

Veikila Vuki: Cultivating the sharing of information on aqua women¹

Dr Veikila Vuki was elected Woman of the Month for February 2016 by the Aquaculture without Frontiers (AwF) organisation.

There are numerous challenges facing women striving to make social changes in the aquaculture and fisheries arena. Firstly, female advocates, experts and researchers are scarce in this domain and are often unique in their institutes; secondly they are nearly always isolated from each other. Keeping up to date with new information and what is going on elsewhere can be difficult, given the constraints of their heavy everyday workload. In addition, few active networks exist to foster information pathways. One of the few standing information networks is in the central and western Pacific, where women are most actively engaged in fisheries and aquaculture. The conduit for this information exchange is the Pacific Community's (SPC) Women in Fisheries Information Bulletin (WIF) <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/en/publications/bulletins/women-in-fisheries.html>, which has been ongoing since 1997.

Since 2007, its editor has been Fijian researcher, educator and community worker Dr Veikila Vuki. In 2007, Veikila took over the information bulletin after a series of active editors who had also had women in fisheries responsibilities inside SPC's fisheries programmes. Although the women in fisheries work of SPC has not been very visible in its recent programmes, through the WIF Information Bulletin, it has maintained a global profile on women in fisheries by providing an information network. Veikila and her ongoing efforts are a major reason for this success.

Dr Veikila Vuki was formerly with the Fiji Fisheries Division and the University of the South Pacific and, since 2006, has been the Director of Oceania Environment Consultants, a consulting firm based in Guam. She also works with grassroots women's groups on fisheries development in Fiji. When she was appointed as WIF editor in November 2006, her duties were described as: seeking and collecting information for the WIF bulletin through regular contact with contributors and networks of people working on the relevant subject, and editing the information through direct



Veikila Vuki

exchange with authors. These duties are not easy, especially in a field with relatively little funding support, such as women in fisheries and aquaculture.

Veikila has succeeded through her personal enterprise, great collaboration skills inside and outside SPC, and a strong commitment to the rights of women in our sector. Each issue of the WIF Information Bulletin is full of information, covering new project results from the Pacific, essays, news and reprinted key papers from other outlets. It is always recommended reading!

Veikila comes from Ono-i-Lau, an isolated southerly island in the Fiji group. She has nearly 30 years of research experience in Australia, Fiji, Samoa, Cook Islands, Kiribati, Vanuatu, Federated States of Micronesia (Chuuk, Pohnpei, Kosrae and Yap), Guam, Marshall Islands and Palau, plus a great deal of international and regional experience. Her experience relates to coastal fishing communities, coastal management, women in fisheries and fisheries development, and she has published widely. In her earlier career, she worked as a Fisheries Officer for the Fiji Department of Fisheries, where she helped train women in fisheries management, and was a board member of the regional Women in Fisheries Network based in Suva. Recently, she and her colleagues have worked to reinvigorate this Fijian network. You can access issues of the Women in Fisheries bulletin: <http://www.spc.int/coastfish/News/WIF/wif.htm>.

¹ Adapted from the AwF website : <http://www.aquaculturewithoutfrontiers.org/veikila-vuki-cultivating-the-sharing-of-information-on-aqua-women/>

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Original text: English

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