

New bus drives home water message

Written by Administrator

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The **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)** message has gone mobile in Fiji with the launch of a bus with the message 'Water is Everybody's Business' running down the length of one side.

The 10 by 2 metre image depicts activities being carried out by a Global Environment Facility (GEF) sponsored IWRM demonstration project in the Nadi Basin and aims to raise awareness of the need for an integrated approach to improve water management and reduce risks from flooding.

Vinesh Kumar, Demonstration Project Manager, said that the bus launch was the start of a wider awareness campaign on how people from different sectors and backgrounds need to work together to improve water management and reduce the risks from flooding.

"Water doesn't belong to one person or one sector. As it flows from mountain ridges to the reef it affects and is affected by many stakeholders," Mr Kumar said. "Whether they are foresters cutting trees high in the catchment, farmers using water for agriculture, or communities and the tourism industry using water for drinking and recreation, everybody needs to play a part in improving the way we manage our water."

The water message takes up the driver side of the bus, while the entrance and back side of the bus have messages from the Department of Environment on reducing, reusing and recycling waste, and ozone protection.

Fiji's Minister for Local Government, Urban Development, Housing and Environment, Colonel Samuela Saumatua, described the bus as a bold step forward for his Ministry's national awareness campaign and a good example of a collaborative effort by various government Ministries, development agencies, NGOs and stakeholders to improve Fiji's environment and protect natural resources.

"This bus that we are launching today will carry an important message 'Water is Everybody's Business' in order to inform the public that we need to protect our water catchment sources," Colonel Saumatua said. "The Land and Water Resources Management Division of the Ministry

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of Primary Industry in collaboration with SOPAC, IUCN and other Nadi stakeholders must be commended for their continued partnership and commitment, which will see the successful completion of this project.”

The bus will be seen by people throughout the Nadi Basin on its daily run between Lautoka and Nadi, and by people along Viti-Levu’s Coral Coast and in the nation’s capital when it travels between Lautoka and Suva every Friday.

The GEF IWRM Nadi basin demonstration project is being run through the Secretariat of the Pacific Community’s (SPC) Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC). The development of the bus design was supported by the European Union funded IWRM planning programme, also at SPC/SOPAC.

The original artwork was taken from EU IWRM programme’s awareness posters, designed by Qoriniasi Bale Jr, while the bus layout was done by SPC/SOPAC’s Navneet Lal.