MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT

<u>NOTICE TO ALL BUSINESSES</u>

We are deeply concerned about the health and safety of our customers, stakeholders, employees and communities. Like everyone, we have been closely monitoring the rapidly changing environment caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak. The consequences of the COVID-19 outbreak are unprecedented and are devastating globally. This situation is affecting us here in Fiji too.
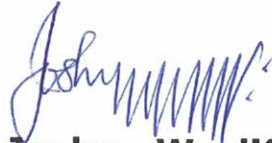
After careful consideration, we have made the difficult choice to temporarily work on lean staff/service/"staff bubble" model at the Ministry. This will help us control and mitigate the effect of COVID-19 on businesses, and comply with the Fijian Government's recovery strategy.

This temporary arrangement might result in potential delays in the processing of applications by the Department of Environment (including EIA, Waste and Pollution Control/Recycling Permits, Permits under the Ozone Depletion Act 1998 and the Endangered & Protected Species Act 2002). Should you need urgent assistance and you are awaiting a response, please immediately contact the **Director of Environment- Ms Sandeep K Singh** on **mobile- 9926659** or email: singhsk@govnet.gov.fj or **Ms Rajeshni Lata** on **mobile: 9905181** email: rajeshni.lata@govnet.gov.fj

The Ministry of Environment requests and appreciates your patience as we endeavour to provide the best possible permit processing assistance, and timely information (including the status of applications) during these challenging times. The Ministry intends to ensure that there is viable business continuity during the lock down period and is grateful for your understanding and cooperation with the matter.

We will update you as soon as we know more or when (any) other changes to these arrangements are made. We value your health and safety. Our thoughts remain with you and your families during this unprecedented time.

Stay safe and we look forward to operating from out of our offices in full swing at the soonest possible.

Joshua Wycliffe
Permanent Secretary for Environment