

BOSE LEVU VAKATURAGA ACT 2026
(ACT NO. 31 OF 2026)

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ACT NO. 31 OF 2026

I assent.

RATU N. T. LALABALAVU
President

[2 October 2026]

AN ACT

TO PROVIDE FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE BOSE LEVU
VAKATURAGA AND FOR RELATED MATTERS

ENACTED by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji—

PART 1—PRELIMINARY*Short title and commencement*

1.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Bose Levu Vakaturaga Act 2026.

(2) This Act comes into force on a date or dates appointed by the Minister by notice in the Gazette.

Interpretation

2. In this Act, unless the context otherwise requires—

“Board” refers to the iTaukei Affairs Board established under section 4(1) of the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944;

“Bose Levu Vakaturaga” means the Great Council of Chiefs established under section 3(1) of the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944;

“Bose Vanua” means the assembly of chiefs convened by the titular head of the Yasana in accordance with its custom;

“Chief” means a head of a Vanua or Yavusa traditionally installed and recorded in the principal Yavusa in the Vanua or the principal Mataqali in the Yavusa as registered in the iTaukei Lands Register under section 9(1) of the iTaukei Lands Act 1905, and includes the 7 District Chiefs who are eligible to be appointed to the Council of Rotuma in accordance with section 2 of the Rotuma Act 1927;

“Constitution” means the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji;

“Institutions” refers to entities and bodies corporate established by the Bose Levu Vakaturaga;

“Minister” means the Minister responsible for iTaukei affairs;

“President” means the President of the Republic of Fiji;

“Roko Tui” means a Roko appointed under section 12 of the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944;

“Secretary-General” means the Secretary-General to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga appointed under section 23;

“Vanua” means the iTaukei peoples and their chief, their lands, seas and defined territories, their resources, tangible and intangible, including but not limited to, iTaukei traditional knowledge, cultural expression, cultural heritage, genetic resources, rivers, streams, waterways or fishing grounds, their environment, their spirituality, their history, their epistemology, culture and traditions;

“VKB” refers to the Vola ni Kawa Bula which is the official register of iTaukei landowners maintained by the iTaukei Lands Commission under the iTaukei Lands Act 1905; and

“Yasana” means a Provincial Council established under section 7 of the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944.

Application

3. This Act must be applied in a manner consistent with—

- (a) the recognition that the Bose Levu Vakaturaga exists as the principal customary and traditional institution of the iTaukei people; and
- (b) the Constitution.

Objective

4. The objective of this Act is to bring the Bose Levu Vakaturaga which prior to this Act, has been operating as the Great Council of Chiefs to be under an Act and to provide for its administration, powers and functions for the benefit of the iTaukei people.

PART 2—ESTABLISHMENT OF BOSE LEVU VAKATURAGA

Bose Levu Vakaturaga

5.—(1) The Great Council of Chiefs established under section 3(1) of the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944, continues as the Bose Levu Vakaturaga as if established under this Act.

Body Corporate

6.—(1) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga is a body corporate with perpetual succession and a common seal.

(2) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga may—

- (a) sue and be sued in its corporate name;
- (b) acquire, hold, manage and dispose of real and personal property;
- (c) enter into contracts and incur liabilities;
- (d) open and maintain bank accounts;
- (e) borrow money and secure the repayment of money borrowed; and
- (f) do all other acts and things that a body corporate may lawfully do.

Common seal

7. The common seal of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga must—

- (a) be kept in the custody of the Secretary-General;
- (b) only be affixed to a document in the presence of the Chairperson, the Secretary-General or a member of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga duly authorised for that purpose;
- (c) be authenticated by the signature of the Chairperson, the Secretary-General or an authorised member; and
- (d) when affixed to a document, be accorded judicial notice by all courts and persons acting judicially.

Objects of Bose Levu Vakaturaga

8.—(1) The objects of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga include—

- (a) recognising the traditional leadership roles of the customary chiefs in their respective Vanua in the 14 provinces;
- (b) preserving, promoting and protecting iTaukei identity, cultural values, heritage, language and traditions for current and future generations;
- (c) promoting and protecting traditional or indigenous knowledge cultural expression, cultural heritage, genetic resources and intellectual property in the forms wherever they are used;
- (d) promoting transparency and accountability in iTaukei institutions;

- (e) promoting the social and economic well-being of iTaukei communities, including addressing poverty through education, real-estate investment, entrepreneurship, youth development, health, environment, climate resilience and encourage participation in agriculture, manufacturing, eco-tourism, creative industries and other businesses ; and
- (f) proposing laws and amendments to current laws impacting iTaukei resources, culture, heritage, arts and identity.

Act Recognises Bose Vanua

9.—(1) The Bose Vanua is hereby recognised and affirmed as the traditional decision making body in each Tikina or Yasana in accordance with iTaukei custom and tradition.

- (2) The Bose Vanua may regulate its own affairs with its own rules of procedure.

Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson

10.—(1) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga must appoint from among themselves a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

- (2) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga must adopt its own rules of procedure when appointing a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

- (3) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga must make all reasonable attempts to ensure gender balance in appointing a Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson.

- (4) The Chairperson presides at all meetings of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga at which he or she is present.

- (5) If the Chairperson is absent from a meeting, the Deputy Chairperson presides at that meeting.

- (6) The Chairperson chairs the meetings and assists the Secretary-General from time to time.

Meetings of Bose Levu Vakaturaga

11.—(1) The Secretary-General must publish a notice in the media and in a newspaper circulating nationally of each meeting not less than one calendar month and not more than 3 calendar months before the date of that meeting.

- (2) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga must meet at least twice a year and a committee or sub-committee may meet when there is business to transact or at the discretion of the Chairperson to deliberate on issues put before it.

- (3) The Chairperson may convene a special meeting of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga on—

- (a) recommendation of the Minister; or
- (b) being petitioned by not less than 10 members to deliberate on an issue.

- (4) The quorum of a meeting of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga is 36 voting members.

- (5) A decision of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga is made by a majority of the votes of the members present and voting at a meeting at which a quorum is met.

(6) In the event of an equality of votes, the Chairperson or in his or her absence, the person presiding, has a casting vote in addition to a deliberative vote.

(7) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga may, from time to time, make rules regulating its meeting procedures.

(8) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga may, by resolution, invite any person to attend a meeting for the purpose of providing advice, information or expertise on any matter but such person does not have the right to vote.

Protection from personal liability

12. Members and employees of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga are not personally liable for any act done or omitted to be done in good faith in the exercise of a power or the performance of a function or duty under this Act.

Committees and sub-committees

13.—(1) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga may, by resolution, establish any committee or sub-committee as it considers appropriate to consider any matter referred to it.

(2) A committee or sub-committee established under subsection (1) may consist of experts in a relevant subject matter for which the committee or sub-committee is created and who are not members of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga.

(3) A committee or sub-committee established under subsection (1) must report to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga on its findings for endorsement.

(4) Where the chairperson of a committee or sub-committee is of the view that a matter before the committee or sub-committee is of vital importance to the interests and rights of the iTaukei people and other communities, such matter must be immediately referred to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga for urgent consideration and decision.

PART 3—MEMBERSHIP OF BOSE LEVU VAKATURAGA

Composition of Bose Levu Vakaturaga

14.—(1) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga comprises—

- (a) 3 honorary and non-voting *ex-officio* members being—
 - (i) the President;
 - (ii) the Prime Minister; and
 - (iii) the Minister for iTaukei Affairs;
- (b) 3 heads of Vanua confederacies members being—
 - (i) Vanua head of the confederacy of Kubuna;
 - (ii) Vanua head of the confederacy of Burebasaga; and
 - (iii) Vanua head of the confederacy of Tovata;
- (c) 42 Chiefs, comprising 3 Chiefs from each of the 14 Yasana's, nominated by the respective Bose Vanua;

- (d) 3 Chiefs nominated by the Council of Rotuma; and
- (e) any other advisory members nominated by the Chairperson and co-opted by the Bose Levu Vakaturaga, on the basis of their expertise and experience in fields relevant to its deliberations.

(2) Every province must take all reasonable efforts, subject to the custom of succession of each Vanua to include female chiefly nominees to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga.

Publication of membership in Gazette

15.—(1) The Minister must, in consultation with the Chairperson, cause the names of the members of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga to be published in the Gazette.

(2) The Minister must publish in the Gazette, any changes in membership of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga as and when they occur.

Nomination of provincial members

16.—(1) The nomination of members to represent the provinces must commence with the Roko Tui of each Provincial Council inviting the Bose Vanua ni Yasana to nominate 3 chiefs for membership to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga.

(2) A nominee must—

- (a) be traditionally installed as a Chief in the respective Vanua or the Yavusa;
- (b) be recorded as a Chief in the VKB; and
- (c) have served in a position of leadership in his or her province.

Time of election

17. The election of members representing the provinces must be held at a date, time and place as may be determined by the Roko Tui of each province.

Eligibility of chiefly nominees

18. A nominee to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga must—

- (a) be a Chief;
- (b) be traditionally installed;
- (c) be registered in the VKB;
- (d) demonstrate integrity, leadership and service as a Chief; and
- (e) not hold a political office.

Disqualification from membership

19. A person may be disqualified from membership to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga if he or she—

- (a) becomes an undischarged bankrupt;
- (b) is convicted of an offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, whether or not the sentence is suspended;

- (c) is found to suffer mental incapacity;
- (d) holds a political office;
- (e) is removed from office under section 22; or
- (f) resigns.

Tenure

20.—(1) A member of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga, other than an *ex-officio* member holds office for a term of 3 years which may be renewed.

(2) Subject to sections 16, 19, 21 and 22, there is no limit to the number of terms a member may serve.

Resignation

21. A member may resign from the Bose Levu Vakaturaga by submitting written notice to the Chairperson and such resignation takes effect upon its receipt.

Termination of membership

22.—(1) The Chairperson may terminate the membership of a member only on the following grounds—

- (a) gross misconduct;
- (b) failure to attend 3 meetings without reasonable excuse;
- (c) persistent neglect of duty; or
- (d) disqualification under section 19.

(2) The Chairperson must not terminate the membership of a member unless a committee established for that purpose has conducted a formal inquiry into the matter and has made a written recommendation that the membership be terminated.

(3) Where there is a question of terminating membership, the member must be given written notice of the proposed termination and a reasonable opportunity to be heard in relation to the matter.

(4) Where membership is terminated, the Chairperson must notify the member in writing of the decision and the reasons for the termination, and it takes effect on the date of notice.

Secretary-General

23.—(1) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga must appoint a suitably qualified person as Secretary-General, in accordance with other terms and conditions it may approve.

(2) The Secretary-General may be appointed for a period of 5 years, and is eligible for reappointment.

Criteria for appointment of Secretary-General

24. To be eligible for appointment as the Secretary-General, a person must—

- (a) hold a Bachelor's degree or higher qualification from a recognised institution in a field relevant to the functions of the Secretary-General;

- (b) have not less than 10 years of demonstrated leadership and management experience;
- (c) not have held office in or been an office bearer of a political party within the 5 years immediately preceding the date of appointment;
- (d) be of good character and not have been convicted of an offence and sentenced to a term of imprisonment, whether or not the sentence is suspended; and
- (e) be able and willing to serve the iTaukei people with integrity, impartiality and dedication.

Functions and powers of Secretary-General

25.—(1) The Secretary-General is responsible to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga for providing administrative support and day to day management of its affairs.

(2) The Secretary-General must attend every meeting of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga, and if he or she is, for any reason, unable to attend a meeting, the Secretary-General may, in consultation with the Chairperson, nominate an officer to attend on his or her behalf.

PART 4—FUNCTIONS, POWERS AND DUTIES OF BOSE LEVU VAKATURAGA

Functions of Bose Levu Vakaturaga

26. The Bose Levu Vakaturaga’s functions are to—

- (a) consider matters relating to the good governance, rights, interests and wellbeing of the iTaukei people;
- (b) review policies and laws affecting iTaukei people;
- (c) provide directions to institutions where commercial priorities impact negatively on iTaukei welfare;
- (d) identify and address socio-economic challenges affecting iTaukei communities, including poverty and informal settlements, education, economic opportunities in rural and maritime islands, low market participation, access to finance, real estate investments, commercial enterprise, land ownership, youth engagement, health, environmental sustainability, and climate resilience;
- (e) set strategic direction and thematic priorities across key sectors affecting the iTaukei, including issues of governance, socio-economy, culture, land, education, health, environment, and climate resilience;
- (f) promote the preservation and protection of iTaukei language, cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, cultural expressions, genetic resources and cultural identity;

- (g) monitor all developments carried out in the provinces to ensure that iTaukei proprietary rights and interests are not infringed or abused by commercial entities and are protected in the development policies and strategies employed by development agencies and that access and benefit sharing frameworks are in place; and
- (h) perform any other lawful or functions imposed on it by this Act or any written law.

Powers of Bose Levu Vakaturaga

27. In carrying out its functions, the Bose Levu Vakaturaga has the power to—

- (a) examine, determine and make recommendations through the Minister regarding any matter relating to policies or laws that affect the governance of the iTaukei people;
- (b) examine, determine and make recommendations through the Minister regarding any matter relating to policies or laws that affect iTaukei rights, interests, health, welfare and order; and
- (c) submit to the Minister such proposals as it considers to be for the benefit of the iTaukei people and the State, and inform the President of such proposals.

Duties of Bose Levu Vakaturaga

28.—(1) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga has a duty to always maintain ethical standards and integrity in the exercise of its powers and functions.

(2) The Bose Levu Vakaturaga has a duty to make public, all of its deliberations and must direct the Secretary-General to—

- (a) maintain minutes of all meetings; and
- (b) provide summaries to the public after consultation with the Chairperson.

PART 5—FINANCIAL PROVISIONS

Funds

29.—(1) The funds of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga consist of—

- (a) such funds as may be payable from moneys appropriated for that purpose by Parliament;
- (b) all gifts, donations and contributions;
- (c) all fees, levies, charges, commissions, rents, interests, dividends and any other domestic or foreign income;
- (d) funds borrowed or advanced from—
 - (i) the Board; or
 - (ii) the iTaukei Land Development Board; and

(e) all other funds lawfully received.

(2) The Secretary-General is the principal accounting officer of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga.

Financial year

30. The Bose Levu Vakaturaga's financial year is the calendar year.

Accounts

31. The Bose Levu Vakaturaga must keep proper books of accounts and other records in respect of all its activities, undertakings and property, including any such accounts and records as the Minister may direct.

Audit of accounts and annual reports

32.—(1) Where funds are appropriated under section 29(1)(a), the Bose Levu Vakaturaga must cause to be prepared at the end of each financial year, audited financial statements and annual reports.

(2) The audited financial statements and annual reports must be conducted by an independent, registered auditor appointed by the Bose Levu Vakaturaga.

(3) The Minister must, within 14 sitting days after receiving the audited financial statements and annual report, table them before Parliament.

PART 6—GENERAL

Regulations

33.—(1) The Minister may, with agreement the Bose Levu Vakaturaga may, make regulations to give effect to the provisions of this Act including prescribing for matters required or permitted by this Act to be prescribed.

(2) Without limiting subsection (1), the Minister may make regulations prescribing matters relating to—

- (a) the appointment of the Secretary-General;
- (b) the procedure and conduct of meetings of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga;
- (c) the appointment, tenure, and removal of members of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga;
- (d) the administration and management of the affairs of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga; and
- (e) any other matter that the Minister considers necessary for the purposes of this Act.

Co-ordinating activities with iTaukei Affairs Board

34. The Chairperson must co-ordinate with the Board to align the functions of the two institutions and increase co-operation in areas of mutual interest.

Co-ordinating with iTaukei Trust Fund Board

35. The Chairperson may make recommendations to the Minister on the exercise of the functions of the Board, and the Minister may, having considered any recommendation, issue general policy directions to the Board relating to the exercise of those functions, with which it must comply.

Procedure with respect to Bills affecting iTaukei interests

36.—(1) Prior to a Bill being introduced by the Minister to Parliament which affects—

- (a) the rights and interests of iTaukei people;
- (b) imposing levies to be paid by iTaukei people;
- (c) rights or interests of an institution; and
- (d) the Chiefs, Provincial Councils or land,

it must first be referred to the Bose Levu Vakaturaga for its consideration.

(2) Where a Bill is referred under subsection (1), the Chairperson must without undue delay table it before the Bose Levu Vakaturaga and prepare a memorandum containing comments on the Bill and must provide the memorandum to the Minister.

(3) The Minister must attach the memorandum that is prepared under subsection (2).

PART 7—TRANSITIONAL, SAVINGS AND REPEAL

Savings

37.—(1) All acts, decisions, and resolutions of the Great Council of Chiefs that were in force immediately before the commencement of this Act continue in force as if made by the Bose Levu Vakaturaga.

(2) Nothing in this Act may be construed—

- (a) as extinguishing, abrogating, diminishing, or derogating from any customary authority, status, or function of the different Vanuas that comprise the Bose Levu Vakaturaga; and
- (b) as limiting the continued operation of customary law and chiefly governance practices applicable to the Vanua as an integral part of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga, except to the extent expressly provided under this Act.

Operational arm of Bose Levu Vakaturaga

38. The Roko Tui's, through their respective Provincial Councils, remain organised under the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944.

Repeal

39. The iTaukei Affairs (Great Council of Chiefs) Regulations 2024 are repealed.

Consequential amendments

40.—(1) The laws listed in the Schedule are amended as set out in that Schedule.

(2) All written laws and all state documents of any nature whatsoever are amended by deleting “Great Council of Chiefs” wherever it appears and substituting “Bose Levu Vakaturaga” unless the context otherwise requires.

(3) All written laws and all state documents of any nature whatsoever are amended by deleting “iTaukei Affairs (Great Council of Chiefs) Regulations 2024” wherever it appears and substituting “Bose Levu Vakaturaga Act 2026” unless the context otherwise requires.

SCHEDULE
(Section 39)

CONSEQUENTIAL AMENDMENTS

1. Section 7 of the iTaukei Trust Fund Act 2004 is amended by—

(a) deleting subsection (3), and substituting—

“(3) The Board consists of 8 members appointed by the Minister of whom—

- (a) 4 are nominated by the Bose Levu Vakaturaga ;
- (b) 4 must hold suitable qualifications and work experience in any one or more of the following areas—
 - (i) investment management;
 - (ii) engineering;
 - (iii) information and technology;
 - (iv) human capital; and
 - (v) tourism and hospitality
- (c) one member must be a legal practitioner registered under the Legal Practitioners Act 2009;
- (d) one member must be a chartered accountant in public practice registered under the Fiji Institute of Chartered accountants Act 2021; and
- (e) one member must be a person with suitable qualifications and work experience as an economist, professional manager, sociologist, historian or similar experience.”.

(b) in subsection (4) by deleting “subsection (3)(b), (c) and (d)” and substituting “subsection (3)(b), (c), (d) and (e)”.

2. Section 2 of the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944 is amended by deleting the definition of “Council” and substituting—

““Council” means the Bose Levu Vakaturaga established in terms of the Bose Levu Vakaturaga Act 2026”.

3. Section 4 of the iTaukei Affairs Act 1944 is amended by deleting subsection (1) and substituting—

“(1) There shall be a Board called the iTaukei Affairs Board which consists of the following members—

- (a) 4 members nominated by the Bose Levu Vakaturaga;

- (b) the Permanent Secretary; and
- (c) 3 other members nominated by the Minister.

(1A) The Board must nominate a member from among themselves, other than the Permanent Secretary, to be the chairperson.”

4. Section 3 of the iTaukei Land Trust Act 1940 is amended by—

(a) deleting subsection (1), and substituting—

“(1) There is hereby established a Board of Trustees called the iTaukei Land Trust Board, which shall consist of—

- (a) 5 members, all of whom must be members of iTaukei land owning units, appointed by the Minister responsible for iTaukei affairs; and
- (b) 6 are nominated from the Bose Levu Vakaturaga of Chiefs from among its members and appointed by the Minister responsible for iTaukei affairs.

(b) deleting subsection (2), and substituting—

“(2) The members appointed—

- (a) under subsection 1(a) and (c) hold office for 3 years, which may be renewed once; and
- (b) under subsection 1(b) hold office *ex-officio*, but the Bose Levu Vakaturaga may rotate members after every 3 years.”; and

(c) deleting subsection (3), and substituting—

“(3) At the inaugural meeting of the Board, the members must nominate one member from among themselves to preside at all meetings.”.

Passed by the Parliament of the Republic of Fiji this 1st day of October 2026.