

## ABAU

The Bembi dialects are found in the Bewani Mountains. It is not known how numerous they are, but inland along the border with Dutch territory the language runs south until at least a dialect of it is found at Abau. ...

- Capell 1954:12; 1962:38.

[quoting Laycock notes]

"At Green River the language is Abau. Tradition places these people as having come up the Sepik, and their language is possibly relatable to Iwam, although structurally it suggests Wogamusin ..."

- Capell 1962:47.

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... Abau (c. 3,386 speakers). ...

- Laycock 1965a:113.

... The figures ... for Abau is taken from Languages of the Amanab Sub-District, by Richard Loving and Jack Bass ... The language is there called 'Green River'.

- Laycock 1965a:118, n. 2.

Abau: (a) 3390 (b) all villages of Green River local CD, and most, if not all, of August River CD ...

- Laycock 1968:45.

(Djarok)

4545 [speakers]

Villages: Abaru, Dieru, Iburu, Minaburu, Ogru, Simia ..., Baiuwai, Baio, Biake No. 1, Biake No. 2, Buna, Hifi, Iaburu, Idam No. 1, Idam No. 2, Ileis, Imnai, Isu, Kaseiru, Kobararu, Maha, Mahani, Musuasi, Sereian, Waiar, Wauru, Yaseiru ..., Beimap, Wagu No. 1, Weidoru ..., Vuriap, Yabal, 6? more villages [West Irian].

- Laycock 1973a:21.

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The Abau language (Central Dialect) is spoken by 4000 people who live along the banks of the Sepik River and some of its tributaries, from the Irian Jaya International Border, east to Yellow River.

- Bailey 1975a:59.

... the Abau language, the main tongue spoken in the Green River census division of the West Sepik District.

There are over 3,500 speakers of this language, living in approximately 40 villages along the Sepik River and some of its tributaries -- a long narrow area stretching from immediately west of Yellow River Patrol Post to just across the West Irian border.

It is not known authoritatively to which other languages the Abau language is related. The Abau people recognize only general speech differences between some villages and have no names of dialect areas.

- Bailey 1975b:6.

... the village of Anaiehyom, which is otherwise known as Idam 1.

Working from the standard survey list used by S.I.L., it was found that approximately 65% of the vocabulary items are the same as is spoken in the central dialect; 20% involve pronunciation differences which necessitate changes of spelling, and 15% are entirely different lexical items.

- Bailey 1975b:52.

The people themselves use the term /\_íá\_k/ 'lial's language' to designate their language as distinct from that of other people. The word /\_íá\_/ is probably a loan word from a neighbouring language (possible Amto) meaning 'foreigner'. However, as the term Abau is accepted and used as the English name for the language group by the government and in published articles, it is felt best to continue in its usage.

The designation 'Green River' should no longer be used to indicate the Abau language.

- Bailey 1975b:57, n. 1.

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The Abau number about 5000 people and inhabit about 1700 square miles of territory along the Sepik mainstream between the International Border and Yellow River, as well as the valleys of the August, October, Green and Idam Rivers. ...

- Craig 1980:5.

Figure 1: Map of Upper Sepik Area -- Geographic Features; Villages.

[ABAU]

Miniaburu

Biake

Kobraru

Yablawai

Buliap

Bibiyum

Iles

Hufi

Isu

Selelian

Antibi

Bamblediam

Isabu

Bisiaburu

Buna

Iaburu  
 Dieru  
 Otwilimakom  
 Hogru  
 Tila  
 Rawei  
 Bifrou  
 Mukwasi  
 Mahanei  
 Baiwal  
 Wiro  
 Baio  
 Beimap  
 Basis  
 Wagu  
 Niohillam

- Craig 1980:37.

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[Map]

Bibyun -- ABAU  
 Dieru -- ABAU  
 Green River -- ABAU  
 Wusianum -- ABAU  
 Yapsiei -- ABAU

- Wurm & Hattori 1981

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According to Laycock (1973:69, 74), Abau belongs to the Upper Sepik Stock of the Sepik-Ramu Phylum of P.N.G. languages. The Abau language group is located in the southern portion of the Amanab Sub-district of the West Sepik Province. Abau villages are located / along the Sepik River from longitude 141° 40' up-river to just beyond the Irian Jaya border; along the lower Green and Hauser Rivers; along the Idam River; along the August (Yapsie) River and in the villages in the vicinity of the Green River Government Station.

- Martin 1981:210-211.

Abau is spoken by 4,317 speakers in 28 villages which are located in five P.N.G. Census Divisions. In addition, there are some speakers (reportedly only a few) along the Sepik River beyond the Irian Jaya border. The 1980 census figures organized by Census Division and village are presented in Table 2. Absentees are excluded from these figures since villagers reported that absentees seldom returned to their home villages.

1980 Census Figures

<u>Yabalhai C.D.</u>		<u>Green River Local C.D.</u>		<u>Idam C.D.</u>	
Baio	122	Iburu	238	Idam #1	322

Baiuwai	122	Miniaburu	167	Idam #2	255
Biake #1	25	Simia	34	<u>Bisiaburu</u>	106
Bifro	240	Dieru	207	<u>Subtotal</u>	638
Buna	117	Ogru	167		
Hufi	159	<u>Abaru</u>	179	<u>YAPSIE</u> <u>C&gt;D&gt;</u>	
Iaburu	415	Subtotal	992		
Sugmayin	111			Ileis	49
Kaseiru	137	<u>ROCKY PEAK C.D.</u>		Imnai #1	167
Kobraru	123			Wauru #1	162
Mahani	138	Beimap	88	<u>Wauru #2</u>	48
Mukwas	219	Wagu	113	<u>Subtotal</u>	426
<u>Subtotal</u>	1,939	<u>Senou</u>	76		
		<u>Subtotal</u>	277		

- Martin 1981:211.

According to Laycock (1973:69) and more recent S.I.L. sources, Abau is bordered on the north by Yuri (Karkar), Sengai (Anggor) and Busa. It is bordered on the east by Namie and on the south by Musian, Amto and Mianmin. To the west across the Irian Jaya border the situation is less certain, but the languages there would appear to be Biksi and Pyu. Abau is not closely related to any language which borders it.

- Martin 1981:211.

It is evident that three major dialect areas emerge ... and arbitrarily have been given the following names in this report: The Central Dialect, the Up-River Dialect, and the Down-River Dialect. The villages of the Central Dialect have more in common with the other two dialects than either of the other two do with each other -- hence the name Central Dialect.

The Up-River Dialect includes all the Abau villages up the Sepik, Idam and August Rivers from the Central Dialect area. Bisiaburu is transitional. The younger generation there speaks the Central Dialect (like Iaburu), while the older generation speaks the Up-River Dialect (like Idam #1).

The Down-River Dialect includes all Abau villages down-river from the Central Dialect area. Mahani was not surveyed, but with more study may prove (like Bisiaburu) to be transitional between the Central and Down-River Dialects. ...

- Martin 1981:223.

#### Appendix A. Map of Abau Area

Central Dialect:

Iaburu  
 Buna  
 Abaru  
 Dieru  
 Ogru  
 Iburu  
 Miniaburu  
 Simia

Mukwas  
Bisiaburu

Up-River Dialect:

Idam #1  
Idam #2  
Wauru #1  
Wauru #2  
Kobraru  
Sugmayin  
Biake #1  
Kaseiru  
Hufi  
Ileis  
Imnai #1

Down-River Dialect:

Mahani  
Bifro  
Baiuwai  
Baio  
Beimap  
Senou  
Wagu

- Martin 1981:230.

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1985 census figures

Down river dialect:

Imnai	167
Ileis	49
Wauru 1	162
Wauru 2	48
Idam 1	325
Idam 2	256
Hufi	159
Kasyeiru	143
Biak	28
Soukmayon	111
Kopraru	103

Total 1551

Central dialect:

Yapru	404
Buna	109
Mukwas	231
Mahani	142
Baiuwai	124
Bifro	240
Baio	136

Yipru	238
Aparu	179
Dioru	207
Miniapru	167
Simia	34
Pisiapru	113
Ogru	167
Total	2491

Up river dialect:	
Beimap	88
Wagu	126
Senou	75

Total 289  
 - Lock & Lock 1985 Ts:5.

The nearly 600 people of Idam 1 and Idam 2 live in 11 different camps. The village Yapru is also divided into two camps. 300 people live along the Sepik River and another 100 people live along the Hauser River.  
 - Lock & Lock 1985 Ts:5.

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... 28 villages in Papua New Guinea. Sandaun Province, Green River District, Sepik and Green Rivers. Also in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. ...  
 - Grimes 1992:810.

... The Sepik River to the north of this [AMA] area, to Waku village, is occupied by speakers of the Abau or Green River language (to the Sawiyan\_, the Sonamo). ...  
 - Guddemi 1992:35.

**ABAU (GREEN RIVER)** ... 4,545 (1981 Wurm and Hattori) in 28 villages. Sandaun Province, Green River District, Sepik and Green rivers. Not in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. ...  
 - Grimes 1996.

**ABAU (GREEN RIVER)** ...4,545 (1981 Wurm and Hattori) in 28 villages. Sandaun Province, Green River District, Sepik and Green rivers. Not in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Linguistic affiliation: Sepik-Ramu, Sepik, Upper Sepik, Abau. ....  
 - Grimes 2000.

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**Abau:** around 4,550 speakers reported in 1981, on the Sepik and Green rivers, in Ambunti and southern Amanab Subdistricts, southwest of Namie, West Sepik Province. Also spoken in Irian Jaya, Indonesia. Also called Green River.  
 - Comrie 1992jj:419.

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**Identification and Location.** The Abau are the westernmost people living on the Sepik River. The name was applied by linguists; it is not used by the Abau people. It might have derived from the kinship term for grandparents, *abau*. "Green River" is inappropriate as an ethnonym because it is the name of a river flowing mainly through non-Abau territory and of a government patrol post near the boundaries of three unrelated language groups.

Abau territory falls within Sandaun (West Sepik) Province of Papua New Guinea and extends mainly along the south bank of the Sepik from the vicinity of the Yellow River, a northern tributary of the upper Sepik, to the international border of the Indonesian province of Irian Jaya; that is between 141°00" [sic] and 141°00" [sic] E. by 4°S. It also includes the area south of the Green River patrol post and the floodplains of the Idam and August rivers, southern tributaries of the upper Sepik. The West Range to the south is sparsely inhabited by peoples who speak unrelated languages ... On the north side of the Sepik, ... peoples of unrelated languages share a culture not unlike that of the Abau.

**Demography.** The names of 1990 and 2000 village-based census units are difficult to correlate with Abau villages. The linguist Laycock estimated 4,545 people based on information in 1970. The census figures for 1980 suggest no significant change.

It is estimated that the Abau number between 4,500 and 5,000 people ...

**Linguistic Affiliation.** Abau belongs to the Sepik-Ramu phylum of Non-Austronesian ("Papuan") languages ... The language most closely related to Abau is Iwam, ...

Abau speakers separate Biaka and Pyu speakers, whose languages appear to be related at the phylum level, to the north and west, respectively. ...

- Craig 2002:1.

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**[GREEN RIVER]**

1. Green River 3,386

- Loving & Bass 1964:1.

**GREEN RIVER = ABAU**

- Loving & Bass 1964: Map.

**Green River.** This is the largest language in the [Amanab] Sub-district with 3,386 speakers within the sub-district and an undetermined number in the headwaters of the Sepik in West Irian.

...

- Loving & Bass 1964:7.

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ABAU	Capell 1962 (Laycock), 1969; Wurm
ABAU	3,386 Laycock 1965
ABAU	3,390 Wurm 1971
ABAU	5,000 Craig 1980
ABAU	4,545 ISOLATE (Wurm & Hattori
ABAU	Upper Sepik Stock (Martin 1981;
ABAU	4,331 Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
ABAU	4,550 Comrie 1992jj
ABAU	4,500-5,000 Craig 2002
DJAROK	Capell 1969
DJAROK = ABAU	Laycock 1973, Wurm & Hattori 1981, Wurm 1982
GREEN RIVER	Capell 1969
GREEN RIVER	3,386 Loving & Bass 1964
GREEN RIVER = ABAU	Loving & Bass 1964; Laycock 1975;
LIALIK = ABAU (own name)	Bailey 1975
SONAMO = ABAU (Sawiyano name)	Guddemi 1992
Abaru -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Abaru -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981
Aparu -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Aburu -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Anaiehyom = Idam -- ABAU	Bailey 1975
Antibi -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980
Baio -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Baio -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981, Craig
Baiuai -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Baiuwai -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Baiuwai -- ABAU	Martin 1981, Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Baiwal -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Bamblediam -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980
Basis -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Beimap -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Beimap -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Craig 1980, Martin
Biak -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Biake -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Biake -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Craig 1980, Martin



Biaki -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Bibigun -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Bibiyum -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Bibiyun -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Bibyun -- ABAU	Wurm & Hattori 1981
Bifro -- ABAU	Martin 1981, Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Bifrou -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Bisiaburu -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Martin 1981
Pisiapru -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Buliap -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980
Buriap -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Buriap -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Buya -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Buna -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Laycock
Dieru -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Dieru -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Laycock
Dioru -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Dio -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Green River -- ABAU	Capell 1962 (Laycock), Wurm &
Hifi -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Hufi -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Laycock
Hogru -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Ogru -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Ogru -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981, Lock &
Yabal -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Yabal -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Yablawai -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Yablawei -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Yapsiei -- ABAU	Wurm & Hattori 1981
Yaseiru -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Yaseiru -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Iaburu -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Laycock
Yapru -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Iburu -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], Laycock 1973,

Idam -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Bailey 1975, Martin
Ileis -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981, Lock &
Iles -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Ilis -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Imnai -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981, Lock &
Isabu -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980
Isu -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Laycock
Yipru -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Kaseiru -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Kaseiru -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981
Keseiru -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Kasyeiru -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Kobararu -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Kobararu -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Kobraru -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Martin 1981
Kopraru -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Koktibi -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Maha -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Mahanei -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Mahani -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Mahani -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981, Lock &
Migiaburu -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Minaburu -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Miniaburu -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980; Martin 1981
Miniapru -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Mubuasi -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Musuasi -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Mukwas -- ABAU	Martin 1981, Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Mukwasi -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980
Naboi -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Niohiliam -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Niohillam -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Otwilimakom -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], 1980

Rawei -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Selelian -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Sereian -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Senou -- ABAU	Martin 1981, Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Sibisibel -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969]
Simia -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Martin 1981, Lock &
Soukmayon -- ABAU	Lock & Lock 1985 Ts
Sugmayin -- ABAU	Martin 1981
Tila -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Vuriap -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Wagu -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Wagu -- ABAU	Laycock 1973, Craig 1980, Martin
Waiar -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Wapayon -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Wasinam = Ileis -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Wauru -- ABAU	Craig n.d.[1969], Laycock 1973,
Weidoru -- GREEN RIVER	Loving & Bass 1964
Weidoru -- ABAU	Laycock 1973
Wiro -- ABAU	Craig 1980
Wusianum -- ABAU	Wurm & Hattori 1981

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