

# THE FORESTER

*In support of the 4 Million Trees in 4 Years, a Fiji Government Initiative, 2019*



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Urban Forest, Healthy Cities



Head Office and Central Eastern staff, family members and forestry officers gathered in numbers in support of the '4 Million Trees in 4 Years Initiative' at the Colo-i-Suva Forest Park

## A green contribution In support of the '4 Million Trees in 4 Years Initiative'

On Saturday 6th April, the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) conducted its first quarter tree-planting exercise at various locations around the country with a lot of enthusiasm and national pride.

CEO Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua stated that this was part of TLTB's corporate social responsibility (CSR) and was one of the board's flagship initiatives. Staff participation in such programmes is an avenue wherein the organization can give back to the communities and to landowners in particular.

The programme includes visitation to our dedicated TLTB Native Tree Reserve areas in Colo-i-Suva, Lautoka, Navolau in Ra and Naduna in Macuata to clean, plant, pot, replant and transplant.

With the support of the Ministry of Forestry in collaboration with various provincial offices; TLTB's CSR programmes as contained under the Strategic Corporate Plan 2019-2021 require us to work with the Government, communities, civil societies and other government agencies to plant four million trees by 2020.

"It is also part of the core business outcomes with measured efforts to address

environment sustainability, climate change and ensuring better livelihoods for the communities in Fiji," he said. "As a land management agency, replanting programmes such as this also ensures mitigation of land loss through bad land management or extreme weather, thus improving the health and livability of these regions and communities.

At the national level, the programme will help conserve the environment and support local environmental outcomes by improving the extent, connectivity and condition of native vegetation that support native species," he added.

Mr Kuruvakadua further explained, that at the national level and in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry, TLTB is glad that they are able to contribute to the '4 Million Trees in 4 Years' Initiative" which was launched by the President of Fiji, His Excellency Ret. Maj. Gen. Jioji Konrote early this year.

The initiative is part of Government's renewed effort to continue the fight against climate change challenges and to protect Fiji's environment and rich biodiversity – in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development particularly the SDG15 and in support of the New York Declaration on Forests. ■



Chief Executive Officer Tevita Kuruvakadua

## From the CEO's Desk

*Trees give oxygen that we need to breath, trees reduce the amount of surface run-off which in turn reduces soil erosion and pollution in our waterways and may eventually reduce the effects of flooding. Trees also provide food, protection and homes for other living organisms.*

In support of the Government's initiative to combat climate change through the "4 Million Trees in 4 Years", the iTaukei Land Trust Board organised a tree planting exercise for all its staff and their respective family members as part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) on April 6.

The initiative, which was launched early this year by the President, H.E Ret. Maj Gen Jioji Konrote, is part of the Government's renewed effort to stall the effects of climate change and to protect Fiji's environment and rich biodiversity. This is in line with the United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in support of the New York Declaration on Forests which aims to end natural forest loss by the year 2030.

For TLTB, this initiative has also given us a platform to enhance our core business and that is to sustainably develop iTaukei land.

Most often, we plant trees to provide shade and beautify our landscapes. However, TLTB is now focused on the global aspect which is to mitigate the effects of climate change through the four million trees initiative. We realise that planting the four million trees is important, but making sure that the four million trees survive, is imperative.

This initiative directly links to Fiji's commitment to sell 3.6m C/metric to the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) that Fiji agreed to and signed in 2016. From this commitment awakens the need to implement Fiji's Emission Reduction Programmes, one of which is to plant four million trees.

We have also established a monitoring system where we took account of all the trees that were planted and will ensure to provide proper care until the trees are fully grown or replace them if needed be. Although mangroves is not included in the 4 Million Trees Initiative but we believe in the overall protection of the environment and the ecosystems in general.

TLTB aims to develop its own carbon footprint and capture it in its records and become a corporate champion in environment conservation and protection that can be showcased to the rest of the world.

To conclude, I wish to thank all the TLTB staff and their respective family members who took time out on that day to be a part of this great initiative. We believe that the many social, economic and environmental benefits of the trees we have planted will be most beneficial for the generations to come. ■



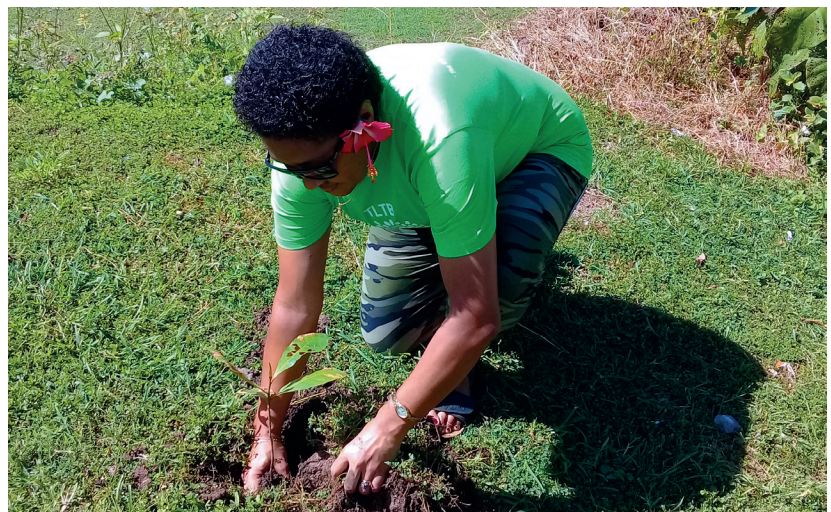
Tourism staff, Forestry representatives with village member and children of Vunitogoloa in support of the 4 million Trees initiatives at the Vunitogoloa site



North-West Region staff in Lautoka revisited the 2017 planting site near the Ba Provincial Free Bird Institute for monitoring and replanting initiatives



Samuela and Suli from the Tourism Department in Nadi with a tray of seedlings during their departmental 1st Quarter CSR programme at Vunitogoloa in Ra



Ateca planted one in support of the 4 Million Trees Challenge in Lautoka



## HIS EXCELLENCY

Maj-Gen (Ret'd) Jioji Konusi Konrote  
CF, OF(Mil), MC, SBSt.J, MSD, OMRI, NOC  
President of the Republic of Fiji

ADDRESS AT THE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FORESTS  
Sigatoka Valley Secondary School - Thursday 21 March 2019

The Minister for Forestry, Honourable Osea Naiqamu;  
Na iTaukei Nakutadrodoro, Vanua Nabuvatu;  
Na iTaukei Erenalaya na Tui Rukuruku;  
Na Tui Nahevevia i Wai kei Vanua;  
Permanent Secretaries;  
Representatives of Development Agencies, Corporate,  
Non-Governmental, and Faith-Based Organisations;  
School Students, Teachers, Parents & Guardians;  
Members of the Media; and Ladies and Gentlemen.

Cola vina, ni sa bula vinaka, namaste, asalaam alaykum,  
noa'ia 'e mauri, and a very good morning to you all. It  
is indeed an honour and great pleasure to be here  
this morning to celebrate the 2019 International Day  
of Forests. I wish to thank all of you, especially the  
children, for your attendance.

Our gathering today is the culmination of an almost  
three months-long tree-planting effort that began when  
I launched Fiji's 4-Million-Trees-in-4-Years Initiative at  
the State House in Suva on Tuesday 8 January 2019.  
This Government Initiative gained momentum when  
the Honourable Minister and I jointly launched the 2019  
International Day of Forests on 1 March, simultaneously  
in Nadi and Rotuma, respectively. Since then, the  
Ministry of Forestry has coordinated tree-planting  
programmes in schools and communities across the  
country; a first for Fiji, that is, a marked departure from  
our previous replanting strategies.

The tree-planting programme is only the start of our  
commitment to plant four million trees in four years  
as part of our effort to build a greener, more climate  
resilient and more beautiful Fiji. A Fiji where our forestry  
sector is a sustainable source of prosperity for our  
people and a bigger and equally important element of  
our economic mix.

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, as resource  
owners and guardians of our natural, beautiful and  
pristine beloved country, it is considered prudent and  
important that we better understand the important role  
that forests play in protecting our natural environment.  
The relationship between people and forests has been  
critical to human development for all of recorded history.  
From the dawn of civilisation, and long before, human  
beings have looked to forests as part of their home; a  
source of shelter, food and clothing. The Fijian people  
were no different. Our history tells us we looked to  
forests, and the flora within, as sources of medical and  
healing materials as well.

Forests also play an important role in addressing the  
effects of Climate Change. They regulate ecosystems,  
protect our rich biodiversity and they play an integral

part in the carbon cycle as well as in reducing greenhouse gas emissions. But as civilization has advanced,  
we have developed commercial agriculture and livestock, replacing the gifts of forests with food, clothing and  
shelter from other sources. Attitudes towards the forest changed, and the natural balance of sustainability  
that existed between people and our forests for generations has been shaken as a result. Many irresponsible  
actors continue to see our forests through the lens of industry and consumption. As a consequence, we have  
suffered massive deforestation on a global scale. Land has been cleared for agriculture, trees are being cut  
down to construct homes or being burned to create heat. In a predatory and destructive manner, the appetite  
of industry has consumed large swaths of our forests and their resources. Only recently, have we begun to  
realise that the bounty of our forests is not infinite. While forests can regenerate, they were being destroyed  
too rapidly for many areas to recover. And when forests disappeared, communities suffered. The planet  
suffered. Humanity suffered.

Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, we are here today as part of the global campaign to reverse the  
degradation of our forests and their resources. We are here to celebrate our forests with the focus on the  
theme: Forests and Education. Fiji's focus on forests and forestry has grown rapidly in recent times. New  
factors are coming into play and we need to improve our understanding of forest-related processes and how  
to manage them for the greatest benefits. Improved performance at all levels will be necessary. That will not  
happen overnight. But we need to begin strengthening our institutions and conducting training to implement  
new standards and expectations effectively.

Education is key to address the human resource limitations we face in forestry and raise awareness among  
the public of forests and forestry. The current scarcity of skilled human resources points to a clear need to  
improve tertiary education in forestry, while there is also an evident need to strengthen education in general  
and increase awareness in relation to forests and natural resources. Government is pleased to note that the  
Fiji National University is offering Diploma and Degree courses in Forestry, while the University of the South  
Pacific and the University of Fiji continue to strengthen their environmental and other science programmes.  
Our young graduates are being equipped with technical expertise and research skills in the areas of forest  
management, biodiversity conservation, climate change adaptation and mitigation, forest health and  
protection. They also learn about agroforestry and land use, harvesting operations, non-timber forest products  
and value adding, forest business, and entrepreneurship. This knowledge will lay the foundation for a lifetime  
of continuous learning and both personal and professional development. The importance of forests must  
also be addressed with our children at the pre-school, primary and secondary school levels. Forests and trees  
must be part of Fiji's school curriculum; and this project will go a long way in educating our young people on  
the importance of proper forestry management.

The four million trees initiative is part of Government's responsibility to young people, the future of our country.  
It is part of our commitment to encouraging the sustainable management of our natural resources. It is  
also part of our concerted effort to champion climate action and protect our natural environment and rich  
biodiversity, including our water sources. The initiative involves plans to plant all types of trees from timber  
trees to fruit trees and ornamental trees. It includes non-wood species like bamboo and candlenut trees, to  
name a few.

To our children here today, remember you are never too young to learn about the importance of protecting  
our forests. Our forests are home to rare species, some of which are only unique to Fiji. Our forests provide  
shade for our water sheds and keep them from drying. Our forests combat the effects of global warming. Our  
forests are a part of our nation, just as much as you or myself. So please, inform your parents, guardians and  
communities on the need to protect our forests and to grow more trees.

On this note, I urge all Fijians to renew our efforts and plant as many trees as possible to help provide a  
secure and sustainable future for our children and future generations!

May Almighty God continue to bless you all and bless our beloved nation, Fiji.

Vinaka vakalevu, dhanyevaad, shukhriya, faiek'sia and thank you all. ■

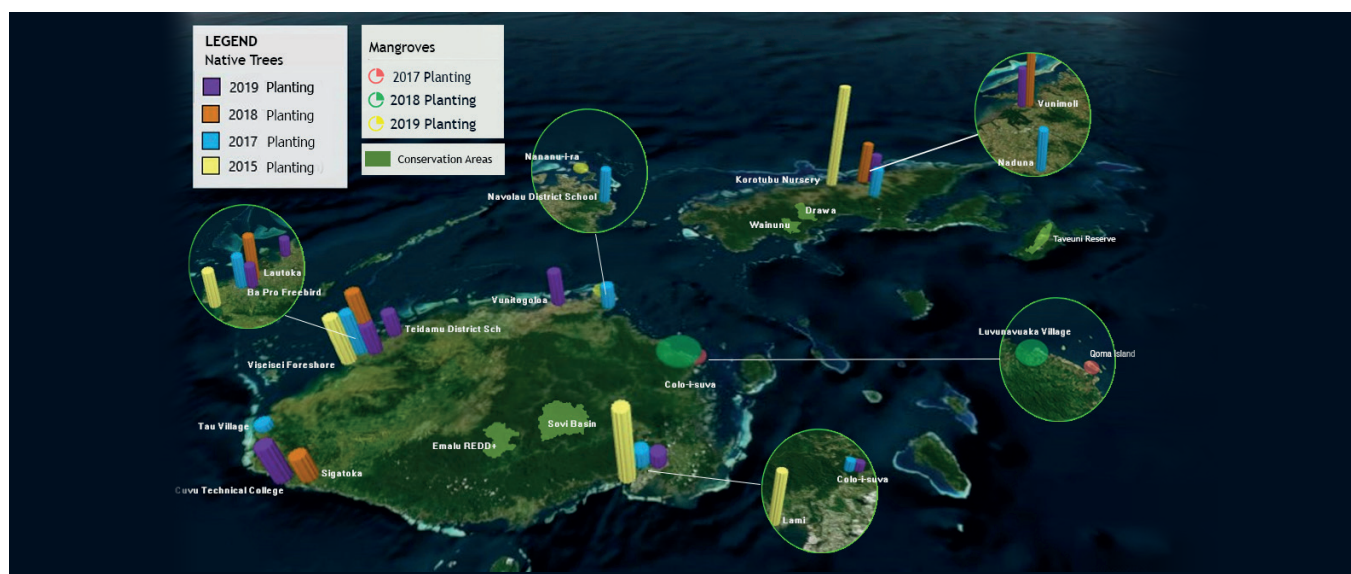
## More than 3,500 trees planted

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) staff and management joined hands once again to support the Government's initiative of planting four million trees by the year 2020. As part of its Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR), TLTB chief executive officer Tevita Kuruvakadua says such programmes are avenues in which the organisation gives back to the communities and most importantly with the full support of our family members who are also an integral part of our corporate journey.

Mr Kuruvakadua says the 4-Million-Trees-In-4-Years Initiative will help conserve the environment and at the same time improve the condition of our native vegetation that supports native species and ecosystems.

Started in 2015, the tree planting programme has enabled us to preserve our forests through the establishment of four TLTB Native Tree Reserve sites in Suva, Nadi, Ra and Labasa including mangrove regeneration sites in Lami Town (Rewa), Luvunavuaka and Qoma Villages (Tailevu), Korotogo (Nadroga), Korotubu Village, (Macuata) and on the foreshore areas on the island of Nananu-i-Ra. (Ra)

A total of 3536 native trees have been planted so far on the forest reserves whilst around 6615 of mangrove seedlings have been planted in the mangrove reserves. ■



YEAR	PLANTING SITE	MANGROVES	TREES
2019	TLTB Native Tree Reserve, Colo-i-Suva, Naitasiri		105 planted, 1332 transplanted, 626 potted and 1110 of mahogany wildings
	Nananu-i-ra Island	1015 planted	
	Ba Provincial Free Bird, Lautoka		250 planted
	Cuvu Technical College, Nadroga		300 planted
	Yavusa Nika, Macuata		283 planted - Teak, Yasi, Kavika, Damanu
	Vunitogoloa, Ra		300 planted, 100 transplanted
	Teidamu Primary School, Lautoka		200 planted - Teak, Koka, Cumquat, Yasi, Mahogany
2018	Luvunavuaka Village, Tailevu	3800 planted	
	Sigatoka, Nadroga		200 planted
	Vunivau, Labasa		400 planted
	Lautoka		500 planted
2017	Qoma Island, Tailevu	800 planted	
	TLTB Native Tree Reserve, Colo-i-Suva, Naitasiri		126 planted, 1140 potted and 551 yasi transplanted
	TLTB Native Tree Reserve, Navolau District School		190 planted
	Tau Village, Nadroga		50 planted
	TLTB Native Tree Reserve, Naduna, Macuata		278 planted
	TLTB Native Tree Reserve, Ba Provincial Free Bird		354 planted
2016	National Clean-Up Campaign & Winston Relief Efforts		
2015	Lami, Rewa	600 planted	
	Korotubu Nursery, Macuata	2000 potted	
	Viseisei Foreshore, Vuda		400 planted
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>6,615</b>	<b>3,536 plants</b>

# The 4 million trees challenge

Trees offer environmental, social as well as economic benefits. This is the reason why the government and environmental specialists and TLTB emphasize on the importance of planting more trees.

Under the Fiji Business Excellence Award (FBEA) programme, Team Nadi which comprises of the South-West Region, the Tourism Department and Sigatoka Sub-Region revisited one of the few tree planting sites at the Nadroga/Navosa Technical Vocational College in Cuvu, Sigatoka to plant 300 more trees in its 1st Quarter tree planting programme.

With the support of the forestry officers in Sigatoka and Assistant Roko Tui Nadroga/Navosa; Manager South-West Mr Soloveni Masi says, "it is time we realize how important these trees are for our environment as well as our social and economic well-being. Each one of us must take responsibility to plant trees whenever and wherever we can to make our planet a better place to live in," he added.

With heightened public awareness on environment issues, TLTB has taken proactive steps in supporting green initiatives as a source of competitive advantage. We need to proactively support and undertake green initiatives that are now a part of global good governance practices.

We need to be environmentally friendly and have a reputation for environmental accountability. ■



Nadi staff planting trees at Cuvu College



Asaeli digs and prepares the soil at Vunitogoloa

## Mataqali land lost 80% of forest cover

On the hilly side of Vunitogoloa Village in Rakiraki is the Mataqali Qilaqila land. Due to human activity, the landowners have lost more than 80 percent of its forest cover.

This is what we call deforestation which is the permanent destruction of forests. Having seen the need to plant more trees on this piece of land, TLTB's Tourism Department in Nadi travelled all the way to Ra to plant 300 different types of trees. They also took with them 100 yasi trees to be kept in the nursery for the community and its nature reserve.

Manager Tourism Mr Peni Qalo was grateful for the assistance provided by the Ministry of Forest in Lautoka and Tavua as well as the support from the villagers for their contribution during the tree planting exercise on 30th April. Deforestation at this scale led to a loss of habitat for many endemic species of wildlife, increased regional drought and soil erosion, and destabilized the water supply in surrounding communities. Planting native trees aims at conserving the biodiversity of the *mataqali* mountains and restoring balance to the environment and addressing the needs of the families who rely on the forest for food, water, and income. This effort also supports global goals to mitigate the impacts of climate change. The newly planted trees will improve the lives of some 150 farming families and generate income as well. Our partners are also working with the farmers to raise awareness about proper land management and agroforestry in the bid to ensure the communities benefit.

Social responsibility has given rise to a mutually beneficial partnership between Government, social enterprises and villages to create a positive impact and make the world a better and greener place to live in. ■

## Kids connect to the environment



Children planting trees in Cuvu, Nadroga

When a child plants a tree it doesn't just help the environment and wildlife. It places a positive impact on the child in relation to the community the child lives in. That is why it is really important to get your children involved!

These were the sentiments expressed by a Business Excellence Champion in Nadi Ms Sikiti Sawau on how the community and the environment can benefit from involving our children in tree planting exercises.

"We believe that society benefits when young children get out, get their hands in the earth, and plant trees. Planting trees is a great way to connect kids to the

environment and to the surrounding communities," she said

As a child grows, so do the trees. This connection between the child and the tree leads to increased environmental awareness and care.

Planting a tree is often a child's first act of volunteering for the community. Tree planting gives children 'a sense of belonging'. When they are planting a tree, the children are literally establishing their roots in their community.

Planting a tree empowers children into realising that they can make a personal difference for wildlife, our soil and the environment. ■



North-West staff during their CSR at the Ba Provincial School

## NW plants in school

Our North—West Region which comprises of TLTB offices in Lautoka, Ba and Rakiraki have been working with the Ba Provincial Free Bird Institute since 2015 to plant and conserve trees.

As part of their 1st Quarter CSR this year they began by revisiting what is now known as the TLTB Native Tree Reserve in Lautokato replace dead plants and plant more trees.

Manager North-West Ms Ema Natadra said they also tried to stop further erosion of the soil in the area by using a very proactive approach with the planting of 250 plants.

The list includes 150 teak, 30 koka, 30 vaivai, 20 yasi and 20 mahogany trees.

Moving forward, the team plans to work hand in hand with the school management and students in order to ensure the plants are well maintained.

Ms Natadra thanked Ba Provincial Free Bird Institute for allowing her staff to plant the trees and to use the school facilities. Also to the Ministry of Forestry for providing the seedlings. ■

## Labasa to plant more with the landowners

The Northern Regional Office together with the Savusavu office who have identified one of the most successful ways of engaging the landowners and that is to include them in their tree planting programme.

Acting Manager North, Mr Nemani Tamani said that they had had difficulty trying to identify land where they can plant trees. However, engaging the landowners has greatly helped them.

"Not only that, it is also an avenue where we can create awareness on the importance of this exercise," he added.

Led by the Marama ni Yavusa (Nika), their 1st Quarter CSR programme was conducted with the support of the Yavusa Nika (Malau junction) in the *tikina* of Labasa in the province of Macuata.

They planted a total of 450 trees which included Yasi, Teak, Ivi, Taumole, Damanu and Kavika.

A team of forestry officers led by Divisional Forestry Officer Mr Moape Drikalu had also visited the site after the planting to thank TLTB for this very useful exercise to support the 4 Million Trees in 4 Years Initiative of the government.

As friendly as they were, the Northern Region showed a small gesture of appreciation towards the landowners with a few basin of *yaqona*.

Mr Tamani then briefed the landowners on the importance of conserving our natural resources and also emphasized that the tree planting exercise was going to be a continuous programme which would require more land. ■



Northern Regional staff with yavusa Nika landowners after their tree planting program in Labasa

### CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY ORGANISING TEAM : 2019

National CSR Coordinator: APO Ms Salanieta Baleisuva

Team Leader (Head Office): CEO Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua

Team Leader (North-West): RMNW Ms Ema Natadra

Team Leader (South-West): RMSW Mr Soloveni Masi & MTD Mr Peni Qalo

Team Leader (North): A/RMN Mr Nemani Tamani

Logistic & Support Team: Business Excellence Committee, Regional Champions, All Staff & Families



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