

SOLOMON ISLANDS **REDD+** READINESS ROADMAP 2014-2020

*“Tackling climate change by securing the
future of forests ecosystems and
livelihoods”*



SOLOMON ISLANDS GOVERNMENT

Prepared by the Solomon Islands Initial National REDD+ Programme for the Government of Solomon Islands.

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Foreword

The recent ADB studies on economic losses as results of climate change for Solomon Islands could be up to 4.7% of annual GDP by 2100.¹ In addition are the impacts on more than eighty percent of Solomon Islanders residing in the rural areas. Climate change has become a major threat to the economic growth and well being of the country. In our responding endeavors to the threats of climate change the country has formulated a **National Climate Change Policy**. The policy encourages the country to contribute to global efforts to mitigate climate change impacts through carbon offsetting mechanisms such as REDD+ under the auspices of the UNFCCC. The policy directions is the impetus for Solomon Island becoming part of UNREDD Global Programme. In our case, Solomon Islands UNREDD initial national programme therefore facilitates the process under which the National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap is formulated.

It is important to also reflect on the fact that whilst the UNREDD initial national programme is being implemented, reform in the country's forest sector has been ongoing. These reforms include measures to strengthen monitoring, expansion of reforestation and plantation development and expansion in botanical research. These reforms are critical to strengthening governance in the forestry sector and initial processes towards REDD+ readiness in Solomon Islands. Given the fact REDD+ focuses on the forestry sector, the opportunity for Solomon Island to benefit are immense. The emphasis on opportunities for REDD+ in the roadmap goes beyond the monetary values of forest carbon but more on the multiples benefits such as sustainable forest management, conservation of biodiversity, maintaining eco-system services and having in place appropriate stakeholder engagement processes and benefit sharing mechanisms.

This REDD+ Readiness Roadmap as the vision clearly outlines focuses the priority on sustaining livelihoods of Solomon Islanders. The forests ecosystem is critical to that and despite many years of forests degradation as a result of logging operations, many communities continues to depend on the forests for their livelihoods. The REDD+ Readiness Roadmap also provided new measures and processes that will protect the rights of forest resources owners. The strategic recommendations in the roadmap include strengthening institutional and systemic processes within the central government and also measures that are inclusive of resources owners in harnessing their forest resources.

We urge all partners and stakeholders working in REDD+ related activities to use this document as a principle guide to their work in the country. It is important that coordination and collaboration continues to be strengthened through the **National REDD+ Implementation Unit** in the Ministry of Forest and Research, and the **REDD+ Focal Point** within the Climate Change Division (MECDM).

The Solomon Islands Government through the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology and the Ministry of Forest and Research take pride in leading the formulation of this National REDD+ Readiness Roadmap. We acknowledge the role of the UNREDD Programme through the UNDP Solomon Island sub-office in facilitating the process and the national stakeholders that have contributed to ensure the document represent the views and concerns of the broad and diverse people of Solomon Islands.

It is our hope that the implementation of this roadmap will indeed be the foundation for Solomon Islands fully participating in a future REDD+ Mechanism.

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Hon Dickson Mua
Ministry of Forestry (MFR)

¹ ADB Report 2013 – Economic impacts of climate change

Executive Summary

REDD+ in the Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands have made early progress on REDD+ and can build on this to develop a national approach to REDD+ for an international mechanism on REDD+.

The Solomon Islands have taken early steps to engage with REDD+ at the national, regional and international level. The country is a signatory to the UNFCCC and the Regional Pacific REDD+ Policy Framework and key ministries have included REDD+ activities within their annual workplans. The Solomon Islands have also received support from the UN-REDD programme to undertake initial planning activities for REDD+. This programme has increased understanding of REDD+ amongst key stakeholders and developing the REDD+ Roadmap.

The Solomon Islands needs to develop capacity in three main areas to become ready for REDD+:

- *Policies and programmes* – that promote REDD+ activities and provide guidance for government, landowner, NGO, community groups and private sector action.
- *A framework of REDD+ safeguards* – a number of safeguards have been identified under the Cancun Accord, and information must be provided on how these are being addressed.
- *An approach to measuring verifiable emission reductions* – a mechanism on REDD+ is based on delivery of verified emission reductions capacity needs to be built to be able to measure and report on emissions levels from the forest sector.

As part of these mechanisms the country will also develop approaches to sharing benefits from a REDD+ mechanism, increasing levels of awareness of REDD+, and ensuring that different stakeholders are consulted on, and are able to participate fully in the REDD+ development process. It is anticipated that establishing this capacity within the Solomon Islands will take a number of years, with implementation occurring through a phased approach starting with piloting of different approaches to REDD+ at site levels.

Based on this early action on REDD+ a vision from REDD+ within the country has been identified:

To establish a sustainably managed forest sector that supports rural livelihoods, maintains the quality of the environment, contributes to the socio-economic development of the nation and through reducing levels of emissions from the forest sector contributes towards global actions to mitigate climate change.

This vision for the REDD+ readiness process will be achieved through delivering four main objectives:

- *To reduce GHG emissions from the forest sector;*
- *To maximize the benefits of REDD+ for the people of the Solomon Islands by ensuring the sustainable management of their resources and promotion of their rights to those natural resources;*
- *To increase understanding of the different values of forests within environmental decision making;*
- *To reduce vulnerability of rural communities through effective management of their natural resources.*

A multi-stakeholder management structure will be established to coordinate REDD+ readiness developments and support consultation with, and participation of different stakeholders.

The management structure will include:

- A National REDD+ Committee made up of government, NGOs, private sector and indigenous representatives.
- A REDD+ Implementation Unit within the MFR to lead REDD+ activities
- A REDD+ Focal Point will be established within the MECDM to lead REDD+ activities within the ministry and support cross cutting activities.

A future mechanism for REDD+ at the national level provides the opportunity to deliver multiple benefits to the people of the Solomon Islands. These benefits can be identified as environmental, cultural and social with key benefits including:

- Establishment of a long-term, sustainable revenue source for forest resource owners and the country.
- Enhancement of economic opportunities for Solomon Islanders at the local and national levels
- Maintenance of environmental services
- Empowerment of vulnerable groups

REDD+ Strategies and Existing Policies and Programmes

Establishing a mechanism on REDD+ can support the Solomon Islands to deliver existing policy objectives and strengthen environmental sustainability within the forest sector.

The Government of the Solomon Islands have policies and programmes in place that can have the different elements of REDD+ mainstreamed within them to deliver reductions in emissions and multiple benefits.

The five REDD+ activities when implemented will be closely linked with existing priorities for line ministries within the Solomon Islands. Key activities by ministry include:

The Ministry of Forest and Research;

- *Improve regulation, monitoring and enforcement within the forest sector* by conducting multi-stakeholder consultation on proposed forestry legislation, undertaking assessment of the value of standing forest, strengthening the application of the development consent process in forests areas, strengthening the management of information on licenses, as well as improving downstream processing and market access for timber through training on timber processing, establishing an internationally recognized timber legality system and strengthening landowner led timber milling.
- *Strengthen the existing reforestation and plantation development programme* by strengthening incentive mechanisms for reforestation and plantation development by landowners
- *Establishment of Forest Reserves to conserve watersheds* by developing a framework for the establishment and management of forest reserves that can be included within legislation and building the capacity of MFR, MAL, and MECDM staff to establish them.

The Ministry of Environment Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology:

- *Strengthen implementation of Environment Act 1998 as a key national safeguard* by strengthening the application of the Development Consent Process for activities within the forest sector, establishing an Environmental Management Information System, developing approaches to environmental offsetting and updating existing legislation to address identified challenges.
- *Establish a network of terrestrial protected areas* by establishing a sustainable financing mechanism for PA, establishing a standardized PAs monitoring process and building community capacity to develop and manage PAs.

The Land Reform Unit:

- *Integrate Land Recording within REDD+ activities* by undertaking public consultation on draft regulations on land recording and testing of approaches to land recording within REDD+ pilot locations.
- *Develop approaches to REDD+ on alienated land* through review of existing alienated land areas and consultation with lease-holders.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock:

- *Integrate landuse planning process for Subsistence Agriculture and Large Scale Agriculture Activities* by strengthening the integration of landuse planning at national (agribusiness development) and local (subsistence and small scale commercial agriculture) levels, will reduce the risk of large-scale deforestation while also decreasing the impact of unavoidable agricultural expansion. Technical support to this process at the local level by agricultural extension workers will be linked to support

to improved customary gardening practices. At the national level clearer criteria and guidance for commercial agricultural expansion will provide a more transparent and sustainable basis for agricultural development.

REDD+ Safeguards

As part of the REDD+ Readiness process, the Solomon Islands will be guided by the social and environmental safeguards identified within Cancun Agreements and provide information on their application. To achieve this the country is working towards a framework of REDD+ safeguards linked to existing policies, programmes and their implementation and to establish a Safeguard Information System.

The Solomon Islands already have in place a significant number of safeguards related to actions within the forest sector that can form key elements of a framework of REDD+ safeguards. An initial assessment has been undertaken, during the REDD+ Roadmap development process, of the compatibility of existing domestic national systems against those of the UN-FCCC utilising the UN-REDD Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria as a starting point. The findings of this review must now be reviewed to identify how an effective safeguard information system can be operationalized linked to a framework of criteria and indicators capable of monitoring the application of the framework of safeguards.

Stakeholder Engagement: Awareness Raising, Consultation and Participation

Effective approaches to awareness raising consultation and participation will be critical to the future implementation of a REDD+ mechanism. This will be achieved through undertaking actions at a number of levels including a broad based awareness raising campaign, key stakeholder awareness raising and consultation, site specific consultation processes and the establishment of a multi-stakeholder management structure and grievance and redress mechanisms.

Existing awareness and capacity on REDD+ is held within a small number of specialists at the national level. Awareness on REDD+ will need to be raised within the context of existing development priorities as well as addressing existing challenges of climate change and disaster risk reduction. This will be achieved by:

- Development of a broad based awareness raising campaign to increase understanding of REDD+ within the context of the Solomon Islands. The campaign will include printed media publications, radio programmes and a website.
- Undertaking key stakeholder awareness raising and consultation to increase the understanding of key stakeholder groups and gain their feedback on Strategies.
- Establishing approaches to increasing awareness of, undertaking consultation on and requesting consent for REDD+ activities at community level

These approaches will be implemented and strengthened by the REDD+ management structure including the REDD+ Implementation Unit, the National REDD+ Focal Point and the multi-stakeholder National REDD+ Committee, which will provide a forum for joint decision-making between different stakeholder groups.

A process for addressing grievances with how approaches to REDD+ are being developed and implemented will be addressed under the principles of merit appeals and can be raised through the management structure with the National REDD+ Committee providing the central body for dispute resolution. Grievances that are not addressed through this mechanism can be raised through line ministries to the National Climate Change Working Group

Effective Benefit Sharing Mechanisms

The establishment of a mechanism for REDD+ will require establishment of transparent and effective financial management structures as well as a framework of how costs and benefits from REDD+ implementation will be shared between different stakeholders. This process will require guidance on the rights of different stakeholders to support related to reductions in forest carbon emissions and how any support will be managed.

As part of a mechanism for REDD+ the Solomon Islands will receive results based payments for verified forest carbon emission reductions and increases in forest carbon stock. A national level mechanisms for fund management will need to be in place to ensure that these funds are effectively, efficiently and transparently managed and appropriately shared with relevant institutions and stakeholder groups. This latter elements will be supported by the establishment of an effective framework for benefit distribution related to delivery of forest carbon emission reductions or increases in forest carbon stock within specific land areas and supported by different stakeholder groups. This framework will provide a basis for benefit sharing and will support actors to make effective land use decisions.

REDD+ and a National Forest Monitoring System

A National Forest Monitoring System (NFMS) is a critical element of establishing a REDD+ mechanism. A NFMS will help the Solomon Islands to measure and monitor changes in forest carbon emissions as well as provide transparent information on the existing status of the Solomon Islands' forests.

A NFMS brings together remote sensing information on changes in land use, and field based measurement information on levels of forest carbon in different land-uses to support the identification of levels of carbon emissions from the forest sector. Establishing a NFMS will be a stepwise process and will require development of both technical and infrastructural capacity within the MFR to manage a NFMS. This process will build on the existing Solomon Islands Forest Resource Information System (SOLFRIS) and will require close coordination with other ministries in particular, the MECDM, MAL, and MDPAC. Data from pilot activities will provide an initial opportunity to test approaches to a NFMS.

Establishing a Reference Emission Level

Forest Reference Emission Levels (F-RELS) and Forest Reference Levels (F-RLs) are key components of any approach to REDD+ and are critical for measuring the impact of REDD+ activities at site, province or national level.

F-RELS quantify the emissions associated with “business as usual”(BAU) practices in the forestry sector, it is against this BAU scenario that progress in reducing emissions from the forest sector is assessed. Development of F-RELS/F-RLs can be undertaken through a phased approach initiating with a pilot location, then moving to province and national levels. Initial capacity building for F-REL has been developed but significant further capacity building and resources will be required to support the process.

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Table of Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
BAU	Business as Usual
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organisation
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCBA	Climate Community and Biodiversity Alliance
CCD	Climate Change Division (MECDM)
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation
CDF	Constituency Development Fund
CDM	Clean Development Mechanism
CDO	Constituency Development Officer
CLAC	Customary Lands Appeal Court
CoLP	Code of Logging Practice
CoD	Certificate of Determination
COP	Conference of the Parties
CSS	Country Safeguard System
CTI	Coral Triangle Initiative
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
EA	Environment Act
EAC	Environment Advisory Committee
ECD	Environment and Conservation Division (MECDM)
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Statement
EMIS	Environment Management Information System
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
F-REL	Forest Reference Emission Level
F-RL	Forest Reference level
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FPIC	Free Prior Informed Consent
FRTUA	Forest Resource and Timber Utilisation Act
FSDP	Forest Sector Development Programme
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Green House Gas
GIS	Geographical Information Systems
GIZ	Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (in German), the German Society for International Cooperation
GNI	Gross National Income
GPPOL	Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Ltd
IPCC	Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change
KIBCA	Kolombangara Indigenous Biodiversity Conservation Association
LALSU	Landowners' Advocacy and Legal Support Unit
LLCTC	Lauru Land Conference of Tribal Community
LLEE	Live and Learn Environmental Education
MAL	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
MDPAC	Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination

MECDM	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology
MFR	Ministry of Forests and Research
MID	Ministry of Infrastructure Development
MLHS	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey
MMA	Mines and Minerals Act
MPA	Marine Protected Area
MRV	Measurement, Reporting and Verification
NAMA	Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action
NDS	National Development Strategy
NFI	National Forest Inventory
NFMS	National Forest Monitoring System
NFPDP	National Forest Plantation Development program
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
NRC	National REDD+ Committee
NRDF	Natural Resource Development Foundation
PA	Protected Areas
PER	Public Environment Report
PLM	Policies Laws and Measures
PMO	Prime Minister's Office
PO	Provincial Ordinance
PSO	Public Solicitors Office
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries
RFP	National REDD+ Focal Point
RIU	National REDD+ Implementation Unit
SBD	Solomon Island Dollars
SEPC	Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria (UN-REDD)
SESA	Strategic Environmental and Social Assessment
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Commission
TF	Taskforce
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
ToR	Terms of Reference
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States Dollar
VATA	Value Added Timber Association
VCS	Verified Carbon Standard
WB	World Bank

1 Introduction to REDD+

1.1 REDD+ Under the UNFCCC

Emissions from deforestation and forest degradation play a significant role in global climate change accounting for between 12-17%² of global anthropogenic emissions from all sectors.

In recognition of this, negotiations under the Conference of the Parties (COP) of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) have designed a climate change mitigation mechanism entitled “*Policy approaches and positive incentives on issues relating to reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks in developing countries*” commonly referred to as REDD+ to lower global emissions from the forest sector.

The REDD+ mechanism identifies a number of activities, which can be undertaken to reduce forest carbon emissions, with countries being provided with positive incentives to undertake these activities based on delivery of verified reductions in emissions.

The five main REDD+ Strategies, which can be undertaken are³:

- a) Reducing emissions from deforestation;
- b) Reducing emissions from forest degradation;
- c) Conservation of forest carbon stocks;
- d) Sustainable management of forests;
- e) Enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

Activities will be operationalized at a national scale, with countries provided with positive incentives based on verified reductions in forest sector emissions. Hence, under the UNFCCC, REDD+ activities are not project-based (unlike the Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)) but rely on actions at national level. UNFCCC negotiations occur annually and it is anticipated that a deal may be reached in 2015 on how REDD+ could fit in a global agreement. Any mechanism related to this however is not likely to be operational before 2020.

1.2 REDD+ within National / Regional Carbon Markets and the Voluntary Carbon Market

1.2.1 National / Regional Carbon Markets

Over 30 national or regional carbon markets have been established or are being developed globally. These provide a basis for trading in carbon emission reductions. None currently accept credits developed under a REDD+ mechanism although some are making moves towards this.

A number of countries and regions have developed markets for carbon trading. These market mechanisms require large-scale emitters to limit their carbon emissions and/or buy ‘carbon offsets’ from projects that are reducing emissions – as actions are compulsory by law they are referred to as compliance markets. Such markets already exist in Europe and are being developed in over 30 countries or regions around the world. At present none accept offsets credits obtained through activities related to reduced emissions from deforestation and degradation. However negotiations are on-going for inclusion of REDD+-type activities within both the Californian and Australian carbon markets. At present prices for carbon within many of these markets are very low as there is more supply of offsets than is required by the demand.

² IPCC (2004)

³ UNFCCC COP Decision 1/CP.16 (Para. 70)

1.2.2 The Voluntary Carbon Market (VCM)

The VCM provides an opportunity for companies, or individuals, to voluntarily offset their emissions. The market is much smaller than existing compliance markets. REDD+ credits are accepted within the VCM with buyers preferring projects that comply with high carbon, social and environmental standards.

A VCM has been developed based on peoples' and organisations' desires to voluntarily offset their own carbon emissions. This market has been in operation for over 10 years and has grown rapidly, although growth is now slowing. As the market is voluntary, no central agency enforces standards, instead a number of *voluntary standards* are used to certify the quality and credibility of the emission reductions. Standards have been developed for the implementation of projects related to REDD+ with a number of projects existing globally. Carbon credit prices for REDD+ in the VCM have varied, after initial rapid interest in REDD+ demand has levelled off and consumers are now demanding increasingly high levels of carbon credit certification. Projects certified for both their carbon and social/environmental benefits have performed best.

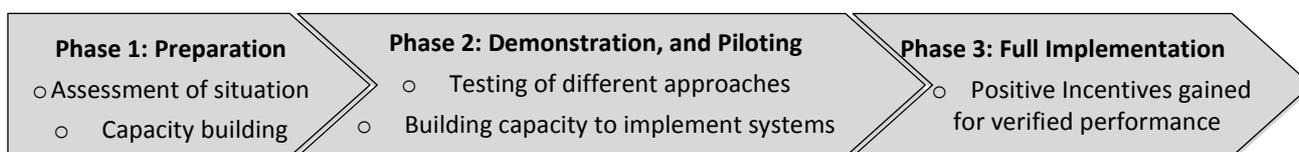
1.3 REDD+ Readiness and the UN-REDD Programme

To become ready for REDD+ countries need to conduct considerable analysis, capacity building, and reform. This process is called REDD+ readiness and is supported by international donor programmes such as the UN-REDD Programme and the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility.

REDD+ readiness is the process through which countries establish the legislation, institutions and technical capacity to implement and provide information on REDD+ at the national scale. It recognises that achieving REDD+ readiness requires significant analysis, capacity building, consultation and reform. UNFCCC guidance (Decision 1/CP.16, paragraph 73) states that countries that wish to implement REDD+ activities should do so through a phased process, of three overlapping and integrated phases, allowing for on-going capacity building and learning-by-doing. The basic process is as follows (see also Figure 1 below):

- (i) Phase 1: Preparation: Development of necessary capacities and institutions to implement REDD+ at national level, through development of strategies, action plans, awareness raising and capacity building;
- (ii) Phase 2: Demonstration and Piloting of Policies and Measures: Field testing of practical measures and strategies may be conducted through demonstration activities, in addition to continuous capacity building and development of new policies and legislation;
- (iii) Phase 3: Full national implementation of REDD+ activities: A national performance-based system with an operation national forest monitoring system, safeguards information system, and a national forest reference emission level and/or reference level (F-REL/F-RL).

Figure 1: Three Phased approach to national level REDD+ development



A number of international programmes are supporting countries through REDD+ readiness. The United Nations Collaborative Initiative on Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (UN-REDD programme) is one such programme⁴. This Programme has supported the Solomon Islands in its REDD+ readiness process through an Initial National Programme, implemented from 2011-2013. The other major

⁴ The Programme, launched in 2008 builds on the convening role and technical expertise of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP). It supports nationally-led REDD+ processes and promotes the informed and meaningful involvement of all stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and forest-dependent communities, in national and international REDD+ implementation.

multilateral programme is the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility. A number of bilateral initiatives also operate, including REDD+ Early Movers Programme and Norway’s International Climate and Forest Initiative.

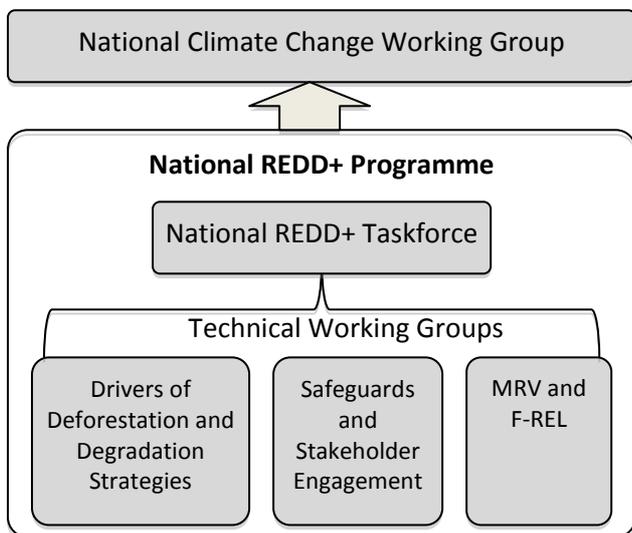
1.4 Existing REDD+ Activities within the Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands have initiated engagement with REDD+ at the national, regional and international level. They are a signatory to the UN-FCCC, the Pacific REDD+ Policy Framework and key ministries have included REDD+ activities within their annual work plans. The Solomon Islands have also been supported by the UN-REDD programme to undertake initial planning activities for REDD+. This programme has increased understanding of REDD+ amongst key stakeholders and developed the REDD+ Roadmap.

The Government of the Solomon Islands has shown significant foresight in making efforts to engage in REDD+ at both the international and domestic levels. Representatives from the Ministry of Environment Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) and the Ministry of Forestry and Research have been actively engaged in negotiations under the UNFCCC, and the country is a signatory to a Regional Pacific REDD+ Policy Framework. This policy framework links closely with existing guidance under the UNFCCC.

At the domestic level the MECDM and the MFR have identified REDD+ and activities related to it as important elements of their annual work plans in both 2013 and 2014. Development of approaches to REDD+ and carbon trading are also key elements of the National Climate Change Policy. In order to achieve these objectives, key ministries have been working with UNDP, through the UN-REDD programme, to develop the current REDD+ Readiness Roadmap for the country and have worked with the Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) / Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) and the Asian Development Bank (ADB) to investigate the feasibility of REDD+ in key locations.

Figure 2: Initial REDD+ Readiness Management Arrangements



The Government of the Solomon Islands joined the UN-REDD Programme in 2010 as part of its efforts to support the national REDD+ Readiness Phase. The objective of this 18-month Initial National Programme was:

To establish the necessary institutional and individual capacities required to develop full REDD+ readiness in the Solomon Islands.

The UN-REDD Programme’s inception workshop was in July 2011 but the programme was not fully operational until late 2012. The programme has worked to raise awareness of REDD+ within the country, develop strategies and approaches to REDD+ implementation for inclusion within the REDD+ Roadmap and has provided training on a number of technical areas including development of a national forest monitoring system.

1.4.1 REDD+ Readiness Management Arrangements

In 2012 the Government of the Solomon Islands, with support from the UN-REDD Programme, established the Solomon Islands REDD+ Taskforce (see figure 2) by cabinet decision. This multi-stakeholder body is integrated within the national climate change governance arrangements and reports to the National Climate Change working group identified within the National Climate Change Policy⁵.

⁵ The National Climate Change Mitigation Working Group is one of four thematic working groups to be established under the National Climate Change Working Group. The structure of these groups is outlined in the National Climate Change Policy

2 The Solomon Islands Context

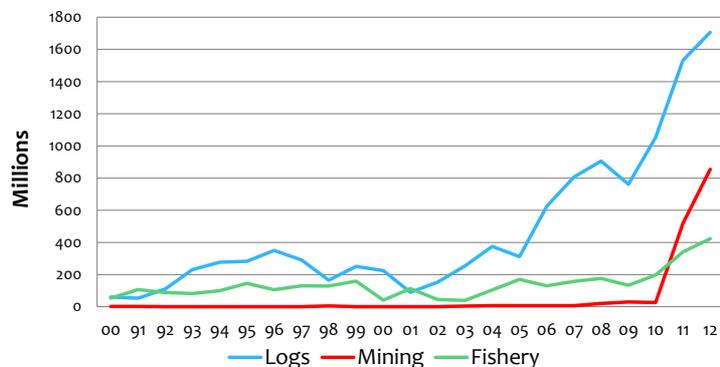
2.1 Socio-economic context

Natural resources play a critical role in the economic and social life of Solomon Islanders. Extraction of resources through mining, logging and fishing are critical to the national economy, with subsistence use of forest and marine resources critical to the livelihoods of communities as well as playing an important role in social and cultural practices.

The economy of the Solomon Islands experienced strong rates of between 5 and 10.5% in GDP growth between 2008 and 2012⁶. This growth was largely driven by increases in the timber logging, minerals and fisheries sectors (see Fig 3). Since 2012 this growth has slowed, with revenue from logging and mineral extraction reaching a plateau, fuelling concern about future economic growth – particularly with timber stocks predicted to decline rapidly over the next three decades⁷. Despite this predicted decline within the timber sector, mining is anticipated to continue its expansion, with at least two new mines under development and a significant number of prospecting licences issued⁸.

Figure 3: Total export values key commodities

Source: CBSI data, graph also quoted in Tagini (2013) Sustainability in the Mining industry available at <http://www.pmc.gov.sb> - all values in SBD



Benefits from the economic growth experienced over the past decade have not been universally distributed, with a small number of skilled or landowning groups capturing the benefits of growth while the majority of the population rely on subsistence practices and informal economic activities. Existing employment figures indicate the importance of these sectors with the 2009 census indicating that 81,194 people were employed in paid work, 87,913 employed in subsistence work, 41,191 people undertaking unpaid work⁹. This subsistence economy, based on the use of natural resources such as forest resources and fisheries, has buffered communities from the more distressing effects of poverty. It is also significant in its economic value with households estimated to gain resources valued at between SBD 10,512 and 47,056 per annum from forest resources alone, well above the SBD7,700 GNI¹⁰.

2012-17. (Available at: http://www.sprep.org/attachments/Climate_Change/Solomon_Islands_Climate_Change_Policy.pdf) but the Mitigation Working Group is yet to be established.

⁶ADB (2013) ADB and Solomon Island Fact Sheet. Available at: <http://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/pub/2013/SOL.pdf>

⁷SKM (2011) *Solomon Islands National Forestry Resource Assessment: 2011 Update*. Sinclair Knight Merz. Melbourn Australia on behalf of RAMSI Economic Governance Pillar

⁸The MME has a list of over 186 tenements that are currently under investigation by a range of international and domestic companies.

⁹SIG (2009) Census of the Solomon Islands

¹⁰The lower figure comes from a 1991 study quoted in Mataki, M. Solo, G. Donohoe, P. Alele, D. Sikajajaka, L (2013) *Choiseul Province climate change vulnerability and adaptation assessment report: securing the future of Laurus now*. SPC/GIZ Suva Fiji available at www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/ChoiseulCCAAssmntreport.pdf accessed Feb 2013 the

Further expansion within the mining sector provides a significant opportunity for the country but will require careful management to ensure revenue generated provides the maximum benefit to all Solomon Islanders and does not result in extensive degradation of vulnerable habitats. Early lessons from the Goldridge mine on Guadalcanal have illustrated some of these challenges with 97% off-shore banking of all foreign earnings¹¹, ongoing disputes between landowners and significant alleged irregularities in royalty payments.

The majority of Solomon Islanders are indigenous people with traditional tenure, knowledge and governance structures, which are still central to their livelihoods. Almost 87% of the land in the Solomon Islands remains under customary tenure with group or individual rights of access through customary processes. Customary law and practices are recognized in both the national legal structure and the Solomon Islands Constitution and remain one of the main components of ethnic and national identity. The country is also hugely culturally diverse, with inhabitants speaking approximately 95 languages. Cultural affiliations are also critical within domestic politics, with groups voting along tribal lines while expecting a system of patronage from leaders to remain. This cultural orientation plays an important role in how communities respond to issues such as sustainable development and climate change.

2.2 Environmental Context

The Solomon Islands have exceptional levels of biodiversity and are globally recognised for the quality and diversity of both their terrestrial and marine habitats.

Within the Pacific the Solomon Islands are only surpassed only by Papua New Guinea for its terrestrial biodiversity¹² with the Solomon Islands' Rainforest Terrestrial Ecoregion AA01191¹³ displaying high vertebrate endemism, including single-island endemics, restricted-range mammals, and 69 bird species found nowhere else in the world¹⁴. The Solomon Islands are also estimated to have 5,599 described species including 2,597 described plant species, 245 birds, 75 mammals, 87 reptiles, 19 amphibians, 777 fish and 1,799 invertebrate species¹⁵. The forest ecosystems are a key element of this diversity with over 4,500 species of plants of which 3,200 are known to be native or indigenous. Of these, 16 fall within IUCN's Red List data criteria, with several tree species including rosewood, rattan and some palms being threatened and ebony critically endangered¹⁶.

The nation's marine habitats are equally diverse, forming part of the Coral Triangle commonly described as the Amazon of the Seas¹⁷. The Coral Triangle is home to 76% of the world's corals and 37% of the world's coral reef fish species in an area that covers less than 2% of the planet's oceans¹⁸. These environments are heavily dependent on the terrestrial habitats they surround with areas of reef being strongly influenced by changes in water sediment or nutrient levels due to changes in terrestrial land use and subsequent run-off.

The country is vulnerable to large-scale weather and geological events including cyclones, storm surges and tsunamis. These events cause significant damage and social upheaval. A reduction on the environmental

higher from a survey by LLEE in 2012 on Aspirations and Perceptions for REDD+ in Choiseul. In both cases figures are based on assessments of predominantly provisioning services (food, timber, medicines, water).

¹¹ Forau (2011) quoted in Matakia (2011) Matakia, M. (2011b). Solomon Islands stocktaking report Rio+20. UNDESA, New York

¹² Morrison, C. Pickacha, P. Pitakia, T. and Boseto, D. (2007). Herpetofauna, community education and logging on Choiseul Island, Solomon Islands: implications for conservation. *Pacific Conservation Biology* 13:250-25

¹³ Olsen et al., (2001) quoted in Peterson et al (2012) Peterson, N., Hamilton, R., Pita, J., Atu, W. and R. James (2012). *Ridges to Reefs Conservation Plan for Isabel Province, Solomon Islands*. The Nature Conservancy Indo- Pacific Division, Solomon Islands. Report No. 1/12. 61 pp.

¹⁴ Kool Johnathan, Tom Brewer, Morena Mills, Robert Pressey (2010). *Ridges to Reefs Conservation Plan for Solomon Islands*. ARC Centre of Excellence for Coral Reef Studies, Townsville, QLD. 44pp

¹⁵ IUCN (2008) quoted in Kool et al (2010)

¹⁶ SIG (2009) *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan*. Ministry of Environment, Climate Change Disaster Management and Meteorology. Honiara Solomon Islands

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ Veron et al., (2009) quoted in Kool et al (2010)

services provided by forests is likely to increase this impact both in terms of direct physical damage and in reductions in the livelihood safety net provided by forest resources.

The Solomon Islands have a tropical climate characterized by daytime temperatures between 25 and 32°C, high humidity and annual rainfalls within the range of 3000-5000mm¹⁹. Oscillations in annual weather patterns are dictated by the El Niño Southern Oscillations (ENSO) with periods of drought associated with El Niño, and periods of heavy rainfall with La Niña oscillations.

On average, the country usually experiences 1-2 tropical cyclones per annum. These events as well as other more localized climatic events such as flash flooding and storm surges cause significant economic costs as well as driving social tensions and environmental changes, leaving the country in an almost constant state of recovery. With such extreme weather events predicted to continue and become more severe as global climate change becomes further exacerbated, the Solomon Islands are extremely vulnerable to significant set backs in their development as well as localized devastation and hardship²⁰. These impacts have been exacerbated in many places by poor planning and management of development activities and the altering of key ecosystems, in particular watersheds such as river channels, upstream river catchments, and coastal mangroves²¹.

2.3 Forest and Land-use Context and the Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation

The Solomon Islands have extensive natural forest, of which 835,100ha has been identified as commercially viable under existing legislation. This area has been exploited at an unsustainable rate over the past decade with log exports predicted to be up to eight times the estimated annual sustainable cut. This situation is perpetuated by a high economic reliance on timber revenue as a source of national and local incomes. Impacts from this rate of harvest have also been worsened by poor environmental practices resulting in environmental degradation and a reduction in the effectiveness of vital environmental services.

The natural forests of the Solomon Islands cover approximately 2.2 million hectares, or 80% of the nation's land base²². Of this just under 40% has been identified as commercially viable²³.

These areas have been heavily logged with over 50% of the estimated 836,100ha of commercial forest being cut pre-2011, the majority in the preceding decade²⁴. This felling is primarily under commercial felling licences²⁵, with small-scale timber milling licenses also contributing.

This logging is predominantly done on a 'legal' basis with companies possessing licences to cut within designated areas. Many of these licenses, however, lack complete paper work, or were agreed without full due process as such rendering them invalid or illegal. Similarly, the extraction of timber beyond stated management plans and against the existing Code of Logging Practice (CoLP) is also common with 36,100ha of forest being identified as cut since 2005 outside of legal concession boundaries²⁶.

¹⁹ SIG(2013) Second National Communication to the UN-FCCC Draft Version

²⁰ Matak, M. (2011b). Solomon Islands stocktaking report Rio+20. UNDESA, New York

²¹ Ibid

²² FAO (2010) *Solomon Islands Forest Resource Assessment*. FAO Rome

²³ Non-commercial areas are identified by those that are classified as non-commercially accessible under the guidance of the Code of Logging practice and FRTUA which prohibit felling in forests located within a 1 km radius of a village, above 400 m in elevation and/or growing on slopes exceeding 30° as well as within riparian buffer areas. 40% estimate from SKM (2011) *Solomon Islands National Forestry Resource Assessment: 2011 Update*. Sinclair Knight Merz. Melbourne Australia on behalf of RAMSI Economic Governance Pillar

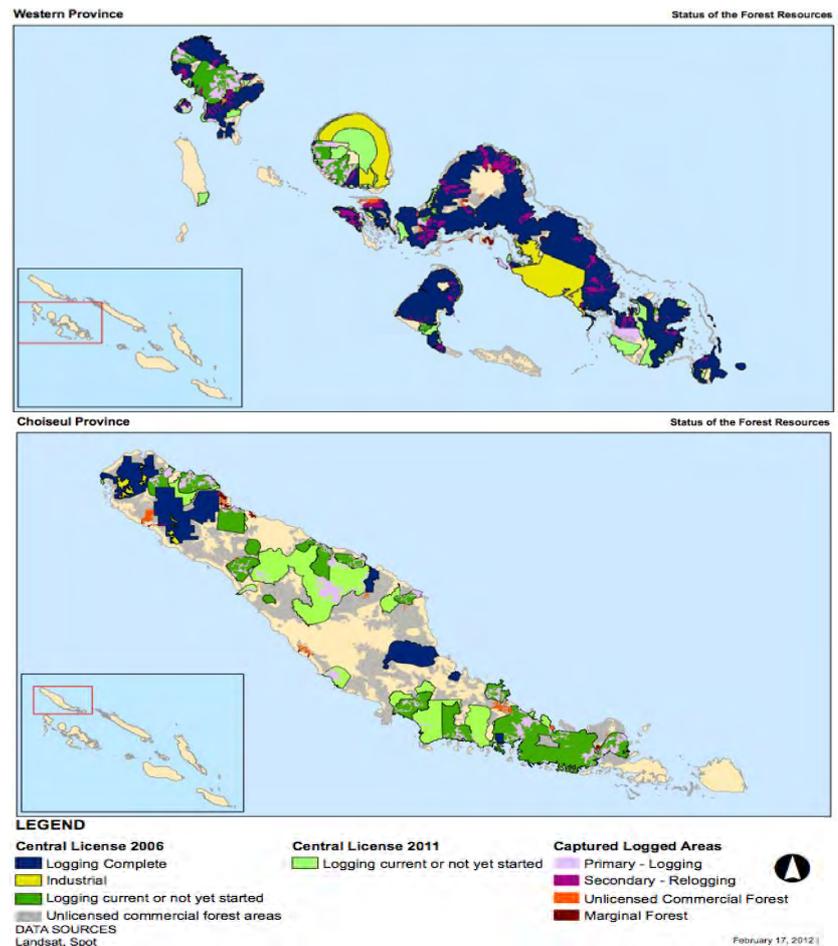
²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Timber felling can occur under two licenses, a milling license or a felling license.

²⁶ Ibid

This situation prevails due to the high levels of logging licenses (over 300 in 2012) making effective monitoring by the MFR and the MECDM extremely difficult. In turn, high levels of licence issuing are perpetuated by a high reliance on logging revenues within the national accounts, particularly in terms of foreign exchange, combined with desire from influential landowners to receive logging royalties putting both upwards and downward pressure on the MFR to issue licenses at the expense of quality control. These pressures have also led to the issuing of discretionary permits by the MFR for areas outside those identified as commercially viable and permissible under the CoLP (leading to the severe degradation of 16,800ha of forest since 2005). Increases in the value of timber and shifts in species of economic value have also led to some re-entry logging to areas cut within the last decade. This practice causes significant habitat degradation and may affect the potential for natural recovery.

Figure 4: Existing and Past Logging in Selected Provinces 2011



These combined pressures have led to current levels of recorded log exports (close to 2 million m³) are close to eight times the estimated annual sustainable cut (300,000m³)²⁷.

Forest areas are also subject to deforestation and degradation due to increased demand for land for subsistence agriculture and an increased focus on commercial agriculture. Expansion of commercial agriculture projects have, however been limited by issues of land-tenure.

Forest areas are also being cleared for domestic agricultural practices, mainly gardening. While limited data is available on the current scale of these practices, increased population pressure is reported to be leading to increasing levels of forest clearance as well as shortening fallow cycles. Similarly, cutting for firewood and domestic use have also caused localised reductions in the density of forest cover.

The MAL plans to increase the area under commercial agriculture to 40,000ha with oil palm identified as the main crop (currently there is little over 6,000ha). Existing efforts to achieve this expansion have, however, been hampered by securing adequately sized plots for investment with difficulties in reaching agreements with landowners on long term land use. While it is important to diversify and strengthen the existing economy, the current planned expansion incorporates a suite of very restricted considerations of the impact of felling expansion on forest cover with most areas identified in areas of existing natural forest.

²⁷ SKM (2011) *Solomon Islands National Forestry Resource Assessment: 2011 Update*. Sinclair Knight Merz. Melbourne Australia on behalf of RAMSI Economic Governance Pillar

Existing plantation cover is limited and unable to replace current levels of natural forest extraction. Efforts to establish large-scale plantations have faltered due to challenges related to land tenure, while efforts to promote small-scale plantation development have been limited by government capacity and long-term commitment by landowners.

The two most significant timber plantations are in Western Province and account for approximately 80%, of the total 35,600ha of plantation, with the remainder held by smallholders²⁸. Efforts to increase levels of plantation forestry have been slowed by difficulties in securing land ownership agreements for expansion of large-scale plantations and the slow uptake of communities to efforts by the MFR to support smallholder plantation development.

The country has no national protected areas network with existing protection provided through Provincial Ordinances and Customary Law. Terrestrial areas under these forms of protection account for an estimated 5% of land area.

High levels of customary land-ownership are also responsible for the development of a large number of small protected areas. While currently only designated through customary law or Provincial Ordinances, this patchwork of culturally or environmentally significant sights cover approximately 5% of the country's area with some also supported by international NGOs²⁹. The enactment of a Protected Areas Act in 2010 provides an opportunity for these sites to gain stronger legal protection and potentially be eligible for national funding.

The impact of the direct drivers (logging, clearance for agriculture, mining) are currently exacerbated and compounded by a number of indirect drivers primarily related to the country's position as a less developed country, challenges in sector governance and the continued need for national growth and development.

Key elements within this include:

- Weak and outdated legislation covering forestry, which make enforcement difficult and provide a number of opportunities for bad practice and illegality.
- Limited human, financial and technical capacity within key ministries making enforcement of existing legislation difficult.
- A lack of accurate information, leading to an environment in which it is extremely difficult for perpetrators to be held to account for their actions.

Structural issues such as geography, population growth and the broader political structure also play important roles and must be considered in any efforts to address the drivers.

The Regional Policy Framework on REDD+ identifies the major drivers of deforestation and forest degradation in the Pacific Islands as planned and unplanned timber harvesting, and agricultural expansion, with lesser drivers including infrastructure expansion and mining and quarrying. These drivers are influenced by:

- *Demand for economic development both locally and nationally*
- *Demand for logs and timber outside the region*
- *Demand for land for food security and agricultural development*

²⁸ Pauku (2010) Solomon Islands Forestry Outlook Study. FAO

²⁹ SIG (2011). Fourth National Report to the Convention on Biological Diversity. Honiara.

Table 1: Summary of Key Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation

	Within the Forest Sector	Outside the Forest Sector
Direct	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forests degradation due to large and small scale commercial felling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Clearance for agriculture <ul style="list-style-type: none"> o Commercial Agriculture o Subsistence agriculture - Clearance for Mining - Natural Disasters
Indirect	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited institutional capacity - Out-dated legislation - Weak enforcement and control - High international demand for timber - Lack of information among communities and local producers on rights and markets - High level of importance of logging revenues to economic stability - Limited coordination across ministries - Limited political will 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Low agricultural yields - Increased incomes and expectations for resource use - Corruption and political patronage - High cost of legal proceedings - Uneven application of the rule of law - Limited coordination and cooperation between traditional authorities - Population increase

2.4 Why do current trends in forest use matter?

The exploitation of forest habitat in the Solomon Islands and the manner in which it is occurring is causing significant damage to the local environment and represents a missed opportunity for development and growth within the country.

The bullets below summarise some of the challenges:

- *Limited economic and livelihood benefits* – the majority of logging is currently carried out by foreign firms, focused on the export of round logs. While tax from these firms plays a critical role within the current economy, the economic impacts of the industry at local level are not significant. A lack of support to landowners in negotiating contracts and overseeing production levels has resulted in many groups receiving limited revenues proportional to the value of the timber. Similarly a lack of engagement of communities within logging activities combined with limited investment of royalties has resulted in logging activities failing to drive sustainable economic development of a local level economy.
- *Economic, social and environmental costs of environmental degradation* - the population of the Solomon Islands is 85% rural and relies heavily on natural resources for livelihoods. Unsustainable and poorly implemented logging operations cause significant environmental degradation, which in turn leads to a number of further impacts including:
 - *Loss of economically valuable forest services*: Studies of the economic value of forest resources to households have further exemplified their importance (see Table 2 next page). An initial scaling up of this data by number of households shows that the total value of services from forests gained by households within Choiseul Province is in excess of 424 times the provincial revenue. Further work conducted on the cost of logging to communities noted that families identified logging as costing households over SBD7,000 per annum approximately the same as the Gross National Income per person.

- *Degradation of watersheds:* The geography and climate of the Solomon Islands are characterised by steep river catchments and periods of high intense rainfall. An assessment of the susceptibility of watersheds within the country (and thus subject to these conditions) to deterioration identified 54% as being very susceptible to deterioration³⁰. Within these conditions stable vegetated watersheds are critical to ensure water capture for groundwater, prevent land degradation and reduce flood events.

Table 2: Estimated values of forest ecosystem services and existing values from formal economy

All values in Solomon Dollars

Gross National Income pa	7,700
Estimated Value of forest services to Households Choiseul pa	10,512 to 47,056
Total estimated value of forest services to Choiseul Province (value per household x number of households)	49,533,251
Total Reported Provincial Revenue Choiseul (2011/12)	116,823
Total loss of forest services per household following logging	7,545

- *Damage to fish stocks:* The majority of the population relies on reef fish as their primary source of protein. Recent research by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in Isabel Province on the impacts of commercial logging on fish populations has demonstrated that runoff from logging operations have significantly impacted fish recruitment, resulting in lower number of key local food species reaching adulthood. Similar impacts within other areas of the Solomon Islands, combined with ongoing increases in runoff from deforested land could result in significant declines in fish stocks. Such a situation would present significant challenges to the livelihoods of communities making them more food insecure.

- *Loss of culturally important sites and existing cultural and social practices:* The cultural identity of the Solomon Islands is very closely linked with the land and forest areas. Ongoing access to and use of land and forest areas remains important for social cohesion, with the use of forest and marine resources critical to the livelihoods of the majority of the population (see points above). Degradation of these land areas would change their economic, social and cultural values and will create a shift in cultural norms and behaviors, particularly if revenue from their use is not evenly distributed or invested within communities.
- *Lack of sustainability* – current harvest levels have been estimated to be close to eight times the estimated allowable cut. This level of exploitation is being sustained through re-entry logging into areas that have already been harvested. This re-entry logging combined with a lack of sustainable practices within many sites is seriously reducing the capacity of the country’s forests to regenerate. Within this context it is estimated that not only will resources from timber be exhausted within the coming 30 years³¹ but that those resources will not regenerate naturally. Rehabilitating these forests will represent a significant direct cost to the country while damage to the natural resources as noted above will also represent a significant indirect cost.

The implications of these impacts within the Solomon Islands should not be underestimated. In a country with very high levels of youth unemployment, a high reliance on subsistence livelihoods from fishing and forest resources where the natural environment has acted as an important social safety net. Loss of this safety net without corresponding increases in formal employment opportunities would present significant challenges to the government to be able to provide adequate support to communities to address food insecurity and lack of employment opportunities. Failure to deliver these services could result in significant social tensions.

³⁰ Aldrick (1993) quoted in SIG (2013) Second National Communication to the UNFCCC Draft

³¹ SKM (2011) *Solomon Islands National Forestry Resource Assessment: 2011 Update*. Sinclair Knight Merz. Melbourne Australia on behalf of RAMSI Economic Governance Pillar

3 Linkages Between REDD+ and Existing Policy Frameworks

3.1 Existing National Policy Framework

National level strategies and policies within the Solomon Islands have a strong focus on the effective and sustainable use of natural resources and equitable distribution of the benefits from those resources.

The *National Development Strategy (NDS) 2011-20* identifies the solid foundations of development in the Solomon Islands as being the creation and maintenance of an enabling environment. The NDS sets two main objectives to achieve this³²:

- *Objective 7 To Effectively Manage and Protect the Environment and Eco-Systems and Protect Solomon Islanders from Natural Disasters*
- *Objective 8 To Improve Governance and Order at National, Provincial and Community Levels and Strengthen Links between Them*

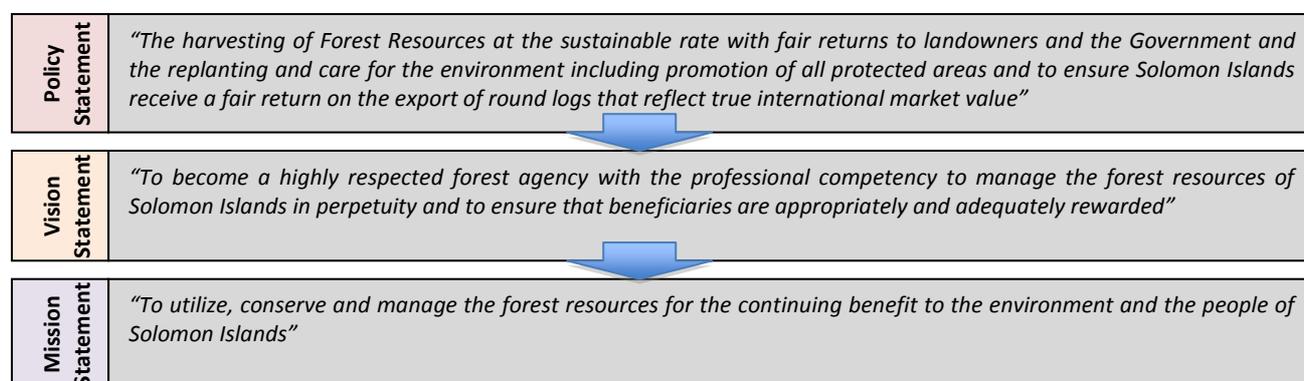
The *National Climate Change Policy 2012-17* sets a framework for a resilient, secure and sustainable Solomon Islands responding to climate change. It includes policy directives to “*Develop a Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Action (NAMAs) strategy at National, Provincial... (levels) that can contribute to the achievement of a Low Carbon Development and include the following sectors and themes:*

*ii) Reducing emissions from the forest sector through sustainable forest management, CDM projects, REDD+ projects and voluntary carbon trading mechanisms*³³.

It will also identifies the need to establish and strengthening governance and capacity for carbon trading through CDM, REDD+ and Voluntary Carbon Trading including establishment of carbon trading legislation (Section 4.e) and requires the government to ensure resource owners maximize benefits from carbon trading arrangements by immediately raising awareness on carbon trade in the forest sector and establish procedures for assessing investors and carbon trading arrangements between investors and communities as an interim measure, prior to the enactment of carbon trading legislation and regulatory framework (Section 4.f.)³⁴.

Sustainable use of natural resources and the conservation of biodiversity are central to sector based strategies and plans.

The National Forest Policy - The MFR also set out clear objectives for the long-term sustainable use of the country’s forest resources through their Policy, Vision, and Mission Statements (see below):



³² SIG (2011) National Development Strategy 2011-2020

³³ SIG (2012) National Climate Change Policy

³⁴ SIG (2012) National Climate Change Policy 2012-2017

The MECDM’s mission statement requires that the ministry:

‘Promote and safeguard the sustainable use of natural resources for the benefit of the peoples of Solomon Islands; provide leadership in development and support to communities in reducing climate risks and other natural hazards; and to provide response measures to disasters’.

The ministry has further laid out objectives for environmental conservation through the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP) and the Coral Triangle Initiative National Plan of Action (CTINPOA) as well as to address the need for climate change adaptation through the National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA).

3.2 How REDD+ can support National Objectives

Establishing approaches to REDD+ at the national level can strengthen the delivery of national policy and programme objectives.

A mechanism on REDD+ provides support and incentives for *reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation in developing countries, and the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks*. These incentives can strengthen existing government capacity to implement key policies and programmes. Additional support will also provide options for landowners looking for alternative approaches to managing their land.

The REDD+ Strategy links closely with existing government priorities to:

REDD+ Activities	Links with Existing Policies and Programmes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ <i>Reduce emissions from deforestation</i> ▪ <i>Reduce emissions from forest degradation -</i> ▪ <i>Sustainable management of forests -</i> ▪ <i>Conservation of forest carbon stock -</i> ▪ <i>Enhancement of forest carbon stock</i> 	<p>MFR policy statement focuses on harvesting of forests at a sustainable rate. It looks to achieve this through three strategies: Sustainable Forest Utilization and Downstream Processing; Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building; and Forest Conservation Integrated Management</p> <p>This work will also be strengthened by enhanced application of Environment Act to developments within the forest sector as a key safeguard to managing forest sector developments. Addressing them will also require action to reduce deforestation and forest degradation from agricultural expansion.</p> <p>The Protected Areas Act provides a basis for the conservation of carbon stock within areas of high biodiversity value. The establishment of Forest Reserves under the FRTUA provides a basis for conservation linked to water catchments.</p> <p>The MFR has also identified the need to support reforestation and plantation development as a policy strategy area.</p>

Effective implementation of these activities will deliver benefits to the forest sector as well as multiple benefits to the domestic economy, the livelihoods of communities and the biodiversity and environmental health of the country. Success in these areas will be further strengthened by adherence to REDD+ social and environmental safeguards.

A mechanism for REDD+ and the approaches adopted to implement it at the national level provides an opportunity to deliver multiple benefits to the Solomon Islands. These benefits can be identified as environmental, cultural and social with key benefits including:

- *Establish a long-term sustainable revenue stream from the forest sector.* Enhanced enforcement of forestry legislation and further strengthening of that legislation will continue to improve revenue capture from the forest sector while helping to slow existing unsustainable levels extraction. This slow down will help reduce the decline in timber stock and initiate the process of shifting to a sustainable

harvesting regime. The approach will be further strengthened by carbon financing and establishment of a more vibrant plantation sector linked to reforestation activities, as well as assisted natural regeneration.

- *Enhance economic opportunities for Solomon Islands at the local and national levels.* An enhanced focus on sustainable harvesting of forest, improvements in downstream processing and local level timber milling will help increase revenue capture at national and local levels. Existing small scale milling operations are able to generate significant incomes for communities strengthening local economies and driving local business development. Improved regulation of logging practices will also help to increase transparency of financial management and benefit sharing between firms and communities.
- *Maintaining environmental services*³⁵ – The population of the Solomon Islands rely heavily on forest ecosystem services to; *provide resources* (such as food, fresh water, building materials, and medicine), *regulate the environment* (reducing risks of landslides, flooding,) and *support existing ecosystems* (by preventing soil erosion and as well as maintaining clean run off to inshore reefs critical for maintaining fish stocks). By protecting key watersheds and areas of biodiversity these services (estimated at being worth between SBD 10,512 and 47,056 annually to a rural household³⁶) will be maintained.
- *Empowerment of vulnerable groups* – Existing mechanisms for land management and revenue distribution from natural resource extraction processes are often not fully inclusive with some groups being excluded from decision making and future benefits. Supporting engagement of vulnerable groups within communities, in particular women, will help address these issues and provide for more sustainable local level development decisions based on community level developments. Such approaches would both help strengthen the role that women can play within the domestic economy and reduce communities' vulnerability to external shocks.

Establishment of a mechanism on REDD+ will require the development of a National Forest Monitoring System and a Safeguard Information System. These systems and the activities undertaken to develop and maintain them will enhance transparency within the forest sector while also promoting the engagement of vulnerable groups including women within environmental and land use decision making.

Establishment of a mechanism on REDD+ requires developing the capacity to measure and report changes in levels of emissions from the forest sector from a reference emission level. To achieve this information is required on existing trends within the forest sector, levels of forest carbon within different land uses, the emissions associated with changes between these land uses and accurate information on existing land-use activities. This information requires significant information gathering and increased levels of transparency within the forest sector with information stored centrally within a National Forest Monitoring System.

The establishment of a mechanism on REDD+ also requires that countries respect and promote a number of REDD+ safeguards. These safeguards (outline in more detail in Section 6) provide a basis for effective forest management with engagement from different stakeholder groups including indigenous and vulnerable groups. They also require that biodiversity is considered when developing REDD+. Information on the application of these safeguards should also be stored and made accessible in a transparent manner through a Safeguard Information System. These two mechanisms will further strengthen the application of existing national policies, and legislation as well as supporting achievement of the Solomon Islands' commitments under multilateral conventions and the reporting of these achievements.

³⁵ The Millenium Ecosystem Assessment (2003) identifies four main categories of ecosystem service, provisioning, regulating, cultural and supporting for more information on linkages between these and REDD+ see *What are the ecosystem-derived benefits of REDD+ and why do they matter?* (2010) UN-REDD available at <http://www.un-redd.org/MultipleBenefitsPublications/tabid/5954/Default.aspx>

³⁶ The lower figure comes from a 1991 study quoted in Mataki, M. Solo, G. Donohoe, P. Alele, D. Sikajajaka, L (2013) *Choiseul Province climate change vulnerability and adaptation assessment report: securing the future of Luru now*. SPC/GIZ Suva Fiji available at www.sprep.org/attachments/Publications/ChoiseulCCAssmntreport.pdf accessed Feb 2013 the higher from a survey by LLEE in 2012 on Aspirations and Perceptions for REDD+ in Choiseul. In both cases figures are based on assessments of predominantly provisioning services (food, timber, medicines, water).

4 Achieving REDD+ Readiness in Solomon Islands

4.1 Vision of the Solomon Islands National REDD+ Programme

The vision for REDD+ within the Solomon Islands is to:

Establish a sustainably managed forest sector that supports rural livelihoods, maintains the quality of the environment, contributes to the socio-economic development of the nation and, through reducing levels of emissions from the forest sector contribute towards global actions to mitigate climate change.

4.2 Objectives

In order to achieve this vision a number of objectives have been identified. These are:

1. *To reduce GHG emissions from the forest sector;*
2. *To maximize the benefits of REDD+ for the people of the Solomon Islands by ensuring the sustainable management of their resources and promotion of their rights to those natural resources;*
3. *To increase understanding of the different values of forests within environmental decision making;*
4. *To reduce the vulnerability of rural communities through effective management of their natural resources.*

4.3 Establishing a Framework for REDD+ in the Solomon Islands

Establishment of a mechanism for REDD+ within the Solomon Islands the country will require an effective framework of policies, legislation and programmes.

This framework will include:

- a) *Policies and programmes* – that will promote REDD+ activities and provide the key guidance for government, landowner, NGO and private sector action. Many elements of these are already in place and will be discussed within Section 5
- b) *Safeguards* – the safeguards identified under the Cancun Accord must be addressed, with information provided on how this is occurring. To achieve this, the country will establish a framework of safeguards with information then provided on their application.
- c) *Verifiable Emission reductions* – any mechanism on REDD+ is based around delivering verifiable reductions in emissions from the forest sector. To achieve this a system of forest measurement and reporting must be established to identify changes against a reference emission level.

These elements are addressed in more detail from here forward.

The implementation of this framework will be guided by a set of operational principles. These principles will also provide a framework within which information on how international safeguards are promoted and respected can be maintained and shared.

The following UN-REDD Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria provide a starting point:

1. Apply norms of democratic governance, including those reflected in national commitments and Multilateral Agreements;
2. Respect and protect stakeholder rights, including human rights, statutory and customary rights, and collective rights;
3. Promote and enhance forests' contribution to sustainable livelihoods;
4. Contribute to low-carbon, climate-resilient sustainable development policy, consistent with national development strategies, national forest programmes and commitments under international conventions and agreements;

5. Protect natural and naturally regenerating forests from degradation or conversion to other land uses, including plantation forest;
6. Maintain and enhance the multiple functions of forests to deliver management objectives including biodiversity conservation and ecosystem services;
7. Minimise adverse impacts (direct and indirect) on non-forest ecosystem services and biodiversity.

Site-specific pilot activities should be undertaken to learn lessons and develop capacity as part of the readiness process at provincial and national level.

The establishment of a mechanism on REDD+ will require the development of coordinated multi-stakeholder approaches to land use management. It also requires establishment of mechanisms to effectively link local site-based activities with national policies and programmes and international reporting. Testing of these approaches through pilot activities allows for learning to occur and capacity of key stakeholders to be built that will strengthen further development of approaches to REDD+ at the national level. Piloting should test key land-use management approaches such as reforestation, sustainable management of forests and protected areas development. Within each of these, specific elements of a mechanism on REDD+ can also be trialled including:

- Approaches to Free Prior Informed Consent
- Approaches to specific environmental and/or social safeguards
- Approaches to benefit sharing mechanisms
- Approaches to Reference Emission Level development
- Approaches to Measurement Reporting and Verification of forest sector emission levels.

4.4 Strategy: Establish Institutional Management Structure

The implementation of REDD+ will require cross-cutting activities. A cross cutting and multi-stakeholder institutional management arrangement is thus also required. To achieve this, a National REDD+ Committee will be established, through extension of the mandate of the existing REDD+ Taskforce. The committee will provide the central point for REDD+ readiness. This will be supported by two operational units within the MFR – the REDD+ Implementation Unit, and within the MECDM – the REDD+ Focal Point.

The *National REDD+ Committee (NRC)* will focus on the implementation of the Roadmap and the approval and oversight of REDD+ pilot activities to ensure they are being implemented in line with the guidance presented within the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap as well as current domestic and international standards.

The NRC will also have the mandate to establish working groups related to key issues within the REDD+ implementation process – for example benefit sharing or safeguards. To strengthen its capacity further, two additions will also be made to the membership of the NRC. This will include the Ministry of Finance, to support financial and economic analysis and the Landowners Advocacy and Legal Support Unit (LALSU) to increase the representation of the interests of landowners. Named representatives for organisations that have yet to provide specific representatives, in particular the Ministry of Provincial Government, should also be nominated.

The NRC will have a term of two years to December 2015 at which point its mandate will be open for review.

Funding for meetings of the NRC should be included within the budget of the MFR as part of increasing their commitment to the REDD+ process.

At the level of line ministries a *National REDD+ Implementation Unit* will be established within the Forest Resource Management and Technical Services Division of the MFR.

This unit will be responsible for:

- 1 Leading REDD+ implementation within the Solomon Islands;
- 2 Organizing awareness raising events and consultation meetings;
- 3 Providing training on REDD+ to relevant stakeholders and relevant agencies;

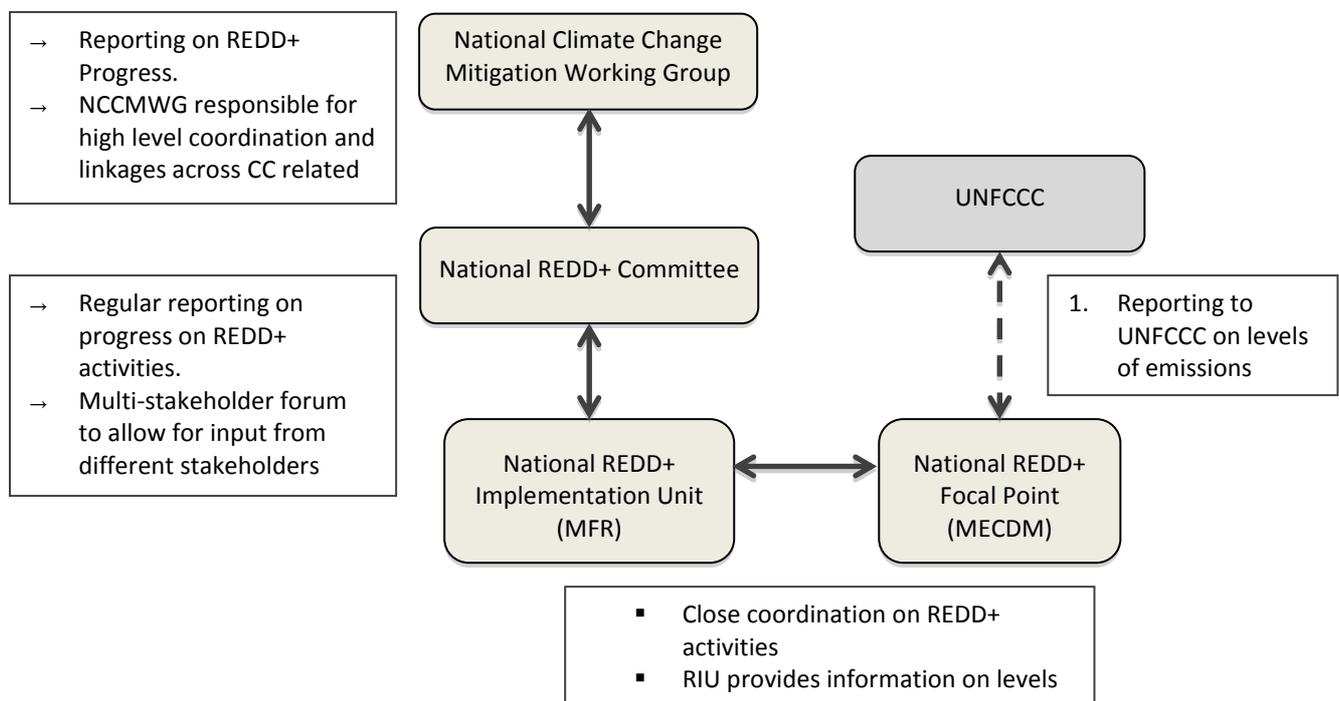
- 4 Acting as a Secretariat to the REDD+ NRC;
- 5 Developing and implementing the Solomon Islands' National Forest Monitoring System;
- 6 Reporting to the CCD of the MECDM on forest carbon stocks and emissions.

A National REDD+ Focal Point in the MECDM be established

This focal point will be responsible for coordinating reporting on REDD+ to the UNFCCC including the national GHG inventory for the land use, land use change and forestry (LULUCF) sector and information on safeguards through the Biennial Update Reports (BURs) and National Communications (NCs).

For full ToR of the NRC please see Annex 1: ToR for the National REDD+ Committee, REDD+ Focal Point and REDD+ Implementation Office.

Figure 5: REDD+ Management Arrangements



4.4.1 Strategic Action: Establish and Operationalise National REDD+ Committee

4.4.1.1 Activity: Present Cabinet Decision

Revised ToR for NRC to be presented to Cabinet with cabinet paper on justification for committee.

4.4.1.2 Activity: Quarterly Meetings of National REDD+ Committee

Quarterly meetings of the NRC to be held.

4.4.2 Strategic Action: Establish and resource operational units for REDD+ Implementation

4.4.2.1 Activity: Resourcing of National REDD+ Implementation Unit

Recruitment of two staff to lead work of the RIU. A GIS expert and communications expert.

4.4.2.2 Activity: Resourcing of National REDD+ Focal Point

Recruitment of one staff member to coordinate work within MECDM.

5 Integrating REDD+ into Existing Policies and Programmes

5.1 The Forestry Sector

The MFR has four policy focus areas within which a number of development strategies have been identified (see Table 3). These strategies are in line with developing approaches to REDD+ at the national level.

Table 3: National Policy Focus Areas and REDD+

Policy Areas	Focus	Medium Term Development Strategies	Links to REDD+ Actions
Sustainable Forestry Development Strategy		a) National Forest Plantation Development and Reforestation Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of pilot reforestation and plantation development sites. ○ Identification of potential incentive mechanism to promote reforestation plantation development
Sustainable Forest Utilization and Downstream Processing Strategy		a) Forest Milling and downstream processing programme b) Forest Industries Monitoring Programme c) Log Export Monitoring Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promotion of small scale sustainable timber harvesting ○ Improved oversight and monitoring of licensing process
Forest Conservation Integration Management Strategy		a) Redevelopment of National Herbarium and Botanical Garden Facility b) Non-timber forest product research programme c) Investigation into Carbon Environmental Services Rent d) National Forest Resource Inventory Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Development of a national forest monitoring system and approach to developing reference emission levels
Institutional Strengthening and Capacity Building Strategy		a) Institutional strengthening and Capacity Building Programme b) National Forest Infrastructure Development Programme c) Forestry Information Technology System Programme d) National Forestry Legislation, Regulation, Standard Review Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review of existing forest legislation ○ Establishment of National Forest Monitoring System

5.2 Strategy: Improve regulation, monitoring and enforcement within the Forest Sector

The Solomon Islands currently exports nearly eight times the level of timber estimated to be sustainable³⁷. Despite the presence of a Code of Logging Practice (CoLP), existing court cases and reporting by NGOs and landowners identify significant breaches in these practices resulting in deforestation, forest degradation and environmental degradation. To address this, improvements in the existing legislative framework and its enforcement will be critical. These changes will also need to be supported by increasing political will for the sustainable management of forests:

³⁷ SKM (2011) *Solomon Islands National Forestry Resource Assessment: 2011 Update*. Sinclair Knight Merz. Melbourn Australia on behalf of RAMSI Economic Governance Pillar

5.2.1 Strategic Action: Update Forest Legislation and Formulate a new legislation on forest resources management

The NDS provides a clear policy direction for the forest sector focused on ensuring the sustainable use of natural resources (in particular forests) to support rural incomes, to ensure the future wood supply, and to maintain ecosystems to help communities adapt to climate change. Legislation within the forest sector has not kept pace with these developments with the current Forest Resource and Timber Utilisation Act (FRTUA) dating from 1969.

Revised bills, developed over the past 15 years have either not been passed or not gazetted. The Policy and Planning Section within the Forest Resource Management and Technical Services Division of the MFR have maintained the need to review and enact new legislation as part of its workplans. Gaining support for a new bill will require further public consultation.

5.2.1.1 Activity: Public Consultation on Forest Policy and Legislation:

This process should be undertaken over a period of at least 12 months allowing for a period of public review and consultation. Activities will include, consolidation of existing comments on the 2012 bill; releasing the draft bill and Forest Policy for public consultation and holding a series of national and provincial level consultation meetings on the draft bill. These events could be combined with awareness raising on REDD+ as part of a process of consulting on the future of the forest sector.

5.2.1.2 Activity: Undertake a forest resources assessment

Forest resources are critical to both the formal and subsistence economy of the Solomon Islands as well as playing an essential role in regulating environmental services and reducing vulnerability to extreme weather events. Gaining further information on the existing and future values of timber, non-timber products used by communities and the ecosystem services provided by forest areas will be critical to enabling decision makers to develop forest policy and for landowners making decisions about how to manage their land. Assessment should include:

- Assessment of the value of existing timber stock
- Updated assessment of potential regeneration rates and sustainable harvest levels within different provinces
- Assessment of the value of ecosystem services provided (this could also be linked with assessment of cost of environmental degradation from logging)

5.2.2 Strategic Action: Enhance Enforcement of Legislation

Existing legislation provides a basis for improved forest management if fully enforced. Improved enforcement should start with the license allocation process and will flow through the life cycle of both felling and milling licenses. Strengthened enforcement of legislation will also provide a basis for timber certification. Key areas of work to achieve this will be:

- *Strengthen license approval process* – Strengthening enforcement of the license approval process will help to drive the improvements in the standards of timber operations. Key elements of this will include: ensuring all license documentation is available and correct, that there is clear evidence that timber rights have been allocated following due process and that timber rights agreements are correct and that Environmental Impact Assessments are comprehensive and have undergone public consultation.
- *Improve monitoring of harvesting plan implementation* - Effective monitoring of the implementation of forest concession harvesting plans is critical to ensuring that harvesting adheres to the CoLP. This will require improved monitoring throughout the existing supply chain with monitoring of the quality of concession harvesting plans, adherence to the CoLP, levels of timber extraction, timber export and rehabilitation activities. Identified violations in license agreements will then also have to be effectively penalized. The Enforcement Unit under the Forest Resource Management and Technical Services Division and the Operations Section of the Forest Industries Division of the MFR identified the need to improve levels of enforcement in its 2012 work plan.

5.2.2.1 Activity: Strengthening application of the development consent process for activities within the forest sector

This activity will be led by the MECDM with guidelines developed for the application of the Development Consent Process for activities within the forest sector. Support and training will be provided to MFR staff on these guidelines (See activity 5.3.1) .

5.2.2.2 Activity: Assessment of existing capacity and resource requirements for effective monitoring of existing felling and milling licenses and presentation of revised resourcing to concession plan

Assess the existing resources within the MFR and the potential costs of resource requirements to undertake regular monitoring of existing concessions and other relevant forest areas. Identify existing resource gaps and development of a resource mobilisation programme for more sustainable financing of the ministry based on a range of revenue sources and limited concession levels. This activity should also be linked to Activity 5.1.1.2)

5.3 Strategy: Reforestation, Rehabilitation and Plantation Development

The National Forest Plantation Development program (NFPDP) is a key element of the MFR workplan. Effective implementation will help restore ecosystem services in heavily degraded or deforested areas as well as help sustain future timber supply within the country. This programme falls under the REDD+ activity enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

The MFR existing reforestation programme has an objective to plant 500ha of forest-land per year with a focus on commercial species (teak and mahogany are most prevalent). The programme has seen success in areas with higher numbers of forest officers and locations close to nurseries. During periods of donor support reforestation reached nearly 2000ha per annum (pa) but are currently closer to 300ha pa. The program is also working on rehabilitation of logged over forest areas through enrichment planting using local indigenous tree species. At present, 90 hectares of logged over forest area has been piloted both in the Western and Isabel Provinces. This program is still at the pilot stage but has the potential for expansion due to the large areas of logged over forest within the Solomon Islands and the potential for rapid regeneration³⁸.

Successes have also been achieved by NGOs in promoting forest rehabilitation through planting of native and commercially valuable species within degraded areas (for example the NRDF³⁹). This work has been linked to performance-related payments to communities for planting and managing rehabilitation activities with technical support from NGO partners.

5.3.1 Strategic Action: Strengthen incentive mechanisms to promote reforestation and plantation development

 MFR has identified key challenges in achieving high levels of reforestation as a lack of long time horizons for income generating activities within communities and difficulties in sustaining technical support to communities over the lifecycle of a plantation. Providing clear short and medium term incentives to communities to establish plantations, and support natural regeneration combined with long term revenue sharing agreements could provide an opportunity to promote short term action while also driving long term

³⁸ Activities within this area can also work in partnership with the ACIAR project Enhancing Economic Opportunities Offered by Community and Smallholder Forestry in Solomon Islands which is also looking at management of natural forest regeneration after logging.

³⁹ The Natural Resource Development Foundation (NRDF) have been working with communities in Choiseul province to support forest rehabilitation through enrichment planting. The work is supported by an international company through their corporate social responsibility programme with landowners being paid to manage and maintain planted trees for future use as timber.

revenue stability for landowners and the MFR (the early incentive model has seen success within the Forest Sector Development Programme, as well as work by NGOs). To achieve this gain, an appropriate incentive mechanism will need to be designed and financed with consideration given to approaches to preventing perverse incentives (landowners deforesting natural forest to plant plantations) and to ensure that different community members are effectively engaged in the process.

5.3.1.1 Activity: Review of existing and past approaches to benefit sharing / incentive agreements within forestry and agriculture

Conduct a review of past and present approaches to benefit sharing and incentive agreements. The assessment should cut across different sectors and activities to identify lessons learned and provide potential approaches to benefit sharing and incentivising change for reforestation, plantation development, protected area establishment and other activities. (This activity will be linked with Strategic Action 8.1.1 in Section 8 Benefit Sharing).

5.3.1.2 Activity: Pilot incentive mechanisms within forest plantation development and assisted rehabilitation within at least two sites

Piloting of small-scale plantation development and assisted forest rehabilitation (either through enrichment planting or thinning of naturally regenerating sites to promote commercially, or biologically important species) should occur in at least two sites. Locations of piloting should be selected as part of the piloting activities identified within Section 11.

5.4 Strategy: Protection of Watershed through Establishment of Forest Reserves

The Solomon Islands is characterised by short and steep watersheds that are vulnerable to rapid degradation following changes to their natural vegetation. While Protected Areas provide a basis for forest conservation for biodiversity values, forest reserves provide an opportunity for conservation of water resources and water catchments as the country becomes more vulnerable to climate change and extreme weather events.

5.4.1 Strategic Action: Establishment of Forest Reserves in Key Watershed Areas

The process should focus on establishment of multiple use areas with strict management criteria supported by technical support from the MFR as well as MAL (to support improved management of subsistence and small scale commercial agriculture) and the Water Resources Division in the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification and where appropriate the MECDM.

5.4.1.1 Activity: Establishment and Piloting of Framework for Establishment of Forest Reserves

Existing legislation⁴⁰ provides limited guidance on the basis on which reserves should be identified, how management structures and plans should be established or how compensation or benefits could be shared. A framework for establishing forest reserves would include criteria for selection as well as a step-by-step approach to establishment including consultation processes and establishment and functioning of management structures. It is recommended that the structure also be open to landowner application to allow landowner groups to identify areas for protection based on specific local needs.

5.4.1.2 Activity: Capacity Building for MFR, MECDM and MAL extension workers on watershed management approaches

Capacity building support will be required to support existing MFR, MECDM and MAL staff (in particular extension workers) in assessment and management of water catchments and approaches to measuring performance of management actions.

⁴⁰ FRTUA (1968) Part VII

5.5 The Environment Sector

The MECDM has seen a rapid expansion of its mandate since its formation in December 2007, gaining responsibilities for Disaster Management and Climate Change. The ministry's vision statement 2012-14 is:

A clean, healthy and unique environment for safe, sustainable and resilient Solomon Island Communities.

It seeks to achieve this vision by *promoting and safeguarding the sustainable use of natural resources for the benefit of the peoples of Solomon Islands; providing leadership in development and support to communities in reducing climate risks and other natural hazards; and providing response measures to disasters*⁴¹.

The ministry's corporate plan sets out a structure to achieve these goals through the delivery of strategic programme areas and key function areas. Of particular relevance to the implementation of REDD+ activities are:

Strategic Areas	
<p>Strategic Area 1 Conservation and Management of Solomon Islands' Environment</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conservation and management of biodiversity • Protected areas network • Waste management and pollution control • Development control • Environment Training 	<p>Strategic Area 2 Climate Change</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy and legislative framework • Mitigation strategies • Adaptation strategies • International representation
Function Areas	
<p>B.3 Advocacy, Coordination, Capacity Development and Funding</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leadership for the promotion and implementation of Solomon Islands Government's conservation and environment policies and legislation • Information management • Awareness and Education Programs • Training, Capacity Development Programs • Seek donor funding and support 	

These focus areas provide a basis for both the implementation of REDD+ activities in the form of the conservation of forest carbon stocks (linked with the PA Act) and the strengthening of REDD+ activities and oversight through reductions in deforestation and forest degradation and the associated emissions of GHGs (linked to the Environment Act) as well as implementation of key elements of a framework of REDD+ safeguards in addressing where different activities can be developed.

Cross cutting responsibilities for Climate Change Adaptation (CCA), Climate Change Mitigation (CCM) and Disaster Risk Management (DRM) also place the MECDM in a key position for supporting the mainstreaming of REDD+ into integrated land-use planning processes which consider a range of vulnerability elements and the importance of ecosystems in increasing resilience.

5.6 Strategy: Strengthen Implementation of the Environment Act as a Key National Safeguard

The Environment Act 1998 and its associated regulations provide MECDM with the mandate to maintain and protect ecosystem functions. The EA's objectives include;

- the establishment of an integrated system of development control, environmental impact assessment and pollution control
- to prevent the degradation of the environment by all practical means and
- to comply with and give effect to regional and international conventions and obligations relating to the environment⁴².

⁴¹ MECDM Mission Statement 2012-14

To strengthen the delivery of these objectives as part of an approach to REDD+ strategic actions, in four areas will be undertaken:

- Strengthening Application of the Development Consent Process within Forest Areas
- Establishing an Environmental Information Management System
- Establishing Environmental Offsetting legislation (either through development of new legislation or updating of existing legislation)
- Updating environmental legislation

5.6.1 Strategic Action: Strengthening Application of the Development Consent Process

The Environment Act (1998) made the undertaking of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) a legal requirement for all developments or activities that are likely to have 'significant adverse impacts on the environment'⁴³. Strengthening guidance on exactly what should be included within an EIA (either Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or Public Environment Report (PER)) for the forest sector will help improve the capacity of the MECDM as well as different ministries and non-state actors to ensure that adequate assessments of impact are undertaken prior to issuing felling and milling licenses.

5.6.1.1 Activity: Formulate detailed Guidelines for application of the development consent process for projects within the forests sector, piloting awareness raising and training on their implementation

Guidelines will include a step-by-step guide to the development consent process including detail on information required at each step and guidance documents (for example draft ToR for EIS/PER consultant, and outline of reports required for different development activities). Guidelines would initially focus on the development consent process for felling and milling licenses but should also consider plantation development and commercial agricultural projects. Guidelines could also cover provision of information on forest carbon within all development projects – possibly initially based around existing IPCC default carbon values but subject to development over time based on establishment of a national forest carbon map.

5.6.2 Strategic Action: Establish an Environmental Management Information System (EMIS)

The MECDM has a significant mandate related to climate change, environment and development. Establishment of an effective knowledge management system cutting across these areas will be a strong tool for promoting multiple benefits within REDD+, monitoring safeguards and improving the use and transparency of environmental information in land-use decision-making. The system will provide information to local and provincial planning processes as well as for the assessment of development consent applications, and reporting to international bodies. Key activities in this area include:

5.6.2.1 Activity: Identification of key data requirements at local, national and international level

This can be achieved by a series of expert workshops to identify information needs and availability.

5.6.2.2 Activity: Harmonization of data formats and data collection and analysis methodologies between various ministries.

Data formats will need to be harmonized and a process for data collection established.

⁴² SIG(2008) Environment Act Sec 3.

⁴³ MECDM (2010) – guidelines on EIA

5.6.2.3 Activity: Establishment of an environmental management information system (EMIS) within the MECDM

This will require allocation of staff to manage the system, addition of IT equipment and training of staff to manage the system.

5.6.3 Strategic Action: Development of Options for Environmental Offsetting / Rehabilitation Requirements

The economy of the Solomon Islands is heavily reliant on the extraction of natural resources. Such processes inevitably result in site-specific levels of environmental degradation. With forestry being a significant industry and mining programmes increasing in scale, further guidance on requirements for rehabilitating and offsetting unavoidable environmental damage from such projects is required. Such a process can support improvements in the quality standards for reforestation following timber extraction or support for other forms of environmental protection and forest rehabilitation to offset longer-term extractive projects such as mining.

5.6.3.1 Activity: Review of legislative options and feasibility assessment for development of environmental offsetting legislation

A review of existing legislation and its application should provide information on the legal feasibility and practical potential for offsetting legislation.

5.6.4 Strategic Action: Updating of Environment Act 1998, the Protected Areas Act 2010 and their Regulations

Through implementation of the EA and its regulations over the past five years (regulations) a number of recommendations have emerged on how to improve the strength and the effectiveness of the act. Existing shortcomings include high levels of discretionary power for the Director of the ECD, limited guidance on implementation for specific sectors, low levels of fines proportional to potential environmental impact, lack of requirements for public engagement, allowances for Environment officers to both develop and review PERs. Consolidation and review of existing recommendations to address these limitations, prior to proposing amendments to the act and its regulations will provide an opportunity to further strengthen its implementation and will provide an opportunity for further stakeholder engagement in improving the environmental management framework. The same process should also be undertaken for the recently implemented PA Act as in this first phase of implementation a number of challenges and discrepancies have been identified within its regulations.

5.6.4.1 Activity: Consolidate recommendations for amendments to the Environment Act, the PA Act and their Regulations

Key stakeholder groups should be requested to provide recommendations for amendments. These should then be reviewed by a multi-stakeholder committee.

5.7 Strategy: Conservation of Forest Carbon Stocks through the Establishment of Protected Areas

The Solomon Islands have a limited number of protected areas established under Provincial Ordinance or Customary Law. Establishment of areas under the Protected Areas Act will increase the legal status of these areas and new areas identified by landowners and the government as requiring protection. Early evidence indicates that there is significant landowner interest in establishing PAs, however there is a lack of clarity on how these will be funded and limited support to landowners and communities to undertake the relevant steps to establish PAs. Increasing capacity within MECDM to support PA establishment as well as promoting

PA development, as part of approaches to land use planning will be important in establishing an effective PA network. Strategic Actions and corresponding activities will include:

5.7.1 Strategic Action: Establish Sustainable PA Financing Mechanism

The sustainable financing of a PA network will be critical to its success. The PA Act and its regulations provide an outline of a potential financial structure for the management of PAs. Further work is needed on how these structures will be operationalised and how a sustainable financing mechanism will be established.

5.7.1.1 Activity: Assessment of PA financing options

An assessment to identify potential financing sources for PA management, including revenue from fines and other domestic financial sources as well as support from REDD+ related schemes and other payment for ecosystem services mechanisms. It should outline costs for PA network management at both site and national levels.

5.7.1.2 Activity: Establishment of Effective PA financial Management Structure

The PA Act and its regulations provide a structure for financial management within PAs including establishment of a PA Trust Fund. The PA trust fund (mandated by the Act) should be established and operationalized, with clear operational procedures related to reporting, transparency and clarifying links between the trust fund and PA management committees. Oversight of the fund should be provided by the Protected Areas Advisory Committee (PAAC).

5.7.1.3 Activity: Development and Piloting of a PA Approval and Monitoring Protocol

The PA Act provides a strong basis for the establishment of PA. However there is limited information within the regulation as to how monitoring and assessment of PA will be conducted. It is proposed that a basic protocol for environmental assessment and monitoring be established to allow PA management committees to maintain ongoing monitoring with national level monitoring to occur on a periodic basis. This process could also be utilised as part of a performance based mechanism for provision of support to PAs.

5.7.2 Strategic Action: Build Community Capacity to Engage in PA Establishment and Management

The PA Act provides the opportunity for the establishment of a PA network to be devolved to the local level, with communities and landowners required to come together to identify and develop a PA. There is however currently limited support to landowners to undertake PA development with early action being promoted mainly by international and domestic NGOs. Further support from government to landowner groups will promote PA development.

5.7.2.1 Activity: Provide Training and Guidance to Landowners wishing to develop and implement Protected Areas Management plans

A series of Provincial Level training events should be held to support landowner awareness of and capacity to develop PA. This can be linked to existing training materials developed for PA establishment and the proposed PA support Unit.

5.7.2.2 Activity: Establishment of a PA support Unit within MECDM

Establishment of a unit within the MECDM with designated staff to support the establishment and monitoring of PA would provide a critical resource to stakeholders interested in PAs. This unit could also support the Constituency Development Assessment process to identify areas within constituencies that would be relevant for PA establishment.

5.7.2.3 Activity: Establishment of PAs in four priority areas

Four priority areas for PA development should be identified to demonstrate integration of approaches to REDD+ implementation and PA development (see also REDD+ Piloting). This process could assess effective

linkages between watersheds and links between protection of mangrove and fishing habitats. Coordination with other ministries will be critical for the implementation of this activity. (see also Section 11: Piloting)

5.8 The Land Resources Sector

The existing customary land and resource tenure is unclear, or open to contest in many areas of the Solomon Islands. This situation has resulted in individuals or small groups being able to benefit from resource extraction at the expense of the broader community. Even where existing practices of land management are effective or where more integrated planning processes are being developed there is vulnerability to future challenges to land and resource titles undermining the long term security of these initiatives. Clear land recording provides an opportunity to address these issues and provide a mechanism to address benefit sharing, and increasing the security of emission reductions. In addition further consideration should also be given to assessing the viability of REDD+ activities on alienated land.

It is anticipated that these issues will also be addressed in the upcoming National Landuse Policy and efforts should be made to ensure the policy considers elements of REDD+ and is then fully operationalized.

5.9 Strategy: Ensure Customary rights and practices are fully recognised within REDD+ mechanisms

5.9.1 Strategic Action: Integrate Customary Land Recording Process into REDD+ Activities

The Land Reform Unit within the PMO is currently working to revise regulations and identify how best institutional capacity can be established to roll out land recording activities. The office is also conducting awareness raising on the opportunities for land recording with landowner groups. These activities can be linked with efforts to develop and test approaches to REDD+ by ensuring that the regulations developed are in line with international best practice on social safeguards including provisions for Free Prior Informed Consent and that the testing of those approaches is integrated into REDD+ piloting activities.

5.9.1.1 Activity: Conduct land recording process within REDD+ pilot sites

Undertaking land recording as part of a REDD+ pilot site activity would provide support to both REDD+ developments and the land recording process. (See also Section 11 Piloting)

5.9.1.2 Activity: Public consultation on draft regulations for Land Recording

Draft regulations for land recording should be circulated for public comment and review prior to a subsequent multi-stakeholder meeting to consolidate recommendation and compare regulations to international best practice.

5.10 Strategy: Develop approaches to REDD+ on alienated land

The current document focuses on the development of REDD+ activities on customary land. Further assessment should be undertaken to identify what activities can be initiated on alienated land with a focus on potential activities to be undertaken on existing plantations.

5.10.1 Strategic Action: Identify feasibility and scale of potential REDD+ activities on Alienated land

5.10.1.1 Activity: Initiate assessment for potential REDD+ activities for selected alienated land

Undertake an assessment of existing alienated land areas to identify levels of forest cover and existing landuses. Identify areas that may be viable for REDD+ development based on existing landuse and clarified tenure arrangements (areas where land is not fully utilised or landuse could be adapted to accommodate REDD+ objectives).

5.10.1.2 Activity: Initiate consultation with lease-holders and tenants of alienated land

Initiate consultations with lease-holders of priority land areas to assess potential for development of REDD+ activities.

5.11 The Agriculture Sector

5.12 Strategy: Reducing Deforestation from Agricultural Expansion in Forest Areas

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock's (MAL) vision is to: *Enhance and promote sustainable agriculture and rural development in the Solomon Islands for food sovereignty and a better living standard.*

The ministry sets out to improve agricultural development within the Solomon Islands for a sustainable future. With increasing pressure on forest lands from shifting agriculture and plans for increases in levels of commercial agriculture, the ministry plays a role as both a driver of deforestation (expansion of commercial agriculture) and working with communities to address the drivers and support food security (by increasing the productivity of small scale agriculture). Effective management of these two roles will be critical to the success of REDD+ implementation.

5.12.1 Strategic Action: Strengthen Integrated Landuse Planning process for Subsistence and small scale commercial Agriculture

Support to extension workers to strengthen landuse planning at the local (community, constituency) level. This process would help extension workers to work with communities in planning areas for subsistence agriculture as well as small scale commercial agriculture enterprises based on both potential levels of productivity and assessment of other ecological services. This process would help to develop a package of benefits for communities at local level with extension workers encouraged to work with other ministries in identifying potential areas of protection, plantation development and timber harvesting. This process should result in all constituencies being required to provide an agricultural development plan as part of the work of the Constituency Development Office.

5.12.1.1 Activity: Training of Agricultural Extension workers within focus communities

Training should be provided to a number of outreach workers in REDD+ pilot areas, possibly utilising the existing Solomon Island Rural Training Center Network to support the process. The training should be followed up by regular information bulletins through radio and other mediums.

5.12.1.2 Activity: Development of landuse planning guidance tool

Tool would provided key points for consideration when developing local level landuse plans, how to address competing demands on resources, approaches to raising productivity and summary information on key relevant policies and programmes within other ministries.

5.12.2 Strategic Action: Reduce impact of commercial agriculture expansion within primary forest areas

The Government of the Solomon Islands has set the objective of expanding the land area under commercial agriculture by 40,000ha. In delivering this objective consideration should also be given to the potential impact of such expansion on forest-land. A process to review priority areas to identify potential sites for agricultural expansion, combined with guidance on how impacts of agriculture should be reduced would help reduce the risk and impact of expansion into areas of high ecological value. This process will result in all agricultural developments providing a clear justification for site selection as well as a landuse management plan outlining how deforestation and forest degradation will be minimised and offset during the project.

5.12.2.1 Activity: Development of a framework for identification of sites for agricultural expansion and criteria for development

The framework should be developed by a cross cutting multi-stakeholder team within government linked to objectives under the Convention to Combat Desertification, the Convention on Biological Diversity and key domestic objectives. Further guidance on the framework could be gained from existing commercial agricultural certification schemes such as the Round Table on Sustainable Palm Oil. This process can also link with the establishment of guidelines for the Development Consent Process for agricultural projects (Section 5.3.1)

6 REDD+ Safeguards

6.1 Overview of REDD+ Safeguards

In establishing a mechanism on REDD+ the Solomon Islands must promote and support the seven social and environmental safeguards identified within the Cancun Agreements. Information on how these safeguards are being addressed and respected should also be provided through a safeguard information system (SIS).

Under the UN-FCCC's Cancun Agreements (Decision 1/CP.16), developing countries undertaking REDD+ activities must promote and support a number of social and environmental safeguards when implementing REDD+ activities (Paras. 69 and 72; Appendix I, Para. 2; see Box 1). In signing the Pacific Regional Policy framework on REDD+, the Solomon Islands further confirmed its commitment to these safeguards. The Cancun safeguards provide a framework for risk mitigation and the enhancement of multiple benefits from REDD+ at the international level, under which REDD+ related activity should be implemented⁴⁴. They are not a detailed set of obligations to which a country is either compliant or non-compliant, as with many donor based safeguard systems, but rather provide principles that each country should follow based on their own understanding and circumstance. Indeed in many cases they reflect commitments already made by countries through international agreements and activities.

In 2011 at COP 17 in Durban it was also decided that countries undertaking REDD+ activities should provide a summary of information on how the safeguards listed in the UN-FCCC's Cancun Agreements are being addressed and respected in the implementation of REDD+ activities.

Box 1: Cancun Safeguards and Requirements for a SIS under the Durban Decision

- (a) That actions are complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements
- (b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures...
- (c) Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities¹ ... noting that the UN General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
- (d) The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular indigenous peoples and local communities ...
- (e) That actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forests and biological diversity, ensuring that [REDD+] actions are not used for the conversion of natural forests, but instead are used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services, and to enhance other social and environmental benefits;
- (f) Actions to address the risks of reversals
- (g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions.

The system established to provide information on these must:

- Be **consistent** with the guidance identified in decision 1/CP.16, appendix I, paragraph 1
- Provide **transparent and consistent** information that is **accessible** by all relevant stakeholders and updated on a regular basis
- Be **transparent and flexible** to allow for improvements over time
- **Provide information** on how all of the safeguards are being addressed and respected
- Be **country-driven** and implemented at the national level
- **Build upon existing systems**, as appropriate

⁴⁴ Rey, D., Roberts, J., Korwin, S., Rivera, L., and Ribet, U. (2013) A Guide to Understanding and Implementing the UNFCCC REDD+ Safeguards. ClientEarth, London, United Kingdom.

6.2 Existing International Safeguard Frameworks and their connection to the Cancun Agreement

The idea of safeguards in REDD+ has been around for several years and has attracted a lot of attention from international organisations, which have worked to develop their own frameworks of safeguards for REDD+. These have both led and been led by progress under the UN-FCCC negotiations, with the frameworks of development partners, multi-lateral institutions and NGOs representing different interpretations of how the Principles under the Cancun Agreement can be understood and requirements to provide information operationalized through a system of criteria and indicators. These structures are also in place within the voluntary forest carbon market as a way for producers to show that they are applying good standards in the absence of international regulations. Some examples include: the Voluntary Carbon Standard, the Plan Vivo standard⁴⁵ and the Social Carbon standard. Within this broad range of frameworks and standards three frameworks have come to the fore for use at national level, these are:

- An international civil society-led initiative, the REDD+ Social & Environmental Standards (REDD+ SES)
- The Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF) Readiness Fund's Common Approach to Environmental and Social Safeguards for Multiple Delivery Partners, including the Strategic Environmental & Social Assessment (SESA).
- The UN-REDD Programme Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria (SEPC);

These frameworks can be utilized by countries to guide the process of addressing and respecting the Cancun Safeguards at national level, either through development of specific monitoring systems related to the application of the principles and criteria within them or as part of a process of developing a REDD+ Country Safeguard System (CSS) which is more closely based within the operations of the country's existing policies, laws and systems. Box 2 provides some of the key benefits of adopting a CSS approach.

Box 2: Benefits of Developing a Country Safeguard System for REDD+⁴⁶

Control over the safeguards that are implemented. Country can define which safeguards are focused on.

Control over the activities that are subject to safeguards. Allows the country to define in which cases safeguards are to be promoted and applied.

Simplicity. It avoids having separate systems for development partner programmes and national legislation.

Country ownership. The system is developed and led domestically.

The ability to tailor systems to each country. It is specifically tailored to the country's context and can reflect the uniqueness of a country's circumstances.

Cost-effectiveness. It reduces transaction costs for government and developers by having one system.

Flexibility. A strong CSS provides flexibility to integrate new programmes and international requirements, speeding up their implementation, making the country more attractive to donors, and investors.

In developing a REDD+ CSS approach a country should identify the scope of the system they are intending to apply with three main options available:

- **A REDD+ specific safeguard system.** Would only apply safeguards to activities financed by REDD+ within the country. It is likely to cut across sectors but will focus only on activities seeking to, or being supported by REDD+ finance.
- **A sector-wide safeguard system.** Would apply safeguards to operations and activities in one particular sector (e.g. forestry), irrespective of the financing mechanism. This could, for example, result from amendments to forestry legislation or requirements for application of legislation within forest areas.
- **A cross-sector safeguard system.** This is the most comprehensive and would cover multiple sectors. It can provide benefits in ensuring that efforts undertaken in one sector are not undermined by actions in

⁴⁵ These two standards are noted within the Pacific Regional REDD+ Policy Framework for use in project development.

⁴⁶ Box adapted from Rey, D., Swan, S. & Enright, A. (2013) A country-led approach to REDD+ safeguards and multiple benefits. SNV – The Netherlands Development Organisation, Ho Chi Minh City.

another and can also support the broader delivery of multiple benefits even outside the forestry sector (for example improved participation of indigenous peoples in decision making).

Further information on the potential benefits and challenges of these are provided in [Table 4](#).

In reality a REDD+ CSS may combine a mixture of these different scopes dependent on which safeguard is being considered and what activities are being undertaken. It may also progress through different phases – for example trialling approaches within specific REDD+ pilots prior to scaling up to sector or cross sector based approaches over time as both REDD+ activities and the capacity to implement safeguards increases.

Table 4: Benefits and Challenges of Developing CSS with REDD+ Specific, Sector or National Scopes⁴⁷

Feature	REDD+ SPECIFIC Safeguard system	SECTOR-WIDE Safeguard system	CROSS-SECTORAL Safeguard system
Safeguard coverage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ensures compliance with REDD+ safeguards only when implementing REDD+ activities (as defined in Paragraph 70 1/CP.16) - Does not ensure compliance with safeguards outside of the scope of REDD+ activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ensures sector-wide compliance with safeguards in all operations and activities defined by the sector, which can go beyond REDD+ activities - Does not ensure the safeguards applied by the sector wide system are not undermined by another sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ensures holistic and systematic compliance with safeguards from all sectors involved in the system. This offers an opportunity to ensure that the safeguards being applied by a sector are not undermined or inconsistently applied by other sectors - More challenging to coordinate its effective implementation
Compliance with international legal obligations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes compliance with UNFCCC REDD+ safeguards and decisions - Only ensures compliance with international obligations relevant and applicable to REDD+ safeguards 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Ensures sector-wide compliance with all international legal obligations relevant or applicable to the sector - Coherent implementation of international legal obligations in sector can be undermined by other sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes a holistic, systematic and coherent implementation of international legal obligations that are relevant and applicable to the country - More challenging to coordinate its effective implementation
Compliance with legal and institutional frameworks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes compliance with legal and institutional frameworks relevant to the REDD+ safeguards - Only promotes compliance with the legal and institutional framework when implementing REDD+. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes compliance with the legal and institutional framework relevant to the safeguards adopted by the sector - Compliance with legal and institutional framework relevant to safeguards adopted by the sector can be undermined by other sectors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes compliance with the legal and institutional frameworks that are relevant and applicable to the safeguards, in a systematic and coherent manner by all sectors involved - Requires a robust legal and institutional framework applicable to all sectors involved
Monitoring and reporting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes a clear mechanism(s) to demonstrate compliance with the REDD+ safeguards and UNFCCC decisions - Only demonstrates application of REDD+ safeguards through the implementation of REDD+ activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes demonstration of compliance with safeguards in the activities and operations of the sector, which can go beyond REDD+ activities - Monitoring and reporting could be more complex, in particular if safeguards effectively implemented by the sector are undermined by another sector 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> + Promotes a clear and consistent demonstration of compliance with the safeguards by all sectors involved - Monitoring and reporting from all sectors could be complex to coordinate

⁴⁷ Table adapted from Rey, D., Swan, S. & Enright, A. (2013) A country-led approach to REDD+ safeguards and multiple benefits. SNV – The Netherlands Development Organisation, Ho Chi Minh City.

6.3 Development of the Solomon Islands Approach to REDD+ Safeguards

The Solomon Islands will work towards the development of a REDD+ CSS, which utilises the UN-REDD SEPC to guide development.

The Solomon Islands already have in place a system of domestic safeguards to protect against the potential negative environmental and social impacts of development activities. Building on and strengthening these policies, laws, regulations and systems and their application to address the Cancun safeguards is in line with guidance provided under both the Cancun and Durban Decisions and will help deliver multiple benefits to the country through strengthening the capacity to implement safeguards across sectors.

The initial objectives of this REDD+ CSS (in addition to being coherent with decisions under the UNFCCC) are:

- To maximize the benefits of REDD+ for the people of the Solomon Islands by safeguarding the country's natural environment and the rights of its people;
- To strengthen and build the effectiveness of national safeguards systems within the Solomon Islands.

Development of this system will also help to address existing international commitments under agreements such as the UN-CBD.

The UN-REDD Social and Environmental Principles and Criteria (SEPC) provide a framework for developing REDD+ Safeguards within the Solomon Islands. This framework is structured around seven Principles (shown in Table 5 against the Principles of the Cancun agreement) each of which is broken down into a number of Criteria of which there are a total of 24.

Table 5: UN-REDD SEPC and UNFCCC Safeguards

UN-REDD SEPC Principles	Relevant section of Cancun Agreements, Annex I
Principle 1 – Apply norms of democratic governance, as reflected in national commitments and Multilateral Agreements	2(b) Transparent and effective national forest governance structures, taking into account national legislation and sovereignty 2(d) The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders, in particular, indigenous peoples and local communities (...)
Principle 2 – Respect and protect stakeholder rights in accordance with international obligations	2(c) Respect for the knowledge and rights of indigenous peoples and members of local communities, by taking into account relevant international obligations, national circumstances and laws, and noting that the General Assembly has adopted the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples
Principle 3 – Promote sustainable livelihoods and poverty reduction	2 (e) Actions are (...) used to (...) enhance other social and environmental benefits (...) 1Taking into account the need for sustainable livelihoods of indigenous peoples and local communities and their interdependence on forests in most countries, reflected in the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the International Mother Earth Day.
Principle 4 – Contribute to low-carbon, climate-resilient sustainable development policy, consistent with national development strategies, national forest programmes and commitments under international conventions and agreements	2(a) Actions complement or are consistent with the objectives of national forest programmes and relevant international conventions and agreements 2(f) Actions to address the risk of reversals
Principle 5 – Protect natural forest from degradation and/or conversion	(e) Actions are consistent with the conservation of natural forest's and biological diversity, ensuring that actions (...) are not used for the conversion of natural forests but are instead used to incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services (...)

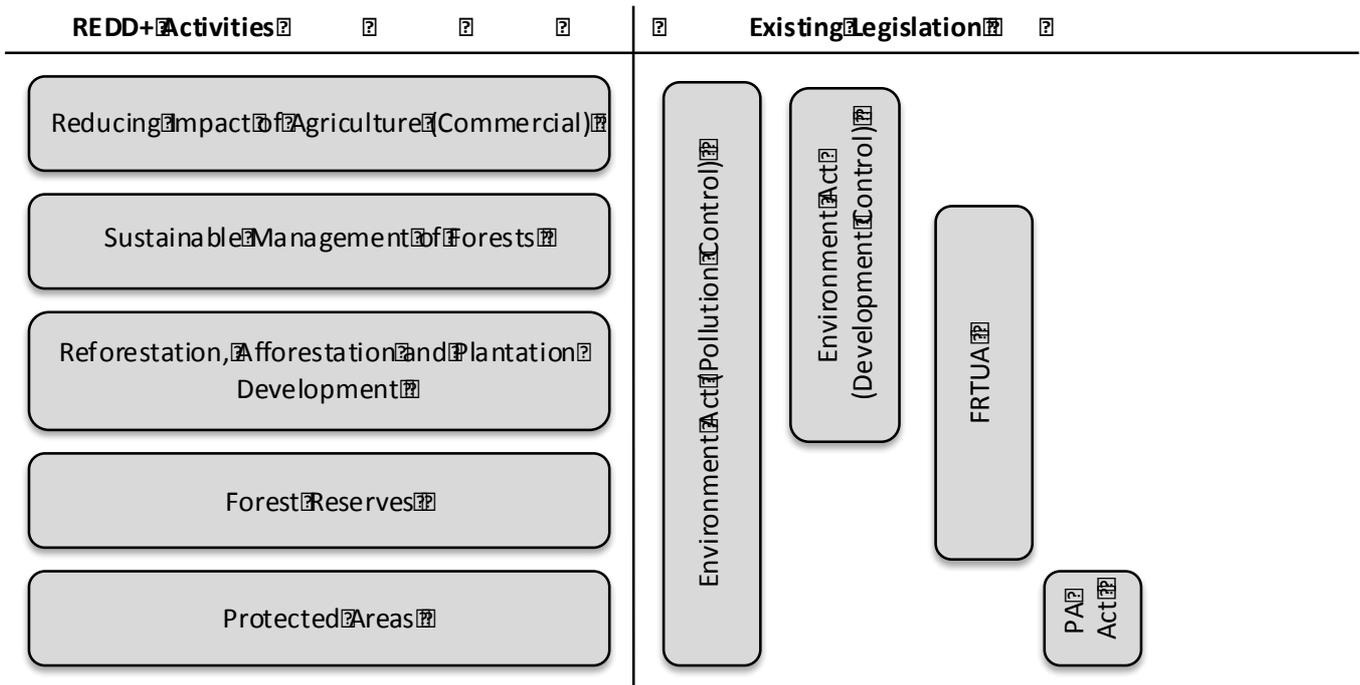
<p>Principle 6 – Maintain and enhance multiple functions of forest including conservation of biodiversity and provision of ecosystem services</p>	<p>2(e) Actions (...) incentivize the protection and conservation of natural forests and their ecosystem services (...)</p> <p>2(e) Actions are (...) used to (...) enhance other social and environmental benefits</p>
<p>Principle 7 – Avoid or minimise adverse impacts (direct and indirect) on non-forest ecosystem services and biodiversity</p>	<p>2(e) Actions that are consistent with the conservation of... biological diversity...</p> <p>2(g) Actions to reduce displacement of emissions</p>

6.4 Establishing a REDD+ Country Safeguard System (CSS) Framework

The Solomon Islands will undertake a phased approach to establishing a REDD+ CSS framework building on existing safeguards provided through the FTRUA 1969, PA Act 2010 and Environment Act 1998. Initial efforts will focus on REDD+ activities through piloting, moving subsequently to sector level approaches focusing on all activities within the forest and agriculture sector before broadening to be fully integrated into cross sector national systems. Strategic actions focusing on effective application of existing legislation, development of guidelines to strengthen application of legislation and undertaking further legal and institutional analysis will be undertaken.

This REDD+ Roadmap identifies a series of key areas in which REDD+ activities will be undertaken. These activity areas are principally governed by three pieces of legislation; the PA Act, the FRTUA and the Environment Act as shown in the figure below:

Figure 6: REDD+ Activities and Key Existing Legislation



These three acts will form the base of the REDD+ CSS with initial efforts focusing on strengthening their application through; development of guidelines on existing requirements, providing training to staff, NGOs, private sector groups and landowners on the requirements of the acts, and strengthening mechanisms to manage and increase access to information on their application. Further legal review should also be conducted linked to the establishment of these guidelines to provide a more comprehensive assessment of the existing legal framework (including other legislation) and provide specific recommendations for amendments.

6.5 Strategy: Strengthening Application of Existing Safeguards in the Forest Sector

Application of the Environment Act and FRTUA should be strengthened and the PA Act fully implemented in new PAs to ensure compliance with existing requirements within the relevant acts. This process should be incremental building on basic requirements of the relevant acts with key areas of action relating to the Development Consent Process, delivery of the State of the Environment Report and establishment of environmental standards under the Environment Act, and ensuring effective review of all elements of the license application process under the FRTUA. Their application should also be strengthened by development of a number of cross cutting and specific guidelines that provide clear requirements for levels of stakeholder participation, transparency and consultation.

6.5.1 Strategic Action: Development of Cross Cutting Guidelines for Stakeholder Participation

The full and effective participation of relevant stakeholders with a particular focus on vulnerable groups is a key component of REDD+ safeguards and is an area in which there is limited guidance within existing Solomon Island legislation. Development of guidance within this area should consider both requirements for site level activities and establishing the broader enabling environment for participation at national level such as levels of public access to information, transparency and consultation.

6.5.1.1 Activity: Development of Cross Cutting Guidelines on Stakeholder engagement and maintaining full and effective participation within Land-use Projects (eg PA, Forest Reserves, Forest Concessions, Plantations).

The existing safeguards within the Solomon Islands provide clear recognition of the need to engage both customary landowners and local communities when undertaking landuse decisions and development projects. Limited information is, however, provided within any of the acts or their regulations on how this process of engagement should be undertaken and what requirements exist to ensure that all groups (in particular womens' groups) are included within consultation processes. Development of a clear set of cross cutting guidelines (related to procedural rights and responsibilities) and performance monitoring criteria that could be used across existing legislation would provide a simple mechanism to guide the proponents of landuse development activities as well as supporting communities in understanding and claiming their rights to consultation. These guidelines could also provide part of an approach to addressing FPIC, which would also encompass guidance on ongoing participation through delivery of projects.

Guidance should continue through the project implementation process to ensure that it covers establishing mechanisms for ongoing engagement of local communities and stakeholders and ensuring that all stakeholders are able to raise grievances and there is sufficient transparency and accountability in decision-making at local level to promote effective use of royalties for the benefit of all community members. Guidelines within this area can build on the guidance for stakeholder engagement developed as part of the REDD+ Roadmap development process.

6.5.1.2 Activity: Development of Guidance on Transparency and Access to Information

The Solomon Islands have no Freedom of Information policy or legislation. Development of guidance relating to requirements for transparency in decision making at all levels of government as well as ensuring access to information would provide a strong interim framework to guide government activity and increase the capacity of stakeholders to effectively engage with decision on natural resources at national and local level.

6.5.2 Strategic Action: Strengthen Implementation and Enforcement of the Environment Act (1998)

The EA is the most significant environmental and social safeguard within the Solomon Islands. Its application however is limited by, a lack of specific environmental standards, clear guidance on application of key controls such as the development control process and effective management of environmental information, resulting both directly from the application of the act and application of other legislation and programmes

(such as the PA Act and environmental and social research work). The activities below focus on strengthening the application of key elements of the act – while activities related to the EMIS are covered under section 6.2.

6.5.2.1 Activity: Development of Standards for environment

Development of standards for environmental management would provide an important base line against which elements of the EA (including Development Control and Pollution control) can be operationalized. These standards would also set key objectives against which environmental management performance can be met within the context of the State of Environment Report, and can be linked to stated national development objectives as well as reporting against international obligations.

6.5.2.2 Activity: Development and Testing of Cross Cutting Guidelines on Environmental and Social Impact Assessment

The Development Consent Process provides mechanisms for the assessment of development impacts for a wide range of prescribed developments. However, no standardised approach currently exists for assessing the environment and social impacts of policies, programmes and activities outside of these prescribed developments. Establishment of clear guidance on information that should be included within ESIA's and at what level (scale of operation / impacts) different requirements could be triggered would provide a basis for developing more specific guidance related to prescribed developments under the development consent process as well as other landuse changes such as PAs or forest reserves.

6.5.2.3 Activity: Development and Testing of guidelines for the Development Consent Process

The Development Consent process provides an important mechanism for safeguarding against negative impacts within the forest sector and supporting the delivery of multiple benefits from development projects. Further guidance on the application of this process to better meet international standards as well as provision of clearer guidance for criteria for assessment of applications, including when the process should be applied, when exemptions are possible and the types of EIA that are required would significantly strengthen this process.

These guidelines can be tested initially within areas identified for REDD+ piloting or specific forestry pilots prior to being adopted for wider use. Development should also occur in close coordination with work on development of guidelines for the Development Consent process in other sectors that is currently ongoing⁴⁸.

6.5.3 Strategic Action: Strengthen Application and Review of All Elements of the Felling and Milling Licensing Process

There is a need to strengthen the effective review of all steps within the license application process. Key steps within the process will include:

- *Review of Certificates of Determination (CoD)* - The Commissioner should request that information be provided on the process that occurred to obtain the CoD including prior notice of the Timber Rights Hearing being given to landowners and communities and levels of participation within the timber rights hearing.
- *Oversight of the Negotiation of Timber Rights Agreement (TRA)* - The TRA sets out a four-step process for negotiating agreements (Form 4 para 4). This process should be followed with the Commissioner undertaking full review. The Commissioner should also review the clauses within the TRA to ensure that they are in line with the principles of sustainable harvesting and fair benefit sharing. Should the TRA not

⁴⁸ The ADB are currently supporting a process of identifying safeguards for the Transport sector.

be developed through due process or contain amendments that are not consistent with the act, no certificate of approval should be provided.

- *Ensuring Financial Transparency* - Under the TRA companies are required to provide a Monthly Statement to the Commissioner of activities (c32) and to pay royalties to representatives in a public place with notice given one week in advance (c34). The Commissioner should require information to be provided on this process including levels of participation in the public meeting where figures are disclosed. Information should be provided in an easy to understand format with potential for MFR to develop a basic form for use.
- *Monitoring of Operation of a Concession* - All concessions should be monitored on a periodic basis to ensure that they are complying with existing regulations including:
 - No infringement within Taboo areas.
 - Full application and enforcement of Code of Logging Practice.
 - No pollution to forest or other ecosystems.
 - Full adherence to the conditions of the license.
- *Ensuring Transparency and Access to Information at Provincial Level* - All information on felling and milling licenses should be maintained at provincial level with provincial level forestry officers working with the Provincial Authority to ensure that this is the case.

6.5.3.1 Activity: Develop Checklist of requirements for key processes within the felling and milling license application process.

Development of a clear checklist of requirements that build on both agreed procedural guidance for stakeholder engagement (Section 5.1.2) and existing legislation would provide a clearer basis for assessment of licenses. This linked with a more transparent and publically accessible NFMS (based on SOLFRIS) would provide the MFR with a simplified mechanism for managing applications, as well as providing landowners with a simple process through which they can assess whether requirements are being met.

6.5.4 Strategic Action: Legal review of Existing Safeguards

The initial assessment of legislation has identified areas in which there are limitations in existing acts and their implementation. Identification of specific revisions to legislation will however require both consideration of experience from testing of guidelines and expert legal assessment to ensure that perverse incentives, contradictions or legal deficiencies are not created. The initial analysis also highlighted a number of additional elements of legislation that should be considered as part of a REDD+ CSS as well including, the Constitution of the Solomon Islands, the Financial Management and Audit Act (2014), the Land and Titles Act (1996), the Customary Land Recording Act (1996), and the Companies Act (2009). Further review of these pieces of legislation and their relationships with the initial three would further strengthen any review and revision process. The assessment should also consider not only the UN-REDD SEPC but also a number of key criteria utilised by development partners and private sector groups to ensure that future amendments provide a strong basis for establishment of a CSS that can be utilised for a range of development activities.

6.5.4.1 Activity: Undertake Full legal assessment of relevant legislation against key international Safeguard Criteria

An initial assessment of FRTUA, the EA and the PA against UN-REDD SEPC has been undertaken as part of the REDD+ Roadmap development process. This process should be further developed to identify specific recommendations for amendments to the three main acts as well as identifying relevant sections within other legislation that can support the application of safeguards or may require further strengthening. This process can build on the work undertaken by ADB on assessment of the Environment Act against ADB safeguards.

Box 3: Linking Pilot Activities and the National REDD+ CSS

Chapter 11 of the Roadmap notes both the need for government led or supported pilot projects to test different approaches to REDD+ and the potential for PS or CS groups to take a lead in implementing REDD+ projects on customary land. Within each of these cases there will be a need for approaches to the Cancun Safeguards to be both implemented and information provided on this process.

Within the context of government led programmes it is anticipated that pilots will test guidance developed at the national level as part of the REDD+ process to identify how it can best be operationalized.

Projects initiated by PS or CS however may be focused on accessing the voluntary forest carbon market and as such will need to work to utilise existing internationally recognised standard. Within these contexts it will be required that:

- All projects enter into an MoU with the relevant ministry an element of which will relate to joint working and capacity building including training on implementation of voluntary standards
- All projects will be required to provide clear documentation to the RIU on how they have implemented the voluntary standard through the project registration process.

Based on these elements the government will be able to gain valuable insight and experience of the benefits and challenges of implementing voluntary forest carbon market standards that can be fed back into the development process of the REDD+ CSS.

6.6 Strategy: Establish a REDD+ Safeguard Information System

Solomon Islands will need to develop a Safeguard Information System based on existing national and international reporting requirements. The system will need a structure of Principles, Criteria, and Indicators to facilitate monitoring of the implementation of safeguards. This will utilise a combination of system, process and outcome indicators to provide information on both the development and the implementation of the REDD+ CSS.

A safeguard information system (SIS) is anticipated to take the form of a series of *principles*, which provide the overall objectives, *criteria*, which represent the key focus areas of the CSS and performance and *indicators*, which provide information on the application of safeguards and the impact they are having.

The Cancun decision provides a set of principles against which information can be provided. The concepts from these principles are also broken down and addressed in different ways by existing safeguard frameworks. The existing assessment has been conducted against the UN-REDD SEPC the seven principles from which are shown in table 4.

The UN-REDD SEPC also provides 24 criteria, which provide a more detailed interpretation of the Principles and under which specific indicators can more easily be developed. The existing assessment has identified areas in which there is the potential for criteria to be merged or revised to better fit national circumstances. This process should be further reviewed to identify more country specific criteria.

Indicators can be grouped into three main categories:

- *Systems indicators*: these provide information on the presence of specific elements of the legal, institutional and compliance framework which support the implementation of the safeguards.
- *Process indicators*: these provide information on the application of the systems put in place as part of the CSS – for example number of EIS submitted.
- *Outcome indicators*: these provide information on the actual results of the CSS in terms of ensuring no-harm is done and multiple benefits are realized.

Reporting on different types of indicator can occur on different time frames. Systems indicators may often only need to be reported once (as the system is either in place or not), process indicators may need to be updated more regularly to demonstrate that systems are functioning, whereas outcome indicators may only be assessed over longer time periods (potentially several years) as it is only after this time that impact can truly be seen. Once again the process of identifying indicators should be linked with consideration of

existing, activity, sector, national and international level reporting to commitments to identify where efficiencies can be achieved and work on REDD+ can further strengthen existing commitments.

It is also recognised that achievement of a comprehensive, fully operational and effective REDD+ CSS may take time to develop as capacities are built and legislation developed. As such it may also be relevant to identify indicators related to the strengthening of the REDD+ CSS to reach the standards desired – such as progress in delivering actions identified within the REDD+ Roadmap.

Box 4: Example of Linkages between System, Process and Outcome Indicators

Reporting on *Systems indicators* can be a one off process related to the presence or absence of that system, or related to the process of developing and strengthening that system. For example with reference to the UN-REDD SEPC a question can be asked - Is there a system in place to;

Avoid or minimise degradation of natural forest by REDD+ activities and make reducing degradation due to other causes (e.g. agriculture, extractive activities, infrastructure) a REDD+ priority. (Criterion 19)

The system indicator response would be - Yes – the Development Consent process under the EA provides a basis for this process but is not applicable to all potential REDD+ activities and its implementation requires strengthening.

As such further indicators can be identified to consider how this process is moving towards fully addressing and respecting the Cancun Safeguards. These could be:

- *Establishment and testing of Guidelines on Development Consent Process for activities.*
- *Revisions of Environment Act to reflect revised guidelines and recommendations of legal review.*

The application of these systems can then be demonstrated through *Process Indicators*, which relate to the application of the system. For example for Criterion 19 the indicator would relate to the application of the Development Consent Process for REDD+ activities in the Forest Sector so would be:

Full Development Consent application process completed for all forest sector activities including EIS identifying impacts on degradation of natural forest and measures to reduce these.

Information on this process should already be available from the Environment and Conservation Division of the MECDM, which is required by the Environment Act to maintain a publically accessible record of all Development Consent Applications. This system however requires further strengthening.

The final level of indicator relates to *Outcome Indicators* – these provide evidence that the REDD+ CSS is being effective in its objectives. Information on these can come from existing data collection and reporting processes. For example outcome indicators for Criterion 19 could be:

- *Number of complaints raised by landowners and communities with relation to forest degradation occurring within areas provided with Development Consent or*
- *Levels of forest degradation occurring as assessed through assessment of levels of forest cover undertaken as part of the MRV process and related to National Communications under the UN-FCCC.*

As with periodic reporting to the UN-FCCC information for outcome indicators can be both taken from and developed as part of existing domestic or international reporting requirements. For example the Environment Act requires the ECD to produce a State of the Environment Report every three years. This document should contain information at the national scale that is relevant to assessment as to whether the environmental safeguards adopted as part of the REDD+ CSS framework are delivering effective outcomes.

Information on application of safeguards against the system of principles, criteria and indicators will be drawn from a combination of management information from REDD+ specific activities (such as operation of

the Taskforce), existing reporting requirements at domestic and international levels and strengthened Information Management Systems within MECDM and MFR.

Identification of mechanisms to effectively collect information on indicators and criteria will be critical to operationalizing the SIS. The objective of this process will be to limit duplication of existing systems, building instead on existing and developing mechanisms of information management to further strengthen their operation and increase access to their findings.

The core elements of these mechanisms are already in place within the Solomon Islands through the Environment Act (which requires a publically accessible registry of all development consent information to be kept at the ECD, and a State of the Environment Report to be produced every three years), the PA Act (which requires a registry of PAs to be maintained) and the operations of the MFR, which, has developed SOLFRIS. Strengthening of these systems, and increasing their accessibility and interactions will provide a solid base for the SIS as well as strengthening the capacity of the MECDM and MFR to deliver their own work programmes.

Identification of other complimentary systems will also build this capacity and should strengthen links between key ministries such as MAL, MDPAC and the MFR and MECDM and should form a key element of the NFMS.

An over view of the structure of the proposed system is shown in Figure 7.

Figure 7: Overview of Data Sources for a REDD+ Safeguard Information System

Type of Indicator	Sources of Information	Central consolidation
Systems Indicators	RIU based assessment of safeguard framework	Central Data collection / consolidation. Process led by RIU to ensure summary information on application of safeguards is available this could utilise: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Linked data base (Development Consent, Protected Areas and SOLFRIS) Collation of existing process information on an annual basis.
Process Indicators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Existing (or mandated) information management systems - Development Consent Register, Protected areas Register, SOLFRIS REDD+ Specific Activity monitoring (consultation events) Third party assessments eg – Transparency International Forest Sector Transparency Assessment 	
Outcome Indicators	Periodic reviews of status of social and environmental conditions eg: State of Environment Report, National Census	

6.6.1 Strategic Action: Formulate and agree agree on criteria and Indicators Against Which Reporting will occur.

Further work must be done to review existing criteria and potential indicators related to the REDD+ CSS to further customise the UN-REDD SEPC to the country context. This process should occur in combination with

efforts to operationalize existing reporting requirements (see next Strategic Action) and efforts to identify actions required to further strengthen the REDD+ CSS (See section 6.4)

6.6.1.1 Activity: Review and Identify Key Criteria and Indicators

Review of UN-REDD SEPC criteria and indicators and identification of revisions and amendments. This process should be undertaken through a multi-stakeholder forum led by the RIU and RFP and should be done in conjunction with a review of existing information sources although consideration should also be given to information sources outside these ministries for example, census information and the RAMSI Peoples' Survey (although the future of this is less certain).

6.6.1.2 Activity: Develop Initial Safeguards Report and Workplan

An initial safeguards report will be developed for submission to the UNFCCC as part of the Solomon Islands ongoing reporting under the convention. The report will utilise the criteria and indicators identified under Activity 6.6.1.1 to provide information on current performance against the Cancun Safeguards and to identify next steps in further strengthening their application. This report can build on the work undertaken during the REDD+ Roadmap process in identifying and assessing the application of existing safeguards.

6.6.2 Strategic Action: Strengthen Information Management Systems in MECDM

The information management systems within MECDM and MFR are the most critical to providing information on the application of a REDD+ CSS as well as reporting against related international agreements. Further development of these systems will provide information sources for both ongoing process indicators as well as outcome indicators and will represent key systems for increasing transparency and access to information.

6.6.2.1 Activity: Establish an Integrated Information Management and Geographical Information System within MECDM with Linkages to the NFMS

Under the EA and PA Act the MECDM is mandated to maintain a number of registries of information including information on Development Consent Applications (covering forestry, mining and agriculture) and Protected Areas. The ministry is also required to maintain information on biodiversity and environment. Establishment of effective information management systems to hold this information and allow for cross-referencing across systems would provide a strong tool to support the implementation of the relevant acts including development of the State of the Environment Report and international commitments. Linking these with a GIS system would further strengthen the process and provide an easily accessible format through which other stakeholders could review and identify information about relevant areas. This process should also be linked with the development of the NFMS to ensure that there is easy compatibility between systems and that where possible cost savings are made on GIS data acquisition and processing.

6.6.2.2 Activity: Resource and provide training to MECDM staff on the management of the EMIS

Following the development of the workplan equipment and resources will need to be provided to ensure that the system can be maintained over a longer time period. The MECDM already has significant IT resources and with a move into a new building in coming years, opportunities to further expand these resources will be possible. Key initial requirements will focus on maintaining full time staff to manage and coordinate the EMIS.

6.6.2.3 Activity: Undertake EMIS system population covering past data

An initial process of EMIS population will need to occur focusing on in putting both base data layers for GIS mapping (this can be linked to the NFMS) and also collating and entering existing information on developments, research and other activities. This process should be supported by additional personnel for a

short period of time to ensure that the system becomes an effective and powerful tool from an early stage in its existence.

7 Stakeholder Engagement

The objective of the stakeholder engagement element of the Roadmap is to ensure that:

Stakeholders have sufficient awareness of REDD+ and how they can be effectively involved in the implementation of any REDD+ activity.

To achieve this objective it will be important to:

- Focus on the needs of the constituent groups – landowners, government (national / provincial), NGOs, Private Sector, and indigenous and forest dependent communities
- Coordinate with other initiatives to ensure that information on forests, land-use and climate change (adaptation and mitigation) is presented in a coherent (logistically and technically) form at national and sub-national levels
- Ensure the engagement of vulnerable groups, women, youth, and indigenous and forest dependent community members
- Not create undue expectations or create additional challenges over land-use or ownership

In line with these considerations it will be critical to implement a programme of awareness raising and consultation related to REDD+.

7.1 Strategy: Implement a National Level REDD+ Awareness Raising Campaign

The Strategy will be implemented through a number of strategic action areas including:

- Broad-based awareness raising campaign
- Focused Stakeholder Awareness Raising
- Specific Community Based Awareness Raising

Activities within each of these areas should be developed in close coordination with existing awareness raising activities being developed and implemented for other landuse related issues such as CCA and DRR, as well as sector specific actions such as PA development or awareness raising on legislation related to natural resource management.

7.1.1 Strategic Action: Establishment of a Broad-based awareness raising campaign

The highly decentralized nature of land management in the Solomon Islands means that it is critical to ensure a broad range of stakeholders understand the concepts of REDD+ within the context of existing forest and land management. To achieve this it is proposed that REDD+ information will be delivered through four main mechanisms:

- Printed materials content (pamphlets, posters and newspapers)
- Radio programmes and television news
- Online media in particular a REDD+ Website
- Workshops in provincial capitals

These approaches will act independently but will also link together to form an ‘awareness raising pathway’ by which stakeholders’ can initially be provided with information and then seek further information about REDD+. Cutting across the activities will be a number of key printed resources focusing on what REDD+ is, what it can mean for landowners, and how to engage with it.

7.1.1.1 Activity: Development of Printed Material Content

Printed materials including information leaflets and newspaper articles are a critical resource within the Solomon Islands. Short briefing documents will be developed to help inform stakeholders about REDD+, how it integrates into national development plans, and what it can mean to engage in a mechanism on REDD+. Information from these will also be utilised with updates on national REDD+ activities to provide press releases and briefings to journalists to strengthen reporting on REDD+ and carbon trading more broadly.

7.1.1.2 Activity: Development of a Series of Radio Programmes

Radio remains the primary source of information for the majority of Solomon Islanders and is more evenly utilised by males, females, and youth than other forms of media making it an important tool in broadening awareness and future engagement.⁴⁹ A series of radio programmes (linked to printed information) will be developed to help inform stakeholders about REDD+, its linkages with national and local development, and relevance to disaster risk reduction and reduction in vulnerabilities to extreme weather events.

7.1.1.3 Activity: Maintenance of a REDD+ Website

Internet is an important medium for many key decision makers (senior staff in NGOs, senior government officials, chiefs, and business people)⁵⁰. The Solomon Islands REDD+ website is currently under development and will provide a central repository for available REDD+ information. This **will provide both background information on REDD+ and stepwise information on landowner rights with regard to REDD+, how to engage in REDD+, and other guidance⁵¹.**

The site will also link with a regional REDD+ platform being developed through the SPC GIZ funded 'Climate Protection through Forest Conservation in the Pacific' programme, as well as the National Forestry Monitoring System to allow access to information on levels of forest cover and planned and ongoing activities within the sector.

7.1.1.4 Activity: Provincial Level Awareness Raising Events

Provincial level awareness raising events will focus on providing information to landowners and key community members, as well as provincial government officials and are anticipated to be undertaken over a number of days in each location. These events will be advertised well in advance and should be scheduled to coincide with other events or activities to facilitate attendance by representatives from throughout the province. Content of these events will also be coordinated with other natural resource initiatives to ensure that a coherent message on climate change and land management is provided at the local level.

7.1.2 Strategic Action: Increase understanding of REDD+ and undertake consultation with Key Stakeholders

A number of key stakeholder groups will need to play central roles in the development and expansion of REDD+ within the Solomon Islands. These stakeholders will require information to be provided to them in a tailored way to ensure REDD+ is understood with relevance to actions that they are undertaking.

⁴⁹ At least 3 in 5 respondents in a 2010 national survey identifying it is their primary source of information for, local, national and world news, special issues, sports news, disaster warnings, and entertainment. - Tebbutt Research (2010) Audience Market Research in Solomon Islands: Qualitative and Quantitative Research Report. Prepared for SOLMAS – Solomon Islands Media Assistance Scheme. Available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/foi/documents/solmas-report.pdf>

⁵⁰ Tebbutt Research (2010) Audience Market Research in Solomon Islands: Qualitative and Quantitative Research Report. Prepared for SOLMAS – Solomon Islands Media Assistance Scheme. Available at: <http://www.usaid.gov/foi/documents/solmas-report.pdf>

⁵¹ During the development of the REDD+ Roadmap a number of landowner groups have requested further information and assistance in understanding REDD+ having been approached by potential project developers. These groups have commonly sought to gain information via the internet but have found it difficult to gain appropriate information in the short time periods available to them and on the slow connections being used.

7.1.2.1 Activity: Stakeholder Specific Awareness Raising and consultation events

A series of stakeholder specific awareness raising events will be held. These events will provide key stakeholder groups with information on REDD+ within the context of wider land management and development decisions.

7.1.3 Strategic Action: Establish approaches to engaging communities on REDD+ including conducting awareness raising, consulting on activities and gaining consent for REDD+ actions.

The highly rural nature of the Solomon Islands' population combined with the limited and high cost of transport make awareness raising and consultation at the local level challenging. The activities noted above are intended to provide information to a broader range of stakeholders, but is limited in its potential to fully consult on the development of site-specific activities. It is proposed that further location specific awareness raising be developed through a number of pilot locations to support the development of approaches to awareness raising, consultation and the implementation of Free Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) at site level, that can in the future be integrated into national policies, regulations and programmes. These activities will be linked with activities identified within Section 6 REDD+ Safeguards. And Section 11 on Piloting.

7.1.3.1 Activity: Pilot approaches to awareness raising, consultation and participation within key REDD+ activities.

Piloting at site level of approaches to building awareness of REDD+ activities, consulting on how activities will be managed and undertaken and gaining consent to undertake activities will be conducted at a number of locations through establishment of PA, reforestation / plantation development and sustainable forest management pilot projects.

7.2 Grievance and Redress Mechanism for REDD+

It will be important for stakeholders to be able to raise issues within the development of the National REDD+ Programme. The current mechanism will be based around the existing merits appeal process with stakeholders able to address grievances through the proposed REDD+ management structure of the REDD+ Implementation Unit, the REDD+ Focal Point, and the National REDD+ Committee.

The principles of subsidiarity will be adopted for addressing grievances within the REDD+ readiness process with stakeholders addressing initial grievances with the most directly associated body and only escalating these issues if they are not effectively addressed. As such the REDD+ Implementation Unit will form the initial point of contact with the unit then responsible for coordinating with other bodies to address the grievance within one month of it being raised and if necessary providing a forum within which disputes can be heard. All issues raised and means by which they are addressed, will be reported by the unit to the NRC. Based on these reports the NRC should advise on a quarterly basis of any operational changes that should be undertaken to reduce future risks.

Should this process be unable to resolve a dispute, within two months of it being raised the issues can be raised directly with the NRC, which will be responsible for providing a multi-stakeholder forum within which the dispute can be heard within one month of the issue being brought to its attention.

A final level of dispute resolution will be provided within the Climate Change Working Group.

Further review of how to develop an effective grievance and redress mechanism for REDD+ will require assessment within the context of activities developed for REDD+. Review of this should occur following initial piloting of approaches to REDD+.

7.3 Strategy: Establish a comprehensive Grievance and Redress Mechanism

A comprehensive grievance and redress mechanism will need to be developed for REDD+ prior to full implementation. This should not be a 'stand alone' system but one that is integrated with existing grievance and redress mechanisms. As such work is required to both identify how this system can be developed and to provide support to those institutions that will be responsible for its operation.

7.3.1 Strategic Action: Identify REDD+ specific grievance and redress mechanism

7.3.1.1 Activity: Review existing grievance and redress mechanisms

Undertake an assessment of existing grievance and redress mechanisms within the Solomon Islands, their effectiveness and key areas of weakness and develop recommendations for a REDD+ grievance and redress mechanism. It is anticipated that some amendments to legislation or regulation may also be recommended.

7.3.1.2 Activity: Undertake consultation on potential grievance and redress mechanism for REDD+

Undertake consultations on the proposals (developed from activity above) with key stakeholders to identify potential operational and technical challenges and develop a comprehensive proposal accepted by a broad range of stakeholders.

7.3.2 Strategic Action: Build capacity of relevant Institutions to effectively implement REDD+ Grievance and Redress Mechanisms

7.3.2.1 Activity: Develop workplan for the establishment of grievance and Redress Mechanism for REDD+

Based on proposals from 7.2.1 develop a clear workplan to support the establishment of the mechanism identifying where training related to REDD+ should be integrated into either planned REDD+ capacity building on capacity building on existing grievance and redress mechanisms such as those related to the landuse sector.

7.3.2.2 Activity: Implement training activities within key institutions to ensure effective implementation of grievance and redress mechanism

Implement planned training and capacity build activities. These trainings should not only strengthen application of the REDD+ grievance and redress mechanism but mechanisms in place for the forest and land use sectors more broadly.

8 Financial Management and Benefit Sharing Mechanisms

The establishment of a mechanism for REDD+ will require establishment of transparent and effective financial management structures as well as a framework of how costs and benefits from REDD+ implementation will be shared between different stakeholders. This process will require guidance on the rights of different stakeholders to support, related to reductions in forest carbon emissions and how any support will be managed.

Establishing the financial management structures to support REDD+ implementation and effective benefit sharing will require action at a number of levels to develop effective frameworks for benefit sharing and the mechanisms through which this can occur.

8.1 Strategy: Establish National Level REDD+ Fund Management Structures

In the third (and final phase) of REDD+, the Solomon Islands will receive REDD+ results-based payments for verified forest carbon emission reductions and increases in forest carbon stocks (UNFCCC Decision 9/CP.19). Receiving and managing these results-based payments, will require a national level mechanism, fund or facility. There is currently no set body in existence for this process although modalities do exist for both development partner project based support, sector budget support and government structures such as trust funds or special funds that are established for a specific technical or operational purpose.

The management structures identified within Section 4 provide an initial set of operational and oversight structures that can be used to both develop and implement future structures. The participation of the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination (MDPAC) and Ministry of Finance (MoF) within the NRC will be essential in this design process, which will include defining the authority to transact international payments through REDD+ implementation.

During the REDD+ Readiness phase, a study will be carried out to identify and consider options for the financial arrangements. The study will also produce recommendations on the terms of reference for the management of REDD+ finances. For example, the management authority may have the following attributes:

- Independent of the REDD+ management structure;
- Ability to receive funds for results-based payments through the international mechanism for REDD+ and to create synergies, if necessary, between multiple sources of funding with clear accountability;
- Ability to enforce decisions on results-based fund disbursement for REDD+ implementation.

8.1.1 Strategic Action: Create a transparent system for national level management of REDD+ finances

8.1.1.1 Activity: Conduct study on the design of a body for management of REDD+ result-based payments;

This will require assessment of existing 'best practice' in the Solomon Islands for implementing national-scale development projects, and existing results based incentive structures. An options paper should then be developed presenting recommendations for transparent and accountable management of national REDD+ finance and a National Authority for managing the receipt of international REDD+ results-based payments in a transparent, accountable and efficient way;

8.1.1.2 Activity: Undertake in-depth consultation on the management structures for REDD+ finances;

Recommendations from the assessment should go through a process of significant consultation and review.

8.1.2 Strategic Action: Establish a mechanism for linking benefits from emission reductions to landownership and land-users with landowners empowered to enter into emission reduction agreements

Landowners already have significant autonomy over the use of resources on their land with a wide range of community members able to use and access resources under customary agreements. Linking rights to emission reductions to these rights and the sustainable use of land and forest resources reduces both the potential for perverse incentives to arise between landowners, timber rights holders and 'carbon rights holders' as well as reducing the potential for a small group of stakeholders to monopolise benefits from REDD+.

Development of linkages between carbon rights and land rights and user rights will require effective mapping of existing rights at community level. This process has been trialled through the customary land recording process and should be further trialled as part of initial REDD+ activities. To establish the legal mandate for such linkages it is also anticipated that a revision to the Land and Titles Act will be required to both define forest carbon and rights to its use. Clarification will also be required to assess existing legislation in relation to mangrove areas as these may be subject to REDD+ activities.

Agreements on the 'sale of emission reductions' from these land areas should also be permitted. Such emission reduction agreements must however ensure that landowners retain their rights to the forest area and can thus make decisions on how that land area is managed as part of a forest carbon scheme. Due to the complexities of carbon stock assessments within each land area it may also be relevant for such agreements to be structured around more easily quantifiable proxies such as quality of PA management with the government of the Solomon Islands then allocating support received on the basis of emission reductions to communities based on this.

8.1.2.1 Activity: Identify the legal basis for carbon rights allocation under a national REDD+ mechanism

Identify a legal basis for carbon right attribution linked to existing and proposed structures of landownership and registration and how this process will link with the management structures for REDD+ finance.

8.1.3 Strategic Action: Establishment of Benefit Sharing Framework for Key REDD+ Activities

The Solomon Islands will undertake REDD+ across strategies in agriculture, forestry, and environment. Establishing a clear framework of how benefits can be managed across these different sectors will be important to ensure that perverse incentives are not created and landowners are able to make informed choices about their approaches to land-use management.

This framework should identify key elements including:

- 1 Types on body eligible for engagement in REDD+ activities and how those bodies should be established and managed (a key safeguard to ensure effective stakeholder engagement and benefit sharing).
- 2 What evidence is required to undertake REDD+ activities (for example evidence of landownership)
- 3 What incentives will be provided (technical support, financial assistance, materials) and on what basis these will be sustained.
- 4 How to account for and cost the role of government action within site level REDD+ implementation.
- 5 How to balance the need for a highly diversified number of site-specific solutions that are characteristic of the diversity of the Solomon Islands with the potentially high transaction costs of negotiating a large number of site-specific agreements.

Box 5: Increasing the role of women in Benefit Sharing Mechanisms and Land-use Decision-making

During the piloting process for Customary Land Recording the requirements for two women to be present on boards of trustees was made for all newly recorded land. Whilst these members were duly elected and attended initial meetings, two years after their establishment there was no record of their attendance at meetings. It is unlikely that this was either due to either coincidence or lack of commitment but rather represents the challenges of addressing deep rooted social norms through regulations with limited on-going oversight or enforcement.

Further assessment of the potential costs of implementing different land management practices and sources of financing from them will be required for clear decisions to be made on these approaches.

Should provisions also be made for landowners to engage directly with project developers or other third parties it will be important that contractual support is also provided. Lessons from the timber rights acquisition process (FRTUA) and surface access agreements (under the MMA) provide examples of the power imbalances that exist between communities and landowners with limited education and knowledge of market values for commodities or contractual agreements and private firms, with many landowners signing agreements that are not in their best interests.

8.1.3.1 Activity: Review of existing benefit sharing mechanisms and institutional arrangements and potential value and costs of REDD+ implementation

Assessment looking at existing benefit sharing and incentive mechanisms across sectors including Guadalcanal Plains Palm Oil Ltd (GPPOL) out-grower scheme, local level protected areas (in particular MPAs), reforestation activities, plantation management and small scale timber milling. Assessment should be utilised to develop proposals for benefit sharing approaches under different landuse regimes with consideration given to the potential cost of implementing different REDD+ strategies as well as potential additional financial and multiple benefits available should be conducted to identify future scenarios and incentive mechanisms.

8.1.3.2 Activity: Establishment of proposals for benefit sharing within different REDD+ Strategies

Proposals for benefit sharing mechanisms developed through a benefit sharing working group and presented for consultation within ministries, the NRC and at provincial level consultation events.

9 National Forest Monitoring System

Solomon Islands will need to establish a National Forest Monitoring System to ensure clear and transparent information is available on levels of forest cover and associated forest sector carbon emissions.

UNFCCC Decision 4/CP.15 establishes the REDD+ MRV requirement by requesting Parties (paragraph 1(d)) to:

“...establish, according to national circumstances and capabilities, robust and transparent national forest monitoring systems and, if appropriate, sub-national systems as part of national monitoring systems that:

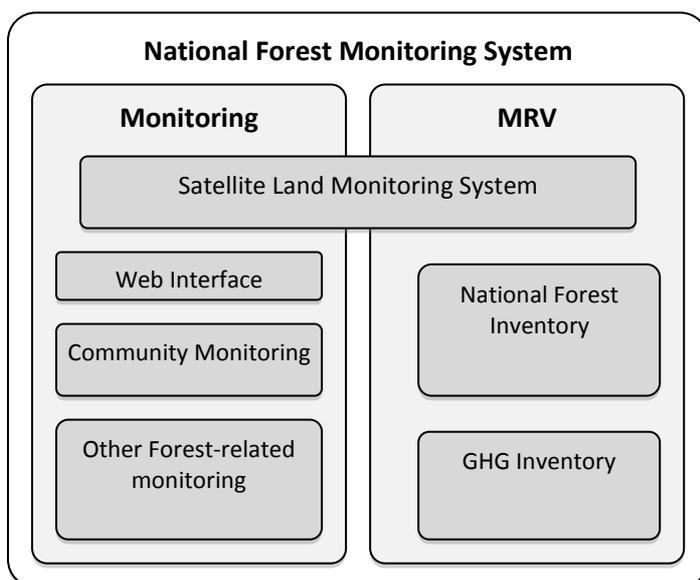
- i. Use a combination of remote sensing and ground-based forest carbon inventory approaches for estimating ... anthropogenic forest-related greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks and forest area changes;*
- ii. Provide estimates that are transparent, consistent, as far as possible accurate, and that reduce uncertainties, taking into account national capabilities and capacities;*
- iii. Are transparent and their results are available and suitable for review as agreed by the Conference of the Parties”.*

Decision 4/CP.15 also specifies that countries must follow the most recent methodological recommendations issued by the IPCC, serving as a basis for estimating the sources of anthropogenic GHG emissions, and their removal by sinks, and for measuring carbon stocks and changes in forest area. In this way, emissions estimates will be based on common (i.e. IPCC) methodological approaches. This methodological guidance indicates that national forest monitoring systems should be used to:

- (i) estimate emissions and removals from the forest sector (M, measurement);
- (ii) report this mitigation performance of REDD+ activities to the UNFCCC (R, reporting); and
- (iii) allow verification of the results by the UNFCCC Secretariat (V, verification) (subject to further guidance from the COP) – i.e. to fulfil the MRV function for REDD+ activities.

UNFCCC guidance on this technical element for REDD+ is further developed in Decision 1/CP.16, where developing countries aiming to participate in REDD+ are requested to develop (paragraph 71(c)):

Figure 8: The dual functions of a National Forest Monitoring System for REDD+ (FAO UN-REDD Programme 2013)



“A robust and transparent national forest monitoring system for the monitoring and reporting of the [REDD+] activities ..., with, if appropriate, sub-national monitoring and reporting as an interim measure, in accordance with national circumstances, and with the provisions contained in decision 4/CP.15”.

Decisions 4/CP.15 and 1/CP.16 together establish that countries should develop a national forest monitoring system to serve the dual functions of monitoring and MRV, as shown in Figure 8. As Figure 8 indicates, the monitoring function of the national forest monitoring system may include wider

elements such as community monitoring and traditional forestry monitoring systems. Community monitoring will form an integral part of the monitoring system as communities will provide ground-level information (e.g. tree counts and locations, delimitation of community forest areas), which will feed into the web-GIS interface. Traditional forest monitoring systems are a critical consideration as the national forest monitoring system aims to build on existing systems and be based on national circumstances; these will therefore also be incorporated into the monitoring function for REDD+ (these systems can link to monitoring activities related to PA implementation (section 5.5.3.), forestry concession management (section 5.1.1.), and forestry reserve management (section 5.3)).

A national forest monitoring system (NFMS) is best described as a series of tools to consolidate and regularly update information on forest resources that can be used for evaluating and monitoring changes of forest landscapes. For REDD+, this is an essential tool for use to assess GHG emissions and removals from forestry, as well as to evaluate historic land use trends, monitor logging concessions and other activities affecting forest cover (such as restoration, conservation, etc.). To be effective and to fully participate in REDD+, the NFMS and methodologies used must contain the following key elements:

- *Transparency.* Assumptions and methodologies are clear to facilitate replication and assessment of the inventory by users, including national decision makers and third-party reviewers / verifiers.
- *Accuracy.* This defines the degree of ‘closeness’ of a measured value to its actual (true) value. Developing emissions factors (EFs)⁵² requires ground-based inventory sampling, and the sampling protocol must contain enough samples to be statistically robust. For remote sensing data, there must be feedback and some degree of ground truth analysis to ensure classifications are correct.
- *Consistency.* Methodologies should be consistent throughout the years. Methods can be refined, but there must be enough consistency so that prior years are comparable.
- *Completeness.* The forest inventory must cover all sources and sinks of GHGs. In forestry, these are the five forest carbon pools identified by the IPCC: aboveground, belowground, litter, deadwood and soil.
- *Comparability.* Estimates of emissions and removals of GHGs by Parties to the UNFCCC should be comparable among all Parties.

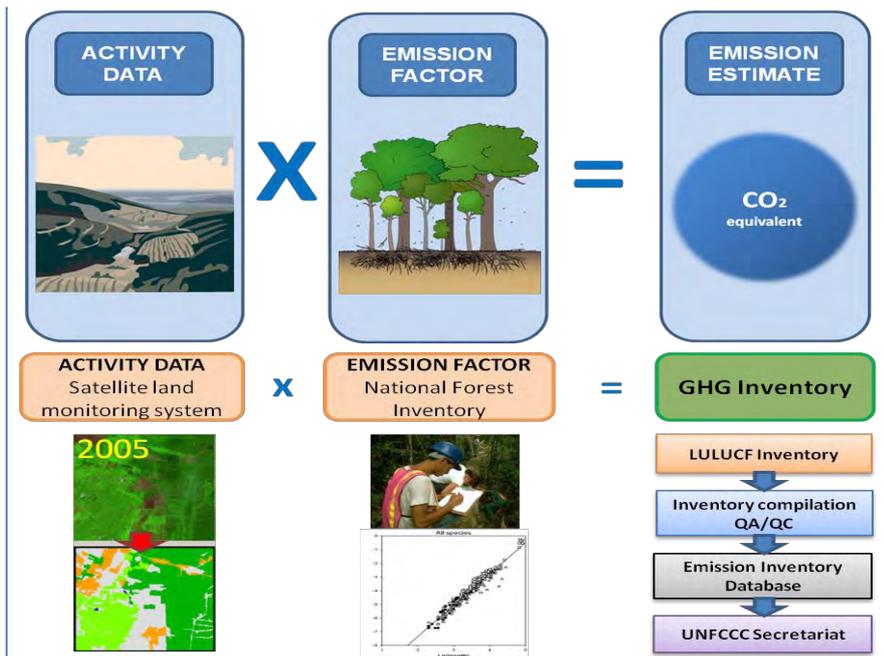
A NFMS requires two key elements, the capacity to monitor change in land-use activities and the capacity to provide measurements of changes in forest carbon stock that can be reported and verified (the MRV element).

The first element is the *monitoring*. This refers to the method a country uses to track activities (conservation, logging, building of infrastructure, or establishment of agricultural lands) on the landscape, and how those activities change. Methodologies mostly involve the creation of a spatial database (GIS) to track changes in a given place and country-wide. This process provides activity data in terms of areas of land under different activities.

The second element is *measurement, reporting and verification or MRV*. *Measurement* is the process by which a forestry team can inventory the resource on the ground and quantify the carbon stocks associated with a given vegetation type and land-use (activity). Undertaking measurements is labour intensive, and requires conducting repeated samples to develop a national forest inventory.

⁵² Emissions Factors refer to changes in levels of forest carbon stock resulting from transitions between land uses and corresponding levels of forest cover.

Figure 9: The IPCC's methodological approach to calculate anthropogenic GHG emissions by source and removal by sinks related to forest land



The NFMS combines remote sensing (monitoring) data with the ground-based inventory data to provide information on emission levels resulting from land-use change. This can be done at the project, sub-national, and national scales. REDD+ guidance requires this combination of data to develop accurate Reference Levels (F-RL) of forest carbon stocks and Reference Emissions Levels (F-REL) of how changes in carbon stocks form sources or sinks of GHGs. Fig 9 provides an outline of this approach.

The implementation of the technical components of the national forest monitoring system will be implemented

through a three-phased approach. This allows time to build the necessary capacity, to learn lessons and to improve the system, as necessary:

- **Phase 1:** Capacity building on, and design of, technical elements (e.g. Satellite Land Monitoring System, remote sensing, and forest inventory); establishment of institutional arrangements; activity planning; and design of demonstration (pilot) activities.
- **Phase 2:** Implementation and monitoring of (and learning from) demonstration activities, and further capacity building on technical elements.
- **Phase 3:** Satellite Land Monitoring System is upgraded to monitor national performance of REDD+ policies and measures; full MRV in place for assessing GHG emissions and removals in the forestry sector and to report mitigation performance to the UNFCCC Secretariat.

9.1 National Forest Monitoring System Development – Institutional Arrangements

The first step towards the development of Solomon Islands' national forest monitoring system will be the determination of transparent and effective institutional arrangements for;

- (i) the production and sharing of land use monitoring and forest carbon stocks data;
- (ii) compilation of the national GHG inventory for the LULUCF sector, and;
- (iii) compilation and reporting of the National Communication to the UNFCCC.

Transparent and accountable institutional arrangements will be essential to ensure the effective functioning of the system; the Government of Solomon Islands will therefore aim to formalize these arrangements through amendments to legislation to ensure long-term accountability and sustainability of the national forest monitoring system. In particular revisions to the FRTUA should include requirements for the management and accessibility of information relating to levels of forest cover and associated forest carbon stock, requirements that can also be linked to requirements for data management under the EA.

9.2 Proposed Approaches to Forest Monitoring and Reporting

Preliminary ideas on methods to be employed and systems to be developed are outlined below - these will be subject to change based on the results of national and sub-national consultations.

A) Forest Monitoring

A satellite land monitoring system will be developed to support the monitoring function of the national forest monitoring system. This will be used to assess the outcomes of Solomon Islands' REDD+ activities using easily detectable proxies such as forest cover and forest cover change over time. This system will comprise an open-source database, a user interface and tools and algorithms, adapted to Solomon Islands' country needs.

Solomon Islands' satellite land monitoring system will be based on satellite remote sensing data that will be regularly updated to capture the progression of land use changes on the ground. Landsat data dating back 20 years are freely available online. Once downloaded, this imagery will be processed and subsequently entered into a specialized database. The imagery will then be made publicly available, at no charge, via an online web-GIS portal, where the imagery will be overlaid with relevant GIS shape files (e.g. administrative boundaries of provinces; rivers, lakes and watershed; roads; settlements; protected areas, etc.).

B) National Forest Inventory

Solomon Islands have developed a base methodology for undertaking forest inventory work and are making efforts to undertake an inventory of existing forest areas as well as areas of community plantation⁵³. The Government will seek to work at the regional level to access support to strengthen this process and develop a REDD+-compatible inventory system that will generate emission factor data for reporting of the national GHG inventory to the UNFCCC.

C) Forest Related National GHG Inventory for Solomon Islands

All country Parties to the UNFCCC are requested to estimate and report on forest-related GHGs by sources and removal by sinks (Decision 4/CP.15, paragraph 1(d) and (d) (i)). Information published in GHG inventories allows the COP to observe progress achieved by the Parties in fulfilling their commitments and achieving the ultimate objective of the Convention.

Information should be documented coherently following the reporting the guidance of the UNFCCC. Countries should follow the most recent IPCC guidance and guidelines, as adopted or encouraged by the COP, as a basis for estimating anthropogenic forest-related greenhouse gas emissions by sources and removals by sinks, forest carbon stocks and forest area changes in order to comply with the five GHG inventory reporting principles: Transparency, Coherence, Comparability, Completeness and Accuracy. The quality of a GHG inventory depends not only on the robustness of the results from the measurements made and the credibility of estimates, but also on the manner and method in which the information is collated and presented.

National Communication

Parties to the Convention are required to submit national reports on their progress on implementing the Convention to the UNFCCC COP. Core elements of the national communications include information on emissions and removals of GHGs and details of the activities a Party has undertaken to implement the Convention. National Communications usually contain sections on national circumstances, vulnerability assessment, financial resources and transfer of technology, and education, training and public awareness.

⁵³ Efforts to develop an inventory of existing community plantations is being developed by Griffith University in partnership with the MFR and supported by the ACIAR.

Central National GHG Inventory Archiving System

An archive system is a critical tool to underpin the sustainability of the National GHG Inventory System by ensuring that GHG estimates can be easily (re-)produced, safeguarding against data and information loss, and allow replicability of estimates.

9.3 Capacity to Roll Out NFMS: Leadership & Infrastructure

A critical component of establishing an NFMS in the Solomon Islands is capacity. Early leadership capacity is forming among the MFR and MECDM through the REDD+ Implementation Unit (MFR) and REDD+ Focal Point (MECDM). Further capacity strengthening will, be required in terms of both physical capacity within these units and technical knowledge to develop and maintain the system.

A general capacity assessment was conducted⁵⁴ for work associated with monitoring and MRV with key responsibilities for different groups identified as:

- *The National REDD+ Implementation Unit* will be responsible for field work, data collection, monitoring, and incorporating *forestry-related* activities into a geo-database (GIS) shared among Ministries
- *The National REDD+ Focal Point* will provide monitoring feedback (i.e. locations of activities) found during the EIA process (see Safeguards) as well as interaction among other Ministries to ensure the monitoring database stays up to date, and is able to inform decision-makers in across Government.

In addition to collaborative capacity, infrastructure improvements are required prior to the establishment as an NFMS *tool*. These capacity gaps include:

- *Clean and stable power source.* Current power fluxes are jeopardising computer resources within the MFR. Simple solutions exist to mitigate power fluxes at relatively low cost.
- *High speed internet.* Reliable internet speeds are needed to transfer large files to and from Provinces, to ensure that monitoring happens on the ground and those data get transferred to a central location. Use of teleconferencing via the internet (e.g. Skype) is also a valuable resource for collaboration.
- *Locker Storage for Field Equipment.* Maintenance and security of field equipment is important as is the access to equipment for forestry officers to practice their field skills
- *Large workroom with workstations, GIS and map production.* Current physical space is very low and thus needs to be expanded to facilitate the necessary collaborative team working, map-making, and the necessary GIS and data analysis to support other Ministries, much less to assist in business as usual forestry activities.
- *Small Laboratory.* NFMS requires some minor laboratory work, with some minor equipment for processing wood density and soil bulk density values (mangroves).
- *Purchase and delivery of quality aerial imagery.* There is a need to have aerial imagery, both historic and present that is 'camera ready' for Forestry officers to conduct monitoring of resources. One issue has been that officers have spent a lot of time learning new skills to do image processing; these skills would be better to be hired in from organisations that can deliver in a timely fashion. This is also a good public-private partnership opportunity for developing local business capacity.

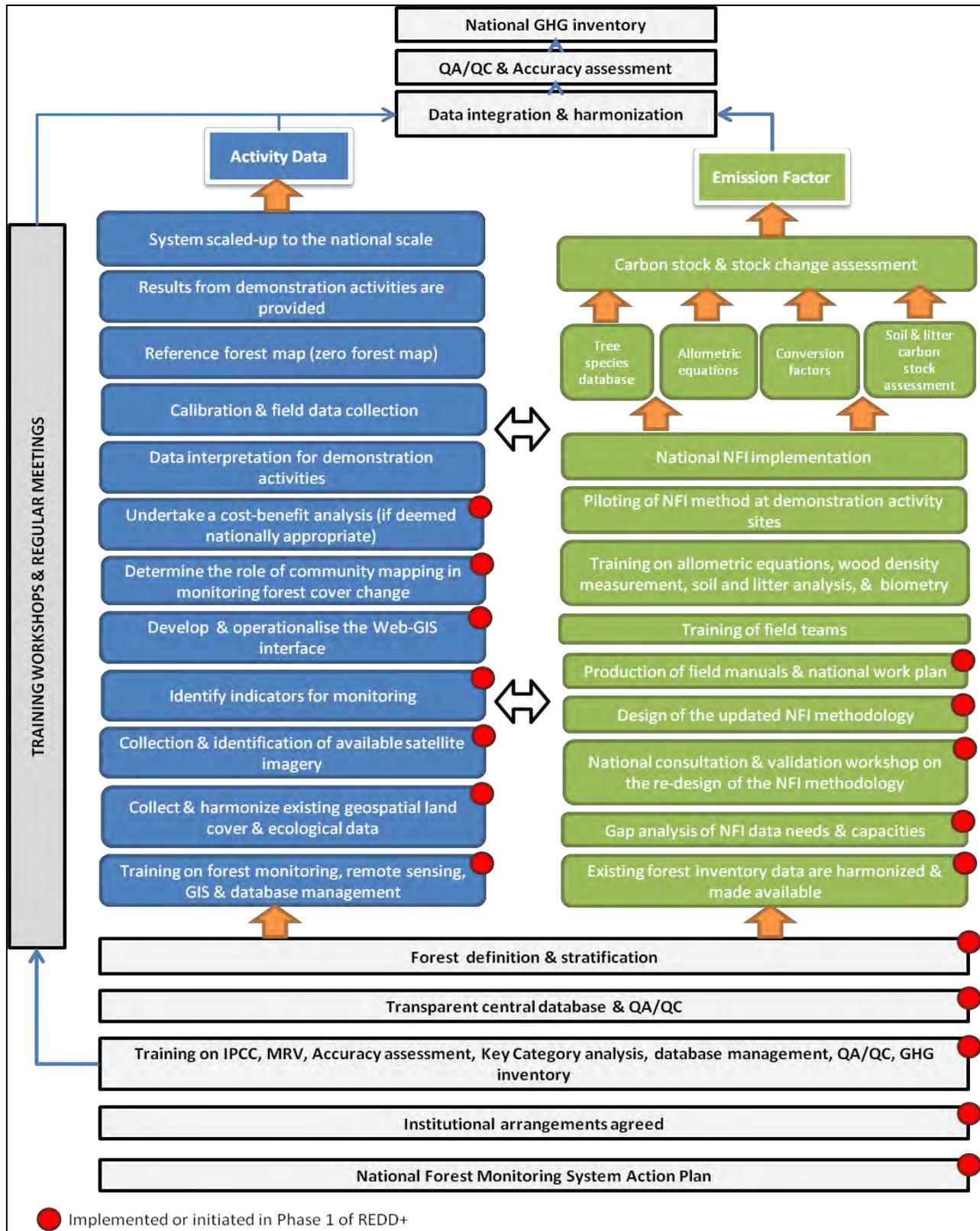
A potential solution to these infrastructural capacity issues is the establishment of a REDD+ Center. This would support the required collaboration amongst ministries as well as facilitating information sharing with the public, liaison with international visitors and experts, and housing of the NFMS.

⁵⁴ Heider, C. 2013. Capacity Assessment of NFMS Capabilities: Monitoring and MRV in the Solomon Islands. Final Draft. UN-REDD Programme. November 2013.

9.4 Strategy: Develop National forest monitoring system

Figure 10 shows the indicative activities that will mark progress towards generating Solomon Islands' national GHG Inventory for the LULUCF sector.

Figure 10: Indicative Activities that will mark progress towards generating Solomon Islands National GHG Inventory for the LULUCF Sector



9.4.1 Strategic Action: Capacity Building and National forest monitoring system Action Plan Development

9.4.1.1 Activity: Develop Solomon Islands' NFMS Action Plan

Work will involve establishment and operationalizing of a NFMS working group, which will identify key requirements for development of the system and its implementation. The action plan should also include clear institutional arrangements for the implementation and management of the NFMS.

9.4.2 Strategic Action: Satellite land monitoring system (SLMS) established

9.4.2.1 Activity: Capacity building on geospatial data processing and database management

9.4.2.2 Activity: Establish a harmonized classification system for land representation

9.4.2.3 Activity: Satellite image characterization for forest monitoring

9.4.2.4 Activity: Establishment an RS/GIS Forest Information System and web-GIS platform

9.4.2.5 Activity: Develop and operationalise Solomon Islands' satellite land monitoring system

9.4.2.6 Activity: Development of participatory tools for community forest monitoring

9.4.2.7 Activity: Forest boundary delineation in the field and GIS boundary generation for demonstration activities

9.4.3 Strategic Action: Multipurpose national forest carbon inventory (NFI) designed

9.4.3.1 Activity: Strengthen forest inventory capacities among stakeholders

9.4.3.2 Activity: Harmonize all existing inventory data and develop robust tree species and NFI databases

9.4.3.3 Activity: Review existing inventory designs and provide recommendations for design of a new multipurpose NFI

9.4.3.4 Activity: Design and pilot Solomon Islands' multipurpose National Forest Inventory

9.4.3.5 Activity: Implement Solomon Islands' multipurpose National Forest Inventory at national scale

9.4.4 Strategic Action: Capacity built for producing accurate and transparent GHG inventories for the LULUCF sector

9.4.4.1 Activity: Technical capacity building for the GHG inventory for the LULUCF sector

9.4.4.2 Activity: Develop a central GHG database and archiving system

9.4.5 Strategic Action: NFMS-related research supported

9.4.5.1 Activity: Support NFMS-related research and dissemination of findings

10 Reference Emissions Levels (F-REL) and Forest Reference Levels (F-RL)

The Solomon Islands will need to develop Reference Emission Levels against which progress in reducing emissions from the forest sector can be assessed.

Guidance for forest F-REL and F-RL for REDD+ has been given through a series of decisions since CoP15 to assist in a systematic approach to developing REDD+ mitigation performance benchmarks. F-RELS quantify emissions associated with “business as usual” practices in the forestry sector, comparing a forest’s reference level of carbon storage (F-RL) with what that “business as usual” practice would emit (or sequester) through time.

Similar to the use and establishment of the NFMS, to fully participate in REDD+, the F-RELS/F-RLs require that the methodology be transparent, accurate, consistent, complete, and comparable.

Though national level F-RELS/F-RLs are the goal, there is guidance to develop sub-national scale measures for the interim. For the Solomon Islands, a sub-national approach has been initiated in Choiseul Province (August 2013) to refine the methodologies and develop in-country skills. Building on these skills, a relevant national level assessment can be phased accounting for the unique circumstances of each province.

A summary of the major guidelines for developing national level F-RELS/F-RLs include the following (CoP 17):

- Reporting of F-RELS/F-RLs should be reported in units of metric tonnes of carbon dioxide equivalents (tCO₂e) per year. These units are the benchmark by which all national activities can be compared across sectors and across countries;
- Maintain consistency with forest-related GHG emissions/ sinks through the development and use of a national forest monitoring system;
- Consider a stepwise approach “learn by doing” to develop and test methodologies and identify capacity needs to ensure the national forest inventory system of both personnel and infrastructure is supported and maintained;
- Consider a phased approach from subnational (provincial) to national level F-RELS/F-RLs as an interim measure;
- F-RELS/F-RLs need to be updated and revised to incorporate new knowledge, new trends, and any new changes in scope and methodologies;
- Consider submitting F-RELS/F-RLs to the UNFCCC REDD+ web-monitoring platform as the program is developed.

Countries are allowed flexibility to exclude forest carbon pools that have minimal contribution to the overall ecosystem pools when developing F-RELS/F-RLs. This allows for a conservative approach to estimating forest carbon stock changes, and provides a means to “tradeoff” between measuring forest carbon pools and allocating resources to do so.

10.1 Approach to F-REL/F-RL in Solomon Islands

The general approach follows the key elements described above with a focus on *consistency* and *transparency* of methodologies. This is important as it will ensure comparability for future F-RELS/F-RLs, and ensure that all relevant stakeholders, including those in the international community, have full access to the process and information used in the development of the F-RELS/F-RLs. To establish a F-REL/F-RL in the Solomon Islands three main elements are required:

- Capacity building and activity planning;
- Quantification of historic trends of forest activities and emissions;

- Building the ongoing stepwise strategy for developing subnational F-RELS/F-RLs and methodologies for a national forest inventory and monitoring system.

10.2 Developing F-REL/F-RL Capacity

Concurrent with the development of this Roadmap, considerable effort has been made by the Government of Solomon Islands to build capacity in forest monitoring and measurement, reporting and verification (MRV) methodologies to participate in REDD+ through the development of F-RELS/F-RLs.

In partnership with the UN-REDD programme, the MFR funded an international consultant to provide training in monitoring and MRV using a “hands on” approach. This has involved a series of training workshops and a field-training programme including: following major workshops were conducted:

- *A Monitoring & MRV Orientation Workshop (Honiara).* June 2013. Kick-off meeting, describing the MRV process, existing data availability and capacity, and outlining goals and logistical considerations for the in-field Training Mission including identification of training location.
- *MRV Field Training Mission (Based in Boeboe Village, South Choiseul).* August 2013. An in-field training of MRV inventory techniques, specifically identifying site locations, sampling ecosystem components (trees, understory, soils), building team leadership, data collection and chain-of-custody responsibilities. MRV trainees from Fiji Ministry of Fisheries and Forests also served as advisors to Solomon Islands Forestry teams strengthening collaboration between the two countries. A total of 18 plots were sampled for ecosystem carbon baselines for upland and mangrove ecosystems along elevational gradients of Southern Choiseul (~30,000 ha), including areas of second growth (converted) forests to provide a coarse estimate of emissions due to logging.
- *Roadmap Presentation Workshop (Honiara).* October 2013. Presented findings associated with the Capacity Assessment and major outcomes associated with the state of readiness for the Solomon Islands to participate in REDD+ activities. Contributed to overall workshop by delivery of the F-REL/F-RL and National Forest Management System components of the Roadmap.
- *MRV Data Analysis & Reporting Training (Honiara).* November 2013. Major objectives included a capacity assessment of computing resources, skills, and hands-on training to calculate biomass and carbon for the stratified plots, conduct data analysis of these values, and report the reference emissions factors for primary forest.

Through this process positive progress in the development of a pilot subregional F-REL/F-RL to begin the process of a national level forest inventory and F-RELS/F-RLs was achieved. Current considerations for the Roadmap include reinforcing the technical skills learned, with a focus on developing better mapping resources to begin the process of building a forest monitoring system. Capacity goals include:

- Organizational hierarchy to manage resources, data sources, field crews, mapping resources, and national forest inventory database;
- Markedly improved infrastructural capacity;
- Completed sub-regional pilot F-REL/F-RL for Choiseul Province;
- Communication and feedback among different sectors to ensure comparability and participation in the GHG inventory.

10.3 Assessment of Historical Trends

Solomon Islands will require an assessment of current and past land use (using remote sensing data and GIS resources) to assess historical trends in forest cover and resources. Given many countries in the Pacific are at a disadvantage for obtaining routine imagery (such as Landsat) that continental regions regularly enjoy,

there is a tremendous step that needs to be accomplished to obtain any contiguous recent, high quality imagery, and even more effort to obtain historic imagery to conduct a trend analysis.

The most likely strategy will involve an analysis of concessionary lands (timber harvest, mining) through time with an on-the-ground assessment of the status and trend of those holdings then being linked to remote sensing imagery. In this way there can be an assessment (at the subregional and national levels) of how many concessions are currently allowed, what the effective “take” has been through time for each, and what the projected “take” will likely to be for the life of the concession. Applying these in the GIS to assess trends with field-based sampling of primary growth, second growth, and years since abandonment will provide emissions factors for each land use category. The field sampling can begin at the sub-regional level while the national level map and analysis is being conducted.

Illegal (non-concessionary) activities will be more difficult to assess at the both subregional and national scales without time series aerial imagery to assist. Strategies to integrate local communities with REDD+ benefits based on maintaining forest carbon stocks might prove to be effective in curbing illegal logging activities. Strategies to work regionally (Fiji, Vanuatu, PNG) to purchase ready-made imagery might also be effective to best assess land cover change from all activities.

Forest degradation and enhancement is likewise a vital but difficult component to quantify without regular and high quality remote sensing data. These typically require high quality imagery and high capacity skills for remote sensing analysts to identify and map these small changes in signal of the forest canopy. As with larger concessions and illegal operations, it becomes important to map these features frequently and deploy field verification teams to quantify the impacts of forest degradation or enhancements of carbon stocks.

Future workshops and hands-on training events are needed to effectively address the historic condition and develop baseline materials by which F-RELS/F-RLs can be compared. This will require additional capacity in infrastructure (see Capacity Section), including computing resources and adequate and reliable power sources to be effective for the long term. Specific trainings in mapping, remote sensing, and time series data analysis will be required to meet this important challenge.

10.4 Developing Sub-national Units for F-REL/F-RL

In June 2013 during the MRV Orientation Workshop, a team was assembled to determine which area would be the first in the Solomon Islands to conduct a pilot MRV field training and develop F-RELS/F-RLs methodologies in a “learn-by-doing” approach. Several criteria were established to help to determine the overall “highest value” starting point that offered the fewest complexities to ensure a successful outcome. These criteria have now been linked with the criteria for the identification of pilot sites for other REDD+ activities.

An overall prioritization strategy and timeline to meet the goals and objectives of the F-REL/F-RL at the national level include:

- Status of Mapping Resources;
- Status of Historical Trends;
- Magnitude and Timing of Threats;
- Stakeholder Willingness;
- Fiscal and Logistical Concerns;
- Active Concessions/ Legal and Contractual Considerations.
- Selection of REDD+ activities should follow the similar prioritization strategy approach, with the additional component of a completed F-REL/F-RL for at least that subregion, or have those inventory, mapping and analysis steps be part of the REDD+ activity in the “pre-implementation” phase.

At the most basic description, a national level forest inventory is a digital database that contains forest inventory and land use activity information, through time, that has the capability to link with spatial

resources. This database must be maintained in a transparent and consistent fashion and be managed and updated by qualified staff that are dedicated to updating and maintenance. The national level forest inventory database should also be able to integrate across sectors to incorporate GHG emissions inventories at the national level. While the field data themselves should be managed and quality controlled by Forestry professionals, linked queries in the database should then inform national level GHG emissions and inventories to guide decision-making. At all levels, security should be imposed with authorized clearance for data stewards and observation of data, particularly in areas of customary lands where dispute may become an issue.

10.5 Strategy: Develop Forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels

10.5.1 Strategic Action: Capacity building and activity planning

10.5.1.1 Activity: F-RELS/F-RLs capacity building workshops and seminars held with stakeholders;

10.5.1.2 Activity: Development of an Action Plan for the development of F-RELS/F-RLs in Solomon Islands;

10.5.1.3 Activity: Study carried out into the context of F-REL/F-RL implementation in Solomon Islands and methodological options available;

10.5.2 Strategic Action: Assessment of Historical data

10.5.2.1 Activity: Develop Historical Trends Assessment for pilot provinces;

10.5.2.2 Activity: Historical annual emissions calculated using emission factors from national forest monitoring system.

10.5.3 Strategic Action: Testing of different F-RELS/F-RLs methodologies completed

10.5.3.1 Activity: Consultations with stakeholder and technical experts to collate proposals for, and select, pilot sites;

10.5.3.2 Activity: Develop a preliminary national/subnational F-REL/FF-RL and submit to the UNFCCC Secretariat for review.

11 Piloting of REDD+ Activities

The full implementation of approaches to REDD+ will take time to develop and deliver. As such delivery should be phased and focus on both testing a series of different approaches at national and site level while building the capacity to implement REDD+ from site level, to provincial and then a national levels.

11.1 Strategy: Pilot REDD+ Activities

Piloting of approaches to REDD+ at site level provides an opportunity for lesson learning, review and capacity building prior to role out approaches at the provincial and national levels.

Establishing approaches to REDD+ requires coordinated action by a number of stakeholders and will need to address the existing challenges within sustainable land-use planning and management in the Solomon Islands. Piloting approaches in a small number of locations provides an opportunity for government staff to build their capacity and understanding of REDD+ and how it can be integrated into existing programmes and policy objectives. It also provides an opportunity to develop relationships with other stakeholders who have the capacity to support activities on REDD+, to strengthen understanding of how to engage landowners and communities on REDD+ and how to combine different approaches to protected area management, sustainable management of forests, and reforestation at appropriate scales to deliver multiple benefits.

Key elements of this piloting will include:

- Piloting of approaches to FPIC
- Piloting of approaches to safeguards
- Piloting of approaches to benefit sharing
- Piloting of approaches to F-REL development
- Piloting of approaches to MRV

These piloting activities should be linked and where possible tested in one location as part of a comprehensive approach at land use planning including a specific REDD+ activity such as PA development.

Implementation of pilot activities will be undertaken through a coordinated multi-sector approach to ensure REDD+ is presented as part of integrated approaches to land management, which consider livelihood development and security, climate change and disaster vulnerability, empowerment of communities and environmental protection.

Due to the high levels of customary landownership, REDD+ activities at the site level will be 'Landowner led' to a significant degree. Landowners in many areas, however, have insufficient capacity (both technical and financial) to develop approaches to REDD+ and effectively request and gain access to government resources to support their activities. As such government bodies will need to work closely and proactively with landowners to identify areas to for activity development in response to nationally and locally identified needs. REDD+ activities should form one part of this package with the full package strengthening the capacity of the community to manage their resources in a sustainable way that supports local development and reduces vulnerability to climatic and economic shocks.

This approach can, be integrated into existing and planned systems to engaging communities in natural resource management and planning. Key areas in which coordination can occur include:

1. Inclusion of environmental assessment within Constituency Assessment Process
2. Inclusion of REDD+ within existing Climate Change "saturation" missions within Choiseul Province
3. Inclusion of approaches to REDD+ within existing vulnerability assessments within communities

11.1.1 Strategic Action: Establishment of Pilot Sites

It is proposed that a number of pilot sites be identified where it will be possible to test approaches to:

- Reforestation, rehabilitation and plantation development (establishment of one pilot sites);
- Establishment of a Forest Reserve (one pilot site)
- Small-scale timber harvesting and milling (one pilot site);
- Conservation of forest carbon stocks through the implementation of PAs (two pilots site).

Identification of these pilot sites should be linked to existing national priorities while also considering operational practicalities. In identifying potential pilot locations, consideration should be given to integrating approaches across a significant landscape or watershed. For example establishment of a PA to protect a river catchment from the threat of logging or agriculture could be combined with reforestation or plantation development activities within a landscape to provide future revenue options for landowners.

11.1.1.1 Activity: Prioritisation of potential pilot sites by multi-stakeholder group

There are a number of potential locations where REDD+ piloting could take place. Due to limited resources a small number of sites will be selected in which it is anticipated that clear results can be demonstrated. These pilot sites should be identified based on a number of criteria, which are proposed below:

- Level of resource owner interest;
- Clarity of land/resource ownership;
- Existing levels of local capacity (resource owners, supporting NGOs/CBOs);
- Rates or current threats of deforestation and forest degradation;
- Forest area/size;
- Logistical feasibility – linked to accessibility and cost of operation;
- Potential to deliver multiple benefits;
- Provincial interest / capacity to engage;
- Potential to deliver co-benefits.

The prioritisation process should be initiated by line ministries with reference to sector policies and programmes. These lists should then be discussed in a multi-stakeholder forum linking existing project level implementers (NGOs, the private sector), Provincial Government representatives, representatives of resource owner groups and development partners. During this process a final list of potential pilot areas should be developed along with commitments to support further action in these areas. A final review of proposed pilot sites should be conducted by the National REDD+ Committee.

11.1.1.2 Activity: Identification of institutional mechanisms through which piloting can be initiated.

Piloting of approaches to REDD+ will require human, technical, logistical and financial resources. While the relevant line ministries have many of these resources further support may be required to implement more comprehensive REDD+ piloting over a number of years. Planning for this should focus on integration with existing government programmes and processes including the Constituency Development process, Choiseul's integrated climate change programme, establishment of PA and ongoing work on community based adaptation and disaster risk reduction initiatives. Further support should also be sort from NGOs and Development partners with efforts made to integrate REDD+ approaches into existing and planned activities.

11.1.1.3 Activity: Implement series of site level pilot activities:

A number of landuse approaches have been identified to support implementation of REDD+ at the site level. These approaches should be piloted at priority sites. Implementation of these pilots should also be linked to piloting / testing of other key elements of a national REDD+ framework including REDD+ Safeguards (focusing on approaches to stakeholder engagement, ongoing participation and ESIA – see section 6), benefit distribution and reward based payment system (see Section 8) and forest carbon measurement and monitoring (see section 9).

11.2 Strategy: Provide oversight to REDD+ Pilot Project Development

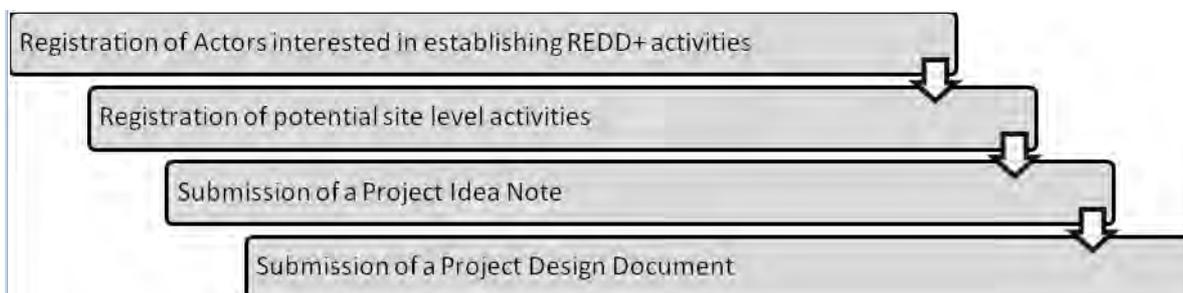
A system of REDD+ project registration will be established to ensure all pilot projects meet national and international standards while allowing landowners, NGOs and private sector groups to lead site level REDD+ project development.

The main focus of action at the national level is on establishing a national approach to REDD+ supported by effective policies, programmes and their implementation. It is however recognised that some site based pilot activities may be initiated by landowners with private sector and NGO groups, outside of the initial focus or capacity of government staff, with a view to establishing full REDD+ projects. Providing landowners with the freedom to initiate such activities provides for broader choice and increased local ownership. It is essential, however, that these approaches are effectively guided and monitored by government bodies to ensure that they are both compatible with national approaches and comply with international best practice. Such oversight should not be seen as a constraint to landowner led action but rather a key mechanism to safeguard landowners when engaging with external groups and indeed when discussing roles and responsibilities within their communities.

11.2.1 Strategic Action: Ensure Registration and Oversight of REDD+ Project Activities

This will be achieved by requiring all site level REDD+ activities to register with the REDD+ Implementation Unit and provide clear information on their operations and actions. Project proponents will also be required to sign an MoU with the relevant government ministry to the activities they are undertaking to further strengthen joint capacity building and collaboration between government staff and project proponent. Registration will be operationalized through a four-step process linked to both the development of site-based activities under national legislation and international best practice for REDD+ project development. These steps are shown in figure 8.

Figure 11: REDD+ Project Registration Process



Each of these stages can be linked with existing site level development processes and will thus be undertaken in conjunction with development of for example a Protected Area, a Forest Reserve or a felling or milling license with proponents being required to provide information to a standard acceptable under the guidelines for stakeholder engagement and REDD+ safeguards.

At each phase documentation must be submitted to the RIU who will review it with the RFP with feedback provided by the RIU to proponents within two weeks if immediate changes are required. Documentation will also be circulated by the RIU to relevant ministries and Provincial Authorities with copies also displayed within affected communities for at least one month with any body able to provide feedback on these documents to the RIU during this period. Full acceptance of each stage will however only occur following review by the National REDD+ Committee on a quarterly basis. Copies of documents will be kept at the offices of the RIU and be available for public consultation as well as being available on line on the REDD+ website.

11.2.1.1 Activity: Establish capacity to provide oversight of REDD+ Projects

The REDD+ Implementation Unit, REDD+ Focal Point and members of the NRC will receive further training on Voluntary Carbon Project Development to enable them to provide enhance oversight of activities. Staff from

MECDM and MFR should also be assigned to act as focal points for pilot projects and provide oversight and review of their activities. Support for these staff could be linked to MoUs with project proponents.

12 Resource Mobilisation and Monitoring and Evaluation Framework 2014-2020

Strategic Actions	Activities	Responsible	Total Budget (USD)	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2020	Potential Linkages / Funding Source
4.4 Strategy: Establish Institutional and Management Structure										
<i>4.4.1. Establish and Operationalise National REDD+ Committee</i>	1. Present Cabinet Decision 2. Quarterly Meetings of National REDD+ Committee.	<i>Responsible: UN-REDD PMU (handover) / MECDM as Chair of current Taskforce</i>	\$160,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
<i>4.4.2. Establish and resource operational units for REDD+ implementation</i>	1. Resourcing of National REDD+ Implementation Unit (office will also have one staff focused on NFMS development) 2. Resourcing of National REDD+ Focal Point	<i>Responsible: NRC / MFR</i>	\$225,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	○ Staff member for MRV / F-REL already agreed within MFR budget ○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making ○ GEF / FAO / MECDM – Integrated Forest Management Programme
Total			\$385,000							
5. Integrating REDD+ Into Policies and Programmes										
5.1 The Ministry of Forestry and Research										
5.2: Strategy: Improved regulation, monitoring and enforcement within the Forest Sector										
<i>5.2.1: Update Forest Legislation and</i>	1. Public Consultation on Forest Policy and Legislation.	<i>Responsible: Forest Resource</i>			X	X	X			○ GEF / FAO / MECDM – Integrated Forest Management Project – will support awareness raising and

<i>Formulate a new legislation on forest resources management</i>	2. Undertake a value of forest resources assessment	<i>Management and Technical Services Division (MFR) / RIU</i>	\$175000							consultation events but not specific legislative reform.
<i>5.2.2. Enhance Enforcement of Legislation</i>	1. Strengthening application of the development consent process for activities within the forest sector 2. Strengthening management and transparency of information on felling and milling licenses and their application	<i>Responsible: Licensing and Enforcement Division (MFR) / RIU</i>	\$200,000		X	X	X			
5.3 Strategy: Enhance Reforestation, Rehabilitation and Plantation Development										
<i>5.3.1: Strengthen incentive mechanisms to promote reforestation and plantation development</i>	1. Review of existing and past approaches to benefit sharing / incentive agreements within forestry and agriculture 2. Pilot incentive mechanisms within for forest rehabilitation within at least two sites	<i>Responsible: Reforestation and Plantation Development Division (MFR) / RIU</i>	\$250,000		X	X	X			○ GEF / FAO / MECMD – Integrated Forest Management Project
5.4 Strategy: Protection of Forest Watersheds through establishment of Forest Reserves										
<i>5.4.1: Establishment of Forest Reserves in Key Watershed Areas</i>	1. Establishment and Piloting of Framework for Establishment of Forest Reserves 2. Capacity Building for MFR, MECMD and MoAL extension workers on watershed management approaches	<i>MFR / RIU</i>	\$160,000			X	X	X		○ GEF / FAO / MECMD – Integrated Forest Management Project
5.5. The Ministry of Environment Climate Change, Disaster Management and										

Meteorology									
5.6 Strategy: Strengthen Implementation of the Environment Act as a Key National Safeguard									
5.6.1 Strengthening Application of the Development Consent Process.	1. Formulate detailed Guidelines for the application of the development consent process for projects within the forests sector, piloting of these and awareness raising and training on their implementation	Responsible: ECD (MECMD) / RIU	\$150,000		X	X			o GEF / FAO / MECMD – Integrated Forest Management Project
5.6.2. Establish an Environmental Management Information System (EMIS)	1. Identification of key data requirements at national, international and local level 2. Harmonization of data formats and collection and analysis methodologies between various ministries. 3. Establishment of an environmental information management system within MECMD	Responsible: ECD (MECMD) / RIU	\$225,000		X	X			o GEF / UNDP / MECMD – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
5.6.3: Development of Options for Environmental Offsetting / Rehabilitation Requirements	1. Review of legislative options and feasibility assessment for development of environmental offsetting legislation.	Responsible: ECD (MECMD) / RIU	\$70,000			X			
5.6.4: Updating of Environment Act and its Regulations	1. Consolidate recommendations for amendments to the regulations for the Environment Act	Responsible: ECD (MECMD) / RIU	\$50,000	X	X	X			
5.7 Strategy: Conservation of Forest Carbon Stocks through the Establishment of Protected Areas									
5.7.1: Establish Sustainable PA Financing Mechanism	1. Assessment of PA financing options 2. Establishment of Effective PA financial Management Structure	Responsible: ECD (MECMD) / RIU	\$150,000	X	X	X			o MECMD / FAO / GEF – Integrated Forest Management Project is intended to provide support to the development of the Solomon Islands Protected Areas Network including consideration of the need for sustainable financing.

5.7.2: Establishing a PA monitoring and assessment process	1. Development and Piloting of a PA Approval and Monitoring Protocol	Responsible: ECD (MECMD) / RIU	\$55,000	X	X	X				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ MECMD / FAO / GEF – Integrated Forest Management Project is intended to provide support to the development of the Solomon Islands Protected Areas Network including monitoring activities.
5.7.3: Build Community Capacity to Engage in PA Establishment and Management	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Provide Training and Guidance to Landowners wishing to develop and implement Protected Areas Management plans 2. Establishment of a PA support Unit within ECD 3. Establishment of PAs in four priority areas 	Responsible: ECD (MECMD) / RIU	\$225,000	X	X	X	X			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ LALSU, and WWF have developed a guide to PA establishment for landowners. This guide could be utilised as a base to help develop further information. ○ MECMD / FAO / GEF – Integrated Forest Management Project is intended to provide support to the development of the Solomon Islands Protected Areas Network including awareness raising of PA activities. ○ A group of NGOs and the LALSU have currently applied for funding to establish a PA development support network.
5.8. The Land Reform Unit										
5.9. Strategy: Ensure Customary and rights and practices are fully recognised within REDD+ mechanisms										
5.9.1: Integrate Customary Land Recording Process into REDD+ Activities	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Conduct land recording process within REDD+ pilot sites 2. Public consultation on draft regulations for Land Recording. 	Responsible: Land Reform Unit PMO / RIU	\$95,000	X	X	X				
5.10. Strategy: Develop Approaches to REDD+ on Alienated Land										
5.10.1. Identify feasibility and scale of potential REDD+ activities on	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiate assessment of for potential REDD+ activities for selected alienated land 2. Initiate consultation with lease- 	Responsible: Land Reform Unit PMO / RIU	\$50,000	X	X					

<i>alienated land</i>	holders and tenants on alienated land									
5.11. The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock										
5.12. Strategy: Reducing Deforestation from Agricultural Expansion in Forest Areas										
<i>5.12.1: Strengthen Integrated Land-use Planning process for Subsistence and small scale commercial Agriculture</i>	1. Training of Agricultural Extension workers within focus communities 2. Development of land-use planning guidance tool	<i>Responsible: MoAL / RIU</i>	\$75000	X	X	X	X			
5.12.2 Reduce the impact of commercial agriculture expansion within Primary forest areas	1. Development of framework for identification of sites for agricultural expansion and criteria for development	<i>Responsible: MoAL / RIU</i>	\$35000		X	X	X			
Total			\$1,915,000							
6. REDD+ Safeguards										
6.5. Strategy: Strengthening Application of Existing Safeguards in the Forest Sector										
<i>6.5.1. Development of Cross Cutting Guidelines for Stakeholder Participation</i>	1. Development of Cross Cutting Guidelines on Stakeholder engagement and maintaining full and effective participation within Land-use Projects (eg PA, Forest Reserves, Forest Concessions, Plantations). 2. Development of Guidance on Transparency and Access to Information	<i>Responsible: RIU / RFP</i>	\$110,000	X	X	X				○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
<i>6.5.2. Strengthen Application of the</i>	1. Development of Standards for environment	<i>Responsible: RFP / ECD</i>		X	X	X				○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment

<i>Environment Act</i>	2. Development and Testing of Cross Cutting Guidelines on Environmental and Social Impact Assessment 3. Development and Testing of guidelines for the Development Consent Process		\$65000							commitments in investment and development decision-making ○ MECDM / FAO / GEF – Integrated Forest Management Project
<i>6.5.3. Strengthen Application and Review of All Elements of the Felling and Milling Licensing Process</i>	1. Develop Checklist of requirements for key processes within the felling and milling license application process.	<i>Responsible: RIU</i>	\$35000	X	X					○
<i>6.5.4. Legal review of Existing Safeguards</i>	1. Undertake Full legal assessment of relevant legislation against key international Safeguard Criteria	<i>Responsible: RIU / RFP</i>	\$40,000							○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
6.6. Strategy: Establish a REDD+ Safeguard Information System										○
<i>6.6.1: Agree Criteria and Indicators Against Which Reporting Will Occur</i>	1. Review and Identify Key Criteria and Indicators 2. Develop Initial Safeguards Report and Workplan	<i>Responsible: RIU / RFP</i>	\$50,000	X	X					○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
<i>6.6.2: Strengthen and Fully Operationalise Information Management Systems in MECDM and MFR</i>	1. Development of a workplan for the establishment of an Integrated Information Management and Geographical Information System within MECDM with Linkages to the NFMS 2. Resource and provide training to MECDM staff on operation of an EMIS 3. Undertake EMIS system population covering past data	<i>Responsible: RIU / RFP</i>	\$120,000	X	X	X	X			○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making ○ MECDM / FAO / GEF – Integrated Forest Management Project

Total			\$420,000							
7. Awareness Raising, Consultation and Participation										
7.1 Strategy: Implement a National Level REDD+ Awareness Raising Campaign										
<i>7.1.1: Establishment of a Broad-based awareness raising campaign</i>	1. Development of Printed Media Content 2. Development of a Series of Radio Programmes 3. Maintenance of a REDD+ Website 4. Provincial Level Awareness Raising Events	<i>Responsible: RIU, and RFP</i>	\$140,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
<i>7.1.2: Increase understanding of REDD+ Amongst Key Stakeholder Groups Awareness Raising</i>	1. Stakeholder Specific Awareness Raising events	<i>Responsible: RIU, and RFP</i>	\$120,000	X	X	X	X			○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
<i>7.1.3: Establishing approaches to increasing awareness of, undertaking consultation on and requesting consent for REDD+ activities at community level</i>	1. Piloting of approaches to awareness raising, consultation and participation within key REDD+ activities	<i>Responsible: RIU, and RFP</i>	\$110,000							○ GEF / UNDP / MECDM – Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making
Total			\$370,000							○
7.3. Strategy: Establish a comprehensive grievance and redress mechanism										

7.3.1: Identify REDD+ specific grievance and redress mechanism	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review existing grievance and redress mechanisms Undertake consultation on potential grievance and redress mechanism for REDD+ 	Responsible: RIU, and RFP	\$40,000		X	X				
7.3.2. Build capacity of relevant institutions to effectively implement REDD+ Grievance and Redress Mechanisms	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Develop workplan for the establishment of REDD+ grievance and redress mechanism Implement training activities within key institutions to ensure effective implementation of grievance and redress mechanism 	Responsible: RIU, and RFP	\$60,000			X	X			
8. Benefit Sharing										
8.1 Strategy: Establish National Level REDD+ Fund Management Structures										
8.1.1. Create the transparent system for national level management of REDD+ finances	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Conduct study on the design of a body for management of REDD+ result-based payments; Undertake in-depth consultation and finalise the National Authority; 	Responsible: RIU / RFP	\$225,000	X	X	X				
8.1.2. Establish a mechanism for linking benefits from emission reductions to landownership and land-users with landowners empowered to enter into emission reduction agreements	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Identify the legal basis for carbon rights allocation under a national REDD+ mechanism 		\$115,000	X	X	X				
8.1.3. Establishment of Benefit Sharing Framework for Key	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Review of existing benefit sharing mechanisms and potential incentive structures Establishment of proposals for 	Responsible: RIU / MoF		X	X	X				

REDD+ Activities	benefit sharing within different REDD+ Strategies		\$125,000							
Total			\$565,000							
9. Establishment of a National Forest Monitoring System and Reference Emission Level										
9.4 Strategy: Develop National forest monitoring system										
9.4.1. Capacity Building and National forest monitoring system Action Plan Developed	1. Develop Solomon Islands' NFMS Action Plan	Responsible: RIU	\$75,000	X	X	X	X			
9.4.2. Satellite land monitoring system (SLMS) established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Capacity building on geospatial data processing and database management 2. Establish a harmonized classification system for land representation 3. Satellite image characterization for forest monitoring 4. Establishment an RS/GIS Forest Information System and web-GIS platform 5. Develop and operationalise Solomon Islands' satellite land monitoring system 6. Development of participatory tools for community forest monitoring 7. Forest boundary delineation in the field and GIS boundary generation for demonstration activities 	Responsible: RIU	\$200,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	

9.4.3. Multipurpose national forest carbon inventory (NFI) designed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Strengthen forest inventory capacities among stakeholders 2. Harmonize all existing inventory data and develop robust tree species and NFI databases 3. Review existing inventory designs and provide recommendations for design of a new multipurpose NFI 4. Design and pilot Solomon Islands' multipurpose National Forest Inventory 5. Implement Solomon Islands' multipurpose National Forest Inventory at national scale 	Responsible: RIU	\$800,000	X	X	X	X			
9.4.4. Capacity built for producing accurate and transparent GHG inventories for the LULUCF sector	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Technical capacity building for the GHG inventory for the LULUCF sector 2. Develop a central GHG database and archiving system 		\$150,000	X	X	X	X			
9.4.5. NFMS-related research supported	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Support NFMS-related research and dissemination of findings 		\$125,000	X	X	X	X	X	X	

			Total	\$1,350,000							
10. Establishment of a National Forest Monitoring System and Reference Emission Level											
10.5 Strategy: Develop Forest reference emission levels and forest reference levels											
<i>10.5.1. Capacity building and activity planning</i>	1. FF-RELS/FF-RLs capacity building workshops and seminars held with stakeholders; 2. Development of an Action Plan for the development of FF-RELS/FF-RLs in Solomon Islands; 3. Study carried out into the context of FF-REL/FF-RL implementation in Solomon Islands and methodological options available;		\$150,000	X	X	X					
<i>10.5.2. Assessment of Historical Data</i>	1. Develop Historical Trends Assessment for pilot provinces; 2. Historical annual emissions calculated using emission factors from national forest monitoring system.		\$150,000	X	X	X					
<i>10.5.3. Strategic Action: Testing of different FF-RELS/FF-RLs methodologies completed</i>	1. Consultations with stakeholder and technical experts to collate proposals for, and select, pilot sites; 2. Develop a preliminary national/subnational FF-REL/FF-RL and submit to the UNFCCC Secretariat for review.		\$175,000	X	X	X	X				
			Total	\$475,000							
11. Piloting of Approaches to REDD+											
11.1. Strategy: Pilot REDD+ Activities											
<i>11.1.1 Establishment of Pilot Sites</i>	1. Prioritisation of potential pilot sites by multi-stakeholder group 2. Identification of institutional mechanisms through which piloting can be initiated.	<i>Responsible: RIU / REDD+ Focal Point / NRC</i>	\$1,000,000	X	X	X	X	X	X		

	3. Implement series of site level pilot activities:									
11.2. Strategy: Provide oversight to REDD+ Pilot Project Development										
<i>11.2.1: Ensure Registration and Oversight of REDD+ Project Activities</i>	1. Establish capacity to provide oversight of REDD+ Projects	<i>Responsible: RIU / REDD+ Focal Point / NRC</i>	\$225,000	X	X	X	X			
Total			\$1,225,000							
Grand Total (USD)			\$6,705,000							

Annex 1: ToR for the National REDD+ Committee, REDD+ Focal Point and REDD+ Implementation Office

The below section provides outline ToR for the roles of the National REDD+ Committee (NRC), the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) and the National REDD+ Focal Point.

12.1 National REDD+ Committee

12.1.1 Objective

“To provide oversight to the development of REDD+ within the Solomon Islands through the implementation of the REDD+ Roadmap”

12.1.2 Membership

National REDD+ Committee		
Institution	Position/Name	Alternate
1. Ministry of Forestry and Research	Permanent Secretary (Chair)	Under Secretary Gordon Konairamo
2. Ministry of Environment Climate Change and Disaster Management	Permanent Secretary (Chair) Melchior Mataki	Under Secretary Chanel Iroi
3. Office of the Prime Minister	Senior Officer Derrick Vagi	
4. Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	Director of Department of Research Jimmy Saelea	
5. Ministry of Finance	Director level to be appointed	
6. Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening	Director level to be appointed	To be appointed
7. Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination	Officer responsible for Environment, Forestry and Natural Resources Development Barnabas Bago	
8. Ministry of Lands and Housing	Director of Department of Land Reform Genesis Kofana	
9. Ministry of Mines and Energy	Director of Mines Krista Jacob	
10. Community Based organizations - SIDT	Head Of Programme	
11. Community Based Organizations - Kolombangara Island Biodiversity Conservation Association (KIBCA)	Ferguson Vaghi	
12. Community Based Organizations –	Jimmy Kereseke	

Laura Land Conference of Tribal Communities (LLCTC)		
13. International NGO: Live and Learn Environmental Education	Programme Manager: Mr. Haikiu B.	
14. Private Sector – Solomon Islands Forest Association (SIFA)	Office Manager	
15. Private Sector – Westpac	Bank Manager	
16. Regional Organizations – SPC/GIZ	Gideon Bouro	

12.1.3 Role and Function

The NRC will serve as the main advisory and coordinating body to all projects and programmes in the Solomon Islands, which contribute to the development of national approaches to REDD+ or the implementation of activities therein. The NRC and its members will be required to:

Management

- To review quarterly progress reports from the REDD+ Implementation Unit
- To provide direction to the REDD+ Implementation Unit and National REDD+ Focal Point on the development of REDD+ in the Solomon Islands
- To review proposals for establishment of site level Pilot projects and support linkages between interested parties (development partners, resource owners, government agencies, NGOs) where appropriate.
- To ensure coordination across government ministries and other stakeholder groups
- To support the formation of specific working groups as necessary
- To support engagement with specific provincial governments regarding issues relevant to their province
- To act as a central focal point for REDD+ development and undertake tasks as related to REDD+ issues and /or climate change issues as required

Technical Guidance

- To participate in and manage the process of drafting and reviewing a comprehensive REDD+ Policy and Strategy
- To ensure that the development of REDD+ in the Solomon Islands is consistent with international guidance on REDD+ under the UNFCCC framework
- To request technical guidance and assistance from other groups as necessary
- To make recommendations and provide advice for policy and legislative review

Stakeholder Engagement

- To represent their respective constituencies on the NRC and provide information concerning REDD+ activities
- To guide the process of stakeholder consultation and awareness-raising about REDD+ and to ensure that all relevant stakeholders are consulted during the process of developing the REDD+ Readiness Roadmap

- To act as a central dispute resolution body for issues emerging for the REDD+ development process.

12.1.4 Operations

The NRC will meet on a quarterly basis to review progress within the National REDD+ Programme and discuss the workplan for the next quarter.

The secretariat of the NRC will be the RIU within the MFR.

The mandate of the NRC will be for two years until December 2015 with review of role aft 18months.

12.2 REDD+ Implementation Unit

12.2.1 Objective

To lead and coordinate work on REDD+ development within the Solomon Islands.

12.2.2 Roles and Function

- Leading technical work on REDD+ development and implementation within the Solomon Islands
- Organizing awareness raising events and consultation meetings
- Providing REDD+ training to relevant stakeholders and relevant agencies
- Mainstreaming REDD+ through the MFR
- Acting as a central contact point for all actions on REDD+
- Supporting the identification and development of REDD+ Pilot projects and ensuring they are undertaken in line with the national approach to REDD+
- Acting as a Secretariat to the NRC
- Development of an approach to forest carbon assessment and reference emission level development
- Develop and maintain the National Forest Management System
- Reporting to the REDD+ Focal Point within the CCD in the MECDM on levels of forest carbon emissions

In undertaking these activities the REDD+ Implementation Unit (RIU) will be required to work closely with other departments within the Ministry of Forestry and Research as well as other line agencies and external stakeholders.

12.2.3 Operations and Staffing

The unit will be based within the MFR's Forest Resource Management and Technical Services Division. It will be led by the Deputy Commissioner of Forests who will be responsible for providing overall coordination and leadership to the unit.

It is anticipated that the RIU will grow as a body as REDD+ activities increase, it is also likely to work increasingly closely with other units within the MFR and MECDM to create a REDD+ team that will be able to lead and coordinate activities. Initial staffing is proposed as follows:

- REDD+ Operations Officer

Responsible for playing a central coordinating role within REDD+ activities the officer will be responsible for developing workplans in coordination with other agencies, ministries and stakeholders. They will work to strengthen awareness raising and communications related activities, and will act as the central focal point for REDD+.

➤ **NFMS Technical Officer**

Officer responsible for driving work on the development of the NFMS and F-RELS. They will work closely with the existing staff within the Policy Planning and Technical Services Divisions responsible for mapping existing concessions and forest resources to develop an integrated system within the MFR as well as with other ministries to support compatibility between them. They will also provide technical support to pilot projects being developed within the country with regard to methodologies.

12.3 National REDD+ Focal Point

12.3.1 Objective

- To coordinate actions on REDD+ within MECDM and
- To provide linkages between reporting under the UNFCCC and REDD+ actions within the Solomon Islands
- Coordinate and provide linkages with the National REDD+ Implementation Unit

12.3.2 Roles and Function

- Reporting on REDD+ progress under the UNFCCC
- Collecting information on the application of safeguards for REDD+ within the Solomon Islands
- Coordinating with the REDD+ Implementation Unit on awareness raising and communications materials
- Integrating REDD+ into the work of the MECDM
- Supporting and providing guidance to the establishment of pilot projects
- Developing linkages between REDD+ and climate change adaptation and disaster management projects.

12.3.3 Operations and Staffing

The National REDD+ Focal Point will be based within the MECDM's Climate Change Division.

The National REDD+ Focal Point:

The Director of the Climate Change Division will be the Focal Point, responsible for providing strategic direction to all actions on REDD+ and supporting coordination across the ministry. The Director will be supported by the addition of one staff member:

National REDD+ Officer:

The officer is responsible for coordinating activities on REDD+ within MECDM and providing the main link between the MECDM and the REDD+ Implementation Unit. They will engage in developing awareness raising materials and working closely with both staff working on the Development Consent Process and the establishment of protected areas on REDD+ related actions.

Annex 2: Potential Pilot Locations

The below table is adapted from the list of potential pilot sites compiled by SPC / GIZ during their Climate Protection through Forest Conservation in Pacific Island Countries, Solomon Islands National Planning Meeting June 2011. This list of potential pilots should be reviewed by key staff within the MECDM and MFR as well as the NRC to facilitate an updating of the list and an initial identification of priority areas. Additional information on potential priority areas is also provided in the Second National Communication to the UNFCCC which identifies areas of vulnerability to Climate Change including a number of locations for whom enhanced protection of or reinstatement of forests could provide significant benefits.

Name	Location	Size	Population	Promoter	Number of clans	Proposed REDD+ eligible activities	Proposed REDD+ eligible activities
AVASO	Kamaben, Choiseul Province	5,000 ha	1,000	NRDF	1	Forest conservation	REDD+ strategy document
Corabara/Bingo	Choiseul Province	Corabara 6,000 ha, Bingo 5,000 ha	More than 1,000 each	NRDF	One each	Forest conservation, SFM	REDD+ potential assessment
Barekasi/Reres are		4,000 ha	2,000	NRDF	2	Forest conservation, reforestation, SFM	REDD+ potential assessment
Tetepare	Tetepare Island, Western Province	12,000 ha	Island is uninhabited, 3,500 registered descendants	Tetepare Descendants Association (TDA)	1	Forest conservation	Support a REDD project: inventory, design project document, determine carbon value
Kolombangara (KIBCA)	Western Province	19,400 ha	5,000 (?)	KIBCA	5 (?)	Conservation and eco-tourism	Technical and financial support
Zabana land	West Isabel, Isabel province	?	2,000	LLEE	1 with sub-clans	Reforestation, enrichment planting (enhancing carbon stock), land use planning, reduce deforestation	Community awareness, MRV, reforestation

Name	Location	Size	Population	Promoter	Number of clans	Proposed REDD+ eligible activities	Proposed REDD+ eligible activities
Padezoka land	Choiseul (south central)	130 km2	3,000	LLEE	1	Conservation	Technical assistance on MRV, community awareness, education, training on REDD and management
Sasafa	North Malaita	10,000 ha	15,000	SPC	10	Reforestation	Technical assistance to add REDD+; MRV; awareness; SME development
Warahito	Makira Province	35,000 ha	5,000	CI	4	Conservation sustainable agricultural practices	Technical assistance, MRV, awareness, SME development
Hetaheta Land	North New Georgia	9,000 ha	2,000	none	3	Forest conservation for 2,000 ha; forest regeneration for 5,000 ha	Technical assistance, MRV, awareness, SME development
Vanikoro Island		5,000 ha	2,000	none	5	Forest conservation, SFM	Technical assistance, MRV
Konggukolo	Marovo lagoon	2,000 ha	500	SPC	1	FSC certification; forest conservation; forest regeneration of logged land	Conservation, technical assistance, MRV, awareness
Maramasike Mangroves and upland forests	Small Malaita			SIG, MESCAL Project		Mangrove forests	MESCAL, Worldfish
Barora Fa,	northwest Isabel			TNC		Barora Fa has a dense tropical rainforest and mangroves with reefs that flanked it	TNC
Ward 5 & 6 Arosi 2	Makira (Arosi 2 - Ward 5 & 6)	More than 40,000 ha		AROSI RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION.		Proposed REDD+ Activities are; 1. Conservation 2. Natural Forest Regeneration	Proposed REDD+ eligible activities: - REDD+ Biomass data on logged over regeneration sites

				(Incorporated in 2012) Mr. Kennedy Hoda		3. Reforestation 4. Eco-tourism 5. Sustainable Agricultural Practices	- Support awareness in Reforestation, Enrichment planting - MRV data collection on logged over sites, REDD+ safeguards piloting,



Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster
Management and Meteorology
and
Ministry of Forests and Research