



**HONOURABLE ALITIA VAKATAI BAVOU CIRIKIYASAWA
BAINIVALU**

MINISTER FOR FISHERIES AND FORESTRY

PARLIAMENTARY RESPONSE – WRITTEN QUESTIONS 150/2026

**Hon. Jovesa Vocea to ask the Minister for Fisheries and Forestry –
Can the Minister inform Parliament how many ice plants are solar-
driven and how many are using other forms of fuel**

Date: Tuesday 18th August 2026

1.0 Honorable Speaker, in responding to the question posed by the Honorable Jovesa Vocea regarding the number of ice plants powered by solar energy and those that operate using other forms of fuel.

A. Introduction

2.0 Honorable Speaker, Sir, ice production remains one of the core services the Ministry of Fisheries delivers to support our licensed fishers and fishing communities across Fiji.

3.0 Ice serves three key purposes in post-harvest processes:

- i. First, it reduces fish spoilage and keeps fish fresh. Bacteria begin to attack fish the moment it is caught and removed from the water. In a tropical environment like Fiji, this process occurs very rapidly.
- ii. Second, ice helps to maintain the quality and value of the catch. Premium markets and buyers will only accept fish that meet high-quality standards, which helps fishers earn better income.
- iii. Third, ice ensures food safety. It keeps fish safe for consumption, reduces the risk of bacterial contamination and poisoning, and ensures that the public has access to safe, affordable fish.

B. Ice Plant Operations Across Coastal and Maritime Areas – The Current Status

- 4.0 Honorable Speaker, the Ministry of Fisheries currently operates 24 ice plants across the four divisions.
- 5.0 Of these, two (2) ice plants are solar-powered, nine (9) are powered by diesel generators, and thirteen (13) are powered through the Energy Fiji Limited (EFL) grid and the Public Works Department (PWD) electricity supply.
- 6.0 Earlier this year, in February, the Ministry of Fisheries commissioned a new ice machine in Taveuni as part of the phase-out of the old machines.

- 7.0 We are also currently installing a new ice plant at the Labasa Fisheries Station to better serve our licensed fishers in the North.
- 8.0 The Ministry of Fisheries is deeply grateful for the support provided by the Government of Japan through the Overseas Fishery Cooperation Foundation (OFCF) of Japan.
- 9.0 Through this partnership, we have received funding for the new ice machines, the replacement of aging equipment, ongoing maintenance, and technical training for our Ministry technicians to ensure proper maintenance and monitoring of the machines.

C. Progress Towards Renewable Energy

- 10.0 Honorable Speaker, the Ministry is committed to moving towards renewable energy solutions. In particular, we are investing in solar-powered ice-making systems to support our licensed fishers in remote maritime island communities.
- 11.0 During the last financial year, the Ministry procured three saltwater solar ice flakes machines to support fishers in **Moce Island in Lau, Vatulele Island in Nadroga Navosa, and Cikobia Island in Macuata**, with internal processes underway for installation.

12.0 For the current financial year, the Ministry plans to procure and install four additional saltwater solar ice flake machine for our maritime fishing communities.

13.0 These saltwater solar ice flake machines are targeted for remote and maritime communities that face inadequate or unreliable freshwater supply. By using seawater and solar energy to produce ice, they reduce dependence on freshwater, diesel fuel, and conventional electricity.

D. Conclusion

14.0 Honorable Speaker, the Ministry is steadfast in its commitment to support our fishing communities through sustainable and practical investments in fisheries infrastructure.

15.0 We are focused on ensuring reliable access to ice, improving the quality and value of the catch, minimizing post-harvest losses, and delivering better returns and improved livelihoods for our fishers.