Country Results Report

The Biodiversity Finance Initiative (**BIOFIN**) programme in **Fiji**
REPORTING PERIOD: January to December 2025

December 2025

Final version



Image: Tavoro Waterfall, Bouma Park, Taveuni Island

BIOFIN COUNTRY PROGRAMME

W: https://www.biofin.org/index.php/Fiji

BIOFIN
The Biodiversity Finance Initiative

BIOFIN COUNTRY PROGRAMME PROFILE

Country: Fiji

Geographic coverage:

BIOFIN Fiji will work with 3 sub-national geographical areas with potential finance solutions. In Naidiri village, located on the southwestern (coral) coast of Viti Levu in Fiji's Nadroga-Navosa province, the local community faces significant challenges due to declining fish stocks in their traditional fishing grounds. This decline is attributed to climate change and overfishing, leading to the endangerment of species like the bumphead parrotfish and humphead wrasse. To address these issues, the village is piloting biodiversity credits and eco-tourism initiatives centered around coral restoration. This comprehensive eco-tourism model will include guided restoration activities, educational programs, and community-driven conservation projects, funded through visitor fees and partnerships with eco-conscious organizations

The Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park, near Suva, represents another community-led initiative aimed at conserving Fiji’s coastal ecosystems and native tree species, which are threatened by deforestation and climate change. By promoting eco-tourism and native tree conservation, the park seeks to provide ecological and economic benefits while attracting attention to endangered species. This financial solution will develop eco-tourism infrastructure, enhance community-led tree-planting initiatives, and secure long-term conservation funding through revenue generated from nature-based tourism, external grants, and carbon offset programs.

Similarly, the conservation of Fiji's national flower, the Tagimoucia, relies on eco-tourism to create a sustainable financial model that supports guided tours and community-based conservation efforts, ensuring the protection of this endemic species.

Programme period (as funded by Phase II/Phase II Extended funds): 30 May 2024 – 31 December 2030

Budget (from Phase II/Phase II Extended funds): Fiji ($216,000)- Canada

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Executive summary

Progress toward targeted results

Validated BFP (following the validation of a PIR, BER, and FNA)

The BIOFIN Fiji initiative is currently being updated to revise its biodiversity finance plan, which was originally compiled in 2018. A consultant is being recruited to assist with this update.

These assessments support the Ministry in achieving Target 19 of the Kunming Global Biodiversity Framework, focusing on developing a comprehensive biodiversity finance plan.

Preliminary results from the PIR and BER indicate updates in policy frameworks and financing mechanisms, highlighting recent sectoral reforms and budget changes. A validation workshop for the National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP) facilitated stakeholder input on biodiversity expenditure, with a national report launch scheduled for March 2026.

While the Biodiversity Finance Plan (BFP) is being updated and validated, the Ministry has identified three key finance solutions:

A. Enhancing Marine Biodiversity through Coral Restoration Initiatives in Naidiri

In the village of Naidiri, the community has observed a significant decline in fish stocks within their traditional fishing grounds, primarily due to climate change and overfishing. Villagers have reported sharp decreases in certain species, such as the 'kalia' (bumphead parrotfish) and the 'varivoce' (humphead wrasse), which are becoming endangered as a result of these factors.

To address this, biodiversity offset strategies for coral replanting, integrated with eco-tourism, offer a sustainable solution for marine conservation. This initiative will establish a comprehensive eco-tourism model centered on coral restoration efforts, featuring guided activities, educational programs, and community-driven conservation projects. Funding will be generated through visitor fees and strategic partnerships with eco-conscious organizations. A feasibility study will also be conducted to establish a biodiversity credit mechanism that will provide financial support to the community.

The goals are to conserve coral reefs, enhance fish stocks, generate sustainable income through biodiversity credits and eco-tourism, and raise awareness about the critical importance of biodiversity.

It is anticipated that all women and girls living in Naidiri village will benefit from this initiative.

B. ForestShield Finance: Investing in the Conservation of Tagimoucia

Fiji's national flower, the Tagimoucia, is at risk of becoming endangered or extinct due to the threats posed by global warming and habitat loss. This flower is endemic to Fiji and only grows on the island of Taveuni.

Conservation through eco-tourism presents a viable solution. By attracting visitors, eco-tourism can generate revenue for conservation efforts focused on the Tagimoucia. The initiative will develop a comprehensive eco-tourism model that includes guided tours, educational programs, and community-based conservation initiatives, funded by visitor fees and partnerships.

This approach aims to conserve the Tagimoucia's habitat, boost local economies, and raise awareness about the importance of biodiversity, ultimately generating sustainable income for conservation and local livelihoods. The biodiversity benefits include habitat preservation, species protection, and enhanced ecosystem resilience.

C. Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park Finance: Protecting Native Tree Species

The Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park, located near Suva, is a community-led initiative focused on conserving Fiji’s coastal ecosystems and native tree species, such as dakua (Agathis vitiensis), vesi (Intsia bijuga), makadre (Dacrydium nausoriense), and koka (Bischofia javanica). These species are vital for stabilizing terrestrial, freshwater, and coastal environments, as well as supporting biodiversity. However, they face threats from deforestation, climate change, and unsustainable land use practices.

Eco-tourism and native tree conservation provide a sustainable solution for the Kalokolevu environment, delivering both ecological and economic benefits. The park will serve as a focal point for biodiversity conservation efforts, drawing attention to the restoration of endangered native tree species while creating a revenue stream through nature-based tourism.

This finance solution will develop eco-tourism infrastructure at Kalokolevu, promote community-led tree-planting initiatives, and secure partnerships for long-term conservation funding. Revenue generated from eco-tourism, along with external grants and carbon offset programs, will be reinvested into tree restoration and habitat protection activities.

Other results and looking ahead



Caption: As part of the overall fee charged for snorkeling at the marine biodiversity park a certain percentage of the fee also caters for guests' lunch which is prepared by "Soqosoqo Vaka Mārama" (women group) who also benefit from the percentage allocation. Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park is one of the three BIOFIN supported solutions for Fiji.



Caption: Youths formed core actors in the financial model for the Nadiri Biodiversity Park. Their role is instrumental as they play environment guardian for the marine biodiversity and also act as tour guides for the guests. Naidiri Marine Park is one of the BIOFIN solutions for Fiji. Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park is one of the three BIOFIN supported solutions for Fiji.

Initial visits as part of a regional inception workshop at the Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park offered valuable, first-hand insights essential for stakeholder consultation and scoping. Engaging directly with local communities, youth conservationists, and park guardians and managers allows for a deeper understanding of ecological priorities, cultural values, and socioeconomic dependencies on marine resources. Observing the park's biodiversity and management practices provides context-specific knowledge that cannot be fully captured through desk-based research. Such an early visit helped identify key concerns, opportunities, and potential conflicts early in the planning process, ensuring that project designs are realistic, inclusive, and culturally sensitive. This immersive experience also served to strengthen trust, encourages meaningful participation, and enhances the quality of decision-making.

Women in Leadership Roles - ForestShield Finance: Investing in the Conservation of Tagimoucia

At Tavoro Forest Park Co-operative Limited, home to Bouma Falls, Taveuni Island, the Information Centre is managed by a dedicated local woman whose leadership is central to the site's success.

- She oversees daily operations, manages handicraft sales created by Bouma Village women, and coordinates branded merchandise, creating vital income streams for local families.
- Acting as a liaison between the community and tourists, she ensures conservation messages are effectively communicated while enhancing visitor experiences.
- Her responsibilities include inventory management, financial reporting, and maintaining product quality standards, fostering transparency and accountability.
- Beyond economic empowerment, her role promotes gender inclusion, enabling other women to participate in eco-tourism, develop entrepreneurial skills, and gain visibility in conservation-linked tourism.
- Through her leadership, the center has become a hub for cultural exchange, sustainable livelihoods, and community-driven conservation.

A. Country factsheet: the country's biodiversity finance profile and the programming approach

Fiji's biodiversity environment comprises fragile island ecosystems that are vital for sustaining both life and the economic well-being of the nation. The rich biodiversity in Fiji significantly contributes to various sectors, including food, agriculture, tourism, and recreational activities, while also providing essential services such as coastal protection and shelter. However, the alarming rate of biodiversity loss poses serious threats to achieving multiple Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), particularly those addressing poverty, hunger, and health. Vulnerable populations, including marginalized groups, women, and children, are most affected as they heavily rely on biodiversity and ecosystem services for their survival.

The degradation of Fiji's wetlands and reefs has resulted in the loss of critical benefits, highlighting the urgent need to integrate the coastal protection value of mangroves and reefs into policy and management decisions. As Fiji looks ahead to the next 5 to 10 years, it faces substantial opportunities and risks that will affect both its ecosystems and the communities that depend on them. In response to these challenges, Fiji signed the Convention on Biological Diversity at the Earth Summit in 1992, which led to the development of the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP I) in 2003, endorsed by the Cabinet in 2007. This plan was reviewed in 2010, resulting in an Implementation Framework focused on monitoring key thematic areas such as inshore fisheries, species conservation, and protected areas. Currently, the Fiji NBSAP for 2020-2025 is being revised to incorporate the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) and its associated targets. Fiji has established national targets, including Target 19, which aims to create a National Resource Mobilization Plan that consolidates all sources of biodiversity funding available to support its NBSAP priorities.

To enhance biodiversity conservation efforts, Fiji is a signatory to several Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including the Ramsar Convention, the Convention on Migratory Species (CMS), and the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES). Additionally, legislation such as the Environment Management Act 2005 and the Endangered and Protected Species Act 2003, along with key national reports like the State of Environment Report 2020 and the Sixth National Reports to the Convention on Biological Diversity, provide a foundation for protecting the national Biodiversity.

The National Protected Areas Committee has identified Key Biodiversity Areas, Important Bird Areas, and Priority Terrestrial and Marine Managed Areas in Fiji. The government has also partnered with conservation-focused NGOs through memorandums of understanding (MOUs) to implement various programs under the NBSAP, including community-managed marine areas and forest conservation initiatives under REDD+.

Although the final BFP was not endorsed, a number of solutions was identified as part of the BFP. Among others, the different financial mechanisms in place include Green Bonds and the Environment and Climate Adaptation Levy (ECAL), both crucial for financing sustainable initiatives in Fiji. In October 2017, Fiji became the first emerging economy and the third country worldwide to issue a sovereign green bond, raising 100 million Fijian dollars (approximately US$50 million) to support its transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient economy. This bond aims to finance projects with economic, environmental, and societal benefits, particularly those addressing climate change, and is guided by the Green Bond Principles 2017 (GBP) from the International Capital Markets Association. The framework aligns with the Sustainable Development Goals, funding eligible projects across sectors like renewable energy, climate resilience, and pollution reduction.

Additionally, the ECAL, enacted in 2015, is a tax on prescribed services, items, and high-income earners designed to fund environmental protection and climate adaptation initiatives. A special purpose fund was created to allocate these levy funds effectively for conservation and climate change mitigation projects. The ECAL includes a 10% charge on specific sales, luxury car purchases over 3000 cc, and individuals earning above $270,000 annually, along with a plastic bag levy that started at ten cents and increased to twenty cents. By April 2018, ECAL revenue surpassed FJ$110.6 million, exceeding the FJ$94 million budgeted for the 2017-2018 fiscal year, demonstrating its significant contribution to safeguarding Fiji's economy and communities from climate-related disasters. In 2022, amendments were made to the ECAL.

A.1. National implementation context

The identified finance solutions, including eco-tourism and biodiversity credits, are deemed effective because they leverage Fiji's rich natural resources to generate sustainable revenue streams while promoting conservation efforts. While eco-tourism is straightforward, implementing biodiversity credits in Fiji presents several challenges:

- **Complex Regulatory Frameworks**: The regulatory environment may not be fully developed or understood, leading to confusion among stakeholders.

- **Limited Awareness**: A lack of awareness and understanding of biodiversity credits can hinder support and participation from stakeholders.
- **Risk of Greenwashing**: There are concerns about superficial environmental efforts, and reliance on external funding poses sustainability risks.
- **Land Use Conflicts**: Conflicts over land use may arise, disrupting traditional practices.

These finance solutions directly address the urgent threats to biodiversity loss, which impact food security, health, and economic stability, particularly for vulnerable populations. By integrating financial mechanisms that support local communities and ecosystems, these approaches foster resilience and encourage sustainable practices that align with Fiji's commitments to several key Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs):

- **SDG 2 (Zero Hunger)**: Promotes food security and sustainable agriculture.
- **SDG 3 (Good Health and Well-being)**: Ensures healthy ecosystems that contribute to better health outcomes.
- **SDG 15 (Life on Land)**: Focuses on protecting and restoring terrestrial ecosystems to combat biodiversity loss.
- **SDG 13 (Climate Action)**: Enhances ecosystem resilience to climate change impacts.
- **SDG 1 (No Poverty)**: Supports economic stability and reduces vulnerability for communities reliant on natural resources.
- **SDG 17 (Partnerships for the Goals)**: Encourages collaboration and partnerships.

The BIOFIN program will primarily focus on engaging the Fiji's private sector, recognizing the limited appetite for public sector investment in biodiversity conservation. By fostering partnerships with eco-conscious businesses and organizations, the BIOFIN Fiji program aims to create a collaborative framework that encourages investment in sustainable practices.

The management of the BIOFIN Fiji program is under the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change. Plans are in place to update and finalize the Biodiversity Finance Plan through consultations with existing biodiversity platforms, such as the Protected Area Committee, Species Committee, and the National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan Steering Committees, among others.

B. Overview of key results

PIR>BER>FNA>BFP

This year marked a turning point as the country moved to update its foundational BIOFIN assessments—the Policy and Institutional Review (PIR) and the Biodiversity Expenditure Review (BER), Finance Needs Assessment (FNA) and Biodiversity Finance Plan (BFP) originally drafted in 2018.

The assessment also supports the Ministry of Environment in its achievement of the Target 19 of the Kunming Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF) which is to develop the biodiversity Finance Plan for the country.

The preliminary results of the PIR and BER incorporate new policy developments, revised expenditure data, and emerging financing mechanisms that have gained relevance over the past six years. This includes recent sectoral reforms, shifts in national budget allocations, and innovative finance instruments. These updates represent early policy and institutional results, as they reflect a system increasingly aware of the need to integrate biodiversity into national planning and budgeting processes. Also establishing a clear national vision and governance structure, developing and enforce biodiversity-friendly land use and sectoral policies and addressing capacity, compliance, and coordination gaps.

Series of other events the BIOFIN project participated they are as follows:

- Pacific Island Round Table (PIRT)

The 28th Pacific Islands Roundtable for Nature Conservation (PIRT) Annual Meeting was held on 1-3 December 2024. The in-person component was hosted at the Conservation International office in Suva, Fiji while others joined online via Microsoft Teams link.

The meeting had 50 participants, both virtual and in-person. During the PIRT meeting, Riazi-ud-Dean from UNDP presented the Biodiversity Finance Initiative (BIOFIN), highlighting its role in addressing the significant biodiversity finance gap, estimated at USD 700–800 billion annually. BIOFIN supports Pacific Island countries, including Fiji, in mobilizing and aligning financial resources for biodiversity conservation and ecosystem management.

The initiative emphasizes strong collaboration with regional organizations and stakeholders to ensure that finance plans are context-specific and aligned with national priorities. It also advocates for improved coordination among various biodiversity financing initiatives in the region to avoid duplication and enhance effectiveness, reinforcing the importance of collective efforts in achieving sustainable conservation outcomes.

- National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP)

The National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan (NBSAP) validation workshop which BIOFIN also had a session also had provided an opportunity to work with the stakeholders to update the biodiversity expenditure, and costings of activities in the biodiversity finance plans. The biodiversity and finance working group was also established under the NBSAP which will form as the steering committee for BIOFIN implementation.

The national launch of the reports is planned for March 2026. These milestones are expected to generate significant visibility and political traction, especially as the reports will highlight the country's biodiversity finance gaps and opportunities.

Once finalized, the reports will be submitted to Cabinet for endorsement, a critical institutional milestone that will formally anchor biodiversity finance within national decision-making structures. Cabinet endorsement will also pave the way for the development and adoption of the updated BFP, which will outline the country's priority financing solutions.

Throughout this process, the Government of Canada has been consistently acknowledged as a key funding partner supporting the BIOFIN programme. Its contribution has been highlighted in consultation materials, stakeholder meetings, and internal communications, reinforcing the importance of international partnerships in advancing national biodiversity finance reforms.

B.1. Implementation of Finance Solutions

Fiji's Progress on Biodiversity Finance Solutions

Fiji's work on biodiversity finance solutions advanced meaningfully this period as the country deepened engagement across three finance solution sites—Taveuni Island, Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park, and Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park. What began as exploratory discussions in previous years has now evolved into tangible results that reflect the priorities and realities of the communities who depend on these ecosystems.

The consultations held in October were not simply meetings; they were moments where communities articulated their aspirations for the land and sea that sustain them. Women played a central role, offering insights on resource use, cultural stewardship, and the economic pressures facing households. Their voices ensured that emerging finance solutions are not only technically viable but socially inclusive.



(Caption: Women participating in the consultation and discussion session)

Institutional and Community Results

Across the three sites, consultations generated draft action plans for piloting and scaling biodiversity finance solutions. They are as follows:

Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park

Located on the coral coast of the Fiji Islands, the park is managed by a community-based organization, opting for tourism as one of the activities to protect the ocean, thus supporting SDG 14. In 2009, the local youth of Naidiri village launched their official marine protected area, known as *tabu*, operating as a no fishing zone. Initially covering 1,200 m² in 2009, it has expanded to 28,800 m² by 2024.

The zone extends 160 m along the shore and 180 m from to the ocean². It was launched in response to the undersized fish caught close to the coast, resulting from climate change and other anthropological stressors such as illegal fishing, coastal erosion, poor farming and logging practices, as well as pollution.

The Naidiri Youth Group manages this marine protected area and collaborates with government agencies, NGOs and researchers to monitor the area, restore fish stocks and restore corals and mangrove. In 2022, the Fijian Government officially recognized the marine protected area as Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park (NMBP).

The community has set up a tourism venture, providing village tours and coral reef snorkelling experiences. These activities rank among the most popular experiences in Fiji and demonstrate the economic potential for Indigenous People seeking to diversify their income.

The snorkelling experience features a mapped tour of coral nurseries, giant clams and fish houses. A storytelling is delivered by local guides. Visitors may be engaged in coral planting, mangrove restoration and cleaning beaches.

The venture follows a self-sustaining model, by generating funds to enhance the protected area, the *tabu* system, as well as coral and mangrove restoration. This benefits both the environment and the community, by directly reinvesting financial resources into the project.

The initiative also promotes cultural transmission, allowing for Fijian indigenous culture to be shared through tourism. Nevertheless, the community still needs to achieve unity to buy-in tourism development and motivation to continue. Identifying sources of funding and submitting complex grant applications is essential. Lastly, local tour guides require product marketing, finance and business management skills.

Opportunities and Challenges for Sustainable Marine Tourism and Community Development

The group work activity identified a range of opportunities and challenges in advancing sustainable marine tourism and community development. Opportunities include the establishment of a clam hatchery to supply local resorts and restaurants with sustainably sourced seafood while supporting reef restoration. Capacity-building initiatives, such as training programs for tour guides and dive instructors, would enhance service quality and create skilled employment. Strengthening legal recognition of community-managed marine areas could improve enforcement and attract conservation funding. Integrating modern science with traditional knowledge, for example, combining GPS mapping with indigenous reef management practices, would ensure culturally appropriate and effective conservation strategies. Participants also highlighted opportunities for cultural knowledge exchange through village tours showcasing traditional crafts and storytelling and promoting sustainable living practices such as organic farming to reduce pressure on marine resources. Additional examples include creating employment opportunities through eco-tourism ventures, engaging youth in marine monitoring programs, investing in infrastructure development like eco-friendly jetties, and establishing breeding grounds using clam shells to support biodiversity. Expanding marine protected areas (MPAs) and implementing awareness campaigns in schools and communities were also identified as critical steps toward long-term sustainability.

Conversely, several challenges were noted, including limited access to essential equipment such as boats and snorkeling gear, over-reliance on marine resources for income, insufficient financial resources and inconsistent revenue streams, vulnerability to natural disasters and storm surges, the impacts of climate change, and funding gaps for training and awareness programs. To mitigate these challenges, participants proposed community-led strategies such as appointing fish wardens to monitor illegal fishing, developing alternative income-generating activities like handicraft production and seaweed farming, conducting sustainability workshops and awareness campaigns, and formulating climate adaptation plans to reduce disaster risks. Collectively, these strategies aim to transform existing constraints into opportunities for resilience, empowerment, and long-term sustainability.

Similarly, the indigenous youth-led Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park achieved international recognition by winning the 2nd Ocean Love Innovation Award 2025 at the Blue Economy World Congress in Barcelona, Spain. This achievement places Fiji on the global map for ocean conservation and innovation.

Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park

The Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park is actively pursuing inclusive tourism initiatives that emphasize biodiversity conservation while enhancing community livelihoods. Recent discussions have focused on empowering local stakeholders, including women, youth, and elders, to ensure that tourism benefits all members of the community.

The development of unique tourism treasure maps has highlighted various cultural and natural attractions, leading to income-generating opportunities such as cultural performances, guided nature walks, and eco-lodge development.



Caption: Kalokolevu Community Consultation

An action plan has been established to address challenges such as limited marketing skills and funding constraints by creating training programs and applying for grants. Additionally, the park aims to promote itself through an official Facebook page, leveraging the platform to engage local and international audiences, share conservation stories, and build community pride. By implementing these strategies, Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park seeks to become a model for sustainable and inclusive tourism that benefits both the environment and the local community.

In Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park, consultations revealed a significant finance result: communities identified the Small Grants Programme (SGP) as a viable mechanism to mobilize seed funding for conservation and livelihood initiatives. This marks a shift from viewing SGP

as donor-driven to recognizing it as a strategic entry point for financing. The community has already succeeded in the first round and is drafting a proposal for funding. Once approved, these grants will represent the first tangible financial flows linked to the Kalokolevu finance solution. *"Accessing SGP funding means we can finally turn our conservation ideas into reality."* — Kalokolevu Community Leader

Taveuni Bouma Heritage Park

During the Bouma Community consultation, several key items were identified to enhance inclusive tourism linked to biodiversity conservation. Participants emphasized the importance of inclusive tourism principles that benefit all community members, including women, youth, elders, and persons with disabilities, fostering community pride and involvement.

Unique tourism initiatives were presented, including the Korovou Village Tour featuring traditional activities, the Waitabu Marine Park offering snorkeling opportunities and cultural shows, eco-adventures in Tavuki Village, and the Vidawa Rainforest Hike focusing on medicinal plants and birdwatching. Insights from the Talanoa session highlighted concerns about climate change, invasive species, and the decline of traditional practices. Participants identified sustainable income strategies such as fees from trekking, agricultural products, and cultural performances, while also recognizing community strengths like leadership and cultural knowledge, alongside challenges such as poor connectivity and limited awareness of eco-tourism benefits. Actionable initiatives were proposed, including the development of tourism infrastructure, sustainable agricultural practices, and renewable energy installations. Additionally, a social media strategy was outlined to promote eco-tourism and conservation efforts, encouraging the sharing of local stories and biodiversity highlights to raise awareness and foster community pride.

As we embrace the potential of eco-tourism in our community, it has become clear that our current fees for tourists are outdated and do not reflect the value of the unique experiences we offer. To ensure sustainability and enhance our conservation efforts, we must review and update these fees, making them more equitable and reflective of the rich cultural and natural heritage that visitors come to enjoy – Bouma community Leader

The workshops documented community feedback, concerns, and recommendations for each proposed solution, ensuring strategies are context-specific and backed by community ownership. Strengthening networks among communities, government agencies, NGOs, and private sector partners emerged as a key institutional outcome, laying the groundwork for long-term collaboration.

Activities such as tourism treasure mapping, brainstorming income-generating ideas, and action planning provided clear pathways for implementing eco-tourism initiatives that protect biodiversity while creating economic opportunities.





(Caption: Group discussions and planning)

Addition site – Upper Navua Conservation Area (UNCA)

The upper Navua River in Nabukelevu communities cuts a narrow gorge in the central highlands of Viti Levu, the main island - the gorge itself is some 75 meters deep and 5 to 25 meters wide and hosts important fauna and flora, including an abundance of the disappearing endemic sago palm Metroxylon vitiense. The waters of the site contain breeding populations of at least two endemic freshwater fish species (*Redigibius leveri and Schismatogobius chrysonotus*), and in the forests surrounding the gorge there are 17 endemic species of birds.

Due to its relative inaccessibility, the site is in a nearly undisturbed state, but increased logging in the area poses a potential threat.

The land is owned by traditional families and managed on their behalf by the I Taulkei Land Trust Board, and is presently leased to Rivers Fiji Ltd, an ecotourism and rafting venture which is designing training and education programmes, among other efforts, to develop sustainable ecotourism further. Villagers' centuries-old traditional knowledge of the river and its systems is seen as the foundation for the long-term preservation and sustainable use of the river and near-river resources.

The finance workshop consultation focused on upper Navua riverine and conservation area, emphasizing inclusive tourism as a strategy to protect ecosystems while creating sustainable livelihoods for the community. Participants discussed the importance of community ownership, gender inclusion, and equitable benefit sharing, defining inclusive tourism as an opportunity for all community members—women, youth, elders, and people with disabilities—to engage in tourism experiences such as cultural ceremonies, trekking, and river tours.

The Tourism Treasures Map was introduced to showcase cultural and natural attractions, featuring tour packages that include a traditional Sevusevu welcome ceremony and nature-based activities, with pricing designed to ensure accessibility for both local and international tourists. Through brainstorming sessions, participants identified key opportunities, such as a strong workforce and revived cultural activities, alongside challenges like limited funding and low awareness. Action plans were developed to address these challenges, focusing on strategic planning, training programs, and partnerships. Additionally, the community aims to leverage Facebook as a promotional platform to enhance visibility and engagement, sharing stories of their cultural heritage and conservation efforts. Overall, the discussions reinforced the potential of inclusive tourism as a practical strategy for economic empowerment and environmental stewardship in Nabukelevu, laying a foundation for a resilient future where conservation and livelihoods thrive together.

"Inclusive tourism in Nabukelevu means empowering every member of our community—women, youth, elders, and people with disabilities—to share in the benefits of our rich cultural heritage and natural beauty. By working together, we can protect our ecosystems while creating sustainable livelihoods, ensuring that everyone has a voice and a stake in our future. – Nabukelevu community representative"

Throughout all engagements, the government of Canda and Germany was acknowledged as a key funding partner for the BIOFIN programme. Its support was highlighted in consultation materials, community presentations, and ministerial discussions, reinforcing the importance of international partnerships in advancing Fiji's biodiversity finance agenda.

C. Social Inclusion Stories

The BIOFIN initiative in Fiji is making significant strides in promoting social inclusion, particularly focusing on gender-related considerations, youth engagement, and the empowerment of marginalized groups.

For the Finance solutions interventions, five community workshops were held in Fiji. The workshops were held in October across Nadiri, Kalokolevu, Nabukelevu, Bouma, and Lavena village, with robust support from the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change.

For Naidiri, Kalokolevu and Nabukelevu a total of 36 women and 40 men participated in three consultation workshops. Women involvement ensured the integration of gender perspectives into planning, as they shared valuable insights on community priorities, cultural practices, and livelihood opportunities. This commitment to gender equality recognizes women as key stakeholders in biodiversity conservation and sustainable development.

The remaining two workshops, Bouma and Lavena village, had a total of 57 participants attended, including 10 members of the organizing team. The participants came from various levels in the community and organizations.

Demographic Breakdown of Participants Across BIOFIN Communities

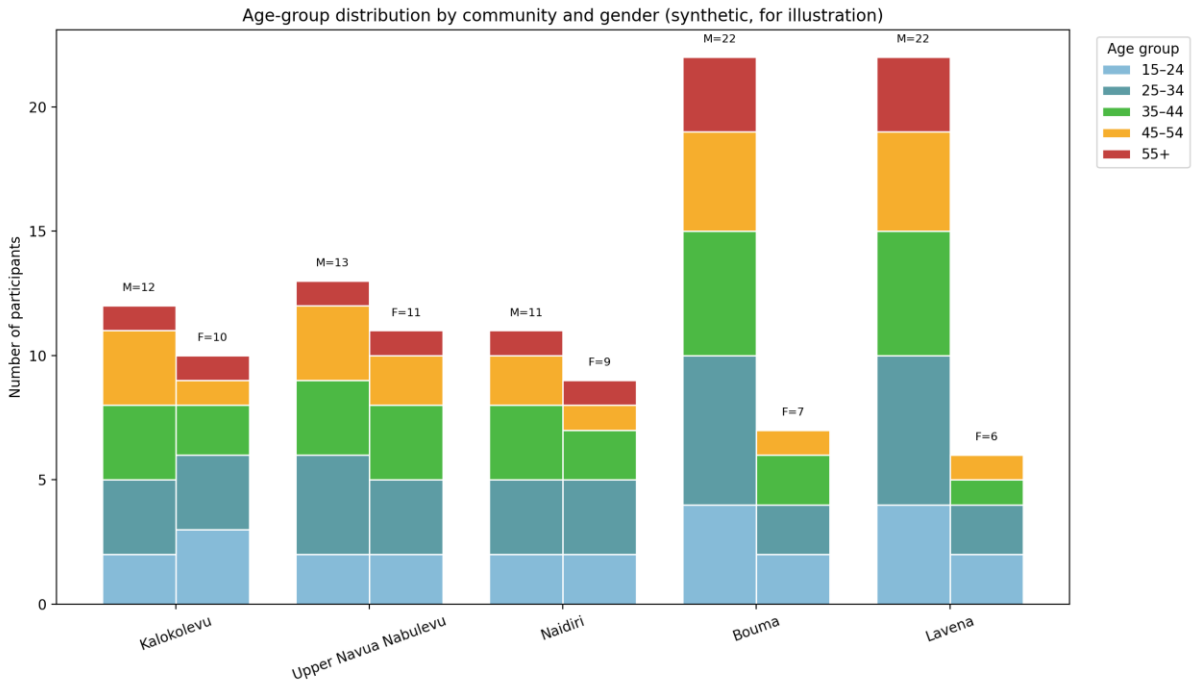


Table 1: Age-group distribution of participants across the five BIOFIN communities, showing the representation of men and women across key demographic categories relevant to biodiversity finance decision-making.

The sample age-group table provides an illustrative breakdown of participant demographics across the five communities engaged under the BIOFIN initiative

Younger adults (15–34) are represented consistently in all communities, showing active involvement from youth and early-career individuals in biodiversity finance discussions. The strongest participation emerges in the 25–44 age range—particularly among men—reflecting the demographic most commonly engaged in resource management, livelihood activities, and community decision-making processes.

Female participation shows similar trends but at lower overall numbers in Bouma and Lavena, suggesting potential social or logistical barriers limiting women's representation in some areas. The presence of participants across all age brackets demonstrates broad community engagement, while the variations between communities provide insight into where more targeted inclusion strategies may be necessary.

Overall, the table offers a clearer understanding of who is involved in biodiversity finance discussions and helps identify opportunities to strengthen youth and women's engagement in future activities.

The leadership of women is exemplified by the manager of the Information Centre at Tavoro Forest Park Co-operative Limited in Taveuni, who plays a crucial role in overseeing operations, managing handicraft sales, and enhancing visitor experiences. Her leadership promotes gender inclusion, empowering other women to engage in eco-tourism and develop entrepreneurial skills.

Additionally, the Korovou Bouma Youth Group, Taveuni, which includes two vocal women, is actively planning eco-tourism initiatives that highlight traditional activities, ensuring women's needs are factored into their vision.

Furthermore, three women from Kalokolevu village participated in the 3rd National Symposium for Community-Led Initiatives on Environmental Sustainability, sharing their experiences and receiving financial literacy training to manage sustainable business operations at the Kalokolevu Biodiversity Park.

In the Naidiri Marine Biodiversity Park, women are also contributing significantly by preparing traditional meals and participating in coral planting activities, linking conservation efforts to cultural heritage and community hospitality. This holistic approach demonstrates how biodiversity finance and conservation can enhance women's economic empowerment and strengthen their roles in sustainable tourism, ultimately benefiting both the environment and local communities.

Public Awareness and Knowledge Management

BIOFIN Exhibition during the 6th Ministers and Environment Authority Forum of Asia Pacific



Caption: Meet and greet at the BIOFIN exhibition booth, Acting Prime Minister for Fiji, Honorable Mr. Manoa Kamikamica

UNDP BIOFIN's participation as an exhibitor at the 6th Ministers Environment Authority Forum of Asia Pacific on the 26th – 29th of August 2025 in Fiji which successfully enhanced visibility of the BIOFIN initiative among regional policymakers, UN agencies, NGOs, and industry stakeholders.

The engagement provided strategic networking opportunities, strengthened collaboration with the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, and positioned UNDP as a key partner in advancing innovative biodiversity finance solutions.

The event also facilitated knowledge sharing on sustainable financing models, creating potential pathways for resource mobilization and future partnerships.

Some of the key recommendations arising from the symposium for impact-based results are as follows:

- Provide tailored support briefs for each country summarising pportunities for financing solutions, Capacity gaps and potential entry points for collaboration. This increases the likelihood of concrete future engagement
- Maximize Visibility – Prepare high quality visual materials (infographics, banners, video) showcasing BIOFINs achievements and tools.
- Include success stories from Fiji and the region to demonstrate impact.
- Organize mini-presentations or demos at the booth to attract attention.
- Offers QR codes for easy access to resources and online platforms.





To make a positive impact at the event, we also partnered with Fiji's Ministry of Environment and Climate Change to create reusable bottle flasks, promoting the reduction of plastic water bottle usage.

D. Lessons learned and adaptive measures

Fiji participated in BIOFIN Phase I from 2016 to 2019, during which four key reports were drafted but not endorsed by the Fijian government. Now, Fiji has rejoined the BIOFIN program to finalize the draft reports and develop solutions for the BIOFIN Phase II project. A recent bilateral meeting with the Permanent Secretary for the Ministry of Environment and Climate Change reinforced the commitment to complete the Biodiversity Finance Plan by April 2026 while simultaneously working on the identified three BIOFIN solutions.

- Awareness of traditional grievances is critical to ensure solutions are agreed upon. For example, in Taveuni, longstanding issues around access to Tavoro Waterfall required careful facilitation.
- Not all consultations were straightforward. Logistical constraints and competing priorities highlighted the need for adaptive approaches that respect community rhythms.
- Mainstreaming biodiversity into policy and budgeting, developing expenditure tracking tools, strengthening institutional capacity, and forging partnerships with private and civil sectors remain essential for scaling finance solutions.
- Increasing the mainstreaming of biodiversity into policy formulation, budgeting and planning processes.
- Obtaining data from economic sectors will require government support and intervention
- Developing tools for monitoring and tracking biodiversity related expenditures in both public and private sectors.
- Strengthening the capabilities of Government and Non-governmental organizations in the areas of program planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- Making more efficient use of existing financial resources channeled to biodiversity conservation.
- Developing effective partnerships with the private and civil sector in mobilizing new resources for that supplement the government funding for biodiversity conservation.

E. Risks

E.1. Programmatic risks (risks *to* the programme)

Table 1: Risk register for BIOFIN Fiji

#	Description	Date Identified	Type	Impact & Probability	Countermeasures / Mngt response	Owner	Submitted, updated by	Last Update	Status
	Enter a brief description of the risk	*When was the risk first identified?*	*Environmental Financial Operational Organizational Political Regulatory Strategic Other (In Atlas, select from list)*	*Describe the potential effect on the project if this risk were to occur Enter probability on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high) P = Enter impact on a scale from 1 (low) to 5 (high) I =*	*What actions have been taken/will be taken to counter this risk?*	*Who has been appointed to keep an eye on this risk?*	*Who submitted the risk?*	*When was the status of the risk last checked?*	*For example: no longer relevant (i.e., P and/or I would = 0, if 0 was an option), reducing, increasing, no change*
1	There is a risk that some stakeholders may not collaborate or completely pull out from the implementation of the solutions.	Project implementation	Operational	Some of the solutions implementations could be delayed or not fully realized. P= 3 I = 3	PMU with the government will hold regular meeting and discussions with key stakeholders	PMU	PMU	17.12.2025	No Change
2	Political changes such as change in government after elections	Project implementation	Political	Fiji will be undertaking election in 2025. This will cause potential changes in leadership and government staff turnover which may impact the project progress. P= 3 I = 3	Foster relationships with incoming officials and their teams to ensure smooth transitions and maintain open lines of communication. Have a business continuity plan in place.	PMU	PMU	17.12.2025	Not yet
3	DIM modality face challenges such as limited local ownership by government countries	Project implementation	Organizational	Limited local ownership which results in reducing project effectiveness, lower sustainability of initiatives, and diminished stakeholder engagement, ultimately hindering development outcomes. P= 3 I = 3	Enhance local ownership through strengthening local capacity through training and engagement, aligning projects with local priorities, leveraging local expertise, and establishing transparent communication and accountability mechanisms. Ensuring long lasting relationship with the Fiji government and other key stakeholders.	PMU	PMU	17.12.2025	Not yet

E.2. Social and Environmental Risks (*of* the programme)

The BIOFIN country programme does not generate additional social and environmental risks. Indeed, the programme works to mitigate existing risks by integrating UNDP's programming principles for strengthening social and environmental sustainability (SESP), and the

programme is directly aligned with Standard 1 of the project-level standards therein, viz., Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Natural Resource Management.

List of annexes and related notes

The following annexes are included in this report:

Annex 1: Indicator Tracking Table (in Excel)

The Indicator Tracking Table provides an up-to-date snapshot (subject to the availability of related data) of progress made towards the BIOFIN country programme's M&E indicator targets.



BIOFIN ITT Fiji -211225.xlsx

Annex 2: Biodiversity Finance Solutions Workshops - Outcome



Workshop_Report_Taveuni.docx



Kalokolevu, Naidiri & Nabukelevu_Report.d

Annex 3: Draft Biodiversity Finance Reports



Updated Draft PIR_Dec 2025.docx

Annex 4: Pacific Island Round Table (PIRT) Report



PIRT Annual Meeting Report 2025.pdf

Annex 6: DRAFT NBSAP



Draft NBSAP.pdf


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