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HEALTHY ECOSYSTEMS

Brief Concept Note

(Paper prepared by the Secretariat)

1. Programme/ Project Summary	
Programme/ Project title:	**Healthy ecosystems**
Beneficiaries:	**PICTs**

2. Context

This Integrated Program (IP) focuses on managing the interaction between human activity and the environment to ensure sustainable livelihood development and protection of biodiversity and the ecosystem. The focus is on developing stewardship of natural resources through community-based natural resource management guided by locally specific and inclusive Land Use Plans.

This IP addresses the Anthropocene's triple challenge of preventing loss and the restoration of biodiversity, adaptation to climate change, and the sustainable provision of resources for food security and livelihood improvement for a growing human population. The long-term outcome is a coordinated system operating across the Pacific region that efficiently and effectively manages the interaction between society and their environment. This IP gathers and collates the vast array of data that is analysed and contributes to Land Use Plans for effective landscape management. Tailored Land Use Plans are specific to a region, catchment area, or whole-of-island approach.

Land, forests and trees play a significant role in the economic, social, environmental and cultural development of the people in the Pacific. More than 90% of the population in the Pacific are semi-subsistence smallholder farmers and the land and forests constitute the natural capital providing an inheritance for their future generations. Unfortunately, these fragile Pacific Island landscapes are under threat from a range of factors including climate change, population growth, changes in water cycles, forest and land degradation, increase production pressure, and general community housing and development. These changes affect the ecosystem and reduce the resilience of the land to sustain livelihoods and biodiversity. The challenges recognised in the Pacific Region are part of global development challenge, and adaptation strategies are required to prevent further loss of species and shifts in ecosystem composition due to climate change (Ceballos, Ehrlich, & Dirzo, 2017; Hallmann CA et al., 2017; Urban, 2015). The interaction between human activity and the environment is a complex system involving many components, interactions, and feedback loops. This system has rule-generating relationships that this IP looks to understand and realise opportunities for livelihood development embracing sustainable ecosystem management.

Significant effort and resources are required to transform working lands from solely for profit into climate resilient, biodiverse and food producing landscapes. Effective implementation of these strategies requires engagement of local stakeholders through community-based resource management programs with strong cross-level communication between all stakeholders that is inclusive of women and youth. This IP will also promote community stewardship of the landscape rather than leaving natural resource management solely to land title owners or government.

Collection of relevant data and systems that improve access to data that is useful for decision managers and communities is required. Tools and applications are available and currently being developed in LRD to manage and analyse the vast range of data that contributes to developing Land Use Plans.

3. Theory of Change

The implementation of effective and efficient management system for the interaction between society and the environment that benefits the Pacific region will be coordinated under an Integrated Program focussing on three areas:

1. Policy and regulatory frameworks: Inclusive policy and frameworks tailored for customary ownership arrangements and monitored to safeguard natural resources. *Interactions between water, soil, forest & vegetation, biodiversity – extant and endemic.*
2. Management systems and practices: Adoption of tailored sustainable systems and practices. Inclusive, area specific and tailor made Land Use Plans developed and operationalised.
3. Capacity building and communications: Strengthen and enhance the capacity of stakeholders to implement and communicate sustainable systems and practices. This is based on collation and management of resource inventory data

4. Readiness

LRD currently has expertise in forest inventory management and development of Land Use Plans.

5. Scope of Work & Management/ Implementation Arrangements

This is an Integrated Program where projects are coordinated under a management system designed to ensure efficient and effective resource sharing, complementary approaches, and maximum benefits to target communities.

To ensure sustainable production of goods and services, biodiversity-based land management techniques implemented will include agroforestry, silvopastoralism, climate smart farming, and ecosystem-based forest management. These techniques focus on building community-level knowledge (Human and Social Capital), to become empowered and capable to manage their natural resources in a productive and sustainable working landscape. A facilitated engagement with women and youth in the communities will develop the matrix that maps the complex interactions among a wide range of components and stakeholders. This facilitated community approach coordinates the 'at times' conflicting objectives of economic benefits and environmental goals that vary according to different locations and their socio-economic, political and cultural contexts. Supporting implementation is LRD's Pacific Landscape Management Support Facility (PLMSF) that coordinates the collection of the right data into a format for decision makers.

Capacity building and awareness to manage the transformation of 'solely' working lands into sustainably managed landscapes takes time and resources. A key transformation is moving from the practices of land-

tenure towards land stewardship based on community resource management.

6. What evidence is there, that SPC is best positioned to do this?

LRD Pillar 2 has experience in sustainable forests and landscape management; it has developed, implement and managed initiatives that balances natural resource management with economic development and livelihood, it has connections with Heads of Forestry, Agriculture, Livestock and Environment, and the Ministers of Forestry across SPC member countries. Pillar 2 also has the experience and networks to share experiences across the Pacific Island Countries and Territories.

Programme Theory of Change

LONG-TERM GOAL

Healthy Ecosystems

Implementation of an effective and efficient management system for the interaction between society and the environment that benefits the Pacific region.

IMPACT ON INDIVIDUALS, POPULATIONS, INSTITUTIONS

Policy and regulatory frameworks: Inclusive policy and frameworks tailored for customary ownership arrangements and monitored to safeguard natural resources. *Interactions between water, soil, forest & vegetation, biodiversity – extant and endemic.*

Management Systems and Practices: Development and adoption of tailored sustainable systems and practices.

Capacity Building and Communications: Strengthened and enhanced capacity to implement tailored sustainable systems and practices. New platforms established and existing platforms strengthened to communicate best practices

Mid-term changes required to create the expected impact - ch*anges in knowledge, skills, attitude or practice.*

IMMEDIATE TO MID-TERM CHANGES

Two pilot countries selected and strategies implemented. *Initially piloted in two target countries for measureable output*

Inclusive, area specific and tailor made Land Use Plans developed and operationalised. *Initially piloted in two target countries for measureable output*

Pacific Landscape Management Support Facility (PLMSF) established and operational. *Capacity existing within LRD Pillar2 to coordinate a landscape approach Improved*

Activities to be delivered to achieve these changes.

OUTPUTS

Uniform and consistent policies and frameworks tailored to individual PICTs with links to the regional and international commitments. (*Changes tracked).* Implementation strategies drafted and operationalised (*Draft documents)*

Identify PICT's national data on current inventory and potential land use management. *Database with links where appropriate to sovereign managed data.* Development of inclusive Land Use Plans at the district/ landscape / sub-catchment scale. *Land Use Plans documents.* Operationalised management systems tailored to the inclusive Land Use Plans *Implementation field sites exist.* Develop links and synergies with other programs *One Health, GCF, EDF11 etc.*

Capacity to develop, implement and manage Land Use Plans and forest management plans, based on the inventory. Management, processing and analysis of land, agriculture and forest inventory data. Introduction of digital applications for landscape management. Awareness of natural resources and interaction of society and environment (terrestrial and marine), biodiversity and food security.
Creating pathways to encourage women's voices and new ideas from young leaders to improve ecosystem management. Pacific Landscape Management Support Facility (PLMSF), based in LRD established and operational.

a. Forest Inventory (Design, Implementation and Analysis)
b. Community-driven Land Use Planning *(based on biophysical survey, and community needs assessment based on food security, socio-economics, and cultural & traditional knowledge, and political awareness*)
c. Digital platform developed to support existing network

Awareness and change practice from land tenure towards land stewardship in the PICTs. *Long-term landscape management regarded as sustainable under*

CAPABILITIES

Which skills, processes, systems, relationships, networks, approaches and capabilities are needed?

Capability exists – just the coordination, time and resources.

Capacity for inventory development and land use planning is limited in-countries. (*Included in capacity building*).

Capability and resources of the countries to facilitate and implement is limited without external support.

ASSUMPTIONS AND RISKS

What are the assumptions and risks associated with the changes and impact?

- Access to experienced facilitator who understands current policies and frameworks and can capture stakeholder thoughts and issues

- The vast array of data, interactions, relationships and feedback loops in a complex system is difficult to map and analyse effectively

- There is a need for a permanent capability to service smaller PICTs to provide advice on inventory design for carbon, timber, and non-timber forest products

-Sustainable land use management requires communities understanding of the development/utilizatio n strategy that corresponds to their natural resources potential