



FNU academic graduates with Masters through ECCAM scholarship

Fiji National University (FNU) academic Tiraon Taioti believes it is everyone's duty to safe guard the environment through conservation and sustainable use of natural and marine resources.

Taioti, an Assistant Instructor in Forestry at FNU's College of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (CAFF), Koronivia Campus recently returned home after completing a Master of Science in Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Development at the University of West Indies in Trinidad and Tobago through the Education for Climate Change Adaptation and Mitigation (ECCAM) mobility project.



ECCAM scholarship recipient and FNU staff Tiraon Taioti believes everyone should be taught the importance of conservation

ECCAM is a mobility project funded by the European Union that aims at academic cooperation between three Higher Education Institutions (Fiji National University, University of West Indies in Trinidad & Tobago and the University of Guyana) and is designed to increase the availability of trained and qualified high-level professionals in the Caribbean and Pacific region.

"We need to protect our environment for future generations and not just think of ourselves and/or short term beneficial visions we have that will become destructive in the long term," Taioti said

"I was grateful to be offered a full scholarship to study at University of West Indies through the ECCAM project and to be able to further my studies and qualification was an opportunity I did not take for granted."

"My interest is in conservation, biodiversity issues and wildlife so when I saw this programme I knew it was for me because it was in my field of work and also something I was passionate in."

"I have recommitted to the task of passing on this knowledge to our younger generation, to ensure everyone is aware of how important it is for us to use our resources wisely in the interest of our future and the future of the generations to come."

"I believe that when I pass on this knowledge to my students, they will share it back in their communities with other youths and elders and this way I am not the only one that benefitted from everything I learnt through the ECCAM project."

"During my two-year Masters studies, I underwent both theoretical and field learning and my research was based on the measurement of carbon sequestration in reforested areas in Morne L'Enfer and Quapo Parry Lands in Trinidad and Tobago."

"This is the process in which carbon is being stored in trees so my project was to look at the amount of carbon being sequestered by each tree. This is one way in which we can offset carbon emissions in each country."

Taioti added that the need to be knowledgeable in sustainable natural resource management was important to prevent destructive human activities and avoid certain species in the country from becoming extinct.

"The other area was sustainable development for the betterment of our future."

"Fiji is already complying with this as we already place emphasis on conserving natural resources as this is already in our traditional culture."

He encouraged those with similar environmental interests to utilise opportunities such as the ECCAM project to enhance their knowledge and join in the fight to protect the environment.

