

INTERNATIONAL CLIMATE INITIATIVE

Regional project Climate Protection through Forest Conservation in Pacific Island Countries

On behalf of



Federal Ministry for the
Environment, Nature Conserv
and Nuclear Safety

of the Federal Republic of Germany

Approach, Issues, and Options for a Pacific Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Roadmap

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On behalf of SPC/GIZ Regional Project

**“Climate Protection through Forest Conservation
in Pacific Island Countries”**

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Executive Summary

A roadmap was prepared for the preparation of a Regional REDD+ Policy Framework, based on an approach that takes into consideration:

- The differential REDD+ opportunities among SPC member states
- The different relevance of REDD+ to SPC member states
- The need to integrate REDD+ initiatives in the region with existing strategic development initiatives and programmes
- The need to minimise workshop fatigue among participating countries.

KEY MESSAGES

The underlying goal of this project is to enhance the role of forests in climate protection by means of a well-designed REDD+ regional effort supported by: Clear goals; Resourcing; Strategy; Readiness; Implementation; Quality Assurance.

The dual role of forests in both climate change adaptation and mitigation for PICs has already been recognized in REDD+ initiatives at the national scale.

One way of viewing the task of climate protection through forest conservation in the PICs is to see forest conservation as primarily a climate change adaptation exercise supported by both climate change adaptation and mitigation funding channels and technical expertise.

How REDD+ is pursued by the PICs individually and collectively is a subject for regional policy dialogue and policy development given the variety of options available and the different implications arising from them.

Several or all of the REDD+ activity types available have some relevance to forest sector strategic development in the PICs.

The development of a Regional REDD+ Policy Framework would need to consider how best to align the needs and interests of the different PICs with the different REDD+ readiness options.

Of particular importance to policy framework development is the potential returns for effort spent in developing a readiness and eventually implementation phase of REDD+.

The option of a project-sale approach to REDD+ for some of the smaller PICs could enable rapid progress to be made on the ground without the need to wait for an overarching international agreement at the UNFCCC.

The community of SPC member states has a range of different vulnerabilities and opportunities with respect to the role of trees and forests in climate change protection.

The task of building a regional REDD+ policy framework for the SPC member states, therefore, presents a unique challenge to find a common foundation that has the net effect of strengthening the resilience of these nations in the face of current and future climate variability and change.

The development of a regional REDD+ policy framework would also need to consider the potential role of REDD+ type activities in relation to a range of other strategic sustainable development initiatives in participating countries including:

- Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) programmes,
- Low Carbon Development Strategies (LCDS)
- National energy security programmes
- National or energy sector carbon neutrality goals
- National climate change adaptation plans
- National biodiversity conservation programmes
- National food and water security initiatives

Participants at the first consultative workshop for the current project held in Suva in November 2010 identified a list of key REDD+ Policy elements relevant to a regional REDD+ policy framework as follows:

- Goals and Purpose
- Scope and Scale (including level of engagement)
- Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV), and Reference Emissions Levels (REL)
- Finance
- Distribution of benefits
- Safeguards
- Addressing drivers of deforestation and degradation
- Intra regional cooperation (including information sharing)
- Interface with domestic REDD+ policies and strategies
- Integration with other regional policies and initiatives
- Extra regional engagement
- Research, training and education
- Consultation
- Governance

To be successful, useful and enduring a regional REDD+ policy framework will need to generate a significant level of participant country buy-in arising from a very tangible sense of value to each participant country.

The process of regional REDD+ policy framework development, therefore, needs to function in a way that is not a burden on their existing human and time resources.

Eligibility to participate in this regional policy development process will be restricted to the following:

- National REDD+ Policy Focal Points / Heads of Forestry (voting rights)
- Non-state Key Stakeholders (e.g. SPREP, UNDP)
- Accredited Observers (accreditation process to be determined)
- SPC/GIZ personnel
- REDD+ Policy Consultant

ROADMAP

The regional REDD Policy Framework development process proposed here operates in two stages:

1. A policy dialogue study tour conducted by the REDD+ Policy Consultant, and
2. Option 1: A regional meeting attended by national focal points to negotiate a finalised text, with the finalised draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text to be presented to the Pacific Heads of Forestry (equivalent) meeting in September 2012. Option 2: Pacific Heads of Forestry (equivalent) meeting in September 2012 to negotiate finalised text.

Regional REDD Policy Framework Process			
	Task	Responsibilities	Deadline
1.	Policy Framework Scoping		
a.	Preparation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Scoping Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REDD Policy Consultant on behalf of Secretariat (SPC/GIZ) 	30/11/2011
b.	Circulation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Scoping Paper to each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat to circulate to PICs and non-state stakeholders • Secretariat to post to website 	30/01/2012
c.	Policy dialogue study tour. Output: Information to use for the development of a Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REDD Policy Consultant to undertake policy dialogue study tour (perhaps accompanied by a SPC/GIZ officer for all or some of this tour; perhaps with remote consultations for some PICs) 	10/02/2012 to 30/06/2012
d.	Preparation of 1 st Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and Background Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • REDD Policy Consultant 	30/07/2012
e.	Circulation of 1 st Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and Background Report to each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders • Secretariat to post to website 	30/06/2012
f.	Written submissions prepared by	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat to receive 	30/07/2012

	each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	submissions and forward to REDD+ Policy Consultant	
g.	Preparation of a 2 nd Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and amended Background Report (including summary of submissions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD+ Policy Consultant 	20/08/2012
h.	Circulation of 2 nd Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and Background Report to participating PICs (and non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders Secretariat to post to website 	21/08/2012

2a.	Option 1: Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Meeting		
a.	Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Meeting (three days). Output: Line-by-line negotiated Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPC/GIZ secretariat to host perhaps jointly with a nominated participant country REDD+ Policy Consultant to act as resource person and facilitator 	30/08/2012
b.	Circulation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text to each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders Secretariat to post to website 	07/09/2012
c.	Pacific Heads of Forestry (equivalent) meeting. Output: Mandated Regional REDD+ Policy Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPC/GIZ secretariat to host jointly with a nominated participant country REDD+ Policy Consultant to act as resource person/facilitator 	30/09/2012

2b.	Option 2: Remote Consultation Followed By HOFS (Equivalent) Meeting		
a.	Finalisation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework through remote consultations. Output: Finalised Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD+ Policy Consultant to conduct phone consultations with each REDD+ Policy focal point from participating PICs 	30/08/2012
b.	Circulation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text to each	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders 	07/09/2012

	participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Secretariat to post to website	
c.	Pacific Heads of Forestry (equivalent) meeting. Output: Mandated Regional REDD+ Policy Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• SPC/GIZ secretariat to host jointly with a nominated participant country• REDD+ Policy Consultant to act as resource person and facilitator	30/09/2012

Pacific REDD Policy Roadmap

POLICY GOALS & OUTCOMES

As stated in the ‘Programme Background’, the 2009 HOFs meeting in Nadi, Fiji endorsed the development of [regional] policies and institutional frameworks for the implementation of REDD+ and capacity development in this sector. The regional component covers all SPC member countries. A regional REDD+ policy framework needs to be capable of generating a common policy position for all SPC member countries. It is therefore, worth clarifying the potential value of a regional REDD+ policy framework in delivering on the project goal of “climate protection through forest conservation in the Pacific Island Countries” whereby the “conservation of forest ecosystems in the Pacific island countries is supported in order to mitigate climate change and preserve biodiversity.”

Climate protection refers to both climate change adaptation (coping with a changing climate) and climate change mitigation (reducing greenhouse gas emissions). The underlying goal of this project is to enhance the role of forests in climate protection by means of a well-designed REDD+ regional effort supported by:

Clear Goals:	A clear set of shared intentions and priorities
Resourcing:	Effective utilization of financial and technical resources
Strategy:	Efficient allocation of resources & coordinated actions
Readiness:	Enhancement of capacity to support implementation
Implementation:	Efficient implementation of management outcomes
Quality Assurance:	Monitoring, Reporting and Verification

Defining Climate Protection For Regional REDD Policy

Climate change-related threats to the Pacific Island Countries (PICs) and the potential role of forests in addressing those threats include the following:

Table 1. Potential Role Of Forests In Addressing Climate Change Threats In The PICs

Climate Change Threats	Risk to PICs	Role of Forests
A stronger El Nino climate pattern with more frequent and more intense El Nino events	This can increase in the risk of drought with consequences for water security and food security.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protection of hydrological cycle through increased water retention in terrestrial soils • Maintains local precipitation rates • Reduce sunlight penetration to soil • Moderates evapotranspiration • Favourably influences latent heat to sensible heat ratios thereby cooling the land surface • Slows and elevates winds reducing evaporation from soils • Agroforestry systems capable of utilizing deeper soil water resources whilst providing forest-related ecosystem services
Increased cyclone intensities	This can increase the risk of cyclone damage to island infrastructures from storm damage, flooding and storm surges.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduced rain impact on soils • Protection of soil mantle from landslide damage • Protection of stream banks during flooding events • Reduces surface erosion • Mangrove systems protect coastline from storm damage
Sea level rise	Threats to coastal infrastructures and low-lying agricultural systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mangrove systems act as a buffer between the sea and the land reducing effects of coastal erosion
Shifts in the distribution of annual precipitation	Precipitation distributed in more intense rainfall events increasing risk of flash flooding, runoff and soil drying	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased water storage in hinterland soils enabling more consistent stream flows to deliver irrigation water to lower lying agricultural lands throughout the growing season

Forests play an important role in climate change adaptation, which has also been identified in national climate change adaptation policy and planning in PICs. But forests also play a significant role in climate change mitigation due to they way they function as reservoirs, sinks, and sources of carbon dioxide. Furthermore, tropical forest carbon emissions contribute to approximately 17% of

the total anthropogenic GHG emissions across all sectors globally with forests being the single largest GHG emissions sector.

The synergy between climate change adaptation and climate change mitigation for the forest sector has been recognized in the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) Fourth Assessment Report (AR4) published in 2007. It is worth summarizing the IPCC AR4¹ on this adaptation/mitigation theme:

Effective climate policy aimed at reducing the risks of climate change to natural and human systems involves a portfolio of diverse adaptation and mitigation actions (very high confidence).

Even the most stringent mitigation efforts cannot avoid further impacts of climate change in the next few decades (Working Group I Fourth Assessment Report, Working Group III Fourth Assessment Report), which makes adaptation unavoidable. However, without mitigation, a magnitude of climate change is likely to be reached that makes adaptation impossible for some natural systems, while for most human systems it would involve very high social and economic costs (see Chapter 4, Section 4.6.1 and Chapter 17, Section 17.4.2). Adaptation and mitigation actions include technological, institutional and behavioural options, the introduction of economic and policy instruments to encourage the use of these options, and research and development to reduce uncertainty and to enhance the options' effectiveness and efficiency [18.3, 18.5]. Opportunities exist to integrate adaptation and mitigation into broader development strategies and policies [18.6].

Decisions on adaptation and mitigation are taken at different governance levels and inter-relationships exist within and across each of these levels (high confidence).

Mitigation is primarily driven by international agreements and ensuing national public policies, possibly complemented by unilateral and voluntary actions, whereas most adaptation involves private actions of affected entities, public arrangements of impacted communities, and national policies.

Creating synergies between adaptation and mitigation can increase the cost-effectiveness of actions and make them more attractive to stakeholders, including potential funding agencies (medium confidence).

Opportunities for synergies are greater in some sectors (e.g., agriculture and forestry, buildings and urban infrastructure) but are limited in others (e.g., coastal systems, energy, health).

People's capacities to adapt and mitigate are driven by similar sets of factors (high confidence).

These factors represent a generalised response capacity that can be mobilised for both adaptation and mitigation. Response capacity, in turn, is dependent on the societal

¹ IPCC 4th Assessment Report, Working Group 2, Chapter 18, page 747. Klein et al 2007.

development path chosen. Enhancing society's response capacity through the pursuit of sustainable development is therefore one way of promoting both adaptation and mitigation [18.6]. This would facilitate the effective implementation of both options, as well as their mainstreaming into sectoral planning and development. If climate policy and sustainable development are to be pursued in an integrated way, then it will be important not simply to evaluate specific policy options that might accomplish both goals but also to explore the determinants of response capacity that underlie those options as they relate to underlying socio- economic and technological development paths [18.6, 18.7].

The dual role of forests in both climate change adaptation and mitigation for PICs has already been recognized in REDD+ initiatives at the national scale. This point was recognized at the 2009 HOFs meeting in Nadi (Weaver 2009), the first stakeholder meeting of the current project in Suva in November 2010 (Weaver 2010, 2011), and the Fiji REDD+ Programme (Weaver et al 2009). Given the size of the forest resources in the PICs it is clear that their contribution to forest-based climate change mitigation will be very small on a global scale. But it is also clear that forests stand to play a central role in climate change adaptation strategies in the PICs (e.g. sustainable management of forests was seen as a priority in the Vanuatu National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)).

One way of viewing the task of climate protection through forest conservation in the PICs is to see forest conservation as primarily a climate change adaptation exercise supported by both climate change adaptation and mitigation funding channels and technical expertise. Clearly, any and all forest sector emission reductions and sink removals in the PICs will make a contribution to the global climate change mitigation goal – no matter how small each of these contributions is. Indeed, while some such emission reductions may be small in absolute terms, they stand to contribute to a relatively high proportion of low carbon development strategies (LCDS) and nationally appropriate climate change mitigation actions (NAMAs) in the PICs. In turn, this can help to strengthen the international climate change negotiating positions of the PICs as an intergovernmental climate policy cluster.

Accordingly, it is appropriate that PICs fully explore the forest conservation financing opportunities provided by their potential contribution to the global climate change mitigation effort. **How REDD+ is pursued by the PICs individually and collectively is a subject for regional policy dialogue and policy development given the variety of options available and the different implications arising from them.**

What Do We Mean By REDD+?

The Cancun Agreements in late 2010 defined 'REDD' as referring to:

- a. Reducing emissions from deforestation
- b. Reducing emissions from forest
- c. Conservation of forest carbon stocks
- d. Sustainable management of forests

e. Enhancement of forest carbon stocks.²

The UN-REDD Programme undertook a review of REDD+ in the Pacific Island region³, which included the following summary of REDD+ activities from the UNFCCC Cancun Agreements in 2010, and signals their relevance to PICs:

Table 2. REDD+ Activities Relevant to PICs (source: Vickers et al 2011)

	REDD+ Activity	Example	Relevance in Pacific
Reducing carbon emissions	1. Reducing deforestation	Slowing the rate of conversion of natural forest to tree-crop plantation or other land use	Highly relevant in Melanesian PICs
			Less relevant in mid-sized countries
			Not relevant in small islands and atolls
	2. Reducing forest degradation	Reducing forest areas affected by selective logging, grazing, fire or fuel wood collection	Relevant in Melanesia, but less than reducing deforestation
			Very relevant in mid-sized PICs.
			Less relevant for small islands and atolls
Increasing or maintaining carbon stocks and sequestration rates (the '+' in REDD+)	3. Conserving forest carbon stocks	Protection-oriented management of wilderness areas	Potentially relevant for remote, unpopulated forest islands in all country typologies
			As above
			As above
	4. Sustainable management of forests	Extending logging cycles from 10 years to 30 years to allow a greater amount of carbon to develop in regrowth	Relevant to all PICs with forests managed for production, whether subsistence or commercial
			As above
			As above
	5. Enhancement of forest carbon stocks	Forest regeneration and rehabilitation	Very relevant to all PICs that wish to conserve and restore mangroves
			As above
			As above

² Decision 1/CP 16, paragraph 70.

³ Vickers et al 2011.

Accordingly, REDD+ is a somewhat inclusive term that relates to many forms of forest carbon management including the following specific activity types using nomenclature adapted from the Verified Carbon Standard (VCS):

Table 3. VCS Activity Types Relevant to PICs

Activity Type	Land Use	Description	Examples
Afforestation / reforestation (AR)	Land use change from non-forest to forest	Establishing new permanent forest – including plantations, natural forest, mangroves and agroforestry systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishing new plantations destined for harvesting and replanting Establishing new plantations without any intention to harvest Re-establishing natural forests with intention to harvest timber in future Re-establishing natural forests with no intention to harvest
Reducing or avoiding deforestation (RED)	Preventing land use change from forest to non-forest	Preventing land use change from forest to non-forest land uses	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deforestation to protected forest Deforestation to sustainable forest management timber harvesting Reducing the rate of deforestation in a geographical area
Improved forest management (IFM)	Forest remaining as forest	Two main types: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Preventing a reduction in carbon stocks Enhancing carbon stocks 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Logged forest to protected forest High intensity logging to low intensity logging Low carbon forest to high carbon forest

Several or all of the REDD+ activity types available have some relevance to forest sector strategic development in the PICs. A REDD policy framework would need to arise from a policy dialogue process among PIC stakeholders that takes full account of the opportunity to enhance the implementation of the above activity types through domestic actions and technical and financial assistance from the international community.

REDD+ READINESS

The goal of the global REDD+ sector is to create the shortest and most efficient path between sources of REDD+ finance on the one hand, and REDD+ implementation outcomes on the other (emission reductions and sink removals). The Cancun Agreements defined a phased approach to REDD+ programme development as follows:

- 1. Readiness Phase:** The development of national strategies or action plans, policies and measures, and capacity building.

2. **Policies and Measures Phase:** The implementation of national policies and measures and national strategies or action plans that could involve further capacity building, technology development and transfer and results-based demonstration activities.
3. **Implementation Phase:** Results-based actions that should be fully measured, reported and verified.⁴

Capacity building in REDD+ includes the development of national measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) systems, training and education, determination of national reference emission levels (REL), and institutional strengthening.

The development of REDD+ programmes in developing countries is predominantly focused on readiness although some degree of implementation is also occurring in the form of demonstration activities and pilot projects. Some PICs have already made considerable progress with their REDD+ Readiness programmes (e.g. PNG, Fiji, Vanuatu), while others are still at the very early stages.

The UN-REDD Programme in collaboration with the World Bank Forest Carbon Partnership Facility developed a useful framework for REDD+ Readiness with six components⁵.

Table 4. UN-REDD/FCPF Readiness Components

Component 1: Management Of The REDD+ Readiness Process
Establishment of multi-stakeholder information network
Establishment of coordination mechanism
Preparation of a REDD+ readiness roadmap
Analysis of sectoral approaches to REDD+ (e.g. timber industry; agriculture sector)
Component 2: Stakeholder Engagement
Awareness raising – government agencies
Awareness raising - communities
Awareness raising – other (industry, armed forces etc.)
Preparation/application of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) procedures
Component 3: Implementation Framework
Mainstreaming REDD+ into planning (land use and socio-economic development)
Design of benefit distribution system (including establishment of REDD+ Fund)
Strengthening forest governance – community or social forestry development
Strengthening forest governance – law enforcement and reduction of corruption
Application of social and environmental safeguards
Component 4: REDD+ Strategy Setting
Analysis of drivers of deforestation and degradation
Analysis of opportunities to enhance forest carbon stocks (reforestation, rehabilitation, etc.)
Identification of options
Preparation of National REDD+ Strategy, including consultation processes

⁴ Decision 1/CP 16, paragraph 73.

⁵ Vickers et al 2011.

Component 5: Reference Scenario
Analysis of past trends in forest cover and forest quality
Estimation of biomass equations (allometric equations)
Scenario setting for future trends in forest development
Estimation of interim reference scenarios
Component 6: National Monitoring System
Strengthening the national forest inventory process
Establishment/capacity building for remote sensing
Development of participatory monitoring techniques
Data management/capacity building for reporting (link to National Communications)

A national process for REDD+ Readiness under the UN-REDD Programme implies a commitment to address all six readiness components, while a regional process does not necessarily commit any countries to all components. **The development of a Regional REDD+ Policy Framework would need to consider how best to align the needs and interests of the different PICs with the different REDD+ readiness options.** This might include full readiness in some countries (e.g. the Melanesian countries) undertaking all six readiness components, through to the selection of appropriate readiness component elements suitable to other nations with smaller scale forest resources.

Of particular importance to policy framework development is the potential returns for effort spent in developing a readiness and eventually implementation phase of REDD+. Some of the small and medium sized PICs for example, have such small-scale forest resources (e.g. up to several thousand hectares per project) that they could more efficiently engage with the REDD+ process at a project scale rather than a national scale. Such project-scale approaches to REDD+ may also enable countries with similar circumstances to proactively collaborate in the development of projects that can be replicated across national boundaries, or undertake grouped projects that include REDD+ activities in more than one nation.

A project-scale approach can access existing and potential future REDD+ implementation finance including the international voluntary carbon market, bi-lateral and multilateral grant funding channels, and project-based instruments in future domestic compliance carbon markets (e.g. the Western Climate Initiative in North America, the New Zealand Emissions Trading Scheme, and the Australia Emissions Trading Scheme). **The option of a project-sale approach to REDD+ for some of the smaller PICs could enable rapid progress to be made on the ground without the need to wait for an overarching international agreement at the UNFCCC,** but also without closing off potential future engagement with a UNFCCC financing instrument (if suitable).

Diversity of Interests

The community of SPC member states has a range of different vulnerabilities and opportunities with respect to the role of trees and forests in climate change protection. This ranges from atoll nations with very few forests and very significant vulnerability to direct climate change impacts on an entire nation, through to high island nations with a wide range of landforms and forest

resources, carbon forestry opportunities, and a wide range of climate change vulnerabilities. High priorities for some PICs may be low priorities or non-existent issues for others. But a mutually supportive regional REDD+ policy framework presents an opportunity for greater intra-regional cooperation and mutual benefit.

The task of building a regional REDD+ policy framework for the SPC member states, therefore, presents a unique challenge to find a common foundation that has the net effect of strengthening the resilience of these nations in the face of current and future climate variability and change. This challenge underscores the need for a process of effective multi-stakeholder dialogue to enable mutual understanding (between countries and stakeholders), and the development of a common purpose.

The UN-REDD Programme Regional REDD+ Readiness Support Strategy for the PICs identified five benefit types for engaging in a REDD+ readiness process:

1. Engagement in regional REDD+ policy debate
2. Practical 'no-regret' improvements to forest sector
3. Access to financial support
4. Decision-making process for REDD+
5. Preparation for national REDD+ programme

The UN-REDD Programme concluded that different benefits would accrue to different PIC groups:

Small islands and atolls will derive benefits from engagement in regional REDD+ discussions and from 'no regret' developments such as improved data on land use. In some cases they may also benefit from access to financial support for forest sector activities. Although these countries do not operate stand-alone forest departments or services, some of them, such as Kiribati, Niue and Palau, have tens of thousands of hectares of tree cover, including mangroves and vulnerable island ecosystems, which require substantial resources for their

Large countries, such as the countries of Melanesia, stand to receive the full complement of benefits defined in the hierarchy above. These benefits, such as those offered through the SPC/GIZ regional project, supplement the support that each country is already receiving for national REDD+ readiness processes.

Mid-sized countries do not currently have any clear prospect of receiving external support for national-level REDD+ readiness processes. In addition to the benefits from access to financial resources for their forest sectors, FSM, Samoa and Tonga would all gain from a thorough objective assessment of their potential under a REDD+ mechanism. Depending on the outcome of such an assessment, they may also gain from the support for a national REDD+ readiness process. Relative to their current situation, these countries stand to gain more from a regional REDD+ readiness process than their larger Melanesian neighbours.⁶

⁶ Vickers et al 2011, p 26, 27.

INTEGRATED CROSS-SECTORAL APPROACH

The development of a regional REDD+ policy framework would also need to consider the potential role of REDD+ type activities in relation to a range of other strategic sustainable development initiatives in participating countries including:

- **Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) programmes,**
- **Low Carbon Development Strategies (LCDS)**
- **National energy security programmes**
- **National or energy sector carbon neutrality goals**
- **National climate change adaptation plans**
- **National biodiversity conservation programmes**
- **National food and water security initiatives**

Some PICs are starting to look more closely at national energy strategies in relation to climate change policy goals including aspirations for more energy independence and carbon neutrality for countries and/or energy sectors. REDD+ type activities can conceivably play an integral role in some of these initiatives through bioenergy carbon capture and storage (BEECS), internal offsetting for energy sector or national carbon neutrality efforts, and forest-derived biomass feedstocks for renewable energy generation.

The development of a regional REDD+ policy framework presents an opportunity to generate strategic synergies between these different sustainable development policy agendas in participating PICs as part of the overall programme of strengthening the resilience of these nations in relation to a range of prominent global challenges.

An integrated cross-sectoral approach to REDD+ policy development may provide a more attractive context for participant country buy-in and ownership, and a greater range of intra-regional cooperation opportunities.

SPC/GIZ CONSULTATION ON A REGIONAL REDD+ POLICY

The current GIZ/SPC project entitled “Climate protection through forest conservation in the Pacific Island Countries”, held its first consultation workshop in Suva, Fiji in November 2010. That workshop focused on the four Melanesian countries of Papua New Guinea, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji and comprised:

1. An update on REDD+ initiatives in the four participating countries
2. An overview of international REDD+ policy, financing, and technical developments as of the end of 2010, and
3. A summary of outputs arising from the consultative process undertaken in workshop breakout groups and covering the three objectives of the project.

The consultative process arising from the workshop breakout groups comprised an initial scoping exercise for:

- A regional REDD+ policy framework
- Regional positioning and international negotiations
- A regional strategy to address drivers of deforestation and degradation
- A regional approach to addressing REDD+ implementation safeguards
- A regional REDD+ information platform, and
- A regional approach to REDD+ readiness

With respect to the development of a regional REDD+ policy framework, the consultative process found that:

- There is scope to identify a set of common denominators in terms of shared aspirations for REDD+ development in the region.
- There is an opportunity to gather key elements of existing domestic REDD+ policies or frameworks and incorporate these into a draft regional policy for circulation.

Country representatives identified a set of key elements to be incorporated into a regional REDD+ policy framework as follows:

Table 5. Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Initial Scoping

Consultation on a Regional REDD+ Policy Framework	
Policy Theme	Comment/Detail
Goals & Purpose	Define the common aspirations of the participating countries with respect to REDD+ outcomes sought for the coming decades.
Scope & Scale	Define the scope of activity types that would be supported by a regional policy, together with the suite of co-benefits that participating countries would like REDD+ programmes to deliver (such as biodiversity conservation, social, cultural, and community benefits, and non-carbon ecosystem services).
MRV	Define the preferred approaches to Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (MRV) and Reference Emission Levels (REL).
Financing	Define the spread of financing supported by the participating countries for REDD+ readiness and implementation. Such financing could include fund and market-based financing instruments and the terms upon which these would be supported. Such terms could include the need for specific safeguards to protect indigenous people's rights, and other aspects of concern to REDD+ participants and observers (see 'Safeguards' below).
Distribution of Benefits	Define a common set of principles for benefit distribution arising from REDD+ capacity building and implementation activities.

Addressing drivers of deforestation/degradation	Define a common set of principles for addressing drivers of forest carbon emissions and supporting drivers of forest carbon removals.
Regional cooperation	Define a common set of principles for enhancing cooperation between the participating PICs.
Interface with domestic REDD+ policies and strategies	Define the way in which a regional REDD+ policy is to interact with domestic REDD+ policies.
International engagement with stakeholders beyond the region	<p>Define a common set of principles for policy, technical, and financing engagement with stakeholders outside the region.</p> <p>Extra-regional stakeholders include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UN agencies • Multilateral development banks • Bilateral partners • International NGOs and research institutions <p>Such principles could include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Emphasis on alignment and reinforcement between different agencies • Aspirations on levels of engagement • Identification of any capacity or resource constraints to engagement • Use of technical and policy advice and support to enhance informed engagement • Information gathering and disbursement.
Integration with other regional policies	Define a set of principles relating to the integration and alignment of regional REDD+ activities with regional policies and agreements from other sectors.
Research, training and education	Define elements of a common approach to research training and education on REDD+ with particular emphasis on regional cooperation to increase efficiencies, maximise funding support, and enhance the effectiveness of research, training and education in REDD+.
Information sharing	Define principles for REDD+ information sharing between the participating PICs. This could include an aspiration for compatible data management systems, and protocols/procedures for information sharing.
Engagement with civil society	Define a set of principles for governmental engagement with civil society entities.
Consultation	Define a set of principles for multi-stakeholder participation in consultation processes for REDD+ policy, strategy, and implementation.

Governance	Define a set of common principles for integrity in REDD+ governance at a regional (if applicable) and domestic scale.
Safeguards	Define a set of common principles relating to safeguards associated with REDD+ programmes.

This provides a useful starting point for discussions on regional REDD+ policy development with SPC member states, particularly when framed in a broader cross-sectoral context in relation to the identification of high-level policy goals.

POLICY DEVELOPMENT PROCESS

To be successful, useful and enduring a regional REDD+ policy framework will need to generate a significant level of participant country buy-in arising from a very tangible sense of value to each participant country. A central feature of the process of policy framework development therefore, will need to include an opportunity to engage with participant countries in a manner that enables a full understanding of relevant priorities, goals/aspirations, and limitations. Furthermore, many developing countries now have a considerable history of a range of capacity building initiatives that have required significant human resource commitments sourced from government agencies with low capacity to add new work to the annual work programme.

The process of regional REDD+ policy framework development, therefore, needs to function in a way that is not a burden on their existing human and time resources. In particular, it is important to avoid a situation where PIC governments feel “work-shopped to death” by more and more capacity-building initiatives. Some countries have a strong interest in REDD+ (e.g. the Melanesian countries), while others (e.g. atoll nations) may rightfully see little relevance of REDD+ to their national circumstances. It would be prudent therefore, to design a policy framework development process in a way that enables SPC/GIZ to add value to existing in-country initiatives.

One way to do this would be to spend some time on a policy dialogue process gathering information from SPC member states and gaining an understanding of how a regional REDD+ policy framework could add value to each country’s existing strategic development agenda. This could take place in the form of a policy dialogue study tour (first and second quarters 2012) by the consultant to work with each participant country (and relevant regional agencies such as SPREP and other key stakeholders) in a way that enables fruitful dialogue addressing a set of clearly defined policy framework themes with a range of local personnel. This is likely to generate a higher quality outcome than attempting to engage in detail with country representatives in a regional workshop setting.

This policy dialogue tour would generate material to inform a regional REDD+ policy framework discussion paper that could be the subject for a Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Workshop that gathers together each regional REDD+ national focal point. This workshop could take place in early

August 2012, and be tasked to produce a draft policy framework text to be tabled to the HOFS equivalent workshop in September 2012.

In this way only one workshop is added to the yearly work schedule, with attendees being comprised of the national REDD+ policy focal points. This would also provide an opportunity to foster South-South dialogue and mentoring together with advisory support from the consultant and the SPC/GIZ team.

ROADMAP

The regional REDD Policy Framework development process proposed here operates in two stages. The first stage involves a policy dialogue study tour by the consultant to each participating country. The second stage has two options: Option 1 comprises a regional meeting attended by national focal points to this initiative and culminates with a policy framework draft text to be presented to the HOFS (equivalent) meeting in September 2012. Option 2 comprises a policy framework text finalisation process undertaken by the HOFS (equivalent) meeting in September 2012.

Regional REDD Policy Framework Process			
	Task	Responsibilities	Deadline
1.	Policy Framework Scoping		
a.	Preparation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Scoping Paper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD Policy Consultant on behalf of Secretariat (SPC/GIZ) 	30/11/2011
b.	Circulation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Scoping Paper to each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to circulate to PICs and non-state stakeholders Secretariat to post to website 	30/01/2012
c.	Policy dialogue study tour. Output: Information to use for the development of a Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD Policy Consultant to undertake policy dialogue study tour (perhaps accompanied by a SPC/GIZ officer for all or some of this tour; perhaps with remote consultations for some PICs) 	10/02/2012 to 30/06/2012
d.	Preparation of 1 st Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and Background Report	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD Policy Consultant 	30/07/2012
e.	Circulation of 1 st Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and Background Report to each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders Secretariat to post to website 	30/06/2012

f.	Written submissions prepared by each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to receive submissions and forward to REDD+ Policy Consultant 	30/07/2012
g.	Preparation of a 2 nd Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and amended Background Report (including summary of submissions)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD+ Policy Consultant 	20/08/2012
h.	Circulation of 2 nd Draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text and Background Report to participating PICs (and non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders Secretariat to post to website 	21/08/2012

2a.	Option 1: Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Meeting		
a.	Regional REDD+ Policy Framework Meeting (three days). Output: Line-by-line negotiated Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPC/GIZ secretariat to host perhaps jointly with a nominated participant country REDD+ Policy Consultant to act as resource person and facilitator 	30/08/2012
b.	Circulation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text to each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders Secretariat to post to website 	07/09/2012
c.	Pacific Heads of Forestry (equivalent) meeting. Output: Mandated Regional REDD+ Policy Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> SPC/GIZ secretariat to host jointly with a nominated participant country REDD+ Policy Consultant to act as resource person and facilitator 	30/09/2012

2b.	Option 2: Remote Consultation Followed By HOFS (Equivalent) Meeting		
a.	Finalisation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework through remote consultations. Output: Finalised Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> REDD+ Policy Consultant to conduct phone consultations with each REDD+ Policy focal point from participating PICs 	30/08/2012

b.	Circulation of Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text to each participating PIC (and key non-state stakeholders)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Secretariat to circulate to PICs & non-state stakeholders • Secretariat to post to website 	07/09/2012
c.	Pacific Heads of Forestry (equivalent) meeting. Output: Mandated Regional REDD+ Policy Framework	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SPC/GIZ secretariat to host jointly with a nominated participant country • REDD+ Policy Consultant to act as resource person and facilitator 	30/09/2012

The advantage of holding a pre-HOFS (equivalent) meeting attended by regional REDD+ policy focal points is that the detailed work can be completed prior to the HOFS (equivalent) meeting with the HOFS (equivalent) only needing to endorse this prior work (i.e. reducing the workload of the Heads of Forestry at the HOFS meeting).

Selecting option 2b. and skipping the pre-HOFS (equivalent) meeting would encompass a lower cost option, but would require more work to be done by the Heads of Forestry at the HOFS (equivalent) meeting (possibly an additional day for that meeting).

PROPOSED TEXT DRAFTING PROCESS

REDD+ Policy Consultant to prepare a draft Regional REDD+ Policy Framework text together with a supporting background report following the completion of the policy dialogue study tour. This draft text will be circulated to each of the official participants to the process with an invitation to read the draft text and make written submissions requesting amendments within a limited time frame. The draft text will also be posted to the SPC website as a public document.

PROPOSED MEETING PROCESS

Decision Process 1: Pre-HOFS (Equivalent) Meeting Option

Decisions to be made by consensus by official participants with voting rights (i.e. state delegates). There may need to be some form of mandating for this group to be able to make decisions although the decision arising from the meeting has no official status because it will comprise a finalised draft text for endorsement/mandating by the Pacific Heads of Forestry (equivalent) meeting the following month.

Decision Process 2: HOFS (Equivalent) Meeting

Decisions to be made by consensus by HOFS (equivalent) delegates (i.e. state delegates) at HOFS (equivalent) meeting in late September 2012.

Meeting Participants

Eligibility to attend the meeting will be restricted to the following:

- National REDD+ Policy Focal Points (possibly two delegates per PIC depending on budget)/Heads of Forestry (voting rights)
- Non-state Key Stakeholders (e.g. SPREP, UNDP)
- Accredited Observers (accreditation process to be determined)
- SPC/GIZ personnel
- REDD+ Policy Consultant

Meeting Status

Closed session attended by official participants only

Meeting Co-Chairs

SPC/GIZ to nominate Co-Chairs (one from the smaller nations and one from the larger nations).

Meeting Agenda Framework

1. Opening of session
2. Organisational matters
3. Adoption of agenda
4. Organisation of the work of the session
5. Election of officers other than Co-Chairs
6. Overview presentation by SPC/GIZ
7. Overview presentation by REDD+ Policy Consultant
8. First Draft Regional REDD Policy Framework Text Elements (potentially revised following policy dialogue study tour)
 - a. Goals and Purpose
 - b. Scope and Scale (including level of engagement)
 - c. Measurement, Reporting and Verification (MRV), and Reference Emissions Levels (REL)
 - d. Finance
 - e. Distribution of benefits
 - f. Safeguards
 - g. Addressing drivers of deforestation and degradation
 - h. Intra regional cooperation (including information sharing)

- i. Interface with domestic REDD+ policies and strategies
 - j. Integration with other regional policies and initiatives
 - k. Extra regional engagement
 - l. Research, training and education
 - m. Consultation
 - n. Governance
9. Report on the session
 10. Closure of the session

Meeting Procedure

The Co-Chairs to lead delegates through the agenda.

The REDD+ Policy Consultant will present each policy theme to the meeting by means of a background introductory presentation followed by the text element.

Each policy text element to be negotiated line by line on screen with opportunity for voting delegates to request amendments.

Each policy text element to be finalised by means of rules of order with a nomination that the meeting adopt a particular element, seconded, and an indication of those in favour and against (carried by consensus).

Where policy text elements cannot be agreed by consensus an agreement must be reached to maintain a text in square brackets with a decision deferred to a later HOFS (equivalent) meeting.

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