu NZ, Bacardi Ltd, and WWF offices in Austria, New Zealand, and Switzerland.

FIJI CAKAULEVU

Weaving communities together for conservation

More than 98 per cent of Fiji's territory is ocean, so it's no wonder that this Pacific island nation is leading the pack of coastal countries in marine conservation. Central to Fiji's protected ecoregion is the worldclass Great Sea Reef, known locally as Cakaulevu, which includes permanent tabu zones, where no fishing or harvesting of other marine resources can take place.

CHARACTERISTICS

74%

of the known coral species in Fiji can be found in Cakaulevu according to a scientific assessment led by WWF, the first survey of its kind to be conducted on the reef system.

US\$ 7.7 million

The inshore fisheries sector of Cakaulevu contributes up to FJD16 million to the Fijian economy annually.

10%

of Fiji's population is directly dependent on Cakaulevu for food and livelihoods, according to research conducted by WWF in 2014.

25%

The billion dollar tourism industry accounts for around 25 per cent of Fiji's GDP, a figure in part thanks to Cakaulevu.



CAKAULEVU

Cakaulevu, Fiji's largest reef system, runs for over 200km from the north eastern tip of Udu point in Vanua Levu to Bua at the north west edge of Vanua Levu and continues on to the provinces of Ba and Ra in Viti Levu and the Yasawas.

NOTABLE WINS & KEY LESSONS



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SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES SETTING SMARTER LIMITS

Amid growing concerns in Macuata regarding declining fish populations, WWF commenced a 12-month Length Based-Spawning Per Recruit (LB-SPR) survey in 2014 on 20 commercial target species. The information allowed for the setting of catch sizes, which will be effective in enabling continued population growth. Thanks to the survey, the camouflage grouper fish was identified as a target species for urgent management action. As a result, community members decided to establish a ban on all harvesting of this fish for a one year period to allow it time to recover. Following that, regulations on catch size will be imposed and there is hope that within a period of two to three years, the species will recover to a more robust population size.



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FROM TURTLE HUNTERS TO CONSERVATIONISTS

Despite government policies and even a turtle hunting moratorium, it was evident that poaching remained a problem and there was little enforcement at the village level. Recognizing this, WWF and partners established the *Dau ni Vonu*, a network of local turtle monitors to assist with awareness raising, monitoring of turtles and enforcing no-take rules within their fishing grounds. Most of the turtle monitors were once turtle hunters but had been convinced of the need to take action to bring back turtle numbers and educate others to do the same. Despite the obstacles, the *Dau ni Vonu* programme has successfully raised awareness and almost completely eradicated turtle hunting in the protected marine areas.

"In the beginning, they laughed at me when I refused to entertain turtle meat consumption... Yet as we involved villagers in tagging, beach clean ups, and more awareness, the change was enormous. Turtles have become members of our family, we love to follow the progress they make trekking the oceans and get emotional when we find them staying close to Yadua."

Pita Garau
Turtle Monitor, Yadua Island in Macuata Province

WWF'S APPROACH IN FIJI

- Documenting and studying the marine biodiversity of the spectacular Cakaulevu reef system
- Devising an ecosystem management strategy to improve fish numbers and restore damaged habitats
- Helping to facilitate the development of new fisheries regulations
- Leading community campaigns for healthier rivers to maximise awareness of river pollution in waterways linked to Cakaulevu, prevent erosion and in turn, revitalize fish stocks in the reef
- Fostering sustainable markets and certification standards while working with communities to maintain high value fish for end users
- Engaging with the private sector to encourage responsible financing

WWF in the Coral Triangle

Over the past two decades, WWF has been working in the Coral Triangle to help safeguard the health of the region's valuable resources and to ensure the wellbeing of the millions of people who depend on this globally significant ecosystem for food and livelihoods.

Learn more about WWF's approach in Cakaulevu

panda.org/coraltriangle/mpa