



MINISTRY OF WATERWAYS

Press Release

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August 2022

Media Release

Vetiver Grass Nursery Commissioned for Western Communities

A new Vetiver grass nursery has been commissioned to help mitigate climate change factors for the vulnerable communities in the Western Division.

While commissioning the nursery at the Legalega Research Station in Nadi today, the Minister for Waterways, Environment and Agriculture Hon. Dr. Mahendra Reddy said the onus to protect communities against riverbank erosion remained a key priority for the government.

Dr. Reddy said a large number of communities living adjacent to the riverbanks, and in the coastal areas are now threatened by coastal and river bank erosion, and these communities need immediate assistance.

"Climate change is a reality, those aspects of nature where we found comfort some five decades ago in which our lifestyle was intertwined are no longer seen in that light. The natural resources that were seen to protect us are now becoming a threat to our livelihood," he said.

"To protect these communities, through the Ministry of Waterways and Environment we have taken several Successful Nature Based Solution Projects to mitigate river bank and coastal erosion through the use of vetiver grass technology," he said

"The nursery here at the Legalega Research Station will serve to provide vetiver grass planting materials not only for river bank and coastal protection, but also for other projects such as stabilizing tree crops, protecting irrigation canals, bridges, and other infrastructure exposed to soil erosion," he said.

Meanwhile, a 65 year old farmer from Tunalia Nadi, Mr. Nur Shah has acknowledged the Ministry of Waterways for establishing the vetiver nursery.

"This nursery will provide us with the vetiver planting material which we used to go and look around to plant along the creek which is eroding in our area," he said.

The newly commissioned vetiver grass nursery will be the primary source of vetiver grass supply for the Ministry of Waterways Nature Based Seawall projects in the Western Division. Members of the Communities in the Western Division are also encouraged to request the vetiver grass should there be a need in combating coastal or river bank erosion.

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