

CONSERVING BIODIVERSITY, IMPROVING LIVELIHOODS IN NATEWA TUNULOVA IMPORTANT BIRD AREA



Natewa Tunuloa IBA community-declared protected area is an initiative developed by the communities for the communities. It aims to conserve the IBA's lowland forest, which is home to the globally threatened Vanua Levu sub-species of Silktail and various other birds. Through the combination of community-based protection and nature-based livelihood projects, the Sisi Initiative together with the wider communities will ensure their forest resources are sustainably managed – for the benefit of birds, other biodiversity and the people of Natewa Tunuloa.

Community-Declared Protected Area

Important Bird Areas (IBAs) are priority sites for the protection of birds and other biological diversity. They have high natural and cultural values. A number of communities in the Natewa Tunuloa IBA have agreed to protect their forests, and established a 'community-declared protected area' within the IBA.

As a result, unsustainable activities such as logging and fires can no longer be carried out in the area. This protects the headwaters, forests, rivers and streams and ensures a healthy and balanced terrestrial and marine ecosystem.



Sustainable Livelihoods

Sustainable income-generating activities have been established for communities in the conserved area, to reduce the pressure of relying on forest resources. Projects like bird guiding, vegetable farming and tree planting have been established. Each project is village-based, and directly benefits the communities.

Sustainable land management practices are incorporated into the projects to assist farmers with utilization of land close to the villages. This will reduce further need for deforestation.

Empowering Site Support Groups

Site Support Groups (SSGs) or Local Conservation Groups (LCGs) are groups of local community members who share common interests in the long-term well-being of their IBA. They are involved in raising bird and biodiversity awareness, IBA monitoring and conservation activities on-site.

The Natewa Tunuloa SSG was established in 2005 and is called the 'Sisi Initiative' after its flagship bird species, the Silktail.

