

Can Marine Conservation Agreements Deliver Biodiversity, Fisheries and Sustainable Financing Outcomes in Fiji?

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Definition of Marine Conservation Agreements (MCAs)

Any formal or informal understanding in which one or more parties commit to delivering explicit economic incentives in exchange for one or more other parties committing to take certain actions, refrain from certain actions, or transfer certain rights and responsibilities to achieve agreed-upon ocean or coastal conservation goals (www.mcatools.com).



Core Components of MCAs

- agreement mechanisms
- conservation goals
- right-holders
- clearly defined parties to agreement: providers and beneficiaries
- voluntary transaction
- Incentives
- conditionality



Study Questions

- 1) What are the key characteristics and scope of MCAs in Fiji?
- 2) What are the enabling conditions for MCAs in Fiji that result in conservation outcomes?
- 3) What are the contribution MCAs make towards biodiversity protection, fisheries management and/or sustainable financing?

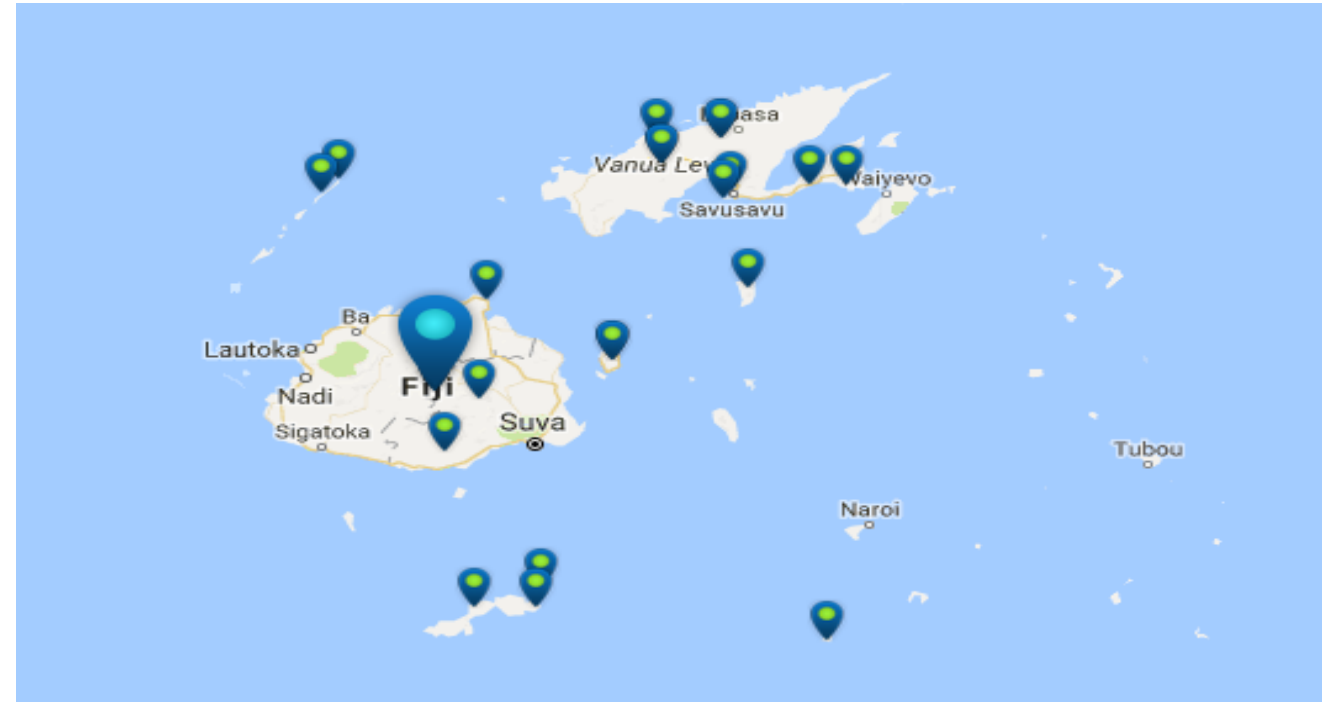
Financial Investments in Infrastructure

Since 2000, contractual agreements with 15 communities to create MPAs (>400 km²)



Limitations:

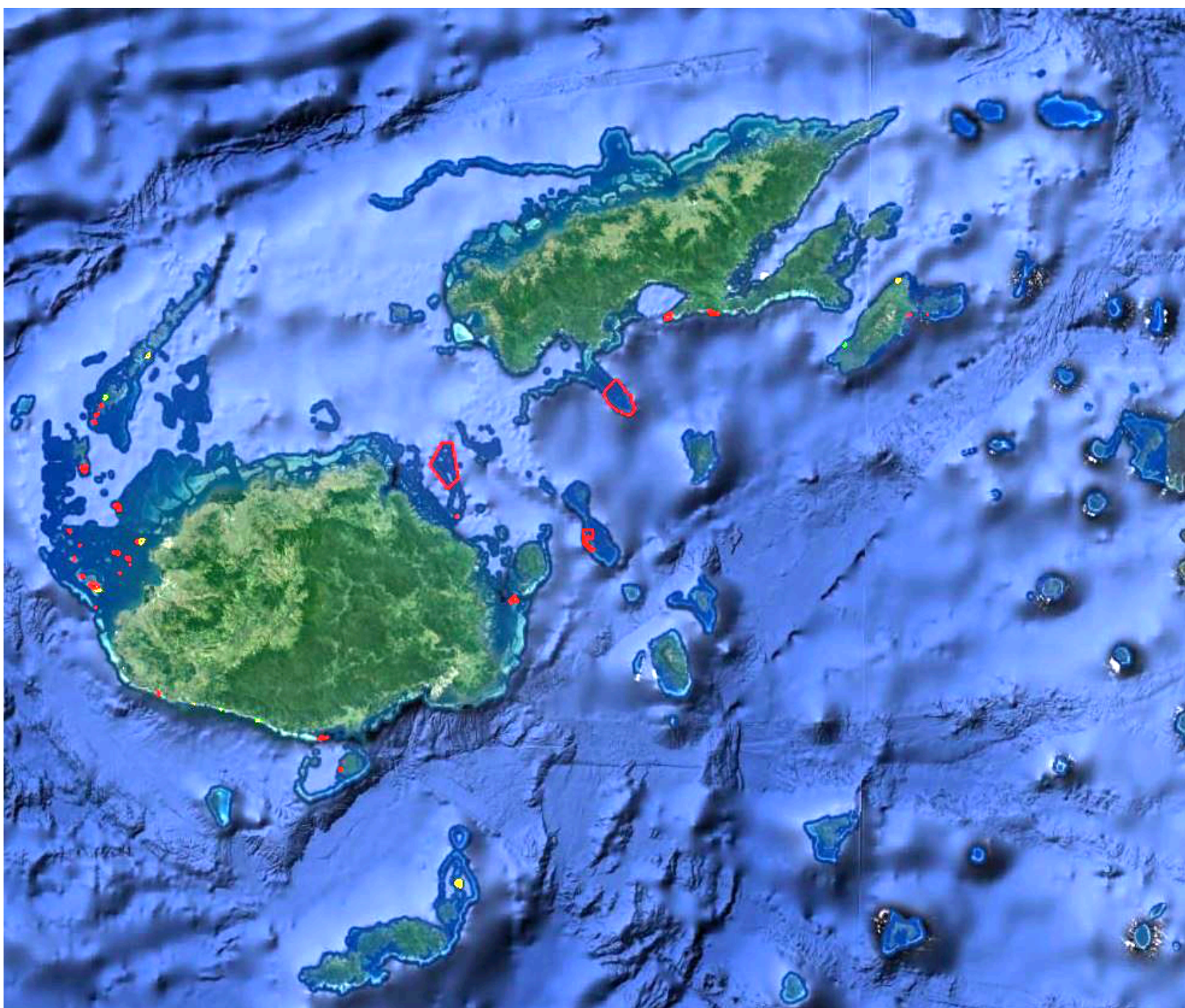
- No consequences for breaking rules
- No monitoring of progress of MPA
- No reinforcement of ecological benefits to community



Tourism-related MCAs

- 81 tourism operators interviewed
- 47 (65%) = some form of marine protection agreement
- 15 (32%) = explicit economic incentives (other than lease payments + employment)
- 47 MPAs = 266.3 km² (26,625 ha) coral reefs
 - 210 km² (21,000 ha) = offshore reefs (Namena, Vatu-i-Ra)
 - 56.3 km² (5,625 ha) = shallow fringing reefs and slopes





Red = active

Yellow= lapsed

Green = in formation

Types of MCAs in Fiji

MCA type	Number	Type of project
Direct on-going payment to resource owning community through cash, bank accounts or trust funds	5 active, 1 proposed	2 large parks for multi-user SCUBA Diving, 3 specific megafauna viewing (Sharks, Manta Rays), 1 small locally owned resort frontage for snorkel trips
Direct business or employment opportunities for community	2	1 community owned snorkel business, 1 employment of local snorkel guides
Direct payments to individual traditional leaders	2 one-off payment at start 2 continuing regular payments (1 lapsed due to community conflicts)	4 resorts with protected frontages used for general beach activities including snorkelling
Indirect compensation such as support of community projects (decided by the donor)	3 (1 lapsed due to cessation of activity)	1 specific megafauna viewing (Dolphins), 2 from income generating projects such as coral or mangrove planting

Enabling Conditions

- Informal agreement
- Tabu
- FLMMA and Fisheries
- Foreshore Lease or Licence
- Gazetting (Fisheries Act)



Mechanisms

Completely Informal Agreement	Verbal Tabu Agreement	Written Tabu Agreement	Legal Lease or Licence	Gazetted Reserve
10%	53%	27%	6%	4%

Government Partner	NGO Partner	Educational Establishment Partner	Private Sector Partner
22%	48%	4%	26%

Monitoring and Evaluation

Regular biological	Occasional biological	Socio economic	Trip Advisor/ Website comments
38%	32%	9%	70%

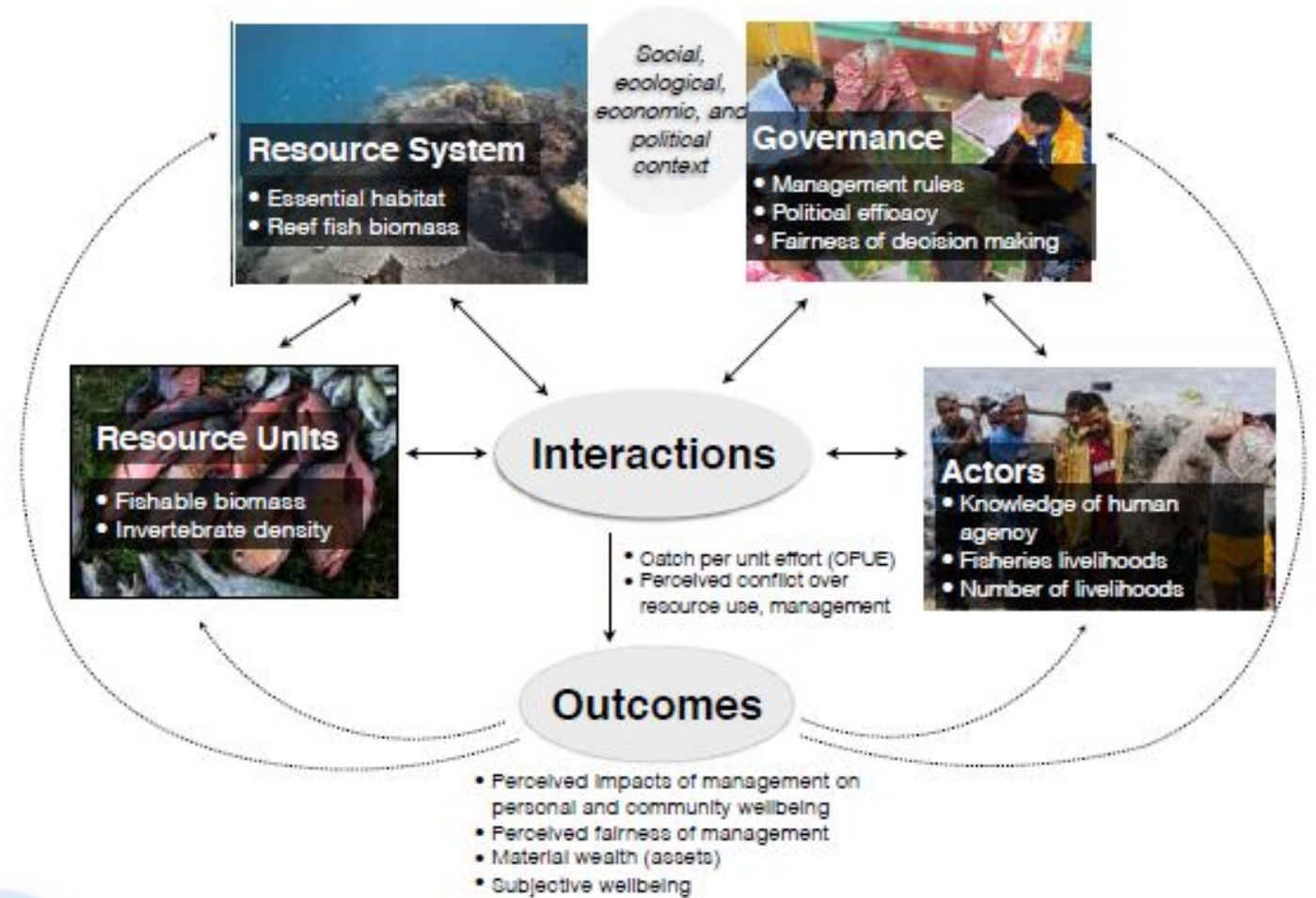
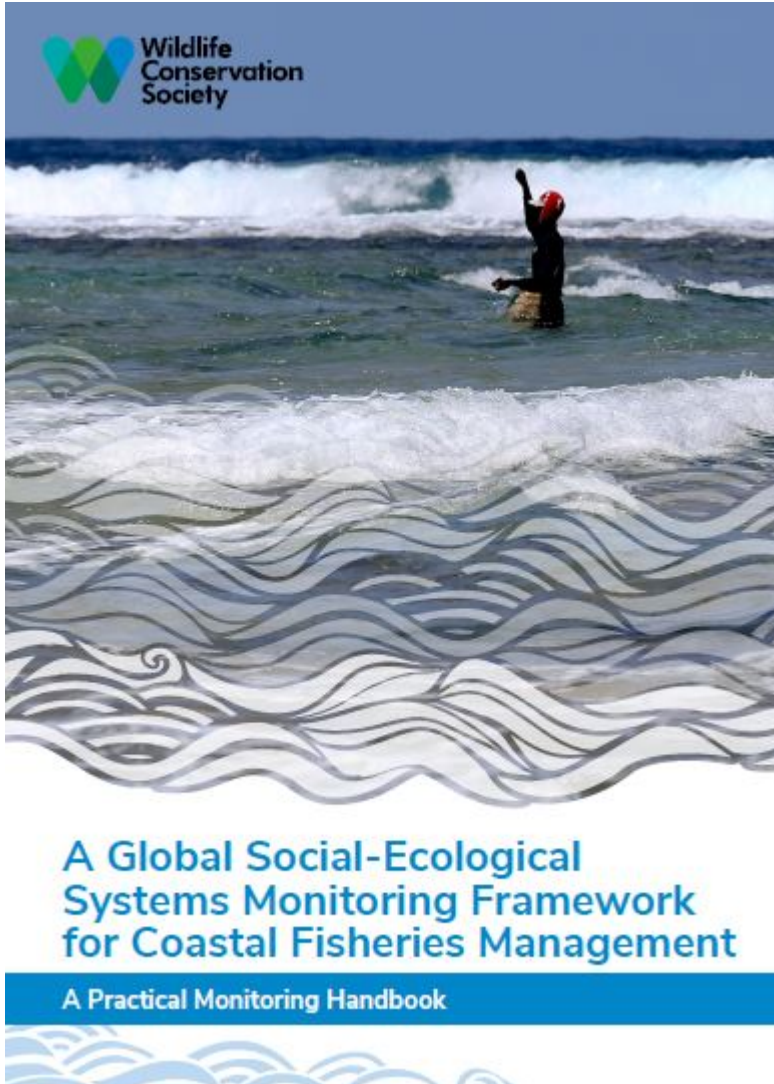


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Monitoring and Evaluation Framework for MCAs



- ❖ MCAs are being used as a tool across Fiji to differing degrees
- ❖ MCAs: >260 km² of reef protected within 47 MPAs
- ❖ 32 create economic and employment for communities
- ❖ Long-term objectives (>20 years)
- ❖ Traditional practices / agreements => few supported in law
- ❖ Ecological and socioeconomic benefits have been recorded.

Vinaka
(thank you!)

