



IUCN Oceania

Water Programme



Managing and protecting freshwater resources is of vital importance for the Pacific region's health and wealth. Freshwater and wetland ecosystems occur within all biomes, take many forms, and are influenced by many land-based and other activities, therefore requiring integrated planning and management approaches to safeguard their many ecosystem benefits and services. IUCN Oceania envisions equitable and solid integrated management practises across biomes to sustain the values and livelihoods of the Pacific Island people.

What are the programme's goals?

In line with the Pacific Action Plan on Sustainable Water Management, the programme focuses on integrated water resource management, environmental flows, water resource economics, watershed ecosystems, and river bank rehabilitation. In addition, it promotes increased awareness about the need for climate change adaptation and the value of coastal ecosystems to disaster risk reduction.

Water and Nature Initiative (WANI)

Ecosystem Services & Water Security: to promote

water security through demonstrating best practice in water and ecosystem management;

Good Governance & Stakeholder Participation: to enable participation in water decision making in support of the establishment of good water governance at regional, (sub-) national and river basin level;

Economic Development & Sustainable Financing: to support sustainable economic growth through financing of water infrastructure, institutions and management;

Leadership & Learning: to catalyse change through building leadership and learning amongst water managers, users and decision makers.



Importance of programme in the Pacific

Many Pacific Islands are experiencing increasing pressures on their rivers, wetlands and natural springs. These pressures which include increasing population, pollution and development, are impacting on livelihoods, health, economies and ecosystems. In the context of climate change and sustainable development, integrated management of water resources is a key challenge for the Pacific Islands.

Projects Completed/Planned 2009

Water and Nature Initiative (WANI)

Working with the University of the South Pacific we successfully completed laying the foundation of the implementation of WANI principles in 3 districts in the Kadavu province. A key feature was the revision of Yaubula (natural resource) Management Plans to include water and catchment management strategies. These strategies include land rehabilitation (afforestation and reforestation), protection of forestland in head water catchment areas and the establishment of appropriate natural resource governance mechanism at village levels that would ensure the wise and sustainable use of both biological (e.g. fish stocks, native forests) and physical (e.g. water) resources. The established Kadavu Yaubula Management Support Team (KYMST) will facilitate conservation and resource management initiatives as well as provide environmental and resource management advice to the Provincial Council. With this resource management structure and capacity already in place, WANI has indeed provided aspects that will reinforce, complement and supplement current and future resource management initiatives.

As part of the 'ridge-to-reef' ecosystem based concepts and principles to reduce the risk of flooding, we facilitated the establishment of Fiji's first water catchment committee – the Nadi Basin Catchment Committee which includes stakeholders groups such as; indigenous land owners, traditional fishing ground owners, sugarcane growers, Nadi Tourist Operators, fishermen, and the Nadi Chamber of Commerce. The

project will build capacity amongst these stakeholders in the use of the WANI toolkit as they prepare an Integrated Risk Management Plan for the Nadi River Basin.

The Samoa Government also started working with WANI in 2008 to develop a Water Resource Management Plan for the Togitogiga watershed to address water quality, invasive species, and reduced environmental flows problems.

Activities planned - We are currently finalizing a number of WANI project proposals with Pacific partners including: Fiji – Kadavu with The University of the South Pacific; Fiji – Nadi with the Department of Land, Water and Resource Management and the Secretariat of the Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC); and Samoa with the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

We are also developing a range of regional capacity building activities for WANI to be implemented throughout the Pacific. These regional activities will take the WANI toolkit and adapt it to the Pacific context whilst still maintaining its integrity. It will also encourage knowledge sharing between the Oceania WANI projects.

We will also be working closely with SOPAC to identify and take advantage of the synergies in the two water programmes.

To learn more:

Visit: www.iucn.org/oceania for the latest news on activities or to download publications.

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