



**Pacific Regional Forestry Technical Meeting
21st to 23rd September, 2011, Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, Fiji**

RECOMMENDATIONS

The Pacific Regional Forestry Technical Meeting convened from 21st up to 23rd September 2011 in Tanoa International Hotel, Nadi, Fiji. The meeting was organized as the highlight of the regional celebration of the International Year of Forests. The meeting's objective was to discuss issues, challenges and opportunities for Pacific forests.

The meeting was officially opened by the Acting Director of the Land Resources Division of the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, Mr. Inoke Ratukalou. Participating delegates included representatives from seventeen SPC member countries and territories, supported by regional and international experts that provided the meeting with valuable information and innovations on various topics discussed during the meeting.

Regional and international partners, donors, and supporting agencies included GIZ, FAO, CSIRO, JICA, EU and UN-REDD Programme. Representatives from NGOs and the private sector also attended the Meeting.

The three-day meeting officially ended on 23rd September with the confirmation of recommendations by the delegates\participants of the Meeting. Some of these recommendations will serve as the basis for HOFs submission to the next Heads of Agriculture and Forestry Services (HOAFS) and the Ministers of Agriculture and Forestry (MOAF) meeting in 2012.

i. PREAMBLE

The Pacific Regional Forestry Technical Meeting:

- a. Recognises that the SPC Land Resources Division Forests and Trees Team has made significant progress in implementing activities in support of PICTs since the HOAFS meeting in 2008 and*
- b. Acknowledges the important roles and support of partners and donors including GIZ, JICA, EU, FAO, AusAID, ACIAR, CSIRO and others to PICTs in supporting the LRD Forestry activities.*
- c. Recognises the challenges faced by SPC LRD resulting from budgetary constraints and the need for organizational reform under the RIF process.*

ii. SPECIFIC RECOMMENDATIONS

A. Regional Framework on REDD+

In recognition of the important role that forests plays in mitigation and adaptation to climate change particularly in reducing emissions from deforestation and forest degradation (REDD), the Meeting recommends:

1. A draft Regional REDD+ Policy framework to be presented at the Regional HOAFS meeting in 2012
2. As priorities to give guidance to member countries it is recommended to emphasize in the regional REDD+ policy framework:
 - a. The identification of the regional drivers of deforestation and regional strategies to address leakage issues in the region
 - b. Regional guidance on MRV methodology, REL/RL methodology, safeguards monitoring tools/methodology.
 - c. Elements of regional open communication, collaboration and information sharing
 - d. Identification of capacity building needs and/or opportunities
3. Existing regional policies need to be considered in the draft regional REDD+ policy framework
4. Basic principles of the following regional support services should be stated in the regional REDD+ policy framework:
 - a. The sharing and coordination of capacities, services, and expertise on REDD+ in the region
 - b. Enhancement of existing regional facility to provide training and technical services on MRV
 - c. Set up a regional roster of experts for REDD+. Countries have to manage the availability of their experts for exchange
 - d. Establishment of a regional information and knowledge management system on REDD+
 - e. Strengthening regional capacity in international engagement

The implementation of the above mentioned support services should begin without delay.

5. SPC to coordinate with SPREP to integrate REDD+ in regional preparatory meetings of UN (and support the participation of national forestry representatives in these meetings).
6. A coordinated policy approach on tertiary education in forestry is necessary to develop expertise in related aspects of integrated forest management including accessing and management of future forest carbon finance.

7. REDD+ readiness role in adaptation in small island countries

- a. SPC to assist smaller island countries in their efforts to benefit from REDD+ readiness processes.
- b. SPC to assist in the integration of small island countries REDD+ concerns in the preparation for international negotiations

B. Other Recommendations related to REDD+

1. To enhance cooperation and collaboration between development partners especially those already active in the Pacific Region with support to REDD+ on national and regional level like EU, GIZ, JICA and UN REDD (UNDP and FAO)
2. Voluntary market trading by private forest enterprises should be regulated and endorsed by national REDD+ or Climate Change bodies.

C. Regional Initiatives

1. Enhancing Trade in Forest Products

Endorse SPC LRD's proposed new work in the EU-funded project Increasing Agricultural Commodity Trade (IACT) to develop value adding opportunities for exportable timber and non-timber forest products and services, through:

- a. Increased local processing including by communities especially in outer islands and remote locations,
- b. Increased forest certification and verifiably legally-sourced timber (both at national level and of private companies and landowner groups),
- c. Development of a sustainable resource base for export through sustainable forest management, plantations of high-value timbers, coconut and NWFP and agroforestry plantings, and
- d. Exploration and development of carbon trading opportunities.

2. Sharing and Exchange of Forest Genetic Resources

The Meeting recognises that the draft MTA is still in development and therefore:

- a. Recommend that HOFS accelerate the process of national endorsement of the Material Transfer Agreement to be the legal framework for the safe and equitable exchange and sharing of forest genetic resources/tree germplasm in the region.
- b. Endorse the implementation of the SPC CSIRO joint project on Strengthening of Capacities in Tree Seed Technologies in the Pacific Island Countries.

3. International and Regional Participation

The Meeting recognises the importance of PICTs participating in international and regional forestry meetings and events and acknowledges that the representation of the Pacific Island countries can be further strengthened and recommends that:

- a. SPC, in collaboration with other regional organisations, organises preparatory meetings of PICTs prior to international meetings and gatherings and provides regional inputs to the sessions. Upcoming meetings include APFC Meeting in Beijing to be held in November 2011 and , UNFF10 to be held in Istanbul, Turkey in 2013.
- b. PICTs are to prepare appropriately for participation, and ensure consistent representation, in international and regional meetings and events. Prior to attendance, PICTs to discuss and agree on regional positions for international meetings to ensure stronger representation of Pacific issues.
- c. Greater national level coordination in PICTs is encouraged among national focal points of UNFF and UN convention bodies, and ensures that global discussions are brought to the national level and vice versa.

4. Harmonized MAR-SFM in the Pacific

SPC LRD to continue working on the harmonised Monitoring Assessment and Reporting (MAR) system on Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) in the PICTs:

- a. Further field testing on carbon stock assessment
- b. Development of MAR-SFM data base
- c. Capacity building\training of participants from member countries
- d. Publication of the Regional MAR Manual

5. SPC Reforms and Future Direction

The Meeting recommends that SPC LRD recognize the important role and contributions of forestry in the region and as such should be reflected in its organizational structure.

6. Forest plantation development in Solomon Islands

The Meeting notes the successful development of community forestry and calls for greater resources to support similar initiatives within the region.

7. SWARS in the RMI, American Samoa, FSM, Guam, CNMI, Palau and other US territories

The Meeting requests that SPC coordinates with other partners in providing support to the implementation of the State Wide Assessment and Resource Strategy

8. New Initiatives in Samoa

The Meeting requests that SPC LRD provides relevant technical support in the implementation of the new projects in Samoa.

9. ACP FORENET

It is recommended that the following be addressed by the HOF/SPC:

- a. The Meeting notes the progress of the project and requests the project coordinator to request for an extension and the efficient disbursement of funds in a timely manner.
- b. The Meeting notes the issues and requests project member countries to address problems relating to communication and project staff involved.

10. Global Environment Facility – Pacific Alliance for Sustainability; the Regional Forestry Conservation and Protected Area Management Project

The Meeting notes that a number of initiatives on conservation and protected area management are being implemented in the region. Countries are urged to share information and build on existing experiences to sustainably use, manage and protect the region's forests.

11. Vegetation Mapping in the Pacific Atoll Islands

The Meeting notes and requests:

- a. SPC LRD to liaise with its partners to secure funding for Very High Resolution (VHR) image data enabling coconut palm density mapping
- b. SPC LRD to liaise with its partners to secure funding for field work.
- c. SPC LRD to inform additional countries to participate in joint vegetation mapping.

12. Phytosanitary Standards in Forestry

A regional proposal to be submitted to potential donors to support:

- a. Implementation of Phytosanitary Standards in Forestry by customizing the training materials to regional requirements.
- b. Conduct regional and national training courses for forestry and biosecurity personnel
- c. Conduct capacity building surveys and other needs assessment for countries through accepted survey method such as Survey Monkey
- d. Capacity building for forest pest's identification training, tools and update of pest lists.
- e. Assist with necessary software and hardware for training.

D. Other Initiatives:

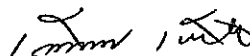
1. Note the comprehensive recommendation made by delegates to the ANZIF conference held in Auckland in May 2011 to the NZ Institute of Forestry, the Institute of Foresters of Australia and the Commonwealth Forestry Association and the progress that those associations have already made on that recommendation;
2. Encourages forestry professionals and others to participate in the various initiatives arising from the recommendations and, in particular:
 - a. Encourage individual forestry professionals to join and participate in the Pacific Forestry Special Interest Group initiated by the New Zealand Institute of Forestry following the recommendations made to it by the delegates to the ANZIF conference held in Auckland in May 2011; and
 - b. Explore in association with the NZ Institute of Forestry, the Institute of Foresters of Australia and the Commonwealth Forestry Association, possibilities of establishing an association for Pacific forestry professionals.

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