



Ban to sustain species

The seasonal ban on grouper and coral trout (*kawakawa* and *donu*) comes into effect on June 1, 2020. Picture: FILE

By UNAI SI RATUBALAVU

THE seasonal ban on grouper and coral trout (*kawakawa* and *donu*) comes into effect on June 1, 2020.

The ban which was gazetted by Government in June last year, aims to protect the two species of fish during their peak breeding months and is in effect from June to September.

Minister for Fisheries Semi Koroilavesau said the ban had been effective in managing the two fish species.



Semi Koroilavesau.
Picture: FILE

"The Fijian Government demonstrated decisive leadership when undertaking 17 voluntary commitments to contribute to the protection and sustainable management of our ocean at the 2017 United Nations Ocean Conference," he said.

"One of these commitments was, of course, to seek to sustainably manage our grouper and coral trout resources by monitoring these fisheries, protecting fishing aggregation sites, as well as applying seasonal and spatial management measures.

"It is these two species that we seek to protect as their numbers have been declining over the years."

Based on science and

data collected over the years, there are more than 150 species in the ocean that are readily available and can be harvested from June to September.

"We are very pleased with the support over the years on the seasonal ban from the communities and people of Fiji along with partner agencies and we hope that it is further strengthened through collaborative efforts into the future.

"However, as with any new management measure, there are some that have been slower in adhering to the ban and we must all be aware that the sustainable management of our grouper and coral trout resources is not a quick fix.

"We will be looking at working towards management measures to ensure that these iconic species are allowed to replenish and are able to be enjoyed by Fijians for generations to come."

Mr Koroilavesau added it was important that we be reminded that factors such as climate change, frequent and more intense cyclones, flooding and other natural disasters had drastically affected the ocean resources and therefore it was vital that we all supported this important initiative for our sustenance.



ABOVE: *Kawakawa* sold at the fish market in Suva last year. Picture: FILE



A lady sells *kawakawa* at the fish market in Suva. Picture: SUPPLIED

RIGHT: *Kawakawa* sold in markets across the country. Minister for Fisheries Semi Koroilavesau said the ban had been effective in managing the two fish species. Picture: FILE

School to celebrate 100 years of existence