

THE FIJI REDD+ NATIONAL STEERING COMMITTEE

TERMS OF REFERENCE

1. INTRODUCTION

Background

Scientists estimate that deforestation and forest degradation account for around 20 percent of the annual greenhouse gas emissions that fuel climate change. REDD (reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation) is an approach aimed at reducing the 20 percent of emissions related to forests through financial incentives. Forests are generally regarded as a source for financial and economical gain (agriculture, logging, land development etc.) and this often takes precedence over forest conservation or sustainable management. The REDD-plus concept links financial incentives to forest conservation, sustainable management, and enhancing and increasing carbon stocks for credits for carbon emissions avoided and/or carbon sequestered.

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. The country also has large areas of degraded and unutilised lands which has potential for reforestation and afforestation to increase carbon stock.

Fiji recognises REDD-plus 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.

The Fiji REDD-plus approach

Fiji's REDD+ initiative began in 2009 with support from the SPC¹/GIZ² Regional Programme - Coping with Climate Change in the Pacific Island Region. Fiji is taking a phased approach in its REDD-plus programme. The first phase aims to put in place policy and institutional frameworks for the implementation of REDD-plus and addressing capacity needs for the establishment of a national MRV (measuring, reporting and verification) system. The second phase involves the development of a national REDD-plus strategy, the establishment of pilot sites and strengthening MRV capacities (towards Tier 2 and 3³ level reporting). The third phase will be the implementation of the strategy, participation in a REDD carbon financing mechanism, and the establishment of an operational MRV and IPCC reporting system.

Policy context

In December 2010 the Fiji REDD-Plus policy was endorsed by cabinet after a comprehensive consultation process involving relevant sectors and agencies. The end of 2010 also saw the drafting of a national REDD+ Strategy. The strategy document will provide directions on the implementation of the policy and the Fiji REDD+ programme. The Fiji REDD+ Programme is the course of action taken by

¹ Secretariat of the Pacific Community

² Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH

³ Tier 1 IPCC methods and IPCC default values (no data collection needed); Tier 2 IPCC methods and country specific data for key factors (including more detailed country specific strata); Tier 3 Country specific methods or models, national inventory of key carbon stocks, repeated measurements of permanent plots to directly measure changes in forest biomass

government and stakeholders to take Fiji through the REDD-readiness phase and to successfully access carbon financing mechanisms

The Fiji REDD-Plus Policy statement 5.5 calls for a transparent multi-stakeholder governance structure. The governance structure will be capable of:

- ensuring the participation and consultation of all relevant stakeholders in REDD-Plus activities;
- delivering efficient and effective decisions;
- enhancing donor and buyer confidence;
- using existing structures and, where possible, modifying them to suit the implementation of the Fiji REDD-Plus Programme;
- standing up to an independent, external, expert third party review.

Policy statement 5.8 emphasises effective engagement and communication. It identifies the need to put in place a communication and awareness strategy capable of ensuring an efficient, effective and transparent flow of information among all stakeholders, at all levels.

Stakeholder consultations identified the need for a national REDD+ steering committee to ensure good and transparent governance and facilitate effective and efficient communication. The establishment of a REDD+ steering committee was recognised as an essential mechanism for strengthening an interdisciplinary and integrated approach for the implementation of the Fiji REDD+ programme.

2. FUNCTION OF THE FIJI NATIONAL REDD+ STEERING COMMITTEE

The overarching function of the Fiji National REDD+ Steering Committee is to **“coordinate and facilitate the implementation of the Fiji REDD+ programme”**.

In fulfilling its function, the national REDD+ steering committee will ensure that a transparent and effective multi-stakeholder governance process is followed and that the safeguards identified under policy statement 5.1 (Fiji REDD-Plus Policy, 2011) are considered.

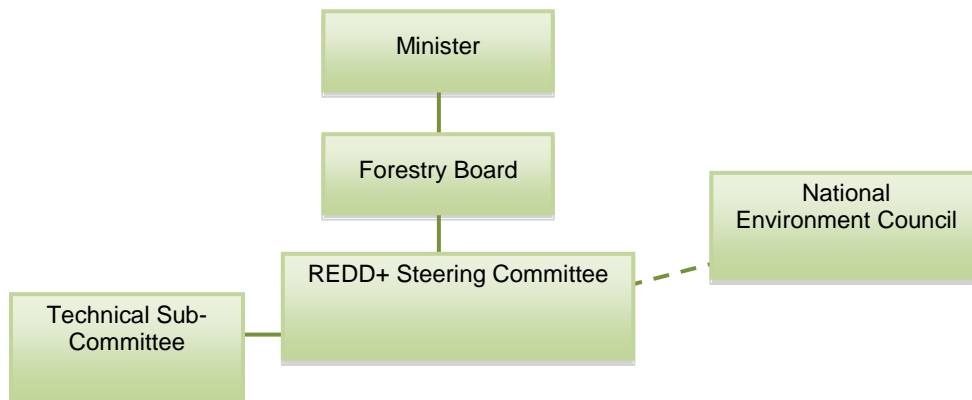
The National REDD+ Steering Committee will perform the following specific functions:

- a. Monitor and evaluate the implementation of the Fiji REDD+ Strategy and associated action plans
- b. Facilitate inter-sectoral and inter-agency support in the implementation of the Fiji REDD+ Strategy and action plans
- c. Ensure alignment with international developments in forest governance integrity, and international REDD technical and policy developments
- d. Serve as an advisory technical body on both national and project level REDD+ issues, including advising local community groups
- e. Assess REDD+ project proposals and make recommendations to the Conservator of Forests and the Director of Environment on the feasibility of these proposals
- f. Promote and support awareness-raising on REDD+ issues
- g. Regularly report to the Forestry board

- h. Regularly inform the National Climate Change Country Team and the National Environment Council on REDD+ activities and progress
- i. Provide advice and support to Fiji delegates participating at international negotiations relating to REDD+. Such international meetings include those on UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change), CBD (Convention on Biological Diversity), UNFF (United Nations Forum on Forests), UNCCD (United Nations Convention on Combating Desertification) and UNCSICH (United Nations Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage).
- j. Support the establishment of an appointed executive body or private entity to manage forest carbon financing schemes.
 - i. This executive body will provide detailed carbon management advice to the Forestry Department, Fiji Pine and Fiji Hardwood Corporation, and landowners including helping to design and manage their carbon programmes.
 - ii. The executive body or private entity will be an aggregate of carbon management and carbon finance expertise and will be financed by levies on participants.
 - iii. The purpose of this body is to maximise carbon benefits to landowners.
- k. Facilitate the development and implementation of REDD+ guidelines (refer to Annex 1)

3. STRUCTURE OF REDD+ STEERING COMMITTEE

- a. The Fiji REDD+ Steering Committee is established by and reports to the Forestry Board. The REDD+ Steering Committee will also provide progress reports to the National Environment Council.
- b. The REDD+ Steering Committee will establish Technical Sub-Committees when required for undertaking certain tasks associated with the implementation of the Fiji REDD+ Programme.



4. STEERING COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

The REDD+ Steering Committee is a multi-stakeholder committee comprising of key stakeholders. The key stakeholders are:

1. The Forestry Department
2. The Department of Environment
3. The Department of Agriculture
4. Native Land Trust Board
5. Private sector (industry)
6. Fiji Pine Limited
7. Resource owner representative
8. Ministry of Regional Development
9. Ministry of Indigenous Affairs (I-Taukei Affairs)
10. Conservation International
11. Live and Learn
12. Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)
13. University of the South Pacific (USP)
14. German Agency for International Cooperation (GIZ)

5. ROLES REQUIRED

- a. The Steering Committee will consist of a minimum of a chair, deputy chair, secretary and two ordinary members⁴.
- b. The chair sets the agenda, convenes meetings, and ensures that they are properly conducted.
- c. The deputy chair takes the role of the chair when the chair is not present.
- d. The secretary plans, coordinates and monitors all Steering Committee-related activities including distributing the agenda, attending the meetings, preparing minutes and reporting to the REDD+ Steering Committee.

6. SIZE AND COMPOSITION THE STEERING COMMITTEE

The Steering Committee will consist of no fewer than 5 and no more than 15 individuals.

7. RULES OF PROCEDURE

The steering committee will elect its chair, deputy chair, and secretary. If neither the chair nor the deputy chair is present at a steering committee meeting the members present will elect one of their members to act as chair at that meeting.

⁴ In the remainder of this document the word "members" includes all individuals participating in the Steering Committee unless there is an explicit distinction between the officials (chair, vice-chair and secretary) and the ordinary members.

8. METHODS OF WORK

- a. The chair is responsible for convening meetings.
- b. Meetings will take place monthly until such a time when the Committee is dissolved.
- c. The chair may convene meetings at other times where it is the consensus opinion of the Steering Committee that it is necessary to do so.
- d. The secretary is responsible for ensuring that the agenda of the meeting is made available to the members in good time before the meeting.
- e. Recommendations shall be decided by consensus where possible.
- f. Consensus means that after deliberation all members support a particular point of view. Where consensus is not achieved, recommendations shall be decided by simple majority vote of members voting on the question. In the case of a tied vote, the person acting as chair shall be entitled to a second or casting vote.
- g. A quorum is constituted by no less than 6 members of the Steering Committee
- h. The Steering Committee may decide (by consensus or majority vote) to ask parties who are not members of the Steering Committee to participate in a meeting so that they can provide relevant information, material or knowledge to the Steering Committee.
- i. The Steering Committee may establish sub-committees consisting of three or more of its members and refer to them any matter in the Steering Committee's mandate. Additional organisations can also be invited to contribute to or form a technical subcommittee.

9. CHANNELS OF COMMUNICATION

- a. The Steering Committee secretary reports the meeting minutes within two weeks of each meeting to the members.
- b. The Steering Committee Chair makes a report to the Forestry Board chairman at each Board meeting. Should there be urgent matters arising in the interim, a special Board meeting can be requested by the chair of the steering committee
- c. The Steering Committee Chair will communicate to the National Environment Council (NEC) at each NEC meeting the progress of the Fiji REDD+ Programme
- d. The Steering Committee chair, deputy chair, and secretary act as focal points of contact between the REDD+SC and external organisations.

10. REMUNERATION FOR EXPENSES AND TIME

Participation in the Steering Committee is at the expense of its members.

ANNEX 1

SPECIFIC TASK: National REDD+ Guidelines

The REDD+ Steering Committee will be responsible for preparing a set of National REDD+ Guidelines on REDD+ readiness and implementation. These guidelines will elaborate detailed aspects of the national REDD+ Programme, including issues not already clarified in the national REDD+ Policy and Strategy documents. The National REDD+ Guidelines become the operational template for the implementation of the National REDD+ Programme in conjunction with the REDD+ Strategy.

The REDD+ Guidelines will include, but not be restricted, to the following:

1. Define objectives of the REDD+ Steering Committee and define a framework for monitoring the performance of the REDD+ Steering Committee. This will include the development of a template for quarterly and annual reports produced by the REDD+ Steering Committee for presentation to the Forestry Board and relevant governance stakeholders
2. Define a process of periodic (e.g. annual) review of REDD+ Steering Committee and its TOR
3. Clarification of role of Designated National Authority (DNA) with respect to REDD+ including recommendations on how the DNA could be structured to accommodate REDD+ issues
4. Definition of REDD+ activity types available to implementation projects and programmes
5. Definition of REDD+ carbon property rights and transfer protocols
6. Definition of REDD+ Safeguards to be incorporated into REDD+ implementation activities including indigenous peoples rights and biological diversity
7. Definition of REDD+ benefit distribution protocols with particular regard to safeguards and benefit sharing with indigenous peoples
8. Definition of terms for carbon trading transactions in REDD+ (identify clear and transparent process of engagement)
9. Definition of guidelines on forest governance good practice – aligned with international developments in forest governance integrity and international REDD+ technical and policy developments
10. Clarification of the relationship between REDD+ and existing policies and strategies
11. Clarification of potential synergies with existing timber and forest certification schemes (e.g. FSC)
12. Clarification of communication procedures and channels, including clarification of communication channels between the Fiji UNFCCC focal point and the REDD+ Programme to enable the participation of relevant Fiji technical and policy representation at international technical and policy meetings. This could include simple communication procedures such as automatic email forwarding of UNFCCC emails to the Conservator of Forests
13. Clarification of alignment of Fiji national REDD+ Programme with Pacific regional REDD+ information platform
14. Clarification on elements of National REDD+ Guidelines that would be more appropriately framed as Regulations

Given the above issues, the National REDD+ Guidelines will contain the following sections:

1. REDD+ Governance Guidelines
2. REDD+ Activity Guidelines
3. REDD+ Financing Guidelines
4. REDD+ MRV Guidelines
5. REDD+ Safeguard Guidelines
6. REDD+ Legal and Regulatory Guidelines
7. REDD+ Distribution Guidelines
8. REDD+ Education, Training and Research Guidelines
9. REDD+ International Engagement Guidelines

The development of the guidelines is to be completed in 2011. However, any of the guidelines will be updated as and when required, with each version appropriately labelled (e.g. National REDD+ Guidelines V1.1 2011; National REDD+ Guidelines V2.1 2012 etc.).