



Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment



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Building Capacity of future generations

The Ministry hosted a Science Fair and Debate program for Colleges during the Commemoration of Lands & Soil Week in May 2018. The purpose of this event is to showcase the knowledge of students in regards to the theme: **“Without soil, without land, without Life”** The Ministry invited 12 colleges within the Aria area to partake in this event.

Colleges include: Robert Louis Stevenson School, Church College of Samoa, Vaimauga College, Samoa College, Faleata College, Avele College, Leififi College, Faatuatua Christian College, St Marys College, St Josephs College, Wesley College and Chanel College. Also, Vaiola College, who had volunteered to participate in the competition.

Students presented on their projects and had reflected great understanding on the how the projects and its relation to the sustainability of our lands. However, the panel of judges had challenged the students mindset by asking, how can each project be applied to our country's development given the fact that were very vulnerable to climate change and human induced issues, as well as moving forward through being a developing island country. This was a great platform for students to provide their perspective to the future development s of our island, and to build capacity from the feedback provided by the panels in order to enhance their student knowledge.

1st -11th May

Access and Benefit Sharing Consultations in Samoa



Group Photo: ABS team & Salelologa community participants



Participants raises their concerns on ABS issues



Community Representatives registration

The Ministry through the Division of Environment and Conservation (DEC) had its consultation programs with communities in regards to "Access and Benefit Sharing" (ABS). This is derived from Samoa's agreement on the United Nations Convention of Biological Diversity (UNCBD); where we agreed to pursue the 3 key goals of CBD which are: 1) to conserve our biodiversity, 2) to sustainably use the components of biodiversity, 3) and to fairly and equitably share the benefits of the genetic resources accessed from our biodiversity. The Ministry had already started its work on pushing communities in conserving and sustainably use our biodiversity resources. However, not all are aware on the importance and the value in biodiversity.

Access and Benefit Sharing refers to the way genetic resources are accessed, and how its benefits are shared amongst the resource owners. In simple terms, how are the benefits from the users (who uses the resources) shared amongst the resource providers?

Providers of resource can refer to government or communities or societies who have primary access to resources. Users of resources can refer to anyone who do not have primary access to resources but wishes to use the resources for their own benefit. For example: researchers, universities and companies.

These consultations are set up to inform communities on how the access and benefits sharing process works. This is how it works - For a user to use resources from providers; the national authority (government/community leaders) are to provide a Prior Informed Consent (PIC) to allow the user to access a resource through the provider. When this PIC is provided, the user and provider has to set out Mutually Agreed Terms (MAT) to ensure that the benefit of the resources used by user is fairly shared onto the providers. These conditions are required by the UNCBD. The whole idea is to ensure that our genetic resources are protected; however, the ownership of lands still remains to customary leadership of chiefs and district councilors.

Communities around Samoa have been a victim to unfair benefit sharing where users from foreign countries who requested access to our local genetic resources (through District representatives and Chiefs) had not shared its fair benefits to our people.

It is important that the communities are informed that if a user is to approach communities in regards to resource access, it is always best to report to the Ministry for appropriate actions to be put in place. In this way, communities will be given not only a partial share but a long term sustainable benefit share from resources used.

18th - 24th May

Turtle Nesting Survey for Falealupo - Tai



Turtle hatchlings



Falealupo Community members assists with monitoring



Assessments carried out



Remains of harvested turtles found at bay

The Ministry through the Marine Conservation Section had conducted a Turtle Nesting Survey at Falealupo Tai, mainly for the critically endangered species - **Hawksbill turtle**. The assessment mainly covered the coasts of Tanumatu, Saupesepese & Fagalele Bay. The assessment objective is to: 1) Determine the number of nests and nest success in Falealupo-tai 2) to identify potential threats on the nesting beach affecting the nesting turtles 3) raise awareness of the Falealupo community on the threats and impacts on turtles 4) and to train young people to undertake nesting surveys. At a course of one week in Falealupo, the team conducted turtle nest monitoring at night whereas trainings on turtle assessments took place during the day.

From the assessments, the team had identified 2 main threats posed on the endangered species. 1) illegal sand mining, 2) and turtle and egg harvesting by nearby communities.

The Ministry is to remind everyone, it is illegal to carry out sand mining. The LSE Act 1989 is to govern the uses of land resources; the PUMA Act 2004 also assists in guiding the public on developments made that may harm to the environment. Also the Marine Wildlife Protection Amendment Regulations 2018, will restrict the illegal harvesting of turtles and their eggs during their nesting season November - June. Survey indicated villagers weren't aware of the new regulation; therefore, the Ministry will continue with its awareness programs in the upcoming Financial Year.

Ministers Advisory Committee Environment Inspection



The Ministers Advisory Committee concluded with its site inspection for the islands of Upolu and Savaii. The purpose of this site inspection is to assess all sites and environmental concerns raised by the Advisory committee members. Keep in mind, the Advisory committee includes all members and representatives of communities; therefore, there is a direct contact between the communities and the Ministry.

The assessment for communities in Savaii started from Salelologa where inspectors witnessed an ugly site along the acres of SLC lands, which had become a dumping site for the public. This isn't the first time this was reported to the Ministry, although there's a billboard sign that basically reads "Do not litter", the general public are still carrying out unsustainable illegal practices. The inspection continued on around Savaii in assessing Vaiaata to Saleia where the Ministry

representatives witnessed houses built on sea walls (Government Property) had finished off with Samalaeulu, to site lands where people have excavated loads of sand from the river banks. The assessments for communities in Upolu started in Aleisa where the committee witnessed illegal dumping sites around the communities. Assessments continued around to Aleipata where a representative reported on illegal sand mining operations done by Silva Transport Company. The assessment for Upolu concluded at Afiamalu where the committee observed the reclaimed lands in Afiamalu that had caused environmental concerns for the water catchments from the highlands of Afiamalu and Malololelei. The Ministry is already in process of finding appropriate solutions to approach the environmental concern raised by the Advisory committee members.

15th - 18th May

First Post Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) and Disaster Recovery Framework (DRF) Workshop conducted for the Water and Sanitation Sector



A Post Disaster Needs Assessment and Disaster Recovery Framework Workshop was conducted for all Implementing Agencies and Stakeholders of the Water and Sanitation sector at the DBS Building, Level 6 Conference Room with more than 20 participants who attended. This was the first time that such as workshop was conducted for the sector.

The facilitators of the workshop were Ms Ruth Ueselani (Sector Coordinator- Water and Sanitation Sector) and Mr Lepale Aussie Simanu (Principal Officer- Disaster Management Office) who were part of the Regional PDNA and DRF Training and Training of the Trainers (ToT) held in Fiji in April this year. This was an opportunity for them to share their knowledge and skills learned from these regional workshops with the relevant agencies and sectors.

The objective of the workshop was to better inform the IAs and

stakeholders of the Water and Sanitation Sector about the advantages of applying a standard approach and methodology across the sector to conduct post disaster needs assessments, formulate a recovery strategy and a plan for its successful implementation and monitoring. This would contribute immensely to the continuous efforts of the sector on building its capacity on preparedness, risk reduction and resilience to natural disasters given the reality of the changing climate uncertainties and risks on the sector and its developments.

It is anticipated that similar PDNA and DRF workshops will be conducted across all sectors of the government as well as further refresher workshops in the forthcoming years for the Water and Sanitation Sector.

Commemorating Lands & Soil Week



Faaturua Christian College



USP Representative



Upolu Community engagement



Soil Erosion Project



Float competition & parade in Sagone

The Ministry had commemorated for the first time ever, its 'LAND AND SOIL' week with particular emphasis and focus on the importance of soils as a natural resource in supporting life and its physical ecological systems and services on earth. Soil functions as the basic ingredient of land for Life on Earth from which singlehandedly enables the spring forth of ecological composition of the physical environment and it's all other natural resources such as water, forests and biodiversity of plants and animal species. The seabed of the marine environment is also another integral part of the ecological soil system composition of which together makes up the geophysical component of our life or of what is known as the "environment". Arguably soil essentially stands to symbolize the basic foundation of all life support systems and its ecological services on this very planet called earth.

The celebration were carried out through 5 days based on the theme: "Without Soil, Without Land, Without Life". The Ministry took this opportunity to increase substantively the awareness of the general public on all services offered, and the laws and regulations endorsed under the Land. Also, within this week, awareness program we also specific to discuss on land degradation and drought concerns (LDD). Consequently, these concerns are in greater need to be addressed through reversal and transformative program and projects at all societal levels of Samoa; grassroots, local and national.

Monday 21st May: Opening of Land Week started with a Float competition between 5 invited communities. Minister MCIT - Afamasaga Rico Tupai, delivered his keynote address in regards to the theme and the future of Samoa when we consider the sustainable developments on our lands and soil.

Tuesday 22nd May: The Land Management and Technical Division promoted its services to the general public. These services were promoted to increase awareness of communities on the systematic processes each Division provides to administer and sustainably manage lands & soil resources. The Ministry also elaborated and clarified various policies and legislations that are currently operational and enforced as key mandates for the sustainable development and administration of lands, especially the LTR Act 08.

Wednesday 23rd May: The consultation program facilitated by the Ministry had involved community members and relevant stakeholders from Land Transport Authority, University of the South Pacific (USP),

Ministry of Agricultural and Fisheries (MAF) and many others. The main purpose of this consultation program is to discuss on land issues by identifying the problem and providing reasonable solutions that will assist the Ministry in developing Samoa. It was also a platform to consult on the formulation of a Land & Soil Resources Management Bill that aims to protect and guide Samoa into sustainable developments and management of land resources; as per required meeting Samoas obligations under the UNCCD. It will also assist the Ministry in monitoring and regulating the uses and mining of soil resources for the sustainable development needs of this limited finite resources of Samoa.

Thursday 24th May

Colleges in Apia urban area were invited to partake in the Land Week Science Fair & Debate Competition. This was an opportunity for students to showcase their understanding of Soil Resource importance to the general public.

The overall winner of the event was awarded to Samoa College. They had achieved 1st place in Science Fair Project and also shown great understanding during debating activities.

Results:

Science Fair Program

1st Place: Samoa College

2nd Place: St Marys College

3rd Place: Church College of Samoa

4th Place: Robert Louis Stevenson School

Consolation Prizes: Remaining participating Colleges

Debate Platform

1st Place: Samoa College

2nd Place: Robert Louis Stevenson School

Consolation Prizes: Church College of Samoa & St Marys College

Friday 25th May: The Ministry had wrapped its Commemorations of Lands & Soil Week in Sagone Savaii. Why Sagone? To ensure the awareness on the importance of Lands & Soil would reach all areas of Samoa. The communities invited: *Faiaai, Sagone, Foailalo, Foailuga, Vaipuaa and Salailua*.

The communities had participated through floats competitiondances, singing and skits. An opportunity was also given to the schools to present their understanding on the importance of Lands & Soil. Schools partook through competitions of poem and visual artwork presentations.

Savaii and Upolu Competition Results

1st Place Float Competition - *Faiaai* Community (Savaii); Levi Saleimoa (Upolu)

1st Place Poem Competition - Sagone Primary School (Savaii); Don Bosco (Upolu)

1st Place Artwork Competition - Vaipua College (Savaii);

Throwback to Lands & Soil Week



Vaimauga College presents Soil Erosion Project



Tusani Joe Reti



Community Registrations



Stakeholders and community discussions



MAF CEO - Tilafono David Hunter



LTA presents on group activities



Faleata College receives award from ACEO - Felisita Heather



Group photo during opening ceremony



Faiaai Community Representatives prepared for float competition in Sagone.



Papauta College participates in poems competition



Satitao community engaged in community presentation



Tree planting in Aopo

Waste Management Consultations



Consultation Group photo (Savaii)



Consultation Group photo (Upolu)

The Ministry through Division of Environment & Conservation (DEC) had conducted a waste management awareness program for communities residing nearing water catchments, and also communities that are reported to be illegally dumping rubbish in their backyards. Principal Officer -Aliimuamua Setoa Apo welcomed all participating communities, and had presented on the purpose of the program; that is to build capacity of communities in regards to waste management. Recent reports from neighboring community members have also pointed out that they have witnessed villagers illegally dumping rubbish into water catchment areas or generally dispose wastes. These places include: (Upolu) Vaoala, Lalovaea, Tanugamanono, Leufisa, Malifa, Maagao, Fatoia, Vini Fou, Magiagi, Papaloloa, Lelata.

The Ministry in collaborations with Savaii Samoa Tourism Agency (SSTA) carried out another consultation program in Savaii; targeting private companies and business owners. This was a great opportunity for the Ministry to continuously remind the participants about the Acts

and policies that governs the management of all sorts of wastes (general/chemical & hazardous wastes) in Samoa. Ministry representatives had delivered in details the importance of proper waste disposals and how illegal dumping can impact our environment , safety and health of the general public.

The Ministry reminded the communities and businesses that the Government had already hired contractors who are to assist in collecting all wastes for disposal in Tafaigata & Vaiaata landfill. General Wastes are collected twice a week in Upolu and Savaii. Except for town areas which are collected twice on a daily basis. Bulky Wastes are collected three times a year in the Months of February, June and October. In these months, contractors are collecting bulk wastes on every Wednesday of these allocated months. The law will not be flexible if one if caught or identified to be carrying out sustainable practices.

Ridge to Reef Project progressing



Water Sampling with NUS



School awareness program









Schools receive Waste Disposal Stands from R2R project coordinator

The Ridge to Reef Project is progressing well with its work aligned for the communities living nearby the Fagalii and Vailele/Letogo river. The river systems flow off from one of the major watershed and river catchments of Upolu. The ultimate objective of the R2R Project is to sustain the river systems of Fagalii and Vailele/Letogo. The Ministry had carried out countless awareness programs to ensure that the education of communities is a continuous process to ensure that the communities are constantly reminded in carrying out sustainable developments. The project is currently at its pilot phase; the targeted river systems is being protected by the Ministry. With the proposed actions by the Ministry through the Project, the communities will be able to sustainably manage its resources to ensure the protection of the river systems through; 1) Conservation of its Biodiversity 2) Rehabilitation of Degraded Land 3) Adaptation to Climatic Change

environmental issues 4) Protection of Water 5) and the sustainable management of vegetation's and forest covers in watersheds and river catchments.

At this stage the Project is carrying out outputs covered under the project components. This involves the security of water quality through water sampling (in partnership with National Univeristy of Samoa) and the conducting of a BioRAP in partnership with Auckland University & Massey University to assess on the ecological health of Fagalii, Letogo/Vailele watershed. The Project has also reached out to Schools and had donated rubbish stands to promote the idea of proper waste disposal and changing a human behavior of carelessly dumping wastes along river systems. The communities are constantly educated overtime on the importance of sustaining the water resource, to ensure that the water resources we depend on daily is well managed.

Welcoming New Recruits

	<p>Name Entole Simanu</p> <p>Position Snr Terrestrial - Officer</p> <p>Division Technical Services</p>		<p>Name Pisopa Hakai</p> <p>Position Assistant Mapping Officer</p> <p>Division Technical Services</p>		<p>Name Kalifa Leafa</p> <p>Position Driver</p> <p>Division Corporate Service</p>
	<p>Name Maeli Tafeaga</p> <p>Position Landfill Assistant</p> <p>Division DEC</p>		<p>Name Sakaria Uaita</p> <p>Position Landfill Assistant</p> <p>Division DEC</p>		<p>Name Matagi Gu</p> <p>Position Facilities Caretaker</p> <p>Division DEC</p>

Upcoming News for June



For more information & queries: Please Directly Contact (roland.setu@mnre.gov.ws) or (68567200)

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