



EBM KUBULAU BULLETIN



VOL. 5. JAN 2009

Ni sa bula vinaka and a happy and prosperous new year! Welcome to the fifth edition, and first for 2009, 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 STAKEHOLDER'S MEETING

On December 4th the various Kubulau stakeholder's met at Cousteau's Resort to discuss the conservation work being done in Kubulau. The Stakeholders meet every quarter of the year for updates on projects, finances, risks and issues.



Participants of this December's Kubulau Stakeholder's Meeting

During December's meeting some of the issues discussed were mooring buoys, MPA boundaries, increasing awareness of the MPAs and work plans for the coming months.

One of the other most important discussions were the scholarship funds (for 2008) for various students attending schools as far as Suva (see page 2 for Kubulau Scholarship details).

Also present at this meeting was Emosi Malo Were, the first student to graduate after receiving financial assistance from the scholarship funds (see page 4 for his interview).

This meeting is an important platform for the stakeholders, to offer and re-

ceive information from community representatives about their day-to-day resources management concerns

In addition to this, the Kubulau Ecosystem Based Management Planning workshop was discussed. The planning workshop is scheduled to be held at the end of February 2009, and is aimed at getting important stakeholders together to revise and to combine all the existing management plans for Kubulau. One of the other important aspects of this workshop will be the start of the MPA gazettal process for Kubulau.

The next stakeholder's meeting is scheduled to be held in March 2009.

The Kubulau Scholarship Committee is now accepting applications for 2009 scholarships. See inside for more information.....

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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KUBULAU SCHOLARSHIP FUNDS

Conservation and protection of natural resources helps not only maintain ecosystem integrity and biodiversity but can also assist communities in generating alternative livelihoods. This can be seen in the case of the Namena Marine Reserve where a scholarship fund has been set up through the money generated from dive tags. Tags are sold to local dive operators and anyone participating in recreational or scientific activities within the reserve.

The scholarship funds provide financial support towards education for young people from the district. In 2008, a total of 25 students were assisted with their school

fees. There are various programmes which the scholarship support, including Trade Certificates, Diplomas and a Bachelors Degree from various learning institutions.

The application window for 2009 scholarships is now open and young people who require financial assistance in schooling are encouraged to send in their application for screening by the Hierarchy Council.

Good luck!

The Kubulau Scholarship Committee is now accepting application for 2009 scholarships.

Please contact your village committee representative for further information.

The deadline for all applications are January 31st, 2009.

CHANGING MANGROVE AREA IN KUBULAU

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.

Mangrove forests are critically important for protecting shorelines from erosion, filtering water from the land, and providing habitat for fish, birds and crabs. However, mangroves are disappearing at a rapid rate. About one third of mangrove forests around the world have been lost over the past 50 years because of activities such as development, timber harvesting and coastal aquaculture. WCS has been investigating mangrove change

in the Kubulau region. By looking at old photographs taken in 1954, 1978 and 1994, WCS researchers were able to map where mangrove areas have changed (see Figure 1 for mapped mangrove areas from 1994 and 1978). These maps were compared to the mangrove area mapped from satellite imagery by the Fiji Department of Forestry for 2001. The results show that there was a general decrease in mangrove area between 1954 and 1994, but more mangroves were present in 2001 (Figures 2). WCS is funding a USP masters student Simita Singh to understand what caused these changes.

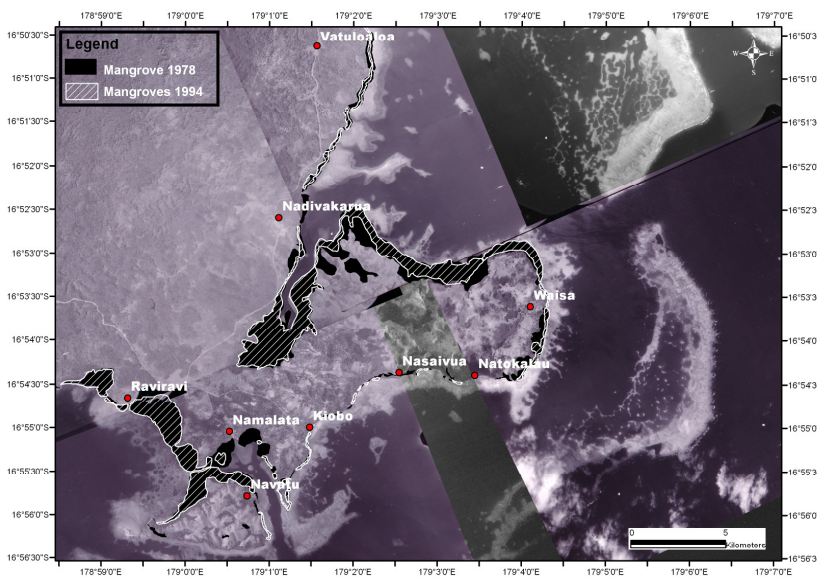


Figure 1. Map of mangrove areas in 1994 (white striped) over mangrove areas in 1978 (black).

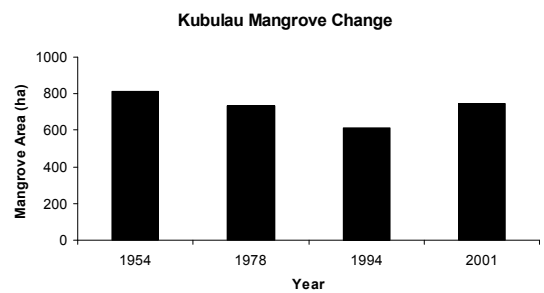


Figure 2. Mangrove area mapped from photographs and satellite imagery between 1954 and 2001.

KUBULAU SOCIO-ECONOMIC SURVEY

The Kubulau socio-economic survey was conducted during November-December 2008 by WCS staff member, Thomas Tui.

This survey was designed to understand how communities of Kubulau affect and are affected by their adjacent ecosystems (terrestrial, freshwater and marine) and how these effects have changed since the introduction of Marine Protected Area (MPA) networks. The data from this survey is currently being analysed.

The information obtained from this survey will be provided to Kubulau

Resource Management Committee and the communities of Kubulau to further develop and strengthen their Ecosystem Based Management plan and activities.

Furthermore, information from the survey will also be used to measure the community's understanding of EBM principles and to help prepare the community in applying these principles.



Thomas during socio-economic survey in Navatu

THE GREAT FIJI BUTTERFLY FISH COUNT

In November, many different dive organisations and resorts throughout Fiji participated in 'The Great Fiji Butterfly Fish Count' survey. This nationwide survey was conducted to establish the health of Fiji's coral reefs. Butterfly fish are considered by some scientists as good indicators of reef health; the greater the abundance of these fishes the healthier the reef (www.coral.org). On Vanua Levu, the Kubulau District was the only community taking part in this survey. This emphasised their commitment to actively help protect their coral reef. Volunteers from within Kubulau district together with Greenforce spent the day completing several 30 minutes snorkels along the Nasonisoni Passage to record the fish numbers. The data collected from the surveys has been passed on to Coral Reef Alliance for analysis and the results will be pre-



One of the Community volunteers counting the Butterfly fish

sented to the Kubulau District and Kubulau Resource Management Committee. The day was a good opportunity for team building between the Greenforce and community volunteers. The team is thankful to Coral Reef Alliance for kindly supplying the slates used and the Kubulau community for their help in this survey.

This survey is expected to be done once a year and the Greenforce team is looking forward to working with the communities to again count the butterfly fish. Please also see www.fijibutterflyfishcount.com

Contributed by Steve Fitzpatrick of Greenforce-Phase 15 team.

**EBM
ACKNOWLEDGES
INTER-
CONNECTEDNESS
AMONG SYSTEMS;
BETWEEN AIR,
LAND AND SEA.**



IN THE NEXT ISSUE....

Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) are an important tool for conserving and managing marine resources for Kubulau. At the moment there are 3 MPAs and 15 tabu areas for Kubulau. These account for 30% of the total Kubulau marine area/*qoliqoli*.

In the next issue, we will continue to present results of our research from these areas....

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

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ONGOING AND UPCOMING EVENTS

- Feb 09—Kubulau management planning workshop.
- Feb/Mar 09—Kubulau community re-training in FLMMMA techniques.
- Feb 09—Final tagging of the fishes in Kubulau MPAs.
- Feb 09—Continued data collection by community monitors (CPUE, infringement, mangrove stakes, and leaf litter).
- Mar 09—Bio and socio-economic monitoring using FLMMMA protocols by the Kubulau community.

GRADUATE OFFERS THANKS TO KUBULAU RESOURCE MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

"I can't express how thankful I am for the scholarship funds..."



Emosi Were—first student to have officially graduated after receiving assistance from the Scholarship fund.

Emosi Malo Were was a very happy person when he graduated from Corpus Christi Teacher's College at the end of November. At the age of 20, this young man from Waisa in Kubulau is the first student to have officially graduated after being awarded partial scholarship for his tertiary education from funds set up by the Kubulau Resource Management Committee.

Emosi has returned home to Savusavu and Waisa for the Christmas holidays, and spent time with his family. He awaits word from the Minister of Education about his future teaching placement.

When asked about the scholarship program, Emosi said, "I can't express how thankful I am for the scholarship funds. My family was struggling financially...it was a rough road. The scholarship was very supportive, and I am very thankful."

Contributed by Julie Bennett of the Coral Reef Alliance (CORAL)



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 10th February 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.

