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# High-resolution mesoscale wind-resource assessment of Fiji using the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model

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## Abstract

This study presents a high-resolution mesoscale wind-resource assessment of the small island developing state (SIDS) of Fiji using a 10-year simulation of the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model with convection-permitting resolution. Our analysis evaluates the wind speed and Weibull distributions, diurnal and seasonal wind speed patterns, resource maps of annual and seasonal wind speed, power density, model statistical analysis and interannual wind speed variability. The results reveal that the WRF-model simulated wind resource parameters are in good agreement with observations at 24 existing weather stations. At 55 m above ground, the annual mean wind speed and wind power density varies from 1.5 m/s to 8 m/s and 50 W/m<sup>2</sup> to 300 W/m<sup>2</sup>, respectively, for onshore land areas. Higher wind speeds are observed during austral winter than in austral summer. Forty high wind-resource areas are identified in this study, which were previously unknown. This indicates that there is potential for utility-scale wind power generation at selected locations with wind speed and power density greater than 6.4 m/s and 300 W/m<sup>2</sup> (NREL, Wind Power Class 3). An estimated 1000 MW theoretical potential installed capacity is available for utility-scale wind power applications on Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

## Key words:

Wind energy, resource assessment, Wind power, WRF, Fiji

## 1. Introduction

Climate change and air pollution have propelled a steady growth of renewable electrical energy generation, and in particular wind energy on the global scale. Over the last decade, the global installed capacity of wind energy grew from 159 GW in 2009 to 651 GW in 2019 [1, 2]. This is an exponential growth with an estimated doubling time of approximately 4 years.

33 Moreover, work is in progress in many countries with new resource assessments, wind farm  
34 construction permits and developments [1, 2].

35 Wind-resource assessment at different scales is fundamental for energy-resource modelling  
36 and site identification for the development of wind farms to support renewable electricity  
37 generation. Numerous methods are available for wind-resource assessment from microscale  
38 to mesoscale applications with each having its own benefits and disadvantages [3]. For  
39 microscale wind-resource assessment of a specific site or location within a domain of 10 – 20  
40 km, microscale linear models like the Wind Atlas Analysis and Application Program (WAsP)  
41 are used. The model uses ground-based measured wind data for wind resource evaluation and  
42 resource mapping at a resolution of 50 m × 50 m or less within the domain around a site [3].  
43 For regional wind-resource assessment of a country or a group of islands, numerical models  
44 can be used to simulate the wind-resource for the region of study [3]. The most common  
45 numerical weather prediction (NWP) model used for atmospheric studies, which includes  
46 resource mapping, is the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model [4]. The  
47 usefulness of the WRF model is its ability to simulate the atmospheric processes from the  
48 ground level to the stratosphere 20 km above. It provides an approximation of the surface  
49 atmospheric parameters like surface winds. It also has the advantage of generating mesoscale  
50 wind resource maps at different heights for resource identification, theoretical potential  
51 evaluation and for creating high-resolution wind data at km scale at locations whereby  
52 measurements are not available.

53 The WRF model has been used for wind energy resource mapping in Palestine [5], assessing  
54 wind resource in Greece [6], modelling wind resource in complex terrain in Portugal [7],  
55 determining wind power characteristics of Oahu, Hawaii [8], assessing offshore wind  
56 resource off the Atlantic Iberian coast and in the Gulf of Thailand [9, 10] and for predicting  
57 wind energy resources in Tanzania [11]. In these studies, the model assisted in creating new  
58 knowledge about mesoscale wind resources and their characteristics, identified and classified  
59 the wind-resource sites and provided useful information for power generation purposes. To  
60 date, most downscaling studies for atmospheric parameters have been conducted in the mid-  
61 latitude regions of the Northern Hemisphere and relatively few have examined semi-arid or  
62 tropical locations in the Southern Hemisphere.

63 Fiji is a small island developing state (SIDS), which is located between the latitudes of 12°S  
64 – 22°S and longitudes of 177°E – 178°W in the tropical Southwest Pacific region. There are  
65 332 islands in Fiji with a total land area of 18,333 km<sup>2</sup>, with 110 islands inhabited. Around 87

66 % of the total land area is occupied by the two largest islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu,  
67 with areas of approximately 10,400 km<sup>2</sup> and 5,540 km<sup>2</sup>, respectively. The islands of Fiji are  
68 mountainous and of volcanic origin, with maximum altitude of 1300 m above mean sea level.  
69 The overall climate in Fiji is categorized as a tropical marine climate with two seasons, which  
70 are classified as austral summer (wet season) extending from November to April and austral  
71 winter (dry season) from May to October.

72 In Fiji, electricity generation is from a mixture of renewable (hydro, biomass and wind) and  
73 conventional (industrial diesel and heavy fuel oil) power stations [12]. In the year 2019, 1060  
74 GWh of electricity was generated with 58 % (611 GWh) from renewable and 42 % (450  
75 GWh) from conventional power plants. The specific contribution from renewable energy-  
76 based power plants include: 53 % (559 GWh) from hydropower, 4.6 % (49 GWh) from  
77 biomass-based independent power producers and 0.25 % (2.7 GWh) from wind [12]. Fiji  
78 aims to achieve 100 % electricity generation from renewable energy sources by 2030 [13].  
79 The extent to which wind electricity generation can contribute to this goal is unknown.  
80 Mapping wind resources on the mesoscale level will assist the SIDS of Fiji in terms of wind  
81 resource identification and quantification.

82 Several wind-resource assessment studies have been conducted in Fiji using the Wind Atlas  
83 Analysis and Application Program (WASP) [14 - 21] and WindPRO [22]. These studies are  
84 confined to micro-scale locations covering small areas surrounding a measuring station in the  
85 range of 5 – 10 km<sup>2</sup>. Moreover, a recent study in Fiji using 5 – 6 years of measured automatic  
86 weather station wind data in WASP identified three potential wind farm sites that can be  
87 further investigated for utility-scale wind power applications. The WASP modelling revealed  
88 that each of these three sites could incorporate a minimum of 10 MW using Vergnet 275-kW  
89 wind turbines to support the electricity grid network [23]. To the knowledge of the authors, to  
90 date, no validated mesoscale wind-resource assessment has been carried out for the SIDS of  
91 Fiji.

92 Previous studies on the evaluation of the WRF model for simulating surface winds and the  
93 diurnal cycle of wind speed for the SIDS of Fiji showed that the standard 1.33 km by 1.33 km  
94 grid resolution in a 20 km – 4 km – 1.33 km grid nesting set up may not be an appropriate  
95 grid size to evaluate the surface winds for Fiji; as it was suspected that the topography was  
96 not properly resolved and a grid sensitivity study was recommended [24]. Following that  
97 recommendation, a grid sensitivity study of the WRF model for simulating the surface winds  
98 for the SIDS of Fiji was conducted and it was concluded that the 1 km by 1 km grid

99 resolution of the 15 km – 5 km – 1 km grid configuration was appropriate to evaluate the  
100 wind resources for the SIDS of Fiji [25].

101 In this paper, we aim to answer two research questions:

- 102 I. Can the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model be used to simulate the  
103 wind flow around the Fijian Islands in order to get sufficiently accurate information  
104 on the wind resources/potential?
- 105 II. Do the WRF simulations reveal sites that are promising for wind power that have not  
106 yet been identified?

107 This paper is an enhancement of the WRF mesoscale wind resource assessment approach  
108 applied to small tropical islands from an initial study [24] followed by a grid sensitivity study  
109 [25] to finally, the decade-long mesoscale wind resource assessment of Fiji. This study is also  
110 an application and evaluation of the mesoscale wind resource modelling using the WRF  
111 model.

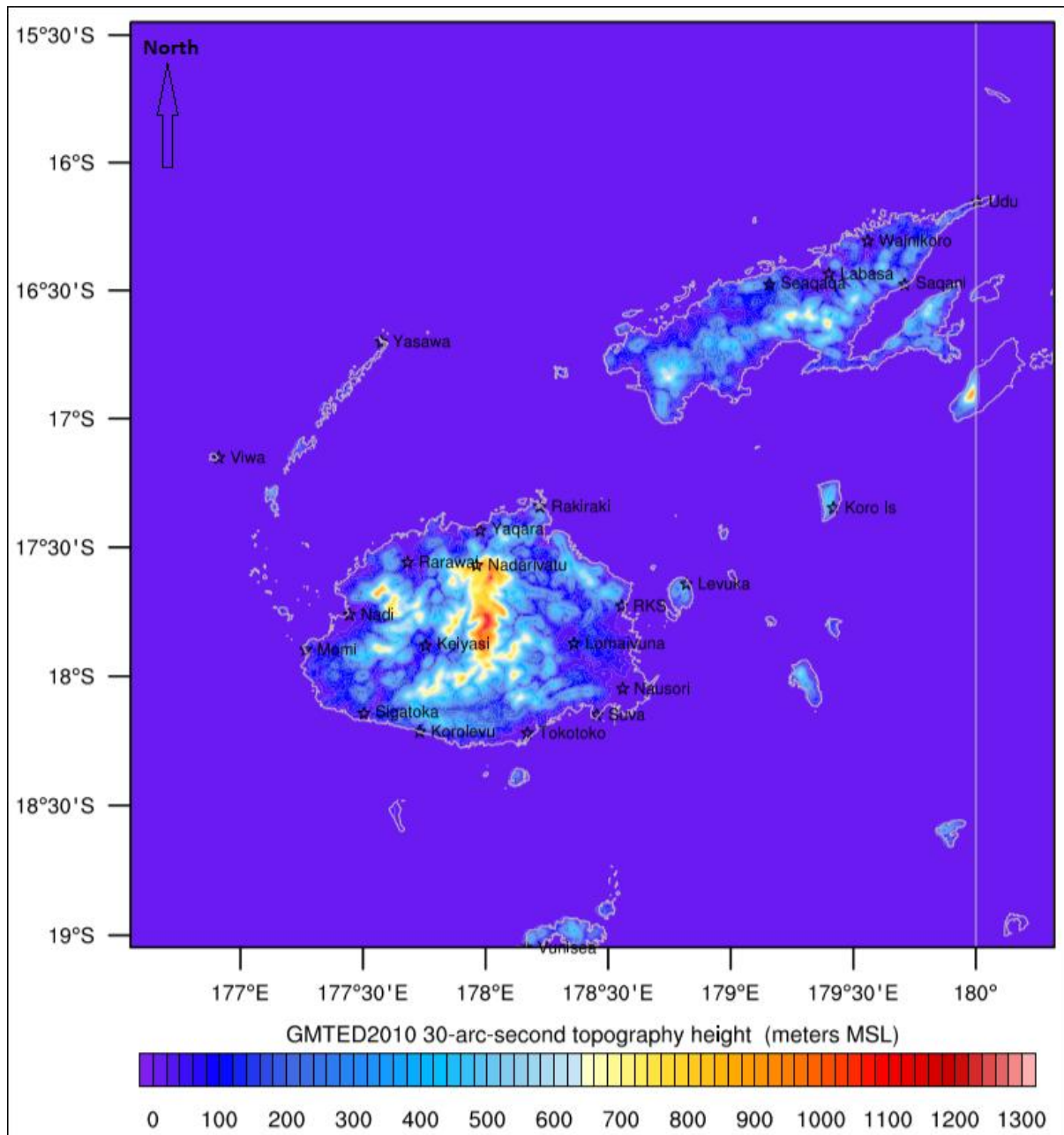
112 Therefore, we present the high-resolution mesoscale wind-resource assessment of the SIDS  
113 of Fiji, which includes the analysis of the wind speed and the Weibull distributions, diurnal  
114 and annual wind speed patterns, resource maps for wind speed and power density. The study  
115 also presents the 10-year annual variability of wind speed and the model validation against  
116 ground-based observations via a model statistical analysis. The purpose of this study is to test  
117 a methodology to assess mesoscale wind-resource on tropical islands and to provide an  
118 assessment of the wind-resource in Fiji. Section 2 of this work describes the methodology,  
119 the results are presented in section 3, then discussed in section 4 and the conclusions are  
120 presented in section 5.

## 121 **2. Methodology**

### 122 **2.1 Study area and wind measuring stations**

123 Figure 1 shows the model topographical height contours at a resolution of 30-arc-seconds for  
124 the study area, which covers the larger islands and the smaller islands in the surrounding  
125 waters and is marked with the locations of 24 automatic weather stations (AWSs) of Fiji  
126 Meteorological Services. Time series and uninterrupted measured wind data is available for 3  
127 years (2016 – 2018) from the 24 AWSs at an elevation of 10 m above ground level. This data  
128 is used for the model validation exercise for the surface winds.

129 The individual station locations are shown in Figure 1, where fourteen stations are located on  
 130 Viti Levu, five on Vanua Levu and five on the outer islands. Eleven stations are located on  
 131 the leeward side of the two larger islands: Keiyasi, Labasa, Momi, Nadarivatu, Nadi,  
 132 Rakiraki, Rarawai, Seaqaqa, Sigatoka, Wainikoro and Yaqara stations. Eight stations are  
 133 located on the windward side of the two larger islands: Korolevu, Lomaivuna, Nausori, RKS  
 134 Lovoni, Saqani, Suva, Tokotoko and Udu stations. The five stations located on the outer  
 135 islands are Koro Island, Levuka, Viwa, Vunisea and Yasawa stations.



136

137

Figure 1. Topographical map of the study area (Fiji) with the locations of the AWSs.

138 A summary of the characteristics of the AWSs from which the wind observations are  
 139 retrieved is shown in Table 1. The elevation of the AWSs is given in metres above sea level  
 140 (m a.s.l.). The model terrain elevation of each AWS is the 1 km  $\times$  1 km grid cell average  
 141 taken from the grid cell in which the AWS is located.

142 Table 1. Details and position of AWSs.

Station Name	Latitude (° S)	Longitude (° E)	Elevation (m a.s.l.)	WRF Elevation (m a.s.l.)
Keiyasi	-17.8795	177.7552	89.8	63.7
Koro Island	-17.3450	179.4184	108.8	80.1
Korolevu	-18.2129	177.7304	25.7	41.5
Labasa	-16.4333	179.4000	8.5	13.1
Levuka	-17.6403	178.8186	41.5	43.1
Lomaivuna	-17.8714	178.3601	122.1	128.5
Momi	-17.8952	177.2668	43.8	25.9
Nadarivatu	-17.5676	177.9632	824.1	761.8
Nadi	-17.7599	177.4448	20.7	14.9
Nausori	-18.0464	178.5591	5.7	4.9
Rakiraki	-17.3404	178.2214	8.1	3.4
Rarawai	-17.5564	177.6814	9.3	17.0
RKS Lovoni	-17.7260	178.5551	17.1	14.1
Saqani	-16.4749	179.7089	30.0	43.2
Seaqaqa	-16.4758	179.1578	101.8	109.5
Sigatoka	-18.1422	177.5039	6.7	12.0
Suva	-18.1475	178.4536	6.6	15.6
Tokotoko	-18.2186	178.1700	4.9	6.2
Udu	-16.1411	-179.9947	43.7	0.3
Viwa	-17.1494	176.9117	2.0	1.0
Vunisea	-19.0469	178.1654	31.9	86.3
Wainikoro	-16.3044	179.5586	15.1	15.3
Yaqara	-17.4330	177.9774	20.0	11.2
Yasawa	-16.6984	177.5746	40.0	5.1

143

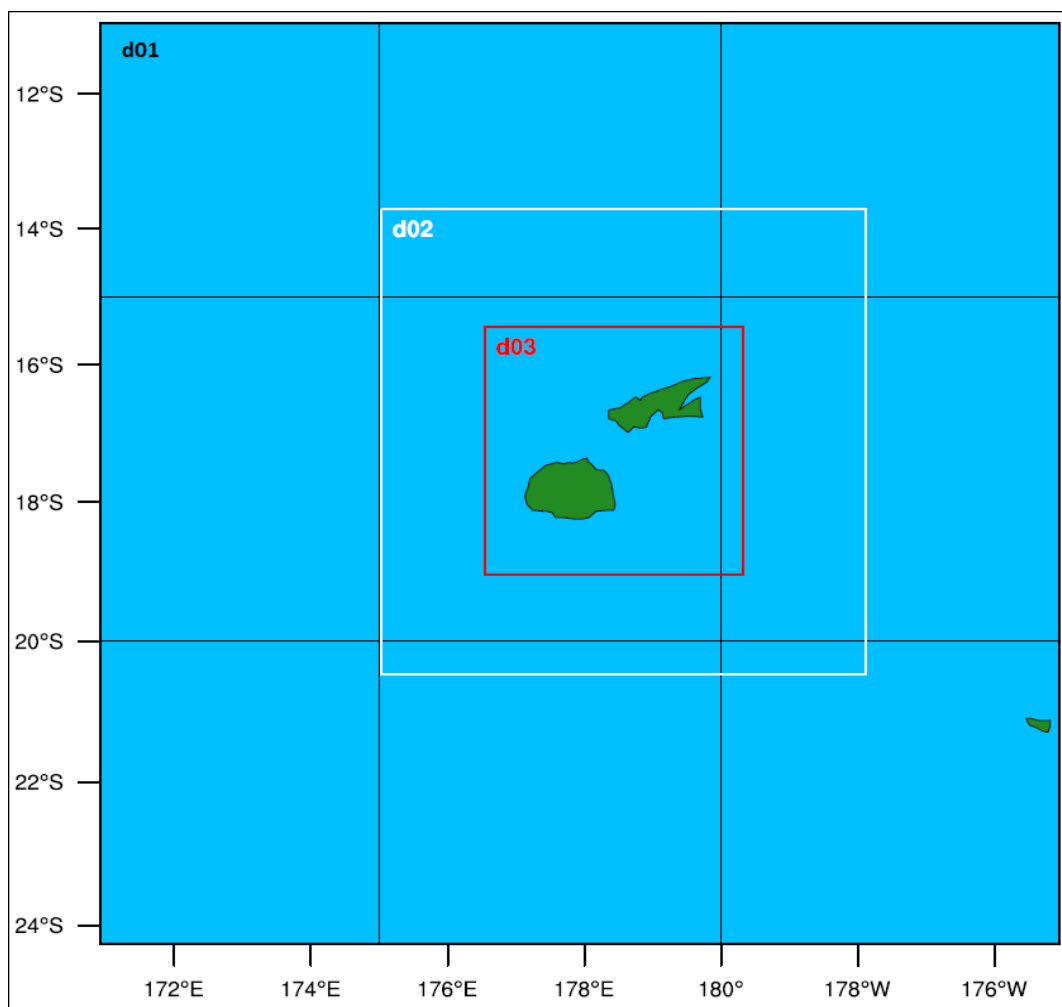
## 144 2.2 Model and simulation set-up

145 The study uses the Weather Research and Forecasting (WRF) model version 3.9.1.1 of the  
 146 Advanced Research (ARW) solver, a widely used community mesoscale model developed by  
 147 the National Centre for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) [26, 27]. The dynamical downscaling  
 148 method was used for running simulations, whereby coarse resolution output from an analysis  
 149 using a General Circulation Model (GCM) are used as initial and boundary conditions to  
 150 drive a regional numerical model to simulate atmospheric parameters via nesting, considering  
 151 the local conditions [28 - 30].

152 The initial and boundary conditions for the SIDS of Fiji were obtained from 6-hourly NCEP-  
 153 FNL (Final) Operational Global Analysis data at 1°  $\times$  1° grid resolution [31]. The static

154 fields for the topography were obtained from the USGS GMTED2010 dataset. The land-  
155 water masks, land use/land cover classification, albedo etc. were obtained and interpolated  
156 from the 21-class MODIS and MODIS FPAR. These were taken from the National Center for  
157 Atmospheric Research (NCAR) database, at a resolution of 30-arc-seconds [32]. Time  
158 varying sea surface temperatures (SSTs) were supplied to the model from NCEP-NOAA at a  
159 grid resolution  $0.083^\circ \times 0.083^\circ$  [33].

160 The input data from NCEP-FNL were downscaled by the WRF model using three nested  
161 domains as illustrated in Figure 2. The outermost domain is referred to as d01, the second d02  
162 and the innermost as d03 (which is also the domain shown in Figure 1).



163

164

Figure 2. Simulation domains.

165 The two-way nesting approach was applied for the parent-child grid interaction, where the  
166 flow of information goes from the coarser domain to the finer domain, with feedback from  
167 the inner domains. All domains are centred at a latitude of  $17.73^\circ\text{S}$  and longitude of



168 177.94°E, which corresponds to the centre of Viti Levu using the Mercator projection as  
169 recommended for low latitudes [26, 27].

170 The spatial coverage of each of the three domains are: d01 = 1500 km × 1500 km (100 ×  
171 100 grid cells), d02 = 755 km × 755 km (151 × 151 grid cells) and d03 = 401 km ×  
172 401 km (401 × 401 grid cells) at a horizontal resolution of 15 km × 15 km, 5 km × 5 km  
173 and 1 km × 1 km, respectively. The vertical spacing of the three domains consist of 30  
174 terrain-following vertical coordinates, including eight levels below 1 km, as meteorological  
175 parameters of interest are in the lower part of the atmosphere, close to the surface. A timestep  
176 of 10 seconds is used in d03 following a 3:1 parent-child grid timestep ratio to ensure  
177 numerical stability as recommended in refs. [26 and 27]. The choice of 15 km – 5 km –  
178 1 km nested grids follows the recommendation of the earlier grid sensitivity study [24], in  
179 keeping with the standard practice of using a 3:1 or 5:1 parent-grid ratio [26, 27].

180 The well-tested tropical suite of the WRF physics parameterization scheme was used for the  
181 model physics options [26, 27]. The parameterization of deep convection was only used on  
182 the larger domains (d01 and d02), as the vertical fluxes due to convection updrafts and  
183 downdrafts and the compensating motion outside the clouds cannot be resolved explicitly at  
184 grid scales of 5 km and above [26, 27]. The remaining physics options are the same for all  
185 three domains as shown in Table 2.

186 Table 2. Physics Parameterization

Parameterization Options	
Long-wave radiation	RRTMG
Short-wave radiation	RRTMG
Microphysics	WRF Single-Moment 6-class
Surface Layer	MM5 Similarity
Planetary Boundary Layer	Yonsei University
Cumulus	New Tiedtke
Land Surface Model	Noah

187  
188 Simulations for the 10 years were performed in monthly segments on the New Zealand  
189 eScience Infrastructure (NeSI) High Performance Computer – Mahuika. The model was  
190 initiated from 3 days prior to the start of each month and these 3 days are the model spin-up  
191 time and are excluded from the analysis. The model is set to restart every 2 days to avoid  
192 model drift as recommended for longer simulations [26, 27]. Even though a period of one  
193 year has been considered adequate to capture the diurnal and seasonal variations for wind  
194 resource assessment [34], in our case, we use 10 years of simulations to provide a better

195 representation of the diurnal and seasonal variations. The simulation results discussed in the  
196 paper are 1-hourly 10-metre-elevation wind speeds retrieved from the simulation on the  
197 innermost domain (d03) considering the grid cell containing the AWS as representative of the  
198 station.

### 199 2.3 Model Validation

200 The validation of a numerical weather prediction (NWP) model can be done according to  
201 various methodologies that complement each other [35]. Five statistical parameters are used  
202 for the model evaluation. The Root Mean Square Error (RMSE) is defined as:

$$\text{RMSE} = \left[ \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (M_i - O_i)^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}, \quad (1)$$

203 in which  $M_i$  is the simulated variable at the  $i^{\text{th}}$  data point,  $O_i$  is the corresponding observed  
204 variable and  $N$  is the total number of simulation-observation pairs of values.

205 The mean Bias was used for the evaluation of data tendency. A positive (negative) bias  
206 means the simulations overestimate (underestimate) the measured values:

$$\text{Bias} = \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (M_i - O_i). \quad (2)$$

207 The Standard Deviation Error (STDE) was used to evaluate the dispersion of the error  
208 between the observed and the simulated data:

$$\text{STDE} = \left[ \frac{1}{N} \sum_{i=1}^N (M_i - O_i)^2 - \text{Bias}^2 \right]^{\frac{1}{2}}. \quad (3)$$

209 The RMSE, Bias and STDE was used to evaluate the hourly-simulated wind speed against  
210 the observed wind speed.

211 Most emphasis is given to STDE, and this assumption comes from the fact that, even if a  
212 simulation has a high RMSE or Bias, if the STDE is low it means that the error is somewhat  
213 constant and can be seen as an offset and the simulation physics is correct. If the simulation  
214 has a high STDE, the error is more scattered and the simulations have low physical meaning  
215 [36, 37].

216 The surface wind speed distribution is well approximated by a Weibull distribution [38, 39]  
217 and this distribution is therefore used to evaluate the model-simulated wind distributions  
218 against observed wind distributions. The Weibull distribution is a two-parameter function,

219 mathematically represented by a probability density function (PDF),  $f(u)$  while the  
220 cumulative distribution function is represented by  $F(u)$ . These functions are defined as:

$$f(u) = \frac{k}{A} \left(\frac{u}{A}\right)^{k-1} e^{-\left(\frac{u}{A}\right)^k} \quad (4)$$

221 and

$$F(u) = 1 - e^{-\left(\frac{u}{A}\right)^k}, \quad (5)$$

222 where  $u$  is the reference wind speed at the height of measurement,  $k$  the non-dimensional  
223 shape parameter, and  $A$  the scale parameter whose dimension coincides with that of  $u$  (m/s).  
224 Note that  $k, A, u > 0$ . The scale parameter,  $A$ , indicates on average how windy the site is,  
225 whilst the shape parameter,  $k$ , indicates how ‘peaked’ the distribution is. The model and the  
226 measured Weibull  $A$  and  $k$  parameters are used for comparison.

227 The Pearson correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the diurnal cycle of wind speed and  
228 the Weibull probability density functions. The Pearson correlation coefficient is a statistical  
229 measure that quantifies the strength of the relationship between the relative variation of two  
230 variables; in our case, the simulated and the measured yearly averaged diurnal values and the  
231 Weibull parameter values.

## 232 **2.4 Resource maps**

233 The 10-year 1 km × 1 km model simulation results from domain 3 (d03) were used to  
234 generate the annual mean wind speed, seasonal mean wind speed and wind power density  
235 resource maps at 55 m elevation, which is equivalent to the typical wind turbine hub height.  
236 This was done to assist in identifying potential wind resource sites for utility-scale wind  
237 power applications.

## 238 **2.5 Interannual wind speed variability**

239 Interannual wind speed anomalies were calculated by subtracting the measured long-term  
240 mean wind speed from the model annual mean wind speed for individual stations for 10-  
241 years. These were plotted to study the variation of the wind speeds from year to year.

## 242 **3. Results**

243 This section presents the results in two parts: the model validation and the resource maps.

### 244 **3.1 Model Validation**

245 The 10-metre-elevation results for the parameters used to validate the model against ground-  
246 based measurements, include: the model statistical analysis, wind speed distribution and

247 Weibull PDFs, and the diurnal and annual wind speed patterns. The model results are  
 248 compared with locations where the measurements are available from AWSs.

### 249 3.1.1 Model Statistical Analysis

250 Tables 3 – 5 present the model statistical analysis for 3 years for the leeward side, windward  
 251 side and the outer islands AWSs, respectively. These also present the 3-year averaged wind  
 252 speed diurnal cycle correlation between the model and the measurements for individual  
 253 station locations. The mean bias for 3 years across all 24 AWSs is 0.62 m/s, which is a 20.2  
 254 % overestimate in comparison with the measured wind speed. The mean RMSE is 2.22 m/s,  
 255 the mean STDE is 2.00 m/s and the mean diurnal cycle correlation is 0.81 for the locations  
 256 tested.

257 Table 3. Wind statistics from the leeward side AWSs (2016 – 2018)

Station	Measured Mean (m/s)	WRF Mean (m/s)	Bias (m/s)	Bias %	RMSE (m/s)	STDE (m/s)	Correlation (%)
Keiyasi	1.15	1.86	0.71	61.9	1.51	1.34	0.99
Labasa	1.57	2.94	1.37	87.3	1.99	1.44	0.91
Momi	4.14	3.20	-0.94	-22.6	2.23	2.03	0.70
Nadarivatu	2.81	3.54	0.73	25.9	2.00	1.87	0.58
Nadi	2.77	2.79	0.02	0.7	1.68	1.68	0.89
Rakiraki	6.10	5.53	-0.57	-9.4	2.30	2.23	0.95
Rarawai	1.77	1.61	-0.17	-9.4	1.38	1.37	0.99
Seaqaqa	1.36	2.20	0.83	61.2	1.78	1.57	0.97
Sigatoka	1.89	2.41	0.53	27.8	1.38	1.28	0.98
Wainikoro	1.65	3.49	1.84	111.1	2.61	1.85	0.94
Yaqara	3.98	3.93	-0.05	-1.3	1.73	1.73	0.86
Average	2.65	3.05	0.39	30.3	1.87	1.67	0.89

258  
 259 Table 4. Wind statistics from the windward side AWSs (2016 – 2018)

Station	Measured Mean (m/s)	WRF Mean (m/s)	Bias (m/s)	Bias %	RMSE (m/s)	STDE (m/s)	Correlation (%)
Korolevu	3.30	3.88	0.58	17.5	1.85	1.76	0.94
Lomaivuna	1.98	2.61	0.63	31.8	1.65	1.52	0.97
Nausori	1.94	3.08	1.14	58.9	2.59	2.32	0.90
RKS Lovoni	2.06	3.95	1.89	91.8	2.67	1.89	0.10
Saqani	2.80	4.17	1.36	48.7	4.15	3.92	0.47
Suva	2.36	3.24	0.88	37.4	2.22	2.04	0.93
Tokotoko	2.57	3.18	0.61	23.6	2.18	2.09	0.95
Udu	5.36	4.80	-0.56	-10.5	1.96	1.88	0.72
Average	2.80	3.61	0.82	37.4	2.41	2.18	0.75

260  
 261 Table 5. Wind statistics from the outer islands' AWSs (2016 – 2018)

Station	Measured Mean (m/s)	WRF Mean (m/s)	Bias (m/s)	Bias %	RMSE (m/s)	STDE (m/s)	Correlation (%)
Koro Island	3.94	4.47	0.53	13.4	2.00	1.93	0.69
Levuka	3.82	5.15	1.33	34.7	2.79	2.46	0.85

Viwa	3.84	5.92	2.08	54.0	3.47	2.78	0.92
Vunisea	4.02	4.58	0.56	13.9	2.60	2.54	0.52
Yasawa	6.27	5.87	-0.39	-6.3	2.49	2.45	0.68
Average	4.38	5.20	0.82	21.9	2.67	2.43	0.73

262

263 Since the mean STDE for all AWSs is low, which is below the border threshold of  $\pm 2.50$   
 264 m/s, this indicates that the model adequately captures the physical processes [35, 36 and 37].  
 265 The 10-metre-elevation model errors reported are assumed to be the equivalent at higher  
 266 elevations of interest, for instance at the hub-height of 55 m.

### 267 3.1.2 Wind Speed Distribution and Weibull PDFs

268 The wind speed distribution provides site-specific information in terms of the Weibull  $A$   
 269 and  $k$  parameters. Tables 6 – 8 present the wind speed distribution parameter analysis for 3  
 270 years for the leeward side, windward side and the outer islands, respectively. Higher Weibull  
 271  $A$  ( $> 4$  m/s) and  $k$  ( $> 2$ ) parameters are observed and modelled at Momi, Rakiraki, Yaqara,  
 272 Udu, Koro Island, Levuka, Vunisea, Viwa and Yasawa. These sites are considered windy and  
 273 have little variation from the mean wind speed, which indicates the presence of consistent,  
 274 regular wind resources.

275 Table 6. Weibull Wind Distribution parameters for leeward side AWSs (2016 – 2018)

Station	Measure	WRF			Measure	WRF			Weibull Correlation
	d Weibull $A$ (m/s)	Weibull $l$ $A$ (m/s)	Weibull $l A$ Bias	Bias %	Weibull $k$	Weibull $l$ $k$	Weibull $l k$ Bias	Bias %	
Keiyasi	1.17	2.02	0.85	72.5	1.17	1.21	0.05	4.0	0.95
Labasa	1.70	3.35	1.65	97.5	1.35	2.69	1.34	99.5	0.60
Momi	4.56	3.63	-0.93	-20.3	1.99	2.31	0.31	15.8	0.95
Nadarivatu	3.15	4.07	0.92	29.5	1.71	2.17	0.46	26.6	0.90
Nadi	3.03	3.17	0.14	6.0	1.65	2.33	0.68	41.3	0.95
Rakiraki	7.11	6.21	-0.90	-12.6	2.44	2.42	-0.02	-0.7	0.97
Rarawai	1.91	1.79	-0.12	-6.3	1.40	1.42	0.02	1.8	1.00
Seaqaqa	1.48	2.44	0.96	64.8	1.23	1.42	0.19	15.8	0.94
Sigatoka	2.11	2.69	0.58	27.6	1.58	1.47	-0.11	-7.1	0.98
Wainikoro	1.88	3.99	2.11	112.6	1.40	2.28	0.89	63.7	0.59
Yaqara	4.47	4.32	-0.15	-3.2	2.24	1.96	-0.28	-12.7	0.99
Average	2.96	3.43	0.46	33.5	1.65	1.97	0.32	22.55	0.89

276

277 Table 7. Weibull Wind Distribution parameters for windward side AWSs (2016 – 2018)

Station	Measure	WRF			Measure	WRF			Weibull Correlation
	d Weibull $A$ (m/s)	Weibull $l$ $A$ (m/s)	Weibull $l A$ Bias	Bias %	Weibull $k$	Weibull $l$ $k$	Weibull $l k$ Bias	Bias %	
Korolevu	3.65	4.31	0.67	18.3	1.94	2.14	0.20	10.3	0.96

Lomaivun									
a	2.15	2.91	0.76	35.4	1.54	1.73	0.18	11.8	0.95
Nausori	2.71	3.45	0.75	28.0	1.51	1.82	0.31	20.4	0.94
RKS	2.32	4.36	2.05	89.3	1.64	2.39	0.75	45.4	0.62
Saqani	2.40	4.66	2.26	95.5	1.27	2.65	1.39	120.8	0.52
Suva	2.58	3.68	1.10	42.7	1.76	1.80	0.04	2.2	0.92
Tokotoko	2.96	3.52	0.56	19.2	1.80	1.58	-0.21	-11.9	0.98
Udu	6.02	5.35	-0.68	-11.2	2.44	2.37	-0.07	-2.7	0.97
Average	3.10	4.03	0.93	39.6	1.74	2.06	0.32	24.5	0.86

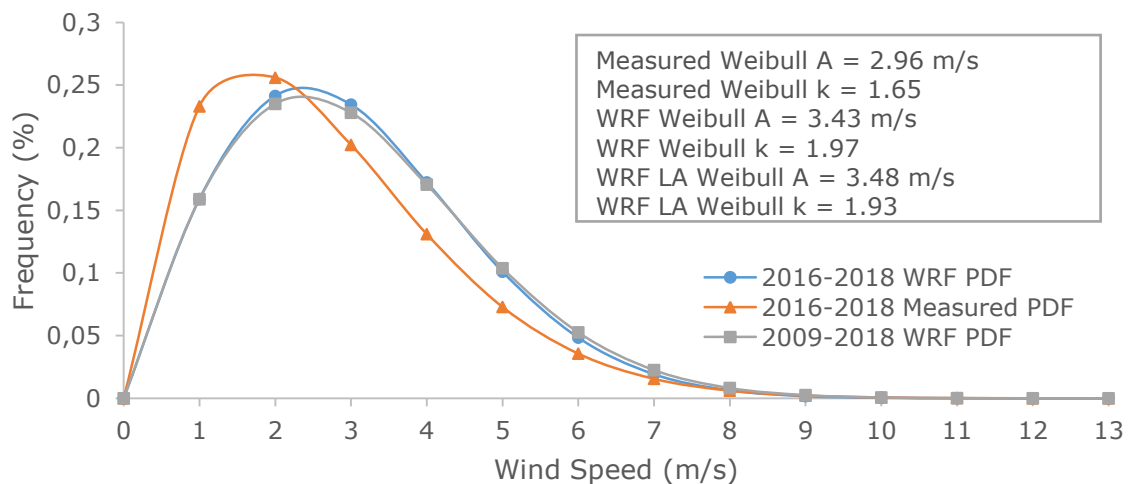
278

279 Table 8. Weibull Wind Distribution parameters for outer islands' AWSs (2016 -2018)

Station	Measured Weibull A (m/s)	WRF Weibull A (m/s)	Weibull A Bias	Bias %	Measured Weibull k	WRF Weibull k	Weibull k Bias	Bias %	Weibull PDF Correlation
Koro	4.47	5.02	0.55	12.4	2.06	2.57	0.50	24.7	0.95
Levuka	4.30	5.78	1.48	35.2	1.75	2.85	1.10	63.2	0.76
Vunisea	4.66	5.10	0.44	9.6	2.02	2.03	0.01	0.5	0.99
Viwa	4.20	6.59	2.39	57.2	1.63	2.51	0.88	54.2	0.67
Yasawa	7.19	6.64	-0.56	-7.6	2.61	2.88	0.27	10.3	0.98
Average	4.97	5.83	0.86	21.4	2.01	2.57	0.55	30.6	0.87

280

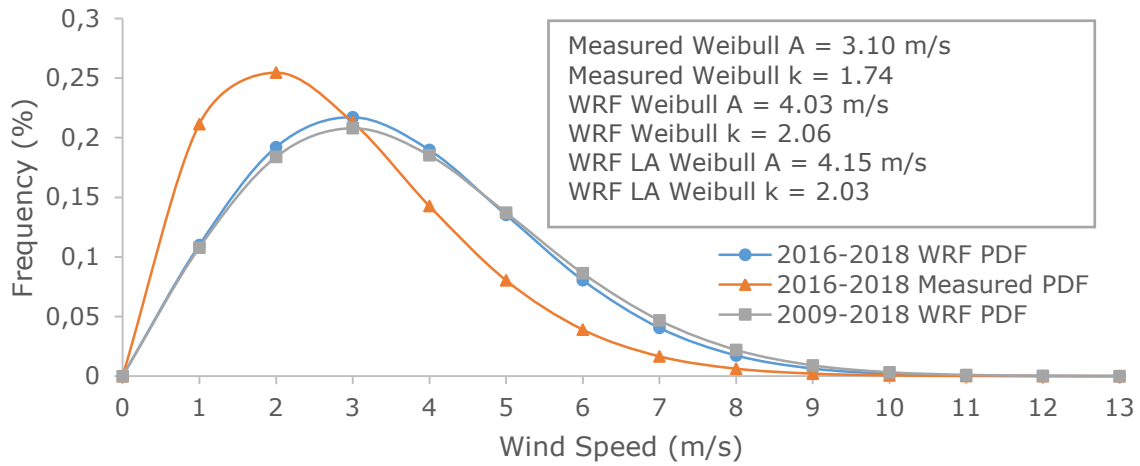
281 The comparison of the Weibull PDFs provides an opportunity to visualise and compare the  
 282 measured and the modelled wind speed and its frequency of occurrence. Figures 3 – 6 present  
 283 the comparison of the 3-year modelled and the measured Weibull PDFs together with the 10-  
 284 years modelled long-term average (WRF LA) for the leeward side, windward side, outer  
 285 islands and for all the AWSs, respectively. These figures also list the Weibull A and  
 286 k parameters for each PDF.



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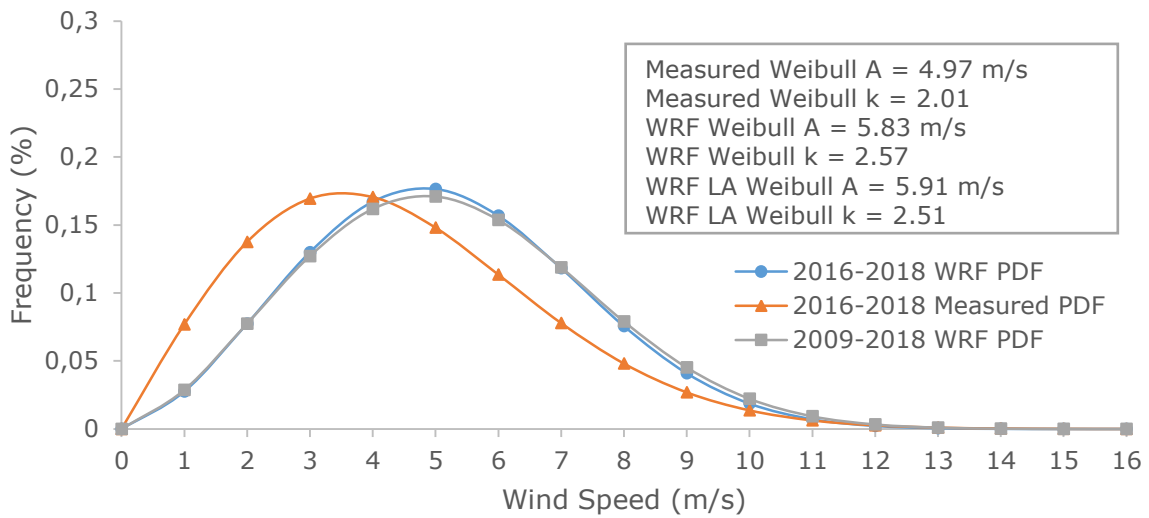
288

Figure 3. Comparison of the Weibull PDFs for the Leeward Side Stations.



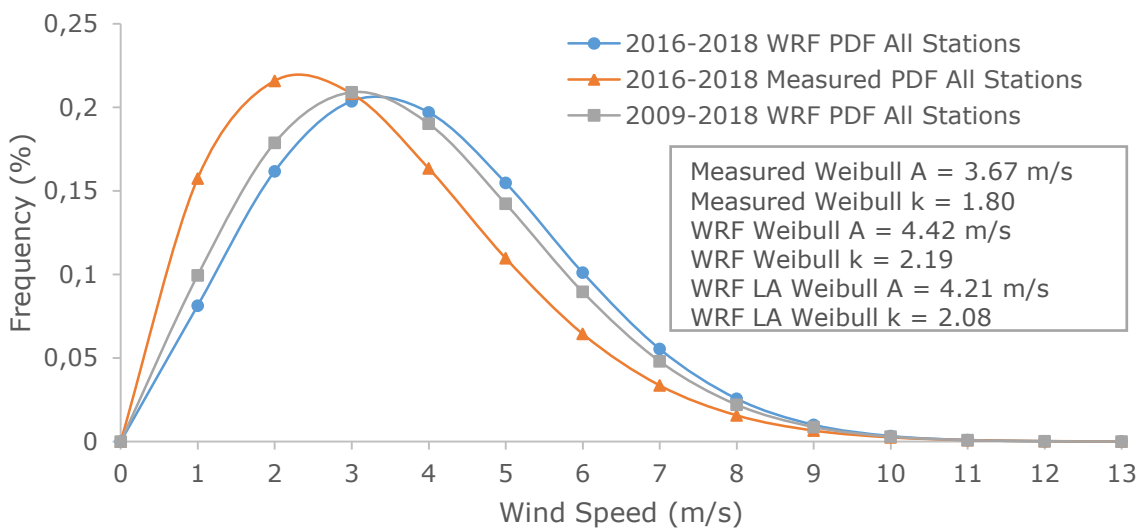
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Figure 4. Comparison of the Weibull PDFs for the Windward Side Stations.



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Figure 5. Comparison of the Weibull PDFs for the Outer Islands Stations.



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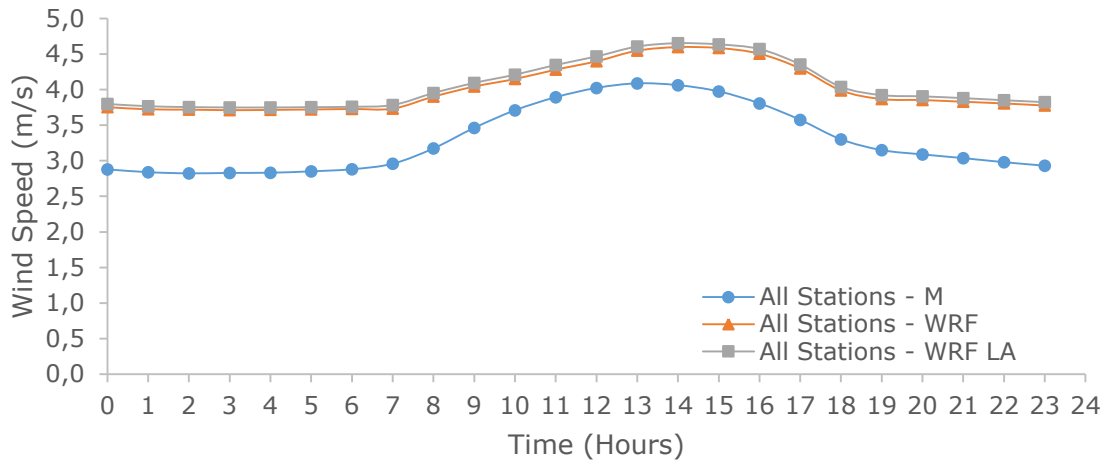
Figure 6. Comparison of the Weibull PDFs for all 24 AWSs.

295 The comparison between the modelled and observed Weibull PDFs show that the model  
296 agrees moderately well with the observations (with an average correlation of 0.88 for 24  
297 AWSs). Nonetheless the model tends to record lower frequency of lower wind speeds of 1 –  
298 2 m/s on the leeward and the windward sides of the larger islands, and 1 – 3 m/s for the outer  
299 islands compared with the observations. The opposite is seen for wind speeds from 3 – 6 m/s  
300 for the leeward side, 3 – 8 m/s for the windward side, and 5 – 10 m/s for the outer islands.  
301 Similar model behaviour is also observed for all the 24 AWSs shown in Figure 6. This  
302 indicates that the model tends to overestimate lower wind speeds and underestimate medium  
303 to higher wind speeds. The measured Weibull  $A$  and  $k$  parameters are slightly lower in  
304 magnitude than modelled. The mean Weibull PDF correlation across all stations is 0.88, with  
305 0.89 for the leeward side, 0.86 for the windward side and 0.87 for the outer islands indicating  
306 that the results are in good agreement. The 3-year and the 10-year modelled Weibull PDFs  
307 have little variation in terms of the Weibull  $A$  and  $k$  parameters and the Weibull PDFs  
308 correlation is almost 1, which shows that the 3-year period is representative of the 10-year  
309 period used in the simulations.

### 310 **3.1.3 Diurnal Wind Speed Patterns**

311 The diurnal wind speed pattern is the variation of wind speed over a 24-hour period. For a  
312 tropical island, it is a representation of the land-sea breeze circulation and provides useful  
313 information about the strength of the wind speed during different times of the day. Figures 7  
314 – 10 present a comparison of the modelled (WRF) and the measured (M) diurnal wind speed  
315 patterns for 3 years together with the 10-year modelled long-term (WRF LA) average for all  
316 the AWSs, the leeward side AWSs, the windward side AWSs and the outer islands' AWSs,  
317 respectively. Note that the diurnal cycles of individual stations are not included in this paper,  
318 but rather an average across all stations, stations on the leeward side, windward side and the  
319 outer islands is used.

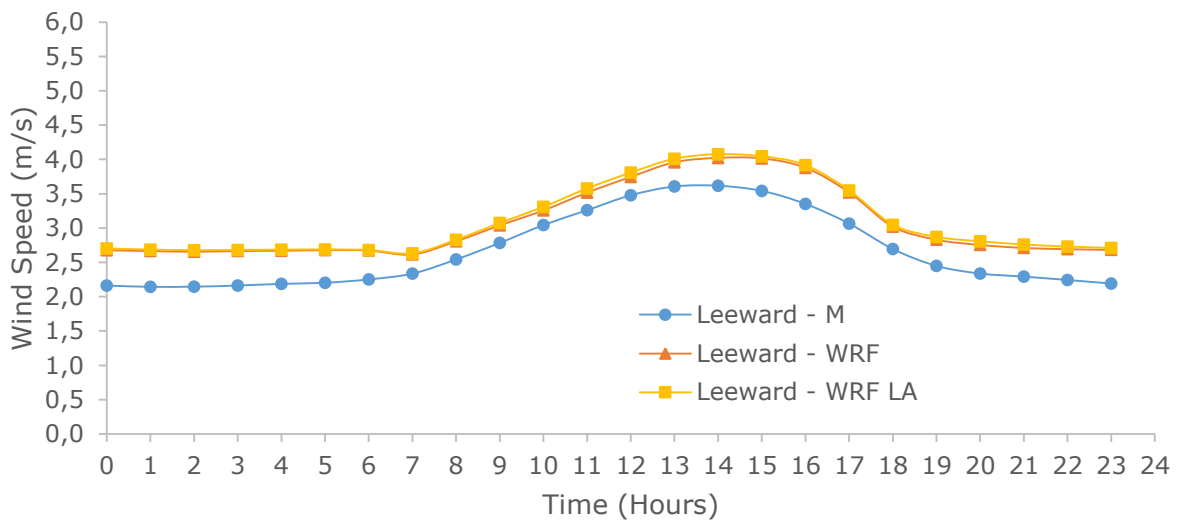




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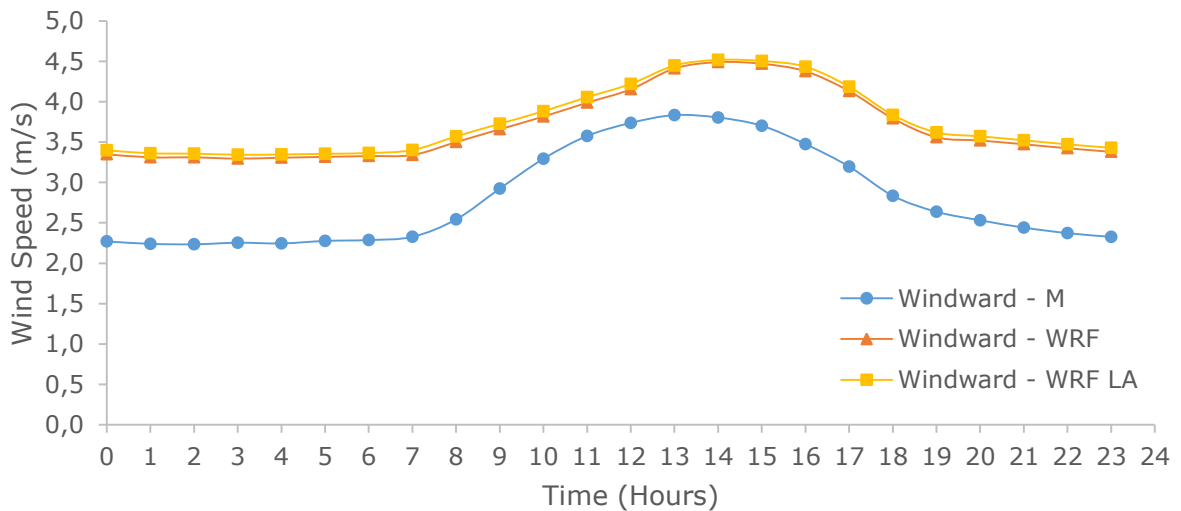
Figure 7. Diurnal wind speed pattern for all 24 AWSs.



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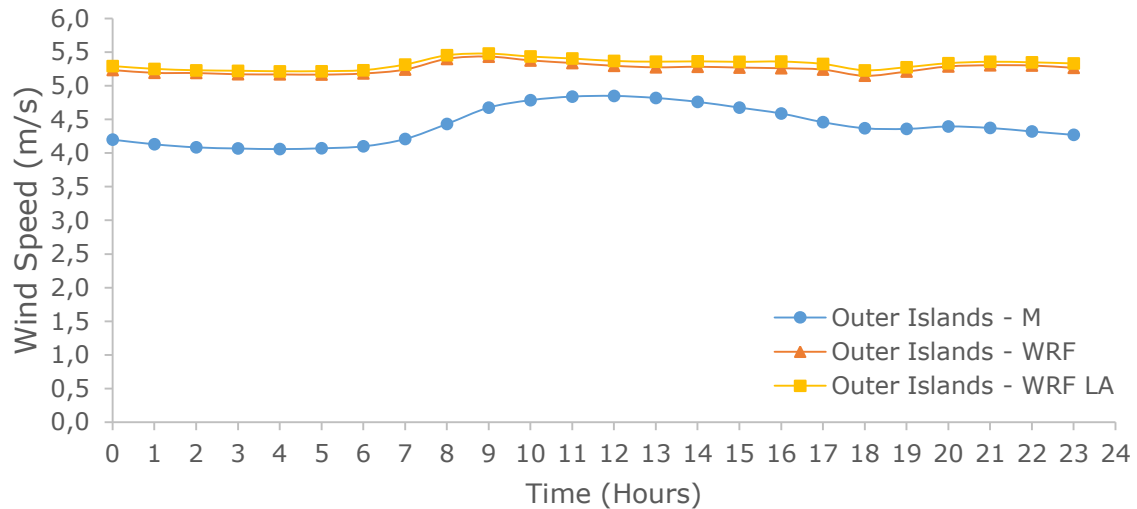
Figure 8. Diurnal wind speed pattern for the Leeward Side AWSs.



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325

Figure 9. Diurnal wind speed pattern for the Windward Side AWSs.



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327

Figure 10. Diurnal wind speed pattern for the Outer Islands AWSs.

328

The model simulated diurnal cycle for 3 years and 10 years is generally in good agreement with the observations. The overall diurnal cycle for all the 24 AWSs is similar to the diurnal cycles on the leeward and the windward sides. Comparison of the 3 year and the 10-year modelled diurnal cycles shows little variation, with a correlation of almost 1 (Figure 7). The model is able to capture the diurnal cycle patterns for both sides of the larger islands, although it systematically overestimates the wind speed. For the leeward and the windward sides of the larger islands, a strong diurnal cycle is observed and modelled, which can be seen in Figures 8 and 9. For the outer islands, which are relatively smaller, a weaker diurnal cycle is observed (Figure 10), which is expected for small tropical islands as ventilation prevents the genesis of the land-sea breeze circulation [40]. This small observed diurnal cycle is not correctly simulated by the WRF model, which only simulates a small early-morning increase in wind speed. This is probably caused by the lack of representation of small-scale topography in the model, which can reduce the efficiency of the ventilation process. The model performance is better on the leeward-side stations with a smaller estimate of the mean diurnal wind speed in comparison with the windward-side and the outer-islands stations.

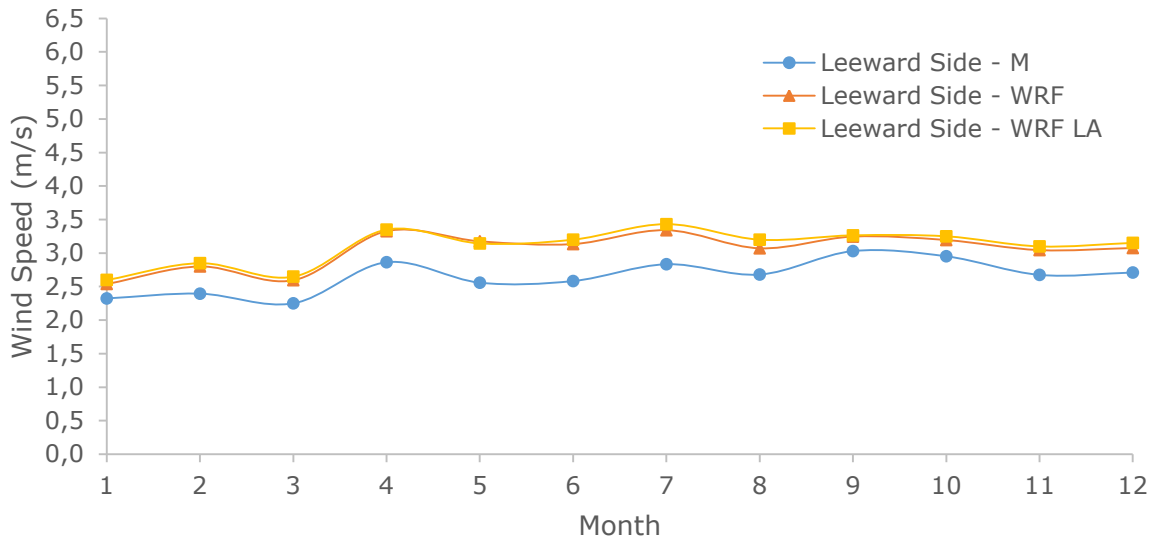
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### 3.1.4 Seasonal Cycle of Wind Speed

344

Figures 11 – 14 present the comparison of the modelled (WRF) and the measured (M) seasonal cycle of wind speed for the 3-year period together with the 10-year modelled long-term (WRF LA) average for the leeward side, windward side, outer islands and for all the AWSs, respectively.

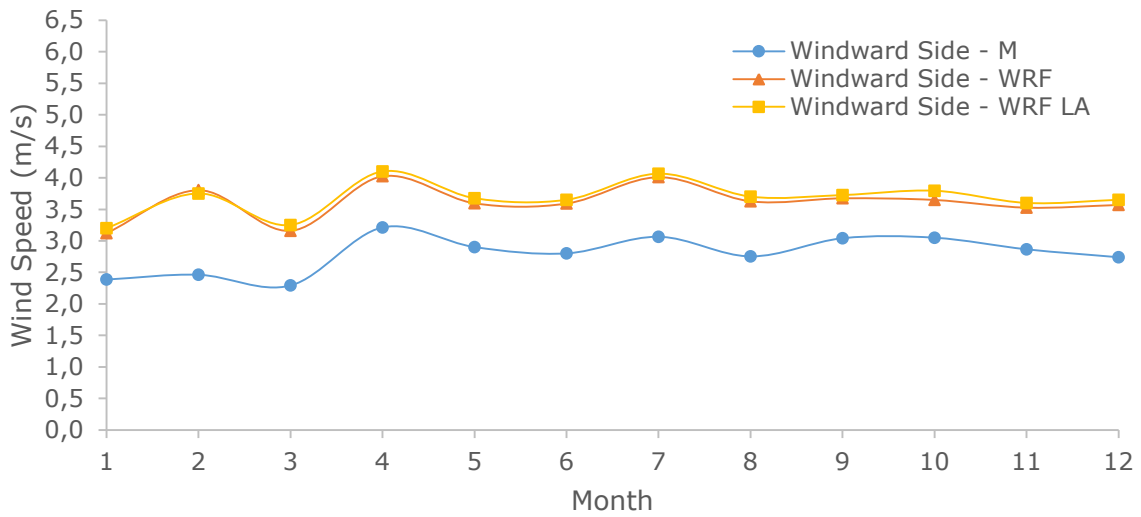
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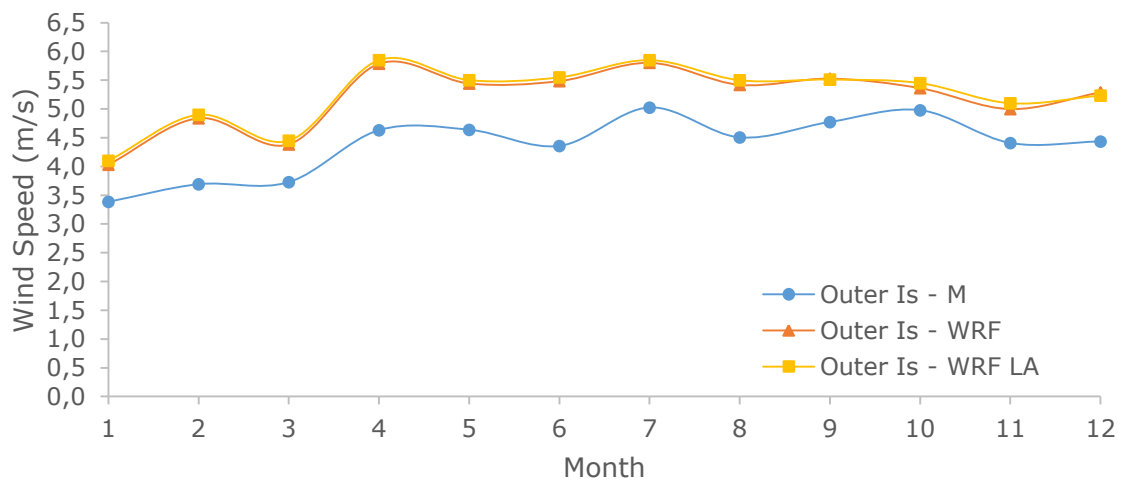
Figure 11. Seasonal cycle of wind speed for the Leeward Side AWS.



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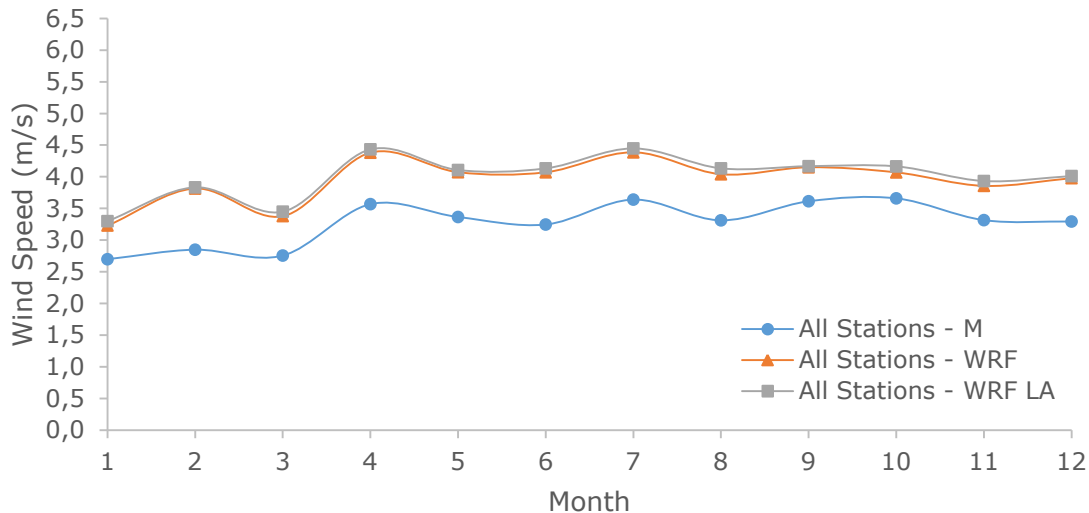
Figure 12. Seasonal cycle of wind speed for the Windward Side AWSs.



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Figure 13. Seasonal cycle of wind speed for the Outer Islands AWSs.



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Figure 14. Seasonal cycle of wind speed for all the 24 AWSs.

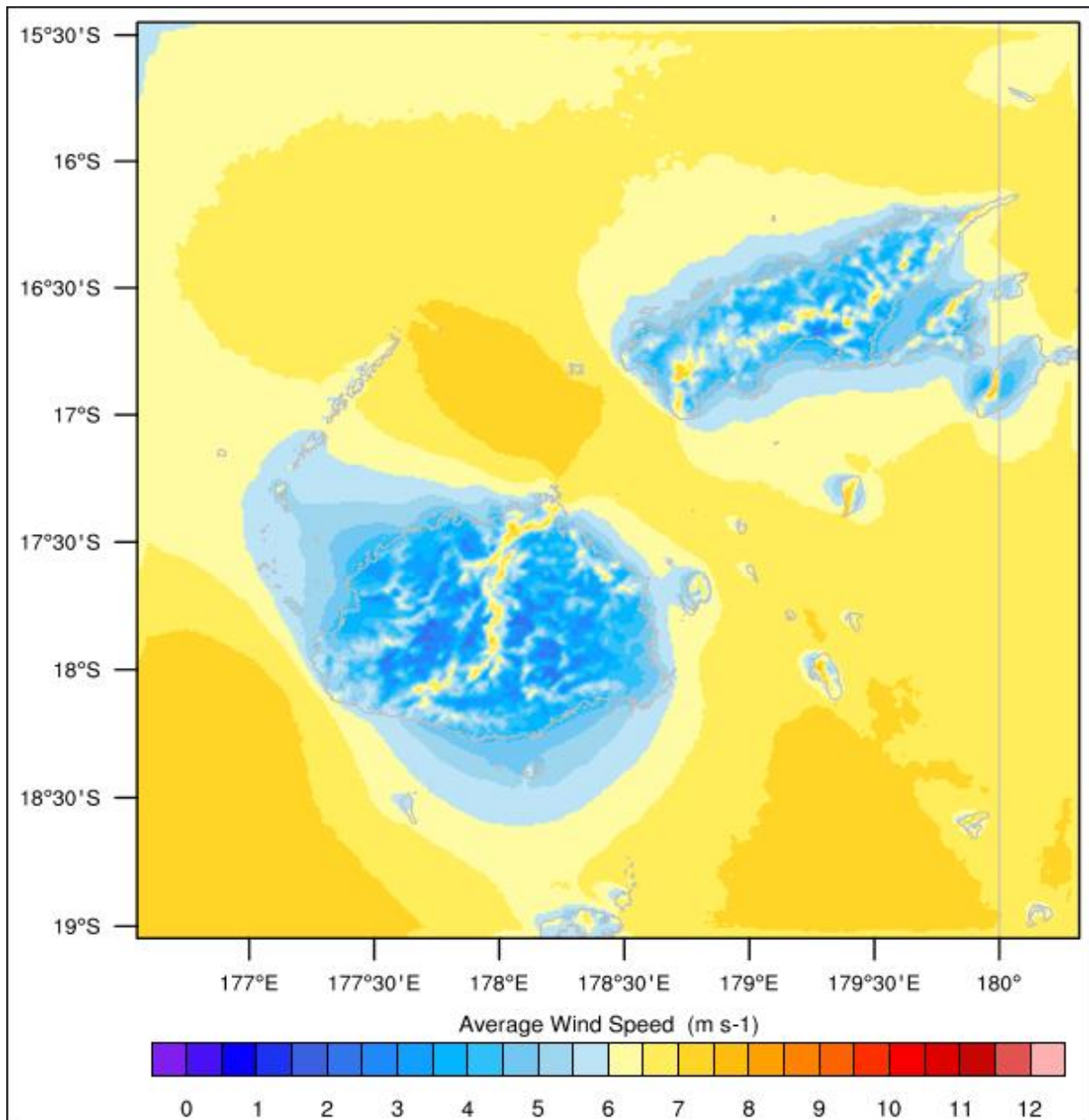
356 The model-simulated seasonal cycle of wind speed is in good agreement with the  
357 observations for the study period. The model successfully captures the seasonal cycle of wind  
358 speed for either sides of the larger islands and for the outer islands, although modelled wind  
359 speed is overestimated in comparison with the measurements. Again, this overestimation is  
360 smaller for the leeward side of the larger islands than for the windward side and the outer  
361 islands. A similar model behaviour is observed for the seasonal cycles for all the AWSs. As  
362 per the station plots, slightly higher wind speeds are observed during austral winter (May –  
363 October), during which the southeast trade winds are more persistent than during austral  
364 summer (November to April), during which the wind climatology is mostly dominated by  
365 synoptic systems. Little variation can be observed between the 3-year and the 10-year  
366 modelled seasonal cycle.

### 367 3.2 Resource Maps

#### 368 3.2.1 Long-term-mean Wind Speed Map at 55 m

369 The long-term-mean wind speed map represents the spatial distribution of the average wind  
370 speed over the simulation. These maps at higher heights such as at the hub-height of a wind  
371 turbine are useful for identifying potential wind resource sites that can be used for utility-  
372 scale wind power applications and for siting wind turbines for wind farms. Figure 15 presents  
373 the 55-metre-elevation long-term-mean wind speed map for the SIDS of Fiji. Ten years of  
374 data was used to calculate the long-term mean. The 55-metre-elevation has been chosen  
375 because a typical wind turbine hub height, which is suitable for power generation in the SIDS

376 of Fiji, has a hub height of 55 m. Note that wind turbines with a hub-height of 55 m are  
377 employed at the existing Butoni wind farm in Fiji [12].



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Figure 15. Long-term-mean 55-metre-elevation wind speed map of Fiji.

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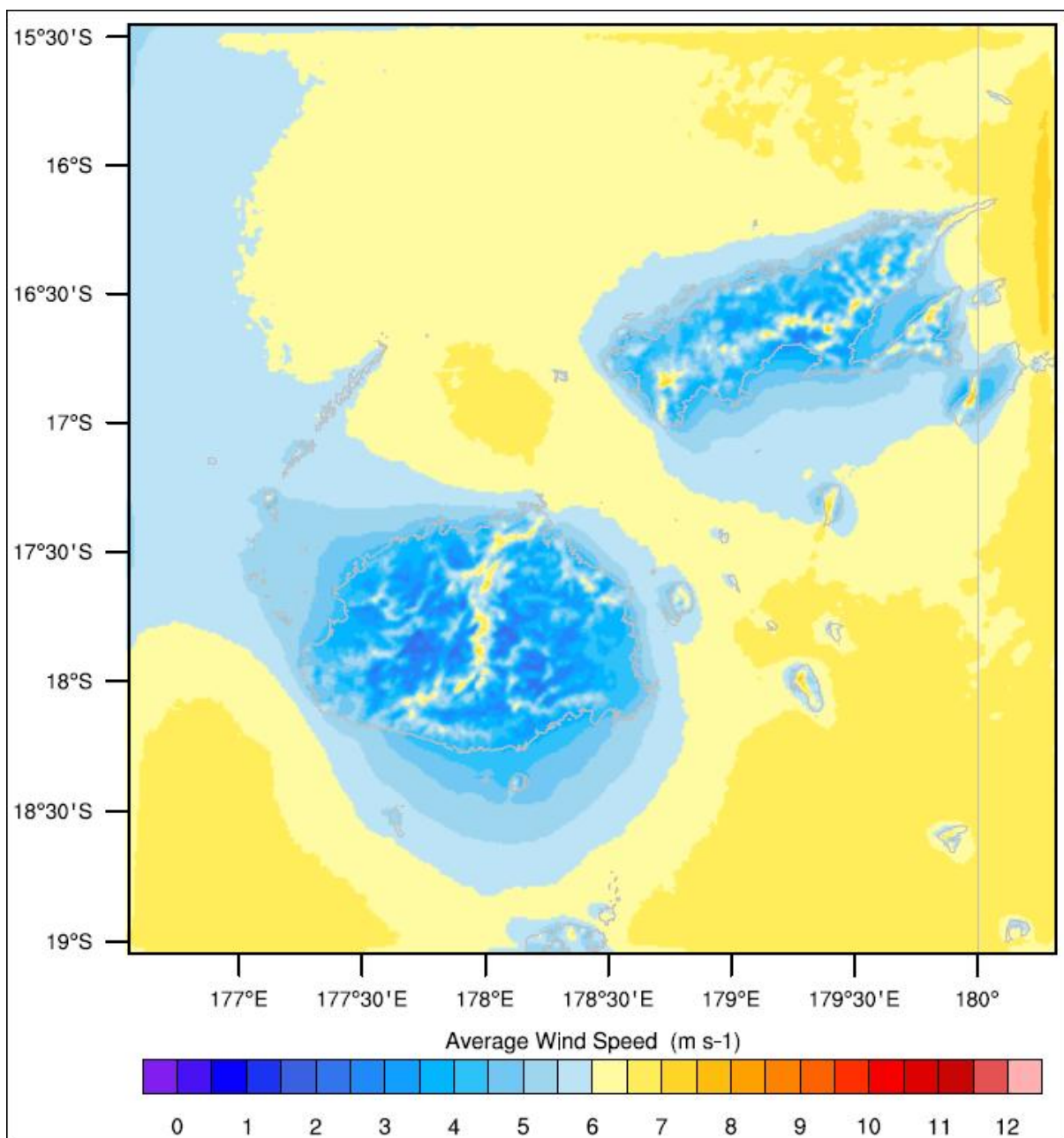
386

The 10-year average wind speed varies from a minimum of around 1.5 m/s to a maximum of 8 m/s over the islands, with minima in the inland valleys and the maxima on the crest of the islands' mountains. The long-term-mean nearshore and offshore wind speed varies from 5 m/s to 8 m/s. The dominant wind direction is south-easterly and the blocking effect of the islands can be seen in their wakes as well as in the upwind flow; this blocking effect means that the flow is diverted around the islands, accelerating the wind on the sides of the islands, particularly in the channel between the two main islands. Following the NREL Wind Power

387 Classification [41] using the 50-meter-elevation reference, numerous potential wind resource  
388 locations on shore can be identified with wind speeds greater than 6.4 m/s, which corresponds  
389 to Wind Power Class 3.

### 390 3.2.2 Seasonal Wind Speed Maps at 55 m

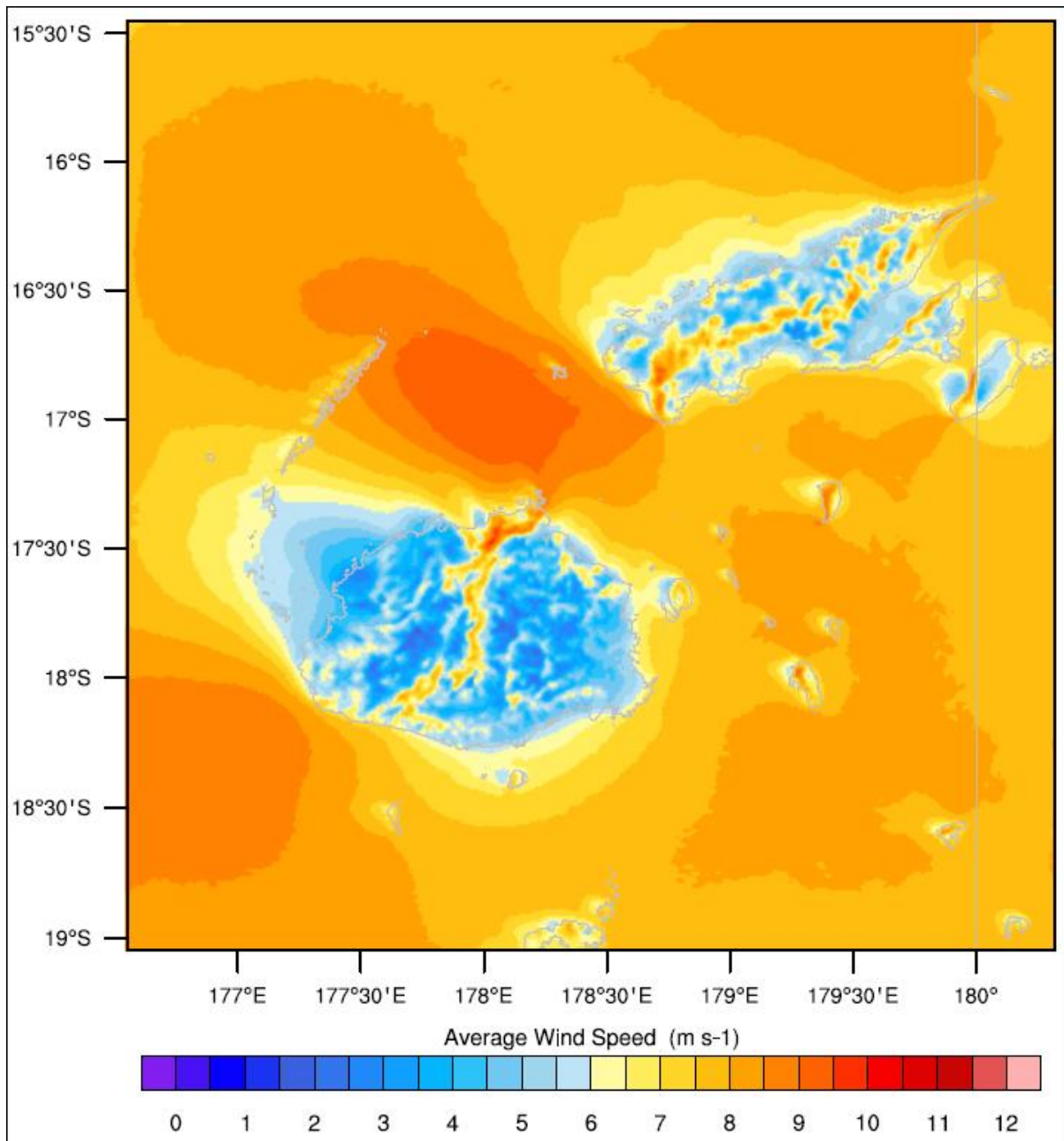
391 The seasonal wind speed map represents the seasonal spatial distribution of the average  
392 hourly wind speed over a season in a year. Figures 16 and 17 present the 55-m-elevation  
393 mean seasonal wind speed map of Fiji for the two seasons of austral summer and austral  
394 winter calculated using 10 years of data.



395

396 Figure 16. Seasonal 55-metre-elevation wind speed map of Fiji for austral summer.





397

398

Figure 17. Seasonal 55-metre-elevation wind speed map for austral winter.

399

Higher wind speeds are simulated during austral winter in comparison with austral summer over both onshore land and offshore open sea areas, but the distribution patterns are the same.

401

This seasonal cycle follows that of the large-scale southeasterlies. The seasonal wind speed

402

patterns at 55-metre-elevation essentially identifies the same general wind resource areas as

403

the long-term-mean wind speed map with wind speeds greater than 6.4 m/s (Wind Power

404

Class 3) for onshore land areas considered suitable for utility-scale wind power applications

405

using the NREL Wind Power Classification [41]. Note that, these areas are smaller in austral

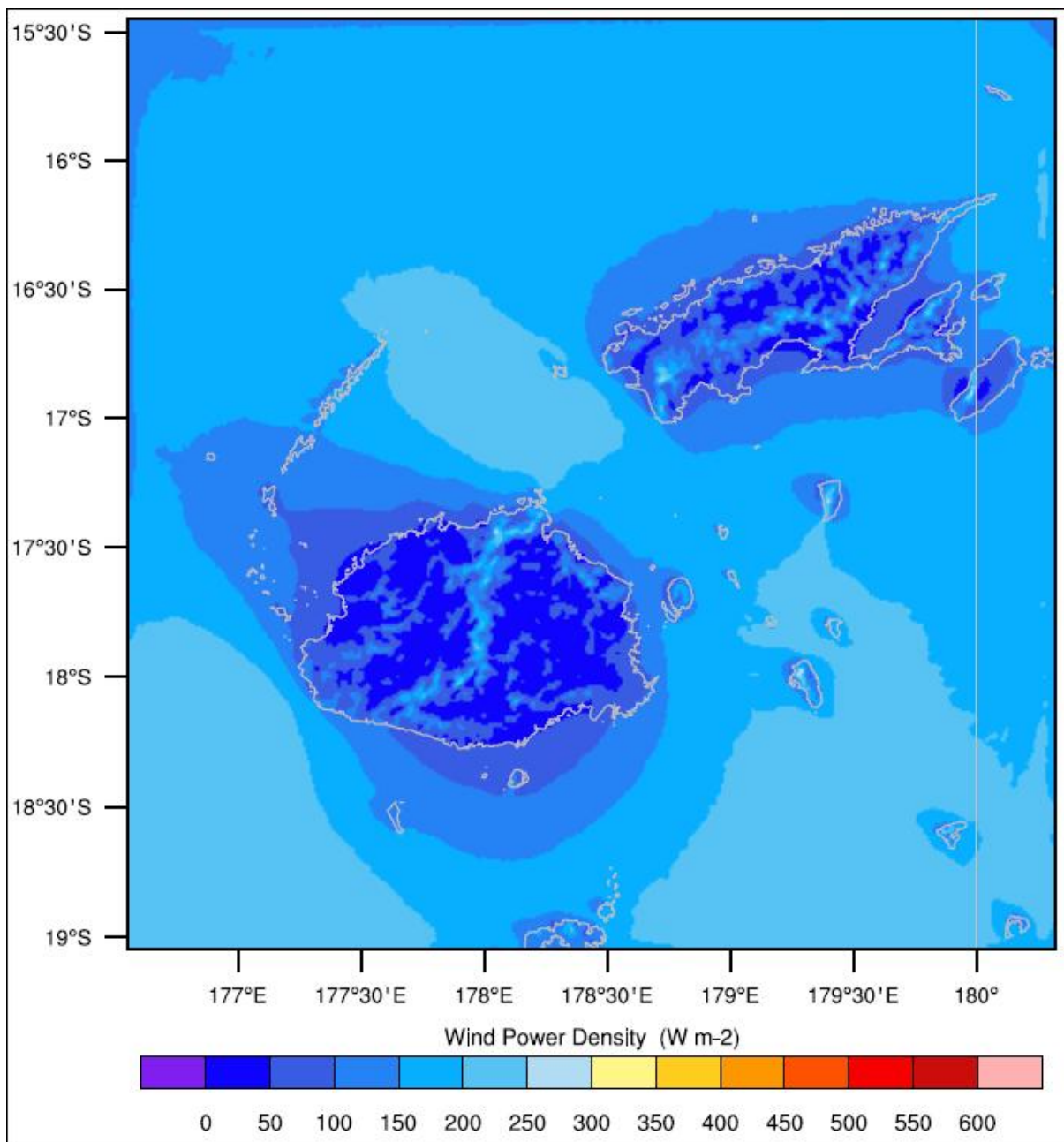
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summer.

407

### 408 3.2.3 Long-term-mean Wind Power Density Map at 55 m

409 The long-term-mean wind power density at the hub-height of a wind turbine is also useful in  
410 identifying potential wind resource sites for utility-scale wind power applications. Figure 18  
411 presents the 55-metre-elevation long-term-mean wind power density map calculated using 10  
412 years of data. The plotted values are the wind power density area-averaged over a 1 km ×  
413 1 km grid cell using a constant air density of 1.225 kg/m<sup>3</sup>.



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Figure 18. Long-term-mean 55-metre-elevation wind power density map of Fiji.

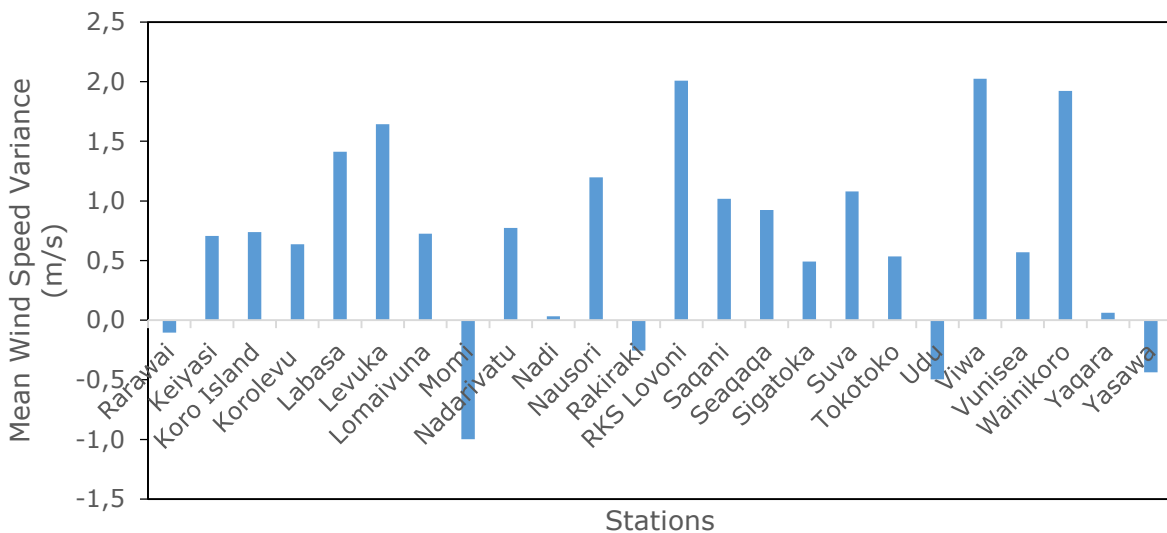


416 The 10-year average wind power density varies from 50 W/m<sup>2</sup> to 300 W/m<sup>2</sup> at various  
 417 locations depending on its topography and geographic location for the onshore land area of  
 418 the major and the smaller islands. The offshore wind power density varies from 100 W/m<sup>2</sup> to  
 419 300 W/m<sup>2</sup> from near-shore areas to open sea areas, respectively.

### 420 3.2.4 Interannual Wind Speed Variability

421 The interannual wind speed variability refers to the magnitude of fluctuation in the annual  
 422 mean wind speed on a year-to-year basis at a site. It is an important consideration for the  
 423 assessment of the long-term wind resource and for the confirmation of the consistency of the  
 424 wind speed over a time period of multiple years. To evaluate the interannual wind speed  
 425 variability, the variance of the wind speed anomaly for the model is plotted and the  
 426 interannual wind speed anomalies for the measured and the modelled wind speed are plotted  
 427 separately.

428 Figure 19 presents the 10-year mean variance of the 10-metre wind speed anomaly for the  
 429 model for the 24 AWSs. The variance of the model anomaly varies with a minimum of 0.03  
 430 m/s at Nadi to a maximum of 2.02 m/s at Viwa with an average of 0.68 m/s for the 24 AWSs.  
 431 Eighteen out of twenty-four stations have the variance of the model anomaly less than 1 m/s.

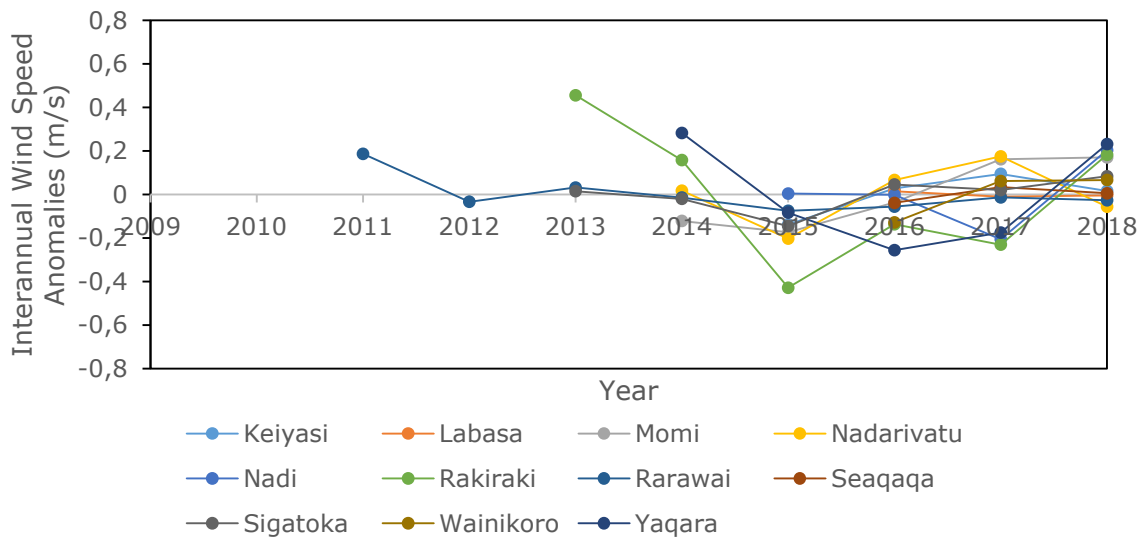


432

433 Figure 19. Variance of wind speed anomaly for 10 years for 24 AWSs.

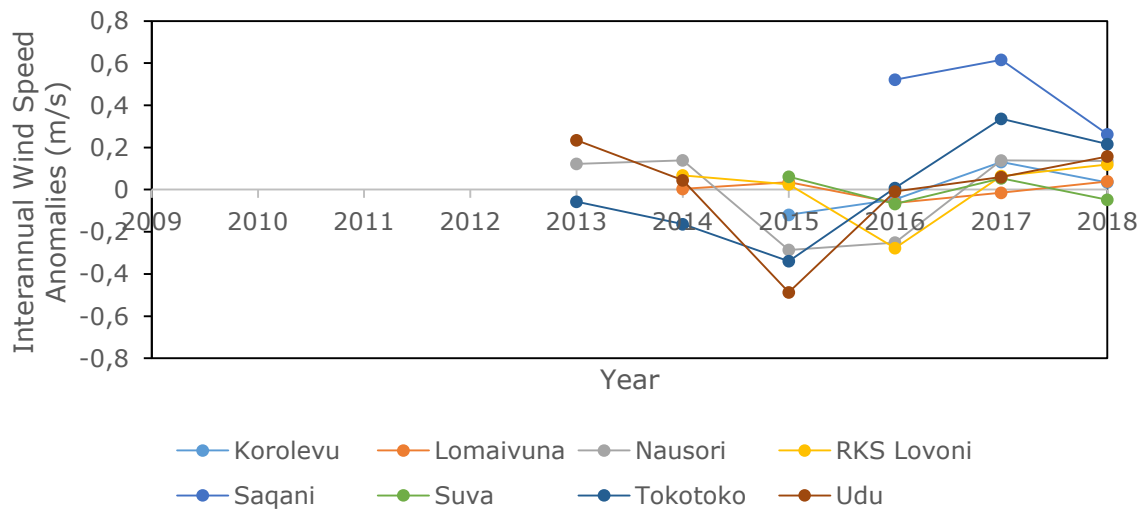
434 The interannual wind speed anomaly of the model and the measurements is the difference  
 435 between the annual mean and the long-term mean for each. Figures 20 – 22 and Figures 23 –  
 436 25 present the interannual wind speed anomalies of the measured and model for the 24 AWS

437 locations for the leeward side, windward side and the outer islands at 10 m elevation,  
 438 respectively.



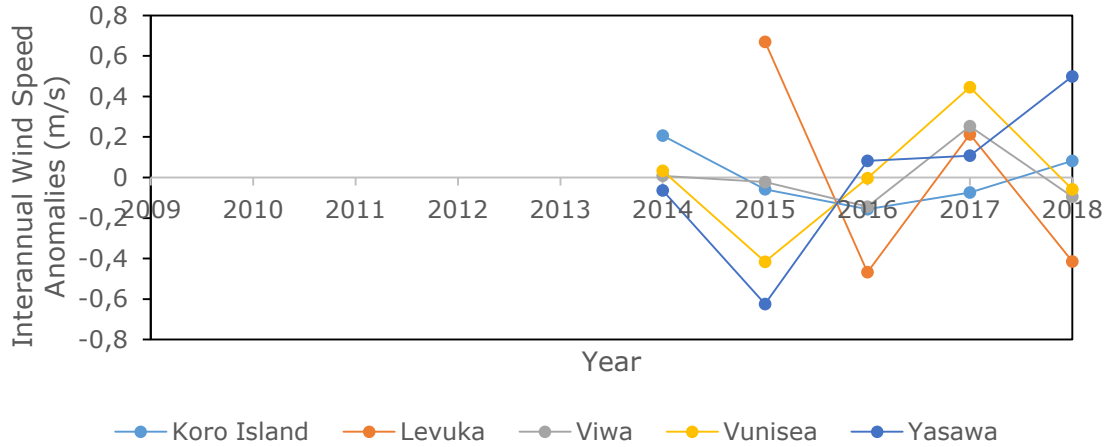
439

440 Figure 20. Measured interannual wind speed anomalies for the leeward side AWSs.



441

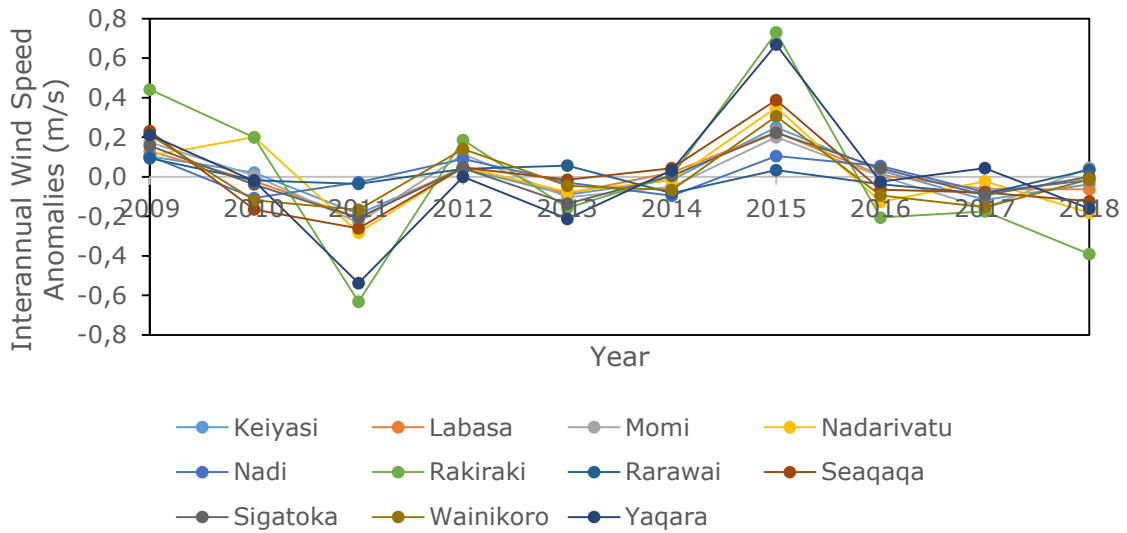
442 Figure 21. Measured interannual wind speed anomalies for the windward side AWSs.



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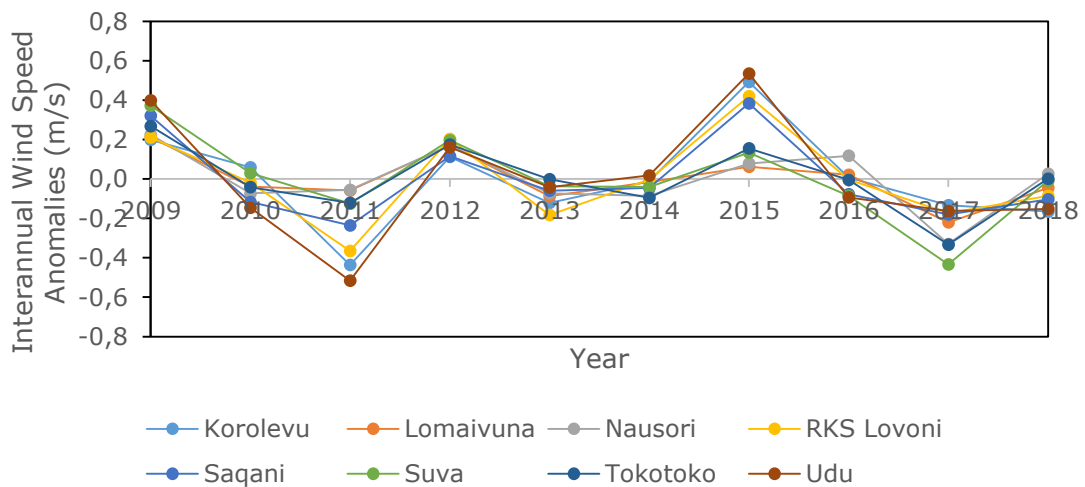
Figure 22. Measured interannual wind speed anomalies for the Outer Islands AWSs.



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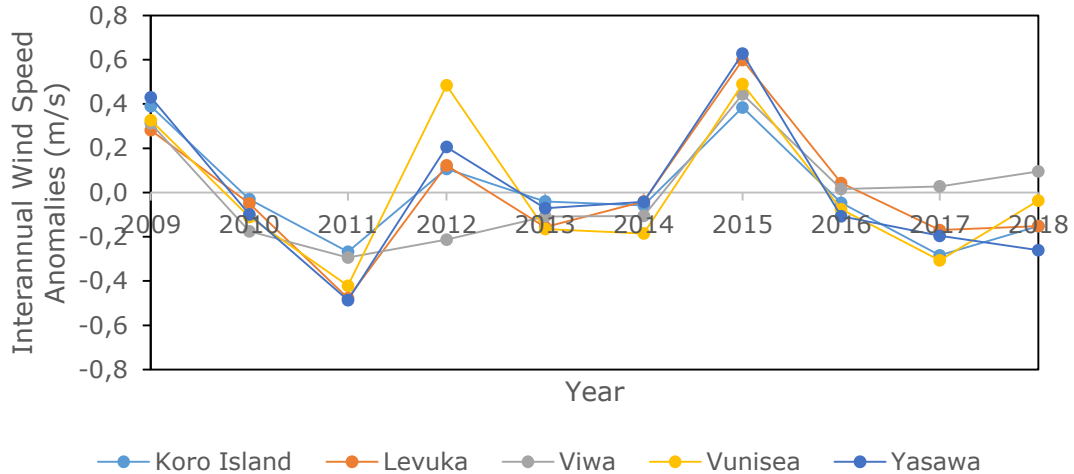
Figure 23. Model interannual wind speed anomalies for the leeward side AWSs.



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Figure 24. Model interannual wind speed anomalies for the windward side AWSs.



449

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Figure 25. Model interannual wind speed anomalies for the Outer Islands AWSs.

451

The trends in the interannual wind speed anomalies for the model and the measurements on the leeward side, windward side and the outer islands show that there is little variation (< 0.8 m/s) in the measured and the modelled wind speed over the 3 – 10 year period. Since there is little variability in the wind speed, energy production would not change significantly from year to year.

456

### 3.2.5 Systematic Bias in Wind Power Density

457

An evaluation of the systematic bias in wind power density at the 24 AWSs for 3 years is presented in Table 9. This shows the overestimation of the model wind speed. Wind power density is calculated using the measured and the modelled wind speed measurements and the difference is calculated to determine the systematic bias in the 10-metre wind power density at the 24 AWSs. The wind power density (WPD) is calculated using the standard equation ( $WPD = \frac{1}{2} \rho V^3$ , where  $\rho$  is the air density and  $V$  is the wind speed) with site-specific air density ranging from 1.084 kg/m<sup>3</sup> to 1.168 kg/m<sup>3</sup>. The site-specific air density has been estimated using the WAsP Air Density Calculator which is a function of altitude (elevation in metres above sea level) and mean air temperature at the same altitude. A lapse rate of 6.5 K/km and a sea level pressure of 1013.25 hPa are assumed and the estimate is based on a standard atmosphere. WAsP software uses the barometric reference data from CFSR reanalysis database [42].

469

The systematic bias computed for wind power density is assumed to be the error in the energy production as it is a function of power density and the other parameters considered in the energy calculation equation are constant. The systematic bias for wind power density is

472 assumed to be constant with height, as the non-linear relationship of wind power density and  
 473 wind speed has been considered in the systematic bias at 10-metre elevation. A lower  
 474 systematic bias can be expected at higher heights for the wind power density in a similar  
 475 manner to the wind speed bias.

476 The mean systematic bias in the wind power density at the 24 AWSs is  $9.68 \text{ W/m}^2$ , which is  
 477 an overestimation of 33.8 %. The systematic bias is less than  $15 \text{ W/m}^2$  at 13 AWSs,  $15 - 30$   
 478  $\text{W/m}^2$  at 6 AWSs and greater than  $30 \text{ W/m}^2$  at 5 AWS. Even though it is assumed that the  
 479 wind speed bias is constant with height, there is a chance that this bias will be smaller at  
 480 higher elevations as there will be little surface friction at the hub-height of 55-metres in  
 481 comparison with that at an elevation of 10-metres.

482

483

Table 9. Systematic Bias for Wind Power Density (WPD) for all AWSs at 10 m

Station	Measured Mean (m/s)	WRF Mean (m/s)	D3 = 1 km Bias(m/s)	Measured WPD ( $\text{W/m}^2$ )	WRF WPD ( $\text{W/m}^2$ )	Bias ( $\text{W/m}^2$ )
Keiyasi	1.15	1.86	0.71	0.88	3.73	2.85
Koro Is	3.94	4.47	0.53	35.38	51.67	16.29
Korolevu	3.30	3.88	0.58	20.95	34.05	13.10
Labasa	1.57	2.94	1.37	2.26	14.84	12.58
Levuka	3.82	5.15	1.33	32.44	79.50	47.05
Lomaivuna	1.98	2.61	0.63	4.49	10.28	5.79
Momi	4.14	3.20	-0.94	41.30	19.07	-22.23
Nadarivatu	2.81	3.54	0.73	12.03	24.04	12.02
Nadi	2.77	2.79	0.02	12.39	12.66	0.27
Nausori	1.94	3.08	1.14	4.26	17.06	12.80
Rakiraki	6.10	5.53	-0.57	132.56	98.76	-33.80
Rarawai	1.77	1.61	-0.16	3.24	2.44	-0.80
RKS	2.06	3.95	1.89	5.10	35.96	30.86
Saqani	2.80	4.17	1.37	12.80	42.27	29.48
Seaqaqa	1.36	2.20	0.84	1.46	6.17	4.71
Sigatoka	1.89	2.41	0.52	3.94	8.17	4.23
Suva	2.36	3.24	0.88	7.68	19.86	12.19
Tokotoko	2.57	3.18	0.61	9.91	18.78	8.87
Udu	5.36	4.80	-0.56	89.62	64.36	-25.26
Viwa	3.84	5.92	2.08	33.07	121.17	88.10
Vunisea	4.02	4.58	0.56	37.84	55.96	18.12
Wainikoro	1.65	3.49	1.84	2.62	24.80	22.18
Yaqara	3.98	3.93	-0.05	36.79	35.42	-1.37
Yasawa	6.27	5.87	-0.40	143.46	117.72	-25.74
Average	3.06	3.68	0.62	28.60	38.28	9.68

484

#### 485 4. Discussion

486 The modelling exercise using 10 years of data presents an opportunity to quantify and  
487 validate the wind-resource for the SIDS of Fiji for the first time at a mesoscale level. The  
488 overall model performance is in good agreement with the ground-based measurements. The  
489 WRF mesoscale NWP model can successfully reproduce the observed wind climate on the  
490 ground. High wind resource areas are identified at higher altitude inland areas of the larger  
491 islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, nearshore land areas on the eastern and the western  
492 sides of the larger islands and the nearby onshore areas adjacent to the channel between the  
493 two larger islands.

494 Mesoscale wind resource maps of the long-term-mean wind speed and the long-term-mean  
495 wind power density at 55-meter-elevation can be compared with the NREL Wind Power  
496 Classification [41]. This reveals forty potential wind resource locations with wind speed and  
497 power density greater than 6.4 m/s and 300 W/m<sup>2</sup> (these values corresponds to Wind Power  
498 Class 3 for the 50 metre classification, which is considered feasible for utility-scale wind  
499 power applications). For the two main islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu where the  
500 national electricity grid is available, there are more than 500 km<sup>2</sup> (500 × 1 km × 1 km grid  
501 cells) of areas on each island where the wind speed and the power density are greater than the  
502 Wind Power Class 3 thresholds. Using the rule-of-thumb that 1 km × 1 km of spatial area is  
503 required to site a 10 MW wind farm with 37 × 275 kW wind turbines having 5-rotor  
504 diameter (160 m) spacing across and downstream using a 6 x 6 array size [43, 44 and 45], the  
505 total available potential wind resource area of 1000 km<sup>2</sup> (1000 × 1 km × 1 km) corresponds  
506 to an estimated 1000 MW theoretical potential installed capacity. To confirm this, micro-  
507 siting with a higher resolution model is required to make a decision considering the terrain  
508 complexities and the errors associated with the mesoscale modelling.

509 For the smaller outer islands there is also potential for wind power development for rural  
510 electrification as the wind resource is available. However, such a development would have to  
511 be complimentary to other power systems such as diesel power plants which currently  
512 provide electricity in these locations. Outer islands like Gau, Ovalau, Taveuni and Kadavu  
513 can accommodate a few MW scale wind farms as there are isolated mini-grid electricity  
514 networks, which are mostly supported by diesel power plants and a micro-scale hydropower  
515 plant in the case of Taveuni.

516 Other work has identified outer island sites of Gau [14], Kadavu [20] and Taveuni [17] as  
517 potential sites for rural electrification, which the current mesoscale work also identifies.  
518 Comparing the results of this study with a recent WAsP microscale wind resource study  
519 undertaken by the authors [23], the WRF model is able to successfully identify the three  
520 reported potential utility-scale wind farm sites of Rakiraki, Nabouwalu and Udu. Looking at  
521 the seasonal cycle of wind speed, the measured and the modelled wind speed seasonal  
522 variability is small ( $< 1$  m/s) over a period of 3 – 10 years at all sites where measurements are  
523 available. The annual wind speed variability is low because Fiji is situated in the Southeast  
524 Trade winds zone, which are steady large-scale winds. The interannual variability is small as  
525 well ( $\sim 0.8$  m/s). The small natural variability of wind speed guarantees regular energy  
526 production.

527 The El-Nino, La-Nina and the ENSO events are the main modes of interannual variability  
528 observed on the ground. These are also captured by the model and are the cause of crests and  
529 the troughs of the interannual wind speed anomalies in Figures 20 – 25. According to the  
530 NASA Earth Observatory [46], El-Nino events occurred between 2009 – 2010, 2014 – 2016  
531 and 2018 – 2019, La Nina events occurred between 2008 – 2009, 2010 – 2012 and 2017 –  
532 2018 and ENSO events occurred between 2014 – 2016.

533 The WRF model has a tendency to overestimate lower wind speeds and underestimate higher  
534 wind speeds [34]. The overestimation of wind speed can be observed at the following station  
535 locations where the measured wind speed is low: Keiyasi, Labasa, Seaqaqa, Wainikoro,  
536 Nausori, Saqani and RKS on the larger islands (% Bias  $> 49$  %). The underestimation of  
537 wind speed can be observed at Rakiraki, Udu and Yasawa whereby the measured wind  
538 speeds are medium to high. Similar model behaviour is reported for studies done for Greece  
539 [6] and Hawaii [8].

540 The results generated by numerical weather prediction models are only approximate due to  
541 simplifications of the topography and the physical processes which they use in order to make  
542 the problem tractable [7]. There is a substantial difference in terms of the wind speed  
543 measurements available at 10-metre-elevation from AWSs, which are essentially  
544 measurements made at a single point, whereas the wind speeds calculated using the model are  
545 the grid cell average which corresponds to an area of  $1 \text{ km} \times 1 \text{ km}$ . The grid cells are  
546 relatively large with an assumed topography and roughness that can be very different from  
547 the real conditions [47]. Also, the measurements are made at an elevation of 10-metres,

548 where structures in the close vicinity might influence the measurements. Such effects are not  
549 included in the WRF mesoscale model.

550 There is also a possibility that the stations are out of calibration, as for these sites, the model  
551 is able to capture the diurnal cycle pattern, which is similar to the measured and the long-term  
552 average diurnal cycles but there is overestimation of wind speed.

553 The terrain representation in the model can also contribute to errors. In Table 1 there are  
554 differences in the model and the real elevation at almost all station locations of between  $-62.4$   
555 m ( $-8\%$ ) and  $54.4$  m ( $170.5\%$ ). For most stations where the topography is less resolved in  
556 the model than the real topography, there is an overestimation of wind speed. These include  
557 the 6 AWSs mentioned earlier where there is a positive larger difference between the model  
558 and the measurements indicating overestimation of wind speed.

559 Significant sources of error in any numerical weather prediction model (such as the WRF  
560 model presented in this paper) include: the initial and the boundary conditions (in our case we  
561 are using coarse resolution output results from GCMs, which is almost the same for the entire  
562 domain as the resolution is around  $100\text{ km} \times 100\text{ km}$ ); resolution of the domain (in our case  
563 it is an average of  $1\text{ km} \times 1\text{ km}$ ); terrain and vegetation characteristics (in our case we used  
564 average values for each  $1\text{ km} \times 1\text{ km}$  grid cell); nudging and assimilation techniques; and the  
565 complexity of the terrain effects and their representation in the model (in our case we have  
566 seen differences) [48]. The choice of the physical schemes can also contribute to errors in the  
567 model, as these schemes are based on many assumptions, and these assumptions may fail, or  
568 give an inadequate response to certain synoptic forcing, limiting their application.

569 In terms of the applicability and value, the finest reanalysis data available globally is ERA5  
570 that is available at  $31\text{ km} \times 31\text{ km}$  grid resolution every hour since 1979, this research created  
571 high-resolution wind resource data at  $1\text{ km} \times 1\text{ km}$  resolution for the recent decade (2009-  
572 2018) for the whole of Fiji, even in locations where ground-based measurements are not  
573 available. This data has been used for potential wind resource site identification and to  
574 evaluate the theoretical potential of wind energy for Fiji. It can also be used to evaluate the  
575 technical potential by coupling it with a microscale model. The advantage of the microscale  
576 model (WAsP) is that it uses the wind atlas and generalisation methodology, which removes  
577 all the terrain influence from the model data going upwards to the free stream wind speed  
578 (geostrophic wind speed) and works downwards taking into account high-resolution terrain



579 data to create a generalised wind climate which can be used at a predicted site to evaluate the  
580 wind resources with greater accuracy than the input data from the model [41].

## 581 **5. Conclusions**

582 This study presents a high-resolution mesoscale wind-resource assessment of the small island  
583 developing state (SIDS) of Fiji using a 10-year simulation of the Weather Research and  
584 Forecasting (WRF) model with convection-permitting resolution. Our analysis evaluates the  
585 wind speed and Weibull distributions, diurnal and annual wind speed patterns, model  
586 statistical analysis, resource maps of annual and seasonal wind speed, power density and  
587 interannual wind speed variability and anomalies.

588 The results revealed that the WRF model simulated wind-resource parameters are in good  
589 agreement with the observations. The model can be reliably used to simulate the wind flow  
590 around the Fijian Islands in order to get reliable information on the wind resource. At 55 m  
591 above ground, the annual mean wind speed and wind power density varies from 1.5 m/s to 8  
592 m/s and  $50 \text{ W/m}^2$  to  $300 \text{ W/m}^2$ , respectively, for onshore land areas. Higher wind speeds are  
593 observed during austral winter than in austral summer. Forty high wind-resource areas are  
594 identified in this study, which were previously unknown. This indicates that there is potential  
595 for utility-scale wind power generation at selected locations with wind speed and power  
596 density greater than 6.4 m/s and  $300 \text{ W/m}^2$  (NREL Wind Power Class 3 at an elevation of 50  
597 m).

598 As the first mesoscale wind resource modelling exercise for the SIDS of Fiji for the recent  
599 decade (2009 – 2018), our study supports the idea that the SIDS in the Pacific can utilize their  
600 wind-resource to ease its dependence on diesel-based power generation. It also provides a  
601 methodology for mesoscale wind-resource assessment for the SIDS in the Southwest Pacific  
602 together with the identification and verification of potential wind resource sites.

603 In future work, it is recommended that the WRF model results are coupled with the linear  
604 wind flow model WAsP. Such an approach could improve the accuracy of the wind speed  
605 prediction by taking into account high-resolution micro-scale features of the topography and  
606 vegetation characteristics. This could also assist in determining the accuracy of the wind  
607 speed prediction as well as evaluating the wind energy potential for the identified locations  
608 from the high-resolution mesoscale wind resource mapping exercise.

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