

## TLTB contributes to IKI Initiative



The Baseline Assessment and Community Consultation Team in Naviti, Yasawa

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) was part of the Baseline Assessment and Community Consultation and also attended the Technical Working Group Meeting and Project launch that was held late last year in Naviti, Yasawa.

The program known as the Internationale Klimaschutz Initiative (IKI) is an effort of the German Federal Ministry of Environment Nature and Conservation and Nuclear Safety, entitled "International Climate initiative 2017: The Paris Agreement in action: Up-scaling Forest and Landscape Restoration to achieve the nationally Determined Contributions.

The project was aimed at encouraging reforestation and landscape restoration, especially in degraded areas as well as to empower communities on a local level to have the capacity to address the impacts of climate change. The project sites for Fiji have been demarcated for the Naviti and Malolo Districts with a timeline of 18 months.

The Baseline Assessment Teams included the following organizations and Government Ministries; TLTB, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture, Ministry of Fisheries, Conservation International, FLAMMA and Ministry of Lands

and Mineral Resources who were tasked to collect data and relay the findings, and provide awareness on issues raised during community *talanoa* sessions.

Since the Board has a number of tourism leases, schools, and communication tower leases within the District of Naviti, Yasawa; the officers' main task(s) was to consult and enlighten the village communities as well as the different representatives in those areas and sites that have active leases and those areas that are currently vacant with more potential sites for tourism development.

TLTB Officers also assisted in conducting *Integrated Village Development Plan* awareness to all the village communities within the district of Naviti. Assessing the ties, bonds, and links between the *vanua*, *iqoliqoli*, and the weak areas that needed more attention.

The trip was also an opportunity to empower the local communities, at the land owning unit (LOU) level in terms of equipping them with the means to be self-sufficient. The program provided training for seed propagation and beekeeping, especially for women and youths. From this training, they were also provided tools and materials to start their own.

The trip was eye-opening to the experiences, iTaukei communities go through in terms of the services available such as health, access to drinking water, access to power supply, etc. It was amazing to see how they survive daily through the application of traditional knowledge and techniques. However, these rural communities are also on the front end of the effects of climate change.

TLTB has a total number of twenty (26) active leases on both sides of the island, out of which, sixteen (16) are Tourism leases, three (3) Government leases, three (3) communication tower leases, two education leases, one residential lease and one other leases. The trip also serves as an opportunity to engage with the landowners, especially in terms of answering their queries and clearing their doubts about certain leases on their land. It was also a time to observe how other stakeholders made assessments on the island. It would really help the Board with regards to land use planning for outer islands and gives a better understanding of managing the resources on vulnerable islands as such. ■

In this issue



Confirmation of RKS Lease Boundary

Page 2



Lease Funds Payout for Landowners since 2019

Page 3



Land Services Team for a post-COVID economic recovery

Page 5



Tavuni Ecological Site re-opens for tourists

Page 11

## Journey on with our stakeholders



**Chief Executive Officer**  
Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua

TLTB has been in existence for more than 80 years and in December 2021 was the climax of a long journey of the Fiji Business Excellence Award which earns us the Presidents Award.

In the midst of the COVID-19 outbreak and subsequent lockdowns the Board Chairman together with the Board Directors have designed a new and improved journey for the TLTB and all its stakeholder groups.

At the national level, the good news is that Fiji persisted in its journey towards full economic recovery. As opposed to the global trend, Fiji relaxed most of its mobility restrictions, re-opened more businesses, and engaged more people in employment.

For TLTB, protecting its people was paramount. At the height of the COVID-19 pandemic, no staff was laid off nor work hours reduced. In the same manner, the staff worked even harder to ensure that our landowners still receive a fair share of what was due to them. On the other hand, the Board also took into consideration the struggling tenants and mapped out payment plans for those that needed assistance.

At the start of the year, re-designed organisation structure was put in place to make way for some other new departments that would be facilitating the new and improved digital journey that the Board has embarked on. With the new structure comes new positions, new skill sets, new equipment, and hopefully, a more efficient and effective service delivery.

There are a lot of integrated systems that are in place and it is the Board's desire to bring them all together with the hope of strengthening the IT platform and IT infrastructure. The bottom line is that the Board wishes to deliver the Board's vision in a more efficient and effective manner.

Being more customer-focused and providing Service Excellence is becoming a significant advantage and performance indicator for the Board. It helps the organisation to empower the landowners, attract tenants and investors and remain relevant in an extremely competitive environment; enhancing productivity at the same time.

The Board is now working on building a smart and futuristic TLTB and urges all its stakeholders to understand this new direction and be a part of it. If there was one thing that COVID has taught us, it is to be able to predict the evolution of future business opportunities and to capitalise on those markets. ■

Tevita Kuruvakadua  
Chief Executive Officer

## Confirmation of RKS lease boundary

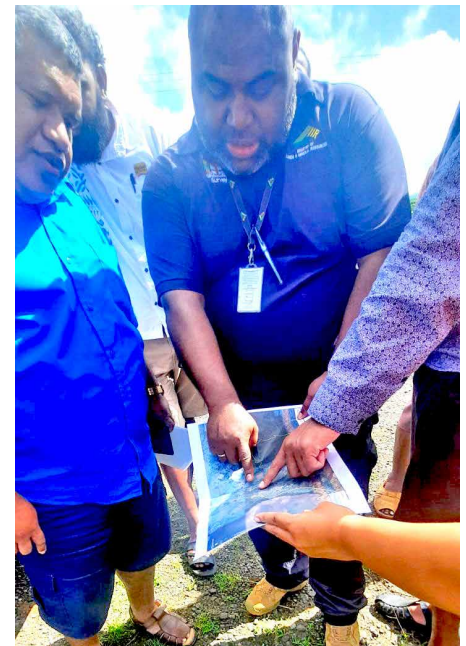
The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) joined the Ministry of Lands last week to conduct the process of re-assessment on the Ratu Kadavulevu School (RKS) lease for the benefit of the landowners and the protection of the adjacent water-bottling investment.

The team initially met in Korovou before they made their way to Lodoni with the objectives to:

- Identify the intended surrendered area from Yavusa Naovini (near the bridge)
- Identify the illegal logging on leased land (Mataqali Naitaka)
- Identify Natural Springwater Company's access through the school from their water bottling lease
- Complete boundary survey
- Confirm LOU's new student and employment quotas as part of lease conditions that are subject to the Suva High Court Civil Action (HBC 158 of 2022).

Manager Central Eastern Ms. Ema Natadra said whilst we facilitate lease with its conditions and ensure compliance, TLTB is also mindful of development and investments for LOU's benefits.

The RKS education lease is on itaukei land of Mataqali Nabati, Mataqali Naitaka, Mataqali Rara, Yavusa Naovini and Yavusa Naboutini. ■



Joint Site meeting at RKS with the Ministry of Education including the School Principal and the Ministry of Land valuers

## What does a name change mean for TLTB?



- BDM to notify relevant state entities when a person has changed his/her name.
- TLTB is one of the state entities that will receive notification from the Registrar.

How does the amendment affect TLTB?

- When a tenant changes his/her name after October 6, 2021; this change must be reflected in the lease document and in our system.
- TLTB will need the tenant's Birth Certificate that bears the changed name to carry out a correction of the name application.
- The change also needs to be factored with the Registrar of Titles for tenants who have registered leases.
- In the case of Agreement for Lease (AFL), the tenant can survey his/her lease and then the Board to issue the registered lease under the tenant's new name OR
- The Board can cancel the existing AFL and re-issue the AFL under the tenant's changed name.
- All costs will be borne by the tenant that has requested the name change.
- All Landsoft records to be updated once notification from Registrar of BDM is received so that invoices, statements, etc. are issued under the tenant's changed name.

As stakeholders of the Board, it is important that we understand what we need to do when we are faced with a situation as such. Knowing what to do will help update your lease information with the Board and avoid problems in the future. ■

The Births, Deaths, and Marriages (BDM) Registration Amendment Act 2021 come into effect on the 6th of October, 2021 and these are some of the changes that we will expect to see:

- Anyone above the age of 18 can change his/her name by way of registration at the BDM office.
- Parents can apply on behalf of Minors for a name change.
- Applicant can go ahead with the application for a name change without the deed poll process.
- Applicants can apply by completing the Application for Registration of Name and Declaration Form – The form is available at the BDM office.

## Lease funds payout for Landowners since 2019

The iTaukei Land Trust Board has already paid out a total of \$243.3 million for the last 3 years up to November 2021 to landowners who have leased out their lands to tenants that utilise iTaukei land to develop the various sectors of the economy.

Despite the difficult circumstances caused by the pandemic, which affected a lot of tenants in the payment of their lease rentals, the Board was still able to collect and distribute lease monies of \$76 million to the landowners – out of which \$45.8m (60%) were distributed through equal distribution, and \$30.4m (40%) were distributed via Assignments to Mataqali bank accounts to assist them in the funding of their collective investment and development projects.

In terms of under 18 years or minors' funds, the Board has invested a total of \$29.3m with the HFC bank, as of 30 November 2021. This accounts for 27,429 minors.

The above funds will only be released to the iTaukei children who are entitled to these lease monies when they turn 18. Out of the 27,429 under minor's accounts, 14,349 are males and 13,349 are females.

The idea behind investing in minors' funds is to empower them to start up new opportunities when they turn 18 years. Minors started having their equal share of lease monies

in 2011. Since then, most minors when they turned 18 years have spent this to further their studies, building their homes, venturing into business, and improving their family livelihoods while most have expanded to other available opportunities in life.

The minors' savings has also created a culture of savings and a shift in mindset for landowners when compared to the past when the focus was mainly on consumption. It has also created the principle of inclusiveness and promotion of gender equality, especially with the inclusion of girls in this equal distribution policy.



The breakdown of the minors' investment as of 30/11/2021 by gender:

Gender	Count	Investment Amount (\$)
Female	13,080	\$12,809,279.75
Male	14,349	\$16,561,320.69
Total	27,429	\$29,370,600.44

Status of current minor's lease funds as of 30 November 2021:

No of Minors	Range (\$)	Total Amount (\$)
27,347	\$1 - \$20,000	24,849,027.51
62	\$20,001 - \$40,000	1,580,638.61
14	\$40,001 - \$60,000	670,836.15
-	\$60,001 - \$80,000	-
-	\$80,001 - \$100,000	-
6	> \$100,001	2,270,098.17
27,429		29,370,600.44

## iTaukei Institutions - towards a common goal

The iTaukei Executive Forum (iTEF) was formed to facilitate discussions of common issues that will assist the iTaukei institutions to deliver their services better and allow members to frequently meet and consult on important issues that concern all iTaukei institutions and the iTaukei communities.

The forum is an avenue where most issues involving iTaukei people are being shredded and resolved. It was a great meeting, and all the iTaukei institutions look forward to working with one another in addressing issues for the iTaukei communities.

In one of their recent meetings, held at the TLTB in Suva, they had openly discussed some of the issues that are prevalent in iTaukei communities.

Some of the topics are tabulated below, together with the justification, explanation or solution to the issue being discussed:



(L-R): CEO - TTFB Aisake Taito invited as guest speaker at the Strategic Corporate Plan 2022-2024, Board Member Dr Akanisi Kedrayate, CEO Tevita Kuruwakadua

No.	Issue	Justification, Explanation, or Solution
1	Delay in the Updating of the VKB	The reason for the delay is that it takes 2 weeks for the System to be updated. In addition, the main register is only located in Suva so they have to wait for the Provincial offices to submit their green slips before the Suva team can enter the Master register.
2	Installation of Land Owning Unit (LOU) Heads	This one task is always difficult to administer as it is the mandatory obligation of the Vanua. Hence, it is the responsibility of the Provincial offices to hold awareness sessions with the Vanua, informing them of the vacancies that exist within the respective Tokatoka, Mataqali and Yavusa within their provinces. In some instances, a few temporary appointments have been made so that these chosen Heads could coordinate development in the interim in their various communities.
3	Verification of Village Boundaries	It has been brought to notice that most LOU members are concerned with the verification of both the village boundaries and the NLC boundaries. The village boundaries have been demarcated to protect the village dwellers and have been approved and endorsed by the LOU themselves through a 60% consent.
4	Illegal Occupancy of Village Boundaries	There have been increasing reports of illegal settlers within the village boundaries, especially in villages that are close to urban and semi-urban areas. Additionally, LOU members have allowed their maternal relatives and friends to settle within the village boundaries which has led to many social issues. We need to remind the illegal dwellers of the importance of living in unity and complying with the regulations and requirements of the villages.

## One & Only Balawi Beach, Yasawa



Talks underway with the Mataqali Yavusaratu for the construction plan of the Balawi Beach Resort, in Yasawa

Talks are underway to construct one of the largest boutique beach resorts in Fiji at Balawi Beach in Nacula, Yasawa.

TLTB representatives led by CEO Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua visited the leading land-owning unit in Malakati Village known as Mataqali Yavusaratu - the domain of the Ratu ni Drola Ratu Apenisa Momolevu to give them comfort that all is in order for the development of Balawi Beach.

This is arguably the most stunning beach in all of Fiji; located less than 50 miles from the Fijian mainland in the Yasawa archipelago.

The acquisition of the current lease owned by Doubloon Investment and the construction of the new five-star beach resort is earmarked to use one of the well-known trading names and international brand is known as "One & Only".

Ratu Apenisa said that the time will come for the development of their mataqali land and we are excited about it.

"We are so excited about the opportunity to host one of the most prestigious brands in the world and we thanked TLTB for their guidance and advice in protecting the interest of the landowners," he added.

Apart from working in resorts like Blue Lagoon Resort, Oarsman Bay Resort, Nanuya Island Resort, and Paradise Cove Resort; villagers on the island of Nacula rely on fishing and selling coconuts as their source of income.

Ratu Apenisa is anticipating a lot of benefits will befall his mataqali including scholarships for their children, electrification, road construction, improvement of the water system, and employment for its LOU members.

Key approvals for Balawi Beach are already in place, and an industry-leading design, construction, and project management team has been assembled to skillfully steer it through the development and completion phases. ■



Recipient of TLTB Sponsored Award with Senior Learning & Development Officer Mere Wong

## Sponsorship for USP top graduates

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) sponsored the two top students from the USP Department of Environment Studies by awarding the Most Outstanding Environment Science Graduate, and the Overall Best Female Graduate.

The sponsorship affirms TLTB's commitment in giving back to the community and to quality education and aligning our values and mission of inclusiveness and visibility at graduation ceremony in Suva on Thursday.

Also, as an organisation which employs 40% percent as female staff, our sponsorship of the Female Award reaffirms our support as a champion of equal opportunity employer.

It is also one of the way of expressing our support for the women in general to achieve higher education and empowering more women leaders.

There was no recipient for the Land Management Department this year. ■

## Meeting with Ministry of Lands

A follow-up meeting between senior executives and officials from the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) and the Ministry of Lands & Mineral Resources at the TLTB Boardroom in Suva to discuss issues that need attention of both organizations. These include pending lease offers, survey issues and backlogs, survey of government leases, State Schedule A and (SSA) and State Schedule B (SSB) land matters, etc.

The meeting was headed by the leaders of both institutions including the Surveyor-General Mr Asakaia Tabua. ■



The Executive Management and Senior Managers met with the Ministry of Lands in Suva

# Land Services Team for a post-COVID economic recovery

The creation of the new Land Services Department to facilitate and fast-track the technical aspects of TLTB's leasing products and processes was one of the new innovations brought about by the Board in 2022.

As an organization who has a vision for continuous service improvement there is a real need to fully survey all iTaukei lands in Fiji and the automation, integration, and streamlining of all its systems and processes is vital.

Access to capital and socio-economic development is greatly precipitated by the enabling of readily accessible lands and or subdivisions, most particularly for the agricultural and residential lands as a strategy to support Fiji's "post-COVID" economic recovery.

The process of land development and the formation of basic standard infrastructure, such as access roads is crucial to opening up new lands and enabling socio-economic development. On this, the role of TLTB as Fiji's largest landlord is crucial to identifying, acquiring, and releasing new lands for enabling sector-specific activities and land uses to occur.

In a recent meeting between key agencies involved in developmental approvals (DTCP, Surveyor General, TLTB), the Minister of Economy Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum and the surveyors, it was raised that there needs to be a closer collaboration by all parties to speed up the approval processes for survey and development.

Further, Government was willing to provide support to TLTB to enable the facilitation of land

development (through funding of basic access roads) so that more lands can be released for sector-specific purposes and boost the country's quick economic recovery plans.

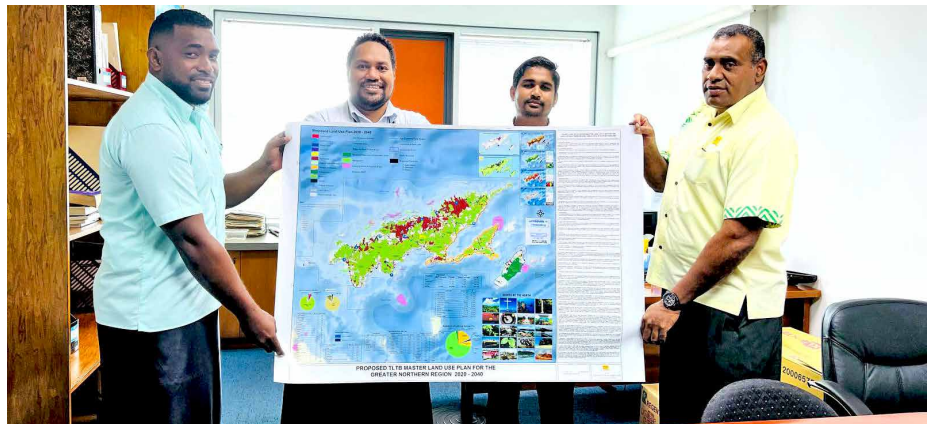
This new department has specific experts with skillsets in the environment, land use planning, valuation, survey, engineering, estate management, and land acquisition – to enable this new way of doing business.

Moving forward, TLTB will now consider pre-packaged (cleaned, vetted, verified, and pre-approved) comprehensively-schemed subdivision plans and lots by DTCP. This will require partial and full outsourcing of services for civil works, surveying, valuation, and planning for selected subdivisions.

TLTB's Panel of Surveyors will be

utilized for scheming TLTB's comprehensive subdivision plans, with the standardization of lots to be partially or fully outsourced to relevant professionals from TLTB's Panel of Contractors, Panel of Valuers, registered EIA consultants, and civil engineers.

TLTB has so far identified 17 new subdivisions for agriculture and other purposes that will require basic standard access roads to open up these new lands. These developments account for approximately 692.47Ha with a total development cost of approximately \$2.17 million, which will release 222 agricultural lots and 206 lots for other sector-specific uses such as residential, tourism, industrial, and commercial. ■



Land Services Team presenting the approved Greater North Regional Master Plan

## Working Committee to streamline process



Working Committee discusses improvements and way-forward

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) organized a meeting with our Panel of Surveyors as well as with the Surveyor-General and representatives from the Department of Town & Country Planning (DTCP) to discuss the current statuses and reasons for the backlogs of survey cases, and look at ways at which all parties can work together at amicably resolving all the pending issues.

The Joint Working Committee recently formed in April via an MOU between TLTB, MCTTT (for the Department of Town & Country Planning), MLMR (for the Office of the Surveyor-General), and the Ministry of Economy have been meeting to discuss and implement procedures to streamline survey and subdivision and related-development processes; so as to support the recovery of the Fijian economy by removing hurdles and bureaucratic processes.

The Panel of Surveyors were informed of the current steps now taken by the Board, DTCP, and Surveyor General Office in streamlining the survey processes and addressing the backlog of cases, which had resulted in a large movement and closing of surveying cases within the past few weeks.

TLTB currently has 15 Registered Surveyors who are members of its Panel of Surveyors. ■

## Landowners encouraged to become landlords

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) joined the *Vanua o Nakovacake* at the launch of their first commercial building in Nadi, on 5th of February. The launch was officiated by the Attorney General and Minister of Economy Hon. Aiyaz Sayed-Khaiyum.

The commercial building, which was the latest of the Nakovacake Development Trust's property acquisition; has been acquired under the subsidiary company of the Vanua Nakovacake Holdings Pte Ltd. There are about 1,700 members whose names appear in the *Vola ni Kawa Bula* (VKB) and these members hail from the villages of Namotomoto and Navoci. The subject LOU owns three-quarters of the land in Nadi town.

Interestingly, the acquisition had been initiated some twenty (20) years back with the Nakovacake elders and TLTB officials whereby the officials facilitated the vision from the landowners to become landlords in town centres. Two properties were identified, but the decision to acquire one was based on fund limitations.

The project encountered a lot of obstacles. First, the Fiji Development Bank (FDB) had suddenly raised the price of the building and threatened TLTB to renew its lease. Around the same time, there was internal bickering within the LOU, abuse of funds by the trustees, and reservation to purchasing the building amongst many others.

However, the sale was finalized around 2016 and the rent was around \$17,000 at the time. It is satisfying to see the current trustees continuing the journey that the elders had started.

Despite all the hiccups encountered along the way, it was a proud moment for the people of Nakovacake. They came together to

celebrate this milestone achievement. Though the building had been acquired in 2016, the trustees had not formally marketed the acquisition to all their members.

In fact, most of their members had always opted for equal distribution of lease funds. But, this project has cut through their differences and has become a success story for them. A message that rang louder than most was the need for leaders and members to think of their future generations and to leave a legacy behind for them to ponder and build upon.

The *Vanua o Nakovacake* acknowledged the Board of Trustees, its Chairman as well

as the TLTB staff for the support rendered to them over the years. It is with great hope that this formal launch would create some positive vibes, especially for its members who have always had negative thoughts about the work of the Trust.

TLTB has been instrumental in instilling and raising the level of governance amongst the Trustees particularly in freezing their funds so that they could get their accounts audited. With that being done, the Trust now progresses further with other developmental plans that they have. ■



*Nakovacake Building in Nadi Town*

## Consultations and pocket meetings to address land issues

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) is organising a series of public consultations and pocket meetings in various villages and settlements around the country to address itaukei land and leasing issues.

Recently the areas we have covered include Solove, Coqeloa, and Tabucola in Macuata, Sabeto in Nadi, Koronubu and Veisaru in Ba, Naduri, Navosa, and Lomaivuna in Naitasiri.

These various sessions allowed us to listen to the farmers and gauge tenants' expectations on the ground.

The purposes of this consultation were to:

- i) Listen to and address their complaints and queries on all itaukei land and lease-related matters;
- ii) Facilitate Government development programs and initiatives on itaukei land;
- iii) Discuss expiring leases and resolving long-standing disputes;
- iv) Arrange the payment of arrears;
- v) Provide advice and directions on new

lease applications, re-assessment, survey, transfer, boundary pegging, disputes, surrender, land dealings, etc.

- vi) Attend to landowners' queries on itaukei land and lease funds.
- vii) Advise landowners on reservations, de-reservations, and extinct mataqali land;
- viii) Seek suggestions from TLTB stakeholders on how best it can further improve its land management services; and,
- ix) Clarify its role in line with current policies, procedures, and relevant legislation.

These evening sessions will be replicated in other parts of our communities for the rest of the year as part of TLTB's ongoing visibility effort.

For those who wish to come to the office you can still visit us during the day from Monday to Friday; in Suva, Nausori, Korovou, Rakiraki, Ba, Labasa, Savusavu, Nadi, Lautoka, and Sigatoka.



*Lomava pocket consultations*



*Consultations with the Bocalevu Farmers, Wailevu, Macuata*

## Naobeka Investment doing well after COVID-19

Naobeka Investment, is a registered company of Matakali Naobeka, from the Yavusa Tukani in Namotomoto, Nadi and they are making good progress in this post-COVID period.

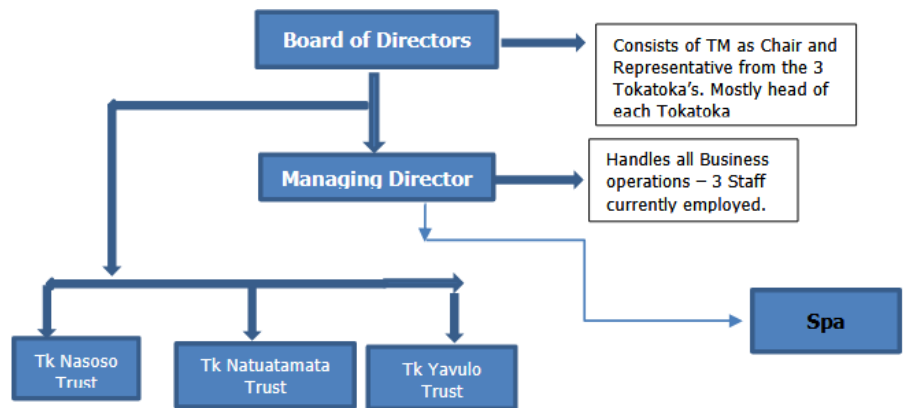
The Matakali consists of three *tokatoka* - Tokatoka Yavulo, Tokatoka Natuatamata and Tokatoka Nasoso.

Naobeka Investment Limited is the Head Lessee at the Malamala Island Beach Club in which South Seas Cruises is the sub-lessee. The Matakali was awarded \$5,000 as part of the Landowners Seed Fund Grant in 2018 to operate a Spa at the Malamala Beach Resort as part of the agreement made with South Sea Cruises. The grant was used to purchase beds and other materials.

The Spa is now in operations there are LOU members employed at the Spa, most of whom have undergone relevant training at the Pivot Point Institute in Lautoka.

The current charge is \$60 for an hour and \$30 for every half hour for the service provided. At the current rate, they are able to surpass their monthly target of \$6,000 per month and are expecting a rise in revenue during the peak period which is from July to September.

The *matakali* also managed to secure a tender for Cruise ships visiting the Malamala Beach Club. Their plan is to use the returns from this, to expand the Spa with an additional eight beds as well as additional staff to operate the Spa.



All three *tokatoka* are represented at the Board level and each Tokatoka has established a three different Trust to look into the affairs of three different *tokatoka* with their respective bank accounts. Naobeka Investment is the business arm of the *matakali* that controls the business affairs and operations of the company. Other added benefits for the *matakali* include:

- Scholarships for tertiary students.
- Financial assistance for primary and high school students.
- Elderly welfare schemes – 60 yrs and over receive \$30 per month.
- Employment for LOU members.
- Laundry services - \$400 a month to each Tokatoka.

It is evident that the *matakali* has been and is making good use of the funds dispersed by the Board. Now that the tourism industry is back



on its feet, the *matakali* aims to maximise its service delivery and give back to its members. At the same time, they are making more plans for further expansion and development in the near future. ■

## TLTB invests in drone technology

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) is now investing in what is now known as an unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) or drones to ease the process of issuing leases, especially in terms of scoping and proper demarcation of lease boundaries.

CEO Mr. Tevita Kuruvakadua says that the use of technology in a modern-day land management service organization is a must.

Our transformation to digital services will improve the ease of doing business in Fiji and alignment to improving our core service to our customers. For TLTB, drone technology is used for inspection of leases and aerial imagery of potential sites that are available for leasing and other drone-related applications like professional aerial photography and videography.

The investment in drone technology is necessary for TLTB given the vast area of land which TLTB administers, and the challenge in accessing some regions due to difficult geographical terrains. It also provides opportunities for faster inspection of leases and potential sites for leasing, monitoring and evaluation of existing leases.

Mr. Kuruvakadua says the idea behind the use of drone technology had more benefits than the cost of acquiring it.

Our aim is to streamline our fieldwork operations where smart technologies as such are used; and at the same time improve our efficiency and effectiveness in managing iTaukei land.

Data from a single well-planned drone flight can be used for 360 Inspection, Committee for Better Utilisation (CBUL) eligibility and monitoring, REDD+ operations like forest cover and carbon content mapping, land and boundary disputes mapping, and land use planning. Drones are also useful for a wide variety of the TLTB's processes and activities that will assist our landowners like monitoring illegal logging, REDD+ activities, data for Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) surveys, and biodiversity surveys.

With the soon-to-be introduced TLTB Online Marketplace, drone technology can provide a more detailed presentation of the features and visuals of the land available parcels.

TLTB currently employs 270 staff who administers 49,000 leases and 4000 landowning units. The Board's investment in technology will not only provide good business opportunities for the tenants & landowners, but contribute to business efficiency and service in the long term. ■



# The Online Marketplace - a digital solution

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) has been working with KPMG through the financial assistance provided by the Asian Development Bank to put together a Land Rent Index (LRI), and Land Price Index (LPI) to support a digital land management solution now known as the TLTB Online Marketplace.

Questions and answers below aim to address some issues surrounding this initiative and the benefits it will bring to the Fijian economy:

## 1. What are some of the current challenges facing TLTB?

- Missing files
- Duplication of records
- Incorrect lease data
- Slow turn-around time
- High number of complaints
- A lot of arrears
- Casual growth in terms of landowners' income

## 2. How can we solve these problems with modern and up-to-date solutions?

The answer is to converge all business processes on a digital and online platform.

## 3. What then is our definition of "digitalisation" in relation to "digitisation"?

Digitalization is "the use of digital technologies to change a business model and provide new revenue and value-producing opportunities; it is the process of moving to a digital business." Digitalization moves beyond digitization, leveraging digital information technology to entirely transform a business' processes — evaluating, reengineering and reimagining the way you do business.

If digitization is a conversion of data and processes, digitalization is a transformation. More than just making existing data digital, digitalization embraces the ability of digital technology to collect data, establish trends and make better business decisions.

## 4. What is TLTB's strategic vision in terms of supporting Fiji's economic progress?

For the landowners this will mean:

- Managing iTaukei Lands prudently to grow the economy,
- Provide accessibility to iTaukei land and alleviate poverty for all Fijians,
- Generate more wealth and value from the 91% of the land it manages,
- Adopt modern practices and use land resources wisely as per the needs of its beneficiaries,
- Introduce programs and initiatives that encourage and assist landowners to lease mataqali lands and become landlords,
- Perform at the highest level to meet the expectations of all its stakeholders.

## 5. What is the Online Marketplace?

An online marketplace is a website or app that facilitates shopping from many one or different sources. As far as TLTB is concerned, the new TLTB Online Marketplace is the custodian of all itaukei land in Fiji (91%), our business is to sell land titles online and facilitate the necessary transactions for the landowners.

The online marketplace connects a buyer from anywhere around the globe through the website or application. Online marketplaces act as digital middlemen, bringing in the buyers to a market to efficiently conduct transactions. Buyers get a choice in what land titles they would like to buy and TLTB gets a variety of customers to sell to.

## 6. What are the different components that constitute the Online Marketplace?

There are four components of the Online Marketplace:

- Public Portal – where all the land lost is available for leasing.
- Admin Portal – where staff will be

processing lease applications end to end.

- Surveyor Portal – where surveyors will update surveying information.
- Mobile Voting System – where landowners will be informed enabling the collection of votes (consent).

## 7. What are the objectives that the Online Marketplace is going to achieve for TLTB?

- TLTB users have a friendly, intuitive web-based interface to verify and approve leases.
- Triggers auto-notification and arrange for consultation and de-reservation easily.
- Lease documentation processes and registration is applied online, thus the opportunity to include all relevant authorities on the platform (sharing information and transparency).
- Promotes governance and transparency as it provides an immutable audit trail.
- Minimizes risk while maximizing viability and saving time and resources.
- Streamlining the process
- Faster processing turn-around time
- Easy access to land
- Convenient payment method (digital)
- Better trend analysis for easy decision-making
- Increase marketability of itaukei land
- Fair price of itaukei land

## 8. What is the LPI?

The Land Price Index (LPI) is an index or a measure of a piece of land that is averaged from the value of the development surrounding the subject land. Objectively, this LPI will cut out the over-valuing and the under-valuing of land when leased out. It will also bring to a minimal the numerous problems faced by the Estate Operation Teams in terms of double leasing, incorrect calculation of premiums, and other related issues. The objective of the Land Price



Regional Director of the ADB Mr Aaron Balten on far left, joined by their Infrastructure Specialist Ms. Katherine Guy and Senior Safeguards Officer Ms. Ferila Brown, on far right, CEO Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua was accompanied by Manager Strategic Planning, Change Management & Innovation Ms. Reijeli Taylor and Information Technology Coordinator & Special Project Mr. Nacanieli Basacala



Index (LPI) study is to:

- Construct the land price and rent indexes based on the TLTB dataset
- Update the LPI with the additional lease records
- Build a dashboard to retrieve price and rent information for surrounding areas.

When we refer to the Land Price Index, we are mainly referring to the premium or the initial price for which a land was bought or sold. At first, the pilot project had only dealt with residential leases in the Tailevu and Naitasiri provinces. But now it engages all lease types, all over Fiji; segmented into provincial levels.

**9. What is the LRI?**

Land Rent is determined according to the developments in the area surrounding the subject land.

There are two scenarios regarding missing rent values:

- Assuming no rent information for the years with the missing value
- Assuming the same rent as the last reassessment period for the years with the missing value.

**10. What will be some of the added roles and responsibilities of the existing teams within TLTB when the Online Marketplace becomes live and running?**

Some of the key areas that will be impacted include:

- Estate Operations Division – Their role will now include preparations and uploading to the Online Marketplace. They are also responsible for processing lease applications online.
- Reserves Commission – Verify, confirm and monitors the mobile voting system in relation to the existing de-reservation process.
- Finance & Administration Department – Responsible for the confirmation of

payment made through the platform. This includes lease application fees, lease offers, premium, etc. managing the different gateways of payment as we will be transacting globally.

- Internal Audit – Monitoring and auditing of all the activities that run through the platform.
- IT - Manages the users of the platform including staff, landowners, surveyors, prospective tenants, etc.
- Land Services Department – keeping the land stock available for leasing through LOU consultation and training.
- Digital Marketing Team – pre-packing land lots with photos and videos using satellite and drone images.
- Research & Policy Department – responsible for producing related policies and procedures within the new digital model.
- Human capital Management Department – HC advisory and the recruitment of the right skill sets to meet corporate objectives.
- Risk & Governance Unit – Identify current risks and devising mitigating activities to suit.
- Communications Unit – creating awareness and educating stakeholder groups of what is to be expected

**11. What is the role of ADB and KPMG in this reform?**

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) is working closely with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) in a project to determine real land prices through land price index (LPI). The project known as the ADB-TLTB Technical Assistance (TA) on Smart Systems and Smart Cities - (ADB REG TA 9170) provides a unified land price information for a variety of administrative purposes and also offer more

convenient processes for tenants and probable tenants.

The KPMG Singapore and KPMG Fiji team were taken on as the expert development partners and the TLTB team as a local counterpart. The project is currently in progress and pilot studies undertaken in the first two phases. It's major objectives:

- Construct a Land Price Index (LPI) for the TLTB (Include Land Price and Land Rent Index).
- Create a digitized land register for all the 46,000+ itaukei land leases in Fiji,
- Build a dashboard for retrieving and comparing rent and land prices within surrounding localities,
- Construct a blockchain prototype for TLTB that will have an online service platform. ■

“

The online marketplace connects a buyer from anywhere around the globe through the website or application. Online marketplaces act as digital middlemen, bringing in the buyers to a market to efficiently conduct transactions. Buyers get a choice in what land titles they would like to buy and TLTB gets a variety of customers to sell to.

”



KPMG rep presenting the LRI and LPI during the Internal Soft Launch of the Online Marketplace in June



## Viseisei landowners were consulted: TLTB



## The National Farmers Union statement was incorrect

In response to a Press Release put out by the National Farmers Union yesterday (2nd June 2022), the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) believes that they are doing their job as mandated by law.

The issues raised by NFU (as stated below) are both incorrect and may be founded on hearsay:

1. That TLTB is demanding five years of rent in advance for lease renewals.
2. That TLTB is charging massive New Lease Consideration (mentioned as premium) payments.

For the five (5) years of advance rent, this is just an option that the incoming tenants can choose and will therefore be included as part of the offer if they wish. If they want to be charged with annual rent then it can also apply. The payment of advance rent was TLTB's strategic

measure to avoid rental arrears during the first five (5) years of the lease.

For sugar cane farmland, TLTB is charging new lease consideration only once; using the 2011 ALTA Schedule of Values with a discount of 35% taking into consideration the natural fertility of the land and the need to support the sugar industry. TLTB is not charging any mark-ups whatsoever on the New Lease Consideration.

Our values are based on factors like the size of the land, location, and land classification. Farmers also have the option if they want to reduce the size of the land; tenants will only have to pay less than the initially charged price.

Individual tenants, as well as the Union, are encouraged to contact us directly with specific cases so that we can respond to their queries, on a case-by-case basis. ■

The iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) wishes to correct an allegation from a landowning unit in Vuda who posed a question in a government talanoa session in Lautoka this week; on why they were not consulted or given their consent for the leasing of their land in Lautoka.

CEO Mr. Tevita Kuruvakadua said the land in question had been leased out by TLTB with all due process of the law being followed.

"We can confirm that the elders of the landowning unit in Viseisei were consulted and had therefore given their consent for the issue of new leases within the expired agricultural lease in Viseisei," he added.

Queries were also being raised on the issue of the land being vacant and undeveloped, Mr. Kuruvakadua maintained that if they raised these questions directly to TLTB; we would have told them that the lease has undergone survey and is still within the approval process. ■

## Help your organisation to challenge bias at work



TLTB celebrated International Women's Day (IWD) in all the regional offices on March 8. It was always an honour to celebrate IWD to recognise the effort and contribution of women to the organisation and to the country as a whole. TLTB used to be a male-dominated workforce but now considers itself an equal opportunity employer, with approximately 40% of its staff as women. For this reason, the CEO Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua together with the male

colleagues of the Board, take time out to prepare afternoon tea for the ladies, to show them how much they are valued in the organisation. The theme for IWD this year is "Break the Bias". Bias continues to hold women and workplaces back, hence the theme: "Help your organisation to #BreakTheBias at work. Although women have made important gains in representation in the last few years, we are still a long way from equality.

Employers need to act now to support, retain and advance women. Combating the biases women face at work is critical to getting this right. Research shows that bias contributes to women being passed over for jobs and promotions. Knowing that bias exists is not enough. We need to take action to break the bias. If women's ideas aren't heard, it can make it harder for us to be perceived as key contributors, which can harm our career progression. When teams miss out on women's insights, it can also mean the Board is missing out. Teams that foster diverse points of view often have better ideas and get more done.

Our experiences shape who we are, and our race, ethnicity, gender, height, weight, sexual orientation, place of birth, and other factors impact the lens with which we view the world. We need to learn how to recognise and acknowledge our own biases so that we can identify with others when making decisions and prevent ourselves from making calls based on a biased viewpoint. ■

## Tavuni Ecological Site re-opens for tourists

ON the 14th of April, Manager Landowners Affairs Unit Mr Akuila Raibevu represented the Board in officiating at the re-opening of the Tavuni Ecological Site in Naroro, Nadroga. The site had previously been referred to as the Tavuni Hill Fort.

The site has been a tourist attraction site since 1992, but has ceased operation for the last two years due to COVID-19. Historically, the Tavuni Hill Fort as it was previously known, was one of the oldest Forts which had been built when Fiji was still in its war days. Yet, after its discovery by Archeologists, it has now become one of the historical tourist attraction sites.

With its rich history, the site keeps intact its heritage. According to the archeologists, Tavuni Ecological is one of the few sites that still has almost all its set up in its historical form. There are very slight or minor changes, due to natural weathering. Otherwise, its antiquity from the yesteryears, still remains today.

After the re-opening of the borders last year, the members of the Mataqali Henibua from the village of Naroro, then thought of re-operating the site to be a source of income to the mataqali. But the place had been run down, due to the two years closure. Additionally, they do not have the funds to carry out some quick renovations to enable them to re-open the place.

The mataqali applied for assistance under the Landowners Seed Fund Grant, with the plan to utilise \$15,000 to re-open the site. Straight away, the LOU members got to their feet to start working on giving the place a much needed facelift. The males cleaned up the place as it was overgrown, minor renovations were done to the building that housed their office and rest rooms, and there was a major makeover with their front entrance.

The funds were certainly put to the best use, regardless of the fact that there are still

more work needed to be done, to give it that wholesome look. However, because the tourists have started visiting again, the LOU thought it best to have it opened and operational, while they work on other improvements at the site.

During the opening, they could not have contained their happiness and appreciation to the Board for providing the much needed assistance that has enabled them to re-open the Tavuni Ecological site. It had been a memorable day for the Mataqali Henibua as this story would be re-told in the years to come. One of the elders and trustee of the Mataqali, held back his tears, when he said, "this is a new chapter in the history of Mataqali Henibua. This is a new beginning, especially for this generation. If TLTB had not assisted us with this grant, the re-opening today would not have

been possible. For this reason, we would like to say, Thank you very much to the iTaukei Land Trust Board for empowering and assisting us – the landowners".

In acknowledging all that the landowners did on that day, Mr Raibevu assured them that, "the Board is always ready to help, assist and empower landowners who have the desire and the urge to develop themselves. This is why the Board exists – for the landowners. It is the Board's wish for LOUs to set up businesses and other projects that would generate income for the LOU. The underlying purpose is to have LOUs not only to be resource rich, but to be asset rich as well". Mataqali Henibua also has plans in place to complete the incomplete task at hand so that Tavuni Ecological site becomes one of the best historical sites in Fiji. ■



(L-R) Manager Landowners Affairs Unit Mr Akuila Raibevu, Content Writer Elesi Nailati, reps of the Mataqali Henibua Trustee, and staff from Sigatoka sub regional office Ilaisa Vunigasau

## New discovery at Tuvatu



Land Services Team at Tuvatu

There is a lot of confidence that Tuvatu Gold Mine will one day fall in the ranks of notable multi-million-ounce gold deposits such as Porgera and Vatukoula after Canadian company, Lion One Metals announced the discovery of a major new feeder structure.

The mining company off Nadi has encountered the longest high-grade intercept yet recorded at Tuvatu.

The new discovery is located at depth beneath the current resource fully within the permit boundaries of the Tuvatu mining lease.

Lion One CEO, Walter Berukoff says like the initial discovery of the high-grade 500 Zone drilled two years ago, he believes this new robust high-grade gold feeder mineralization encountered by hole TUG-141 represents a substantial discovery for Lion One.

He says the notable high grades and continuity of mineralization of this intercept demonstrate Tuvatu's potential to become a large-scale, high-grade underground gold mine.

Berukoff says they have long encouraged their team to find that "gold room" at Tuvatu, and hole TUG-141 leads him to believe they have found it.

He also commends the team on this truly outstanding discovery and he looks forward to the continued successful execution of both their exploration strategy to realize growth at Tuvatu and the development strategy targeting

the commencement of gold production in the second half of 2023.

Lion One Senior VP of Exploration, Sergio Cattalani says the mineralized intercepts reported by TUG-141 represent a highly significant development.

He says the grades and continuity observed by the intercepts in hole TUG-141 are of a magnitude not previously documented at Tuvatu, and highlight the largely untapped potential of this deposit.

Their immediate priority is to follow up on this significant discovery with additional drilling in what remains a relatively poorly drilled portion of the Tuvatu system.

Lion One is now more than ever, convinced of the potential of Tuvatu to become a prominent, multi-million-ounce gold deposit at the top of the gold grade distribution worldwide.

Tuvatu received the green light for development by the Fijian Government in 2015 with approval of a mining lease, following a 21-year surface lease agreement in 2014 and the approval of the Tuvatu EIA and EMPs by the Department of Environment. ■

## Naqara Town extends into Mataqali Valelevu land

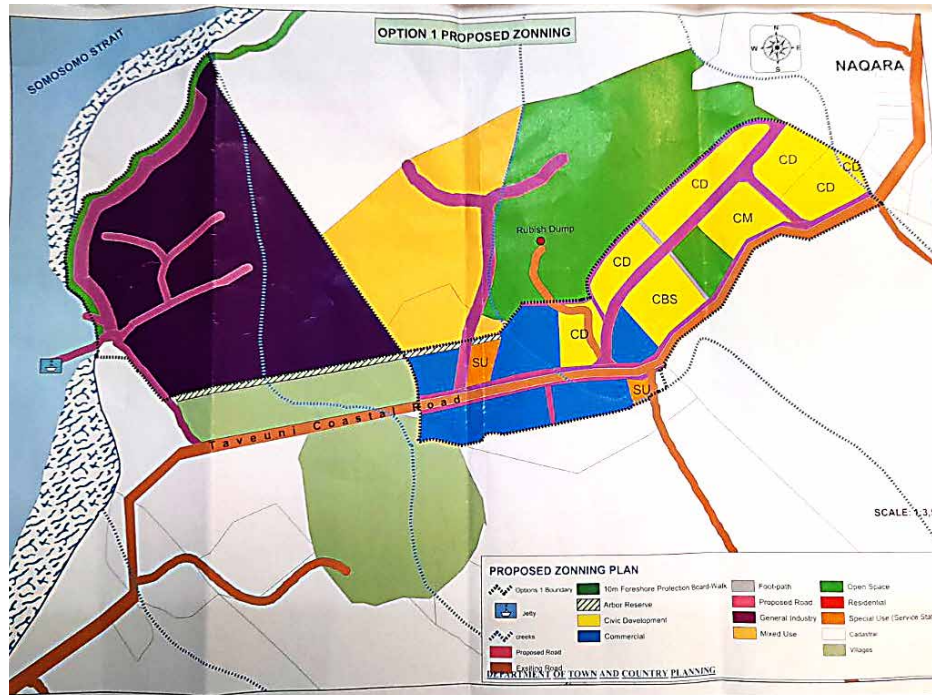


MATAQALI Valelevu of Somosomo Village in Taveuni has given their consent for the extension of Naqara Township in Taveuni to extend into their mataqali land.

A new development lease will be lodged soon from Savusavu Town Council for a new market and a bus station on the site identified.

Landowners, the Department of Town & Country Planning (DTCP) and the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) presentation were successfully endorsed as the proposed zoning was linked directly to the 2020-2040 Greater North Land Use Master Plan.

The Honourable Minister for Education and Local Government Ms Premila Kumar thanked the iTaukei landowners, TLTB and DTCP for the teamwork. ■



## Strengthening National Geospatial Information Management

Representatives from the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) attended Fiji's Geospatial Country Level Action Plan Stakeholder Consultation yesterday at the Pacific Community (HQ) in Suva on Tuesday (14 June 2022).

The consultation was organised by the Pacific Geospatial and Surveying Council (PGSC) together with the Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources Fiji and the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), facilitated by the Pacific Community.

Geographical Information System (GIS) has become one of the corner stone of TLTB's

work tools aimed at enabling a seamless process in land management and decision-making. It creates, manages, analyzes, and maps all types of data connected to a map integrating location data (where things are) with all types of descriptive information (what things are like there). This provides a foundation for mapping and analysis that is used in almost every industry. GIS helps users understand patterns, relationships, and geographic context.

The Country Action Plan aims to strengthen the geospatial arrangement in supporting the national development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). It

contains various components of geospatial management from budgetary and financing of projects to governance, standards, partnerships, data, and innovation. It is designed in response to the recognition of the direct benefits of the integrated geospatial information in providing evidence-based decision-making solutions, improving planning for economic growth, and delivering better services.

Participants were from government, statutory bodies, and NGOs who collaborated and re-looked at the existing Action Plan of 2018, examining different parts of the document and which recommendations were made. ■

