

Bioinvasion and Global Environmental Governance: The Transnational Policy Network on Invasive Alien Species

Fiji's Actions on IAS

Description²²

The Republic of the Fiji Islands is an island nation in the South Pacific Ocean east of Vanuatu, west of Tonga and south of Tuvalu. The country occupies an archipelago of about 322 islands, of which 106 are permanently inhabited, and 522 islets. The two major islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, account for 87% of the less than 1 million population. The islands are mountainous, with peaks up to 1,300 metres (4,250 ft), and covered with tropical forests.

Fiji became independent in 1970, after nearly a century as a British colony. Democratic rule was interrupted by two military coups in 1987, caused by concern over a government perceived as dominated by the Indian community (descendants of contract laborers brought to the islands by the British in the 19th century). A new constitution enacted in 1997 was more equitable. Free and peaceful elections in 1999 resulted in a government led by an Indo-Fijian, but a civilian-led coup in May 2000 ushered in a prolonged period of political turmoil. Parliamentary elections held in August 2001 provided Fiji with a democratically elected government led by Prime Minister Laisenia Qarase. He was ousted in a military coup in December 2006 led by Commodore Voreqe Bainimarama, who appointed himself acting president. In January 2007 Bainimarama became interim prime minister, but he refuses to hold elections.

Overview of Biodiversity

The total number of vascular plants known from Fiji is approximately 2600 of which approximately 1600 are native and 1000 are introduced. The fern flora, in particular, is highly developed with 303 taxa of which 88 (29%) are endemic species. Fiji's fauna includes 55 terrestrial breeding bird species, of which 24 are endemic, and 15 species of breeding seabirds. The only indigenous mammals are bats, of which there are six known species.

- [CBD Country Profile](#)
- [Earth Trends Country Profile on Biodiversity and Protected Areas](#)

Legislation relating to IAS

- Some of Fiji's Environmental Legislation can be found on [the Commonwealth Secretariat website](#)
- [Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002](#) and the [Endangered and Protected Species Regulations 2003](#)
- Fiji's Plant Quarantine Act (PQA)
- Key maritime legislation, such as the [Animals Importation Act 1970](#), [Marine Spaces Act 1978](#), and the Continental Shelf Act, were enacted in the early 70s, but are now outdated and need review and updating.⁸

Government Agencies/Programs/Ministries dealing with IAS

- The Ministry of Agriculture
 - The Research and Quarantine Sections or the Division of Quarantine and Inspection Services
- The Ministry of Fisheries and Forests
 - Forestry Department
- [Ministry of Lands, Mineral Resources and Environment](#)
 - [Department of Lands and Survey](#)
 - Mineral Resources Department
 - Department of Environment
- [Fiji Police Force](#)
- [Fiji Military Forces](#)
- Fijian Islands Revenue and Customs Authority (FIRCA)

Major Invasive Alien Species¹¹

[Acacia farnesiana](#) (tree, shrub)

[Acridotheres tristis](#) (bird)

[Antigonon leptopus](#) (vine, climber)

[Brontispa longissima](#) (insect)

[Herpestes javanicus](#) (mammal)

[Paspalum vaginatum](#) (grass)

[Pennisetum polystachion](#) (grass)

[Pheidole megacephala](#) (insect)

[Piper aduncum](#) (tree, shrub)

[Rattus exulans](#) (mammal)

[Solenopsis geminata](#) (insect)

[Spathodea campanulata](#) (tree)

[Tabebuia heterophylla](#) (tree)

[Ziziphus mauritiana](#) (tree, shrub)

Native Species Exported/Introduced to Non-Native Environments¹¹

[Casuarina equisetifolia](#) (tree)

[Caulerpa taxifolia](#) (algae)

[Landoltia punctata](#) (aquatic plant)

[Lutjanus kasmira](#) (fish)

[Merremia peltata](#) (vine, climber)

[Pterois volitans](#) (fish)

[Rotboellia cochinchinensis](#) (grass)

[Rubus moluccanus](#) (vine, climber, shrub)

[Solenopsis papuana](#) (insect)

[Vitex rotundifolia](#) (shrub)

Table 1 Actions to prevent, detect and manage IAS categorized into three themes: biodiversity, human health, and economic

Note: Actions (such as projects, publications and programs) are classified according to the most obvious theme but may also fit into the dimensions of another.

Theme	Action
Biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Fijian National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan addresses IAS to a significant extent: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objective 1, Priority 2: Management of Introduced species. Fiji is using the ecosystem, biogeographical and precautionary approaches as appropriate in its work with IAS. Fiji gives priority to regions that are geographically or evolutionary isolated.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Objective 5, Priority 3: Improve awareness of the Invasive risks of introduced species and their movement between islands. There are some initiatives for education, training and public awareness on IAS in the form of a formal education process and activities through the Agriculture Department.¹ • Fiji is developing the Emergency Response Plan that will mitigate and manage the risks of any invasive species and/or a local major pest outbreak... This will be integrated as part of Fiji's National Disaster Management Programme.² • Commitment to ensure that at least 30% of Fiji's inshore and offshore marine areas will be effectively managed and financed within a comprehensive, ecologically representative network of marine protected areas by the year 2020.⁵
Human health	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • All passengers arriving into Fiji must declare any plant or plant products, animal or animal products, marine and forestry products to the Agricultural Quarantine Inspectors.⁷ • All imports of live animals require an 'Application to Import Live Animals into Fiji' from the office of the Director of Animal Health and Production.⁷ • Small animals (i.e. cats and dogs) may be imported into Fiji by air only from Australia, Hawaii and New Zealand, with no exceptions • Import conditions include a period of quarantine (minimum of 7 days from Australia and New Zealand; minimum of 30 days from Hawaii).⁷ • Import of birds is currently not permitted, with the exception of live chickens, which may only be imported from New Zealand. Any animal coming from somewhere other than the permitted locations must first be taken to one of the permitted locations and satisfy ALL of their quarantine requirements and then apply for re-export to Fiji. All of Fiji's quarantine requirements will then have to be fulfilled as well.⁷ • Fiji is a member of the Pacific Animal Health Information System, a database initially developed in collaboration with the FAO to provide technical information on important animal diseases.
Economic	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Legislation conforming to regulations of Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) are now contained within the Endangered and Protected Species Act 2002. Involvement of the Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forests, the Fiji Police Force, the Fiji Military Forces, and the Environment Department to ensure that all companies selling commodities listed under the EPS Act are registered. The EPS Regulation requires all registered companies to pay F\$15.00 per annum as a registration fee and F\$1000 per annum for the issuing of certificates. As of March 2007 there were 7 registered companies dealing with threatened wildlife in Fiji.³ • There will be a CITES Management Authority that is to produce

	<p>Annual Reports to the national Government and to the CITES Secretariat detailing all exports, re-exports and imports. To assist in the preparation of these reports there will be a database recording all issued permits that will be set up by the Department of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forests, Fijian Affairs and the Fijian Islands Revenue and Customs Authority (FIRCA).³</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project called ‘Removal of Barriers to the Effective Implementation of Ballast Water Control and Management Measures in Developing Countries’ • Division of Quarantine and Inspection Services (a sub-branch of the Ministry of Agriculture, Sugar and Land Resettlement) is responsible for facilitating the increase in the export of Fiji’s agricultural produce and processed products and the provision of monitoring and surveillance, regulatory services to effectively manage the quarantine risks associated with imports into Fiji and protect its plants and animals. There are 2 major sections within the Division: the Operational Section provides the pre-border, border and post border regulatory services and the Biosecurity Section looks after the BQA market accessing and standard setting. The Division also deals with public awareness and staff capacity building and facilities upgrading.² • Fiji’s Plant Quarantine Act (PQA) is the main agriculture protection law and covers two basic areas: plant protection and quarantine and quality control for plant export products. The PQA is closed and currently under review to become Fiji’s Biosecurity Act.²
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Table 2 Actions on IAS in cooperation with other countries

Agreement/ Organization	Countries/ Member	Action
Asia-Pacific Forest Invasive Species Network	Member Countries and National Coordinators	<p>The Asia Pacific Forestry Commission (APFC) is one of the six commissions of the FAO established with the main objective of providing a forum for discussions at the regional level, facilitating the participation of not only of government policy makers but also of NGOs, local organisations and the private sector on all forestry issues including global policies, raising awareness on forestry issues and shaping of international policy discussions.</p> <p>At the invitation of the Government of Fiji and in conjunction with the 20th session of the APFC, a pre-session workshop: "Developing an Action Plan for Addressing Forest Invasive Species in Asia and Pacific" was held at Nadi, Fiji on 17-18th April,</p>

		<p>2004. Five highest priority areas have been identified in the workshop for the action plan:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Organizational structures to support the network • Stock-taking of national activities • Awareness raising • Capacity building • Database and information sharing
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Case Studies

Community-Based Conservation Groups at Fiji's Key Conservation Sites Darwin Initiative project ref: 162/15/019¹⁰

In 2006, a project called *Community-Based Conservation Groups at Fiji's Key Conservation Sites* was initiated. The overall purpose of this project is to build the capacity of Fijian conservation professionals to conserve forest resources through the establishment of protected areas, management planning processes and monitoring frameworks. These conservation professionals will then train community members in the management of their own forest resources. The project sought to: “develop models of community-based protected areas; establish management plans for priority sites; develop an IBA monitoring framework and establish a baseline on which to assess future conditions of IBAs; and raise resources for the further development of managed areas in Fiji.”

Significant progress has been achieved. Highlights include:

- positive responses from communities and provincial governments for the development of managed or protected areas;
- the establishment of a community conservation group on the Natewa Peninsula while continuing work with existing conservation groups in two other IBAs;
- the establishment of a community-declared protected area totaling about 5000ha on the Natewa Peninsula;
- a management plan drafted for the statutory reserves on Taveuni;
- two university students supported to develop frameworks relating to bird populations and forest management;
- the establishment of a draft monitoring framework and initial baseline;
- a fundraising workshop resulting in funding for two project concepts from the GEF Small Grants Programme;
- extensive awareness work in Fiji through media, community work and awareness materials
- International promotion at the [2006 British Birdwatching Fair](#).

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