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## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FNU the best in Asia Pacific Region**

**Suva, Fiji Islands.** The Fiji National University has claimed the prestigious GUPES Green Gown Award for the Asia and Pacific region for its sustainable community project conducted in the interior of Ba Province.

FNU Vice Chancellor, Professor Nigel Healey was thrilled with the win and said it has uplifted the profile of the University.

“We are very honoured to receive this GUPES Green Gown Award, which recognises the major contribution FNU has made to sustainability in the South Pacific. This important work demonstrates that resilience can be achieved through simple practical measures that don’t require major external funding. Sustainability can be bottom-up, using practical means of adaptation that create shared interest and mutual interconnectedness, emphasises traditional knowledge and strengthen institutional research and development endeavours in Small Islands Developing States. It is gratifying that FNU’s pioneering work is being recognised internationally for its impact,” said Professor Healey.

The Green Gown Awards recognise the exceptional sustainability initiatives being undertaken by universities and colleges across the world.

The competition is the first of its kind with universities from five global regions - Asia and the Pacific, Latin America and the Caribbean, Europe and North America – going head to head to compete and showcase the different projects undertaken by the universities in their different countries to lead sustainable living.

FNU’s Centre for Sustainable Technology and Development represented the country’s very own national university to the competition with its community project being carried out in Ba.

Prone to flash flooding and landslide in the rainy season, the climate smart landscape project aims in carrying out watershed protection works using traditional Fijian agroforestry systems and slow conservation to enhance community resilience to climate change in the six upper watershed communities in Ba.

CSTD Director, Professor Dan Orcherton said the use of Fijian traditional agroforestry systems was the best way to protect vulnerable areas in Ba.

“What was done on the project was that we installed six tree nurseries. One main nursery in Navala Village and five other satellite nurseries for native plant and tree propagation and seed production in Nadugu, Nakoroboya, Nanoko, Koro and Bukuya,” said Professor Orcherton.

In addition to the nurseries, the team also planted over 300 hectares of native trees and 100 hectares of vetiver grass.

The CSTD Director said the project was groundbreaking, cost effective and practical in Fiji in terms of gender base empowering of man and women to implement for themselves the climate smart landscape that incorporate climate change adaptation and reduction of carbon dioxide emission through the planting of native tree species.

**For further information, please contact the Communications Office on 339 4000 extension 2890/2886 or Senior Public Relations Officer, Ranbeer Singh on Email: [SPRO@fnu.ac.fj](mailto:SPRO@fnu.ac.fj) or Phone: 9895267**

**About the Fiji National University:** The Fiji National University (FNU) was established through the merger of 7 government-owned tertiary institutions in Fiji, and commenced operations from 1 January 2010. The constituent institutions are found at over 40 different locations across Fiji, and collectively offer Certificates, Diplomas, Advanced Diplomas, Degrees, Postgraduate qualifications and Skills Upgrading for those who are already in employment. Approximately 30,000 students pass through the University each year. Over the last six years of its operations, the University has registered major achievements with regard to new programme delivery, quality improvements and contribution to research and publications via its 5 Colleges: The College of Humanities & Education (CHE), the College of Medicine, Nursing & Health Sciences (CMNHS), the College of Engineering, Science & Technology (CEST), the College of Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry (CAFF), the College of Business, Hospitality & Tourism Studies (CBHTS) and the National Training & Productivity Centre (NTPC).