



International Year of Biodiversity (IYB 2010) Report



2010 has been designated the International Year of Biodiversity (IYB) by the United Nations General Assembly. Fiji's IYB celebrations was officially launched on *May 21st* by the *Minister of Local Government, Housing, Urban Development & Environment, Mr. Samuela Saumatusa*. Focusing on the theme *"Protect island Biodiversity - it's our life"* the launch marks the beginning of the 12-month IYB Campaign for the Department of Environment and its conservation partners.

The celebrations hope to reflect on the importance of Fiji's biodiversity to the people's livelihood, culture and Fiji's economy. Fiji's species vary and have contributed incalculably to the services that our ecosystems provide and to our nation's very own development. Fiji is also momentous because of her unique island biodiversity and varied ecosystems. Our personal health, and the health of our economy and human society, depends on the continuous supply of various ecological services that would be extremely costly or impossible to replace. Better protection for natural resources is more cost-efficient for the world economy than continuously having to pay for the effects of destruction of natural resources. The main communications aim of the International Year is to *raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity, including for human well-being, and the role of the Convention in ensuring its conservation and sustainable use and the equitable sharing of the benefits from its use.*



Fiji's International Year of Biodiversity Action Plan



The Department of Environment had the overall responsibility of preparing the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Fiji. Funding for the development of Fiji's NBSAP was made available through the Global Environment Facility (GEF) of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The FNBSAP was completed in 1999 and was endorsed by Cabinet of the Fiji Government in 2003. The following Action Plan is a record of partner's existing communications plans for the IYB along with specific plans that were made collaboratively during the planning workshop. It also makes note of relevant external events. The plan is organized as a calendar, there is also a list of events and potential events that have not yet been assigned a date, these events and ideas are listed at the end of the calendar.

In addition, the IYB communications planning workshop generated the idea of a 'Clearing House' mechanism for communications materials. All of the partners to the plan already have their own biodiversity-related communications materials which include posters, stickers, t-shirts, brochures, etc. They all wish to distribute these materials to target audiences in Fiji and are doing so independently with varying degrees of success. This current situation illustrates the lack of coordination between partners on biodiversity communications (resources being wasted in duplication of materials) and the need for this plan. The workshop participants agreed that DoE would act as a 'library' for all of these communications materials and that it would be the responsibility of partners to provide stocks of their communications materials to DoE and to also collect relevant materials when distribution opportunities arise.



Achievements during IYB Campaign 2010

Spearheaded by DOE



Through the Action Plan Government Stakeholders together with Non Government Organizations had ongoing commitments each month which corresponded to the different themes laid out for each month in the IYB Action Plan. The launching of the campaign marked the production of the following communication materials:

- **IYB t-shirts** with two different patterns (one containing the IYB logo and the other with the Fiji infusion value island biodiversity signifying our very own island biodiversity).
- **Posters** (3 different posters were made show casing Fiji's alien species, Fiji's unique biodiversity and the third showing Fiji's unique ecosystems).
- **Biodiversity TV Spots** which was aired during Biodiversity Day together with the launching of the campaign. The TV spots were produced by Nunia Thomas of NFMV.
- **Biodiversity CD Productions** capturing the three different TV spots together with interviews from various Conservation Key personnel's working hard towards achieving the objectives laid out in the IYB Fiji Government document and the IYB Communications Action Plan.
- **Art work Exhibition** on biodiversity which was craftly painted by the students of Suva Christian School.
- **Biodiversity Float march** during Hibiscus. The production of the float included the hard work of all stakeholders coming together to produce our very own float for the closing march of the annual festival. WWF and IUCN took the lead role for this production.

- **Monthly Newsletters** which captures the monthly activities all our partners are involved in which are laid out in the IYB Action Plan. This was an initiative by the Department of Environment.
- **Launching of a Biodiversity bus** which was spearheaded by the National Capacity Self Assessment Unit of the Department of Environment. The bus also promoted the theme *"Don't throw it- Bin it, Keep our roads clean"*. This launch was significant as it was the first bus to have a rubbish bin.

The above were all successful communication tools that were produced to mark the International year of Biodiversity. In addition during the month of August a *review of the NBSAP and IYB* was carried out. Together with this review was a general discussion and consultation about Fiji's Position to the COP10 agenda which the government of Japan had hosted. This review and COP10 consultation had the presence of representatives from the different conservation partners that we are in partnership with.

The above mentioned activities are some of the achievements that DOE have successfully accomplished for the International Year of Biodiversity Campaign.