Trust Fund as a sustainable financing mechanism for Protected Areas. A case study of Veratavou project and the FLMMA Network in Fiji.

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Presentation Overview

- Brief site description and history of Project
- How can project or MPA activities can be sustained?
- Bioprospecting and Trust Fund
- Lessons learned and recommendations

INTRODUCTION

Project Setting: Verata District, Fiji

Coastal setting

- 8 villages with approximately 2500 resident population.
- Fishing ground that we have customary rights and access to is 95 sq km. The whole 95 sq km fishing ground is a Locally managed marine area.

Design and Planning

1996-Participatory Resource Assessment workshop

Critical marine resource issues ranked based on communities perception.

- Overharvesting/Overfishing
- Mangrove extraction
- Siltation
- Coral extraction
- Trash and human waste (Pollution)
- Poison fishing: Duva

Implementation stage.

Developing Protection/management plans

- Resource Management Plan (RMP) developed and implemented since 1997
  - Stop issue of commercial fishing licenses, turtle harvesting, poison fishing, mangrove and coral extraction, gillnet ban
  - Beach and water cleanups campaign
  - Set up a network of protected or tabu areas within our fishing ground which totals up to 15 sq km.
  - Alternative income generated through bioprospecting enterprise arrangement facilitated by the University of the South Pacific.

- Community monitoring conducted to evaluate management effectiveness

Monitoring of abundances of indicator species at tabu areas

- Annual data collected at tabu and harvest sites (1997-2003)
## Summary of annual monitoring results (1997-2003)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Village</th>
<th>Status of monitored sites</th>
<th>Indicator species</th>
<th>Years</th>
<th>% stock change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ucunivana</td>
<td>Lomo-Tabu</td>
<td>clam</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2303</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Matanaiverata-harvest</td>
<td>clam</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>833</td>
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<tr>
<td>Kumi</td>
<td>Lelea-Tabu</td>
<td>clam</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>500</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Kaboa- harvest</td>
<td>clam</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Naqitula Is. harvest</td>
<td>mudlobster</td>
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<td>500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Naivuruvuru</td>
<td>Maitaauri-Tabu harvest</td>
<td>clam</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>clam harvest</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>233</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Sizes of clams at Tabu site

Survey area: 50 x 1 m² quadrats = 50 m²

- April 1997
- August 2003

### Sizes of clams at adjacent harvest site

Survey area: 50 x 1 m² quadrats = 50 m²

- April 1997
- May 2003
**Our Concern:**
How can we continue this good work and allow all sections of my community to benefit from it and work including my future generations?

**Rationale:**
- We will not receive external help and funding forever
- We need to marry the development needs of my community and the conservation work that we are doing
- We need to distribute the benefits equitably to members of my community at present and importantly my generations to come.

**My elders in 1999 then decided to:**

1. **Set up a trust fund from the bioprospecting revenue collected (US$30,000) and to invest 50% of this sum of money.**
2. The other 50% was directed to developments within the district that benefits all community members within the district such as:
   - Electrification of households within the district
   - Equipping the three schools (photocopy etc.) within the districts
   - Sponsorship scheme for high school students within the district
   - And other district obligations (provincial and church levies)

These are the commitments and obligations that each households would have had to extract from their fishing grounds in order to meet them.

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**Trust Fund Mechanism**

- There is a committee made up of representatives from each of the 8 villages to manage the trust fund
- The use of the money is guided legally by a constitution and the final decision of how the money is used rests with the district council which consists of chiefs and village administrators from the 8 villages
- The trustee (the paramount chief of the district) signs upon the authorization of the district council
- The commission from the invested fund is expected to be used for:
  - The continuation of the Protected Area (Locally managed marine area) Management and monitoring
  - The Policing of the fishing ground
  - The continuation of the sponsorship scheme for high school students
  - Other developments needs, traditional and monetary obligation of the districts

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**Lessons Learned**

- Trust fund is a useful way of creating self-financing mechanism. It ensures
  1. The continuation of our Marine Protected area activity after funding ceases
  2. That the money generated from bioprospecting is distributed equitably
  3. My community have experienced the benefits of the conservation work through the developments that is taking place in my districts
  4. That households in my community are able to focus on improving the welfare of the family as the trust fund have helped to significantly reduce the monetary commitments and obligations – 35% increase in household income since 1999.

- The Equator Initiative award won (US$30,000) by the Fiji Locally Managed Marine Area (FLMMA) network at the WSSD last year, 2002, have also been put aside to initiate a similar trust fund to sustain established Marine Protected Areas in other communities around Fiji.

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**Recommendation**

- I wish to Encourage financial institutions (donors) and organizations to seriously look at trust fund as an option for self financing Protected areas