



**PACIFIC BLUE**  
**FOUNDATION**  
Sustaining Reef Communities

# **BEQA LAGOON INITIATIVE**

## **FIJI ISLANDS**

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# PACIFIC BLUE FOUNDATION

Sustaining Reef Communities



## WHO WE ARE

Pacific Blue Foundation (PBF) is a non-profit, public-benefit charitable trust.

PBF provides research, education and dissemination of sustainable practices in coastal regions in Fiji with the ultimate goal of preserving and promoting the biological and cultural diversity.



## WHAT WE DO

The Beqa Lagoon Initiative (BLI) is at the heart of PBF's work in the South Pacific towards preserving traditional and balanced use of the Beqa Lagoon's natural resources. The BLI brings together 10 local Fijian communities from two islands to achieve longterm environmental protection goals whilst facilitating healthy and sustainable living conditions.



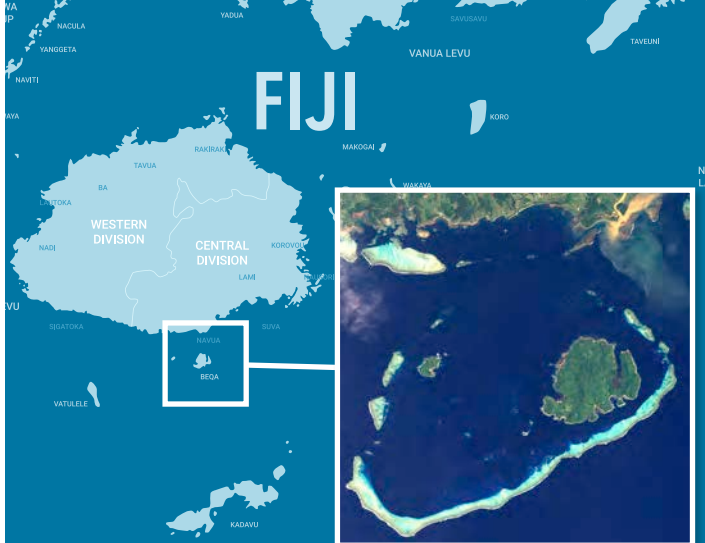
## WHY IS BEQA LAGOON SPECIAL?

The Beqa Lagoon is considered a world class coral reef ecosystem that supports both a rich diversity of marine life and traditional Fijian culture. The natural marvels of this amazing region draw thousands of visitors from all over the world to the Lagoon on an annual basis.

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## BEQA LAGOON LOCATION

Beqa Lagoon is located six kilometres south of Fiji's main island - Viti Levu, covering over 400 square kilometres of exceptional coral reefs, extensive mangrove forests and healthy seagrass meadows. These habitats provide homes to many species of fish and sharks, nesting grounds for sea turtles, and resting spots for migrating humpback whales!



*Beqa Lagoon's popular tourist attractions are amongst world-class SCUBA diving (including cageless shark diving), snorkelling, surfing and cultural heritage such as the birthplace of Dakuwaqa, the shark-god, and the legendary fire-walkers.*



## BEQA UNDER THREAT

The increase in efficiency of fishing gear combined with a shift away from subsistence living has led to wide-spread overfishing and a massive increase in unmanaged rubbish and pollution in coastal areas. These issues, exasperated by outbreaks of the coral-eating Crown-of-Thorns Starfish and threats from climate change such as coastal erosion and coral bleaching, are putting the Beqa Lagoon under serious pressure.



## HOW YOU CAN HELP...

- **Support us** by making a tax-deductible gift; help maintain and enhance the state of the Beqa Lagoon area by donating to the Beqa Lagoon Initiative
  - Join us on one of our educational, ecological activities and contribute to our conservation goals
  - Adopt a Coral today! – [www.pacificbluefoundation.org/adoptacoral](http://www.pacificbluefoundation.org/adoptacoral)
- The local villagers, reefs, forests, corals and sharks will thank you for generations to come!***





# OUR GOALS

BLI uses an integrated solutions-focused approach to address the human pressures and climate-change threats that are degrading the Beqa Lagoon's natural resources and its cultural heritage. We achieve this by delivering four key programmes:

## CULTURAL INTEGRITY



### GOAL:

Empower local communities to preserve and strengthen their cultural way of life for present and future generations.

### MISSION:

- Unite tribes and clans to work with a common vision
- Conserving traditional knowledge and ways of life
- Protect the health of "Vanua" - the connection between people and their environment

## MARINE AND COASTAL CONSERVATION



### GOAL:

Conserve Beqa Lagoon's marine coastal and terrestrial ecosystems.

### MISSION:

- Mitigate and remove local stressors to coral reefs
- Restore critical habitats under threat
- Implement marine protected areas based on scientific and traditional knowledge

## ENHANCING EDUCATION



### GOAL:

School education, community-focused environmental awareness and skill-based training.

### MISSION:

- Integrating natural resource management and environmental education into local schools
- Offer engaging ecological activities lead by marine biologists
- Capacity building through technical and agricultural training
- Provide vocational and tertiary education opportunities through the Sireli Kago Education Fund (SKEF) Scholarship

## COMMUNITY SUSTAINABILITY



### GOAL:

Improve living standards, wellbeing and livelihoods of the local communities

### MISSION:

- Clean drinking water, green power supply, organic farming and waste and pollution management
- Encouraging alternative income generation such as local-lead tourism activities and locally-made products
- Empowering women and youth within the community structure



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