



## *World Wetland Day Report 2009*

*Theme: "Upstream, Downstream: Wetland Connects Us all"*

## ***Introduction:***

2009 is the first year that the Government of Fiji has actively participated in the World Wetlands Day at the national level. The event was coordinated by the Department of Environment in collaboration with Wetlands International, University of the South Pacific, and the NatureFiji/MareqetiViti.

With the theme on **“Upstream, Downstream: Wetland Connects Us All”**, the campaign will provide an opportunity for people to understand the importance of wetlands, their interconnections with the surroundings, benefits derived from wetlands and how activities upstream and downstream can affect our wetlands. Also crucial is for the public to understand the work under the Ramsar Convention in the country and how community can benefit from it.

## ***Objectives:***

- To educate and raise awareness on the World Wetland Day Theme **“Upstream, Downstream: Wetland Connects Us All”**.
- Raise awareness on importance and threats of Wetlands among the general public.
- Raise awareness on Fiji’s Ramsar site.

## ***Expected Outcomes:***

- Greater awareness and understanding of Wetlands and related issues amongst the general public.

## ***Target Group:***

- The general public

## ***Activities:***

### **Newspaper supplement**

A three page supplement was published in the Fiji Times on February 2<sup>nd</sup> commemorating the World Wetland Day Celebrations in Fiji. The three pages provided background information on Fiji’s Ramsar Sites, highlighted the benefits and

background of the Ramsar Convention, a species page which highlighted endemic, endangered and indicator species commonly found in Fiji's wetlands, and an article on River Basin Management which highlighted the recent flooding in the Fiji Islands.

### **Talkback show- Radio**

A talk-back show was aired at the Viti FM radio station in the Fijian language to highlight the importance of the theme for the WWD. Speakers for the program included representatives from NatureFiji/MareqetiViti, Department of Environment, and Wetlands International.

### **Television Advertisement**

A television advertisement was aired on the 1<sup>st</sup> of February (Sunday) to 4<sup>th</sup> of February (Wednesday) on Fiji One which also highlights the theme with important messages to the public about our wetlands. It addresses threats to wetlands and ways to protect our wetlands, eg. River basins.

### **Posters**

Three thousand posters on 'Upstream-Downstream – Wetlands connect us All' were produced in the three languages - English, Fijian and Hindi. The posters were distributed to all the schools through out Fiji with the assistance from Curriculum Development Unit of the Ministry of Education.

### **Conclusion**

The Department of Environment, Fiji would like to acknowledge the support provided by the Ramsar Secretariat towards our WWD preparations and specifically for the poster template. We also acknowledge the Fiji Government, Wetlands International, Institute of Applied Science, USP and NatureFiji/MareqetiViti for their financial support and technical support towards the campaign.

It is hoped that this will mark the beginning of coordinated efforts put towards WWD celebrations in the future.