

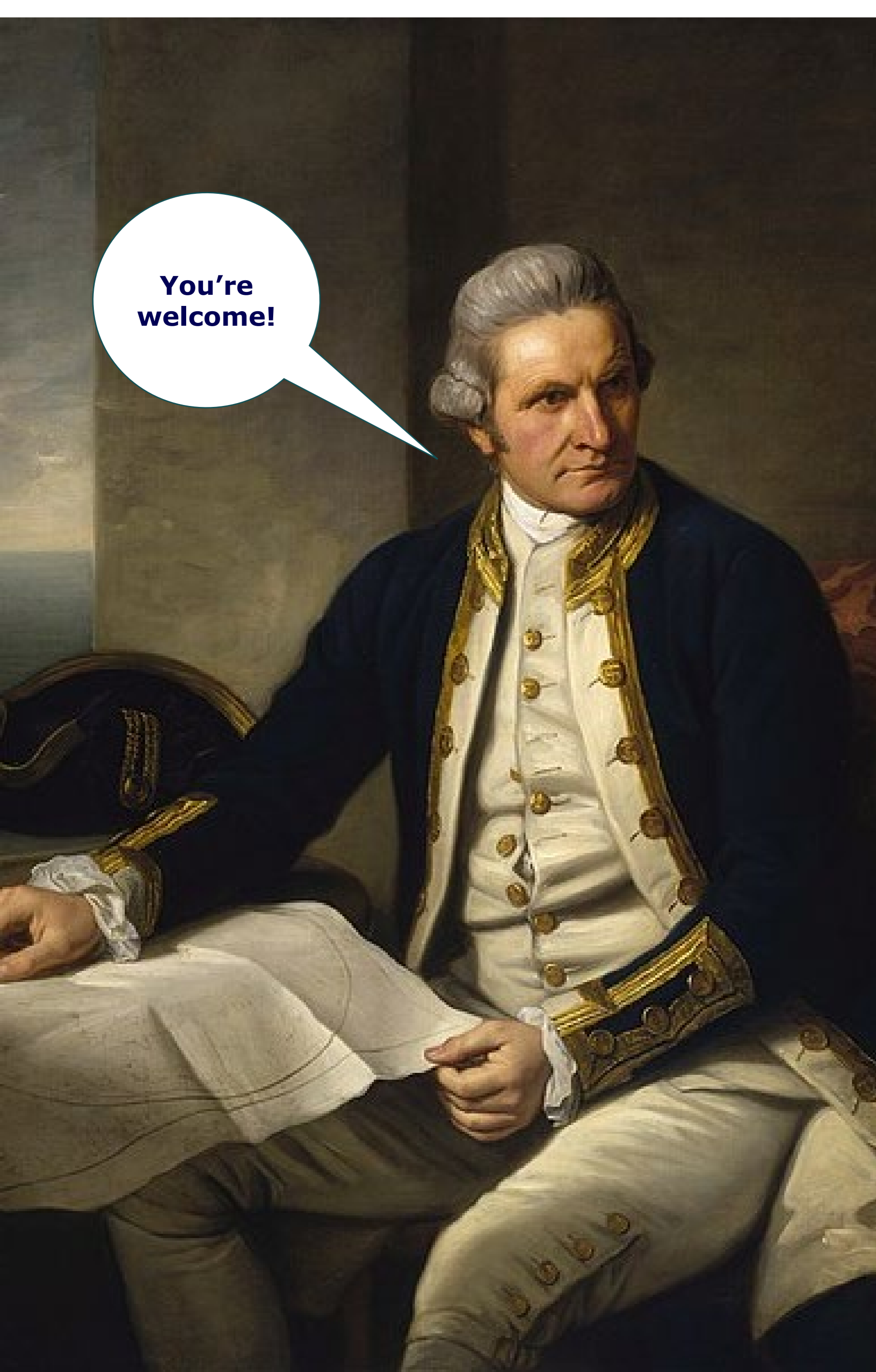


# Unlocking Cruise Tourism Destinations through Hydrography

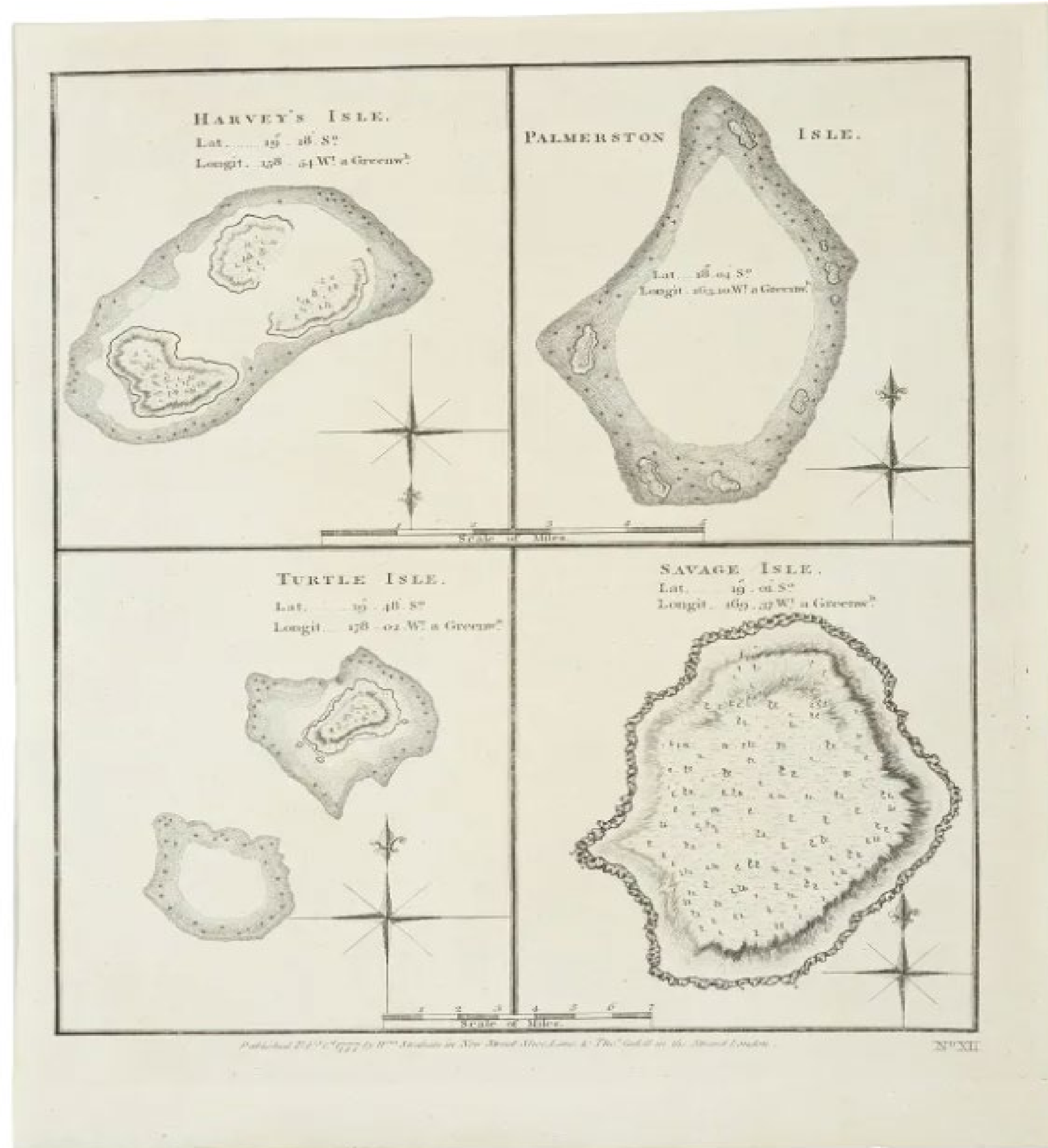
Seabed 2030 6th Pacific Ocean Mapping Meeting  
6<sup>th</sup> November 2024



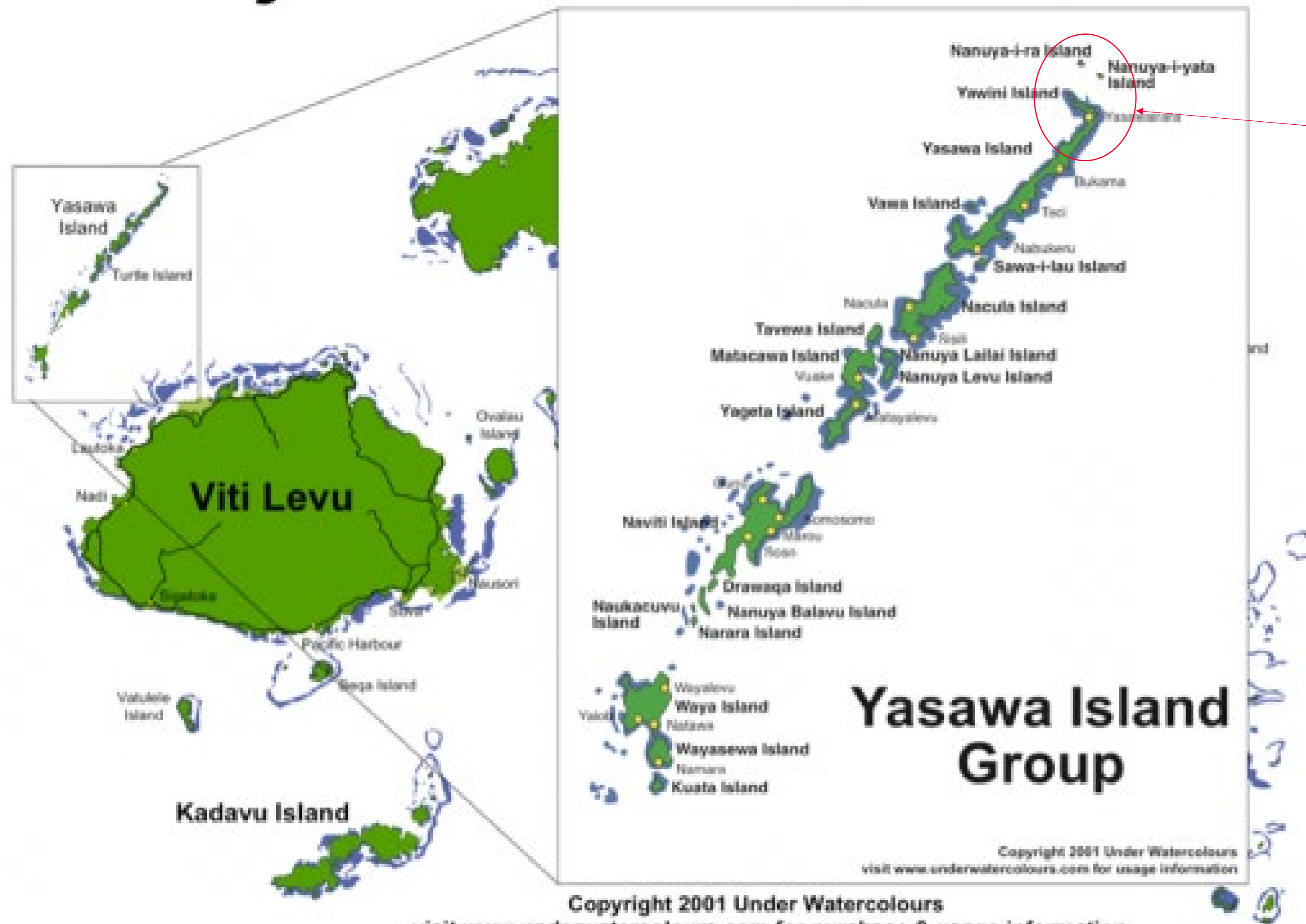
MDF is funded by the Australian government. It is implemented by Palladium, in partnership with Swisscontact.



Some parts of Fiji still use charts that Captains Cook and Bligh produced



# The Fiji Islands



Yassawa – I – Rara



# Who is MDF?

- Aims to increase incomes of women and men in Fiji, Tonga, Samoa, Vanuatu, Timor Leste and Sri Lanka
- Aims to help fix the way that whole sectors function to make them more inclusive
- Partners with the private sector to develop, test and scale new business models, and with the public sector to help improve the business enabling environment
- Supported by the Australian Government; running since 2012
- Tourism is a key sector for MDF in Fiji – especially in more remote, indigenous areas





Last cruise ship visit to  
Yasawa-i-Rara

2008

- Growing demand from cruise tourists for Fiji island destinations.
- Interest from Carnival Cruises to add a new island destination, Yasawa-i-Rara, to its Fiji itinerary
- **Challenge : Insurers reluctant to provide cover due to outdated nautical charts of the YIR anchorage.**
- Priority to domestic ports, inter-island shipping & cargo lanes rather than potential remote island tourism destinations



2018 provided an opportunity & we grasped it!



Solution: A **Public Private Partnership** between FHS, Transam Fiji Limited & MDF



Last cruise ship visit to Yasawa-i-Rara

**2008**



Fiji Navy, Kenua Fiji, and MDF partner to begin hydrographic mapping of Yasawa-i-rara

**2018**



UK Hydrographic Office approved updated hydrographic map for Yasawa-i-rara

**2021**



**COVID-19...**

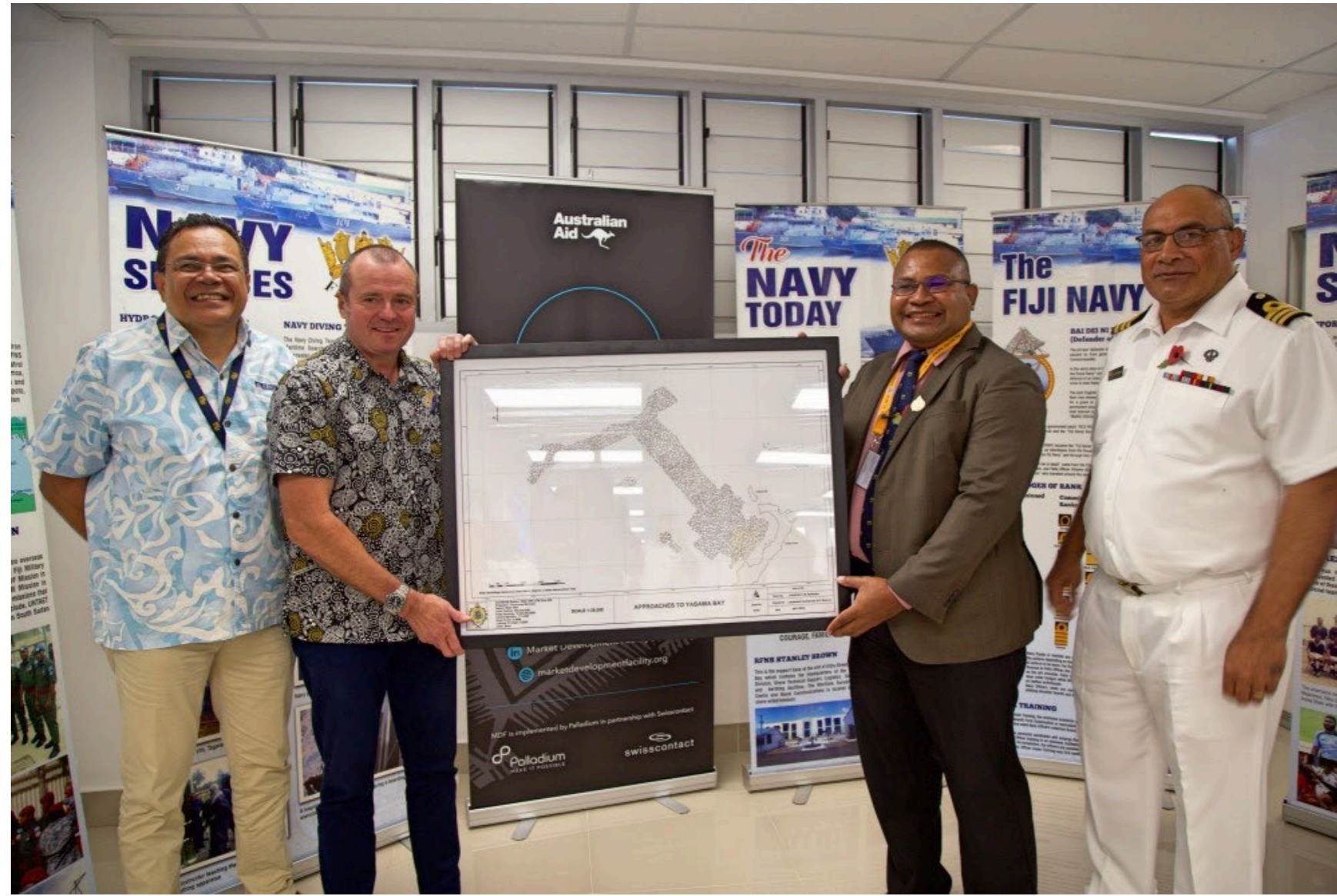
**2019**



Fiji hydrographic map for Yasawa-i-Rara updated



# You have your charts: job done, right?!



## Yes but...

- A lack of coordination mechanisms between Yassawa-i-Rara and the cruise agents
- A lack of understanding of what the cruises wanted
- A lack of alignment with community values and goals
- 16 years of neglect of infrastructure (jetty, ablution block etc)
- Lack of experience and technical skills to deliver tourism experience
- Lack of service to support the community to respond to the above





Last cruise ship visit to Yasawa-i-Rara

**2008**

Fiji Navy, Kenua Fiji, and MDF partner to begin hydrographic mapping of Yasawa-i-rara

**2018**

UK Hydrographic Office approved updated hydrographic map for Yasawa-i-rara

**2021**

- TTFB & MDF sign partnership
- TTFB/MDF Scoping Mission
- TTFB/MDF Training Mission
- Cruise Day – Seabourn Pursuit

**2024**

**COVID-19...**

**2019**

Fiji hydrographic map for Yasawa-i-Rara updated

**2023**

Kenua Fiji signal intention for cruise ship visit to Yasawa-i-rara

# Community Engagement & Readiness



- **December 2023** – interest from Seabourne Pursuit, expedition cruise liner, to visit Yasawa-i-Rara.
- Need & opportunity to work on the supply side – community readiness; product development; governance; ensuring sustainability of cruise tourism
- **Strategy:** MDF partnership with iTaukei Trust Fund Board (TTFB)
- **Activities:**
  - Development of a draft methodology to support the community to identify and communicate their values, aspirations and risk perceptions with regards to involvement in tourism (economic, cultural, social, environmental)
  - Training: product development and quality checks; infrastructure upgrades; post-cruise monitoring and impact assessment
  - Co-investment in infrastructure repair (including private sector)













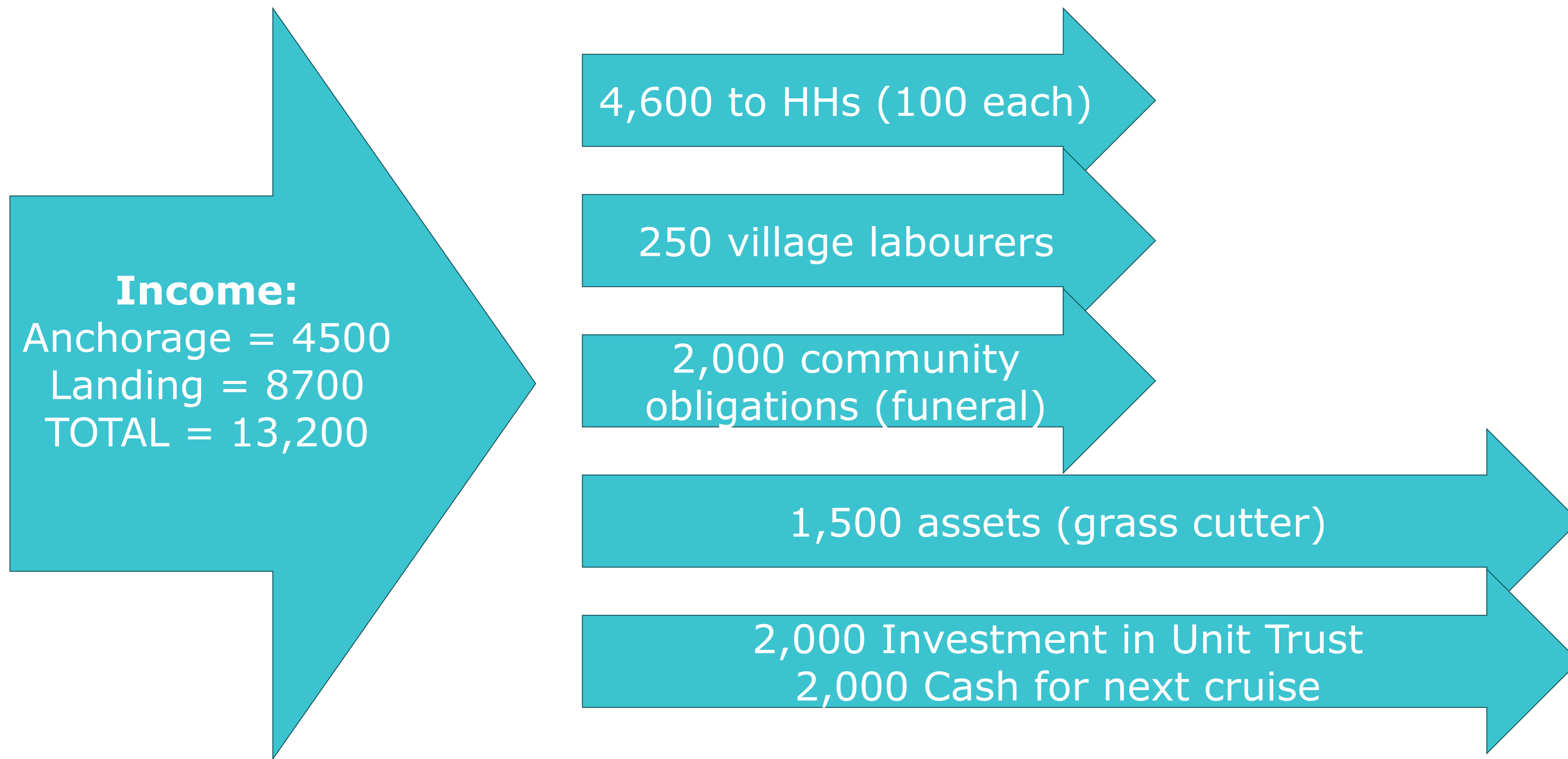






## Economic Impact

*How did this benefit the community?*



# Social Impact

*How did this benefit the community?*





# Call to Action

*If it's possible in Yasawa, it's possible anywhere. But first.....*

- Increase recognition and understanding of the importance of hydrography and its benefits for tourism, fisheries, safety of navigation, etc.
- Stakeholder ownership – government, ports, marinas, environmental organisations, tourism groups, commercial shipping – of **their** role in hydrography. PPP as a possible funding model particularly for tourism and economic sectors; private sector involvement is crucial.
  - ❖ *Government's priorities (NSTF) include spreading the benefits of tourism to non-traditional regions via expedition cruises and large cruise ships.*
  - ❖ *The private sector (cruise agents, tour operators) have a commercial interest in the opening of new regions; co-investment*
- Identifying/quantifying direct links between hydrographic surveys and the economic benefits to the local communities and developing maritime zones. Strengthen the case – cost:benefit.
- Recognising and empowering the Fiji Hydrographic Taskforce Working Group to deliver according to its mandate, chief of which is validating/prioritising hydrography needs against available resourcing
- Strategic plans and investment should include hydrographic surveys as a fundamental component to building capacity that directly benefits the local communities, industry, transport and economies. **Needs to be done in unison with wider community engagement and preparedness work.**

# Vinaka Vakalevu!

Tim Stewart  
Deputy Country Director, MDF Fiji



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