

## 1.1 Introduction

**Year of ratification** 1990

### Organisation submitting the report

- National Trust for Fiji.

## 1.2 Identification of cultural and natural heritage properties

### The status of national inventories

- No information provided.
- The Legislation to create a National Heritage Register was passed in 1998. The National Trust of Fiji is currently putting this Register together.
- The Fiji National Biodiversity and Action Plan endorsed by Cabinet in 2003 lists sites of natural significance in Fiji.
- The Fiji Museum keeps a Register of Historical Sites in Fiji.

### The preparation of a Tentative List

- \*4 sites included in the Tentative List.
- The Ministry of Environment chaired the selection and study of Fiji's four sites to the Tentative List via a Fiji Heritage Committee in 1997. Cabinet endorsed this list in 1998.

### Nominations and the nomination process

- \*Levuka nomination is under preparation.
- Of the 4 sites on the Tentative List, the Fiji Heritage Committee, following the Third Global Strategy Meeting for the Pacific held in Fiji in 1997, chose Levuka as the first site. Application to the Preparatory Assistance Grant was first submitted in 2000 and the preparatory process for nomination of Levuka is currently underway.

## 1.3 Protection, conservation and presentation of the cultural and natural heritage

### Integration of heritage and planning

- There is no specific legislation for the protection of World Heritage sites in Fiji.
- A new Department of Culture and Heritage was established in 2000. This Department will be responsible for reviewing heritage legislation in Fiji.
- There are four key heritage management agencies: Fiji Arts Council, the Fiji Museum, the National Trust for Fiji and the National Archives.
- Support to WH was recently included as a key activity by the Department in the Fiji Government Strategic Development Plan 2003-2005.
- Fiji's National Heritage Policy of 1996 supported World Heritage.

### Participation of local communities

- No information provided.
- Community involvement in WH in Fiji has been mainly limited to Levuka. This has been through presentations to local provincial meetings, various stakeholder workshops and site specific committees. Linkage to other stakeholder groups and agencies has been spontaneous and short-term.
- It is now widely accepted that local ownership, acceptance and understanding of WH is crucial to local support for the process. Future proposals have been developed with this in mind.

### Tourism Development

- No information provided.
- Tourism support via national agencies to sites on the Tentative List is minimal and mainly through the Fiji Visitors Bureau website and brochures. National focus on these sites is not considered a priority.

### **Financial measures and budget allowance**

- The National Trust receives no financial grant from Government for WH work. Between 1998 – 2002, the Trust received \$US12,000 from the WHC to conduct research, awareness and workshops for World Heritage Awareness.
- In 2002 the Trust received \$US2,500 from the APFP for WH for awareness work.

### **Professional**

- The National Trust of Fiji creates linkages between communities and the professional sector on heritage management issues. The Fiji Museum is the national authority on archaeological site research and collections.
- Other Government organisations, statutory authorities and NGOs provide specialist training and support.

### **New and improved services**

- The Department of Culture and Heritage is the newly created Government Department that forms the link between the sector and government and will be instrumental in achieving adequate heritage legislation for Fiji.
- The Department is also working closely with the National Trust to reactivate the World Heritage Advisory Committee for Fiji.

### **Issues to be addressed**

- It has become obvious that to continue with the nomination of Levuka to the World Heritage List there is a need to address other issues. There are deeper community problems related to an acceptance of and a definition of Levuka's heritage, and the boundaries in question. This is compounded by a lack of activity at government and policy level. Therefore, whether it is Levuka or any other site, the government/policy input is an essential ingredient.
- While Fiji is a signatory to the Convention, its obligations to the Convention should be identified in the National Planning Strategic Plan (this was a recent event of 2003) and through some form of legislation or policy. This will justify Government Budgetary expenditure needed to support the requirements of potential listed areas and encourage co-operation between relevant government departments and the private sector. The lack of adequate legislation forms poor basis to any management plans for a site and will not strengthen a nomination document.
- The need for all parties impacted by the decision to nominate the site to the World Heritage List cannot be overemphasized. Understanding of the value of the Convention, and the meaning, impacts and implications of World Heritage Listing is important to the acceptance and support from all stakeholders. That aside, the high percent of land under customary ownership demands a process of consultation with traditional owners for access to, use of, and knowledge of local traditions and customs.
- Develop National Policy to address WH issues.
- Integrated approach.
- Wider stakeholder consultation.
- Review of Tentative List.

## **1.4 International co-operation and fund raising**

### **National and International Fund Raising**

- \*International Assistance provided for Levuka nomination.
- Two project proposals prepared to seek financial assistance from WHC.
- One proposal sent to the APFP.

## **1.5 Education, information and awareness-building**

### **Information and awareness measures**

- \*Fiji Museum has an Education Programme.
- Understanding Heritage, Workshop, April 2002.
- ASP Net Program, Fiji works with the Trust on heritage awareness.
- \*3 Stakeholders workshops, 1999.
- \*WH Global Strategy workshop, 1997.

### **1.6 Conclusions and recommended actions**

- The government should nominate a World Heritage Committee (TOR to be identified) represented by the following: the Department of Culture and Heritage (possible Chair), the National Trust (possible Secretariat), the UNESCO Commission Secretariat, the Fiji Museum, NLTB, FAB, Tourism, National Planning, DOE, Town and Country Planning, and two NGO representatives. The first role of the committee should be to conduct a thorough stakeholder convention to reiterate government's and the people's commitments to the Convention, review the current tentative list, and develop policy outlines for the government. A proposal outlining this in detail was written by the Trust and submitted to the World Heritage Centre in March 2003.
- A policy or legislation needs to be developed to govern the protection of a World Heritage Site. This could be a new policy, strengthening of the National Trust Act, or part of a new Heritage Act for Fiji. This should include regulations for the protection and management of such sites and link with other specific pieces of legislation such as the Forestry and Fisheries Acts. The legislation should also ensure community ownership and management rights are protected.
- The responsibility for selection of sites to the tentative list should be designated to a particular Ministry, Department and or agency. The Minister then takes responsibility to review and accredit management plans for sites, ensure they are included in the government national planning process, the regional development plans and the national budget.
- The comparative analysis study of Levuka to justify its inclusion to the World Heritage List is necessary to support its application. Given the fact that intermittent progress has been made in Levuka, it is crucial that this study is carried out despite the fact that the results of stakeholder consultations may not support the inclusion of Levuka in the Tentative List. A proposal for this has been written by the Trust, and consultants for the study selected.

