PAPER 1:
INTEGRATION OF CLIMATE CHANGE AND DISASTER RISK MANAGEMENT IN THE AGRICULTURE SECTOR – CASE STUDY FROM THE FIJI PAPAYA INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Over the past decade, papaya has emerged as a key lead commodity for horticulture development in the Fiji Islands. Currently Fiji exports an average of 800 tonnes of papaya annually to New Zealand and Australia. The development of this industry has been subject to the normal constraints faced by developing countries entering the horticulture export market. In addition to these traditional constraints, the industry is now faced with a new set of challenges that relates to climate change and the likelihood of increasing natural disasters. In recent years natural disasters such as drought, floods and cyclones have had a direct impact on the Fiji papaya industry.

In the face of these traditional and emerging challenges, the Fiji papaya industry led by Nature's Way Cooperative has embarked on a series of initiatives to address the continued threat of natural disasters. These initiatives include both immediate responses to the situation as well as research into new mitigation strategies. This paper examines a selection of these initiatives including: the calculation of natural disasters into papaya crop budgets, reducing the scale of planting and increasing the frequency of planting, the Fiji Papaya Seed production scheme, bulking of seed stocks to quickly recover from natural disasters and research into pre and post-cyclone farm activities.

Keywords: natural disasters, papaya, cyclone, mitigation