



I assent.

[L.S.]

J. I. ULUIVUDA
President

[1 May, 2002]

AN ACT

TO ALTER THE NATIVE LAND TRUST ACT

[30 November 2000]

ENACTED by the Parliament of the Fiji Islands—

Short title, etc.

1.—(1) This Act may be cited as the Native Land Trust (Amendment) Act 2002 and is deemed to have commenced on 30 November 2000.

(2) In this Act, the Native Land Trust Act (Cap. 134) is referred to as the “principal Act”.

(3) Any Act done in respect of matters set out in Sections 6 to 9 of this Act between 30th November 2000 and the publication of this Act in the *Gazette* is validated and deemed to have been done under the principal Act or other written law.

(4) At the date of publication of this Act in the *Gazette*, any unallotted extinct land (including any improvements on such land) occupied by the State for which no lease or other instrument or agreement has been issued remains to be vested and controlled by the State until such lease or other instrument or agreement has been issued by the Board.

Interpretation

2. Section 2 of the principal Act is amended by repealing the definition of “native land” and substituting—

““native land” has the same meaning given in section 2 of the Native Lands Act.”

Control of native land vested in the Board

3. Section 4 of the principal Act is amended in subsection (1) by adding “or for the benefit of the native Fijians”.

State ultimus haeres of extinct mataqali

4. Section 19 of the principal Act is amended—

(a) in subsection (1)—

- (i) by deleting “fall to the Crown as *ultimus haeres*” and substituting “vest in the Board”;
- (ii) by deleting “by the Crown” and substituting “by the Board”;

(b) in subsection (2) by deleting “fall to the Crown” and substituting “vest in the Board”;

(c) in subsection (6) by deleting “Crown land” and substituting “native land”;

(d) by deleting the section heading and substituting—
“*Extinct mataqali lands to vest in the Board*”.

New section 19A

5. The principal Act is amended by inserting after section 19 the following new section—

“Allotment of extinct mataqali lands

19A. (1) A copy of the order by the Board under section 19(1) allotting or otherwise dealing with land vested in the Board under that section must be sent by the Board to the Native Land Commission which must register the allotment or dealing in the Register of Native Lands kept by the Commission.

(2) Until an allotment of or other dealing with extinct *mataqali* land is made under section 19(1), all income arising from leases and other dealings with unallotted extinct *mataqali* land (less not more than 15% for administration costs of the Native Land Trust Board) must be paid to the Fijian Affairs Board and used exclusively for the benefit of the native Fijians in a manner and for purposes approved by the Minister on the advice of the Great Council of Chiefs.

(3) In exercising its powers under this section or section 19(1), the Board must comply with any procedures prescribed in the Native Land (Native Reserves) Regulations.”

Transfer of leases

6.—(1) Where a lease of any land was granted to any person by the Director of Lands under section 19(1) of the principal Act before the commencement of this Act—

- (a) the Director of Lands is replaced by the Board as lessor for all purposes; and
- (b) the income from the lease must be dealt with in accordance with section 19A(2) of this Act,

but otherwise the terms and conditions of the lease remain as before.

(2) All leases, deeds and instruments issued by the Director of Lands in respect of any land allotted or otherwise dealt with under section 19(1) of the principal Act before the commencement of this Act and current at the commencement of this Act shall, until their expiry or earlier termination in accordance with their terms and conditions, be deemed to have been issued by the Board and governed by the principal Act.

Transfer of contracts etc.

7.—(1) All contracts, agreements, conveyances, deeds, leases, licences and other instruments or undertakings which—

- (a) were entered into by or made with and addressed to the Director of Lands (whether alone or with any other person);
- (b) were in force at the commencement of this Act; and
- (c) relate to land allotted or dealt with under section 19(1) of the principal Act before the commencement of this Act,

are binding and enforceable by or against the Board after the commencement of this Act.

(2) All documents or instruments brought into existence for the purpose of evidencing, recording or effecting the matters referred to in subsection (1) relating to the transfer of such property from the Director of Lands to the Board or the vesting of any such property in the Board are exempt from stamp duty under the Stamp Duties Act and that Act does not—

- (a) apply to any agreement or instrument brought into existence for the purpose of recording, evidencing or effecting any transfer of such property from the Director of Lands to the Board or the vesting of any such property in the Board;
- (b) operate to impose or attract any duty, fine, penalty or assessment required or necessary to give effect to the purpose of this Act.

(3) Nothing in the State Acquisition of Lands Act, Forests Act, Land Sales Act, Land Transfer Act or any other written law invalidates or affects any mortgage, transfer, bill of sale or security given or made to the Director of Lands to which the Board is entitled to under this Act.

Land titles

8.—(1) The Registrar of Titles must, upon application and lodgement for registration made by the Board, make necessary entry on a certificate of title, mortgage, lease or other instrument or document under his or her custody or control as a result of the vesting in the Board of lands owned by extinct *mataqali*, under section 19 of the principal Act as amended by this Act, and the Board must notify the holder of the certificate of title, mortgage, lease, instrument or document to produce it to the Registrar of Titles for that purpose.

(2) The Registrar of Titles must, upon application and lodgement for registration made by the Board, make any other memorial or entry in any public record that is necessary or expedient to record the vesting of such land in the Board under the principal Act as amended by this Act.

Actions etc. not to abate

9.—(1) At the commencement of this Act, any action, arbitration or proceeding pending by, against, or in favour of the Director of Lands, does not abate and is not discontinued or in any way prejudicially affected by this Act but may be prosecuted, continued and enforced by, against or in favour of the Director of Lands or the State as the case may be.

(2) For the avoidance of doubt, neither the Board nor the native owners are liable in any way whatsoever in respect of any cause of action which may accrue or has accrued (whether or not legal proceedings have begun) before the commencement of this Act in respect of extinct *mataqali* lands vested in the Board by virtue of this Act.

Passed by the House of Representatives this 12th day of April, 2002.

Passed by the Senate this 26th day of April, 2002.