



WWF

FACTSHEET

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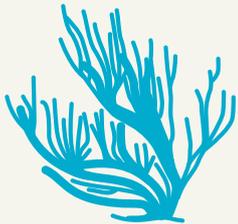


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## WWF Priority Places- Southwest Pacific

# Malomalo Village- Fiji

### Conservation Focus



**MALOMALO VILLAGE, ONE OF FIJI'S MAJOR HARVEST AREA FOR LIVE ROCK, BANNED THE ACTIVITY IN 2004 OUT OF CONCERN FOR THEIR MARINE ENVIRONMENT.**

Malomalo Village was a major harvest site for live rock in Fiji's Aquarium Trade. Live rock refers to coral rubble, base limestone and reef rock that is covered with pink to purplish coralline algae, used as bio-filters in aquariums.. WWF's engagement with the Malomalo community was in response to the Fiji governments concern over the sustainability of the Aquarium Trade Industry, the potential threat unregulated extraction had on the marine environment and whether there was conclusive data based evidence to issue a total ban on the activity. At the time of WWF's entry into the site in 2002, roughly 15 per cent of annual export of live rock from Fiji was derived from this community's "i qoliqoli" or traditional fishing grounds and had been an ongoing activity for almost a decade. WWF initiated a site scientific study to assess the sustainability of the live rock extraction to advocate continued harvest either through community certification via the Marine Aquarium Council and a determined harvest quota or if deemed not viable, a complete ban of the activity. WWF through community awareness, training and consultation regarding their marine environment, encouraged the community to set up a marine protected area. In the process of WWF collaboratively working with the community to develop their marine protected area management plan and determining a viable solution to the local collection of live rock, the Malomalo community of their own volition in 2004, banned the activity. Since then WWF's site presence has been to strengthen their community marine conservation efforts and to develop alternative income livelihoods, for the community members that had previously depended on the live rock trade.



Malomalo community setting their native tree forest nursery

© Opeti Vateleli / WWF-SPPO



Financial literacy training with Malomalo community

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## Conservation- Safeguarding Nature and Community Interests

The live rock harvest ban established by the Malomalo community in 2004 from a conservation and natural resource sustainability perspective is a commendable one, however this ban has had dire implications on the economic livelihood of the community. In October 2005, WWF undertook a socio-economic reassessment of the community to gauge the impact of the live rock harvest ban on household livelihood. The results from this reassessment demonstrated that previous live rock harvesting households recorded lower household income, on average some recording a loss of 70 per cent of their monthly household income as compared to 2002. Most of these families had reverted back to harvesting fish for sale and sugar cane cutting, as alternatives albeit it being lower in generating income than their previous occupation.

Development within the village, the education of their children and meeting household and communal obligations are central to the amount of income earned by households within the community. It was due to this reason that WWF was approached by headman of the Malomalo community to assist them to undertake planning and possible activities to implement a potential alternative income generating option, to not only assist those households previously engaged in the live rock trade but also provide opportunities for their youth or an initiative in which the whole community could participate and benefit from. Through funding sourced and secured through VASS-NZAID, WWF in partnership with the community began planning, training and building community capacity and finally implementing the defined alternative income options determined through community and expert consultation.

Some of the focal alternative income activities have been to synergise the village potential to the local tourism industry, through handicraft production and local crop supply to resorts through community model farm development. Effort has also been made to build on community conservation efforts such as the introduction of native trees to the landscape and income potential through sandalwood introduction. Feasibility work to develop small scale eco-tourism for the village has been done to effectively link conservation and alternative income activities undertaken by the community.



Villagers collecting live rock, Coral Coast, Fiji

© WWF

### Site Profile

Malomalo village, one of eight, belonging to the Malomalo District is situated along the south-western coast of Viti Levu, the main island in the Fiji Group. A coastal village surrounded by grassland and remnant dry forest and a marine inshore area with traditional access of 1km<sup>2</sup>. Comprising of 31 households, with a population of 150, the community is one of semi subsistence. Of the total number of households, a third was actively involved in the harvest of live rock.

## WWF Community Assisted Achievements at a Glance

- Community marine protected area established
- Community forest nursery established, with community reforestation programme in place
- Seagrass and coral reef monitoring to profile the local marine environment
- Climate change awareness and adaptation plan development
- Community model farm developed with youth

### For more information

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#### Why we are here

To stop the degradation of the planet's natural environment and to build a future in which humans live in harmony with nature.

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