



# MINISTRY OF WATERWAYS

## Press Release

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### **MoU Signing for Nature Base Seawall to benefit over 300 villagers**

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was signed between the Ministry of Waterways and the British High Commission to Fiji for Enhancing climate resilience of Fiji's coastal and riverbank communities through the provision of Nature Base seawalls (NBS) for the Namatakula Village in Sigatoka.

While officiating the signing at the Ministry of Waterways boardroom this morning, the Minister for Waterways, Agriculture and Environment, Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy applauded the initiatives of the British High Commission to Fiji for protecting and building resilience amongst the coastal communities in Fiji.

Minister, Dr. Reddy reiterated that MoU will support the Fijian Government's effort towards achieving the National Adaptation Plan (NAP) and National Development Plan objectives for building resilience amongst the coastal communities through climate adaptation measures, which are most affected by climate change.

"Like other coastal communities in Fiji, Namatakula village faces coastal erosion, along with increasing impacts from extreme weather events, including seawater intrusion and flooding that provides a threat to the communities," he said.

"Therefore, an immediate action is needed to address and reduce the impact of coastal inundation that damages the infrastructure and causes threats to the villagers," said Minister Reddy.

Minister Reddy further alluded to the importance of Nature-Based Seawall's while dealing with the problem that arises from climate change.

"At the Ministry of Waterways and Environment, we have adopted the theory of change to do "More with less" amidst the COVID19 pandemic and moving from traditional concrete masonry to nature-based boulder type seawalls for coastal protection," he said

The completion of the Namatakula village Seawall project will not only address the coastal erosion for the village but will also restore the marine biodiversity across the coastline providing a home for marine species, replenishing their coastal stocks, and boosting food security in the Future.

The High Commissioner to Fiji His Excellency, Mr. George Edgar has commended the Ministry of Waterways for taking up the lead role for the completion of the project that would benefit over 300 Fijians by protecting their homes and replenishment of Natural resources around the Namatakula village.

"I am delighted to support this innovative project. I hope that it will provide valuable services to the villagers of Namatakula, and show the effectiveness of nature-based solutions," he said.

The Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Waterways and the British High Commission to Fiji, with a grant of FJD 38,139.00 will be used to establish a Nature-Based Solutions Seawall (NBS) for the Namatakula village that will benefit over 300 villagers and also a primary school which is affected by the coastal inundation.

Approximate 450 meters of a hybrid sea wall, will be built by the Ministry of Waterways with bouldering work, land reclamation, rows of mangroves (as a first), and vetiver planting (last line of defence ) to protect the village coastline.

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