

COMMUNITY CENTRED  
CONSERVATION

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FIJI

PROGRAMME BRIEF  
2011

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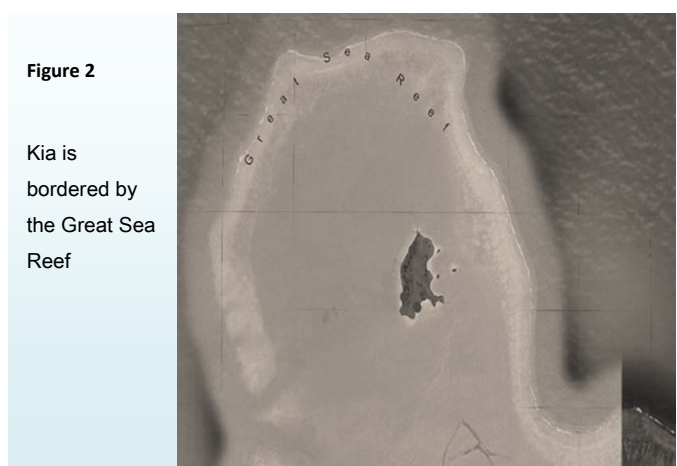
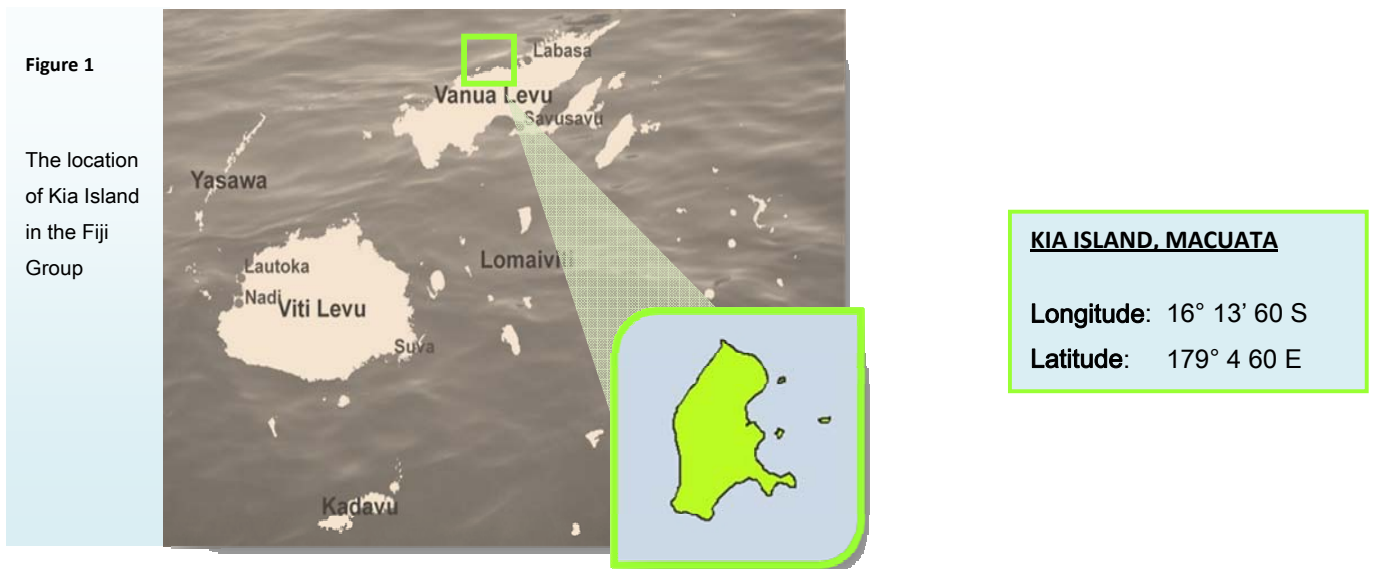
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# “CAKAU BULA<sup>1</sup>- MANAGING THE MARINE RESOURCES OF THE GREAT SEA REEF, FIJI”

## PROJECT LOCATION

Situated off the Northern coast of Vanua Levu- the second largest island in Fiji after Viti Levu, Kia Island lies isolated, some 24km from the mainland. Spanning a land area of about 2km<sup>2</sup>, the island is enveloped within the extensive reaches of a barrier reef system- the Great Sea Reef- that stretches to an area of over 77 000 squares miles.



<sup>1</sup>Cakau Bula is a Fijian phrase that means “living reef”

## BACKGROUND AND JUSTIFICATION

Kia is as an isolated community on one of the world's most important coral reef ecosystems. Sustainability of marine resources associated with the reef is of huge significance to local population however the marine biodiversity and conservation status of the marine ecosystems within the GSR are very poorly understood.

In addition to human induced threats to these ecosystems - burgeoning human populations, consequential industrial and coastal development, and high commercial demand for tropical reef products; vital traditional knowledge of marine resources in the area is already being lost as village elders pass away and will be lost forever if not accurately recorded as soon as possible.

In our growing commitment to sustainable development, proposed activities on Kia represent a positive step forward in:-

- the conservation of marine biodiversity of the Great Sea Reef and the sustainable use of its components;
- the empowerment of the local community to preserve traditional knowledge and well proven traditional methods; and
- the effective integration of traditional knowledge and methods into their management practices.

For the immediate future, it is hoped that successful outcomes of this proposed community integrated project can be tailored and replicated in other parts of Fiji and the South Pacific region.

## OBJECTIVES

The Great Sea Reef (GSR) is part of the Fiji Island Marine Ecoregion, an area considered to be of global biological significance for conservation (WWF 2001) and is a conservation site under the umbrella of the Macuata conservation network - *Siga Damu a Vanua* (an ancient Fijian war cry).

The breaks in the GSR are important spawning sites for local fisheries as well as commercial fish species and the island is also a known turtle nesting site (Fiu, 2005). Fishing is the only source of income for the people of Kia and all their efforts are invested in this industry. With the proposed extension of the current marine protected area (MPA), suitable alternative sources of income need to be developed to sustain livelihoods.

Our objectives for work to be carried out on Kia are as follows:

- To assess the exploitation of marine resources of the GSR through local ecological and traditional knowledge, socioeconomic and in-water surveys
- To raise awareness of conservation issues on the island of Kia, particularly among marginalized groups
- To train community members of the island of Kia to monitor and manage their own marine resources
- To investigate and pilot potential alternative sustainable livelihoods

This project will provide additional biological and socioeconomic information on the marine resources of the GSR and empower the local community of Kia to effectively manage and obtain maximum benefit in the long term from these resources.

## METHODS

### **Objective 1**

**To assess the exploitation of marine resources of the GSR through local ecological and traditional knowledge and in-water surveys**

**1.1 *Traditional Knowledge interviews with key community members***

 *Documenting TEK through participatory and non-participatory (surveys, questionnaires and interviews) methods and using the data to publish a traditional calendar for the island*

**1.2 *Socioeconomic surveys of households on the island of Kia***

**1.3 *In water (snorkel) surveys of socio-economically-important fishing grounds***


### **Objective 2**

**To raise awareness of conservation issues on the island of Kia, particularly among marginalized groups**

**2.1 *Introduction of environmental awareness modules into the local primary school curriculum***

 *Conducting science experiments with local student and their families*


**2.2 *Youth exhibitions held for the community***

 *Fun interactive displays and activities about the marine resources of the Great Sea Reef spearheaded by youth*

**2.3 *Focus group workshops***

### **Objective 3**

**To train community members of the island of Kia to monitor and manage their own marine resources**

 *Training workshops: Socioeconomic surveys, coral reef surveys, fisheries surveys and seagrass surveys*

### **Objective 4**

**To investigate and pilot potential alternative sustainable livelihoods**

**4.1 *Community workshop to discuss potential sources of income and their benefits and drawbacks***

**4.2 *Community submits proposals which are competitively evaluated and the five best submissions funded***

