Fiji REDD-Plus Policy

Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in Fiji

February 2011

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Compiled by the Fiji Forestry Department

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

CBD	-	Convention on Biological Diversity
CO_2	-	Carbon dioxide
FAO	-	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GTZ	-	German Technical Cooperation
GIZ	-	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit; as a federally owned enterprise, GIZ supports the German Government in achieving its objectives in the field of international cooperation for sustainable development
IPCC	-	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
MRV	-	Measuring, reporting and verification
REDD	-	Reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation
SPC	-	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
UNCCD	-	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCSICH	-	United Nations Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage
UNDRIP	-	United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
UNFCCC	-	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

DEFINITIONS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Afforestation	'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.' Decision 11/CP.7[1] (UNFCCC, 2002) (See also 'reforestation'.)
Agroforestry	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	A substance composed of carbon atoms, not to be confused with carbon dioxide. (See also '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 loop (e.g. atmosphere-biosphere) of the carbon cycle. The examination of the budget of a pool or reservoir will provide information about 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' (Fourth Assessment Report, IPCC, 2007c).
Carbon market	A market instrument used in the context of emissions trading whereby carbon units are traded.
Carbon pool	'Carbon pools are: above-ground biomass, belowground biomass, litter, dead wood and soil organic carbon' (IPCC, 2007b)
Carbon sink	Any process, activity or mechanism which removes carbon dioxide from the atmosphere. (Adapted from the entry for sink in the glossary of terms IPCC Fourth Assessment report: Climate Change 2007. Synthesis Report. Annex II Glossary. IPCC, 2007c)
Carbon source	Any process or activity which releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere (Adapted from the entry for source in the glossary of terms IPCC Fourth Assessment report: Climate Change 2007. Synthesis Report. Annex II Glossary. IPCC, 2007c)
Carbon stock	'The quantity of carbon in a 'pool', meaning a reservoir or system that has the capacity to accumulate or release carbon. Examples of carbon pools are: living biomass (including above- and below-ground biomass); dead organic matter (including dead wood and litter); soils (soil organic matter). The units are mass.' (FAO 2006)
Climate change adaptation	'Adjustment in natural or human systems in response to actual or expected climatic stimuli or their effects, which moderates harm or exploits beneficial opportunities. Various types of adaptation can be distinguished, including anticipatory, autonomous and planned adaptation: […]' (from the entry for adaptation in the IPCC Fourth Assessment report: Climate Change 2007. Impacts, Adaptation and Vulnerability. Appendix I Glossary. IPPC, 2007a)

[1] The designation 11/CP.7 means the 11th decision adopted by the COP to the UNFCCC at its 7th session.

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'(from the entry for mitigation in the IPCC Fourth Assessment report: Climate Change 2007. Mitigation. Annex I Glossary, IPPC, 2007b)
Deforestation	The direct human-induced conversion of forested land to non-forested land. Decision 11/CP.7 (UNFCCC, 2002) The conversion of forest to another land use or the long-term reduction of the tree canopy cover below the minimum ten per cent threshold. (FAO 2004)
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 principal 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 are commonly only awarded 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[2]	'Land spanning more than 0.5 hectares with trees higher than five metres and a canopy cover of more than 10 per cent, or trees able to reach these thresholds in situ. 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 per cent and a tree height of five metres are included, as are temporarily unstocked areas, resulting from human intervention or natural causes, which are expected to regenerate. 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 metres; plantations primarily used for forestry or protected purposes [....] 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).

[2] The FAO definition is used here for consistency with the definitions used in Fiji's National Forest Inventory and its National Forest Policy.

Greenhouse gases	'Greenhouse gases are those gaseous constituents of the atmosphere, both natural and anthropogenic, that absorb and emit radiation at specific wavelengths within the spectrum of infrared radiation emitted by the Earth's surface, the atmosphere and clouds. This property causes the greenhouse effect. Water vapour (H_2O), carbon dioxide (CO_2), nitrous oxide (N_2O), methane (CH_4) and ozone (O_3) are the primary greenhouse gases in the earth's atmosphere. Moreover, there are a number of entirely human-made greenhouse gases in the atmosphere, such as the halocarbons and other chlorine and bromine-containing substances, dealt with under the Montreal Protocol. Besides carbon dioxide, nitrous oxide and methane, the Kyoto Protocol deals with the greenhouse gases sulphur hexafluoride, hydrofluorocarbons, and perfluorocarbons.' (IPCC 2007b)
Hybrid approach	A combination of both a national and sub-national or project approach. It allows countries to start REDD efforts through subnational activities and gradually move to a national approach, or for the coexistence of the two approaches in a system where REDD credits are generated by projects and governments, thus maximising the potential of both approaches (Angelsen et. al. 2008)
Improved forest management	Activities related to improved forest management are those done on forest lands that are managed for wood products such as sawn timber, pulpwood and fuel wood, 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 (or measurement) reporting and verification (MRV)	A greenhouse gas inventory on 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 in the 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 that are outside forests (as defined above) but excluding wetlands, peatlands, and indigenous palm stands.
REDD-Plus	'"REDD-Plus" goes beyond deforestation and forest degradation, and includes the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.' (UN 2009)
Reforestation	'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[3], reforestation activities will be limited to reforestation occurring on those lands that did not contain forest on 31 December 1989'. Decision 11/CP.7 (UNFCCC, 2002).
Sustainable forest management	A dynamic and evolving concept intended to maintain and enhance the economic, social and environmental value of all types of forests, for the benefit of present and future generations (UN General Assembly, 2008)

[3] Parties to the Kyoto Protocol agreed on emission targets for the first commitment period, which stretches from 1 January 2008 to 31 December 2012.

FOREWORD

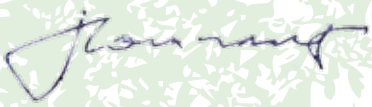
The main goal of the forestry sector under the Fiji National Strategic Development Plan 2007–2011 is sustainable forest management. This involves a balanced focus on all seven thematic elements of sustainable forest management: the extent of forest cover; biological diversity; forest health and vitality; productive functions of forests; protective functions of forests; socio-economic functions of forests; and a legal policy and institutional framework.

The Fiji REDD-Plus policy aligns itself with the Forest Sector goal of sustainable forest management and also with the vision in the National Forest Policy 2007, broadly stated as: 'Sustainable well-being and prosperity from diversified forests', 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-Plus policy, therefore, offers 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 benefits through the conservation of its forest biodiversity.

This policy document had its formal beginning in September 2009 during a series of broad national consultations held between February 2008 and February 2010 after UNFCCC's (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change) COP15 (15th Conference of the Parties), through a joint Fiji, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC), Deutsche Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) project implemented under the CCCPIR regional programme (Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region). This document, therefore, reflects the aspirations of forest sector stakeholders on how they wish to engage themselves in the process of being ready to engage in REDD-Plus activities. This policy document thus sets the framework for the development of REDD-Plus activities in Fiji, and its ultimate purpose is to get Fiji to a state of REDD-readiness by the end of 2012.

This document is designed to be broad enough to capture international negotiation developments from now to the end of 2012 especially regarding the mechanism for national engagement in REDD-Plus, which is still under discussion.

I therefore recommend this document to people wishing to engage in any form of REDD-Plus activity in Fiji.



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Hon. Joketani Cokanasiga
Minister for Primary Industries

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CP(2010): 22nd Meeting
Date: 7/12/10

CABINET DECISION

Extract from Minutes of Meeting Held on Tuesday, 7th December, 2010 at 9.00am

434. Fiji's Draft Policy on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation, Forest Conservation, Sustainable Management of Forests Carbon Stocks (REDD+) - 9271 — CP(10)342

Cabinet:

(i) endorsed Fiji's Draft Policy on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Degradation (REDD+) and its implications; and

(ii) endorsed its implementation in January, 2011.

[V. Namosimalua (Mrs)]
Acting Secretary to the Cabinet

1 PREAMBLE

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

In particular the Government of Fiji recognises:

- the role of human-induced greenhouse gas emissions as a driver of climate change;
- that reducing human-induced emissions can reduce the impact of climate change;
- that deforestation and degradation of forests contribute to approximately 20% of global human-induced carbon dioxide emissions;
- that reducing deforestation and degradation of forests and growing new permanent forests will help to mitigate the future impacts of climate change;
- that effective strategies to reduce forest-based greenhouse gas emissions are crucial to achieving the overall UNFCCC goal of avoiding dangerous human-induced interference in the climate system;
- that a goal of avoiding dangerous human-induced interference of the climate system requires stabilising atmospheric carbon dioxide concentrations to no more than 350 parts per million in the long term;
- that a significant proportion of Fiji's greenhouse gas emissions (as in many other forested developing countries) is likely to arise from forest sector emissions;

- that 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;
- that the vast majority of Fiji's forests are owned by Fiji's indigenous people and therefore the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples shall be guaranteed, as defined under the Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP), the Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (UNCSICH), and other international instruments on rights of indigenous people;
- that international policy developments in forest sector climate change mitigation and REDD-Plus are providing a framework for support for reducing emissions from forest CO^2 sources, avoiding emissions from forest CO^2 sources, and enhancing removals by forest CO^2 sinks;
- that Fiji has an opportunity to develop a programme to take advantage of financial instruments designed to reduce emissions from forest CO^2 sources, avoiding emissions from forest CO^2 sources, and enhancing removals by forest CO^2 sinks in Fiji;
- that sectors other than forestry may benefit from actions that reduce emissions from the forest CO^2 sources, avoid emissions from forest CO^2 sources, and enhance removals by forest CO^2 sinks, including:
    i. biodiversity conservation
    ii. ecosystem services
    iii. livelihoods
    iv. adaptation capacities
    v. food security.

The Fiji REDD-Plus policy will support:

- global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;
- the socio-economic development of forest resource owners and local communities;
- relevant domestic legislation and policies and contribute to the implementation of international agreements, conventions and treaties that Fiji has associated itself with, signed or ratified;
- Fiji's efforts to conserve Fiji's natural forests and the valuable ecosystem services it provides and biological diversity and contribute to meeting Fiji's international commitments under the CBD (the Convention on Biological Diversity) and UNCCD (United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification).

The accompanying document to this policy is the Fiji REDD Policy Scoping Report (2009). The report details the efforts Fiji will need to take to establish and implement REDD+ in the country. This includes comprehensive background information on the capacity needs required for Fiji to successfully engage in a REDD+ mechanism for the country.

2 NATIONAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE POLICY

The Fiji REDD-Plus Policy is implemented within the framework of the National Forest Policy 2007 and contributes to the national Forest Sector goal: 'Sustainable management of Fiji's forests 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' (Section 5.1, National Forest Policy) and 'strengthen the capacities to facilitate access to international financing mechanisms such as opportunities in the context of the UNFCCC' (Policy field 6.6, National Forest Policy).

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.

3 POLICY IMPLEMENTATION: 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 coming from various sectors and agencies.

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 in order to:

a) assist Fiji in retaining and enhancing the carbon in its forested landscapes;

b) assist Fiji in achieving core forest sector goals as defined in the Fiji Forest Policy, including:

- a transition to sustainable forest management;
- reducing the loss of forest from the expansion of agricultural lands and other land use change;
- protecting indigenous forest areas of high cultural, biological diversity and ecosystem services value;
- increasing timber production from the plantation sector through afforestation/reforestation of non-forest lands (excluding wetlands/peatlands and indigenous palms);
- increasing agroforestry activities on non-forest lands (excluding wetlands/peatlands and indigenous palms);
- assist Fiji in achieving 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.

4 POLICY OBJECTIVES

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

- supporting and strengthening initiatives that address the drivers of forest-based carbon emission sand;
- encouraging the drivers of forest-based carbon sinks.

5 FIJI REDD-PLUS POLICY STATEMENTS

5.1 SAFEGUARDS

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

i. protection of and respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples (as stated in UNDRIP and UNCSICH and other international instruments);

ii. full and effective participation of indigenous people and other relevant stakeholders;

iii. equitable distribution of benefits to rights owners;

iv. consideration of gender issues in all phases of decision-making and implementation;

v. no conversion of natural forests but will reward the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and will enhance other social and environmental benefits;

vi. that these initiatives and projects complement and are consistent with the objectives of the Fiji Sustainable Economic and Empowerment Development Strategy (SEEDS) and relevant international conventions and agreements.

5.2 SCALE OF IMPLEMENTATION

A 'hybrid' scale approach, enabling both national and sub-national or 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 measuring, reporting, and verification (MRV) system and the national reference level to facilitate higher level quality assurance for any project-scale activities.

5.3 SCOPE OF REDD-PLUS ACTIVITIES

The following activities are eligible for inclusion in a national/sub-national/Project scale 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 afforestation/reforestation with REDD.

5.4 FINANCING OF REDD-PLUS

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

5.5 GOVERNANCE

Through the Fiji REDD-plus programme, a transparent multi-stakeholder governance structure will be developed. The governance structure will be 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, modifying them to suit the implementation of the Fiji REDD-Plus Programme;

e) standing up to an independent, external, expert third party review.

5.6 MEASURING, REPORTING AND VERIFICATION

The Fiji REDD-Plus Programme will establish a forest carbon measuring, 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 an 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.

5.7 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.

5.8 ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

Effective engagement with regard to international policy and technical issues at the UNFCCC and other relevant international/ regional forums, agencies, and countries will be strengthened.

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

a) among people at the national level (government, industry, non-governmental organisations), local communities, landowners and other stakeholders;

b) between and within government departments and statutory bodies;

c) among national and international bodies and forums to enable more effective international policy and technical engagement.

5.9 TRAINING

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

5.10 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.

6 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 drawing up of the REDD-Plus Strategic Action Plan;

b) at least one carbon and/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.

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