

# OUR ENVIRONMENT OUR HERITAGE



## SAMOA'S IUCN DEMONSTRATION PROJECT



The Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) through its Water Resources Division (WRD) is currently putting together a proposal to the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) for the restoration and the preservation of the Togitogiga Watershed Area. The project is expected to start in 2009 over a 5 year period, and will include various activities which will hopefully lead to the improvement in the status of the watershed and the overall health and economy of the community, through improved watershed services on eco-tourism, water supply and others.

### THE SETTING: TOGITOGIGA WATERSHED AREA

The Togitogiga Watershed Area is located in the district of Falealili on the Island of Upolu, covering approximately 1,580 hectares. A total population of approximately 1010 people lives within the boundaries of the watershed in the villages of Poutasi, Saaga and Saleilua. The area has a unique riparian ecosystem, biodiversity and environment consisting of steep forested slopes, deep canyons with steep inner gorges, fertile narrow valleys, and extensive networks of grasslands. The catchment also includes the Mataloa stream which empties into the Ilili estuary situated on the eastern side of the Le Pupu Pu'e National Park.

The Togitogiga Watershed is the main source of water supply for some of the residents living in Saaga, Saleilua and Poutasi. It is very popular for recreational purposes as part of the eco-tourism operations of the "Togitogiga Waterfalls" which is managed by the Forestry Division of the MNRE.



Current status of the Togitogiga Watershed

### PROJECT OBJECTIVES

The project aims to develop and implement a set of strategic actions to rehabilitate and sustainably manage the Togitogiga Watershed Area in order to improve the quality and quantity of the water resources for enhanced water supply, socio-economic advancement, and reduced adverse environmental impacts.

In order to achieve the main objective, the project needs to work together with existing stakeholders in terms of collecting baseline information, undertaking hydrological research and the implementation of appropriate watershed management schemes. Also identified as necessary are awareness activities and capacity building programmes for the identified stakeholders and the communities. The intention is to promote peoples' awareness and understanding of the impacts of their activities within the watershed area and the surrounding environment.

The project aims to work together with all identified watershed users (community, government ministries, public utilities, farmers and the tourism industry) to formulate a Togitogiga Watershed Partnership through the Togitogiga Catchment Coordinating Committee (TCCC). This will encourage an open dialogue and build relationships with community decision makers, landowners and agencies who will assist in structuring benefits for the program.

### IMPLEMENTATION

Project implementation will be managed and monitored by the WRD-MNRE. It is envisaged



Clearing of land for agriculture

that at the end of the project timeframe, different users will have a comprehensive understanding of watershed management, their individual and collective impacts on water resources, their contribution towards sustainable water resource management, and most of all, appreciation and understanding of water resources management at the watershed and community level.

### Five key components have been proposed for the implementation of the project.

- Component 1 targets specific policy and plans formulation.
- Component 2 looks at the implementation of relevant Baseline Surveys (Research),
- Component 3 has a dual purpose focusing on conservation and rehabilitation of the proposed project zone. Its activities are closely interrelated with common outputs, hence the reason for combining the two sub-components.
- Component 4 focuses on promoting sustainable farming and agricultural management practices which was the main issue stressed by the targeted communities during the consultations.
- Component 5 provides for capacity building opportunities for stakeholders involved in watershed management as well as effective public awareness and education programmes to support and strengthen the proposed project's aims. Project management and coordination activities are targeted under Component 0 (C0). The core activities are summarised below, under their respective components.

### Benefits of the project includes:

- abundant water for water supply
- attraction of more tourists to visit the waterfall and associated forest walks
- improvement of habitat for fish and wildlife
- a reference for students conducting researches on rivers and water resources

Other factors to be considered will be the socio-economic and environmental benefits including a well managed water resource zone with incidental benefits impacting regionally on international waters quality, reduction of land degradation, increased resilience to climate change variability as well as the protection of biodiversity. It will also include the formulation of the Togitogiga watershed partnership which will enable stakeholders to work together and create a relationship in order to continually manage the Togitogiga Watershed in a sustainable way. Lessons learnt and best practices applied during the project will be replicated in other areas of Samoa and the Pacific region.

### CURRENT PROBLEMS WITHIN THE TOGITOGIGA WATERSHED AREA

Environmental and social problems arising from water and land use interactions. Although a basin forms a convenient unit for water resource development and management, the increasing use of land and water resources in the basins can lead to potential conflicts between upstream and downstream areas, and between different sectors such as agriculture and fisheries. In most cases these conflicts occur because development in the watershed proceeds randomly with little or no regard for the impact on the watershed environment.

### Some of the current problems within the Togitogiga Watershed Area includes:

- natural causes - such as dry streams due to prolonged periods of droughts, degraded forest areas due to cyclones, and destructive flooding caused by heavy rainfall
- cattle farms managed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and community land owners
- cutting down trees / deforestation causing soil erosion and sedimentation
- economic loss in the tourism industry within the area, because the river has run dry
- water contamination due to wastes from the cattle farms as well as chemicals from surrounding plantations
- site for rubbish disposal by some people
- infrastructure - road network, agricultural inspection
- using pesticides and chemical run-off into streams and river systems
- fishing of tuna/ula caused by the increase in demand by the growing population within the watershed
- loss of species, habitat and genetic resource.



Cutting down trees causing soil erosion



Cattle farm within the catchment area

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## Children's Corner



### CONGRATULATIONS!!!!

To our TOP TEN winners - "2008 Young Environmentalist Stars" - Please contact our office DBS building - Level 3 - telephone number 23800 for more information.

1. Fritz Krause ★
2. Palepua Solaese ★
3. Faith Crawley ★
4. Allenor Levy ★
5. Victoria Pauga ★
6. Martin Lui Yuen ★
7. Malaea Schuster ★
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9. Anastasia Carruthers ★
10. Edith Faolotoi ★

### CONGRATULATIONS!!

Top Five - Consolation winners  
- call our office telephone number 23800  
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1. Ebony Taavili
2. Noeda Chan Boon
3. Mara Nansen
4. Saouila Tolovaa
5. Crystal Umar

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### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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