

APPENDICES

Appendix 1
Written Evidence
Ministry of Fisheries



MINISTRY OF FISHERIES ANNUAL REPORT 2017 – 2018

Questions

1) Page 3 – PS Foreword

a. Can the Ministry clarify whether reviews been done on the archaic legislation for the coastal fisheries community?

Response:

Legislative Reviews for the Fisheries Act (1941) has been an ongoing exercise for the Ministry of Fisheries since 2009 whereby extensive consultations were undertaken with all stakeholder groups. The Outcome of these series of consultations was the enactment of the Offshore Fisheries Management Act in 2012 and the Offshore Fisheries regulations in 2014. The Ministry was also able to develop the first ever Aquaculture Bill that was tabled in Parliament in 2017-2018.

The Strategic Plan 2019-2020 of the Ministry outlines the review and development of fit for purpose legislation as a strategic priority to be progressed.

b. What has the Ministry done to address the absence of the regulatory framework to cover aquaculture operations?

Response:

With the Draft Aquaculture law to be finalized, the Ministry had focused on developing policy guidelines to map the way forward for aquaculture operations.

These policy guidelines includes the launch of the Ministry's 10 year Strategic Development Plan in 2019. Included in this 10 year SDP is the Aquaculture Strategy which guides and cover Aquaculture Operations. Addition to that, the Ministry of Fisheries have also designed the National Fisheries Policy and the Aquaculture Development Plan that will also guide Aquaculture Operation and Implementation.

2) Can the Ministry provide a list of species being overfished and what measures have been undertaken to curb overfishing?

“Overfished is a term used to define when the abundance of the stocks is “too low”, meaning below the limit reference point. Overfishing is when fishing mortality being exerted on the stock is “too high”, meaning above the limit fishing mortality reference point.”¹ “Overfishing” may occur as (a) Growth overfishing; (b) Recruitment overfishing; or (c) Ecosystem overfishing. Growth overfishing occurs when the young fish (the “recruits”) are caught before they can grow to a reasonable size. Thus, to the fishery biologist, the problem is to estimate the most suitable age (and/or size) at first capture and to suggest to the fishing community, e.g., the mesh size which by allowing

younger (smaller) fish to escape, optimizes the yield that can be obtained from a given number of recruits.¹ Understanding size at maturity and implementing the right minimum size limits and associated management measures are critical to minimize or avoid overfishing.

Recruitment overfishing occurs when the (parent) stock is reduced, by fishing to the extent that not enough young fish are produced to ensure that the stock will maintain itself. Everybody knows that in any fish stock, there will be fish if no parent fish are left by the fishery. These parents must mature, spawn, and fertilize eggs which hatch to larvae, only a very small fraction of which eventually survive and become fully formed young fish (recruits).²

To address the challenges of the current size limits, the Ministry of Fisheries, Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS), and World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) and Biospherics Pty Ltd began collaboration in 2014, to collect data on the size at maturity.

Size at maturity is defined by fisheries scientists as the size (meaning length) at which 50% of the population is reproductive and therefore an adult. The sampling of reef fish catches undertaken as part of the data collection has measured 16,404 fish from 180 species.

A further stock assessment technique called spawning potential ratio was applied to the data collected on 29 important coastal fisheries species in Fiji. This stock assessment calculated the percentage of the species population that remained compared to the total population, if the stock had not been fished at all.

Internationally, it is accepted that stocks should be maintained above 20% spawning potential ratio. Below 20% spawning potential ratio the ability for the species to recover decreases and risks crash or collapse.

Using the concept of spawning potential ratio to assess fish stocks is similar to assessing human population trends. On average, if couples have 2.1 children surviving through to adulthood, populations replace themselves and remain stable. Above the replacement level for human reproduction (2.1 children on average), populations grow, and below that they decline. With fish populations, 20% spawning potential ratio provides the same replacement level reference point as 2.1 surviving children per couple.

During this research, the spawning potential ratio was found to be below 20% for 17 of the 29 species to which spawning potential ratio was applied. In addition to this 14 of these 17 species were estimated to be at or less than 10% spawning potential ratio. The species estimated at or below 10% spawning potential ratio included iconic species such as kawakawa, kabatia, tiri damu, batisai and ulavi.

There has been also profound harvesting of and presenting for sale of undersized mud crabs. This also heavily contributes to depletion of these species.

Management Actions

¹ <http://www.fao.org/3/X6845E/X6845E07.htm>

² <http://www.fao.org/3/X6845E/X6845E07.htm>

For iconic species such as Groupers (kawakawa) & Coral Trout (donu), seasonal bans have been implemented by the Ministry as these species have been found to be below the 20% spawning potential ration and almost all spawning ground having been overfished. A critical catalyst in the overfishing of these species was the unique spawning behavior where the fish would aggregate yearly to the same breeding ground in masses to spawn.

The Ministry has undertaken the review of all these species of fish and scientifically determined the new size limits that will ensure the sustainability of all of the biologically assessed species of fish.

A total ban on the exports of BDM was invoked in 2017. This was a result of a study undertaken in Fiji in 2014 that revealed the fish stocks reaching below the regional stock densities and was at the risk of collapse. It was not until 2019, where the government implemented a much more serious management measure - the complete ban on harvest and trade of sea cucumbers in Fiji.

However, the current Fisheries Act of 1941 has Regulations on size limits that were established in 1965, which was over 55 years ago. These size limits now need to be urgently revised to accommodate the new size limits based on the current biological science and understanding of the inshore fish species and current fishery. This can be only done through the implementation of new size limits through regulation.

3) Page 5 – Major Functions

a. Can the Ministry highlight some of these policies and strategies?

This includes both technical and administrative/financial policies and strategies that governs the work of the Ministry:

Technical:

Tuna Management & Development Plan 2018
National Fisheries Policy (draft)
National Operational Compliance Strategy
Seizure and Confiscation Policy
Crew Standards Policy (Draft)
Harvesting Strategy (Offshore)
Fishermen Warden Strategy
National Fisheries Biosecurity Strategy (draft)
Policy Framework – Food Security Program
Policy Framework – Commercial Shrimp
Development
Aquaculture Strategy
Inshore Fisheries Strategy
Research Strategy
Pearl Development Plan, etc.

<u>Administrative/Financial/Planning</u> Strategic Development Plan 2019-2029 Operational and Business Plans (for all years since 2016-2017 onwards) Finance Manuals HR Manual HR Related Policies for internal operations in the Ministry
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4) Page 9 – Summary of Assets

- Can the Ministry expand the asset list to include the actual locations?
- How many vessels and ice plants were in operation at the time of this report?

Ice Plants operation was 21 Ice Plants in 2018 excluding Cicia, Moala and Kubulau because they were installed after 2018

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES - ICE PLANT FACILITIES							
No:	Location/ Station:	Models of Machines:	Capacities for Ice Production per 24hrs:	Ice Storage Capacities [tonnes]	Capacities of Main Compressors (kwatt)	Power Supply	Year of Ice Plant Installation
CENTRAL DIVISION							
1	OLI Wainbokasi	Nissin Taito	5ton	20	30	EFL	1989 (Phased Out)
1a	Replacement	Nitto Seimo	3 Ton	2.5Ton	7	EFL	2018
2	Navua	Nissin Taito	3 ton	2.5tonne	15	EFL	1990 (Phased Out)
2a	Navua	Nitto Seimo	1.5	2.5 Ton	7	EFL	2021
WESTERN DIVISION							
3	Ba	Nissin Taito (R-22 gas)	5	20	30	EFL	1989 To be replaced this year.
4	Rakiraki	Nissin Taito	3	12	15	EFL	1989 (Phased Out)
4a	Rakiraki	Nitto Seimo	1.5	2.5	7	EFL	2021
5	Lautoka	Nissin Taito (R-22 gas)	15	45	22 X 3	EFL	1989
6	Sigatoka	Nissin Taito	1	2	7.5	EFL	Replacement machine 2013
7	Namarai	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	2	5	9.5	Power generator 50kwatt	2012
EASTERN DIVISION							
8	Lakeba	Nissin Taito	0.5	1.5	7.5	Power generator 40kwatt	Replacement 2018 by OFCF
9	Vanuabalavu	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	3	10	15	Power Generator 37kwatt	2004
10	Kavala	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	2	5	9.5	Power generator 50kwatt	2006
11	Levuka	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	2	10	9.5	FEA	2005
12	Vunisea (Kadavu)	Nissin Taito (R-22 gas)	3	12	15	Danyeo PWD/ 45kva power generator provided by OFCF	1991
13	Gau	Nissin Taito	1 ton	3 ton	9.5	Danyeo 20 kva power generator	2019
14	Moala	Nissin Taito	1 ton	3 ton	9.5	Danyeo 20 kva power generator	2019
15	Cicia	Nissin Taito	0.5 ton	1.5 ton	7	Danyeo 20 kva power generator	2019
16	Rotuma	Nissin Taito	0.5 ton	1.5 ton	7	Danyeo 20 kva power generator	2017
NORTHERN DIVISION							
17	Lekutu	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	1.5	5	7.5	Danyeo Power Generator 30 kwatt provided by OFCF in 2016	Ice plant Replacement in 2005
18	Nabouwala	Nissin Taito	1 x 1ton 1 x 0.5 ton	1.5 ton 1 ton	9 7	PWD	Replacement 2015 (for Labasa) Replacement in 2018
19	Savusavu	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	3	5	15	EFL	Replacement 2002
20	Labasa	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000 Korean Machines	5 3	20 5	30	EFL Power generator 54 kva	Replacement 2005 Installed in Kubulau 2017 and now transferred to Labasa to be installed this year
21	Wainikoro	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	2x2 =4	10	9.5 x 2	EFL/ standby 50kva power generator	Ice machines and generator both installed in 2003
22	Taveuni	Taylor Ice Machine TS 2,000	2	5	9.5	Power Generator 27kwatt	Replacement 2007
23	Rabi	Nissin Taito	0.5	1.5	5	Power Generator 20 kwatt generator replaced by Fisheries in 2019	Ice machine installed in March 2013
24	Kubulau	Nissin Taito	1 ton	3 ton	9.5	Danyeo 20 kva power generator	2019

Vessel

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES - VESSEL UPDATE				
#	VESSEL NAME	STATUS	OPERATION	MSAF CERTIFIED
CENTRAL DIVISION				
1	Cevaninubu	Docked-Based at Wainibokasi	In Operation	Not registered
2	Bull Shark	Dry docked	Not operational, waiting for repair	Not in use due to damage caused by natural disaster: survey cert. expired on 20/06/2020
3	Spine Foot	Boarded	Repaired for Vuci village (HM's commitment). Awaiting engine.	Not surveyed - Inactive \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
4	Heilala	Boarded	23 foot open fiber. Dry docked	Not surveyed - Inactive \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
5	No Name	Boarded	23 foot open fiber. Dry docked	Not registered
WESTERN DIVISION				
1	MV Dua Lei Ranima	Moored	Operational	Survey Cert. Expired - 24/07/2020 \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
2	FV Sabutukula	Namarai	Engine returned for return job with Asco.	Not surveyed - Inactive \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
3	FV Busa	Dry docked	Requested for a re-quote with Asco - \$4785.65	Not surveyed - Inactive \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
4	FV Sabutu	Dry docked	25 Hp. Engine repaired by Mala (Wainikoro), though awaiting its return from Lami to Lautoka.	Survey Cert. Expired - 23/11/2020 Note: Registered as Pleasure Craft not Fishing Purpose.
5	FV Volaca	Dry-docked	Quotes for repair by companies- Hon. Minister's directive to be handed over to Drauniivi Scheme after repair works	Not surveyed - Inactive \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
EASTERN DIVISION				
1	Kavala/ Qari	Running-Based on the station	Operational	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register
2	Vunisea/ Regurawa	Running-Based on the station	Operational	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register
3	Moala	Running-Based on the station	Operational	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register
4	Cicia/ Donu	Running-Based on the station	Operational	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register
5	Levuka	Running-Based on the station	Operational	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register
6	Lakeba	Running-Based on the station	Operational	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register
7	Gau	Running-Based on the station	Operational	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register
NORTHERN DIVISION				
1	Bai Ni Vualiku	Docked	In Operation	Survey Cert. Expired - 27/03/2019 \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
2	Onaga	Dry docked	Not operation, waiting for repair	Survey Cert. Expired - 14/04/2016 \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
3	Civa Loa	Dry docked	Not in Operation, waiting for repair	Survey Cert. Expired - 26/02/2021 \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
4	Long Tom	Dry docked	Boat fully repaired, but waiting for Engine	Inactive - \$87.20 for Survey Renewal
5	Tesia Akawa	Docked	Currently in operation in Rabi	Not Registered visit MSAF Office to Register

Please note that the regional division looks after the vessel and the operation status whilst the Technical Services Division only monitors the registration to align with MSAF STATUS. 25 vessels was operational by 2018.

c. Can the Ministry further provide a gender analysis on staffing (refer to Human Resources as at 31st July, 2018)?

No	Approved establishment:	351	Vacancies	Vacancies: 83		
				Male	Female	Total
1	General [Total]			163	105	268
2	Established	192	49	83	60	143
3	Unestablished	107	26	73	8	81
4	Projects	52	8	7	37	44

Total Male- 163

Total Female- 105

5) Page 10 – Portfolio Leadership, Policy Advice, Financial services - Collaborations with Partners in Development (Nationally, Regionally and Internationally)

a. Can the Ministry update the Committee on the installation of the replacement ice plant in Nabouwalu, Bua?

The aging ice machine in Nabouwalu had a major breakdown in 2017 and was beyond repair since the machine is old. Replacement of new parts fitted into the old machine ran for a while and came to absolute stop and could no longer supply ice.

Since the office in Nabouwalu is a major supplier of ice for fish that were often sent to the urban markets in Suva, there was an urgent need to replace the ice machine as the fishermen were in dire need of ice.

Within 3 months' time, a standby 2 metric tons ice machine operating at the Labasa Service Center was temporary transferred and installed at Nabouwalu to deliver the much needed ice to generate income for the fishermen.

b. Can the Ministry provide the acronym for ACIAR, PARDI and FADs?

ACIAR – Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
 PARDI – Pacific Agribusiness Research in Development Initiative
 FADs – Fish Aggregation Device

c. Can the Ministry advice whether the slicing machine is still in operation?

The purpose of installing the fish slicer at Vunisea Service Center was to provide economic support to the Fishermen Association on the island. Large yellowfins caught on FADs are often sliced and sold in pieces by the association at affordable prices to government based employees who are

working on the island.

In the past, consumers could not afford to buy a whole yellowfin tuna due to its costly prices considering the massive size of the fish however this has been solved when fish are sliced and sold in pieces at a much lower price.

Currently the fish slicer is still in operational condition but requires servicing to ensure maximum output is achieved. A smaller one was donated by JICA to Kavala Service Centre for the same purpose and is also in working condition.

6. The Committee noted that there was no mention of upriver fishing for the period under review.

- a. Does the Ministry undertake upriver fishing?
- b. If yes how does upriver affect the coastal communities in terms of the providing the necessary assistance on the legal impacts on environment, silting

No, the Ministry does not undertake upriver fishing - communities do. The Ministry does however on occasion re-stock rivers and dams with tilapia and carp to support food security for communities.

Some key targeted species are freshwater mussels (kai), tilapia & carp (re-stocked by the Ministry of Fisheries), eels, native prawn & goby species to name a few.

Like every other development, an Environmental Impact Assessment is always undertaken by the Dept. of Environment. This assessment is anticipated to consider the impacts of mining, deforestation, new developments such as dams, bridges etc. In some cases, the Ministry of Fisheries is requested through the Dept. of Land to undertake Fisheries Impact Assessments where communities heavily rely on aquatic or fisheries resources and of course to provide the Dept. of Environment the fisheries lens in the EIA's undertaken.

7) Page 14 – Aquaculture Division

- a. Can the Ministry explain on how the prawn and sand fish production be improved as an import substitution?

Shrimp- The best way forward from the Ministry's perspective is for private sector to take the leading role in the whole production chain from broodstock management to market sales. Whereby the government's role is to concentrate on Research and facilitate whenever necessary for smooth implementation of the private sector.

Sandfish- Ministry of Fisheries is encouraging Public Private Partnership (PPP) approach in maximizing this commodity for export. A framework has been designed in the facilitation of this initiative. In summary the best way forward is PPP approach for both commodities with clear TOR's and Scope of Works by both parties.

b. Is there any awareness program provided by the Ministry for communities? If yes? How effective the program is?

The Ministry of Fisheries has been providing awareness program to coastal, inland, rural and urban communities. This awareness program is through government expos, agriculture shows, tikina/yasana meetings, trade shows, and institution/school open days and through Ministry's website and social media platforms. The effectiveness of this aggressive awareness program has resulted in the huge interest from the community to venture into aquaculture farming at both subsistence and semi-commercial levels. For example through the Aquaculture Food Security Program we received a total of more than 400 applications around the 4 regions (Western/Central/Eastern and Northern) compare to 50-100 in previous years to be assisted through this grant program. Due to budget constraints we can cater for only 100 successful applicants to be assisted. Same goes to the Commercial Aquaculture Assistance program as we received more than 15 applications but can only assist 4 applicants due to budget allocations.

8) Page 16 – Research Division (Makogai Mariculture Research Project)

a. Can the Ministry provide an update on the progress of the partnership program with Tavarua and Wakaya on giant clams project?

The project in Tavarua and Wakaya contribute to Fiji's national sustainable development goal 14 (SDG 14) voluntary commitment on the (i) integrated coastal management to preserve ecosystem services, improve climate resilience and sustain livelihoods in Fiji, (ii) expansion of large scale marine managed areas in Fiji and also align to the (iii) Fiji National Development Plan (5 Year & 20 Year). The Ministry of Fisheries is mandated to the protection and management of marine resources, include ecosystem based management approaches that address the connectivity between the terrestrial and marine environment including the active participation of stakeholders involved.

The Wakaya Marine Reserve (Fisheries Regulations 2015), totaling a sea area of 17.8 square kilometers, was legally established in 2015. The purpose of establishing the Wakaya Marine Reserve is to provide a "source – sink" dynamic approach of supporting the giant clams population in Makogai Island, connecting through a barrier coral reef system that provide ecological trap to the long term survival of the giant clams population in the area. The gazette Wakaya Marine Reserve protect the giant clam population and the associated marine ecosystem and biodiversity from outside interference, as there has been escalating problem of poaching and associated illegal fishing activities across the area. As mitigation strategic approach, juvenile giant clams were also reseeded into the marine reserve including brooders. Training on (i) giant clam ocean nursery management and monitoring and (ii) Honorary Fish Warden were provided to the Wakaya Island Resort Marine Reserve staff. A total of ten (10) Honorary Fish Warden were trained to prevent, detect and enforce the provision of the Fisheries Act. The marine reserve is an active diving sites for tourists visiting the island including residents of the island, mooring buoys for ship anchorage have been deployed and installed to prevent the damages on coral reefs.

Tavarua Island giant clam project was established as a mitigation strategic approach on the preservation and management of giant clams brooders for artificial propagation and continue the reseeded program in Fiji. The Tavarua giant clam project is fundamental in terms of building resilience and reduction of risk through lesson learnt from past experiences, example, in 2016, TC Winston severely impacted 40,000 juvenile giant clams including the brood stock that were stocked in the Makogai Island ocean nursery. Remaining healthy brooders were taken to Tavarua Island for artificial propagation. Established 2 Tanks x 100,000 Liters to contain salt water before circulated into the 2 round fiber glass tanks which can incubate 500 juvenile clams before deploying into the ocean nursery (cages). The habitat condition in Tavarua Island favors giant clam productivity and support the population growth. Tavarua Island is in close proximity to Navula Passage and the open ocean with good and clean water circulation exchange. Brooders in Tavarua can be used by MOF for future artificial propagation. The stock in Tavarua contribute to reef enhancement and productivity in the area through spill over and current circulation within the Malolo – Yasawa coral reef area.

MOF is currently working on the paper work to establish the coral reef area around Tavarua as a gazette marine reserve. Pending consultation with the customary fishing right areas, Vanua Malolo, scheduled to be carried out after the COVID19 pandemic.

b. What is the possibility of extending this program to other marine protected areas? Can the Ministry elaborate more, please?

The program can be replicated into other areas as the project conducted in Tavarua and Wakaya provided a benchmark, on project collaboration with communities, stakeholders and the government. Submission has to be directed to the Permanent Secretary for Fisheries stating the interest and the SOP will be followed for site selection.

c. Could the Ministry please explain why only two (2) spawning trials were successful and where were these trials held?

The spawning trials was held in Makogai Island. Only 2 spawning trials (artificial propagation) were successful because of the capacity of the raceway after TC Winston. The hatchery and the entire station were still in the rehabilitating and rebuilding state. The artificial propagation can go beyond that but limited to the raceway capacity to avoid overcrowded and disease. In one spawning, 40,000 juvenile giant clams can be produced, to achieve the overall annual target of 80,000 juveniles.

d. Can the Ministry provide an update on the rehabilitation work since the committee's last visit in 2019? E.g. Makogai jetty?

The Fijian Government has completed 100% rehabilitation work on major construction including an office buildings installation of phones, internet, computers, staff quarters with 3 duplex buildings and 1x 3 bed room buildings, laboratory including the accessories with a fully operation new generator.

Construction of the new jetty is still pending as a proper jetty master plan is required to incorporate the physical and geological landscape of the area. At the moment the jetty is used to berth small boats and collection of saltwater through a piping system. The plan is to cater for tourist ships/yachts/.government vessel visiting the island.

e. Can the Ministry provide the results of the 8 marine inventory resources survey carried out in the reporting period?

Data collected from the marine inventory resources survey is analyzed, technical reports compiled to assist with the formulation of the CFRA management plan. The results are shared to resource owners and also upon request from other stakeholders.

f. Does the Ministry have any future plans to extend this program to other fishing grounds?

The program is a core activity of the RA&D, undertake resource assessment to determine the status of the fishing ground and the species of interest, to provide advice to senior executive and the resource custodians.

9) Page 17

There were 9 fisheries impact assessment done, can the Ministry include a column on fishing rights claims (compensation) in future reports?

The role of MOF is to provide fisheries scientific advice to Department of Lands therefore undertake the fisheries impact assessment and determine the compensation value payable to resource custodians and submit to the Department of Lands who then facilitate the payment processes with the Native Fisheries Commission. Disclosing of this type of information is to be undertaken by mandated authority, the Department of Lands and the Native Fisheries Commission.

10) Page 18

Can the Ministry update the Committee on the FIA for Votua (Ba) fishing ground (AMEX) and Vitogo fishing ground?

There was no request on FIA received from the Department of Lands on the development in Votua (Ba) and Vitogo fishing ground.

Can the Ministry explain what is SPAT?

Spat is called the baby (larvae) oyster permanently attached to a surface. In the Pearl Oyster Development program, spat are baby or juvenile oyster attached to the collector.

11) **Page 19-20**

a. Can the Ministry provide the value of outputs from the various spat farms that were developed during the year?

	Year Established	Spat Farm Name	Province	Owner/Group	Number of Lines	Status	No.of Harvest	Value FJ\$
1	2005	Navatudua,Raviravi	Macuata	Women's Group	13	Active	5	10,000
2	2013	Natuvu	Cakaudrove	Women's Group	10	Active	1	900
3	2013	Somosomo	Lomaiviti	Youth Group	5	Active	1	1,200
4	2014	Vuya	Bua	Community	10	Active	1	1,500
5	2014	Namarai	Ra	Youth Group	10	Active	Use spat for mabe pearl	
6	2014	Naocobau	Ra	Community	10	Active	Use spat for mabe pearl	
7	2015	Viani	Cakaudrove	Youth Group	10	Active	2	4,500
8	2015	Ravita	Cakaudrove	Women's Group	12	Active	3	5,000
9	2016	Nacodreudreu	Cakaudrove	Women's Group	2	Trial		
10	2016	Urata	Cakaudrove	Youth Group	13	Active	2	2,000
11	2017	Nabouwalu	Bua	Women's Group	7	Active	4	4,500
12	2017	Veidrala	Ra	Community	2	Trial		
13	2017	Sawaieke	Lomaiviti	Womens Group	10	Active	1	300
14	2017	Nawaikama	Lomaiviti	Womens Group	10	Active	1	200
15	2018	Manukasi	Cakaudrove	Youth Group	12	Active		
16	2018	Saioko	Ra	Community	4	Active	Use spat for mabe pearl	
17	2018	Verevere	Ra	Community	4	Active	Use spat for mabe pearl	
18	2019	Nasavu	Bua	Women's Group	12	Active	New	
19	2019	Koronatoga	Cakaudrove	Youth Group	2	Trial	New	
20	2019	Waiqori -	Lau/Oneata	Community	4	Active	New	
21	2019	Dakuiloa	Lau/Oneata	Community	4	Active	New	
22	2020	Taukena	Bua	Individual	10	Active	New	
23	2020	Naqara	Kadavu	Community	4	Active	New	

12) **Page 21 – Regional Divisions (Geographically Located)**

a. **Can the Ministry explain why the Northern Division recorded the highest ice sales with only 176 licenses issued compared to the other divisions (Western and Central Divisions)?**

Division do not only supply ice to the 176 licensed fishers as reported, but are also supplying ice to middle-man, fish vendors and the general community, most of whom utilizes the services at the Labasa Ice plant.

- b. **Can the Ministry explain how this relates to the actual tonnage and revenue derived from the sale of fish from each division? only 176 licenses issued compared to the other divisions (Western and Central Division)**

Fish that is coming from the North to the various markets in Viti Levu, but it is clearly evident that fish are usually sent to Suva every week via Freezer trucks (carting frozen goods), middle-man hired transport and companies freezer trucks.

13) Page 25 – Financial Statements

- a. **What has the Ministry done to address the matters raised by the Auditor General as the basis of qualified opinion?**

Operating Fund Account

[i] The Ministry shared the same Drawings Account with the Ministry of Forestry for the financial year 2017/2018 and most of the records were maintained by them. The absence of proper handing over of records was a contributing factor to the inability to locate the accounting records to ascertain the audit inspections at the time.

Actions taken:

- Strengthening of the role of the Accounts Payable Team especially on the security of the accounting records such as Payment Vouchers, Journal Vouchers and etcetera in the following manner:
 1. All Payments Vouchers are thoroughly checked, numbered, organised in sequential order and filed appropriately
 2. These records are kept in Cabinets / Shelves in a locked room.
 3. Access to these records is limited and will only be released to Accounts Officers and to be supervised by the Assistant Accounts Officer together with the Senior Accounts Officer.

[ii] The unreconciled variance of \$1,727,621 between the Financial Management Information System [FMIS] and the Payroll is noted. A contributing aspect to this are the Allowances in SEGs 1 and 2 that the Ministry has in terms of the Regional Observer Program [ROP] - \$260,000, the National Observer Program [NOP] - \$200,000, the Sea Going Allowances that are normally paid out manually rather than through the Payroll. The above contributed to the variances.

Actions Taken:

- Timely reconciliations are undertaken and aligned to the standard operating procedures outlined in the Finance Manual;
- Conducted monthly checks of the General Ledger and the Payroll Reports to substantiate any variances and normal adjustments are carried out accordingly.
- Regular reconciliations are being carried out between the Person to Post and the Payroll to detect any such variances.

[iii] Trust Fund Account

- Necessary consultation has been undertaken with the Ministry of Economy and the Ministry of Forestry with the aim of reconciling and developing a detailed listing of the beneficiaries of the \$262,208.86 balance as at 31/07/2020.
- With the conduct of this exercise, we have noted that most of these claims were paid out from the Operating Fund Account [Fund 1] at the time instead of the True Trust Account [Fund 9].
- The reason why these were paid out of the Operating Fund Account [Fund 1] was when there were a lot of intertwining of funds occurring within the Ministry of Fisheries and Forests then, as it operated three [3] different bank accounts; the [1] Operating Fund, the [2] Trading Manufacturing Account [TMA] and the [3] True Trust Account.
- At the conclusion of the exercise, we maintain that there are no beneficiaries and the amount has to be transferred back into the Consolidated Fund Account [CFA].

Appendix 2
Supplementary Response
Ministry of Fisheries

MINISTRY OF FISHERIES 2017 – 2018 ANNUAL REPORT SCRUTINY

COMMITTEE MEMBERS SUPPLEMENTARY QUESTIONS

1) **Strategic Plan of the Ministry**

Can the Ministry of Fisheries please clarify whether the Strategic Plan of the Ministry was aligned to the National Development Plan under the review period?

Affirmative – yes the Strategic Plan is aligned to the broader strategies of the NDP with special focus on strategies for food security, economic growth and resource sustainability.

2) Can the Ministry please explain the meaning of BDM used during spawning as derived from the supplementary response from the Ministry?

BDM stands for bech-de-mer. This is the processed product, out from the various species of sea-cucumber which is then exported.

3) **List of banned Fish**

Can the Ministry explain why Kabatia, Tiridamu, Batisai and Ulavi fish aren't on the ban list?

- The banning of any species of fish is the last and final management option that the Ministry takes when a fishery has collapsed
- These fish species promotes food security and income generation for Fijians and the Ministry can regulate sustainability of the above species through the imposition of minimum size limits.

4) Can the Ministry explain why the Eastern Division boats in operation but has not been registered with MSAF as per the given list of fishing vessels of the Ministry?

- Only 3 vessels for Lakeba, Levuka and Gau are the ones yet to be registered. Process of registration is 50% into completion.(COVID 19 RESTRICTIONS IN PLACE).

END

Appendix 3
Annual Report Summary
Ministry of Fisheries



Annual Report Summary - Ministry of Fisheries 2017-2018 Annual Report Standing Committee on Natural Resources

Vision–“A Sustainable Fisheries Sector for Our Future Generation Based on the Blue Economy”

Mission–“To Drive Sustainable Fisheries Management, Economic Growth and To Improve Livelihood through SMART Fisheries Strategies”

	2017 - 2018
Background	The Ministry is responsible for the formulation and implementation of policies that promote best practice (equating conservation and utilization) that will ensure a prosperous and enhanced Fisheries Sector. <i>The major functions of the Ministry can be seen on page 5 of the annual report.</i>
Acts in place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Constitution of the Republic of Fiji 2013 • Financial Management Act 2004/2010 • Tax Administration Decree 2009 • Fiji Health & Safety at Work Act 1996 • Public Service Act 1999 • Act 2 of 2016 – Amendment to PSC Act • Employment Relations Promulgations 2007 & Employment Relations (Amendment) Act 2016 • Fisheries Act (Cap 158) • Marine Spaces Act (Cap 158A) • Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012
Organization Structure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Total staff establishment as at 31 July 2018 was 267 (143 established staff; 80 unestablished staff & 44 project staff). • The organisational structure can be seen on page 6 of the annual report.
Major Highlights	<p><u>Offshore Fisheries Management Division (OFMD)</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The OFMD is the technical and advisory arm of the Ministry of Fisheries on matters relating to Fiji’s offshore sector. The division manages licensing, monitoring, control and surveillance, and catch and activity reporting for vessels operating in Fiji offshore waters. • During the current fiscal year, a total of 42 Long line fishing licenses, 7 exploratory licenses and 25 authorizations to fish beyond Fiji fisheries waters were issued.



- In addition, **1274 export** and **267 import permits** were issued from the **Walu Bay** and **Lautoka offices** respectively.
- The division also issued **199 CITES permits** for the fiscal year, prior to Department of Environment becoming the sole signatories, as per Fiji CITES Management Authority (FCMA) meeting resolutions of 10th January, 2018.
- A major achievement for the Ministry was the unanimous decision in Parliament on July 13, 2018 to **sign the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA)** to prevent, deter and eliminate illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing. The PSMA is a tool aimed at eliminating IUU fishing through the development deployment of effective port State measures.
- **Development** of the **draft Offshore Pelagic Fisheries Mahimahi Management Plan**. It is anticipated that stakeholder consultations will take place in the next fiscal year before finalization of the draft plan.
- The Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA) commenced on an **in-country survey on Economic contribution of Tuna fisheries** to the Fiji economy. This survey will help understand the value that this important regional resource brings to Fiji and will continue into the next fiscal year.

Fish Production Data	1st August 2017 - 31st July 2018
Albacore [MT]	7,438
Big Eye [MT]	663
Yellow Fin [MT]	2,438
Tuna like [By Catch] [MT]	1,792
Beach-de-mer [KG]'	8,415
Trochus [Shells and shell scraps] [Pieces]	18,000
Soft coral [Pieces]	33,266
Ornamental Fish [live] [Pieces]	37,000
Ornamental Invertebrates [Live] [Pieces]	9,600
Live Rock [KG]	1,500
Coral Base rock/cultured rock [KG]	75,500



Inshore Fisheries Management Division (IFMD)

- At the United Nations Oceans Conference in New York on 6th June, 2017, the Fiji Government made a commitment on “Delivering Improved Coastal Fisheries Management Services in Fiji”. During this fiscal year the Ministry commenced work towards the delivery of this commitment through the **establishment of the IFMD**. IFMD has been established to ensure the effective management and oversight of Fiji’s coastal fisheries through an improved system of coastal fisheries management.
- The Ministry was also supported by **two technical advisors funded by New Zealand Government** through the New Zealand Aid Programme. The advisors both commenced work in February 2018, and were embedded within IFMD to **support the establishment and the development of the new Division**.

Aquaculture Division

- The **Division** activities targeted the production and distribution of freshwater and brackish water aquaculture species, together with extension advisory work, research and targeted trainings both local and overseas for both staff and farmers.

Freshwater Aquaculture Hatchery Production and Distribution:

- **488,580 Tilapia fries produced and distributed** from the hatcheries
- **158,500 prawn post larvae produced and distributed** from the hatcheries
- **14 farmers** assisted under the **Food Security 2017/ 2018 program** – breakdown being 4 from the Central and West while there was 6 in the Northern Division

Brackish water Hatchery Production & Distribution:

- **647,129 brackish water shrimp post larvae produced & distributed** from the hatchery
- **30,100 sandfish juveniles** produced from **Galoa hatchery** and distributed to sea ranch sites for restocking of depleted sites
- In terms of looking into the future and developing plans for various commodities in the Aquaculture fisheries, the Ministry engaged stakeholders through a consultation forum to discuss the **Draft Pearl Development Plan** on October 23rd, 2017. This plan when completed was to meet the voluntary commitment made by the Fiji Government at the United Nations Oceans Conference in New York in June, 2017.
- In addition, the **first shrimp conference** on the **culturing of Penaid Prawns** was held at Galoa Fisheries station on May 1, 2018. This brought together the existing and potential farmers as well as other stakeholders to discuss the issues of the industry and way forward. A follow up conference was held in Lomawai on 18 October 2018 but targeted only the Western Division farmers.



- **Four farmer trainings** were conducted nationally, with one in each division. A total of 87 farmers participated at these regional trainings. These trainings are essentials to ensure that **aquaculture farmers** are equipped with accurate technical advice to support their farming activities.
- **The Nadi/ Lautoka Aquaculture Cluster farmers group received assistance** from collaboration partners, the Secretariat of the Pacific Community on May 2nd 2018. The cluster is made up of 10 tilapia freshwater farmers around the Nadi and Lautoka area and their level of operation ranges from semi commercial to commercial farming of tilapia. The farmers received donated items funded by New Zealand Foreign Affairs and Trade Aid Programme under the Sustainable Pacific Aquaculture development for food security and economic growth. The items donated included graders, nets, digital scales and scoop nets.
- In May 2018, the Division embarked to **develop the first ever National Strategy on Aquatic Biosecurity for Fiji** in collaboration with SPC. A draft Strategy has been developed for further consultation in the New Year.
- The Japanese Government, through the Embassy of Japan in Suva, approved a **project for the provision of materials for tilapia seed production** at Naduruloulou Research Station under the Grant Assistance for Grass Roots Human Security Projects (GGP).
- During the fiscal year, the Ministry **produced 1.5metric tones of seaweed against a target of 100MT**. These harvests were from Naividamu village and Nakalou Women Seaweed farm. The Ministry continued to assist communities in the establishment of seaweed nurseries and two (2) were established during the year in Serua and Malake against the target of four (4) for the year. In addition to this, it assisted 13 communities with materials and drying sheds (against a target of 10).

Research Division

- There are three capital projects under the division, the Pearl Oyster Research and Development Program, the Marine Resource Inventory Survey project and the Makogai Mariculture Research project.

Makogai Mariculture Research Project:

- Since 1983, the island and the waters around the island have been used by the Ministry of Fisheries, and to operate a fisheries research station, which focuses on Giant Clam Mariculture and juvenile ocean grow-out, including the implementation of the giant clam reseeding programs across Fiji. The **Giant Clam project** started in 1984 under the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR) with the objective of establishing the farming and culture of Giant Clams.
- The island and the station were severely **damaged** by **Tropical Cyclone Winston**. As such, the fiscal year 2017 saw further **rebuilding** and **re-establishment of the Research laboratories** and hatcheries, as well as other facilities such as the staff quarters and other key facilities.



- A strong partnership was forged with the resorts in terms of **setting up land and ocean nurseries for giant clams**. **Tavarua and Wakaya island resorts** were assisted with **setting up of their land nurseries** and were supplied with 500 and 120 juvenile clams respectively.

Marine Resource Inventory Survey Project (MRIS):

- The MRIS project undertakes **biological and socio-economic surveys** for **qoliqoli's** to assess the biological status of the qoliqoli and the dependence of the communities on their resources.
- For the 2017 - 2018 fiscal year, the **project completed 8 marine resources inventory survey** at selected fishing grounds in Tailevu, Lomaiviti, Nadroga and Kadavu (*details can be seen on page 16 of the annual report*).
- The **Fisheries Impact Assessment** is also undertaken by the Research team. This assessment is undertaken to **calculate the value of compensation that should be awarded to the communities for the waiver of their fishing rights for any foreshore development**. As such the team **undertook nine (9) FIA's** for the current year and **4 site visits to confirm FIA logistics** (*details of the surveys undertaken can be seen on page 17 of the annual report*).
- A **National Inshore Fisheries Enforcement Workshop** was held on August 25, 2017 with key enforcement agencies and members of the judiciary to discuss the enforcement of laws regulating inshore fisheries in Fiji. The one-day forum was a closed forum between key agencies and the judiciary to enable open discussions with the main objectives to: -
 1. Review current enforcement efforts in coastal areas in Fiji to identify challenges and barriers to the effective enforcement of fisheries laws; and
 2. Explore short- and long-term opportunities for enforcement agencies and members of the judiciary to work more closely to address a number of these challenges.
- The divisions were also involved in implementing the **first ever ban of the kawakawa and donu during the spawning months**. The Ministry of Fisheries banned all harvesting, local sales, and export of all Grouper (Kawakawa) and Coral Trout (Donu) fish species from Friday, 1st of June to September 30th 2018 to allow for spawning during this breeding season.
- To mark the Year of the Coral Reefs, the Ministry of Fisheries had **banned all harvesting, purchasing, sales and export of live coral and aquarium rock (also known as live rock, coral rock or fossil coral)** from the 28th of December, 2017. The geographic divisions through their program monitored the bans in place.
- **Pearl Oyster Research and Development Program** details can be seen on pages 19 & 20 of the annual report.



	<p><u>Regional Divisions</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inshore Fisheries Licensing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 942 Inshore Fishing licenses were issued: (Central – 226, Eastern – 54, Western – 486 and Northern – 176) • Number of Inshore Fisheries Inter-divisional MCS operations: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ 36 Sea Patrols conducted (Central 9 –, Eastern – 4, Western – 16 and Northern – 7) ➤ 73 Land Patrols conducted (Central – 27, Eastern – 7, Western – 26 and Northern – 13) • A total of 2746.071 metric tonne of ice produced in the year with a revenue of \$38,602.57. The breakdown by Divisions are as follows: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Central – 274.011 metric tonne with a revenue of \$37,390.87 ➤ Eastern – 136.07 metric tonne with a revenue of \$23,525.24 ➤ Western – 1123.53 metric tonne with a revenue of t \$161,422.83 ➤ Northern – 1212.46 metric tonne with a revenue of \$163,263.63 																																		
<p>Projects</p>	<p><u>Fisheries Public Sector Investment Projects</u></p> <table border="1" data-bbox="454 724 1890 1417"> <thead> <tr> <th style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;">Project</th> <th style="background-color: #4F81BD; color: white;">Budget \$</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Coastal Fisheries Development</td><td>672,380</td></tr> <tr><td>Construction of Cicia Ice Plant</td><td>852,930</td></tr> <tr><td>Construction of Moala Ice Plant</td><td>852,930</td></tr> <tr><td>Preparatory Works - Wainigadru Ice Plant</td><td>50,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Upgrade of Lekutu Fisheries Station</td><td>340,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Purchase of New Ice Machine - Wainibokasi Ice Plant</td><td>440,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Donor Funded - Technical Assistance to Fisheries Extension Division (JICA)</td><td>86,309</td></tr> <tr><td>Makogai Mari-culture Development Centre</td><td>262,160</td></tr> <tr><td>Pearl Oyster Research and Development</td><td>295,200</td></tr> <tr><td>Marine Resource Inventory Survey</td><td>300,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Upgrade of Office and Quarters</td><td>630,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Cyclone Rehabilitation - On-going Construction of Fisheries Institutional Buildings</td><td>1,600,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Purchase of Aluminum Boat</td><td>225,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Aquaculture Development</td><td>350,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Brackishwater Development</td><td>380,000</td></tr> <tr><td>Seaweed Development Programme</td><td>259,225</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Project	Budget \$	Coastal Fisheries Development	672,380	Construction of Cicia Ice Plant	852,930	Construction of Moala Ice Plant	852,930	Preparatory Works - Wainigadru Ice Plant	50,000	Upgrade of Lekutu Fisheries Station	340,000	Purchase of New Ice Machine - Wainibokasi Ice Plant	440,000	Donor Funded - Technical Assistance to Fisheries Extension Division (JICA)	86,309	Makogai Mari-culture Development Centre	262,160	Pearl Oyster Research and Development	295,200	Marine Resource Inventory Survey	300,000	Upgrade of Office and Quarters	630,000	Cyclone Rehabilitation - On-going Construction of Fisheries Institutional Buildings	1,600,000	Purchase of Aluminum Boat	225,000	Aquaculture Development	350,000	Brackishwater Development	380,000	Seaweed Development Programme	259,225
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	On-going Construction of Multi Species Hatchery - Ra	400,000	
	Food Security Programme – Aquaculture	250,000	
Financial Position		2018 (\$)	2017 (\$)
	Total State Revenue	2,133,637	-
	Total Agency Revenue	63,442	-
	Total Receipts	2,197,079	-
	Total Operating Expenditure	9,113,152	-
	Total Capital Expenditure	5,409,517	-
	Total Expenditure	15,134,297	-
Auditor's Opinion	<p>Audit Opinion The Auditor has audited the financial statements of the Ministry of Fisheries, which comprise the Statement of Receipts and Expenditure, Appropriation Statement, Statement of Losses and Main Trust Fund Account Statement of Receipts and Payments for the year ended 31 July 2018, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies.</p> <p>In Auditor's opinion, except for the effects on the matters described in the Basis of Qualified Opinion paragraph, the accompanying financial statements are prepared, in all material respects, in accordance with the Financial Management Act 2004 and Finance Instructions 2010 and Finance (Amendment) Instructions 2016.</p> <p>Basis for Qualified Opinion</p> <p>Operating Fund Account</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Ministry recorded Capital Construction of \$4,756,332 and Capital Purchase of \$653,185 in the Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the year ended 31 July 2018. The Ministry was unable to provide Auditor with payment and journal vouchers totaling \$954,252 to support the above balances. As a result, Auditor was unable to verify the completeness and accuracy of the balances and also unable to determine whether any adjustments might have been necessary in respect of Capital Construction and Capital Purchase at the end of the financial year. 2. An unreconciled variance of \$1,727,621 exists between Financial Management Information System (FMIS) general ledger and the Ministry's payroll report for both Established Staff and Government Wage Earner. In 		



	<p>addition, internal control over payroll were generally found to be weak. This relates to the incorrect preparation of salary reconciliations. Consequently, the Auditor was unable to establish the accuracy of the Established Staff and Government Wage Earners balances recorded in the Statement of Receipts and Expenditure for the year ended 31 July 2018.</p> <p>Trust Fund Account</p> <p>3. The Ministry did not maintain a detailed listing of the beneficiaries of the Trust Account. Consequently, Auditor was not able to substantiate the completeness of the closing balance of \$261,684 reflected in the Statement of Receipts and Payments of the Trust Fund Account.</p> <p>Auditor conducted the audit in accordance with International Standards on Auditing (ISA). The responsibilities under those standards are described in the <i>Auditor’s Responsibilities</i> paragraph of the report. The Auditor is independent of the Ministry in accordance with the ethical requirements that are relevant to the audit of the financial statements in Fiji and the Auditor has fulfilled the other responsibilities in accordance with these requirements. The Auditor believes that the audit evidence he has obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for his audit opinion.</p>
Gender Analysis	No gender analysis has been provided in the annual report.

Guiding Questions

1. How does the Ministry align its goals and KPIs to the 5 & 20 Year National Development Plan (NDP) and the SDGs, in particular SDG 14 – Life below water?
2. Can you inform the Committee on how effective the Port State Measures Agreement (PSMA) tool has been in eliminating illegal, unreported and unregulated (IUU) fishing?
3. Can you update the Committee on the ‘Draft Offshore Pelagic Fisheries Mahimahi Management Plan’, if this has been finalised and implemented?
4. Can you inform the Committee on the outcome(s) of the ‘in-country survey on Economic contribution of Tuna fisheries’ conducted by the Pacific Islands Forum Fisheries Agency (FFA)?
5. Can you update the Committee on the ‘Draft Pearl Development Plan’, if this has been finalised and implemented?
6. Can you enlighten the Committee regarding the ‘National Strategy on Aquatic Biosecurity for Fiji’?



7. The annual report states that the Makogai Island and the station were severely damaged by Tropical Cyclone Winston. As such, the fiscal year 2017 saw further rebuilding and re-establishment of the Research laboratories and hatcheries, as well as other facilities such as the staff quarters and other key facilities. Can you advise the Committee on the progress/outcome of the rebuilding and re-establishment of these facilities?
8. Can you advise the Committee on how successful the 'Giant Clam project' has been with the Tavarua and Wakaya Island resorts?
9. The OAGs report in both, the 2016-2017 annual report and this 2017-2018 annual report states that 'the Ministry did not maintain a detailed listing of the beneficiaries of the Trust Account'. Can you explain why this recurring issue?
10. There were 2 Qualified Opinions for the Operating Fund Account by the OAG stated on pages 25 of the annual report. Please advise on the status of these Qualified Opinions?
11. What are some of the Ministry's future plans?
12. What are some of the challenges faced by the Ministry and how have these been overcome?

24 February 2021

Disclaimer

This Annual Report Summary was prepared to assist the Standing Committee on Natural Resources in its review of the Ministry of Fisheries 2017-2018 Annual Report. This summary should not be relied on as a substitute for specific advice. Other sources and information should be consulted. Whilst every effort has been made to ensure that the information is accurate, the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji will not accept any liability for any loss or damage which may be incurred by any person acting in reliance upon the information. The Parliament of the Republic of Fiji accepts no responsibility for any references or links to, or the content of, information maintained by third parties. For further information please email: Shobhna Rani on shobna.rani@govnet.gov.fj