

Sautu Voyage - Historic Voyage by Uto ni Yalo Highlights Resilience and Ocean Protection

After nearly a week at sea, the Uto ni Yalo (UNY) arrived in Tonga for the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PIFLM53).

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[/EINPresswire.com/](https://EINPresswire.com/) -- After nearly a week at sea, the [Uto ni Yalo](#) (UNY) arrived in Tonga for the 53rd Pacific Islands Forum Leaders Meeting (PIFLM53). Greeted by difficult ocean

conditions, including shifting winds and ocean swells, the crew overcame many challenges to deliver a message of peace, prosperity, and resilience.



This historic sail from Fiji to Tonga symbolized the values of a resilient Pacific through the revival of traditional voyaging, sustainable sea transport, and advocating for the health of the ocean. This aligns with the PIFLM53 theme "Transformative Resilient Pasifiki: Build Better Now."

Margaret Tabunakawai-Vakalalabure, Chair of Uto Ni Yalo Trustees said, "The winds and waves that our crew experienced on our voyage to Tonga are a metaphor for the many winds of change and strong currents buffeting the fleet of our Liquid Continent, the vaka of Pacific Regionalism. Climate Change, Geopolitics, Development, Drugs and many other waves and swells.

But as we sailed, tacking to catch the right wind, our course was not a straight line, progress was slow and many considerations had to be made. But ultimately the safety of our vaka and her crew remained the priority. Likewise we urge our leaders, government, civil society, private sector, and all who would be friends of the Pacific, to ensure the wellbeing of our Pacific vaka and her people."

As leaders gathered in Tonga to discuss the vision of the 2050 Strategy for our Blue Pacific Continent, the arrival of the UNY calls for collective action toward sustainable ocean management and the protection of important marine resources. The voyage served as a reminder of the importance of protecting 30 percent of the Pacific Ocean. As the ocean faces numerous threats, including climate change, its protection is a vital component of the global

solution.

While in Nuku'alofa, Tonga, the UNY engaged with Pacific leaders, government representatives, civil society, and community groups, creating a safe space to discuss critical issues important to the Pacific.

The UNY will now sail to outer island communities, sharing the message that the 'Sautu — Moana 'o e Melino' Voyage reminds Pacific Islanders of an ancient understanding: the ocean is an 'Ocean of Peace,' where all depend on it, treat it with respect, and see it as a force that connects rather than divides the islands.

Ian Chute, [Blue Prosperity Fiji](#) Communications Coordinator said: "I am grateful to have been part of this sail, carrying the important message of the need for sustainable ocean management. During the voyage, I experienced the power of the ocean, which reminded me of the importance of our work in Fiji, supporting the Blue Prosperity Fiji program to create a healthy ocean, thriving communities, and prosperous economies. Fiji is connected to our neighboring countries as part of the Blue Pacific Continent, and it is our shared responsibility to honor this collective resource and protect it for future generations."

This historic voyage has been made possible through the generous support of the [Waitt Institute](#), Blue Prosperity Coalition, Oceans 5, Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty Initiative, Greenpeace Australia Pacific, the Office of the Pacific Oceans Commissioner, with in-kind contributions from National Geographic Pristine Seas, Tradewinds Marine, Value City, and Niranjans.

Uto ni Yalo

The Uto ni Yalo Trust is dedicated to teaching our current and future generations the art of Pacific traditional voyaging. By understanding our ancestors' ability to navigate vast oceans using only the natural elements, the Trust aims to inspire communities with the power of innovation the Pacific Islands bring to the world and the values we hold that can help drive solutions for the earth's rapidly declining resources.

Waitt Institute

The Waitt Institute is a non-profit organization that partners with committed governments, local stakeholders and communities to create and implement sustainable ocean plans to benefit people, the economy, and the environment. It works with governments, NGOs, and local communities to develop Marine Protected Areas, establish sustainable fisheries, and encourage a Blue Economy.

The Waitt Institute is a founding member and organizing body of the Blue Prosperity Coalition, which currently has Blue Prosperity partnerships with the Azores, Bermuda, the Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji, the Maldives, Samoa, Tonga, and Vanuatu.

Dylan Kava

Uto ni Yalo Trust

+679 906 1989

[email us here](#)

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