



MINISTRY OF WATERWAYS AND ENVIRONMENT

Press Release

318 TOORAK ROAD, BALI TOWER, SUVA

P O BOX 1292, SUVA

Phone: (679) 3383155 Fax: (679) 3383546

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Attention: Chief-of-Staff

For immediate Release

Minister Reddy Calls for National Movement to Protect Waterways.

The conservation of waterways is essential for sustainable fresh water supply, flood mitigation, agricultural activity and Fijian households.

Its protection is equally important for future generations, ensuring the longevity of the benefits provided by waterways to plants, animals and humans continues and is preserved.

This was highlighted by the Minister for Agriculture, Rural and Maritime Development, Waterways and Environment Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy during the 2020 International Day of Action for Rivers at Bilalevu in Sigatoka today.

“I urge all of you, to understand the importance of protecting our riverbanks. It’s our home. It’s your home to take responsibility of, the Government is here to assist you, but you need to take the initiative yourselves.

“We now have to start a National movement on how we can protect our waterways not only for ourselves, but also for our future generations as our entire activities are dependent on waterways,” he said.

Minister Reddy adds the individual contribution from communities and settlements would be vital as major primary activities such as agriculture was dependent on waterways.

“The Ministry cannot do it alone but we will develop frameworks, protocols and policies but it will need to be implemented by individuals. You all need to take ownership in protecting our waterways,” he said.

Minister Reddy further reiterated human activities such as cultivation was the major contributor towards damages on waterways.

Members of the public are also being urged to practice sustainable management practices and to consider nature based solutions to protect waterways.

As part of the celebration, Hon. Reddy launched the 50km river bank protection project, using the nature based solution - vetiver grass, which will be planted across the country to protect riverbanks from erosion.