

**THE COMMUNITY  
CONSERVATION RESILIENCE  
INITIATIVE IN SAMOA**

**BY  
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## **O LE SIOSIOMAGA SOCIETY, INC. (OLSSI)**

**O le Siosiomaga Society, Inc. (OLSSI)**, Samoa's first environmental non-government organization, was established in 1990. It is now one of Samoa's leading conservation NGOs. Since its creation, the overall objective of the society's work has been to develop its capacity to be a trusted, value added, and catalytic agent to promote the wise use of natural resources and conservation of Samoa's environment, and through it provide a forum for its members to advocate the successful achievement of the society goals and objectives. OLSSI has a membership of more than 50 financial members, including international and local residents. It has secured access from most village communities in Samoa with unique and intact terrestrial and marine biodiversity resources.

### **Our Vision**

It is our vision to have OLSSI to be one of the most dependable, value added and efficient Non-Government Organizations.

We aim to be responsive to the broader contemporary issues in all the four pillars of sustainable development (Social, Economic, Environmental, Cultural), as well as further the sustainable management and use of natural resources delivered to benefit peoples and communities of Samoa, the Pacific region and the world, utilizing broad advocacy and awareness raising approaches whilst respecting the principles of good governance.

**CULTURAL PROTOCOL – WELCOME  
AVA CEREMONY IN VAIUSU VILLAGE**



**CULTURAL NORMS AND PROTOCOLS ARE PREREQUISITES  
TO SUCCESS WHEN WORKING WITH SAMOAN VILLAGE  
COMMUNITIES.**

**CULTURAL PROTOCOL BACKED  
BY COMMUNITY ELDERS**



**REMEMBERING THE PRISTINE CONDITIONS OF THE  
MANGROVES AND THE ABUNDANCE OF ECOSYSTEM  
SERVICES AND PRODUCTS HAS FIRED UP THE VILLAGE  
ELDERS TO LEAD IN THE BASELINE DATA COLLECTION  
SURVEY.**

**INVASIVE SPECIES DOMINATING THE  
MANGROVE ZONE IN THE SAINA  
COMMUNITY**



**SAINA COMMUNITY HAS LOST ABOUT 80% OF ITS MANGROVES  
DUE TO UNSUSTAINABLE HARVESTING FOR FIREWOOD.**

**SAND MINING ADJACENT TO  
VAITELE VILLAGE**



**THE SAINA AND TOAMUA COMMUNITIES ARE COMPLAINING ABOUT THE ENHANCED SEDIMENTATION CAUSED BY SAND MINING IN VAITELE.**

**SAINA – MUD IS GRAY AND SEA IS  
TURBID**



**ENHANCED SILTATION AND TURBIDITY GENERATED BY SAND MINING IN VAITELE – VERY UNFAVOURABLE TO MANGROVE GROWTH/DEVELOPMENT . IT IS ALSO UNHEALTHY FOR OTHER MEMBERS OF THE EMBRACED BIODIVERSITY.**

## **OLD VAITOLOA RUBBISH DUMP**



**MANGROVES REMAIN UNDER THREAT FROM TOXIC HEAVY METAL CONTAMINATION.**



## OLD VAITOLOA RUBBISH DUMP



**WRECKAGE OF ENTIRE BOAT WITH ENGINE STILL EVIDENT - PUBLIC WARNED TO STAY CLEAR OF THIS AREA. POSSIBLE TOXIC LEACHATE INTO THE ADJACENT MANGROVES.**

**TROPICAL ALMOND (*TROPICAL  
ALMOND*)**



**EVEN THE NATURAL COASTAL TREE SPECIES LIKE THE TROPICAL ALMOND CANNOT PROVIDE MUCH PROTECTION AGAINST BEACH EROSION.**

**VAITELE MANGROVES ZONE HAS  
BEEN COMPLETELY DESTROYED**



**THE WHOLE MANGROVE ZONE OF VAITELE VILLAGE HAS BEEN  
CONVERTED INTO BUSINESS AND RESIDENTIAL AREAS.**

## TOAMUA – TOURIST RESORT



**TOAMUA ALSO FACES THE PROBLEM OF MANGROVE  
CONVERSION INTO BUSINESS.**

## CCRI IN VAIUSU COMMUNITY



**VAIUSU IS THE FIRST COMMUNITY TO ENGAGE IN CCRI – THE WOMEN’S COMMITTEE HAS DEVELOPED A TWO ACRE MANGROVE PLANTATION.**

## **VAIUSU MANGROVE PLANTATION**



**THESE YOUNG MANGROVE TREES ARE STILL VERY VULNERABLE TO THREATS.**

***XYLOCARPUS MOLUCCENSIS***  
**FOUND IN TOAMUA MANGROVES**



**PRESIDENT OF OLSSI, DR KEN LAMETA, APPRAISING THE 3RD AND RAREST MANGROVE SPECIES IN SAMOA (*XYLOCARPUS MOLUCCENSIS*). THIS IS THE SECOND KNOWN LOCATION OF THIS MANGROVE SPECIES. ONLY EIGHT TREES WERE SIGHTED DURING THE SURVEY.**

## COMMUNITIES AND CCRI

- **Vaiusu community is actively engaged in developing mangrove restoration – plan to expand the project to more fragmented areas.**
- **Mangrove management action plan will be developed soon once the mangrove biodiversity audit report is completed.**
- **Toamua village – biodiversity audit completed; discussion on developing mangrove management action plan started. Special emphasis on conservation of the endangered *Xylocarpus moluccensis*.**
- **Saina village – biodiversity audit completed; contemplating the best approach to restore mangroves.**
- **All three communities require external assistance especially technical and financial.**



## CONCLUSIONS

- Mangroves have been destroyed in many sections of the survey area consequently:
  - i. Aggravating beach erosion
  - ii. Weakening bio-shield effect – more prone to extreme weather events and tsunamis
  - i. Causing decline in fish and other animal species – threaten food security and loss of household income
- Mangrove cannot re-dominate former territories that are fragmented especially those occupied by other coastal and invasive species – community intervention is therefore necessary.
- Mangrove restoration and conservation enhance ecosystem and species resilience – this also makes village communities more resilient against the might of climate change.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

- Toamua and Saina communities to follow Vaiusu example. Rehabilitating destroyed mangroves requires proper community intervention.
- Intervention needs long-term vision hence community must establish ownership of the initiative through genuine conviction and strong commitment.
- Communities to seek assistance from government and other external partners.
- Communities with partners to continuously monitor and evaluate the initiative so a more relevant and cost effective approach can be developed for effective mangrove management in the future.