



## **PRESS RELEASE**

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### **Vonu Export beer boosts environmental commitments with new MES partnership**

Vonu Export, the socially conscious lifestyle beer brand from Fiji, has demonstrated its continued commitment to protecting Fiji's marine environment with a new long-term partnership with the Mamanuca Environment Society (MES).

The agreement extends a decade-long relationship between MES and Vonu, which carries the *Vonu Dina*, or green turtle, as its emblem and is brewed by Fiji's leading drinks company Paradise Beverages.

Around ten of the brewery team kicked off the partnership during an afternoon spent working with the Society's marine biologists, planting 49 Acropora corals before transferring them to the in-house reef at Castaway Island, as part of an ongoing coral replenishment program.

"The Fijian Islands are home to one of the world's most outstanding tropical marine environments, with many of our species found nowhere else in the world," said Paradise Beverages General Manager Mike Spencer, who took the opportunity to promote the importance of local partnerships like this to the local marine environment.

"It's this incredible diversity and natural beauty that puts Fiji on the map and draws in tourists from around the world. It's also a fundamental part of the identity and livelihood of most Fijians, most local communities rely heavily on marine resources for food and the jobs and income from our vital tourism and fisheries industries.

"As a local company and one of Fiji's largest employers, we absolutely recognise that Paradise and our people play a part in protecting the environment and the communities around us."

Said Blake Vanderfield Kramer, brand manager for Vonu beer, "We're proud that Vonu beer has been supporting the work of MES in protecting endangered turtle species for over a decade, our decision to extend it reflects the vital role the Society plays in protecting not just our turtles but the marine environment they live in.

"Much like the turtle, Vonu beer embodies the live free philosophy, grounded within the ocean and coastal areas and we want to ensure that we are trying to have a positive impact on the environment wherever possible. We're committed to working with the MES to raise awareness and funds to protect our coral reefs and marine life that are so crucial to our turtles, and the Fijian way of life."

Acknowledging the company's increased commitment, MES Project Manager Marica Vakacola said, "We are immensely grateful for the support of our newest sponsorship partner, Paradise Beverages, and we appreciate the commitment shown by this corporate market leader.

"Paradise Beverages' sponsorship will enable MES to further achieve its goals to expand conservation work further in the Mamanuca region in areas of ocean conservation, and further benefit Island communities and commercial stakeholders' through the oversight, assistance and education provided by the Society."

Ms. Vakacola added that the region's rising number of visitors and increasing development demand, coupled with the biggest natural phenomena of climate change, made it partnerships between the private sector and community even more vital to ensuring a sustainable and healthy ecosystem.

"Our actions today will determine the outcome for present and future generations. We believe our collaboration with partner agencies, society members and sponsors will enhance and promote sustainable tourism and community livelihood through environment protection and awareness."

#### **ABOUT THE MAMANUCA ENVIRONMENT SOCIETY**

MES was incorporated in 2003 and is a non-profit organization whose primary objective is to promote and encourage sound environmental management practices with the goal being the sustainability of our fragile marine and terrestrial environment. The Society's goal is immensely important in attaining recognition and providing protection for the environment in the Mamanucas which in turn supports the livelihood of both community and commercial stakeholders. For more details go to <https://mesfiji.org>.

#### **ABOUT PARADISE BEVERAGES**

A leading local manufacturer and among the Pacific region's largest local employers, Paradise Beverages employs around 550 staff in Fiji and Samoa across four sites, including Vailima Brewery in Apia (Samoa), Fiji Brewery in Suva (Fiji) and RUM Co of Fiji Distillery in Lautoka (Fiji). Its beer range includes local favourites Fiji Bitter, Fiji Gold (Fiji's number one selling beer), Vonu Pure Lager, Fiji Premium and Vailima Lager. It also specialises in Ready to Drink (RTD) beverages including the Tribe range, Bounty and Cola, and Joske's Brew. It is renowned world-wide for its multi award-winning Bounty, Ratu and Bati rum ranges, all from Rum Co of Fiji.

Paradise Beverages was purchased by Coca-Cola Amatil in 2012 and has since undergone a FJD 55 million capital investment and capability program to modernise its facilities and underline its position as a significant long-term contributor to the local community and economy. Its mission is to be recognised as the premier place to work, creating world-class beverages and making a positive contribution to the business and the markets in which it operates. Further information on Paradise Beverages is available from the Paradise Beverages website [www.paradisebeverages.com.fj](http://www.paradisebeverages.com.fj).