



Action Project Reference: 12-03

Organisation: Nature Fiji

### Action Project Proposal:

“Write an advocacy and communications strategy for the launch of the Great Fiji Migratory Birds Count”

#### Who Are NatureFiji?

NatureFiji-MareqetiViti (NFMV) is the membership-based working arm of the Fiji Nature Conservation Trust (FNCT), established in 2007 under the Fiji Charitable Trusts Act.

The only voice for Fiji’s forest-based endangered species. Through our advocacy work, we have raised the profile of Fiji’s endangered species locally. Fiji’s notes and coins now showcase Fiji’s endemic and endangered species, and information from our endangered species compendium on our website has been incorporated into the curriculum for Fiji’s primary and secondary schools.

Our vision is a Fiji rich in nature where a diversity of species and habitats are sustained, and future generations are empowered to care for and live in harmony with their natural heritage.

#### Mission:

The mission of FNCT is to conserve and restore Fiji’s biodiversity and its habitat working together with local communities and partners to value and steward their natural resources. We implement these projects nationally under four pillars:

1. Save Species,

2. Conserve and Protect Sites and Habitats,
3. Empower People and Communities
4. Build a Strong and Robust Organisation.

### **Long Term Aims & Vision:**

At NatureFiji-MareqetiViti, we aim to generate enthusiasm and local expertise in all matters associated with wildlife conservation and management through raising the level of conservation and environmental awareness and education. Fiji's children are particularly important as for too long, they have had minimal opportunity to learn of the remarkable natural heritage of our islands and seas. We recognize the key role played by Fiji's indigenous landowners and NatureFiji- MareqetiViti promotes much better understanding and awareness of Fiji's wildlife.

We hope to continue to grow an active membership that will assist in conservation projects, wildlife management and island restoration projects.

Our core values revolve around upholding the biological integrity of Fijis' natural heritage, evidence-based advice and leadership. Likewise, valuing and respecting members, donors, and partners. Since its establishment in 2007, NatureFiji- MareqetiViti (NFMV) has collaborated with the Fiji Ministry of Forestry (MoF) and the National Trust of Fiji (NTF) to become the most active terrestrial biodiversity conservation organization in Fiji, and is responsible for all but one of the active endangered species conservation projects currently being undertaken in Fiji (Fiji Petrel, Fiji Flying Fox, Fiji Mastiff Bat, Fiji Sago Palm, Navua Palm, Red-throated Lorikeet, Yaqaga Crested Iguana, Collared Petrel, Fiji Acropyle).

### **Current Challenges:**

1. Core finance: Since 2012, NFMV has had difficulty with securing consistent funding. The organisation has never been able to afford a full-time fundraiser. As the local partner for BirdLife International, NFMV has benefited from their regional funded programs, which, from 2008 to 2016 contributed to 60% of the organisation's core funds. Projects since 2016 have been small grants with limited core funds. While we lost some key personnel after 2016, we have since recruited passionate, dedicated young individuals who developed the new NFMV Strategy 2020 - 2024. However, we still lack the capacity to write proposals for grants that have good core funds.

2. Communications: The sites and species that we choose to run our projects with are usually isolated (communities and sites) and rare or endangered (species), and need consistent interactions and communications. In Fiji, the most far-reaching means of communication is the radio. While we know the messages that we need to send out, we rarely have the time to do

this because each staff member is busy managing and reporting on their respective programs. In the recent past, we have had volunteer communication specialists who have sat with members of the team, and through a question and answer session, developed content for media releases, news-bites for our websites and social media platforms etc. We have found this to be the most effective means of getting content to communicate to our members, donors and partners. We no longer have this capacity for consistent messaging and interaction with our stakeholders. A consistent comment from our volunteers is that we have a lot of stories to tell - but we just don't tell it because we are so focussed on our projects. We are not using our technical capacity and all the information we have to its fullest capacity.

At this time of COVID-19 pandemic, securing enough funding for our current programs has been a challenge along with finding donors who are willing to support species-based conservation action. This, in turn, affects our ability to recruit, delegate and efficiently complete conservation actions that are key to saving species, habitats and the people that live around them.

### **Further Information: The Great Fiji Migratory Bird Count**

**What:** The National Fiji Migratory Bird Count is a campaign due to be launched in October. This campaign is being led by The Fiji Ministry of Waterways and Environment who has teamed up with some NGOs in Fiji, predominately Birdlife International and Nature Fiji-Mareqeti Viti.

**Aim:** This campaign aims to step up public and community awareness on the importance of wetlands. The goal is to ensure Fiji is a safe and peaceful migratory destination for birds and other migratory species.

**How:** We aim to engage ministries, NGOs, development partners, and donor agencies to work closely to put strategies in place that will protect our wildlife and birds. This will involve more field assessments, building datasets, monitoring development impacts, creating designated wetland sites and enforcing wildlife laws.

**Why:** The campaign will help Fiji to understand their migratory species, their pathways and habitats in order to help protect endangered and vulnerable species of global significance.

Check out this [resource](#) for more information.

Here are some international frameworks (and one national framework), that directly and indirectly affect the migratory population. These frameworks help provide opportunities to facilitate the creation of effective policies worldwide, and could be useful to look at during your project:

- Convention on Migratory Species
- Convention on Biological Diversity
- Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Flora and Fauna
- Convention on Wetlands of International Importance

- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) – this plan focuses on conserving some of Fiji’s species of conservation and national significance.

## Key Research & Discussion Areas:

### Plan and deliver ...

- How much work has been done on the advocacy and communication strategy? What has been completed? What needs to be worked on?
- What areas of communication should be included in the strategy? (It could be good to focus on a couple of key communication avenues in detail)
- What are the major aims of the strategy?
- What key guiding principles are going to be essential to ensure the success of the Initiative?
- What information can you find out about the Great Fiji Migratory Birds Count? - are any social media platforms already being utilised?
- What forms of communication will be most successful in raising awareness of the initiative and persuading people to get involved?
  - Will you need to help create graphics/ posts for this initiative?
- Consider advocacy and communication strategies for other organisations either in Fiji or elsewhere.
  - What works well?
  - What could be improved?
  - How are the aims of Nature Fiji similar?

### Create content ...

- If you are appealing to multiple audiences (E.g. Public, NGOs, donor agencies) how could you differentiate your content (e.g. language, level of assumed background knowledge) for varying audiences?
- What is the best way for you to format this strategy to ensure that it is a working document that is easy to understand but also able to be edited as progress is made?
- How is the strategy going to be presented at the end of your internship?

### Barriers to success ...

- What barriers could affect the planning, delivery and engagement with the strategy? Examples could include:

- Financial barriers
- Varying information needed for different stakeholders (public, business, etc)
- Practical barriers (e.g. access to internet to access web content)
- Information and knowledge (e.g. level of assumed knowledge is too high for certain audiences)
- What solutions can you think of that could potentially solve these problems?

### Useful Links:

- Organisation page - <https://thinkpacific.com/action-project-nature-fiji/>
- Website - <https://naturefiji.org/>
- Facebook - <https://www.facebook.com/NatureFijiMareqetiViti/>
- Instagram - <https://www.instagram.com/naturefiji/>
- Ministry of Waterways and Environment - <https://www.mowe.gov.fj/>
- Birdlife International - <http://www.birdlife.org/>

### Further Questions

Are there any questions you would like to ask Nature Fiji to assist in completing this project?

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