

2011

Annual Report



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PACIFIC BLUE FOUNDATION (PBF) provides basic research, education, encouragement and implementation of sustainable practices in coastal regions with the ultimate goal of preserving and promoting the biological and cultural diversity of the region.



2011 Annual Report

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For Local Threats, Turn to Tradition

Global threats, such as climate change and ocean acidification, are affecting the coral reef ecosystem. But local threats, like overfishing and pollution, also devastate the abundance and biodiversity of the coral reef.

Pacific Blue Foundation recognizes that the well-being of an island community is often intertwined with the health of its surrounding environment. While small island communities may not be able to control global issues, they can preserve their surroundings by addressing local threats, and Pacific Blue Foundation works to promote sustainable practices that benefit both the coral reef ecosystem and the communities that depend on it.

2011 proved to be a very rewarding year for Pacific Blue Foundation as we focused on merging present-day technologies and traditional practices, honoring the conservation values instilled in island culture. We engaged with island villages, not only encouraging awareness, but also looking to communities for traditional knowledge that could be harnessed to further conservation efforts.

The success of our organization was highlighted on Ocean's Day, when Roko Sau, the high chief of Totoya, proclaimed Totoya's Sacred Reef a Marine Protected Area, demonstrating how old customs (tabu fishing areas) and modern approaches (MPAs) can come together to serve both the environment and surrounding villages.

Pacific Blue Foundation continues to conserve coral communities by investing in the region's culture, ecology, and community, and by promoting education and awareness.

Board of Directors and Staff

Board of Directors

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 Corals for Conservation

Andy Hamm



Solar Panel Workshop and Installation

The availability of energy is important to the development of a nation. In the wake of climate change, the need to harness renewable energy has been heightened.

Small villages, such as Yanuca, need energy to grow and prosper, but depending on petroleum-based energy is costly and detrimental to the pristine environment that locals often depend on for sustenance and income.

In order to support the sustainable growth of the village, Pacific Blue Foundation funded its first solar energy project on the island of Yanuca. The workshop was led by Dr. Andy Hamm for any villager that was interested in learning more about simple solar panel applications.

The class focused on teaching villagers the basics of solar panels, including costs, efficiency and maintenance. Locals were then given the opportunity to gain hands-on experience with the installation of the solar panels.

The workshop provided locals with an understanding of sustainable energy options that would suit the needs and potential growth of the village. The knowledge gained will prove helpful for potential solar projects in the future.





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Fijian Canoe Races - Bring the Family!

In October of 2011, Pacific Blue Foundation held its third Fijian Canoe Racing Event, *Veitau Waqa – The Boat Lives*, to celebrate Fiji's ancient sailing tradition. This year included a *Bakanawa* event, in which children raced miniature Fijian canoes, exposing them to a sailing culture worth revitalizing.

The skills needed to build and handle the Fijian canoe are slowly fading, as motor-powered boats take precedent in the lives of many. Though these newer vessels boast convenience and speed, the fuel needed to power them is expensive, leading local fishermen to increase their catch just to offset the price of gas. This depletion of ocean resources is far from where Fijian culture began.

The ability to navigate open oceans on the Fijian canoe went hand in hand with a deeper connection to the environment. A greater understanding of nature's power spurred veneration for the ocean and earth, promoting sustainable practices that respected the delicate balance of nature and recognized human's capacity to disrupt its harmony.

Those that rely on the Fijian canoe today recognize the many benefits of their ancestors' sailing culture, including the ability to quietly glide up to fish for a fraction of the cost of motorized boats.

Veitau Waqa is intended to not only revive a dying sailing culture, but to also renew the reverence and awe for nature that accompanied it. The building of the canoe is a time-honored craftsmanship that takes into consideration the temperament of the ocean and the needs of the sea-farer; collaboration between man and nature that is the essence of Fijian culture.



Exploration of Totoya's Sacred Reef

In June 2011, a team of researchers from the Waitt Institute, Wildlife Conservation Society, Wetlands International and Pacific Blue Foundation set out to study the biological diversity on the secluded Fijian Island, Totoya. Researchers gathered information from the surrounding Sacred Reef to determine the fish abundance and the overall health of the coral.

The *Daveta Tabu* had been declared a no-take fishing zone, or *tabu*, by a former high chief, or Roko Sau. A *tabu* is a Pacific Island custom set into place to ensure bountiful harvests of nearby fisheries. Sometimes chiefs proclaim areas to be *tabu* out of respect for the recently deceased; sometimes it is due to the depletion of local resources. The *Daveta Tabu* was announced after the still-birth of a high chief's son several decades ago.

The previous chief lifted this *tabu* when fish values increased, hoping Totoya would benefit from their marine resources. Even though the *tabu* was lifted, the fisheries do not seem to have been greatly affected by local fishing needs, possibly because the reefs are so far from significant anthropogenic pressures.

Nevertheless, on World Ocean's Day, the current Roko Sau, with approval from the neighboring villages, re-established the *Daveta tabu*, declaring the site a Marine Protected Area (MPA). Once the MPA was marked with a *cibicibi* tree, locals excitedly jumped into the ocean in celebration. The MPA is both a revival of ancient Fijian customs and a sanction of modern methods of sustainability - it is Totoya's first official Marine Protected Area.



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Pre-Colonial Music and Culture in Fiji

This year, Tiffany Dumouchelle and Steven Solook, both PhD candidates at UCSD, returned to Fiji in an effort to gain a better understanding of the pre-colonial musical traditions and culture that seem to be fading from more industrialized parts of Fiji. They decided to conduct their research on Fulaga Island, which is far removed from industrial impacts.

Due to the remote location of the island, Fulaga islanders have maintained much of the rich Fijian culture that was prevalent in Fiji prior to its colonization. Since boats do not frequent the island often, villagers cannot depend on the regular delivery of gasoline or other processed goods. Therefore, motorized boats are rarely, if at all, used, resulting in an island community that has retained many traditions that have disappeared elsewhere in Fiji.

Dumouchelle and Solook conducted interviews throughout the island, and observed meke (traditional dance), lullabies, and other types of music performed by the community. The indigenous Fijian music currently practiced was documented to provide a better understanding of how musical traditions spread throughout Fiji.

The findings were given to the primary research centers in Fiji as a resource in hopes of helping Fijian communities better determine possible means of conserving long-held Fijian musical traditions.



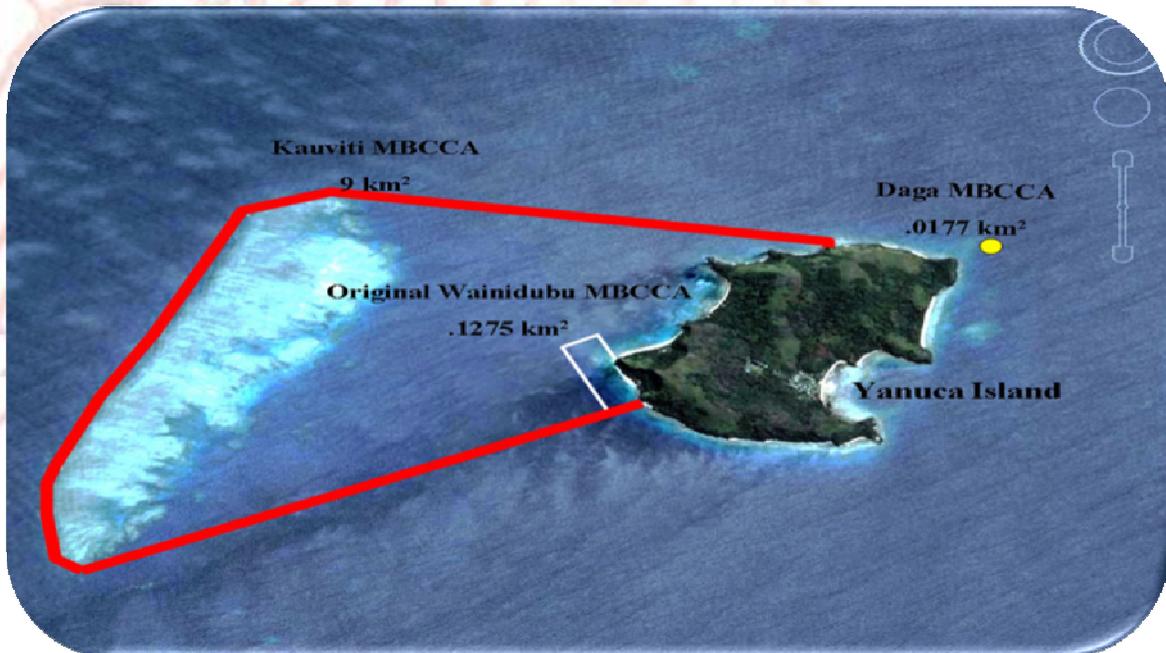
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FLMMA Workshop on Yanuca Island

In March, Pacific Blue Foundation funded a Fiji Locally Managed Marine Areas (FLMMA) workshop on Yanuca Island that focused on marine conservation efforts. The workshop was held to enhance the knowledge and skills of community members in marine conservation practices by combining traditional methods with scientific knowledge.

The FLMMA workshop helped the Yanuca community identify practices that are destructive to the surrounding environment and the coral reef, such as overfishing and fishing during spawning seasons. Upon recognizing these threats, the community collaborated to determine appropriate solutions to mitigate the problems.

By promoting awareness and facilitating discussions, FLMMA allowed locals to develop a marine resource management plan to protect their natural resources.





This diagram highlights the process that FLMMA uses in engaging in a Community in terms of Resource Management. To date, six community members have been trained as fish wardens. Their task is to closely monitor the Tabu Area.

FLMMA GOALS

- Enhance the knowledge and skills of community members in marine conservation methods and practices by combining traditional with scientific knowledge.
- Improve and maintain a healthy marine environment for the people of Yanuca by developing a marine resource management plan that will ensure protection of their natural resources.

2011

PROJECTS, RESEARCH AND FUNDING

FIJI

Suva Island

Veitau Waqa Traditional Canoe Races & Training of Locals to Sail Camakau

- Pacific Blue Foundation Sponsorship

Fulaga Island

Research of Pre-Colonial Fijian Music

- Tiffany Dumouchelle and Steven Solook with Pacific Blue Foundation Sponsorship

Yanuca Island

FLMMA Workshop for Community Members

- Pacific Blue Foundation Sponsorship

Solar Panel Workshop for Yanuca Community

- Pacific Blue Foundation Sponsorship

Totoya Island

Exploration of Sacred Reef of Totoya

- In Collaboration with Waitt Institute, Wildlife Conservation Society, and Wetlands International with Pacific Blue Foundation Sponsorship



PACIFIC BLUE FOUNDATION

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