

Fiji Mangrove Conservation Project

Conduct scientific baseline data surveys of reef areas, mapping the sea grass beds and mangrove fringes of the region.

The Fijian archipelago lies scattered lazily in the achingly blue waters of the Pacific Ocean, bathed in the radiant antipodean sunlight. Its towns and villages are veritable melting pots of cultural influences.

Fiji's shores are fringed with palms and mangroves, and the azure waters that surround the islands are inhabited by an astonishing array of marine creatures; over 1,200 species of fish including clownfish, triggerfish, blue tangs, 12 species of whales (including humpbacks), anemones, soft coral and much more.

Moreover Fiji has the third largest mangrove area in the Pacific Island region, with approximately 42,000 hectares of land covered by mangrove forests.

Mangroves represent a critical coastal ecosystem, which has an incredible impact on our lives. They aid in preserving biodiversity by providing nursery grounds for many marine and coastal species and fisheries. Mangroves also contribute to; the protection of coastal communities against extreme weather events such as hurricanes and stabilising coastlines, therefore reducing soil erosion. Unfortunately, due to climate change and other factors, preservation and conservation of the mangroves ecosystem is essential.

Volunteering with Frontier you will assist in the protection of mangroves by surveying the ecosystem and collecting data, to establish a long term plan for the restoration of the mangrove forests.

PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Help to preserve Fiji's marine and coastal biodiversity

Make lifelong friends and return with incredible stories, photos and memories

Extend your experience in tropical marine and coastal conservation field work

Environmental education days in the local schools and community groups

Swim and snorkel off the beach to locate and explore near shore environments

Mangrove surveying

Discover the effects of global warming on marine communities

FAST FACTS

Location: The South Pacific Island of Beqa, Fiji

Transport:

Free airport pickup and transfer to the island is provided for volunteers arriving on the first Monday of each month. For volunteers arriving on different days airport pickup, transfers to the island and hostel accommodation for the first night can be arranged at a small additional cost

Accommodation:

Communal cast away style camp a few minutes' walk from the bay, with timber frame house

The aim of Frontier-Fiji Mangroves Conservation Project is to better understand the marine resources of the island of Beqa. The mangrove ecosystem is amongst the worlds richest in terms of its biodiversity. Mangroves provide a vital buffer against storm surges caused by cyclones and are an important part of the coastal ecosystem. They provide a number of essential ecological services including; carbon sequestration, protection from erosion and nutrient cycling. Despite the benefits provided by mangroves to humans such as timber and fish, mass deforestation continues to threaten their numbers and thus it is vital that we provide education on how to monitor and where possible, replant these species. In Fiji, there are eight tree species and several associated plants that make up the mangrove forest.

In order to preserve mangroves, we conduct scientific baseline data surveys of reef areas, mapping the sea grass beds and mangrove fringes of the region. Once a long term data set is obtained, patterns of resource use can be identified and work with local communities can begin to build awareness of the value and vulnerability of their marine environment.

What will I be doing?

Enjoy fragrant sun drenched days and exotic nights of delectable food cooked in a traditional underground oven. Fiji will enchant you with its infectious, chilled out "Fiji time" lifestyle, its heavenly beaches and surrounding mountains of rainforest– the perfect paradise location for your Frontier adventure!

You will explore and record the organisms that inhabit the luxuriant mangrove forests, dense sea grass beds and productive inter-tidal areas. Activities include surveying mangroves, collecting data, beach clean ups, and forest restoration work. Although the work is intense and challenging you'll get immense satisfaction from having survived and from having made a valuable contribution to the conservation of this untarnished marine wilderness. You will return home with the new friends you've made and a wealth of fascinating stories and memories.

You'll find your team to be a fun, dynamic mix of ages and experiences, with members who all share a passion about travelling in developing countries and saving endangered life. Your staff will be young, friendly individuals who are highly experienced in their field and many have volunteered on a Frontier project earlier in their career.

WHAT HAPPENS WHEN I ARRIVE?

An airport pick-up service is offered to volunteers arriving on the first Monday of the month only, whose flights land before 2:30pm local time. All other volunteers must make their own way to the project site. We will provide you with easy to follow instructions prior to your departure to enable you to plan your journey. If you are arriving into Fiji before the first Monday of the month but wish to travel to the project site with the main deployment group on the first Monday of the month, the overland arrival meeting point is at Nadi international airport arrivals hall. Please make sure that your intended arrival/travel plans have been arranged and confirmed with the project field staff a minimum of 1 week before your project start date.

If you are travelling to a marine project on Beqa Island, you will only be able to travel to the island on the same day if your flight arrives before 9am on the Monday (due to limited boat timetables).

However, you are more than welcome to spend one night with us at our homestay family in Suva, or

you can choose to stay in Nadi or Suva for a night, in preparation for your journey to Beqa the next morning.

You will travel from the airport along the Coral Coast of the Island of Viti Levu to the town of Navua. Following this you will take a local boat for the one hour journey to the spectacular and famous south Pacific island of Beqa.

If you are an independent traveller arriving on any other date you are welcome to join the project on any Monday (please discuss your intended arrival date and duration of stay with our travel advisers, especially if you need to book a dive training course, to confirm availability). Please be aware that you will need to organise your own transfer between Nadi and Suva and the first night hostel accommodation in Suva at a cost of US\$42/\$40. We will arrange for you to transfer from Suva to Beqa the following day at your own cost where our field team will be ready to welcome you to the Frontier house and camp. Again, you must confirm your exact arrival time/date with in country staff at least 1 week before arrival.

WHERE WILL I BE STAYING?

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hO4bs3o-WvI>

During the project you'll live in our simple but comfortable timber frame house on a cast away camp about 5-minutes walking from the Bay on the south Pacific island of Beqa. We aim to provide you with an authentic and memorable living experience. The Beqa house and camp has been constructed by local craftsmen using traditional building techniques and locally sourced building materials. The camp is situated up a short hill from the shore through the rainforest. Camp life is very simple, unsophisticated and fun. You will be staying in communal house near to the local communities. Your "shower" consists of a pipe that runs into an outdoor stall from the local stream and runs 24 hours a day. We have a western style bucket flush toilet and camp-style gas hobs to cook on. Prepare for the basic, cast away, virtually footprint-less lifestyle!

As well as the diving and marine conservation work you may be asked to help with the scientific data entry and will need to help with daily camp maintenance; taking turns to cook, tidy and clean the camp, rinse dive kit, and help with a wide variety of other important and essential camp duties.

WHAT WILL I BE EATING?

Camp food is simple and consists largely of rice, lentils, split peas, pasta, tinned tomatoes, potatoes, onions, curry, rolled oats, freshly baked bread, and any fruit or vegetable grown on the land (pumpkin, eggplant, papaya, banana, mango, cassava, bele leaves, etc. depending on season). All food is purchased in-country or made on camp in order to help support the local economy. Luxuries such as sweets, biscuits and drinking chocolate have to be brought over to the island from Suva, so make sure you stock up before heading to the camp! Part of your role on camp will be to help with the cooking, so get your cookbooks out now and start practising! Also, with luck you'll be invited to local feasts and festivals – a great way to integrate with the local communities in the nearby villages and absorb the fabulous and welcoming local culture.

Some local dishes to look forward to include; taro, taro leaves, breadfruit, sweet potato, cassava, and cassava chips, coconut and fabulous seafood. A delicious Fijian speciality is a lovo feast, which is a meal cooked in a hole in the ground – unusual but very tasty!

COSTS

1 week	US\$ 1,645
2 weeks	US\$ 1,995
3 weeks	US\$ 2,345
4 weeks	US\$ 2,495
5 weeks	US\$ 2,995
6 weeks	US\$ 3,195
7 weeks	US\$ 3,395
8 weeks	US\$ 3,545
10 weeks	US\$ 4,245
20 weeks	US\$ 6,045
Extra week	US\$ 345
Christmas Week	US\$ 295

DEPARTURE DATES

First and third Monday of the month.

Alternative dates available on request.

DURATION

You can join this project for a minimum of 1 week

CHRISTMAS OFFER

This project is available for the special price of US\$255 per week over the Christmas period. Placements starting on the 24th or 31st of December 2018 are eligible for this price, subject to availability. Please apply using the orange button below and then tell your volunteer advisor that you wish to take part over Christmas.

WHAT'S INCLUDED

Before you go

- Pre-departure support
- Travel & medical advice & documentation
- Equipment advice
- Discounted medical kit
- Free Frontier T-shirt
- UK residential briefing weekend including food, accommodation and training (extra cost applies)

in country

- All field camp accommodation & food

- Local orientation & comprehensive project training
- Project equipment & camp diving equipment
- Research materials
- 24 hour in-country support
- International HQ emergency support & back-up
- Airport pick-up for first Monday of the month arrivals (an airport pick up service is available for alternative arrival dates at extra cost)
- Internal ground transfers and first night hostel accommodation for first Monday of the month arrivals
- Boat transfer to the Island of Beqa
- Dive training courses run monthly starting on the first Monday of the month. Dive training to PADI Open Water or PADI Advanced Open Water (depending on the duration of your stay) price includes PIC cards, PADI membership and use of Frontier project equipment and diving equipment, including tanks, regs, BCDs, weights, compressor etc
- Discounted further dive courses: PADI Emergency First Response (US\$221), PADI Rescue Diver (US\$595), and PADI Divemaster (US\$1,275) qualifications

AIRPORT INFORMATION

Nearest airport(s): Suva (SUV)

CONTACT INFORMATION

Call us on 020 7613 2422 (UK) / 1 949 336 8178 (US)

Mail us on info@frontier.ac.uk

Check out our social media here:

Project details were correct at the time this document was generated. Price, dates and other details are subject to change. Please see our website for current details for this project.