



*Asian Development Bank forecasts a 0.3 percent GDP negative growth for the year 2020 due to the impact of CoVID-19 pandemic in the Pacific*

## TLTB prepares for the worst case scenario

WE are in the midst of a COVID-19 (coronavirus) pandemic with no foreseeable end. Fear and uncertainty are evident in global financial market volatility and in the public sphere.

This chaotic situation is being driven by our inability to say how this will all play out in the short, medium or long term. With government in the lead wielding the force of law for preservation of the public's health, private sector organizations are especially vulnerable to both supply-side and demand-side shocks. Those of us who depend on employment to maintain our income and protect our loved ones begin to feel particularly vulnerable, while businesses recognize the need to update their continuity plans, do proper risk analysis, and advise staff, but struggle with how to do so.

In the face of this uncertainty, a blueprint for how organizations should respond can already be found in a best practice public health concept called "One Health". Under this approach, multiple departments communicate and work together to achieve public health outcomes, assessing risk based on available data, coupled with a risk communication strategy that drives sensible and evidence-based actions for containment and mitigation. TLTB has therefore instituted a Disaster Readiness Committee (DRC) to implement

specific approach from within the organization and to adapt it to our organizational response to the coronavirus threat.

Here are seven proactive steps that TLTB have taken:

### 1. Activate an emergency committee (DRC)

The DRC represent all functions of the organization (this includes Human Capital, Finance & Administration, Communication, Legal, Risk & Governance, IT and Operations, etc.) and is an advisory body to the Executive Management with full authority to act quickly and effectively.

### 2. Review policies and protocols

DRC consider amongst other things business continuation, evacuation, teleworking, social distancing, communications, and other existing policies, through the lens of protecting staff and TLTB's business.

### 3. Vet information sources

With so much information of variable quality accumulating, separating fact from conjecture becomes crucial. Identify the most trusted and authoritative sources (such as the Fiji Government, Ministry of Health and WHO, as well as representative bodies within the Fijian economy.

### 4. Conduct drills

What if we all had to close our main offices?

How would that work in practice to maintain essential organizational functions? Practice drills make for smoother implementation and for identification of key enablers and barriers.

### 5. Communicate constantly

Engagement with the workforce is essential, as it takes all employees working together to mitigate risks and prevent panic and confusion. Communications are ongoing and transparent, using both "push" and "pull" channels. Equip leaders to step up and maintain a dialogue.

### 6. Apply the precautionary principle

Risk assessment and contingency planning is core to organizational philosophy and strategy. Take an evidence-based approach to assessing and mitigating risks using the precautionary principle (i.e., imagine the worst-case outcome of a decision – particularly when it comes to human lives – and plan accordingly).

### 7. Review and adjust

Implement a review cycle for all activities. At the present rate of new developments, daily interactions and adjustments are necessary.

We know that businesses have plans in place to protect their supply chains. Are they similarly prepared to protect their workforce in an escalating scenario? By implementing this approach, fear and normative confusion can be replaced with informed leadership and an effective plan of action. ■

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## From the CEO's Desk



FIJI may have won the initial battle against COVID-19 (coronavirus) but it will not rest on its laurels as the world still grapples with the spread of the deadly virus. As the nation continues with international travel and curfew restrictions, lay-off from work, reduced pay and loss of income to some unlucky individuals, TLTB is very much on the brink of economic slowdown due to COVID-19.

Much of the rest of the world is still in the grips of widespread viral outbreaks, meaning the coronavirus-fuelled collapse of the world economy will likely get worse before it begins to relent. Like most other nations Fiji is deeply connected with the rest of the world, and like most other economies, our businesses, industries and citizens have been affected.

For TLTB, we believe that the Government is rightly prioritizing backyard farming and large scale agriculture to mitigate the impact of COVID-19. And we are working together with the Ministry of Agriculture to assist especially with the Committee for Better Utilization of Land (CBUL) which was an initiative of the Government that started in 2008 to ensure the better utilisation of land and the revitalisation of agricultural industry. From 2008 to 2019, the government has paid an estimated \$74 million for TLTB to facilitate the payment to the landowners.

The message behind the "Love Our Locals Campaign" is an opportune time for us to show support to our tourism industry and our people. It conveys a spirit of community solidarity.

We are optimistic that our 2020-2021 National Budget will strengthen our resilience to the global economic fallout of COVID-19, finding creative ways to stimulate growth to sustain employment, get people working again, and cater for Fijians severely impacted by this once-in-a-generation pandemic.

For the time being, let us continue with the good habits that were picked up to fight off infection such as regularly washing of hands, not sharing *bilos*, keeping homes clean and minimising movement including social gatherings.

*Tevita Kuruvakadua*

Tevita Kuruvakadua  
Chief Executive Officer

## Landowners workshop launch in Sigatoka

FOR the very first time, the Landowners Affairs Department conducted a workshop for the landowners along the Sigatoka – Nadi area on Thursday, March 19. The workshop which was held at the Sigatoka Town Council Conference Room, accommodated 28 LOU representatives from the Nadroga/Navosa, Malolo and Nadi areas.

In his opening address, the Assitant Roko Tui Nadroga/Navosa said that this is one of the best programmes to be organised for the landowners. Through this workshop, the LOU representatives were informed and clearly made to understand the role of TLTB and the services that on offer that specifically target the landowners.

When explaining the legal mandate of the Board, the Deputy General Manager Operations, Research & Development Mr Solo Nata clearly demarcated what the Board can do and what the Board cannot do. He also outlined the legal rights of the landowners and how most of the landowners are violating these rights.

A combined presentation with other service providers like Fiji Development Bank, Department of Cooperatives, Fiji National Provident Fund and BSP Life, the landowners did not only have the opportunity to learn about the services offered by the Board, they even also

learn about how they can team up with other organisations to create more opportunities and generate more wealth. The presentation from the TLTB was an eye-opening as to how the lease monies are currently being distributed, how they can set aside some of their lease funds (assignment), and how they can inject some into their investments.

The workshop was also a platform to educate the landowners on the new initiatives, new programmes and the new journey that TLTB has embarked on. They are also made aware of the assistance that the Board offers, specifically to the landowners.

Since most of the landowning units (LOUs) from the greater Sigatoka-Nadi area recipients of lease monies, it is also the responsibility of the Board, through the LAU Department, to educate them on how to make the best use of their lease monies (financial literacy) as well as making good use of their resources to eliminate poverty.

Instead of having to rely mostly on lease monies, they are adamant to now take up the challenge, start their own businesses, be employers instead of being employees and most of all, to be resource rich and asset rich at the same time. ■



Landowners at the workshop in Nadroga

# Waisali Forest Park to provide environment education on site

THE Waisali Forest Reserve is a 120 hectare reserve or conservation site belonging to the Mataqali Waisali of Waisali Village in Cakaudrove.

In its recent meeting, the TLTB Board of Trustees endorsed TLTB to support the development of Waisali Forest Park into an environment education centre.

The National Trust of Fiji (NTF) who is entrusted with the care of Waisali Forest Park sees great potentials for the park and one of its plans is to develop an environmental educational centre for the local children in Vanua Levu.

This will be similar to what is currently done at the Sigatoka Sand Dunes and Momi Battery Historic Park Information Centre, both of which are taken care of by the National Trust of Fiji.

It is important that TLTB supports this initiative as it is well stocked with native trees and has been well protected by the NTF. More so, TLTB is supporting the sustainable management of native forest.

Since the Board is an advocate of conversation, reforestation and afforestation leases, this is an avenue where we show our support for the environment and help mitigate climate change.

The forest reserve is surrounded by steep



Waisali Rainforest Reserve to promote biodiversity and environment education in Fiji

slopes near the summit ridge of the main Vanua Levu mountain range and receives about 3000-5000mm of rainfall every year.

The reserved forest area is mostly intact and undisturbed with *dakua*, *makadre* and *dakua salusalu* as the dominating trees. Other trees in the area include *yaka*, *damanu*, *kaudamu* and *buabua*.

Being one of the last areas of unexploited rainforest in Vanua Levu, the high diversity of the native plants and endemic species, makes

Waisali one of the few managed parks in Fiji that comprises a unique and floral composition.

In addition is the diversity of commercially important timber species and the large number of seedlings and samplings which makes the park an important landmark in Fiji, specifically for the Northern Region.

Protection of this forest park is aligned to the climate change measures of forest conservation and reforestation programme. ■

# Landowners to lease own land for tree planting

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) has been participating in the national tree planting exercise since it was first launched in January last year.

In support of this initiative, TLTB finally got the approval from the Board of Trustees to get the landowners who want to lease their own land for this purpose.

In a paper presented by the Deputy General Manager Operations, Research & Development Mr Solo Nata stated that the move was to support the REDD+ Initiatives and to empower

the landowners to lease their own land for their financial benefit through carbon the trading program.

Mr Nata provided an explanation on the roles of TLTB under an emission reduction program (ERP) – tree planting activities and landowners involvement in leasing their own land for such purpose together with an update on the work carried out by TLTB with the landowners.

Recommendations put forward are:

- TLTB to continue in partnership with communities and stakeholders,

- Share information with stakeholders,
- Continue to support and facilitate emission reduction (ER) activities,
- For the Board to endorse the waiver of premium charge on all tree planting sites leased by landowners but planted by TLTB staff,
- For the Board to endorse the lease application fee, annual rental and stamp duty for documentation be paid by TLTB,
- TLTB to administer and monitor the sites that have been planted by TLTB staff. ■



CEO Tevita Kuruvakadua with staff and family members during the national tree planting initiative at Colo-i-Suva

# TLTB receives \$3.04m for CBUL



CBUL committee meeting that was held at the Ministry of Agriculture office

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) has received yet another cheque of \$3.09 million from the Ministry of Agriculture for a Committee of Better Utilisation of Land (CBUL) payment in January.

This CBUL payment is for the second half of 2019, from July to December, which subsidises Agricultural tenants who wish to renew their leases that are expiring or have already expired.

Following the deduction of \$50,000 of TLTB fees, the total amount that is left to be distributed amongst the land owning units (LOUs) is \$3.04 million.

The CEO, Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua, said that the Board is always grateful to the Government for providing such assistance as the CBUL payment. It has provided immense support to the agricultural sector, specifically to the 9,476

agricultural tenants who continue to support the growth of Fiji's economy through their agricultural produce.

Mr Kuruvakadua added, that the payment is also a much needed revenue for the 1,088 iTaukei landowning units who will be sharing this amount. The LOU members concerned will have something to look forward to, to meet their "back to school needs" as the funds are expected to be in their bank accounts by the end of this week. This is a small token of appreciation for the use of their land.

"This has been a great initiative by the government to increase the Unused Capital Value (UCV) from 6% to 10%; of which the government is paying the difference of 4%. This has made it easier for the landowners to agree to the leasing of their land," said the CEO.

Ever since the introduction of the CBUL payment in 2010, the Government has paid out a little over \$74 million, to the landowners, in support of the CBUL initiative.

It is expected that better land utilisation will lead to better economic returns, for the landowners, the tenants and for the country as a whole. ■

## iTaukei landowners rights

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) wishes to highlight some of the key information to create some awareness and educate our landowners on their rights as stipulated under the iTaukei Land Act (1905):

### 1. Customary rights to use and occupy land

As long as a landowner is registered in the VKB, it is their right to occupy and use any piece of land belonging to the *mataqali* or *tokatoka* that the landowner is registered under.

### 2. Boundary rights

The landowners have the right to be informed and shown proof (maps) of their land boundaries.

### 3. Registration in the VKB (including illegitimate children)

It is the right of every landowner, including illegitimate children, born into this world to be registered into the *Vola ni Kawa Bula* (VKB).

### 4. Right to appeal iTaukei Land & Fisheries Commission (TLFC's) decisions

If a landowner does not agree with a decision made by TLFC, they have every right to appeal the decision within 90 days.

### 5. Right to dispute Turaga ni Mataqali titles

The landowners also have the right to dispute any decision made by TLFC regarding *Turaga ni Mataqali* titles or chiefly titles. For this, they are

also given 90 days.

The second set of laws are stipulated in the iTaukei Land Trust Act (1940) which states the following:

### 1. Right to beneficiary occupation of itaukei land

Where a landowner is already occupying a space that is intended for lease, this space will be excluded from the lease that is to be issued.

### 2. Right to reserve land for maintenance and sustenance

The landowners have the right to set aside a piece of their land as reserves for the use and maintenance for the existing landowners as well as the future generation. It is unfortunate that some landowners are allowing informal settlements (squatters) into the reserved sections of their land. The reserved land is only for the maintenance and sustenance of landowners and for no other purpose. They do not have the legal authority to allocate block(s) of land to anyone who is not registered in their VKB.

### 3. Right to equal lease money entitlement/distribution

Every landowner has the right to an equal portion of all lease monies derived from leased lands.

### 4. Right to investments

In addition to being trustee to iTaukei land and their lease monies, are also entrusted with their

investments (for those who wish to invest part of their lease monies). Consent of the majority is also required when they wish to make a partial or full withdrawal of their investment(s). They also have the right to a share the return on investments.

### 5. Right to be consulted on the use of iTaukei land

The landowners need to be consulted on the use of their land, even, if the subject land is outside reserve. When a lease expires or when a renewal is needed, the landowners still need to be consulted.

### 6. Right to give consent or not for any issue concerning iTaukei land

The landowners have every right to give their consent or not regarding the use of any of their reserved land. We cannot force them.

### 7. Beneficiary owners of iTaukei land

This is very important to note. The landowner is the *mataqali* and the members are just the beneficiaries.

### 8. Right to challenge the Board's decision

The landowners have the right to seek legal action against the Board if they do not agree with the Board's decision. This is common for expiry cases where the Board did not consult the landowners. While many of us assume traditional ownership of our land, it is important to know that there are laws in place that govern the use and ownership of iTaukei land. ■

## We can only make land available upon request: CEO

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) has been trying to facilitate the current land needs in the country especially in the areas of agriculture. In one of their recent meetings with the Permanent Secretary for Agriculture Mr Ritesh Dass, TLTB CEO Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua said that he was optimistic with the request from Government to look into these land needs. "We know that there has been a lot of emphasis and focus of the current Government on agriculture but as TLTB procedure, we can only make land available as and when formal requests come to us," he added. There has also been a lot of interest from various investors and TLTB always tries their best to provide information upfront.

Mr Kuruvakadua added that unless and until they receive formal applications, then only will they commence facilitating the needs of the interested parties because the applicants need to indicate the specific lease type they are interested in, as there are specific requirements for each lease type.

"Before the officers actually go out to inspect any available land, we need to first understand the needs of the applicants – their strengths, their earning capacity, the ability for them to meet the rental payments and other details.

There are 15 commercial agriculture leases that were given to FNU students who were specialized in the area of commercial agriculture, in alignment of the FNU agriculture sector requirements. These are big areas of land and TLTB had to accommodate FNU's need and issued 99-year leases instead of the 30 and 50 years that is usually the norm. Mr Kuruvakadua said TLTB has to disclose all information when the officers had to go out to consult with the landowners, with regards to the leasing of their land.

"We cannot do anything on any piece of land without the landowners' consent and most of them refuse to sign unless they fully understand what will happen on their piece of land.

He added that TLTB could not do anything on any piece of land without the landowners' consent and most of them refuse to sign unless they fully understood what will happen on their piece of land and we were facing a lot of challenges with the landowners in terms of their future land requirements as well.

The two parties finally got to a mutual understanding on how TLTB and the Ministry of Agriculture could work better to resolve the people's land needs in these uncertain times. ■



*Agriculture to improve the food supply chain in Fiji*

## Mataqali Naicavu receives cheque from Sinohydro



*Turaga ni Mataqali Naicavu Mr Penijamini Ratokabula received a cheque from Mr Li Xianglin of Sinohydro while Regional Manager Central Eastern Mr Eroni Rauto (third from left) looks on along with trustees members*

POWERCHINA's hydropower subsidiary company; Sinohydro Corporation Limited, jointly implemented by Huadong Engineering Corporation Limited (HDEC) signed a \$266 million contract with the Water Authority of Fiji in April, 2019. The Sinohydro Corporation Limited had then obtained a lease of five years on a piece of land that belongs to the Mataqali Naicavu of Viria Village in Naitasiri.

On January 10, Sinohydro presented their first cheque handover to the Mataqali Naicavu of Viria Village in Naitasiri as their token of appreciation. The cheque handover was part of the agreement that was signed under the MOU between the two parties.

Within the 5-year lease term, the Sinohydro have agreed to:

1) Give cash donations to the Mataqali Naicavu to specifically assist school students of the Mataqali with their 'Back to School' shopping.

2) To provide employment opportunity to the youths of the Mataqali Naicavu.

The total sum of cheque presented was \$2,571.75 and was distributed in cash to twenty-five (25) school children of the Mataqali Naicavu. \$1,971.75 was distributed to the Primary School Children including two kindy and \$600.00 was distributed to the Secondary School children. This is a huge breakthrough for the Mataqali and it's also the first time for any Mataqali in Viria Village to be leasing their own land for any type of project like this said, Mr Penijamini Ratokabula, who is the Turaga ni Mataqali of Naicavu. On behalf of the Mataqali Naicavu, the Turaga ni Koro, Mr Ratokabula has conveyed a big vinaka vakalevu to another great initiative from the Board. ■



*Goodwill is illegal*

## Practice and payments of goodwill is illegal

THE payment of goodwill is not a statutory requirement under the iTaukei Land Trust Act (Cap. 134) and is not recognized, encouraged and condoned by the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB).

The TLTB Board of Trustees considered that the practice of goodwill is deemed illegal and must be stopped and the consideration of goodwill payment as part of premium is not allowed and must be stopped.

Goodwill payments were widely practiced in Fiji between potential lessees and landowners during the preliminary stage of requesting landowners to lease part of their land and securing landowners' majority consent. Consents of the members of the landowning units are required for the dereservation of reserved lands for leasing purposes.

Investors and prospective lessees who have paid goodwill normally demanded TLTB to adjust the premium or rent on the leased land when a lease is approved but are unsuccessful.

TLTB wishes to advise the general public to refrain from engaging and practicing goodwill payment because it:

- ♦ creates an opportunity for unequal distribution of goodwill to all members of a land owning unit (Tokatoka, Mataqali or Yavusa);
- ♦ lead to disputes and faction among landowners within their landowning unit;
- ♦ lead to abuse and misuse of goodwill payment;
- ♦ not a requirement under the iTaukei Land Trust Act;
- ♦ does not bind TLTB or guarantee the issuance of lease or license;
- ♦ is considered as financial loss to potential lessees.
- ♦ has implications on the premium to be levied and tends to distort the value of the land.

Further, the general public must understand that the legal powers to grant a lease or issue a license is vested with TLTB under law.

An offer by an investor or prospective tenant or demand by a member of a landowning unit for the payment of goodwill should be reported to the Police or the Fiji Independent Commission Against Corruption (FICAC). ■

## 60% renewal rate of non-sugar and sugar cane agricultural leases in 2019

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) has been working very closely with landowners on the renewal of agricultural leases over the years with a lot of success.

The consolidated renewal rate of non-sugar agriculture and sugar cane expired leases from 2007 to 2019 is 60 percent.

In terms of non-sugar agricultural leases that expired from the period 2007 to 2019, there has been a renewal rate of 49 percent.

In terms of sugar cane leases that expired from the period 2007 to 2019, there has been a renewal rate of 64 percent.

Non-sugar agriculture lease includes:

- i) root crops and vegetable leases,
- ii) dairy and grazing leases and,
- iii) rice leases.

However, there has also been a number of challenges especially in terms of demand from landowners and their preference to engage and utilize their own land with a view to increase commercial activities upon the expiry of various leases on their land.

In some instances where the landowners do not wish to renew the whole agricultural leased area, TLTB continues to renew tenant's leases where there houses are located.

This is to ensure that the tenants' investment in improvements is protected through the issue of residential leases.

Other challenges include:

- ♦ Change in Landowners' perception towards non-sugar agriculture leases. Landowners are more interested in utilizing their expired leased land for lease types (commercial, residential, tourism and commercial agriculture) that will ensure high and best use on the basis that it will generate higher economic returns for them.
- ♦ Most landowning units, prior to expiry of agricultural leases on their land have notified TLTB in advance of their plans to utilize their non-sugar cane agriculture and sugarcane agriculture leases upon expiry in preference of commercial, residential, tourism, commercial agriculture.
- ♦ According to landowners, the returns on non-sugar agricultural leases are low hence their desire to convert the use of the land for other activities that will yield better and higher returns for them.
- ♦ While agricultural leases take up large parcels of land and carrying low rental rates compared to other lease types, most landowners are concerned that it also carries the largest amount of unpaid rentals to TLTB. As at 31st December 2019, the current outstanding lease rentals for agricultural leases owed by tenants to TLTB stands at \$2,350,687, which is 40% of TLTB lease rental arrears portfolio.
- ♦ Government has tried its best over the years to revive the sugarcane and non-sugar cane agriculture sectors over the years through its Committee for Better Utilization on the Land (CBUL) and has worked on renewal of 60% of agricultural leases. It appears that there is still a lack of interest to take up agricultural farming which has in turn contributed to low yield productivity from farmers in the agriculture sector.
- ♦ Landowners have also become more conscious of the scarcity of land for their future support and maintenance due to increasing registered members of the landowning unit (population). ■



*Renewal of sugar cane leases to revitalise the sugar industry*

# Q&A with CEO Mr Tevita Kuruvakadua



*Replanting of pine is a major reforestation programme for the bauxite mining at Nawailevu in Bua*

THE iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) would like to categorically highlight some key information that we believe would help the landowners and tenants to fully understand its roles under the following subjects:

### 1) 2013 Constitution & Native Land Ownership

**Q:** Most are of the view that changes in the TLTB policies were done without any proper consultation and the 2013 constitution does not protect our itaukei land and interest of landowners.

**A:** The rights of the landowners and the ownership and protection of itaukei land is well covered under the 2013 Constitution as stipulated in the Bill of Rights and Section 28 and Section 29 of the 2013 Constitution. In fact, itaukei land has increased as a result of the reversion of Schedule A and Schedule B land. This must be clearly understood by the resource owners as we now have about 91 percent of Fiji's total landmass.

### 2) A Statutory Organization

**Q:** TLTB is alleged to have not been independent in its course of duties and is been interfered with the leadership of Prime Minister Voreqe Bainimarama.

**A:** TLTB is a statutory organization established in 1940 and it mandates under the iTaukei Land Trust Act to control and administer iTaukei land on behalf of iTaukei landowners. TLTB Board of Trustee under the statute has the fiduciary role to act in the best interest of iTaukei landowners. The appointment of Board of Trustees are constitutionally made under the iTaukei Land Trust Act and the Chairman of the Board is he/she who holds the position of the Minister for iTaukei Affairs.

### 3) Change in Laws

**Q:** Is it true that changes at TLTB especially when the Equal Rent Distribution was adopted; had been done without any proper consultation?

**A:** TLTB does not make or amend laws. It is the roles of the Government that changes law hence the amendment of the iTaukei Land Trust

Act regarding the equal rent or lease money distribution in 2010.

### 4) Equal Rent Distribution

**Q:** Was it the motive of the Government to have the equal rent distribution so that they can demolish the traditional chiefly system in Fiji?

**A:** Since the implementation of the ERD there has been a lot of opposing views from the general public but it has now been received with a lot of positivity as people now realized its greater economic spin-offs. First, it has built income base for minors when they turned 18 years old which prepared them for business opportunities and further investment. However, TLTB can still pay lease monies to respective trustees as assignment for their development project or investment provided they have the 60% majority consent of those members above the age of 18. The process for the formation of trustees and assignment must be go through TLTB finance for approval and facilitation.

### 5) Freesoul Real Estate Properties

**Q:** What is TLTB's position on Freesoul Real Estate Development at this stage?

**A:** It must be noted that this was an integrated development that involved itaukei land and also the foreshore. For the itaukei land, due process was undertaken with full support of the landowners as there were huge amount of money paid to them as premium including other benefits like housing projects, construction of classrooms, installation of solar energy, provision of five fiber glass boats with auto board engine. The major issues concerned in this development were from the foreshore of which the lease was still under process when development was undertaken. The facts it must be noted that investors have obtained the consent of qoliqoli owners and have also paid part of compensation to the Lands Department.

### 6) Bauxite Mining at Nawailevu, Bua

**Q:** What is TLTB's position on the bauxite mining in Nawailevu, Bua?

**A:** The bauxite mining in Nawailevu is under Land Use hence all administration of this

lease is through these section. TLTB have no jurisdiction on this lease as landowners have given their majority consent for the designation of this iTaukei land to Land Use section.

### 7) Environment Impact Assessment for Major Project

**Q:** How many EIA studies conducted for any development or industrial site such as mining?

**A:** The engagement of environmental consultants by any developer has to go through the Department of Environment. They have to select those registered environmental consultants who can undertake EIA's on their project. There will be one EIA required first before the development but it will go through a lot of consultation process with the resource owners and stakeholders to take note of the social, economic and environmental issues that needs to be addressed.

The EIA is an independent process undertaken by a third party where the TOR, guidelines and requirements are provided under EMA 2007 and administered by the Environment Department. There is no pint undertaking 2 or three EIA as it will undergo the same independent process, and there are mechanism in place to address non compliances resulting in damages or loss or both. An approved IA is mandatory before any development takes place.

### 8) Lease Term – 99 years

**Q:** What is the maximum term of the lease the board could issue?

**A:** The Board can issue the maximum lease terms of 99 years been regulated under TLTA and there was no court case regarding the reduction of lease terms to 75 years. TLTB under TLTA can issue a lease for over one (1) year and not more than 99 years anywhere in Fiji with certain conditions including charging market premium and rent.

For agricultural leases, ALTA specified that the term shall not be less than 30 years. TLTB issue leases for 30 years, 50 years and even 99 years for agricultural leases with conditions and appropriate new lease considerations and costs. ■

# IMPORTANT VISITOR NOTICE

PLEASE READ BEFORE ENTERING

## HEALTH WARNING **COVID-19**

Also known as the coronavirus

To protect community health, safety and wellbeing  
please **DO NOT** enter our premises if you have:



Travelled overseas in the last 14 days and to any area of high risk as identified by the Government of Fiji / Ministry of Health



If you are feeling unwell

Please observe good hygiene practices whilst on premises:



Wash your  
hands



Cough, sneeze  
etiquette



Social  
distancing

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT