



Pacific R2R Programme Workshop

Most Significant Change

The GEF Pacific IW R2R Project - FIJI



Name of Person recording story	Graduate Trainee & R2R IW PM
Name of storyteller	Mr. Seveci Tavaga (Mata ni Tikina/District Rep – Sawani)
Date of recording	27 th of June 2019
Location	Sawani village

My Waimanu River

I used to work for the government but now I am retired and I have dedicated my life to serve the village duties. I was appointed a district leader and it's been two years in leadership. My village is Sawani and is located near to the Waimanu River.

The first observation as you go by Sawani road is river banks erosion near to my village. There used to be a lot of coconut trees near the church and river banks but today there is none because of erosion where it has caused the trees to slip into the river.



The Sawani church is being impacted by the river bank erosion occurrence.



Erosion along the river banks



The Waimanu River is now beginning to be shallow and gravels appearing everywhere. Behind my village there is small stream which is about 200m distance to the Waimanu River but now stream is much closer.



Waimanu River becoming shallow

The freshwater mussel has disappeared and only some are found only in deep waters. The taste also is different it is not like the taste as before.

There are a lot of Chinese people established their plantations and other businesses along the Waimanu catchment. They cut everything on the land and there seem to be a trend where as soon as one lease expires, another one comes in to settle down. They just don't want to leave the land but when they finally do, the land dies and African tulip tree grows very quickly. I used to farm in the area but the soil is very poor so I have moved to another place.

Gravel extraction and boulder extraction is being done upstream and have caused fish to disappear because their homes have been destroyed. The extraction is done every day and their not enough time for river to recover. On a fine day the water is muddy which is very suspicious to me.

One of the changes the Ridge to Reef project will bring is to put in place a management and implementation plan which will brings all the communities and stakeholders together to address and implement necessary changes to the issues currently faced.