



Fisheries and Forest Headquarters

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Ref: F.97

Date: 31/7/12

Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the FCPF Secretariat

Dear Mr. Benoit Bosquet

Re : Request for Observer Status: Republic of Fiji

The Republic of Fiji hereby kindly requests Observer Status under the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility for the further development of our REDD+ activities.

Fiji has made substantial progress in the readiness process; we believe that our participation in the multilateral platform of the FCPF will be of benefit for all participants. We attach to this letter a brief summary of what we had done so far and what we had planned for the immediate future.

We sincerely appreciate your response and advise in this regard.

Yours faithfully

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Hon. Jokatani Cokanasiga
Minister for Primary Industries
Ministry of Primary Industries
Robinson Complex, Grantham Road
Private Mail Bag, Raiwaqa
FIJI

REDD+ in the Republic of Fiji

Introduction

Fiji has a forest cover of almost 1.1 million hectares, covering about fifty-six percent of the total land mass. Forest clearance, largely attributed to agriculture, can be observed on parts of Fiji and the country has large areas of degraded and unutilised lands. Fiji recognises a REDD+ mechanism as an opportunity to contribute towards global efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, strengthen the socio-economic status of its forest resource owners and protect its forest ecosystems. Work in this area officially began in January 2009.

The Government of Fiji firmly supports the Fiji national REDD+ Programme. In 2012, a funding allocation of FJD300,000 was provided through the government coffers. Fiji has put in place a national REDD+ Policy and has firmed up institutional and governance frameworks for REDD. REDD-plus development in Fiji follows a wide participatory consultation process and capacity development on the subject. Collaboration and cooperation is greatly facilitated by the presence of existing policy frameworks protecting indigenous land and cultural rights, and a genuine desire to protect forest resources and improve the livelihoods of resource owners. The Fiji Forestry Department is the lead agency for national REDD+ activities in the country.

Policy development

The Fiji National [REDD-plus Policy](#) was endorsed by the Fiji cabinet on 07 December 2010 and is a first for the Pacific region. Also developed is a [Fiji REDD+ scoping report](#) detailing the country's capacity and requirements to implement REDD-plus. The REDD+ policy development process took place over a period of one year and involved the active participation of governmental agencies, non-governmental organisations, private sector, resource owners and development partners. In July this year a translated version of the REDD+ Policy (into the Fiji indigenous language) was finalised through a series of stakeholder consultation workshops.

The Fiji national REDD+ steering committee was formed and officially endorsed in June 2011. The main role of the Fiji National REDD+ Steering Committee is to "coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Fiji REDD+ programme" and to ensure a transparent and effective multi-stakeholder governance process is followed. The steering committee comprises of key stakeholders from the government and non-governmental agencies, resource owner representatives, the private sector, regional organisations and supporting development partners. Support from the steering committee agencies have been very strong with resources being provided from the members for REDD+ initiatives.

Currently under consultation is the Fiji national REDD-plus Strategy. A first draft of the strategy was developed by stakeholders in 2011 and stakeholder consultations are ongoing, with the strategy anticipated for finalisation before the end of 2012.

Establishing a MRV system

Fiji recently completed a forest cover change assessment for the county and results are currently being reviewed. A national forest carbon stock calculation has also been carried out under the guidance of international experts. Both exercises were carried out with the Fiji Forestry Department officers trained on the job. This ensures that local capacity is being developed by international experts. A species-specific allometric modeling exercise is also being carried (under the support of FORNet and JICA). Also currently underway is the determination of Fiji's reference level.

Pilot Site

Fiji is currently undertaking preliminary assessments on the first REDD+ Pilot site. Consultations with resource owners have been taking place since 2011. A detailed biodiversity survey, a participatory socio-economic analysis and forest inventory and carbon pool measurements are currently underway.

Support

We acknowledge the support of GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit) in the development of REDD+ in Fiji. However, much work needs to be done in this readiness phase and resources and technical expertise are still needed. Fiji hopes that there will be scope for assistance through the FCPF. Given the amount and quality of information existing, Fiji is confident that a RPP can be put together for submission.