

Monday 04 June, 2018

PRESS RELEASE

FNU joins the fight to safeguard our environment

Suva, Fiji Islands. The Fiji National University (FNU) has appointed teams at all its campuses to conduct clean-up activities and create greater awareness as it marks **Environment Week from 5 – 8 June, 2018.**

World Environment Day is a United Nations Environment-led global event, the single largest celebration of our environment each year. The theme for the event is **BEAT PLASTIC POLLUTION.**

Acting Manager Human Resources, William Mar said as Fiji's national university it's important for the institution to promote this important event and ensure that the lessons learnt are applied in everyday life.

"We have a duty to our country and planet which is to ensure that we safe guard it so our future generations can enjoy as did we. So it's important that as an institution that prepares our future leaders to know the importance of taking care of the environment that we live in, we must also impart this knowledge to our friends and family as only with a united approach can we overcome this major problem of plastic pollution," said Mar.

"We have organised our teams at all campuses and they will lead our Environment Week campaign. We have planned clean-up campaigns at the respective campuses as well and have interactive sessions involving staff and students discussing topics on reducing plastic use by saying NO to plastic bags at shopping outlets, be aware of plastic problems and its effects, use alternatives such as eco-friendly bags and how to ensure that we live in a clean and healthy surrounding"

"We want to ensure that all staff and students get this important message as we need to apply these in our daily lives and not just during the Environment Week. University staff have been encouraged to wear green clothing to assist with creating greater awareness and to recognise the efforts of our staff and students, we will be awarding prizes such as trophies and certificates to the winning teams and participants," said Mar.

Background

Since Environment Week began in 1972, the event has grown to become a global platform for public outreach that is widely celebrated across the globe. World Environment Day is a day of everyone around the world to take ownership of their environment and to actively engage in the protection of our earth.

"*Beat Plastic Pollution*" urges governments, industry, communities, and individuals to come together and explore sustainable alternatives and urgently reduce the production and excessive use of single-use plastic polluting our oceans, damaging marine life and threatening human health.

Plastic Pollution is a global emergency affecting every aspect of our lives. It's in the water we drink and the food we eat. It is destroying our beaches and oceans affecting marine life and threatening to the human health.

Plastic Pollution facts:

- Every year the world uses 500 billion plastic bags
- Each year, at least 8 million tons of plastic end up in the oceans, the equivalent of a full garbage truck every minute.
- In the last decade, we produced more plastic than in the whole last century
- 50 percent of the plastic we use is single-use or disposable
- We buy 1 million plastic bottles every minute
- Plastic makes up 10% of all of the waste we generate

Each year, an estimated 500 billion to 1 trillion plastic bags are consumed worldwide. That means over one million plastic bags used per minute. Plastic Bags have become a problem that cannot be fixed in one campaign. It has become a prevailing problem because it not only deals with the complex issue of trying to change a person's life style or mind-set on how they see plastic bags as a convenience but also that is become a serious environmental issue.

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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).