

5% CLOSER TO EXTINCTION

THE SILENT ERASURE OF FIJI'S SEA TURTLES



Fiji is home to five different types of sea turtles, but today they are in danger of disappearing forever. Rising ocean temperatures, higher sea levels, and growing tourism are destroying their sandy nesting beaches and pushing them closer to extinction on the Red List Index.

Declining Survival Index of Fiji's Sea Turtles (1993 - 2024)



In just 30 years, Fiji's ecological safety net has unraveled. Since 1993, the nation's **Red List Index has plunged by a staggering 5%** — dropping from a stable 74% to a fragile 69%.

While 5% looks like a small shift on a chart, in the ocean, it represents a catastrophic fast-track toward total ecosystem collapse.

The Heat-Driven Extinction of Fiji's Turtles

Sea turtles don't have sex chromosomes—their gender is decided entirely by the temperature of the sand where their eggs incubate. Cooler sand produces males, while warmer sand produces females.

Ocean Warming: Water Temperature Anomalies



As Fiji's ocean temperatures rise and trigger extreme heat anomalies, nesting beaches are getting hotter - with every +1°C ocean spike heats nesting sand by +0.5°C, rising temperatures are literally wiping out male turtles.

During the **2022 ocean heat spike +1.1°C**, sand temperatures crossed the critical tipping point—creating severe gender imbalances, overheating nests, and threatening the survival of Fiji's turtles.

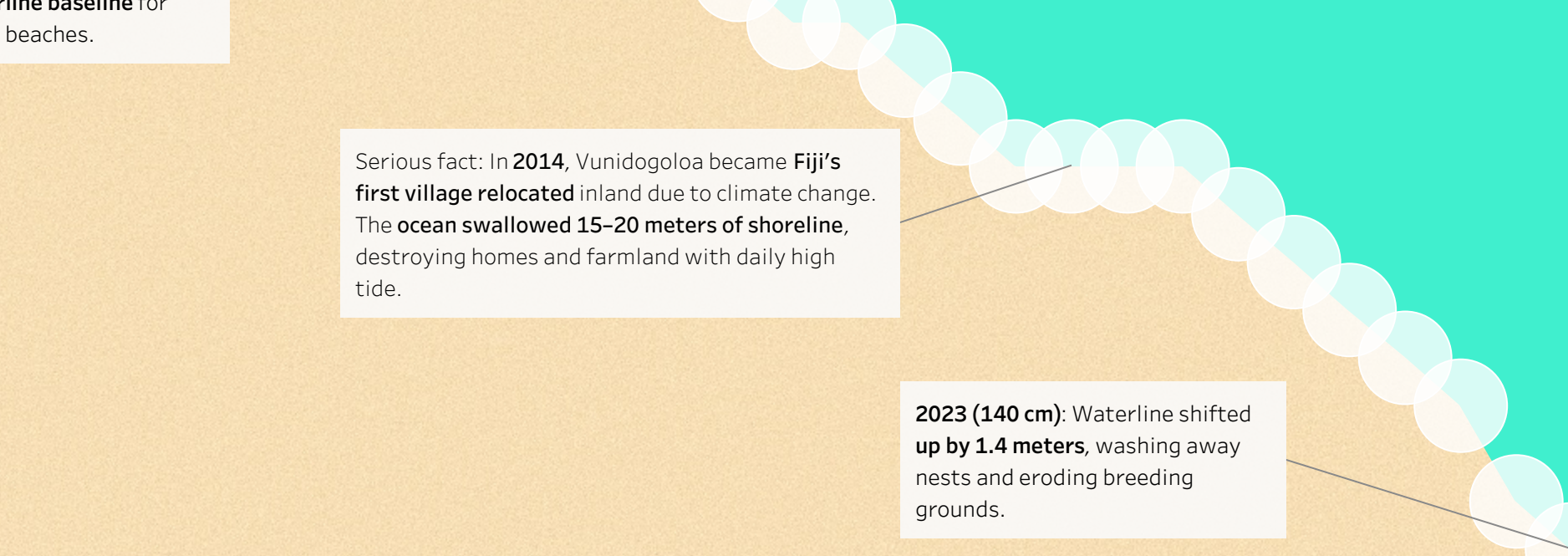
The result of warmer sand?

Nearly 100% of hatchlings were born female recorded recently in 2024. Without **males**, reproduction stops completely. This demographic collapse is a biological time bomb, dragging Fiji's ..



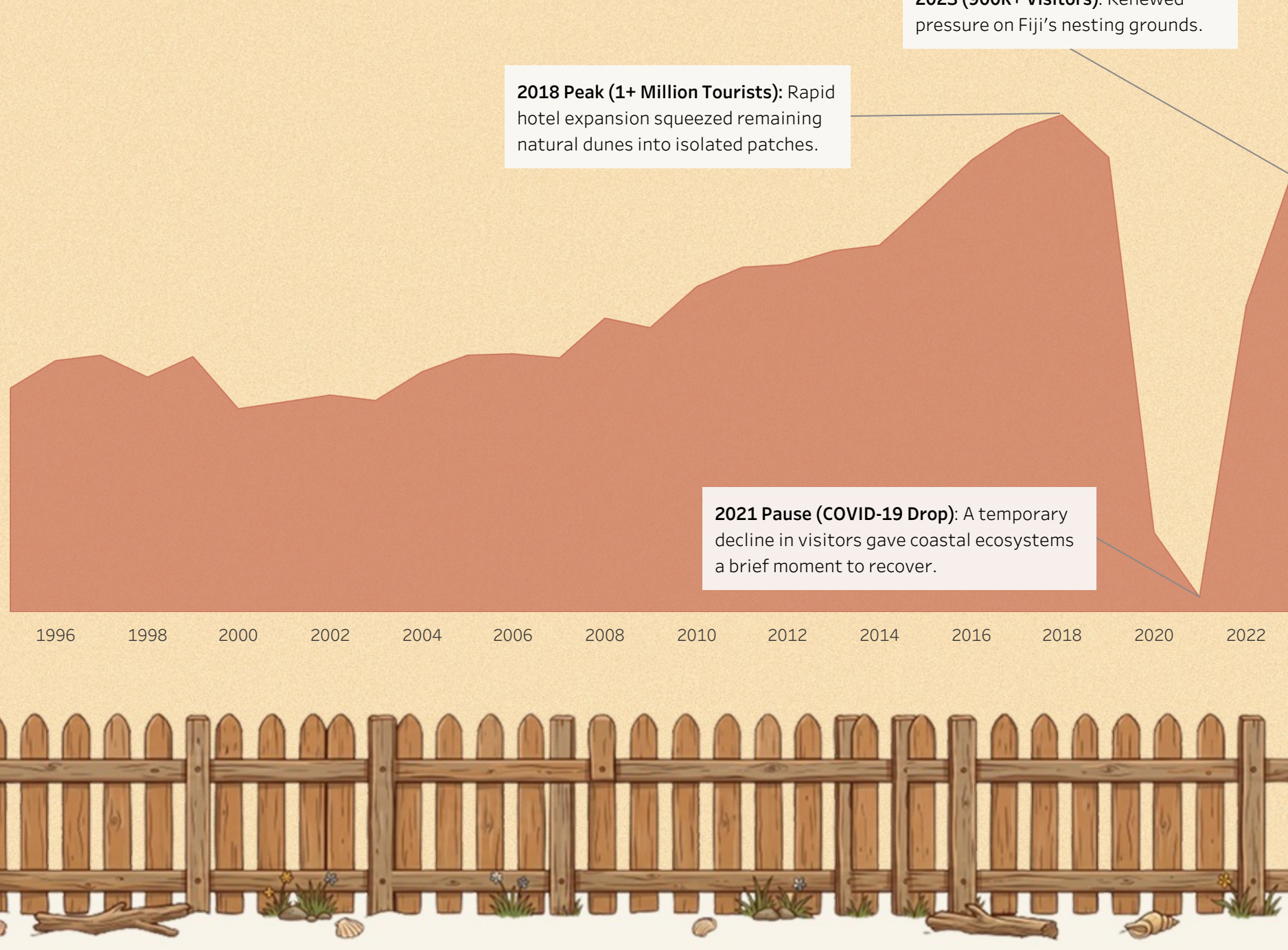
Shrinking Shorelines: Sea Level Rise in Fiji (1993–2023)

Sea turtles build their nests deep in the dry sand, high above the ocean waves. But **over the last 30 years, Fiji's waterline has surged up to 140 cm (1.4 meters)**, ocean tides reach deeper onto the shore. High water washes away entire beaches and floods turtle eggs before they can hatch.



Shrinking Shores: Tourism Development (1995 - 2023)

More tourists mean more hotels, resorts, and bright beach lights built along the coast. Bound between concrete landward barriers and rising ocean waters, nesting turtles are running out of safe, quiet sandy spots to build their nests.



HOW YOU CAN HELP

IN FIJI

- 1 Turn Down the Lights on Nesting Beaches**
Keep beach curtains closed at night and avoid flashlight photography on beaches
- 2 Keep Your Distance in the Water**
Maintain at least a 3 to 5-meter distance while snorkeling or diving. Never touch, chase, or ride sea turtles
- 3 Keep Beaches Obstacle-Free**
Remove beach furniture, sandcastles, and plastic trash before nightfall so female turtles can safely crawl ashore to lay eggs

FROM FAR AWAY

- 1 Donate to Community-Led Turtle Guardians**
Support WWF-Pacific's Dau ni Vonu (Turtle Monitors) network. These are local Fijian villagers trained to protect nesting beaches, deploy satellite tags, and monitor ocean seagrass habitats
- 2 Cut Single-Use Plastic at the Source**
Eliminate single-use plastic bags, straws, and bottles from your daily routine, and support local river/beach cleanups near home
- 3 Amplify Pacific Voices & Climate Action**
Share conservation stories, advocate for global carbon reduction policies, and support Pacific-led climate resilience initiatives