

### **UniFiji Science Students Plant 1000 Mangrove Seeds**

The University of Fiji's School of Science and Technology (SoST) students in collaboration with the Ministry of Forestry planted 1000 mangrove seeds at Saweni Beach on Monday, March 11, 2019. This was done to commemorate the "World Earth Day" and help the Ministry achieve its goal to plant 4 million trees in 4 years.

Total of 26 second year students enrolled in biodiversity and conservation course were accompanied by the teaching staff of The University of Fiji to plant mangrove to help raise awareness of environmental issues.

"We planted mangroves to preserve the natural environment and habitat for marine species.

Mangroves do not only provide livelihood to coastal communities, it also prevents coastal erosion, abrasion, and helps in combating the effects of global climate change. It is one of the most threatened ecosystems in the world which needs to be protected due to its ecological and economical importance," said Ms. Zafia Naaz of the School of Science and Technology.

Mr. Setareki Nanuloilagi, who is the forester extension at Ministry of Forestry, West, helped provide the mangrove seedlings and also accompanied the students at the site. His team demonstrated how to plant mangrove seedlings to the students.

The University of Fiji has been consistent with its efforts to make a difference in the community through its various community outreach programmes. One such was SoST hosting monthly seminar sessions in the lead-up to COP23 in Germany. Mangrove planting activity has also been carried out by the Science Department in previous years to help rehabilitate and regenerate coastal habitats.

Therefore the students who took part got an opportunity to interact and engage in conservation methods which they can later practice in their own homes and communities.