



IMPLEMENTATION PLAN

National Water Resources Management and Sanitation Policy 2026 – 2035

*A Ten-Year Framework for the Implementation of Fiji's National Water Resources
Management and Sanitation Policy*

National Water Resources Management and Sanitation Policy Implementation Plan

Introduction

The implementation plan for the National Water Resources Management and Sanitation Policy (NWRMSP) is structured in two phases spanning a ten-year period. Given that the NWRMSP proposes comprehensive reforms across the water sector and involves multiple ministries, an extensive and phased approach to implementation is essential.

Phase One is scheduled to begin in mid 2026 and conclude by the end of 2030. This phase will focus on introducing new legislation and establishing regulatory frameworks and procedures related to water service regulation, surface water allocation, and urban planning concerning development and flood risk management. Groundwater regulation, in line with the National Groundwater Resources Development and Management Policy (GRDMP), will also be progressed during this phase, including the establishment of key regulatory and management mechanisms.

Additionally, Phase One will encompass master planning and surveys to identify priorities in infrastructure development, catchment water resource availability, local flood and drainage management, drought vulnerability, and freshwater ecosystem health. Capacity building and administrative upgrades will be implemented in areas such as water service regulation, groundwater allocation and driller licensing, surface water licensing and allocation, and integrated flood management. A significant enhancement of surface water data collection and information systems is proposed, including surface water quality monitoring and data archiving.

Phase Two will focus on the continued implementation and expansion of programs initiated in Phase One. This includes the development of master plans for water supply and sewerage coverage, regulatory monitoring and reporting for urban water services, and ongoing oversight of rural water services. The national water catchment hydrological assessment program will also persist into this phase. Regulatory programs for groundwater permit, drilling company licensing, and surface water licensing will commence following the enactment of relevant legislation and continue through Phase Two. Flood management planning in the Nadi River Basin is expected to begin during this phase, contingent upon the timeline of the Nadi Flood Alleviation Project.

Implementation Arrangements

The Department of Water and Sewerage will be responsible for monitoring and reporting on the implementation of the strategies in the NWRMSP.

Abbreviations

DNR	Donor Funding Required
DTCP	Department of Town and Country Planning
DWS	Department of Water and Sewerage
MoI	Ministry of Information
MECC	Ministry of Environment and Climate Change
FGB	Funding from Fiji Government budget required
FMS	Fiji Meteorological Service
GEDSI	Gender, Equality, Disability and Social Inclusion
GRDMP	National Groundwater Resources Development and Management Policy
IFMP	Integrated Flood Management Plan
MLMR	Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources
MHMS	Ministry of Health and Medical Services
MPWMST	Ministry of Public Works, Meteorological Services and Transport
MAWSI	Ministry of Agriculture, Waterways and Sugar Industry
MRD	Mineral Resources Department
NDRMO	National Disaster Risk Management Office
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
WAF	Water Authority of Fiji
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WRM	Water Resources Management
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation
WSS 2050	Water Sector Strategy 2050
WTP	Water Treatment Plant
WWTP	Waste Water Treatment Plant

National Water Resources Management and Sanitation Policy

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
1. Water services regulation					
1.1. Introduce <i>Water and Sewerage Services Act</i>	Legislation required to create and provide powers of water services regulator [2.7 a)]				
1.1.1. Draft legislation	<i>Legislative drafting commenced under consultancy</i>	DWS	Completed	Legal consultant	<i>UNICEF funded</i>
1.1.2. Consultation and approval	Standard legislative consultation procedure	DWS	2026	Existing resources	
1.2. Establish Water Services Regulator	Following introduction of the <i>Water and Sewerage Services Act</i> [2.7 b)]	DWS	2026	Establish regulatory unit [FGB]	
1.3. Regulator structure and staffing	Establish regulatory staff/unit for urban water services	DWS	2027	Administrative and field staff [FGB]	
1.4. <i>Water Service Agreement</i> with WAF	Preparation to commence immediately and formal application following approval of legislation [2.7 c)]	DWS	2027	Water service consultant [DNR]	
1.5. Monitoring and database	Database expansion - FIWSIMS	DWS	2027	NDA – RVO /AKVO	
1.6. Establish <i>Consumer Advisory Council</i> [2.2 m]	May be undertaken ad hoc at any time	DWS	2027		
2. Urban water supply services					
2.1. Connect 100% urban properties to water supply	Program completion by end 2027	WAF	2027	Within budget {FGB}	
2.2. Drought management plan	Drought management plan to identify options for alternative water sources, and differential urban supply priorities	WAF	Ongoing	Consultancy [DNR]	

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
2.3. Urban demand management and education	WAF to continue urban demand management	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget [FGB]	
2.4. Principles for Tariff Structure	WAF/DWS to develop principles for water supply and sewerage tariff design to encourage water conservation and other water service objectives	WAF/DWS		Water sector tariff consultant [DNR]	
2.5. <i>Water Tank Policy</i> implement	WAF to implement policy	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget	Installation costs to property owners
2.6 Water Sector Strategy 2050	WAF to implement Water Sector Strategy 2050	WAF	Ongoing	Government Budget/DNR/ Development Banks	
3. Urban sanitation					
3.1. Regulation to connect peri-urban areas	Regulation under Water Authority of Fiji Act to enable connections and schemes in areas outside WAF area of operations	WAF		Within budget	
3.2. <i>Town Planning Act</i> amendment (see)	Review of Town Planning Act to include flood-related provisions and powers <i>General provisions</i> to include flood-related Nadi general provisions	DTCP/WAF	Ongoing	Urban planning consultancy [DNR]	
3.3. 10-year sewerage extension plan	WAF to undertake plan identifying priorities for extension of sewerage coverage within and external to areas of operations, with 10-year cost estimate. Projects to comply with Environment Management Act 2005 (Waste Disposal and Recycling) Regulations 2007	WAF		Engineering consultancy [DNR]	
3.4. Standardised septic tank guidelines	Guidelines to be developed by DWS for oversight by WAF and Water Committees	DWS	2026	Within budget	
3.5. Construct centralised sewerage plants	Ongoing program to follow 3.3	WAF	2029	Medium and long-term funding within annual allocation	

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
3.6. Public awareness on improved sanitation	Awareness program for urban and rural areas	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget	
3.7. Regulatory control of liquid wastes to sewer					
3.7.1.	Regulation under <i>Water Authority of Fiji Act</i>	WAF	Ongoing	No budget impact	
3.7.2.	Monitoring and enforcement	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget	
3.8. Review WWTP discharges					
3.8.1.	Survey of WWTP and discharge quality and upgrade plan in line with EMA 2005	WAF	Ongoing	STP consultant [DNR]	
3.8.2.	Rollout of WWTP upgrades 2026-2028	WAF	Ongoing	Annual allocation	
3.9. WWTP environmental monitoring	DWS and Environment to develop WWTP monitoring program in line with Environment Management Act 2005 (Waste Disposal and Recycling) Regulations 2007	DWS/MECC	2026	Within budget	
4. Rural water supply					
4.1. 10-year plan for Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Master Plan	DWS	2026	UNICEF Technical Assistance	
4.2. Introduce multi-source water supply	Policy to be applied to all WAF and donor projects	DWS	Ongoing	Within budget	
4.3. Establish <i>Water Committees</i>	Continue current practice, consistent with RWSP	DWS	Ongoing	No budget impact	
4.4. WSMP to govern rural water services	As above. Acceleration of program will demand additional resources	DWS, WAF & NGOs	Ongoing	FGB allocation and DNR	
4.5. Include women on <i>Water Committees</i>	Review of RWSP	DWS	Ongoing		

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
4.6. Establish <i>National Drinking Water Quality Committee</i>	DWS to establish with MHMS ongoing	DWS, MHMS	Ongoing		
5. Rural Sanitation					
5.1. 10-year plan for rural sanitation development	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Masterplan	DWS	2026	UNICEF Technical Assistance	
5.2. Ensure compliance with RWSP for all schemes	Review of RWSP	DWS	Ongoing	No budget impact	
5.3. WSMP to govern rural sanitation services	Review of WSMP Guidelines	DWS	Ongoing	No budget impact	
5.4. Establish research into low-cost technology	Design and trial low-cost pilot for new technology rural small-scheme WSS	DWS	Ongoing	Consultant research [DNR]	
5.5. Watercourse quality monitoring program	Promote community stream and groundwater sampling associated with WSS sampling equipment	DWS	Ongoing	Funding required [FGB/DNR]	
5.6. Expand water quality database	DWS to add database for community water quality sampling, staff and data costs	DWS	Ongoing	Funding required [FGB]	
6. Water resources information and planning					
6.1. Upgrade surface water data collection	FMS to perform major upgrade to surface water monitoring and data.	FMS	Ongoing		
6.1.1. Initial scoping study	Scoping study to identify the requirements for the streamflow gauging upgrade and define the upgrade package	FMS	Ongoing	Consult hydrology streamflow [DNR]	
6.1.2. Upgrade package	Commencing early 2026 to end 2028, implementation of scoping study with multiple elements	FMS	Ongoing	Major upgrade external consulting [DNR/FGB]	

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
6.2. Groundwater data upgrade	Upgrade and strengthen groundwater data collection, monitoring, and database systems in line with the GRDMP	MRD	Ongoing	Technical and system resources	
6.3. National surface water assessment/plan	Waterways to conduct national catchment water assessment	FMS	Ongoing		
6.3.1. Establish methodology	Methodology for national catchment resources assessments	MAWSI		Consultant hydrologist [DNR]	
6.3.2. Conduct assessments	Undertake national catchment water resources assessment	MAWSI			
6.4. Surface water quality data	Create national surface water quality database	DWS/WAF			
6.4.1. Design and establish database	Scoping study to set up database hardware and software.	FMS/DWS/MRD/WAF	Ongoing	SPC	
6.4.2. Data archiving	Develop database	FMS	Ongoing	Within budget	
6.5. Incorporate water resources data sets into <i>VanuaGIS</i>	By agreement, establish layers for surface water, groundwater, flooding, water quality and other datasets.	MLMR	Ongoing	Annual budget allocation	
6.6. Establish water data exchange protocols	DWS/Lands to coordinate data exchange agreements and protocols	DWS/MLMR	2027	Consultant natural resources data [DNR]	
6.7. IWRM Plan	DWS to make IWRM Plan as per NDP	DWS	2026	Consultant WRM [DNR]	
7. Watershed and catchment management					
7.1. Watershed planning and management					

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
7.1.1. Develop management arrangements	Design watershed management plan, MOU and village agency	MAWSI ¹		Watershed mgt consultant ² [DNR]	
7.1.2. Pilot planning project	Conduct pilot in line with policy as developed in 7.1.1	MAWSI		Consulting support [DNR]	
7.1.3. Watershed committee and MOU	Establish watershed management committee and negotiate pilot MOU	MAWSI		As above	
7.1.4. Ongoing watershed management	Continue watershed planning based on 7.1.1 and 7.1.2	MAWSI		Financing by Fiji Govt and donors	
7.2. Protected catchment program					
7.2.1. Legal mechanism for catchment definition	Review legal options for high level protection of catchments	WAF	Ongoing	Legal consultant [FGB]	
7.2.2. Catchment surveys	Survey activity in drinking water catchments and design protection measures	WAF	Ongoing		Funding for catchment survey program by external consultant (2-year program)
7.2.3. Model catchment plan	Develop catchment plan that provides high level of protection consistent with traditional ownership.	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget	
7.2.4. National planning program	WAF to continue protected catchment planning	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget	
8. Waterways Management					
8.1. Definition of riparian zone	Guidelines for assessing extent of riparian zone	MLMR		Legal consultant [DNR]	
8.2. Evaluation of excavation downstream impacts	Technical guidelines for impact assessment on rivers of extractive activity, training and field manual	MAWSI		Geomorphology consultant [DNR]	

¹ Cooperative program with Forestry, TLTB, Lands, Agriculture, local government

² Regional or national consultant to design watershed arrangements

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
8.3. Monitoring excavation activity	Field staff to monitor riverine impacts	MAWSI		Field staff costs	
8.4. National waterways plan	Survey and master plan for waterway works program	MAWSI		Engineering consultant [DNR]	
8.5. Waterways protocols	Flood and stability assessment for waterways	MAWSI			
9. Groundwater management					
9.1. <i>Groundwater Management Act</i>	Develop and operationalise groundwater management legislation to regulate abstraction, allocation, monitoring, and protection of groundwater resources in accordance with the GRDMP (<i>Ref: Section 7.1</i>)	MRD	Ongoing	Legal and Technical Support	
9.1.1. Draft legislation	Prepare draft groundwater resources legislation incorporating permit systems, monitoring requirements, and regulatory controls (<i>Ref: Section 7.1</i>)	MRD		Legal Drafting Consultant	
9.1.2. Consultation and approval	Undertake stakeholder consultations and legislative approval processes for enactment of groundwater legislation (<i>Ref: Section 7.1</i>)	MRD		Existing Resources	
9.2. Establish groundwater permits	Develop and implement a permit system to regulate groundwater abstraction, including allocation limits, monitoring requirements, and protection of existing users (<i>Ref: Section 10.1</i>)	MRD		Technical and Administrative Resources	
9.2.1 Permit Allocation Framework	Establish criteria and procedures for groundwater allocation based on aquifer capacity, sustainability, and user priority (<i>Ref: Sections 6.2 & 10.1</i>)	MRD		Technical Expertise	
9.2.2 Monitoring and Compliance Mechanism	Introduce monitoring, reporting, and compliance requirements for permit holders, including data submission to MRD (<i>Ref: Sections 8.5 & 10.1</i>)	MRD		Monitoring systems and staff	

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
9.3. Establish drilling licensing function	Develop and implement a licensing regime for groundwater drilling companies, including registration, technical standards, and compliance monitoring (<i>Ref: Section 10.3</i>)	MRD		Regulatory and Technical staff	
9.4. Structural reform and resources	Strengthen institutional arrangements within MRD to support the effective regulation, administration, and monitoring of groundwater resources (<i>Ref: Section 10.5</i>)	MRD		Technical and Operational Resources	
10. Surface water allocation					
10.1. Amend <i>Rivers and Streams Act</i>	Draft amendments to Act to cover water allocation objectives, procedures and legal guidelines	MLMR		Legal drafting consultant (DMR)	
10.1.1. Legislative program	Consultation process for legislation	MLMR		Within budget	
10.1.2. Resolve legislative issues	Resolve in-principal issues for qoliqoli and water users	MLMR		Within budget	
10.2. Establish administrative capacity	Departmental administration and technical assessment resources following approval of legislation (9.1)				
10.2.1. Staffing and resources	Establish licensing unit, structure and staffing, duties and job specifications, communication protocols for inter-departmental inputs	MLMR		Development support [DNR] Administrative costs [FGB]	
10.2.2. Monitoring and regulation function	Field staff recruitment and training	MLMR		Field staff (FGB)	
10.3. Water allocation guidelines	Develop technical guidelines and protocols for evaluating water licence applications	MLMR/ MAWSI		Water allocation consultancy [DNR]	
10.4. Establish policy on qoliqoli	Confirm policy and protocols for approach to qoliqoli and water licensing	MLMR		Within budget	
10.5. Create appeal body	Appeal body design in legislation. Required if appeals made	Judicial department		Ad hoc panel costs	

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
10.6. E-flow guidelines	Develop environmental flow approach for Fijian rivers	MECC		Consultancy {DNR}	
11. Flood Management					
11.1. Amend <i>Town Planning Act</i>	Introduce zoning, flood risk guidelines and mandated rules.	DTCP		Review consultant for flood [DNR]	To accompany broader review of TPA
11.2. Flood map for development	Initial flood map for Nadi	MAWSI/ NDRMO		Flood mapping consultant [DNR]	
11.3. Create flood zones commencing Nadi River basin	Flood risk levels based on flood studies for Nadi River and gazette or certify flood zones	DTCP		Consultation procedure costs	
11.4. <i>Fiji National Building Code</i> review for flood resilience	Building Code to include flood-related standards among other matters	MPWMST	2026	Consultancy proposed (ADB)	
11.5. Legislate <i>Fiji National Building Code</i>	Provide mandating powers by regulation for relevant areas	MPWMST	2026	Within budget	
11.6. Amend <i>Drainage Act</i> for flood works	Introduce power for flood works and hydraulic works management	MAWSI		Within budget	
11.7. Strengthen flood hydrology	Scoping study for Departmental strengthening to identify costs associated with 11.8.	MAWSI		Consultancy [DNR]	
11.8. Upgrade Waterways hydrological capacity	Structure, staffing and technological capacity	MAWSI		Consultancy [DNR] and administration costs [FGB]	
11.9. Develop IFMP approach and procedures	Integrated flood management plan commencing Nadi flood scheme	MAWSI		Flood management consultant [DNR]	
11.10. Assign flood responsibility in Gazette	Assign formal responsibility for flood management to MAWSI	MAWSI		No impact	
11.11. Review legislation for flood references	Review laws of Fiji and recommend flood references	NDRMO		Legal consultant flood background [DNR]	

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
12. Drainage					
12.1. National review of urban drainage	National urban drainage review, priority setting and master plan for cost	MAWSI		Consultancy [DNR]	
12.2. Master plan for urban drainage implementation	Implement 10-year drainage master plan	MAWSI		Annual budget allocation 2023 onwards	
12.3. National database for local urban flooding	Create urban flooding database with local governments	MAWSI		Some budget requirement	
12.4. Unlink stormwater from sewers	WAF program with local government scoping study for priority setting – may link to drainage master plan (12.2)	WAF/Local government		Consultancy drainage [DNR]	
12.5. Stormwater master plan	Implement master plan for stormwater realignment	WAF/Local government		Annual budget [FGB]	
13. Irrigation management					
13.1. Survey irrigation water withdrawals	Identify intake measurement facilities and upgrading requirements	MAWSI		Consultancy irrigation management [DNR]	
13.2. Database on irrigation demand	Establish database on irrigation demand and seasonal usage	MAWSI		Within budget	
13.3. Irrigation water conservation plan	Water conservation and re-use program planning (identify projects for implementation)	MAWSI		Within budget	
13.4. Irrigation water conservation program	Implement water conservation plan	MAWSI			
13.5. Agricultural pollution	Survey agriculture and irrigation runoff and drainage quality	MAWSI		Funding required [DNR]	

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
14. Drought prediction and preparation					
14.1. Disseminate FMS drought predictions	Publicise long-term climate forecasts and provide information on drought risk	FMS		Dissemination costs [DNR] (CREWS Project)	
14.2. Identify national drought vulnerabilities	Study to identify localities of highest drought risk, develop preparation strategies	FMS/ MAWSI/ NDRMO		Consultancy [DNR]	
14.3. Install backup domestic water storage	Manage program to install back-up emergency water sources	WAF/DWS		Retrofitting program [DNR]	
14.4. Require multi-source schemes as criterion	Implement policy	DWS			
15. Demand management					
15.1. National demand management strategy	Demand management strategy to identify areas and priorities for attention	WAF/DWS	Ongoing	Consultancy [DNR]	
15.2. Value of water strategy	Develop information material on the value of water in all sectors	WAF/DWS/ MRD/MAWSI		Development and publication [DNR]	
15.3. WAF leakage detection and remedial program	Ongoing	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget	
15.4. Urban water saving incentives	Investigate incentive programs to encourage water saving by urban customers	WAF	Ongoing	Within budget	
15.5. Water conservation measures in mining licences	Review, study and policy approach for implementation	MRD		No impact	
16. Water quality management					

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
16.1. Ambient water quality guidelines	Develop national water quality guidelines for Fijian waters	MECC		Environmental consultant [DNR]	
16.2. Extend WSS WQ database to groundwater/surface water	Program to monitor water supply and sanitation outflow on environment	MHMS/DWS/WAF/MRD		Budget allocation [FGB]	
16.3. Provide low-cost sampling to Water Committees	See 4.3	DWS	Ongoing	Equipment [DNR]	
16.4. National surface water WQ database	Creation of national database for surface water quality	FMS		Consultancy to establish [DNR]	
16.5. Water quality data agreements	Included in 6.6	DWS/WAF/MHMS/MRD			
16.6. Groundwater protection zones	Included in GRDMP (<i>Ref: Section 9.12</i>)	MRD			
16.7. Education on rural groundwater contamination	Included in GRDMP (<i>Ref: Section 11.7</i>)	MRD			
17. Water and environment					
17.1. Base flow protection	Develop technical guidelines for maintaining base flow in rivers appropriate to Fijian conditions	MECC		Consultancy [DNR]	
17.2. Water allocation guidelines	Guideline as above with socio-economic and environmental factors to be considered by end	MLMR		Consultancy [DNR]	
17.3. High conservation values and water resources	Survey of freshwater supported environmental features in Fiji	MECC			
17.4. WWTP outflow review and upgrading	See 3.8, 3.9, 5.5	WAF			
18. Social and economic values					

Implementation Item	Description	Agency	Completion date	Resources	Budget estimate
18.1. Develop social value framework for water resources	Framework to identify social factors to be considered in water sector programs	DWS		Consultancy [DNR]	
18.2. Include GEDSI in plan and operation bodies	Integration of GEDSI in all policies and framework	All agencies	Ongoing		