

# **Fiji REDD-Plus Policy**

***COPYRIGHT PAGE***

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

## DEFINITIONS & INTERPRETATIONS

Afforestation (UNFCCC Definition)	“Afforestation” is the direct human-induced conversion of land that has not been forested for a period of at least 50 years to forested land through planting, seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources; See ‘reforestation’.
Agroforestry	Agroforestry is a collective name for land use systems and practices in which woody perennials are deliberately integrated with crops and/or animals on the same land management unit. The integration can be either in a spatial mixture or in a temporal sequence. There are normally both ecological and economic interactions between woody and non-woody components in agroforestry"
Carbon	Substance composed of carbon atoms. Not to be confused with carbon dioxide (see ‘carbon dioxide’).
Carbon balance	The annual sum total of carbon emissions and sequestration within a given area (e.g. a project, sector, country, region, or globally)
Carbon budget	The balance of the exchanges of carbon between carbon pools or between one specific loops (e.g. atmosphere-biosphere) of the carbon cycle. The examination of the budget of a pool or reservoir will provide information whether it is acting as a source or a sink (IPCC, 2003)
Carbon dioxide	A naturally occurring gas, and also a by-product of burning fossil fuels and biomass, as well as land-use changes and other industrial processes. It is the principal anthropogenic greenhouse gas that affects the Earth’s radiative balance. It is the reference gas against which other greenhouse gases are measured and therefore has a Global warming Potential of 1. (3 <sup>rd</sup> Assessment Report (TAR), IPCC, 2001).
Carbon market	A market instrument used in the context of emissions trading whereby carbon units are traded.
Carbon pool	A reservoir A component or componets of the climatic system where carbon dioxide is stored. Examples for carbon pools are forest biomass, wood products, soils and the atmosphere. The units are mass. (IPCC, 2006)
Carbon sink	Any process, activity or mechanism which removes carbon dioxide

	from the atmosphere (adopted from <i>sink</i> , IPCC, 2006)
Carbon source	Any process or activity which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere (adopted from <i>source</i> , IPCC, 2006)
Carbon stock	The volume of carbon contained in a carbon reservoir or pool (e.g. in a forest or soil).
Climate change adaptation	Initiatives and measures to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems against actual or expected climate change effects. Various types of adaptation exist, e.g. anticipatory and reactive, private and public, autonomous and planned. Examples are raising river or coastal dykes, the substitution of more temperature-shock resistant plants for sensitive ones, etc. (4 AR, IPCC, 2007).
Climate Change Mitigation	Technological change and substitution that reduce resource inputs and emissions per unit of output. Although several  Social, economic and technological policies would produce an emission reduction, with respect to Climate Change, mitigation means implementing policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance sinks (4 AR, IPCC, 2007).
Deforestation	<b>Decision 11/CP.7 (UNFCCC, 2001):</b> the direct human-induced conversion of forested land to non-forested land.  <b>FAO 2001:</b> The conversion of forest to another land use or the long-term reduction of the tree canopy cover below the minimum 10 percent threshold.
Drivers	Drivers refers to processes that cause something to occur. A driver of deforestation may be demand for agricultural land. A driver of reforestation might be demand for plantation timber.
Emissions	Greenhouse gas emissions. The principle greenhouse gas in the forest sector is carbon dioxide. Carbon dioxide emissions arise from the burning and decomposition of wood and vegetation.
Enhancing Removals by Sinks	Carbon sinks sequester carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. There are many natural carbon sinks. Incentive payments from carbon markets or carbon financing is commonly only eligible for undertaking a management intervention that enhances the removal of atmospheric carbon dioxide by sinks. This is because incentive payments are not required for what nature would do anyway. Accordingly, management interventions seeking incentive payments need to demonstrate that the intervention enhances the rate of carbon sequestration by sinks. Examples of such interventions

	include a change in land use or a change in management practices.
Fiji REDD Programme	Course of action taken by government and stakeholders to take Fiji through the REDD Readiness phase and to successfully access carbon financing mechanisms
Forest (FAO)	<p>Land spanning more than 0.5 hectares with trees higher than 5 meters and a canopy cover of more than 10 percent, or trees able to reach these thresholds in situ.</p> <p>It does not include land that is predominantly under agriculture or urban use. Forest is determined both by the presence of trees and the absence of other predominant land uses. Areas under reforestation that have not yet reached but are expected to reach a canopy cover of 10 percent and a tree height of 5 meter are included, as are temporarily unstocked areas, resulting from human intervention or natural causes, which are expected to regenerate.</p> <p>Includes: Areas with bamboo and palms provided that height and canopy cover criteria are met; forest roads, fire breaks and other small open areas; forest in national parks, nature reserves and other protected areas such as those of scientific, historical, cultural or spiritual interest; windbreaks, shelterbelts and corridors of trees with an area of more than 0.5 hectares and width of more than 20 meters; plantations primarily used for forestry or protected purposes; such as rubberwood plantations and cork oak stands.</p> <p>Excludes; tree stands in agricultural production systems, for example in fruit plantations and agroforestry systems. The term also excludes trees in urban parks and gardens (FAO, 2006: 171)</p>
Greenhouse gas	Trace gas capable of re-emitting infra red solar radiation, and has the effect of insulating the atmosphere (greenhouse effect). Greenhouse gases are a natural component of the Earth's atmosphere, without which the Earth would not be suitable for life. The addition of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere can amplify the greenhouse effect and contribute to global warming.
Improved Forest Management	Activities related to improved forest management are those implemented on forest lands managed for wood products such as sawtimber, pulpwood, and fuelwood and are included in the IPCC category "forests remaining as forests". Improved forest management includes conversion from conventional logging to reduced impact logging (e.g. sustainable forest management), and conversion of logged forests to protected forests.

Monitoring ( <i>or Measurement</i> ) Reporting and Verification (MRV)	A greenhouse gas inventory at a national or sub national/project scale that enables an accurate measurement and monitoring of greenhouse gas emissions or carbon stocks and rates of change of these emissions or carbon stocks.
New Permanent Forest	Forests established on non-forested lands and maintained as permanent forest into the future. New permanent forest can include plantation forest that is intended for clear felling, provided the forest is replanted after felling and the land is maintained as forest land in perpetuity. Carbon stocks will rise and fall with the growing and harvest cycle and will remain higher (on average) than non-forest land that preceded it. Other forms of establishing new permanent forest include the re-establishment of natural forests through rehabilitation, where there is no intention to remove the forest in the future.
Non-forest	Areas which are outside Forests (as defined above) but excluding wetlands, peatlands, and indigenous palm stands
REDD	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation
REDD-Plus	REDD and afforestation/reforestation and/or any activity capable of addressing the drivers of deforestation or degradation.
Reforestation (UNFCCC Definition)	“Reforestation” is the direct human-induced conversion of non-forested land to forested land through planting, seeding and/or the human-induced promotion of natural seed sources, on land that was forested but that has been converted to non-forested land. For the first commitment period, reforestation activities will be limited to reforestation occurring on those lands that did not contain forest on 31 December 1989
Sustainable Forest Management (FAO definition)	<p>The stewardship and use of forests and forest lands in a way, and at a rate, that maintains their biodiversity, productivity, regeneration capacity, vitality and their potential to fulfil, now and in the future, relevant ecological, economic and social functions, at local, national, and global levels, and that does not cause damage to other ecosystems.</p> <p>The FAO definition is used here for consistency with the definitions used in the National Forest Inventory and the National Forest Policy</p>
UNCSICH	The UN “Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage” - adopted by the General Conference of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) meeting in Paris on 17 October 2003.

UNDRIP

The UN “Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples” - adopted by the General Assembly on Thursday September 13 2007. In April 2009, 182 States from all regions of the world reached consensus on an outcome document.



## **PREFACE**

The main goal of the forest sector under the Fiji National Strategic Development Plan is “sustainable forest management”, meaning a balanced focus on all the seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management which includes: the extent of our forest cover; biological diversity; forest health and vitality; productive functions of forests; protective functions of forests; socio economic functions of forests; and its legal, policy and institutional framework.

The Fiji REDD+ policy aligns itself with the forest sector goal on sustainable forest management and also with the vision in the Forest Policy broadly stated as: “Sustainable well being and prosperity from diversified Forests”. This is based on “The need to overcome the sector’s current focus on timber production and to widen the perspective to a balanced attention to the multiple economic, ecological and social values of Fiji’s forest resources” covering the various thematic areas of sustainable forest management. The Fiji REDD+ policy therefore poses an additional excellent opportunity for Fiji to conserve its forests and at the same time benefit from the continued environmental services from the standing forests, including other benefits through the conservation of its forest biodiversity.

This document had its formal beginnings in September 2009 during a series of broad national consultations starting from February 2008 to February 2010 after UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) COP15 (15<sup>th</sup> session of the Conference of the Parties), through a joint Fiji, SPC (Secretariat of the Pacific Community), GTZ (German Technical Cooperation) project implemented under the ACCPIR regional project (Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region). It therefore reflects the aspirations of the forest sector stakeholders on how it wishes to engage itself in the process of being ready to engage in REDD+ activities after 2012. It thus sets the framework for the development of REDD+ activities in Fiji, and its ultimate purpose is to get Fiji in to a status of REDD Readiness by the end of 2012.

This document is designed in such a way that it is broad enough to capture new developments between now and the end of 2012 at the international negotiations on the mechanism for national engagement in REDD+ which is still progressing.

I therefore recommend this document to any one wishing to engage in any form of carbon trading activity through REDD+ in Fiji.

Hon. Jocketani Cokanasiga  
Minister for Primary Industries

## **NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE POLICY**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Policy is implemented within the National Forest Policy framework (2007) and contributes to the national forestry sector goal: “Sustainable management of Fiji’s forest to maintain their natural potential and to achieve greater social, economic and environmental benefits for current and future generations”

In supporting the National Forest Policy, the Fiji REDD-Plus policy will “contribute towards the development of a national carbon trading policy” (page 26; section 5.1) and “strengthen the capacities to facilitate access to international financing mechanisms such as opportunities in the context of the UNFCCC” (page 64; policy field 6.6))

The Fiji REDD-Plus Policy is aligned to the objectives of the Fiji Sustainable Economic and Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS) and will strive to contribute to the overall sustainable development of the Fiji Islands, including poverty reduction.

The Fiji REDD-Plus Policy will support and strengthen relevant domestic legislations and policies and contribute to the implementation of international agreements, conventions and treaties that Fiji has associated itself with, signed, or ratified.

The Fiji REDD-Plus policy will support Fiji’s efforts to conserve Fiji’s natural forests and biological diversity and contribute to meeting Fiji’s international commitments under the CBD (United Nations Convention on Biodiversity) and UNCCD (United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification).

### **1. PREAMBLE**

The Government of Fiji recognises the threat of climate change on the well-being of the people, economy, and ecosystems of Fiji, through a likely increase in surface temperature, droughts, flooding, increased storm intensities, and sea level rise. In particular the Government of Fiji recognises:

- a) The role of human induced greenhouse gas emissions as a driver of climate change.
- b) Reducing human induced emissions can reduce the impact of climate change.
- c) Deforestation and degradation of forests contributes to approximately 20% of global human induced carbon dioxide emissions.
- d) Reducing deforestation and degradation of forests and growing new permanent forests will help to mitigate the future impacts of climate change.

- e) Effective strategies to reduce forest-based greenhouse gas emissions is crucial to achieving the overall UNFCCC goal of avoiding dangerous human induced interference in the climate system.
- f) A goal of avoiding dangerous human induced interference of the climate system requires stabilizing atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations to no more than 350 parts per million in the long term.
- g) A significant proportion of Fiji's greenhouse gas emissions (as with many other forested developing countries) are likely to arise from forest sector emissions.
- h) Fiji's forests play an important role in providing valuable ecosystem services associated with maintaining and enhancing human well being, with particular reference to the maintenance of forested landscapes that are capable of reducing some of the likely impacts of climate change.
- i) The landowners of the vast majority of Fiji's forests are the indigenous people of Fiji and therefore the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples shall be guaranteed, as defined under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) and, Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNCSICH), and other international instruments on rights of Indigenous People.
- j) International policy developments in forest sector climate change mitigation and REDD-Plus are providing a framework for support for reducing emissions from forest CO<sub>2</sub> sources, avoiding emissions from forest CO<sub>2</sub> sources, and enhancing removals by forest CO<sub>2</sub> sinks.
- k) Fiji has an opportunity to develop a programme to take advantage of financial instruments designed to reduce emissions from forest CO<sub>2</sub> sources, avoiding emissions from forest CO<sub>2</sub> sources, and enhancing removals by forest CO<sub>2</sub> sinks in Fiji.
- l) Sectors other than Forestry may benefit from actions that reduce emissions from the forest CO<sub>2</sub> sources, avoid emissions from forest CO<sub>2</sub> sources, and enhance removals by forest CO<sub>2</sub> sinks, including:
  - i. Biodiversity conservation
  - ii. Ecosystem services
  - iii. Livelihoods
  - iv. Adaptation capacities
  - v. Food security

## **2. POLICY OBJECTIVES**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Policy has the overall objective of enhancing the national forest-based carbon balance by:

- i. Supporting and strengthening initiatives that address the drivers of forest-based carbon emissions, and
- ii. Encouraging the drivers of forest-based carbon sinks

## **3. SAFEGUARDS**

The following will be ensured for all REDD-Plus initiatives and projects in Fiji:

- i. The knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples (as stated in the UNDRIP and UNCSICH and other international instruments) will be protected and respected.
- ii. Full and effective participation of indigenous peoples and other relevant stakeholders.
- iii. Equitable distribution of benefits to right owners.
- iv. Gender issues will be considered in all phases of decision-making and implementation.
- v. Will not result in the conversion of natural forests but will incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits.
- vi. That these complement and are consistent with the objectives of the Fiji Sustainable Economic and Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS) and relevant international conventions and agreements.

## **4. THE FIJI REDD-PLUS PROGRAMME**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Policy will be implemented through a Fiji REDD-Plus Programme which will involve the participation of all relevant stakeholders.

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme aims to have Fiji achieve national REDD-Readiness by 2012 and provide a framework to facilitate access to all available financing instruments for the REDD sector.

The REDD-Plus Programme will maximise benefits arising from carbon and climate-related financial instruments to:

- a) Assist Fiji retain and enhance the carbon in its forested landscapes.
- b) Assist Fiji achieve core forest sector goals as defined in the Fiji Forest Policy including:
  - i. A transition to sustainable forest management.
  - ii. Reducing the loss of forest from the expansion of agricultural lands and other land use change.
  - iii. Protecting indigenous forest areas of high cultural, biological diversity, and ecosystem services value.
  - iv. Increasing timber production from the plantation sector through afforestation/reforestation of non-forest lands (excludes the conversion of wetlands/peatlands; indigenous palms).
  - v. Increasing agroforestry activities on non-forest lands (excludes the conversion of wetlands/peatlands; indigenous palms).
  - vi. Assist Fiji achieve its strategic goals in land based development and environmental management.

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will regularly review policy and technical issues in order to maintain alignment with ongoing international policy and technical developments

## **5. SCALE OF IMPLEMENTATION**

A “hybrid” scale approach enabling both national and sub-national/project-scale activities where appropriate will be adopted. There will be both national and project level engagement with REDD-Plus financing instruments to maximise opportunities and minimise costs.

Project-based or sub-national implementation and monitoring will be linked to the national scale forest carbon monitoring and reporting (MRV) system and national reference level to facilitate higher level quality assurance for any project-scale activities.

## **6. SCOPE OF REDD-PLUS ACTIVITIES**

The following activities are eligible in a national/sub-national Fiji REDD initiative:

- (a) Reducing emissions from deforestation via forest protection and improved forest management.
- (b) Reducing emissions from degradation via forest protection and improved forest management.
- (c) Afforestation/reforestation.
- (d) Forest/energy sector linkages (biomass electricity generation).
- (e) Forest/agriculture linkages (biomass residue/biochar).
- (f) Combination linking A/R with REDD.

## **7. FINANCING**

REDD-Plus initiatives will be open to all available financing instruments for the REDD sector from both market-based and fund-based sources.

## **8. GOVERNANCE**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will develop a transparent multi-stakeholder governance structure capable of:

- a) Ensuring the participation and consultation of all relevant stakeholders in REDD-Plus activities.
- b) Delivering efficient and effective decisions.
- c) Enhancing donor and buyer confidence.
- d) Using existing structures and where possible, modify them to suit the implementation of the Fiji REDD-plus Programme.
- e) Standing up to independent, external, expert third party review.

## **9. MEASUREMENT, REPORTING AND VERIFICATION (MRV)**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will build a forest carbon measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) capability in line with the latest international good practice guidelines and guidance arising from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change under the recognition that:

- a) Eligibility for participation in international carbon and climate related financial instruments is dependent on establishing and maintaining a MRV system and capability for the forest sector at the national and sub-national scale.
- b) Such an MRV capability will provide benefits to other aspects of forest sector monitoring.

## **10. PILOT PROJECTS**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will benefit from 'learning-by-doing' and will therefore include pilot projects designed to assist in building capability in the design and implementation of REDD-Plus activities.

## **11. ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will develop effective engagement with regards to international policy and technical issues at the UNFCCC and other relevant international/regional forums, agencies, and countries.

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will develop an effective communication and awareness strategy capable of ensuring an efficient, effective, and transparent flow of information between:

- a) national level, local community, and other relevant stakeholders.
- b) and within government departments and statutory bodies.
- c) national level and international bodies and fora to enable more effective international policy and technical engagement.

## **12. TRAINING**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will develop an effective educational and training strategy capable of building policy and technical capacity.

## **13. RESEARCH**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will undertake research, where necessary and with the approval of relevant authorities, to enable the achievement of its goals.

#### **14. AGREED ACTIVITIES FOR REDD READINESS**

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will pursue the goal of 'REDD Readiness' by completing by no later than the end of 2012

- a) The REDD-Plus Strategic Action Plan and begin implementation of that Strategic Action Plan.
- b) At least one carbon &/or climate related finance contract arising from a pilot project.
- c) The assessment of historical changes in forest carbon at the national level for the purpose of establishing the national reference level.
- d) The design and initial implementation of a national forest carbon monitoring programme.
- e) The establishment of institutional and legal infrastructures associated with REDD-Plus.
- f) An independent, external, expert third party review of the Fiji REDD-Plus programme.