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## UNIVOIS NEWSLETTER

# SINU Academic Inducted as PAS Fellow at 2026 Congress in Samoa



**Solomon Islands National University Pro Vice Chancellor Academic (PVCA), Associate Professor Eric Katovai.**

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is pleased to announce that Eric Katovai, Acting Vice-Chancellor and Pro Vice-Chancellor Academic, has been formally inducted as a Fellow of the Pacific Academy of Sciences (PAS) during the 2026 PAS Congress held in Apia, Samoa, from 16-18 February 2026.

The Fellowship recognises sustained contributions to research, education, and scientific leadership across the Pacific. Associate Professor Katovai's work in forest ecology, biodiversity conservation, and regional science leadership has strengthened research capacity and environmental stewardship in the Solomon Islands and across the wider Blue Pacific region.

Beyond his leadership role at SINU, Associate Professor Katovai is actively engaged in several regional research and capacity-building initiatives. These include the LIFER (Livelihood in Forest Ecosystem Recovery) programme with local and international partners, and Women's Leadership in STEM research across four Pacific Island universities.

He also holds an adjunct Associate Professorship at the Queensland University of Technology, where he co-supervises two PhD students under the LIFER project.

In addition, he co-supervises two PhD candidates at the University of the South Pacific and will commence supervision of master's by Research students at SINU this year, supporting the University's expansion of higher degree research training.

Reflecting on the honour, Associate Professor Katovai expressed humility and dedicated the recognition to those who have supported his research journey.

He noted his hope that this achievement will inspire young Pacific researchers to pursue excellence and advance Pacific-led science for the benefit of Pacific peoples.

The Solomon Islands was further represented at the Congress by two SINU researchers. Dr Lionel Kakai, Head of the School of Sciences, presented a paper titled Indigenous Knowledge Systems in Solomon Islands: Focusing on the Engineering Traditions of Artificial Islands, highlighting the sophistication and contemporary relevance of Indigenous engineering and ecological knowledge.

Mrs Dawnie Katovai, nearing completion of her PhD under the Pacific European Union Marine Partnership (PEUMP) programme, presented on Traditional Knowledge for Effective Forest Conservation in Fiji and Solomon Islands, emphasising the importance of Indigenous knowledge in community-based conservation and sustainable resource management.

## SINU Signs MOU to Develop Bloody Ridge National Historical Park



**From left to right MFR Acting Permanent Secretary Wilfred Atomea, MECDM Permanent Secretary David Hiba Hiriasia, SINU Acting Vice-Chancellor, Associate Professor Eric Katovai, and MCT Permanent Secretary Bunyan Sivoro showing copies of the signed MOU.**

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU), in partnership with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism (MCT), the Ministry of Forestry and Research (MFR), and the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management, and Meteorology (MECDM), has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) to develop the Bloody Ridge National Historical Park (BRNHP).

The historic MOU was officially signed on Wednesday 4 February in Honiara, establishing a framework for collaboration among the four parties to sustainably manage, conserve, and develop BRNHP as a protected area and globally recognized heritage and visitor attraction.

Under the agreement, the Parties have committed to promoting cooperation in tourism, recreation, conservation, restoration, and research for the benefit of both Solomon Islanders and international visitors.

The scope of collaboration under the MOU covers the following areas; Joint environment and conservation initiatives, including reforestation and restoration biodiversity and invasive species management.

Promotion and development of sustainable tourism opportunities. Facilitation of academic research, training, and awareness programs related to BRNHP.

Integration of climate adaptation and mitigation strategies into park management.

Inclusion of local communities in the park's management and development and implementation of suitable benefit-sharing mechanisms. Monitoring, compliance and enforcement to address illegal activities within BRNHP.

Under the MOU, SINU's responsibilities are as follows; Facilitate research and academic programs on biodiversity, conservation, and sustainable tourism.

Provide access to technical expertise and engage students and faculty in practical training and fieldwork within BRNHP.

Develop educational materials and programs to raise awareness of BRNHP's ecological and cultural importance.

Share research findings with all Parties to enhance evidence-based management of the park. Speaking at the MOU signing, the SINU Acting Vice-Chancellor Associate Professor Eric Katovai said BRNHP is a place of profound national significance it is a site that carries our World War II history, hold important biodiversity values, and continues to serve as a place of learning, reflection, and identity for our people.

The Acting Vice-Chancellor said the MOU recognises that such as site requires coordinated stewardship - one that balances heritage protection, environmental conservation, community engagement, and sustainable tourism.

"For SINU, this partnership affirms our mandate as the national university to contribute through research, teaching, and capacity building." "We are committed to supporting evidence based-environmental management, engaging our students and staff in applied learning and research, and sharing knowledge that strengthen decision-making and long-term sustainability for Bloody Ridge."

"I commend the Ministries for their leadership in bringing this agreement together and for recognizing the value of collaboration."

"This MOU provides a strong framework for joint action- through the proposed taskforce, shared responsibilities, and a collective commitment to conservation, climate resilience, and community participation. SINU looks forward to working closely with all parties to ensure that BRNHP is protected, respected, and sustainably managed for current and future generation."

The MOU was signed by MCT Permanent Secretary Bunyan Sivoro, MECDM Permanent Secretary David Hiba Hiriasia, MFR Acting Permanent Secretary Wilfred Atomea, and SINU Acting Vice Chancellor Associate Professor Eric Katovai. The signing was witnessed by officials from all parties, including representatives from BRNHP.

## SINU Hosts Workshop on Food Loss and Waste



Participants and facilitators posed for a group photo during the workshop at SINU

The Solomon Islands National University (SINU) on Wednesday, 12 February successfully hosted a workshop on the introduction to food loss and waste.

The workshop aimed to investigate and address food loss across Pacific Island value chains using a gender-sensitive, participatory approach. It also focused on expanding fruit and vegetable choices and improving diet and nutrition across the Pacific region.

Topics covered during the workshop included the importance of food loss and waste in the Pacific, food loss and waste in the Solomon Islands, group discussions on experiences related to food loss and waste, practical strategies to reduce and repurpose food waste, and practical strategies to reduce food loss.

Key speaker Professor Steven Underhill, a specialist in Pacific horticultural food loss from the Australian Centre for Pacific Island Research at the University of the Sunshine Coast (UniSC), Australia, has been in the country this week delivering a series of joint workshops on food loss and waste in collaboration with SINU, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL), Solomon Islands Research and Extension Support Organisation (SROS), and other partners.

"Solomon Islands currently experiences very high levels of farm and market waste, so these workshops, funded by the Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research (ACIAR), are extremely important and very timely," said Professor Underhill.

Professor Underhill added that SINU, MAL, NGOs, farmers, and vendors have been attending multiple food loss and waste workshops throughout the week at SINU's Kukum Campus and Kastom Garden to learn practical and low-cost strategies to reduce food loss.

"What has made these workshops so useful is that the material being presented comes from best practices observed among other Pacific farmers and markets, making it highly relevant to production and market practices here in the Solomon Islands," he said.

MAL Deputy Secretary Technical, Michael Ho'ota, who officially opened the workshop, reaffirmed MAL's strong support for the initiative.

Mr Ho'ota said reducing food loss is not just about efficiency; it is about resilience, equity, nutrition, and dignity for farmers, vendors, and consumers, especially women and youth who play critical.



Professor Steven Underhill doing a presentation during the workshop.

## SINU Lecturers Visit Tetere Species Recovery Centre



### SINU lecturers and TSRC staff come together to support conservation efforts for the endangered Santa Cruz Ground Dove during the visit to the Tetere Species Recovery Centre, Guadalcanal Plains.

A team of lecturers from the Solomon Islands National University (SINU), Faculty of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry (FAFF), and the Department of Environmental Studies successfully visited the Tetere Species Recovery Centre (TSRC) in the Guadalcanal Plains on Tuesday, 10 February.

The visit, led by FAFF Dean, Dr. Vaeno Vigulu, focused on observing TSRC's captive breeding program for the Santa Cruz Ground Dove, a species listed as endangered by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN).

TSRC was established by Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Ltd (GPPOL), in partnership with the Solomon Islands Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) and Toledo Zoo (Ohio, USA), with the primary goal of conserving the Santa Cruz Ground Dove.

The visit provided an opportunity for SINU to explore how TSRC can serve as a platform for research, capacity building, and training in conservation breeding, animal husbandry, and biosecurity.

The collaboration is expected to involve both local and international students and researchers, supporting scientific studies and publications that guide future translocations, habitat restoration, preservation of genetic diversity, and long-term management of endangered species.

The visit was coordinated by Narelle Wilson, Conservation Advisor with Toledo Zoo and in-country advisor for TSRC. TSRC staff are led by Martin Prescott, Senior Aviary Keeper at GPPOL, who oversees the daily husbandry and welfare of the Santa Cruz Ground Dove flock.

TSRC maintains a productive, healthy, and genetically diverse captive population, serving both as an insurance population and a resource for future reintroductions and genetic rescue.

Both TSRC and SINU recognize that building local capacity and academic expertise in managing captive breeding programs for endangered species, such as the Santa Cruz Ground Dove, is vital for conservation efforts in the Solomon Islands.

The Santa Cruz Ground Dove, endemic to the Santa Cruz Islands and northern Vanuatu, was once common across the region but has suffered severe declines due to introduced mammals such as rats, cats, and pigs.

In the Solomon Islands, its population is now confined to the island of Tinakula, historically free from rats and cats. Even there, the species faces threats from illegal capture for export, volcanic eruptions, and habitat disturbance caused by introduced pigs.

TSRC warmly welcomes and values SINU's collaboration in these critical conservation efforts.

# Staff Profile

**Name:** Greg Gilosia

**Province:** Malaita

**Age:** 37

**Workstation:** Kukum Campus

**Department:** Security

**Job title:** Security Officer

**Qualification:** Form 3

**How long have you been working here?** I joined SINU in 2018, this year marks my ninth year working as a security officer at SINU.

**Tell us about your job:** My daily task as a security officer ensures SINU properties are secured, and to ensure SINU staff and students interact in a secured environment.

**What do you like about SINU and your job? I like working at SINU because it gives me a lot of opportunities. I like my job because it allows me to interact with staff and students which also help me to build my network with people from different provinces and background.**



## About us:

Solomon Islands National University (SINU) is the Prime and ONLY National University of Solomon Islands. Founded in 2013, SINU is striving to be one of the Best Education and Research Institute in the Region. Our VISION: "A quality National University, raising Standards of education and applied research in the Pacific Region."

Our Mission: "Championing the pursuit of knowledge, skills, academic inquiry and applied research to transform lives through higher education and training, inclusive of diverse communities, while providing relevant solutions for the Solomon Islands."



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