



# CTA-099-Sustainable Environments-Fiji

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## Sustainable Environmental Livelihoods Farm, Fiji



### Details

**Commenced:** 01/06/2008

**Submitted:** 07/12/2013

**Last updated:** 07/10/2015

**Location:** Km 20 Sigatoka Valley Road (PO box 1368 Sigatoka), Sigatoka , FJ

**Phone:** (679) 938-6437

**Website:** [www.facebook.com/teiteifarmstay](http://www.facebook.com/teiteifarmstay)

**Climate zone:** Wet/Dry Tropical

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## Sustainable Environmental Livelihoods Farm, Fiji

Project Type

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH



SUSTAINABLE GOALS



GLOBAL ISLAND PARTNERSHIP  
LEADERSHIP | COMMITMENT | COLLABORATION | ACTION



Rural, Commercial, Community, Philanthropic aid, Demonstration, Educational

## Project Summary

Our focus is to develop, implement, and demonstrate sustainable livelihoods through permaculture and sustainable farming, caring for the land and for rural communities. Our goal is to trial permaculture species and techniques and to learn as much as we can from others and through doing, and then to inspire others to use the knowledge for their own benefit. We strive to include the surrounding communities and poor rural farmers of both native Fijian and Indian descent, as well as to link lessons learned with the global permaculture community.

## Project Description

Located on 35 acres, SELF contains all land types of the Sigatoka valley area and western part of Fiji: swampy floodplain, well drained sandy loam soils, dense clay soils, and from flat to steep hillsides, with both dry north-facing and wet south-facing slopes.

We have learned which permaculture crops do best on which soils, and which areas lend themselves to seasonal gardening during our cooler/drier winter (May-September). We have converted former rice fields into productive native "duruka" fields of seven varieties intercropped with coconut palms on ridges of soil above the water table. Duruka is a wonderful tasty perennial grass that looks like sugar cane but that is eaten for its nutritious flower. As the coconut trees grow, taro and bananas will be added to the system, as well as penned goats to keep the weeds down. Bananas are planted in between the coconuts on the drained ridges and taro is planted in the wet soils under the shade produced by the coconut trees and bananas. All tree rows are oriented East-West to prevent them shading other understory and partial shade crops.

We discovered some traditional knowledge from an elderly man who has now passed on- how to make terraces on very steep land using a pair of oxen or horses. Each 1.5m terrace has a swale on the uphill side so they become self-irrigating during dry season. We have been able to grow crops normally associated with the wet side of this island, like ginger without any irrigation. We are now planting citrus and sandalwood on every fourth terrace, with ginger in between, and as the trees grow we plan on planting coffee and cocoa in between them.

We have learnt that when cassava is planted, that the local generations old traditional corn grows well as a companion crop, with peanuts planted on the sides as well! Corn and peanuts are harvested at 3 months, with the cassava harvested at 9-12 months. Again, all rowed plantings are east to west, to allow the inclusion of tree species into the fields without interfering with sunlight penetration. Rows of coconut trees planted ten meters apart and with nitrogen fixing rain trees on the borders that shower nitrogen-rich leaves into the fields.

We are having great results with our first Cashew and Macadamia nut trees, and we are using the seeds to produce a larger nursery.

Our Happy Chicken Project focuses on humane poultry production and replacing imported chicken food with locally made alternatives. We have discovered that adding pawpaw leaves and fruit to the diet of chickens and livestock helps them get more protein out of their food. Primary protein sources for our chickens and tilapia ponds are morniga and "bele" edible Pacific hibiscus (19% protein when dried). Our tilapia and duck ponds are also very successful, as is our virgin coconut oil production- with the waste coconut going to the chooks- combined with corn it makes a complete protein (coconut is deficient in lysine, which corn is rich in).

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We have accommodations that can sleep 10-15 and we plan to host trainings in the future. Volunteers are welcome as long as you cover your costs plus a bit, and we have registered the farm to keep it legal for such purposes as the "Teitei home stay" which is on Facebook. Teitei means farm or plantation in Fijian.

[http://www.picionline.org/PICl\\_Sharks.htm](http://www.picionline.org/PICl_Sharks.htm) is the site for the Pacific Island Conservation Initiative. PICI has had significant support from many people all around the globe in getting this shark sanctuary established. We would like to thank first and foremost the people of the Cook Islands who have accepted this and made this a reality. It is a true bipartisan effort with support from all political parties.

Thanks to Teina Bishop, Minister of Marine Resources for listening to the arguments from all sides regarding sharks, and making an informed and balanced decision.

For additional reading see [The WFCRC Document Gallery](#) for articles about:

- Public Service Announcements (PSA)
- Coral Alert Network (CAN)
- Emergency Reporting Reports (ERR)
- Call to Action (CTA)
- Marine Protected Areas (MPA)
- Marine Life Alert (MLA)
- Seismic and Oil Production Threats
- Natural Science Reports (NSR)
- Oil Spill Alerts (OSA)
- And other miscellaneous documents

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