Fiji’s new flora and fauna designs will now replace the portrait of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II across all denominations. It is important to recognize the biodiversity around us. Some of the flora and fauna that have been chosen to feature on our banknotes and coins are so unique that they are only found in Fiji while some are even believed to be extinct since they have not been seen recently. We should be proud of nature’s gift to us. It is therefore important that we recognize these in conserving our biodiversity and creating awareness of the threats to biodiversity. What better way to do this than on our currency which is used by all citizens.

The change in designs is a significant one since we all have been so accustomed to seeing members of the British Royal Family on our currency over the past 78 years. At the Reserve Bank we feel it is now time to promote our own unique natural treasure.

Work on the design process commenced in 2010, the United Nations declared International Year of Biodiversity. A Currency Design Committee (CDC) comprising government Fiji was approved by the Prime Minister and Minister for Finance to oversee the design selection process. The CDC finalised design selections which were approved by the RBF Board in November 2010 and by the Cabinet in March 2011. Following a competitive tender process, the world’s largest commercial banknote printer De La Rue was awarded the tender.

The RBF for the first time has introduced a new polymer banknote in the $25 denomination. Polymer banknotes require special care. Some tips are:

- Do not expose polymer banknotes to excessive heat such as ironing, burning or exposing to direct sunlight. If polymer banknotes are exposed to excessive heat, they could cause them to melt. If melted, you will lose your banknotes and these damages the banknotes and reduces their life.
- Do not apply sellotape on banknotes. Applying sellotape on banknotes damages them and also destroys their look and feel.
- Do not write on them. Writing on banknotes destroys the look and feel of them. Writing on banknotes is also illegal.
- Store banknotes in cool and dry places. Water, moisture, excessive heat and dirt will damage the banknotes.

In February 2009, the Reserve Bank of Fiji (RBF) issued smaller and lighter coins to save cost. Approximately 73 million smaller and lighter coins have been issued by the RBF since February 2009. This equates to 278 tonnes of coins.

It is estimated that less than 50 percent of these coins are actively used in circulation. Approximately 11 million brand new coins into circulation each year to meet demand costing the RBF approximately $1 million. The rest are assumed to be lying idle in homes, offices and in cars. Some may even be lost. Coins, unlike banknotes, are much more durable, and an average, can last 15 years in circulation if used actively.

The RBF for the first time will introduce a new $2 coin and a polymer banknote in $5 denomination in its new vibrant green colour. These measures have been taken to improve banknote durability and to also save costs for our nation. Various strategies have been set to withdraw the old $2 and $5 banknotes. Public awareness will commence in January 2013 to ensure an efficient and effective transition for these two denominations. Other banknote denominations will continue to co-circulate and will be subject to a gradual withdrawal process. Coins will continue to co-circulate and the old designs will not be withdrawn.

Design and technical changes include more vibrant colours and modern security features for the higher banknote denominations. Designs on the front and back of all coin denominations have now been named in promoting our natural heritage even better. We all will get to know and recognize the importance of what we have. Many of us did not know what a saqamoli was until we put it on the $1 coin.

For the visually impaired, banknotes will continue to be of varied sizes and coins will continue to have different edges to assist in differentiating between the denominations.

I am sure that we all will be proud of our natural heritage and our new design flora and fauna currency. I am also confident that our new currency will be amongst the best in the world.

On behalf of the Board of Directors, Executive Management and Staff of the RBF I extend my season’s greetings and best wishes to you all for this festive season.

Mr. Barry Whiteside
Governor, Reserve Bank of Fiji
Front design features Fiji's endemic Kulea (Red-throated Lutkevich), our smallest member of the parrot family. Predominantly green, the Kulea is a very rare inhabitant of the mountain forest canopy which feeds on nectar and pollen. Kulea has only been recorded from Viti Levu, Vanua Levu, Vanua Levu and Ovalau. The first confirmed sighting was in 1933 and searches in the last five years have failed to find it. A clear window with an image of an i-Taukei man is featured on the note. An image of a Kobo in Masi (suit baton) is also featured on the front of the note.

Back design features Fiji's endangered Crested Iguana, endemic Belau-sim, Mauanower and Mount Yald in Vanua Levu.

5 cents

Polymer Clear Window (B10 only)

Watermark ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Security Threads ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hidden Text ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Foil ($10 only)

Front design features a Bi-colour Foxface Rabbitfish). Discovered in Fiji waters, this distinctive species has since been found from Tonga to New Caledonia but remains relatively uncommon throughout its range. Has since been found from Tonga to New Caledonia but remains relatively uncommon throughout its range. The note, “Fiji Flying Fox” (Fiji Flying Fox) has a very distinctive flight style which helps to make it stand out. A clear window with an image of a Fijian man is featured on the note. An image of a Fijian canoe (scap) is also featured on the front.

Back design features a culture and heritage theme with descriptions of a traditional Taduku and Taqaqai-Vakaturaga ceremony.

10 cents

Security Threads ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hidden Text ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hologram ($20 only)

Front design features Fiji’s shining parrots are a strikingly beautiful group of two to three species. Fiji’s dazzling parrots are a visually beautiful group of two to three species that are endemic to Fiji. They have a very distinctive flight style which helps to make it stand out. A clear window with an image of a Fijian man is featured on the note. An image of a Fijian canoe (scap) is also featured on the front.

Back design features a culture and heritage theme with descriptions of a traditional Taduku and Taduku-Vakaturaga ceremony.

20 cents

Security Threads ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hidden Text ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hologram ($20 only)

Front design features a unique displays of dual image holographic stripes. The note has two different angles to see the image of the bird Kacau ni Gau, features Fiji Flying Fox logo, and the number 20 on the hologram. You will also be able to see different cultures on the hologram as and when you tilt the note.

Back design features a culture and heritage theme with descriptions of a traditional Taduku and Taduku-Vakaturaga ceremony.

50 cents

Security Threads ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hidden Text ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hologram ($20 only)

Front design features a unique displays of dual image holographic stripes. The note has two different angles to see the image of the bird Kacau ni Gau, features Fiji Flying Fox logo, and the number 50 on the hologram. You will also be able to see different cultures on the hologram as and when you tilt the note.

Back design features a culture and heritage theme with descriptions of a traditional Taduku and Taduku-Vakaturaga ceremony.

$1

Security Threads ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hidden Text ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Colour Changing thread $100 only

Front design features a unique displays of dual image holographic stripes. The note has two different angles to see the image of the bird Kacau ni Gau, features Fiji Flying Fox logo, and the number 100 on the hologram. You will also be able to see different cultures on the hologram as and when you tilt the note.

Back design features a culture and heritage theme with descriptions of a traditional Taduku and Taduku-Vakaturaga ceremony.

$2 coin

Security Threads ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hidden Text ($10, $20, $50 and $100 only)

Hologram ($20 only)

Front design features a unique displays of dual image holographic stripes. The note has two different angles to see the image of the bird Kacau ni Gau, features Fiji Flying Fox logo, and the number 200 on the hologram. You will also be able to see different cultures on the hologram as and when you tilt the note.

Back design features a culture and heritage theme with descriptions of a traditional Taduku and Taduku-Vakaturaga ceremony.

Source of information on Flora and Fauna: Dr. Dick Wattke, Environmental Consultant (Fiji) Ltd.