Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

Forest Landscape Restoration for Climate Benefits and Resilience (Fiji FLR)

GCP /FIJ/009/GCF

Environmental and Social Management Framework

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ABBREVIATIONS

AE	Accredited Entity
AWPB	Annual Work Plan and Budget
BAU	Business as Usual
BCM	Billion Cubic Meters
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CC	Climate Change
CCA	Climate Change Adaptation
CCD	Climate Change Division
CCM	Climate Change Mitigation
CLMP	Community Landscape Management Plans
CRA	Climate Resilient Agricultural Practices
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
EbA	Ecosystem based Adaptation
EE	Executing Entity
ESA	Environmental and Social Analysis
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ES PRO	Ecosystem Services Procedure
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FAO-HQ	Food and Agriculture Organization Head Quarters
FDB	Fiji Development Bank
FFP	Full Funding Proposal
Fiji FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration for Climate Benefits and Resilience
FJD	Fiji Dollar
FLR	Forest Landscape Restoration
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
FY	Fiscal Years
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GDI	Gender Development Index
GHG	Greenhouse Gas Emissions
GII	Gender Inequality Index
HCVF	High Conservation Value Forests
HDI	Human Development Index
HH	Households
ICT	Information Communication Technology
ICT4CA	Information Communication Technology for Climate Change
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
ILO	International Labour Organization
INC	Initial National Communication to the UNFCCC
LDN	Land Degradation Neutrality

M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoAW	Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways
MoE	Ministry of Economy
MoEP	Ministry of Environmental Protection
MoFF	Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry
MoiTA	Ministry of iTaukei Affairs
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NBS	Nature-based Solutions
NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan
NCCC	National Centre for Climate Change
NDA	National Designated Authority
NDC	Nationally Determined Contribution
NFI	National Financial Institutions
NFM	National Forestry Management
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
ND-GAIN	Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative
NDP	Fiji's National Development Plan
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NTFP	Non-Timber Forest Products
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PMF	Performance Management Framework
PMU	Project Management Unit
PNCCC	Permanent National Committee for Climate Change
PSEA	Prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTF	Project Task Force
RtR	Ridge to Reef
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SFM	Sustainable Forest Management
TA	Technical assistance
TLTB	iTaukei Land Trust Board
TORs	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNCCD	UN Convention to Combat Desertification
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNFCCC	UN Framework Convention on Climate Change
USD	United States dollar
VAW	Violence Against Women
WWF	World Wildlife Fund

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

An island nation of the Melanesia region of the South Pacific, Fiji is composed of 332 islands, of which around 110 are inhabited; the territory also includes a large number of smaller islets. The Exclusive Economic Zone covers about 1.3 million km^2. The group of islands includes numerous small volcanic islands, low-lying atolls and elevated reefs[1]. The two largest islands are Viti Levu and Vanua Levu – which make up 80 percent of the landmass, and where the majority of the population lives. Fiji's climate is categorized as tropical. The islands of Fiji are characterized by a diverse range of terrestrial ecosystems, including extensive areas of indigenous forest. Their coastal ecosystems are made up of mangroves, algae and sea-grass beds in shallow reef and lagoon areas.

Fiji faces serious **deforestation and soil erosion** problems. Deforestation and forest degradation is widespread in the most accessible forests in Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, fueled by poor logging and agricultural expansion, infrastructure development, establishment of settlements and fuelwood collection. Because of land clearing, forest cover loss also increases erosion, which then impacts freshwater and coastal ecosystems as a result of siltation and sedimentation. Fiji has and is projected to experience more severe cyclones, increased floods, saltwater intrusion, coastal and riverbank erosion, dry spells, and wildfires that not only cause physical damage to forests and infrastructure, but also agriculture losses and impacts on livelihoods.

Fiji is also negatively impacted by **climate change**. Average, minimum and maximum temperatures are expected to increase at a rate of +0.35°C, +0.4°C and +0.42°C per decade respectively, during the period 2023-2055. Dry months are likely to increase up to +0.71 months/year/decade and the climatic water balance is expected to decrease to –184 mm/year per decade, reducing the availability of water for plants and therefore potentially negatively affecting vegetation health in both natural and anthropic environments. An increase in wet days can be expected under the mitigation scenario (RCP4.5), to a rate of +7.97 days/year per decade, while an increase in extremely wet days can be expected under the business-as-usual scenario (RCP8.5) at a rate of +1.84 days/year per decade. Annual accumulated precipitations are projected to further increase up to 264 mm per decade and maximum one day precipitation is expected to increase up to +14.42 mm per decade (FAO, 2023). These phenomena are likely to lead to further water management challenges, in particular related to increased erosion and more intense flooding events.

The o**bjective** of the Project is to restore the productive capacity and ecosystem quality of Fiji's forest landscapes to improve the climate resilience of vulnerable local communities while enhancing carbon removals and sinks to produce tangible climate change mitigation benefits. The project, which will operate in the two large islands of Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, is in line with Fiji's, 5&20-Year Development Plan 2017-2036, National Climate Change Policy (2018-2030), Climate Change Act No. 43 of 2021, Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (2022), Low Emission Development Strategy 2018-2050, and National Adaptation Plan: A pathway towards climate resilience (2018).

This Project is **classified as a moderate risk (Category B)** and identifies the ESS triggers for the project, the potential environmental and social impacts of project activities, and measures to mitigate the identified risks. The Project's risk assessment was conducted using FAO's Environmental and Social Screening Form (Appendix 3), which identifies areas of risk and, based on the risk screening responses, resulted in the moderate-risk categorization. In line with Fiji's ESIA procedures, this ESMF constitutes the

[1] Republic of Fiji. 2020. Third National Communication.

initial environmental impact assessment; Fijian environmental impact assessment falls under the overall responsibility of the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MoEP), who is a partner Ministry in this project.
Project partners who undertake activities will include reference to this ESMF and the need to abide by the protocols and actions listed herein. Lastly, this ESMF serves as a practical tool to guide the identification and mitigation of potential negative environmental and social impacts of the proposed Project and serves as a platform for consultations with stakeholders and potential Project beneficiaries.

The Project will establish a **Project Steering Committee (PSC)** for the overall strategic guidance of this project as well as of the projects implemented by WWF-Fiji and the Fiji Development Bank. The PSC of the project will be housed within the NDA (Climate Change Division of the Office of the Prime Minister). A dedicated **Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be established and hosted by the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry or FAO (in Suva), as appropriate. The PMU will be functional for the entire duration of the project, and will coordinate directly with institutions as well as with the PSC and the equivalent offices in the regions and districts and will be responsible for providing support to the execution of day-to-day activities with participating regional and local governments and other stakeholders. The PMU will be supported by technical experts assigned to each technical intervention for support and oversight; an **Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Specialist** will be hired, within the PMU, for the duration of the project. A total budget of USD 225,000 is allocated for the salary of this person. The ESS Specialist will be responsible for ensuring overall compliance with this ESMF, presenting and explaining the ESMF (including the Grievance Redress Mechanism, which includes the SEAH Risk Mitigation Matrix) to all stakeholders during consultations, oversight for environmental and social assessments of activities, and the overall oversight of mitigation for any medium-risk activities using a project-level ESMP developed during implementation. The ESS Specialist will also work closely with the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) unit and Gender Specialist, on matters related to reporting for the ESS and stakeholder engagement aspects of the project.

Major elements of the workplan for the implementation of this ESMF include capacity building of project staff and implementation partners, ESS screening and assessment, ESS oversight, stakeholder engagement, Gender Action Plan, and monitoring and reporting. **Project costs of relevant staff** are below.

Costs description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	USD total costs
ESS safeguard specialist	30,075	30,150	30,225	30,300	24,047	25,375	26,735	196,907
Gender Specialist	30,075	30,150	30,225	30,300	24,047	25,375	25,521	195,693
TOTAL	**60,150**	**60,300**	**60,450**	**60,600**	**48,094**	**50,750**	**52,256**	**392,600**

Positive impacts of the Project are environmental, social and economic. With regards to ecosystems and ecosystem services, the project will ensure increased resilience and adaptability of 80,737 ha of forest and agricultural landscapes, contributing to the protection of over 90,000 ha of coastal and marine ecosystems, and increase carbon removal of 6 million tCO2eq over 20 years. Project investments will have a direct impact on all forests in Fiji. In addition to direct forestry and agroforestry investments, the project will reduce the adaptation deficit of the country by transferring knowledge and technologies to the country by increasing people's participation in forest management and by enhancing the policy and access to credit framework of the country. In addition to the positive impacts in terms of CCA and CCM,

the project will have positive impacts on biodiversity, on soil quality and water availability, decrease of evapotranspiration and slow down soil erosion, increase agricultural yields, and protection of rural communities and infrastructures from flash floods, floods and landslides. Additionally, thanks to its ridge to reef approach the project will contribute to the resilience of at least 90,000 ha of coastal and marine ecosystems thanks to the reduced erosion and consequent siltation of reefs, mangroves and seagrass beds. Finally, the project will partner during the entire execution with key NGOs such as WWF-Fiji that will support and advice on community participation as well as biodiversity and nature conservation. The project will also enhance community participation also empowering youth and women on forestry investments and forest management. Furthermore, thanks to the introduced practices and technologies the project will contribute to creating new jobs and new markets (e.g. CO2 management, green biomass, climate adaptive nurseries). The project will benefit the entire population of Fiji with some specific focus on sectorial stakeholders and private companies. In all training and investments, when possible, the project will give higher priority to women owning/leasing lands for bioenergy or other purposes and will ensure that at least 50% of beneficiaries are women. Furthermore, the project will ensure women participation and their empowerment in all the activities related to forestry investments. Through investments in community nurseries women will be reached and involved in community behavioural change activity. The project is expected to increase climate resilience of 196,877 most vulnerable people (~21% of Fiji's population) and indirectly benefit 149,715 people (~16% of the population).

Potential negative impacts are mitigatable, and are mainly related to on-ground activities in the forestry sector. On-ground activities will include implementing ecosystem-based forest restoration adaptation solutions; restoring and bringing 80,737 ha of forests under Sustainable Forest Management practices; and developing Short Rotation Plantation strategies. Potential impacts are limited to the Project footprint and could occur as a result of forest-related activities, but these are localized and are mitigated thanks to Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) activities which will establish community and farmer enterprise-led FLR for afforestation – using native species - and agroforestry and conservation of High Conservation Value Forests (HCVF) and achieving reforestation and SFM through Public-Private-Community Partnership. In relevant coastal areas, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) seawalls with mangrove forest will be built for complete Ridge to Reef ecosystem resilience. The project follows a zero-tolerance approach for activities that would affect Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories, or resources, but the Indigenous Peoples safeguards was triggered because approximately 90% of land in Fiji is owned by indigenous Fijians (iTaukei) through their mataqali (clan); given the national ownership of the project that includes the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs among its partners, it was agreed with the Government of Fiji that the Project already satisfies the FPIC requirements. Should it be determined that a detailed FPIC will be needed, this will be executed at Project start-up. Gender-based violence is a reality, but project activities are not expected to directly cause, exacerbate, or introduce gender inequality or gender-based violence risks through their design, scope, or implementation modalities; potentially needed risk mitigation actions (including reference to the Gender Action Plan) are in Table 6. Potential risks in relation to community health and safety are not foreseen, however these will be addressed by providing training and protective measures and gear as needed. **FAO Safeguards that are applicable for this project** are presented below.

FAO Safeguard	Applies	Justification
ESS 1: Biodiversity conservation, and	Yes	This safeguard was triggered because of forest regeneration and waterways and riparian zones restoration activities. The Project will only plant with native or locally

sustainable management of natural resources		adapted species and involving local communities. Activities will be executed according to the responsible management of planted forests. No seeds will be procured and no new planting material (tree, shrub, crop varieties) will be introduced into the country. The project will not intervene in existing protected areas. Intervention in natural habitats will be restricted to degraded areas and agriculture land. Intervention will follow FAO guidelines and international standards. Furthermore, in full alignment with its ESS standards and FAO code of practice, the project will not allow nor promote loss or conversion of remaining natural forests. As planned within the CLMPs the project will secure detailed mapping of natural resources and identify natural areas and related buffer zones.
ESS 2. Resource efficiency and pollution prevention and management	No	The Project aims restore the productive capacity and ecosystem quality of Fiji's forest landscapes. The project will not lead to increased use of pesticides through intensification or expansion of production. No seeds will be procured and no new planting material will be introduced into the country; the Project will only select native or locally adapted species. No GMO or seeds with insecticidal seed coatings will be used in the project. No significant waste will be generated.
ESS 3. Climate change and disaster risk reduction	No	On the contrary, the project will lead to efficient reduction of forest and land use change GHG emissions, contributing to Fiji's goal of net zero emissions by 2050, and will strengthen the resilience of communities and ecosystems with reduced risks of climate hazards and disasters (floods, landslides soil erosion and pollution).
ESS 4. Decent work	Yes	The project will enhance community participation also empowering youth and women on forestry investments and forest management. Furthermore, thanks to the introduced practices and technologies the project will contribute to creating new jobs and new markets (e.g. CO2 management, green biomass, climate adaptive nurseries). The project will promote, respect and realize fundamental principles and rights at work. The employment of project workers will be based on the principle of equal opportunity and fair treatment, and there will be no discrimination with respect to any aspects of the employment relationship. Hiring of workers will be made following the laws and regulations of Fiji, and workers will need to abide with the FAO code of conduct and FAO policies. All workers will be above 18 years old. Any potential occupational health and safety risks will be dealt with by providing training and protective measures and gear as well as provisions for protecting workers as needed. The Project will protect and promote the safety and health of all workers; the planned range of field activities in afforestation/reforestation/infrastructure development and respective OHS measures will be implemented as elaborated in the ESS mitigation plan (Table 6, ESMF).
ESS 5. Community health, safety and security	No	Community health, safety and security will not be compromised by Project field activities. Any impacts on communal ecosystem services will be positive impacts. No hazardous materials or waste will be used or generated. The project will not create the conditions for exposure to health-and life-threatening hazards.
ESS 6. Gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence	Yes	Project activities are not expected to directly cause, exacerbate, or introduce gender inequality or gender-based violence risks through their design, scope, or implementation modalities. The project will not involve mechanisms typically associated with heightened ESS6 risk, such as cash or in-kind transfers targeted to individuals, relocation or infrastructure works among others. Furthermore, the project will not introduce new power asymmetries or dependency relationships at household or community level. Having said that, ESS 6 has been triggered because the project operates in rural and forest-dependent communities with a documented high prevalence of violence against women (as acknowledged in Annex 8). With regards to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), through its Grievance Redress Mechanism the Project will ensure that all concerns and/or incidents will be reported to the PSEA focal point and the FAO Office of the Inspector General, as appropriate. The Project will include sexual exploitation and abuse awareness raising, and stakeholder-differentiated understanding, during

		stakeholder engagement. As part of the Community Landscape Management Plans (CLMPs), the project will complete a district-level GBV/SEAH service-provider mapping in each target area, undertaken with local CSOs and relevant experts and aligned with national referral protocols (Sub-activity 1.3.1.4). Results will be annexed to the project GRM and the SEAH risk-management plan, so that referral pathways (health-first response for sexual violence; psychosocial support helplines; police/legal aid upon survivor consent) are explicit, consistent, and accessible at site level. Furthermore, if site-specific screening will identify elevated risks during implementation, the project-level ESMP and the Gender Action Plan provide sufficient flexibility to scale mitigation measures accordingly, including enhanced monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and referral mechanisms.
ESS 7. Land tenure, displacement, and resettlement	No	There are no unclear land tenure issues. Project activities will only include forestry investments in existing forest areas or in areas previously covered with forests – these areas are always owned by communities. Land can be cleared by communities or leased out via the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB). Land management plans, developed with communities, will determine the sites - therefore, there will be no involuntary resettlement or displacement, nor any restrictions of land use or access to resources, resulting from project activities. Project investments will be voluntary and limited to degraded areas and agricultural lands that are identified with and by communities through the CLMPs, or to areas already leased through formal agreements with customary landowners. Accordingly, all project-supported land-use changes identified through CLMPs will be subject to a PS5 screening step to assess whether they would result in loss of income, assets, or restriction of access to land or resources currently used for livelihoods, regardless of formal tenure status. Where screening confirms that participation is fully voluntary and does not entail livelihood loss, activities will proceed under the standard ESMP. Potential conflicts will be identified early through the CLMP process. Where differing interests or concerns emerge, the project will prioritize consensus-building and adaptive design, including adjustment of activity siting and phasing to avoid disadvantaging specific sub-groups. Benefit-sharing arrangements supported by the project will be required to be transparent, documented, and communicated within the community, and aligned with customary and legal governance structures that are available. Via the CLMPs, the project will assess that potential loss of access or livelihood effects not only at community level, but also for affected users, households, or sub-groups who may rely on the relevant land or natural resources.
ESS 8. Indigenous Peoples	Yes	The project is not designed to cause harm or suffering to Indigenous Peoples; this has been triggered because almost 90 percent of the land is owned by indigenous Fijians. A 19 March 2024 letter (Appendix 7) from the Permanent Secretary for iTaukei Affairs, Culture, Heritage and Arts to the Acting Permanent Secretary for Fisheries and Forests confirmed that the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs – which represents the ITaukei – states that the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs supports the project, that the project will be implemented in coordination with iTaukei legislations and that all activities relating to communities will be in consultation with the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and relevant agencies such as the TLTB. Hence, it was agreed with the Government of Fiji that the Project already satisfies the FPIC requirements but should it be determined that a detailed FPIC will be needed, this will be executed at Project start-up. The project operates entirely on customary land under Fiji's legal system, where Indigenous iTaukei communities are the sole landowners and no land or resource can be allocated, accessed, or used without the explicit consensus of the relevant mataqali (landowning unit). The project follows a zero-tolerance approach for activities that would affect Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories, or resources. In practice, FPIC is embedded throughout project design. All Community Landscape Management Plans (CLMPs) are designed with and by communities, using

		culturally appropriate engagement processes and securing documented consent from landowners prior to validation. CLMPs will identify only activities that landowners will have agreed to. This ensures that community priorities—and therefore Indigenous Peoples' rights—drive all land and resource decisions. No activity will be implemented in target areas if not included in the CLMPs. Should screening identify any unresolved land claims, competing uses, or subgroup concerns, no activity will proceed until FPIC is fully obtained and documented; if FPIC cannot be secured, that activity will be excluded.
ESS 9. Cultural heritage	No	Cultural heritage will be neither undermined nor compromised by the Project. 90 percent of the land is owned by indigenous Fijians, and the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs among Project partners. Cultural considerations are embedded in the Project's design and implementation approach. Finding of artefacts of cultural importance is not envisaged but should this occur, chance find procedures will be followed in line with FAO guidelines, and would include the notification of relevant authorities and stakeholders; the avoidance of further disturbance or damage; and the protection, documentation and assessment of the found objects, artifacts and spaces by experts.

The Project was **designed** in close consultation with and involvement of relevant government agencies, technical line departments, other national institutions, UN agencies, civil society and private sector stakeholders, through national and community-level workshops and detailed bilateral meetings. This has ensured that the components and activities proposed are in line with national policies and strategies with strong country ownership and relevance for local communities. During **project implementation**, formal consultations with (national and community-level) stakeholders will take place yearly, at the time of the preparation of Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) – i.e. at the beginning of each of the seven project Fiscal Years (FY). The AWPB will be presented by the PMU and reviewed by all stakeholders, including at the national and community levels as well as during the planning, implementation and monitoring of forest restoration/sustainable forest management investments. During these stakeholder engagement consultations, the ESMF – including the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), but also the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and SEAH Risk Mitigation Matrix - will be shared with stakeholders, and explained. In addition, as needed, consultations will be held with relevant stakeholders during the preparation and implementation of sub-activities. Stakeholder engagement will take place at the community level when developing land management plans.

1. INTRODUCTION

An island nation of the Melanesia region of the South Pacific, Fiji faces serious deforestation and soil erosion problems. Fiji forests cover 60 percent of total land area and provide critical ecosystem services for the climate resilience of the country, its people and the main sectors of the economy (tourism and agriculture). Climate change is threatening these ecosystems and millions of livelihoods they support. On the other hand, deforestation and forest degradation have been widespread mainly due to agriculture expansion and infrastructure development. These compounded impacts negatively affect ecosystems - from ridge to reef – and dependent communities while putting forests at danger of losing their sink capacity and threatening Fiji's path to sustainable development and zero net emissions as envisioned in the Low Emissions Development Strategy. The project will also contribute to improved coral reef management, in particular through reduced sedimentation.

Deforestation and forest degradation has been widespread in the most accessible forests in Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, fueled by poor logging and agricultural expansion, infrastructure development, establishment of settlements and fuelwood collection. According to the Ministry of Fisheries and Forests, the forested area is on decline both in natural and planted forests, with estimated rates between -0.01 percent/year[2]. The rate of degradation in forest peripheries also refers to the loss of vegetation cover in agroecosystems (including rangelands), and the continued loss of productivity in agricultural lands, which impacts livelihoods significantly (FAO, 2021).

Climate change represents a major obstacle to Fiji's development and threatens ecosystems and the communities they support. Fiji has and is projected to experience more severe cyclones, increased floods, saltwater intrusion, coastal and riverbank erosion, dry spells and wildfires that not only cause physical damage to forests and infrastructure, but also agriculture losses and impacts on livelihoods. Compounded loss and damages from climate related disasters and poor natural resources management practices have contributed to the vicious cycle of resource depletion and land degradation, increasing risks of disasters and impacts on ecosystems and livelihoods.

Fiji currently ranks 77th out of 185 countries on the ND-Gain Index, indicating that while the country is on the road to responding effectively to climate change, its adaptation needs and urgency to act are greater. Its vulnerability and readiness scores are 0.455 and 0.478, respectively.

Key constraints were identified as main barriers to adaptation and mitigation. The main root causes and bottlenecks preventing climate-adaptive, effective, transparent, and integrated management of forest and other natural resources in Fiji are multifaceted and as a consequence, exposure and vulnerability are high. These include an outdated policy and knowledge framework; lack of community awareness including women and youth; lack of financial tools and access to credit; and undervalued forest value chains. A concern is the lack of awareness, capacities, and coordination for integrated land-use planning, particularly at the landscape level. Communities face challenges in implementing activities related to Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) due to insufficient technical capacity. Unplanned agricultural expansion driven by perceived short term economic benefits contributes significantly to ecosystems' degradation. Institutional focus divergence, inadequate long-term financial incentives, and limited access to technologies and finance further compound the issues. Moreover, the underrepresentation of women in decision-making processes,

[2] Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry. 2015. Department of Forestry Annual Report 2015. Fiji. Available: http://www.parliament.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Department-of-Forests-Annual-Report-2015.pdf [2021, October 07].

underdeveloped value chains for climate-resilient forestry products, and a lack of market access for rural communities exacerbate the challenges.

The project will address these barriers by promoting Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) processes aiming at implementing integrated and climate responsive land use to regain its ecological integrity and restore forest ecosystems and related human wellbeing in a climate adaptive way as part of larger landscape management changes, rather than through isolated restoration projects. This will be vital for climate resilience of forest dependent communities, of downstream coastal ecosystems and for coral reef protection, while reducing GHG emissions and increasing carbon stock. Customary landowners' climate actions will be enabled by integrated land use planning, strengthened regulatory frameworks and codes of conduct as well as innovative financial mechanisms including Fiji's access to international carbon market.

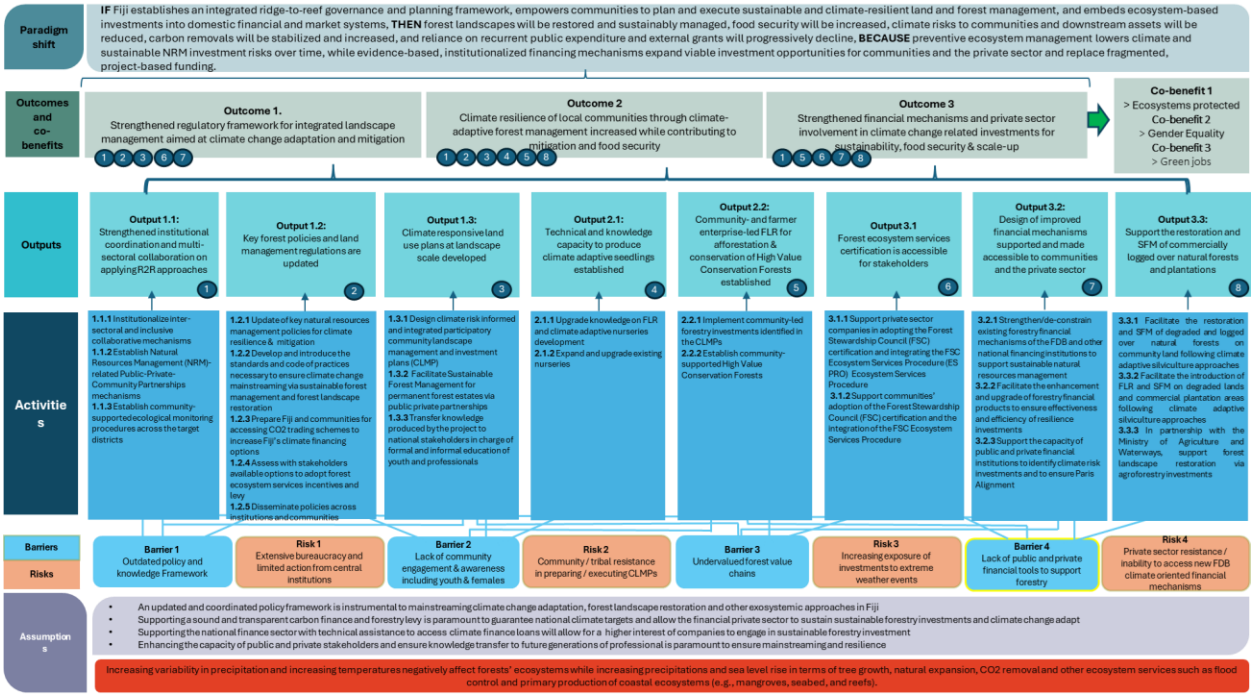
The project interventions will generate important outcomes: they will strengthen the resilience of communities and ecosystems with diversified, more resilient livelihoods, reduced risks of climate hazards and disasters (floods, landslides soil erosion and pollution). They will also lead to efficient reduction of forest and land use change GHG emissions, contributing to Fiji's goal of net zero emissions by 2050, national biodiversity conservation and the SDGs. It will do so by addressing gaps in land use planning and creating the necessary regulatory frameworks to enable customary stewards of the land to implement Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) at scale, supported by innovate forestry investments and financial mechanisms that will support and maintain climate resilience of both ecosystems and communities across watersheds.

The objective of the Project **is to restore the productive capacity and ecosystem quality of Fiji's forest landscapes to improve the climate resilience of vulnerable local communities while enhancing carbon removals and sinks to produce tangible climate change mitigation benefits.** This Project has three components:

Component 1 - Strengthened regulatory framework for climate responsive and integrated landscape management (Ridge to Reef)
Component 2 - Enhanced sustainable and resilient management of ecosystems and forests by stakeholders
Component 3 - Strengthened financial mechanisms, incentives, and opportunities for sustainability and scaling up

The Project Theory of Change. The paradigm shift envisaged by this Project is that *IF* forests are restored with a climate adaptive approach and managed by all stakeholders according to policies that are oriented towards Ridge to Edge and sustainable management while communities (including women and young girls) and private sector are supported with tailored technical assistance and access to credit *THEN* communities across landscapes will increase their climate resilience while contributing to low carbon and sustainable development pathways *BECAUSE* the value of ecosystem services is recognized and embedded in land use planning and in the pricing of forest and agriculture goods, and the participatory and inclusive investment and governance mechanisms as well as the new policies and access to credit promoted by the project will lead to more resilient ecosystems decreasing exposure and vulnerabilities of communities (including women and young girls) while reducing GHG emissions.

Figure 1: Theory of Change



This Project is part of a larger, global picture – Project results feed into global processes including the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and its related agreements/processes and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2030 Agenda) and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals - SDGs). The Project objectives are closely aligned with national policy objectives and international climate change commitments of the Republic of Fiji, including, among others, its National Development Plan, Strategic Development Plan, National Climate Change Policy, NDC, Low Emissions Strategy, National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan and National Adaptation Plan. National stakeholders were engaged in the process of developing the concept note.

The Project has been classified as a **moderate risk (Category B) by the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)** in compliance with FAO's Framework for Environmental and Social Management and considering the GCF´s Environmental and Social Safeguards. The Project's risk assessment was conducted using FAO's Environmental and Social Screening Form (Appendix 3), which identifies areas of risk and, based on the risk screening responses, resulted in the moderate-risk categorization. Due diligence for addressing identified risks is carried out through the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF, this document) which guides Project implementing agencies and stakeholders on environmental and social assessment, mitigation of impacts, and monitoring and reporting procedures during Project implementation. This ESMF, which constitutes the environmental impact assessment (EIA) as per the requirements of national EIA legislation, will be adopted by project stakeholders responsible for project components ad activities, and any sub-contractors. Following Environmental and Social Impact Assessments, a project-level Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) will be prepared once exact target areas are identified. Project partners who undertake activities will include reference to this ESMF and the need to abide by the protocols and actions listed

herein. Relevant Project partners will be provided with required Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) training prior to undertaking Project-related activities.

The preparation process of this ESMF contributed to Project formulation by identifying, *a priori*, "do-able" – or not – activities and provided suggestions for improvements in Project activity design. Since exact target areas are not determined at the onset of Project but will be refined during Project implementation, the ESMF is the appropriate instrument under FAO´s Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy. The ESMF serves as a practical tool to guide the identification and mitigation of potential negative environmental and social impacts of the proposed Project and serves as a platform for consultations with stakeholders and potential Project beneficiaries.

Specifically, the **objectives of this ESMF** are to:

- Assess the potential environmental and social impacts of the proposed Project, whether positive or negative, and propose mitigation measures which will effectively address these impacts;
- Establish clear procedures for the environmental and social planning, review, approval, and implementation of sub-activities to be financed under the Project;
- Specify appropriate roles and responsibilities, and outline the necessary reporting procedures, for managing and monitoring environmental and social concerns related to sub-activities;
- Consider different alternatives, options and relevant mitigation measures during Project preparation and implementation;
- Determine the training, capacity building and technical assistance needed to successfully implement the provisions of the ESMF;
- Address mechanisms for public consultation and disclosure of Project documents as well as redress of possible grievances; and
- Establish the Project funding required to implement the ESMF requirements and to provide practical resources for implementing the ESMF.

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

2.1 PROJECT OBJECTIVES

Restoring, maintaining and enhancing the ecosystems services and productive capacity of forest landscape is vital for climate resilience of communities across landscapes as each ecosystem in Fiji is highly interlinked and impacts upstream (e.g. edge: forests and agriculture areas) will have immediate and severe consequences downstream (e.g. ridge: coastal areas and seascapes). Therefore, the project aims to address the challenge of reducing the exposure and vulnerability to climate change of communities across landscapes while reducing GHG emissions and increasing carbon removals and stock. Climate adaptation is enhanced by proposed investments both in terms of increased resilience of individuals, as well as ecosystem resilience.

The project **objective is to restore the productive capacity and ecosystem quality of Fiji's forest landscapes to improve the climate resilience of vulnerable local communities while enhancing carbon removals and sinks to produce tangible climate change mitigation benefits.** The project will strengthen regulatory frameworks for climate responsive, integrated landscape management, restore and sustainably manage 80,737 ha of forest ecosystems, and implement innovative financial mechanisms for sustainability and scaling up. Furthermore, to ensure a coordinated and synergetic ridge to reef approach, FAO will work with WWF and the FDB to ensure complementarity and impact.

It will do so by addressing gaps in land use planning and creating the necessary regulatory frameworks to enable customary stewards of the land to implement Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) at scale, supported by innovate forestry investments and financial mechanisms that will support and maintain climate resilience of both ecosystems and communities across watersheds.

Overall, the project is expected to directly **increase climate resilience of 196,877 most vulnerable people** (~21% of Fiji's population) **and indirectly benefit 149,715 people** (~16% of the population) while enhancing the resilience of **80,737 ha**[i]**90,000 ha** of coastal and marine ecosystems, and increase carbon removal of **6 million tCO2eq over 20 years.**

2.2 PROJECT COMPONENTS

The outcomes of the project form its three interlinked components:

Component 1 will support and enhance the establishment of clear and shared enabling conditions for sustainable forest and forest landscape restoration to effectively and efficiently contribute to climate change adaptation and mitigation. The component will address inadequate stakeholders' collaboration and coordination for landscape approaches for climate change; the outdated and incomplete governance, policy framework, and incentive mechanisms for stakeholders to restore, manage and protect forest ecosystems and landscapes; and the lack of participation of customary landowners and communities in planning landscapes and ecosystems at the sub-national level. Furthermore, building on the framework of the Climate Change Act (2021) and its enactment, the project will support the Ministry of Environment and the Prime Minister Office in enabling the carbon sequestration property rights and legal environment for domestic carbon market and ecosystem services in Fiji. Finally. through collaborative and participatory approaches, the project will ensure a precise and evidence-based understanding of the current status of land and resources, ecosystem services and climate change impacts to stimulate and facilitate land use planning at the landscape scale.

Component 2 will overcome the lack of access to technologies and finance to implement Forest Landscape Restoration and poor compliance with forest management rules and regulations with the risk of customary landowners and the private sector not recognizing the value of Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM). This will be done by capacitating public, private, and community nurseries to provide a flexible amount of climate-adapted seedlings, and empowering communities through forestry investments, improved access to information and technologies, and climate-adaptive silvicultural practices. Building on the Climate Change Act (2021) framework and its enactment and to ensure the achievement of the NDCs, this component will implement a 360-degree approach to forestry, where climate change and its adverse impacts are fully addressed and investments are upscaled. Promoting climate-adaptive silviculture, the project will help forest communities diversify their practices through appropriate restoration techniques that emphasize spatial heterogeneity and diversity. This approach will increase the proportion of species better suited to current and future climatic conditions.

Component 3 will enable private sector operators as well as institutions and communities to access new financial mechanisms linked to sustainability and climate change. It will support the country to overcome the lack of suitable financing instruments offered from local financial institutions to finance climate change adaptation and underdeveloped climate resilient forestry products and contribute to the sustainable forest management of former plantations and other community owned commercial forests.

Through this component, the project will first work with the forestry sector to review business-as-usual forest management practices, develop new business models and identify financially viable pathways for FLR and SFM. In partnership with the Fiji Development Bank (FDB), access to loan financing through the FDB's existing financing products will be supported, as well as developing new financial mechanisms to enable communities and private sector forestry operators to invest in FLR and SFM. With leveraged private financing from FDB, the component will support forest/landowners and smallholder farmers to sustain their adoption of financially viable FLR and climate resilient agroforestry and agriculture while unlocking investments by private companies to accelerate afforestation/reforestation, improve forestry supply chains, expand the development of sustainable NTFPs, and deliver SFM.

Table 1. Project components

COMPONENT 1. Strengthened regulatory framework for climate responsive and integrated landscape management (Ridge to Reef)
Output 1.1. Strengthened regulatory framework for integrated landscape management aimed at climate change adaptation and mitigation
Activity 1.1.1: Institutionalize inter-sectoral and inclusive collaborative mechanisms
Activity 1.1.2: Establish Natural Resources Management-related Public-Private-Community Partnerships mechanisms
Activity 1.1.3: Establish community-supported ecological monitoring across the target districts
Output 1.2. Key forest policies and land management regulations are updated, reviewed, and developed
Activity 1.2.1: Update of key natural resources management policies for climate resilience and mitigation
Activity 1.2.2: Develop and introduce the standards and code of practices necessary to ensure climate change mainstreaming via sustainable forest management and forest landscape restoration
Activity 1.2.3: Prepare Fiji and communities for accessing carbon trading schemes to increase Fiji's climate financing options
Activity 1.2.4: Assess with stakeholders available options to adopt forest ecosystem services incentives and levy
Activity 1.2.5: Disseminate policies across institutions and communities
Output 1.3. Climate responsive land use plans at landscape scale developed
Activity 1.3.1: Design climate risk informed and integrated participatory community landscape management and investment plans (CLMP)
Activity 1.3.2: Facilitate Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) for permanent forest estates via public private partnerships
Activity 1.3.3: Transfer knowledge produced by the project to national stakeholders in charge of formal and informal education of youth and professionals
COMPONENT 2. Enhanced sustainable and resilient management of ecosystems and forests by stakeholders
Output 2.1. Technical and knowledge capacity to produce climate adaptive seedlings established
Activity 2.1.1: Upgrade knowledge on FLR and climate adaptive nurseries development
Activity 2.1.2: Expand and upgrade the public nurseries
Output 2.2. Community- and farmer enterprise-led FLR for afforestation and conservation of High Conservation Value Forests established
Activity 2.2.1: Implement community-led forestry investments identified in the CLMPs

Activity 2.2.2: Establish community-supported High Conservation Value Forests[3]
COMPONENT 3. Strengthened financial mechanisms, incentives, and opportunities for sustainability and scaling up
Output 3.1. Forest ecosystem services certification is accessible to stakeholders
Activity 3.1.1: Support private sector companies in adopting the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification and integrating the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure[ii] (ES PRO)
Activity 3.1.2: Support communities' adoption of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification and the integration of the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure (ES PRO)
Output 3.2. Design of improved financial mechanisms supported and made accessible to communities and the private sector
Activity 3.2.1: Strengthen/de-constrain existing forestry financial mechanisms of the FDB and other national financing institutions to support sustainable natural resources management (SNRM)
Activity 3.2.2: Facilitate the enhancement and upgrade of forestry financial products to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of resilience investments
Activity 3.2.3: Support the capacity of public and private financial institutions to identify climate risk investments and to ensure Paris Agreement alignment of the pipeline portfolio
Output 3.3. Support the restoration and SFM of commercially logged over natural forests and plantations
Activity 3.3.1: Facilitate the restoration and SFM of degraded and logged over natural forests on community land following climate adaptive silviculture approaches
Activity 3.3.2: Facilitate the introduction of FLR and SFM on degraded lands and commercial plantation areas following climate adaptive silviculture approaches
Activity 3.3.3: In partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways, support forest landscape restoration via agroforestry investments

2.3 TARGET AREAS AND ELIGIBILITY CRITERIA

The project targets two islands: Viti Levu and Vanua Levu. Based on the choices of the government a third island could be added. Specific target areas[4] were discussed and agreed upon in several occasions with the NDA, WWF and the Fiji Development Bank (FDB) in order to ensure synergies with the whole national GCF programme and with initiatives focusing on other complementary marine and terrestrial ecosystem services. It was agreed that the final target areas in the project will be decided by the government at project start-up, based on the methodology established by the project and criteria including: vulnerability to climate change; degradation and deforestation hotspots; presence of areas with high biodiversity; low climate resilience and adaptive capacity of the local population; and presence of complementary initiatives. Rural communities will be consulted further to identify the most vulnerable communities in the Districts, document their interest in participating in the programme and delivering FLR activities and to ensure that benefit-sharing conditions are clearly articulated and understood.

2.4 PROJECT GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT

At the request of the Government of Fiji, FAO will serve as the Accredited Entity (AE) to the GCF for this project. In this capacity, FAO will be responsible for overall oversight of the Project, including: i) all project evaluation aspects; ii) administrative, financial and technical supervision throughout

[3] Upgrading reserved forests from ERPA project in protected areas.

[4] Potential target districts include Ba, Bua, Dogotoki, Labasa, Macuata, Magodro, Maolmalo, Nadi, Naitasiri, Nakorotubu, Nawaka, Rakiraki, Rewa, Sasa, Tavua, Vuda, Vuya, Waimaro, Wainimala and Wainunu.

implementation of the Project; iii) supervision of effective management of funds to achieve the results and objectives; iv) quality control of Project monitoring and reporting to the GCF; and v) Project closure and evaluation.

FAO will ensure that the project is executed in compliance with GCF and FAO rules and regulations, policies and procedures, including relevant requirements on fiduciary, procurement, monitoring and evaluation, environment and social safeguards, and other project performance standards. FAO will assume these responsibilities in line with the detailed provisions listed in the Accreditation Master Agreement (AMA) between FAO and the GCF.

FAO, the AE, will act as the Executing Agency (EE) for all GCF-funded project activities and will be responsible for the GCF proceeds. FAO-SAP will establish a dedicated Project Management Unit (PMU), in Suva, Fiji, to be in charge of the execution of the project as a whole. The Government of Fiji, acting through the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry, the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and the Ministry of Environmental Protection will be EEs for activities funded by their own co-financing resources. As such, they will be responsible for managing and executing their co-financing funds but will not execute any GCF Proceeds.

A **Project Steering Committee** (PSC) will be established for the overall strategic guidance of this project as well as of the projects implemented by WWF-Fiji and the FDB. The PSC will be housed within the NDA and will be composed of primary stakeholders, such as the MoFF, the MiTA, the MoAW; the MECC, the MoT; the Ministry for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics (MoFSPNDS), the Ministry of Interiors (MoI), and representatives of provinces, project areas, FAO (Observer) and CSOs (Observer). The role of the PSC will be to: (i) Provide overall guidance and direction to the project; (ii) Ensure that co-financing support is provided in a timely and effective manner and reported against its availability and use; (iii) Address project issues as raised by the PMU and/or PSC members or EEs; (iii) Review the project progress, and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily and within the approved project framework; (iv) Review and approve annual work plan and provide necessary strategic guidance for its implementation;(v) Appraise the annual project reports; (vi) make recommendations for subsequent work plans to build on achievements and address any shortcomings, etc. One representative from the PMU will act as Rapporteur to the PSC and should ensure through its overall leading and central role a strong country ownership.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL BASELINE[5]

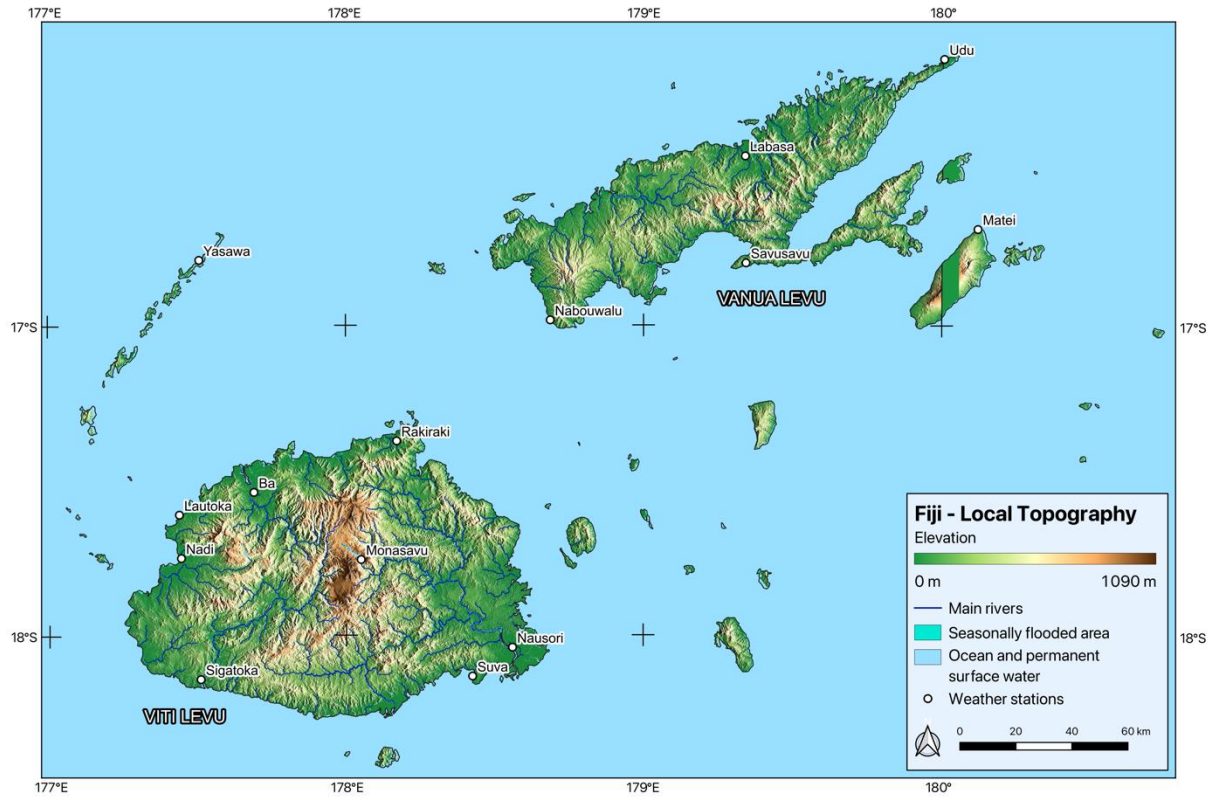
3.1 GEOGRAPHICAL CONTEXT

An island nation of the Melanesia region of the South Pacific, Fiji is composed of 332 islands, of which around 110 are inhabited; the territory also includes a large number of smaller islets. The Exclusive Economic Zone covers about 1.3 million km^2. The group of islands includes numerous small volcanic islands, low-lying atolls and elevated reefs[6]. The two largest islands are Viti Levu and Vanua Levu – which make up 80 percent of the landmass, and where the majority of the population lives. Fiji's climate is categorized as tropical. Temperatures are relatively constant throughout the year; they average 23-25^{o}C during the dry season which runs from May-October. In the wet season, November-April, temperatures average about 27-27^{o}C. There is greater seasonal variation in precipitation, with an average of around

[5] Much of information for this chapter has been extracted from the Working Papers that supported the Full Funding Proposal.
[6] Republic of Fiji. 2020. Third National Communication.

250–400 millimeters (mm) of rainfall/month in the wet season and 80–150 mm/month in the dry. Periods of drought have occurred during El Niño periods[7]. Fiji's most populous island, Viti Levu, sees much stronger precipitation on its east side (3,000-5,000 mm) compared to its west (2,000-2,000 mm). Tropical cyclones but also floods are a major feature, given Fiji's geographical location, and have major implications for the economy of the country. The islands of Fiji are characterized by a diverse range of terrestrial ecosystems, including extensive areas of indigenous forest. Their coastal ecosystems are made up of mangroves, algae and sea-grass beds in shallow reef and lagoon areas. There are also pristine reef types such as barrier, fringing platform and atoll or patch reefs that house most of Fiji's aquatic biodiversity[8].

Figure 2. Topography of Fiji



Data Source: NASA / USGS / JPL-Caltech (Farr et al. 2007), JRC Yearly Water Classification History (Pekel et al. 2016), WWF HydroSHEDS Free Flowing Rivers Network v1 (Lehner, Verdin, and Jarvis 2008; Grill et al. 2019)

3.1.1 Characteristics of target areas

Most of Fiji's population (87 percent of total population) lives on the two largest islands, Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, which comprise 80 percent of Fiji's landmass. Native forest cover is largely located on Viti Levu and Vanua Levu islands. With a population of around 600,000 people[9], Viti Levu covers an area of approximately 10,389 km^2. It has a central mountain range that divides it into two climatic zones: a wet southeastern section and a drier northwestern section; its highest peak is Mount Tomanivi, at 1,324

[7] World Bank. 2021. Climate Risk Country Profile: Fiji.
[8] Republic of Fiji. 2020. Third National Communication.
9 https://worldpopulationreview.com/cities/fiji

meters. Because of this divide, there are lush rainforests in the wetter, southeastern areas and more arid conditions in the northwest. Viti Levu is characterized by a rugged terrain on account of volcanic activity and tectonic movements, while its interior boasts extensive rainforests and diverse ecosystems. Many inactive volcanoes are scattered across the island.

With a population of around 135,000 people[10], Vanua Levu covers approximately 5,538 km^2. The terrain is rugged mountainous; its highest peak is Mount Batini (Nasorolevu), at 1,111 meters. As with Viti Levu, Vanua Levu is divided by a central mountain range into two climactic zones: the wetter southeastern area and the drier northwestern area. The most degraded catchments areas are in Vanua Levu, where the native vegetation was removed for infrastructural or agricultural development, and are the ones with the highest erosion and consequently the highest marine turbidity rates11.

Native forest cover is mostly located on Viti Levu and Vanua Levu islands, and collectively contribute to 87 percent of total forest area in Fiji. They include mangrove forests, lowland rainforests, upland rainforest, cloud forests, and dry forests. Dry forests are already extinct in much of their natural range, while cloud forests are greatly threatened by climate change as their natural range decreases due to rising temperatures.

Details of the environmental characteristics of Fiji, and of the two major islands, are described below. Maps and potential district profiles are in Annex 16 of the project proposal package.

3.2 ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

Fiji faces serious deforestation and soil erosion problems. Fiji forests cover 60 percent of total land area and provide critical ecosystem services for the climate resilience of the country, its people and the main sectors of the economy (tourism and agriculture). Climate change is threatening these ecosystems and millions of livelihoods they support. On the other hand, deforestation and forest degradation have been widespread mainly due to agriculture expansion and infrastructure development. These compounded impacts negatively affect ecosystems - from ridge to reef – and dependent communities while putting forests at danger of losing their sink capacity and threatening Fiji's path to sustainable development and zero net emissions as envisioned in the Low Emissions Development Strategy.

3.2.1 Forestry

Deforestation and forest degradation is widespread in the most accessible forests in Viti Levu and Vanua Levu, fueled by poor logging and agricultural expansion, infrastructure development, establishment of settlements and fuelwood collection. According to the Ministry of Fisheries and Forests, the forested area is on decline both in natural and planted forests, with estimated rates between -0.01 percent/year[12]. The rate of degradation in forest peripheries also refers to the loss of vegetation cover in agroecosystems (including rangelands), and the continued loss of productivity in agricultural lands, which impacts livelihoods significantly.

Around 60 percent of Fiji's total landmass is covered by forest and contributing to crucial ecosystems services corresponding to a value of FJD 544 million (250 million USD - approx. 6% of the GDP)

10 Ibid.

[11] A further regional example, in the Solomon Islands, extensive logging contributed to a loss of reef habitat from 3,528 to 1,941 ha, decreasing populations of inshore *Acroporid* corals and associated parrotfish species (Hamilton et al., 2017).

[12] Ministry of Fisheries and Forests. 2015. Department of Forestry Annual Report 2015. Fiji. Available: http://www.parliament.gov.fj/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Department-of-Forests-Annual-Report-2015.pdf [2021, October 07].

annually)[13]. Of this forest, it is estimated that 85.3 percent is natural forest, with 2.4 percent pine (*Pinus carribaea*) and 5 percent of mahogany (*Swietenia macrophylla*) plantations. Native forest cover, largely on Viti Levu and Vanua Levu islands, collectively contribute to 87 percent of total forest area in Fiji, and include mangrove forests, lowland rainforests, upland rainforest, cloud forests, and dry forests. Dry forests are already extinct in much of their natural range, while cloud forests are greatly threatened by climate change as their natural range increases in temperature. Fijian forests include high altitudinal forest at elevations above 800m above sea level; middle lowland forest at 600m above sea level; and lower forest. The coastal littoral forest and can be found along the branches and super-tidal coastal area that encapsulates the inner margins of mangroves and small uninhabited offshore islands[14].

According to 2010 FAO data, there was an increase in overall forest cover from 52 percent of land mass in 1990 to 56 percent in 2010. However, during this same period there was a decline in primary forest cover from 490,000 ha in 1990 to 449,000 ha in 2010. The increase in overall forest cover is attributable to increased areas of softwood and hardwood plantations (predominantly pine and mahogany), which, as of 2020, make up 11 percent of the forest area of the country. Forest areas continue to be cleared for agriculture expansion, infrastructural development, logging, mining and traditional uses. Fiji's remaining native forest is now found in areas of high rainfall and elevation and steep slopes, with much of the accessible lowland forest cleared by loggers and converted to plantations. Forest exploited for timber has played a major role in deforestation and significantly affected the forests' quality and diversity[15].

Forest cover loss and forest fragmentation is a major cause of species loss and extinction (which impacts people's livelihoods, for example the access of rural populations to fuel wood). Because of land clearing, forest cover loss also increases erosion, which then impacts freshwater and coastal ecosystems as a result of siltation and sedimentation. In addition, land use change to agriculture increases agricultural pollution and nutrient levels in freshwater and marine ecosystems[16].

3.2.2 Biodiversity

Biodiversity is under growing pressure from threats, including overfishing, poor land use and agricultural run-off, unsustainable forest management practices, mangrove removal, poor waste management practices, and introduction of invasive alien species. In the coastal areas, habitat destruction threatens mangroves, estuaries, coral reefs and foreshore ecosystems.

Fiji's forests are home to the majority of the country's endemic flora and fauna; at least 2641 species of plants are found in forests, of which 35 percent are endemic. Forests are also home to 5024 species of insect species and while many species remain unknown, there are around 164 known species of amphibians, birds, mammals and reptiles, of which in total 28.7 percent are endemic[17].

Pressures on coral reef health include climate change, storms and cyclones, coral diseases and predator outbreaks. Increasing human populations have increased pressures as a result of fishing (especially near urban centres), causing the loss of marine habitats and higher levels of pollution. Threats to reefs include pollution/sedimentation from developments and deforestation; marine pollution; coastal development; over-fishing and over-harvesting of corals and marine fish for the marine aquarium trade. In certain areas around the larger islands, high levels of sedimentation and nutrient pollution arising

[13] https://investmentfiji.org.fj/sector-opportunities/forestry

[14] Department of Environment, Government of Fiji (2020). *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020–2025, Suva, Fiji.*

[15] *Ibid.*

[16] *Ibid.*

[17] Department of Environment, Government of Fiji (2020). *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020–2025, Suva, Fiji.*

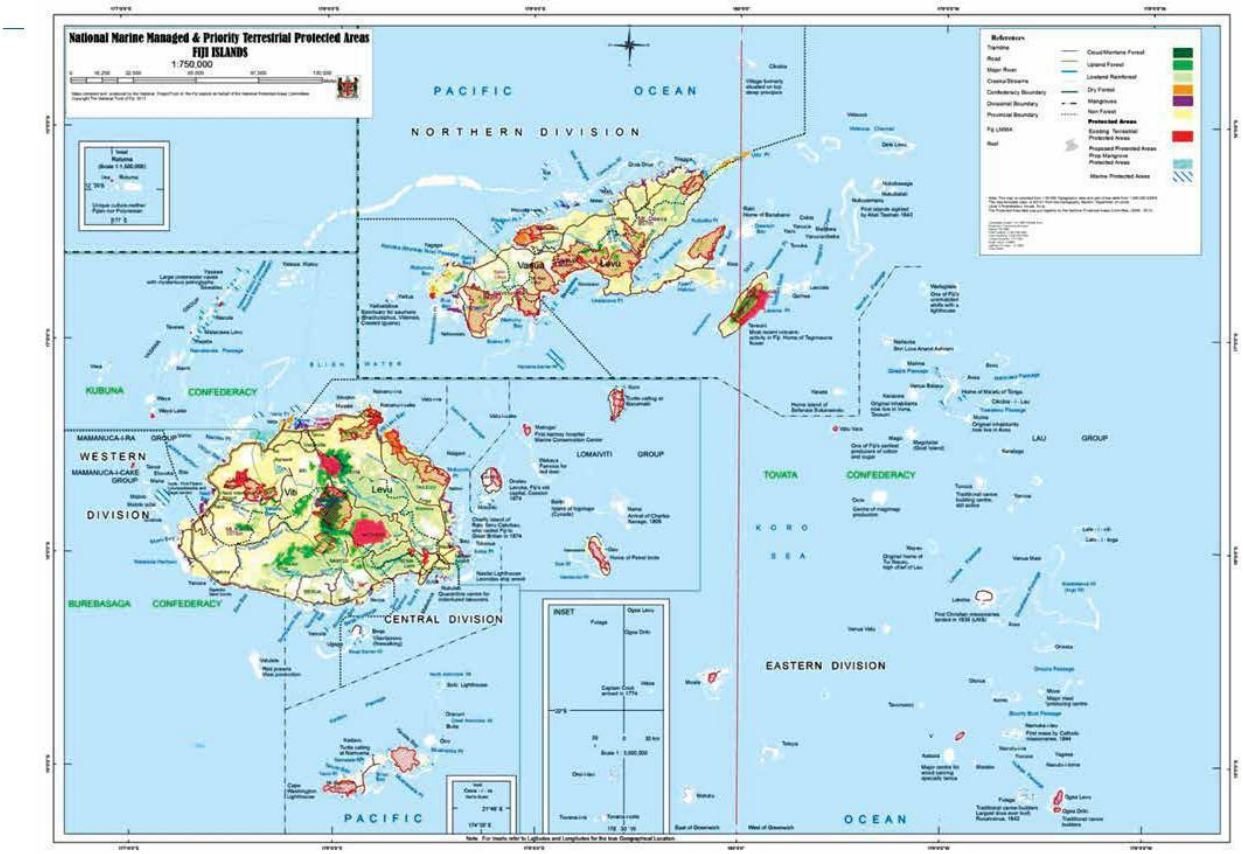
from agricultural practices have changed the ecology of the fringing reefs from coral-dominated to algal-dominated reefs. Mangrove clearance and conversion in some parts of Fiji impacts on important breeding grounds for some of the reef species[18].

The third largest mangrove area in the Pacific Islands (around 43,650 has), Fiji's mangroves are one of the most important coastal ecosystems; they provide nursery and feeding grounds for fish and invertebrates. Occurring at the mouths of the river deltas in the tidal zone, there are eight mangrove species: *Rhizophora stylosa, R. samoensis, R. x selala, Brugiera gymnorrhiza, Excoecaria agallocha, Heritiera littorallis, Lumnitzera littorea* and *Xylocarpus granatum.* Threatened by urban expansion, tourism and an increase in the number of waste disposal sites, the loss of mangroves can reduce important fish and bird habitats. Mangroves also provide fuel, shelter and medicines for many communities and ecosystem services such as protection of shorelines against storm surges; filtration of toxins from freshwater runoff; and they are a major carbon sequestration source for mitigating greenhouse gas emissions[19]. Most mangrove loss occurred from 1991-2001, but has slowed over the course of the past 10 years, with larger mangrove areas growing by 5–10 percent in some areas. The largest of these stands (covering over 90 percent of Fiji's mangrove area) are found along the south-east and north-west coasts of Viti Levu and on the northern shores of the Labasa river delta on Vanua Levu.

Fiji contains globally significant biodiversity on both land and sea and much of Fiji's flora and fauna are endemic. There are a total of 146 Protected Areas in Fiji; terrestrial and inland waters protected areas cover 5.41 percent of the country[20]. There are 23 Terrestrial Protected Areas in Fiji, covering 50,000 ha. Approximately 35,000 ha of these are on Viti Levu and the remaining 15,000 ha on Vanua Levu and Taveuni. In total, these account for only 2.7% of Fiji's land mass, protecting under 19 percent of the country's terrestrial ecosystems. . Fiji has been undertaking initiatives for the conservation of biodiversity, including the designation of protected areas (formal and informal); identification of national priority sites for conservation, Key Biodiversity Areas (KBA), Important Bird Areas (IBA), Endemic Bird Areas (EBA), Alliance for Zero Extinction (AZE) Sites, nationally significant wetland sites, fish aggregation and spawning sites; and more recently, identification of special and unique marine areas[21].

[18] *Ibid.*
[19] *Ibid.*
[20] https://www.protectedplanet.net/country/FJI
[21] Department of Environment, Government of Fiji (2020). *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020–2025, Suva, Fiji.*

Figure 3. Map of priority Protected Areas in Fiji



Source: Department of Environment, Government of Fiji (2020). *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020–2025, Suva, Fiji.*

3.2.3 Climate change[22]

The current climate in Fiji is classified as a tropical monsoon climate. This climatic profile is characterized by a monthly average temperature exceeding 18°C throughout the entire year, along with a distinct dry season. It can be viewed as an intermediary between the more humid tropical rainforest climate and the drier tropical savanna climate[23].

Climate change represents a major obstacle to Fiji's development and threatens ecosystems and the communities they support. Fiji has and is projected to experience more severe cyclones, increased floods, saltwater intrusion, coastal and riverbank erosion, dry spells and wildfires that not only cause physical damage to forests and infrastructure, but also agriculture losses and impacts on livelihoods. Compounded loss and damages from climate related disasters and poor natural resources management practices have contributed to the vicious cycle of resource depletion and land degradation, increasing risks of disasters and impacts on ecosystems and livelihoods. Burning of grasslands, sugar cane plantations, and forest margins are a significant source of GHG emissions.

[22] Information, including references, for this section has been taken from Climate Rationale prepared for this project.
[23] Much of this section is taken from FAO's "Climate rationale" for this Project.

Temperature. The average temperature in Fiji increased during the last 40 years, at a rate of +0.27°C/decade. The increase in average temperature is consistent throughout the islands. It is however slightly more marked on the North side of Viti Levu, around the town of Rakiraki. The increasing trend in average temperature is expected to continue over the next four decades, with an average rate of +0.23°C/decade under the mitigation scenario (RCP4.5) and +0.34°C under the business-as-usual scenario (RCP8.5). Spatially, the annual a*verage* temperatures range from 25°C on the highlands of Mount Monasavu and southeast coast of Viti Levu to 27°C on Vanua Levu and the northwest coast of Viti Levu.

The increase in annual *minimum* temperature (+0.29°C) is also spread out and consistent through the islands, with some slight differences: the increase in more marked on the northern shore of Vanua Levu, and on the East side of Viti Levu. On the west side of Viti Levu, the increase is less intense except in the bay of Nadi, where the increase is marked. The annual m*aximum* temperature in Fiji has increased during the last 40 years, to a rate of +0.33°C per decade. The increase in annual maximum temperature is also spread out and consistent throughout the islands, with some slight differences: the increase in more marked on the west side of Viti Levu, except in the bay of Nadi, where the maximum temperature has mostly been constant for the last 30 years. The expected increase in annual maximum temperature in Fiji is quite marked; average, minimum and maximum temperature are expected to increase, to +0.35°C, 0+.4°C and +0.42°C per decade respectively, during the period 2023-2055.

Precipitation. Spatially, the annually accumulated *precipitation* ranges from 1500 mm per year on Vanua Levu and the west coast of Viti Levu to more than 4000 mm per year on the highlands of Mount Monasavu on Viti Levu. Over the last 40 years, Fiji's already high annual accumulated precipitation increased at a rate of +81 mm/year per decade, reaching a current average of ±2300 mm/year. The frequency of wet and extremely wet days has also increased, at a rate of +3.20 days/year per decade and +0.65 days/year per decade, currently reaching 140 days and 20 days per year, respectively. Geographically, the increase in accumulated wet days is homogenous over Fiji, except around the town of Ba, in the Northeast of Viti Levu Island, where the increase is close to five days/decade, and around the town of Labasa, at the middle point of the northern shore of Vanua Levu, where the is almost no increase in the accumulated number of wet days. Geographically, the increase in accumulated extremely wet days is almost homogenous in Viti Levu Island, close to +1 day/decade, with slightly higher values on the northwestern part of the island. On Vanua Levu, the situation is more complex, with a slight increase (around +0.5 days/decade) on the western part of the island, a decrease (around -0.5 days/decade) to the southeast, and a marked increase on the northeastern part, close to Nambouono.

Dry months are likely to increase up to +0.71 months/year/decade and the climatic water balance is expected to decrease to –184 mm/year per decade, reducing the availability of water for plants and therefore potentially negatively affecting vegetation health in both natural and anthropic environments. An increase in wet days can be expected under the mitigation scenario (RCP4.5), at a rate of +7.97 days/year per decade, while an increase in extremely wet days can be expected under the business-as-usual scenario (RCP8.5) at a rate of +1.84 days/year per decade. Annual accumulated precipitation is projected to further increase up to 264 mm/decade and maximum one-day precipitation is expected to increase up to +14.42 mm/ decade. These phenomena are likely to lead to further water management challenges, in particular related to increased erosion and more intense flooding events.

Floods and cyclones. The number of floods reported in Fiji significantly increased in Fiji between 1980 and 2009, to a rate of +2.01 flood events reported/year per decade. There is a projected increase in coastal floods and average cyclone intensity due to storm surges and the combined impacts of climate

change, forest degradation and land use changes. The average wind speed in Fiji stayed stable around 11 km/h during the last 40 years. The average wind speed is expected to remain stable for the next three decades. The annual maximum wind speed in Fiji did not show any statistically significant variation during the last 4 decades, averaging around 48 km/h. Extreme events in specific locations can however be noted, with winds above 150 km/h and sometimes above 200 km/h. Although the number of cyclonic events remained stable in Fiji during the last 30 years, the number of hurricane level events[24] increased, to a rate of +0.30 event per decade. Geographically, most of the more intense and recent cyclonic events affecting Fiji passed through the coastal areas of Viti Levu, especially on the northern and eastern littoral area. Although Vanua Levu suffered from multiple cyclonic events, especially during the 2000-2009 period, these events were gales for the most part, which are less intense events that the hurricanes that affected Viti Levu recently. However less intense, most of these events didn't stay on the coastline of Vanua Levu and crossed the full width of the island. Over the last 30 years, sea levels rose consistently to a rate of +5 cm per decade in Lautoka, and +10 cm in Suva, both increases being higher than the global average (+4.5 cm) per decade for the period 2013-2021.

Evapotranspiration. The reference evapotranspiration in Fiji has increased during the last 40 years, to a rate of -26 mm per decade. The decrease in annually accumulated reference evapotranspiration is consistent throughout Vanua Levu. On Viti Levu, while most of the island presents a decrease in reference evapotranspiration, the northern tip of the island presents an increase for this variable. Moreover, the decrease in reference evapotranspiration is more marked on the southwestern side of the island.

National GHG emissions profile and forestry sector emissions. Fiji's CO_{2eq} emissions were estimated to be 3.2 $MtCO_{2eq}$ in 2019, which corresponds to an average of 3.5 tCO_{2eq} per person against a world average of 6.6 $MtCO_{2eq}$ per person. The energy sector is the highest emitter with 67 percent followed by agriculture at 17 percent, waste (12 percent) and industrial processes (4 percent). In 2019, carbon sinks of the Forestry and Land Use sector corresponded to -0.85 $MtCO_{2eq}$ which means that there has been an increase in carbon removal and decreased deforestation occurring since 2013 when the sector was considered a net emitter with a slight contribution of 0.02 $MtCO_{2eq.}$ Fiji's MoFF undertook a preliminary National Forest Carbon Stock Assessment in 2011. These results have undergone further data improvement and analysis. The total carbon stock for the national forest estate in the current datasets is 199 MtCO2eq divided further between indigenous forests (157,325,000 tCO2eq); pine forests (27,590,000 tCO2eq); and mahogany forests (14,355,000 tCO2eq). The current GHG inventory shows that initiatives in the forestry sector have been successful in reducing carbon stocks depletion.

Climate-related impacts. Water resources are highly vulnerable to climate variability, especially because of changes in the frequency and intensity of extreme events. Key water infrastructure is at risk from soil erosion and landslides during extreme climate-events, whereas coastal zones are threatened by sea-level rise; given that many of Fiji's islands are low-lying and threatened with inundation, the coastline is vulnerable to erosion and saltwater intrusion. Erosion and inundation are a threat because of the clearing of mangroves. Fiji is also vulnerable to flooding generated by seismic activity (tsunami), the risk of which is increased by sea-level rises. Changes in rainfall patterns and increased frequency and intensity of torrential rains are expected to increase waterlogging, erosion, and landslides, damaging riparian tree cover, as well as reduce accessibility to sites. Moreover, increased periods of dry spells are expected to have impacts on water storage and availability, increasing the risk of wildfires, altered growth patterns and possible shift ranges of species. These impacts significantly affect both forest-

[24] Cyclonic events presenting wind speeds higher or equal to 117 km/h (64 knots).

dwelling communities and forest ecosystems and reduce revenues in the forestry sector. Forests are sensitive to high temperatures making them more vulnerable to fires. Given their current state, forests in Fiji are likely to degrade further under future climate scenarios: increased temperatures and dry months, a decrease in climatic water balance, possible heavy precipitation events and intensified cyclones could lead to even more weakened forest systems. In addition, fragmented forest ecosystems, due to human driven degradation frequently present in Fiji, have altered microclimates, reduced connectivity, and increased vulnerability to disturbances, further exacerbating the impacts of climate change.

For the agriculture sector, climate change will have direct (including alterations to carbon dioxide availability, precipitation and temperatures) and indirect (impacts on water resource availability and seasonality, soil organic matter transformation, soil erosion, changes in pest and disease profiles, invasive species, and decline in arable areas due to the submergence of coastal lands and desertification) effects on crop growth processes. Crop losses to storm damage can be a major potential impact of any future increase in storm intensity or frequency; increased average temperatures and temperature variability including warmer wet season and cooler dry season have already led to the reduction of the agricultural growing period, increase of pests and diseases. Heat and water stresses, and particularly droughts, worsened by increased evapotranspiration, affect the yield, nutritional value, and in the case of cassava, lead to increased foliage and tubular toxicity. Rising sea-levels can increase the incidence of saline-intrusion into soils and groundwater, while more intense precipitation events can be expected to exacerbate soil erosion and associated nutrient losses[25].

3.2.4 Forest ownership and tenure

Understanding land tenure in Fiji requires an exploration of the legal frameworks that govern ownership, use, and transfer of land. Approximately 90 percent of land in Fiji is owned by indigenous Fijians (iTaukei) through their mataqali (clan). This native or iTaukei land is communally owned and cannot be bought or sold except to the state for public purposes. The legal framework governing land tenure in Fiji reflects a balance between preserving indigenous cultural identity and fostering economic development. The Native Land Trust Board Act - which entrusts the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB) with the responsibility to administer, develop, and manage the native land on behalf of its owners - the Agricultural Landlord and Tenant Act, and the Land Use Decree, collectively form a legal mosaic that seeks to reconcile the interests of the iTaukei people with broader societal needs. Customary ownership of land is recognised by the Constitution of the Republic of Fiji 2013. Customary landowners have rights of access and use of forest resources in Fiji under the Forest Decree 1992, which secures the customary rights of iTaukei Fijians on iTaukei land as well as the right to exercise any rights established by custom such as hunting, fishing or collecting fruits and vegetables growing wild.

3.3 SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONTEXT

3.3.1 Demographics

As at 2024, the population of Fiji is made of 473,000 (50.14 percent) males and 470,000 (49.86 percent) females. Most of the population is under 30, reflecting the trend of youth-heavy populations in other Pacific countries. The average annual rate of population growth over the past decade up to September 2017 was 0.6 percent (Fiji Bureau of Statistics: Release 1, 2018). Population growth rate has been slowing down since the 1980s, mainly due to lower birth rates and migration out of Fiji.

[25] World Bank. 2021. Climate Risk Country Profile: Fiji.

The rural population makes up 44.1 percent of the total and is of a median age of 27 years in both genders. Youth are more present in rural areas as opposed to urban areas; younger people in the most economically active age group (20-40 yrs) are more present in the urban population. Females who are younger than this (15-19) and older (40-49) reside more in urban areas than men. The rural population has grown in the Project's potential target provinces of Tailevu, Bua, and Kadavu, while urbanization has advanced in other provinces. In other potential project areas, the rural shares of the population are far greater (72.5 percent) than in the country as a whole (44.1 percent).

3.3.2 Gender

The 2023 global gender gap index for Fiji was 0.65, where 1 indicates no inequality and 0 indicates maximum inequality. Fiji's global gender gap index has fluctuated substantially in recent years, but in general, it has increased through 2012 - 2023 (World Bank Data Atlas, 2024).

School completion rates in Fiji are 100 percent at the primary level and 86 percent at the secondary level. Gender parity is 0.93 at the primary level and 1.10 at the secondary level. In Fiji, 99 percent of girls and 92 percent of boys complete lower secondary school (as of 2022 data). Data is not available for Fiji for Adult literacy rate, by sex (%age of people ages 15 and above)[26]. At the university level, women often outnumber men as students and graduates, but gender gaps exist in science, technology, engineering, and mathematics fields. In Fiji, 38 women die per 100,000 live births due to pregnancy-related causes. The maternal mortality ratio in Fiji has improved from 49 in 2000 to 38 in 2020. Maternal mortality in Fiji is lower than its regional average.

The government does not currently have legislation specifically related to gender equality or a standalone policy on women's economic empowerment. The Gender Transformative Institutional Capacity Development Initiative was launched in 2021 to enhance gender mainstreaming and roll out gender-responsive budgeting across government, with Phase 1 including training and established Gender Mainstreaming Action Groups (in participating ministries/agencies (Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation 2022). Phase 2 is set to expand across all ministries.

72% of Fijian women report that they have experience one or more types of violence in their lifetime from husbands or intimate partners, with 800 cases of Violence Against Women (VAW) reported in 2018 and 834 in 2019. In Fiji, intimate partners are the most common perpetrators of VAW. Gender Based Violence has been addressed in recent years with the National Action Plan to Prevent Violence Against All Women and Girls, 2023-2028 which has five key strategies to comprehensively address violence: transformative public education and social norm change; strengthening of equal and respectful relationships; survivor-centered services for survivors of violence; coordinated legal protection for survivors of violence; and fostering a gender equal society.

More information on gender can be found in Annex 8 - Gender Assessment and Action Plan, of the project proposal package.

3.3.3 Economy

Fiji has a relatively small economy, and is classified as a middle-income country with per capita income of approximately USD 6,26027, but with large income disparities, particularly across rural and urban

[26] UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS). UIS, Stat Bulk Data Download Service. https://apiportal.uis.unesco.org/bdds.
[27] IMF data https://www.imf.org/external/datamapper/profile/FJI

areas. Around 42 percent of Fiji's population live in rural areas, and over 75 percent participate in farming, livestock production, forestry, or fishing28. The country's biggest export products (mineral water, fish, wood, wood chips and sugar) all depend on natural resources, climate and healthy ecosystems (WITS, 2021). Similarly, the tourism, agriculture, fishery and forestry sectors are large contributors to the economy - all of which depend on healthy ecosystems and a stable climate for their success. More than 60% of Fiji's commercially fish and 83% of subsistence fish species depend on mangrove areas for some phase of their life cycle (GoF and UNDP, 2014).

According to the International Monetary Fund, Fiji's GDP in 2024 was USD 5.77 billion. Fiji's economy experienced steady growth before the COVID-19 pandemic, with GDP growth averaging 3.10 percent between 2015 and 2019, recovering from the impact of the 2008 Global Financial Crisis29. In 2020, GDP growth declined by 17 percent but rebounded to 20 percent in 2022. The inflation rate in Fiji varied significantly over the ten years from 2014 to 2024, and low rates were observed, followed by a deflation of 2.7 percent in 2020 attributed to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Following COVID-19, there was a significant increase in inflation to 4.1 percent in 2021 before decreasing slightly to 1.9 percent in 2024.

Tourism is the key driver of the Fijian economy, and while it was only 18.6 percent of GDP in 2022, prior to the pandemic it accounted for nearly 40 percent.

In the past decade, the agriculture sector contributed, on average, to about 10 percent to the national GDP. Fiji has a relatively large subsistence and agriculture sector with a total land area of 194,768 hectares under agriculture, of which over 54 percent are operated under traditional ownership. Traditionally, subsistence agriculture and sugarcane production were the two pillars of Fiji's agriculture sector. However, due to various reasons (e.g. natural disasters, difficulty in coping with agricultural commodity markets, production cost escalation), the performance of the sugar industry has been in a permanent decline, and sugar farms have been left idle. The agriculture sector is generally broken down into five subsectors: crops (around 44 percent of 2015 agricultural GDP), sugar cane (9.4 percent), livestock (9.7 percent), fisheries (11.7 percent), and forests (8 percent).

Though subsistence agriculture still takes a central role in the agriculture sector, there has been an increased transformation to semi-commercial farming, mostly comprising root crops and horticulture. Major food exports include copra, fish, ginger, sugar, and other processed consumer foods. The livestock sector has generally been dominated by beef and dairy production, but both industries are in decline and rely on imports to meet domestic demand. Pork, poultry and goat production has been growing consistently. However, low agricultural productivity has significant implications on the country's ability to produce enough food, leading to greater reliance on food imports.

4. POLICY AND LEGAL FRAMEWORKS

The following chapter provides an overview of Fiji's existing and national policy and legal framework, and nationally signed and ratified international treaties, as relevant to the Fiji FLR project.

[28] UNCCD National Focal Point, 2007; GoF, 2015; Akram-Lodhi, 2016

[29] International Monetary Fund Datamapper. Real GDP growth (%): 2020: -17%, 2019: -0.6%, 2018: 3.8%, 2017: 5.4%, 2016: 2.4%, 2015: 4.5%.

4.1 FIJI'S REGULATORY FRAMEWORK[30]

Fiji's 5&20 Year National Development Plan (NDP) has a vision of "Transforming Fiji", to include both a 20-Year Development Plan (2017-2036) and a comprehensive 5-Year Development Plan (2017-2021), which work together. Specifically, the 5-Year Development Plan provides a detailed action agenda with specific targets and policies that are aligned to the long-term, transformational, 20-Year Development Plan. The Plan consists of two approaches: "Inclusive Socio-economic Development" and "Transformational Strategic Thrusts". Important aspects of this NDP include: sustained economic expansion supported by private sector investment and trade, and enhanced provision of social services and public goods; maintained macroeconomic and fiscal stability; improved food and nutrition security by ensuring increased local production, raising farm efficiency and productivity, and developing more effective distribution systems; enhanced agriculture and fisheries programmes; adoption of new technology, mechanisation and better production practices; improved market linkages; large-scale production encouraged and supported to achieve greater economies of scale; and organic farming promoted, with production of traditional crops and niche agricultural and fisheries products pursued. Fiji will continue its stewardship of climate change issues at the local, regional and global level, stressing small island developing states. Critical cross-cutting issues such as climate change, green growth, the environment, gender equality, disability and governance are mainstreamed in this NDP.

Green Growth Framework for Fiji: Restoring the Balance in Development that is Sustainable for Our Future. (2014). This is a tool to accelerate integrated and inclusive sustainable development, to strengthen environmental resilience, build social improvement and reduce poverty, support economic growth, food security and strengthen capacity to withstand and manage the adverse effects of climate change. The three pillars of development of this Framework are: (i) economic benefits: increased revenue from pricing ecosystem services and improved management of economic risks; and reduced vulnerability and innovation technologies; (ii) environmental benefits: increased productivity and efficiency of natural resources sustainably used; and reduced adverse environmental impact and improved natural hazard/risk management especially to climate changes; and (iii) social benefits: increased livelihood opportunities, food security, income and/or quality of life, notably of the poor; decent jobs that benefit poor people created and sustained; enhanced social, human and knowledge capital; and reduced inequality.

Climate Change

Fiji's National Climate Change Policy (2018-2030) is a central policy instrument to protect development priorities from current, future, and intergenerational climate change risks. It anchors Fiji's national climate change response and nationally determined commitment under the Paris agreement within national policy and planning processes. It also provides the overarching objectives to define the evolution of Fiji's climate change adaptation and mitigation targets and support the delivery of the priorities set out within the National Development Plan and SDGs. The policy created the mandate for the National Adaptation Process and the Low Emissions Development Strategy, and provided the basis, rationale and guidance for progressing national climate change legislation, namely, the Climate Change Act 2021.

Climate Change Act No. 43 of 2021. A detailed framework for a whole of government approach to addressing the climate emergency in Fiji, objectives are the: (i) development and implementation of long-term climate change measures and policies; (ii) effective implementation of UNFCCC, Paris

[3030] A large portion of this section is directly extracted from the FAOLEX Database https://www.fao.org/faolex/country-profiles/general-profile/en/?iso3=FJI

Agreement and its Nationally Determined Contribution to meet its international obligations; (iii) achievement of regional commitments and aspirations relating to climate change including the Suva Declaration on Climate Change; (iv) establishment of institutional and governance structures for the implementation of this Act; (v) evidence-based consideration of climate change issues in specified areas of government and private sector decision-making; (vi) articulation of risk reduction responsibilities and formulation of resilience-building objectives across all sector plans and strategies; (vii) integration of climate change considerations into related policies with a gender sensitive and socially inclusive manner; (viii) establishment of a transparent framework for the monitoring, reporting and verification of anthropogenic emissions by sources and anthropogenic removals by sinks of greenhouse gases; (ix) establishment of data management systems and the publicly accessible Information Platform to enhance government transparency and enable informed private and civil sector decision-making and risk management; (x) reduction of greenhouse gas emissions consistently in the long term; the implementation, operation and administration of regulations, measures and actions to provide for a strategic response to the climate-related emergencies; (xi) development of emissions reduction projects, programs and activities and access to international carbon markets; (xii) enhancement of adaptive capacity to the impacts of climate change with respect to the communities, environment and ecosystems; (xiii) the relocation of at-risk communities and safeguard their rights; (xiv) conservation of oceans and enhancing their ability to respond to the adverse impacts of climate change; (xv) safeguarding Fiji's national security and sovereignty including with respect to Fiji's sovereignty over its maritime zones; (xvi) establishment of a framework for securing nationally and internationally derived finance for the implementation of this Act; and (xvii) financial measures against the impacts of climate change on the business environment.

Fiji's National Climate Finance Strategy (2022) addresses the vulnerabilities to the impacts of climate change in key sectors, especially in agriculture, blue economy, climate-induced relocation, disaster risk management, electricity, forestry, gender and social inclusion, housing, human health, climate policy and governance, transport, and water and sanitation. The Strategy lays out Fiji's main investment priorities for cultivating a climate-resilient, low-carbon economy from 2022 to 2029.

In the agriculture sector, climate-resilient and low-carbon economy interventions will be integrated by promoting climate-smart agriculture, implementing disaster risk financing for agriculture, adopting sustainable agricultural methods, providing support for sustainable agribusiness and e-commerce on the outer islands and in rural areas, and expanding education and training programmes about the use of pesticides and business development practices. Farmers will be empowered through agriculture land use practices and improved farm efficiency that promote sustainability in resource utilization. Research and academic partnerships and their institutional, technical, and scientific capacity will be improved for evidence-based planning and programming to support sustainable agroforestry practices, with a specific focus on improving soil health and soil conservation. Bottom-up outreach to subsistence and smallholder farmers will be improved to ensure their access to resilient crop varieties, livestock breeds, and affordable crop insurance. The blue economy will be developed to ensure protection and sustainable use of ocean resources. Climate considerations and disaster risk management will be integrated into national, sub-national, and community planning and investment processes. Sustainable forest management (SFM) will be strengthened by establishing total area under long-term conservation, enhancing reforestation of degraded forests, and developing Emissions Reduction Program Document (REDD+).

Fiji's Updated Nationally Determined Contribution (2022) is a revised version of Fiji's first Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (2015) and includes: (i) a reaffirmation of its 2030 target; (ii) a

commitment to achieve net zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050; (iii) up-front information to facilitate clarity, transparency and understanding; (iv) a commitment to enact its Climate Change Bill by 2021; and (v) a commitment to operationalize its National Adaptation Plan. In addition to Fiji's 2015 NDC's mitigation targets, this updated NDC commits to: reduce domestic maritime shipping emissions by 40 percent; adopt Climate Smart Agriculture (CSA) practices, with emphasis on the promotion of sustainable practices in crop management, livestock and sugarcane farming and fisheries; enhance resilience by upgrading, repairing and relocating existing critical public infrastructure; develop simplified and standardised early warning and monitoring systems, and prioritise nature-based solutions to mitigate the impact of floods and cyclones; relocate highly vulnerable communities, and implement the concept of 'build back better'; build a strong healthcare system by implementing the 'Guidelines for climate-resilient and environmentally sustainable health care facilities in Fiji'; conserve the natural environment and biodiversity which enables sustainable long-term provision of ecosystem services, including carbon sequestration potential; plant 30 million trees by 2035; and establish 30 percent of the Exclusive Economic Zones (EEZ) as Marine Protected Areas and work towards 100 percent management of EEZ by 2030 through the implementation of the National Ocean Policy.

Fiji's Intended Nationally Determined Contribution (2020-2030) addresses both mitigation and adaptation measures with the aim of reducing emissions. Mitigation measures focus on the electricity, energy efficiency and transport sectors. Adaptation measures focus on creating and perfecting policies, institutions and budget systems for mobilizing resources towards climate risk management and disaster risk management activities, and to continue actions already undertaken, including in the agricultural and forestry sector. This involves planting traditional trees, root crops and mangroves to minimize soil erosion and land degradation and desertification, along with the construction of embankments and the relocation of communities on higher grounds.

The overall purpose of Fiji's Low Emission Development Strategy 2018-2050 is to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2050 across the following sectors: electricity and other energy generation and use; land transport; domestic maritime transport; domestic air transport; agriculture, forestry, and other land use; wetlands; waste; and the cross-cutting sectors of tourism, commerce, industry, and manufacturing. With regards to the forestry sector, the capacities of forest villagers will be enhanced to decrease emissions from deforestation and logging in natural forests and to prevent forest degradation. The productivity in forest plantations through tree improvement and the cultivation of alternative tree species will be increased to increase timber production and ensure forest growth. Afforestation initiatives will be integrated into land use planning policies.

Fiji's National Adaptation Plan Framework (2017) was prepared to provide guidance on the development and implementation of the NAP, which itself serves to implement the adaptation component of the new National Climate Change Policy. More in details, it (i) sets out the approaches and principles which will underpin how the NAP is implemented; (ii) sets out the institutional arrangements which will guide the formulation and coordination of efforts to implement the NAP and steer the national process over the long term; and (iii) proposes some initial efforts to progress the NAP process.

Fiji's National Adaptation Plan: A pathway towards climate resilience (2018) (NAP) outlines 160 adaptation measures to be prioritised over the five-year period of the NAP, split across a total of 10 systems and sectoral components. It states that climate change adaptation and mitigation will be integrated into all sectoral policies to increase the resilience to the negative impacts of climate change; it also sets out strategies to ensure food and nutrition security by enhancing the resilience of the food production system. Among other things, innovative and climate-adaptive farming practices will be

promoted in food production in the agriculture, livestock and fisheries sectors. The adoption of sustainable soil and land management techniques will be increased to address soil erosion, desertification, increased soil salination and to improve soil fertility, nutrient management, arability and soil restoration. Farmers' resilience will be increased by encouraging the diversification of agricultural. Sustainable fisheries management and the replenishment of fish stocks will be promoted through the integration of climate change adaptation. Ecosystem-based adaptation measures will be integrated into disaster risk reduction and management. Finally, critical areas will be delineated for protection and sustainable management based on ecosystem services, cultural importance, biodiversity, food security, water security, access and benefit sharing, and importance for adaptation and disaster risk reduction.

Fiji's National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2018-2030 is a statement of intent of the Government of Fiji to ensure that a comprehensive and systematic approach to disaster risk reduction helps achieve poverty reduction and sustainable development. It promotes good disaster risk governance, emphasizes the need for better risk assessment, established clear priorities for future action, and highlights the importance of monitoring. It promotes the active participation and engagement of all groups of society.

Forestry

Fiji's Forest Decree 1992 (Decree No. 31) establishes a framework for the administration of forests in Fiji, and sets forth rules regarding the utilization of forest resources. It also gives the Minister, upon recommendation of the Forestry Board, the right to create forest or nature reserves.

Fiji Forest Policy Statement (2007). Objectives include: ensured ecosystem stability through conservation of forest biodiversity, water catchments and soil fertility; ensured sustainable supply of forest products and services by maintaining a sufficiently large permanent forest area under efficient and effective management; increased engagement by landowners and communities in SFM and an equitable distribution of benefits from forest products and processes including ensured protection of intellectual property rights; increased employment in the forestry sector; sufficient supply of domestic markets and increased foreign exchange earnings through sustainable forest-based industry development and trade; and enhanced national capacity to manage and develop the forest sector in a collaborative approach with involvement of all stakeholders. Among other things, the policy sets out the actions for the promotion and support to the development of agroforestry systems as a means to enhance food and forest production on areas cultivated for crop production by way of planting and integrating suitable forest trees into their existing farming system. It also envisages shifting to landowner involvement and community based sustainable forest management. Furthermore, the policy foresees measures for the management of forest resources to maintain and improve the production potential while maintaining their genetic diversity and resilience against natural disasters and impacts of climate change.

The Forest Harvesting Code of Practice (2013) aims to provide a set of guidelines to forestry officers, landowners, contractors and the forest industry on how forest harvesting should be conducted so as to achieve best practice and minimise any adverse impacts. The Code applies to all forest harvesting operations within Fiji. It highlights that harvesting operations must be well planned and supervised and that forest workers and landowners must have the right skills and knowledge to achieve good practice.

Biodiversity

Fiji prepared and submitted its second Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Fiji 2020-2025 in 2020. The purposes are the conservation and sustainable use of terrestrial, freshwater and marine biodiversity; and the maintenance of ecological processes and functioning of ecological systems. The

Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan has six priority focus areas: (i) capacity building; (ii) development of protected areas; (iii) management and protection of species; (iv) prevention of the introduction of invasive species; (v) enabling environment for biodiversity conservation; and (vi) sustainable use and development.

Agriculture

Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda 2014. The goal of this policy agenda is to ensure food security alongside the primary economic goal of increasing income and employment opportunities in the rural communities. Underlying this is to establish a diversified economically and environmentally sustainable agriculture economy. The five agriculture development objectives are to: (i) build modern agriculture as a system of producing, processing, and marketing crops, livestock, and aquaculture products; (ii) develop integrated production, processing, energy, and transport infrastructure support system for agriculture; (iii) improve delivery of agriculture support services; (iv) enhance capabilities to generate fund and investment through foreign and private public investment; and (v) improve policy formulation capability within the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and its partner institutions. Each objective has corresponding set of interrelated strategic actions. With regards to climate change, agriculture activities focus on the management of natural resources including in areas where soils are prone to water-logging, and the more effective management of soil carbon, precision application of fertilizers and nutrients, and the use of energy-efficient machinery.

Rural Land Use Policy for Fiji (second print 2006). The general principle of this policy is to determine responsibilities of the State, landowners and land users in the fields of sustainable rural development, land management, and protection of natural resources, with a regard to biophysical, cultural, social and commercial factors. The policy looks to strengthening technical, institutional and legal frameworks, and carrying out assessments on agricultural land, pastures and forests to ensure efficient land use. forest protection, forest health, biodiversity conservation, water management, natural resources, and rural land use systems.

Fiji's 2008 Food and Nutrition Security Policy (FNP). The vision of this FNP is good health and nutritional well-being for all citizens of Fiji, and the mission is to improve the nutritional status and health of the population. The overall goal is to reach nutritionally healthy communities. This policy needs to be endorsed at the highest level of Government through the nine following policies: Policy 1: Advocate nutritional issues and mainstreaming into the Government decision-making system. Policy 2: Promote and sustain household food security (through: Local initiatives for increasing production and consumption of fish and seafood, poultry and livestock and Community-based food production to increase consumption of vegetables, fruits and root crops). Policy 3: Improve national nutritional status. Policy 4: Protect consumers through improved food and water quality and safety. Policy 5: Improve nutritional status of the socio-economically disadvantaged and the groups that are nutritionally vulnerable (including children, mothers, the aged, differently-able and those living with HIV/AIDS. Policy 6: Support Nutrition Policy for Schools. Policy 7: Promote healthy diets and lifestyles. Policy 8: Establish and promote a nutrition surveillance and monitoring system. Policy 9: Strengthen collaboration with development partners.

Indigenous Peoples

Fijian Affairs Act Chap. 120. Date of original text: 1944 (07 October 1970). This Act provides for the establishment of the Great Council of Chiefs and its Board which shall be responsible for the benefit, peace, order, good governance and wellbeing of every member of an aboriginal race indigenous to Fiji and to Melanesia, Micronesia or Polynesia living in Fiji who has elected to live in a Fijian village.

Native Land Trust Act (1940). This Act was originally enacted in 1940, and revised in 1985. Now the iTaukei Land Trust Act (1940), it is divided into four parts, namely: (i) preliminary; (ii) control of native land; (iii) native reserves; and (v) miscellaneous. Originally, a board of trustees called the Native Land Trust Board (sect. 3) was established, in which the control of all native land shall be vested (sect. 4). The Act makes provision for the alienation, transfer and lease of native land. The Board may create a native reserve (sect. 15) where native land may not be alienated (sect. 16). Portions of the reserve may only be excluded from it with consent from the native owners (sect. 17). Since then, the Native Land Trust (Amendment) Decree 2011 (No. 8 of 2011) amends the Native Land Trust Act by establishing in that Act and all subsidiary laws made under that Act the word "native" shall be deleted wherever it appears and be replaced by the word "i Taukei". Furthermore, the iTaukei Land Trust (Amendment) Decree 2012 (No. 20 of 2012) deletes the words "Great Council of Chiefs" and substitutes with "iTaukei Affairs Board".

Labour

Occupational health and safety is regulated under Fiji's Health and Safety at Work Act, 1996; it was amended in 2003 (Health and Safety at Work (Amendment) Act 2003 (No 14 of 2003)). The Act was established to reform the law relating to the health and safety of workers, and other people at work or affected by the work of other people; provide clear objectives, obligations and functions which cover every workplace; set out the roles of employers, including workers, self-employed persons, manufacturers, designers, suppliers, installers, inspectors and provides methods for the development of detailed standards and codes of practice; and provide for the consolidation and progressive replacement of the associated health and safety legislations as defined and related matters.

Fiji's Employment Relations Act (2007) states the entitlement to fair labour practices for all persons. It was amended in 2023 (Employment Relations (Amendment) Act 2023 (No 26 of 2023)). Fiji's 2018 National Employment Policy aims to improve the growth and quality of employment by diversifying opportunities and coping with the challenges posed by the demographic, socio-economic, political, and technological issues as well as climate change and natural disasters. Skills development will be carried out to create green jobs and diversify employment opportunities in the construction, sustainable agriculture and fisheries, tourism and renewable energy sectors.

4.2 FIJI INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORK

The **Climate Change Division (CCD)** of the Office of the Prime Minister is the responsible national agency for addressing climate change policy issues in Fiji. It is also Fiji's Nationally Designated Authority (NDA) for the GCF. The CCD is comprised of four climate change workstreams: adaptation, mitigation, oceans and finance.

The **Climate Change and International Cooperation Division** of the Ministry of Economy is the government entity charged with coordinating and facilitating the development of the NAP. It is responsible for monitoring and evaluation of the implementation of the NAP and reporting to the **National Climate Change Coordination Committee**. The National Climate Change Coordination Committee will enhance cooperation, communication, and coordination relating to climate change and disaster risk reduction efforts, and to improve preparation and participation in relevant international and Pacific regional meetings. A **NAP Steering Committee**, comprised of relevant sector leads will be formed periodically to guide the review progress, consider relevant changes to the current climate risk context, and guide the development of futures NAP according to its 5-year life cycle.

The **Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways (MoA)** is responsible for the enhancement of food production and income security through agricultural sector growth. More specifically, it is responsible for maintaining food security through the provision of Extension and Research Services for both livestock and crops; quick economic recovery through the implementation of the Demand Driven Approach Programme (DDA) and other commodity projects; assisting in poverty alleviation by building the capacity of farmers to increase production; and the sustainable management of natural resources through the flood protection programmes and other Sustainable Land Management practices.

The **Ministry of Forestry and Fisheries (MoFF)** houses the Department of Forestry and the Department of Fisheries. The Department of Forestry has a primary role in enforcement of logging regulations. It also has a significant role in management of natural forests, particularly to support management decision-making by assembling a database for the natural forest resources, including maps, inventories, and GIS. Forestry research is primarily under the auspices of the Silvicultural Research Division and the Timber Utilization Research Division of the Department of Forestry. The Department of Fisheries is responsible for the sustainable management of Fiji's marine resources and for preserving the vital role these resources play in promoting the Fijian way of life. It works to promote responsible fishing practices and sustainable aquaculture development to meet the growing demand for seafood while preserving the oceans for future generations.

The **Ministry of Environmental Protection (MoEP)** is responsible for promoting the sustainable use and development of Fiji's environment and efficient implementation of policies, legislation and programs. This includes Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures.

The **iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB)** was established in 1940 to administer and control native or iTaukei land for the benefit of the iTaukei (Indigenous) landowners. It is a statutory body administering 91 percent of Fiji's total landmass. It aims to: support potential internal and external investors on development of iTaukei land; issue and administer iTaukei land lease and license contracts; enhance new innovations and business opportunities on iTaukei land; support local, regional and international treaties and conventions through partnership engagement; provide spatial planning and mapping through ArcGIS; empower landowners through financial literacy, investment and business advisory as well as on Government projects. regularly consult with landowners and to provide sound advice to all stakeholders; ensure that sufficient iTaukei land is "reserved" for the use, maintenance and support of its owners; control and manage extinct mataqali (customary landowning unit) land; and collect and distribute premiums, rent and royalties derived from leased land.

4.3 REGULATORY FRAMEWORK FOR ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT (EIA) IN FIJI

The Department of Environment within the Ministry of Environmental Protection manages Fiji's EIA process.

Fiji's Environmental Management Act (No.1 2005) makes provision for the protection of the environment and in Fiji's Exclusive Economic Zone. It: defines principles and purposes of environmental protection; establishes the National Environment Council and defines its function and powers; defines functions and powers of the Department responsible for Environment; provides with respect to the internal organization of the Department; provides with respect to environmental plans and reports; provides rules relative to environmental impact assessment and audit; concerns waste management control and pollution prevention; establishes an Environmental Trust Fund; establishes an Environmental Tribunal; and defines offences.

Fiji's Environmental and Social Management System (2021) (i) determines and assesses environmental and social risks and impacts of projects, including through consultations with stakeholders and vulnerable communities; (ii) ensures access to information and full participation in the decision-making process for stakeholders, especially vulnerable communities and indigenous peoples; (iii) creates safeguards and mechanisms to mitigate risks and negative environmental, social and economic impacts associated with projects; (iv) builds on the Ministry of Economy's existing policies, operating procedures, and project cycle; (v) ensures access to justice in matters regarding environmental and social safeguard issues for affected parties in the form of a functional and efficient Grievance Redressal Mechanism; and (vi) cooperates with partners to build capacity in risk mitigation and facilitate implementation of environmental and social safeguards and monitoring and evaluation. The System includes the: (i) **Environmental and Social Safeguards Policy**; **Environmental and Social Risk Management Procedures**; (ii) **Environmental and Social Action Plan**; and (iii) **Environmental and Social Capacity Building**. The Ministry of Economy (MoE) is responsible for the development and implementation of Fiji's Environmental and Social Management System.

4.4 RELEVANT INTERNATIONAL CONVENTIONS AND TREATIES

Fiji is signatory of several Multilateral Environmental Agreements (MEAs), including:

1. United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

- Paris Agreement (Ratified: 22 April 2016[31])
- Kyoto Protocol (Ratified: 2 17 September 1998)

Fiji submitted its First (updated) NDC on 31/12/2020, and its Third National Communication on 28 Apr 2020.

2. United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (Ratified: 26 August 1998)

Documents prepared in the context of the UNCCD include:
National Action Programme (2017)
Fiji Country Report (2018)

3. UN Convention on Biological Diversity (Ratified: 29 December 1993)

Fiji submitted its second Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan for Fiji 2020-2025 in 2020.
It also submitted its Sixth (final draft) National Report 2014-2020 in 2020.

These MEAs impose requirements and restrictions of varying degrees upon the member countries to meet the objectives of these agreements. The implementation of Fijis national policies, strategies and plans are contributions to the achievement of these global Conventions. Fiji is also committed to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) principles by integrating the SDGs into its national development plans. Lastly, Fiji ratified the ILO Convention 169 in 1998; at the World of Work Summit during the 111th Session of the International Labour Conference in June 2023, the President of Fiji informed that Fiji has taken the important step of supporting UNDRIP, stating that "Fiji's support for UNDRIP is complementarity to its commitment to ILO Convention 169". Since then, official statements and provincial support indicate a move towards full adoption, however official ratification at the national level is still pending.

[31] https://treaties.un.org/doc/Publication/CN/2021/CN.358.2021-Eng.pdf

5. FAO AND GCF SAFEGUARDS

In accordance with FAO and GCF ESS policy, the Project underwent an environmental and social assessment against FAO's environmental and social standards[32]. FAO will not undertake activities in the non-eligible activities listed in Appendix 1[33]. In addition, the Project will not use GMO seeds or introduce invasive alien species. There will be no significant or irreversible negative environmental impacts associated with the Project – on the contrary, working with communities, institutions, civil society organization and private sector operators, the project will support Fiji's transition from the exploitation of natural resources to processes as engines for climate change adaptation and mitigation while creating investment opportunities, green jobs and supporting sustainable and inclusive rural development. By strengthening institutional coordination and multi-sectoral collaboration on applying R2R approaches, and updating, reviewing and developing key forest policies and land management regulations, the project will support the update of the current policy framework and creation of stakeholders' s coordination mechanisms to ensure the legal, administrative, and financial governance for sustainable and resilient ecosystem management.

Furthermore, by developing climate responsive land use plans at the landscape scale, establishing technical and knowledge capacity to produce climate adaptive seedlings, and supporting community-led forestry investments, the project will guarantee community led planning and sustainable forest and agroforestry investments based on FLR and other approaches to stabilize degraded and climate exposed ecosystems via a ridge to reef approach. At the same time, the availability of tailored climate finance mechanisms and tools will be guaranteed. By making Forest Ecosystem Services incentives governance and levy available, this will ensure that adverse externalities caused by the commercial use of natural resources are embedded in land leasing costs and will support stakeholders in FLR and SFM investments.

Project interventions will strengthen the resilience of communities and ecosystems with diversified, more resilient livelihoods, reduced risks of climate hazards and disasters (floods, landslides soil erosion and pollution). They will also lead to efficient reduction of forest and land use change GHG emissions, contributing to Fiji's goal of net zero emissions by 2050, national biodiversity conservation and the SDGs. The project will contribute to reducing the exposure of target areas to floods and flash floods of economic related infrastructures and prepare a new generation of foresters, agronomists, economists and administrators in managing and mediating climate change related issues and the complex interlinkages between ecosystems from ridge to reef.

Project components were identified through a consultative process, and address the needs and priorities reported by the Republic of Fiji in its 2020-2030 NDC, (2022 updated) National Communication, National Adaptation Plan, 2018-2050 Low Emissions Development Strategy, and other national policy frameworks including the 2018-2030 National Climate Change Policy.

5.1 RISK CLASSIFICATION OF THE PROPOSAL

According to FAO's environmental and social risk classification, the Project is moderate risk (Category B). Moderate risk projects are defined as:

a) Projects with environmental and/or social impacts potentially identified.

[32] FAO´s Environmental and Social Standards resources information available at: https://www.fao.org/environmental-social-standards/resources/en/

[33] Annex 1 of FAO's Framework for Environmental and Social Management: https://www.fao.org/3/cb9870en/cb9870en.pdf

- Project activities will enhance forest management and governance while ensuring climate change adaptation and reducing drivers of degradation; enhance AFOLU's contribution to climate change mitigation while greening the wood biomass value chain with the private sector; and support private sector engagement in decarbonisation. On-ground activities will include newly establishing forest; restoring damaged forests; shifting private coppice stands to high forest; and establishing shelterbelts.

b) Potential impacts are limited to the project footprint.
   - Potential identified impacts could occur as a result of forest-related activities, but these are localized and can be mitigated.

c) Potential impacts are neither irreversible nor cumulative.
   - Potential impacts are reversible and not cumulative and have wide-ranging mitigation and adaptation benefits.

d) Potential negative impacts can be resolved by means of best practice.
   - These will be addressed through mitigation measures (e.g. using only appropriate, native species, ensuring stakeholder engagement, following best practice, obtaining necessary technical clearances, where and as needed).

The ESMF identifies policy triggers for the Project, screening criteria for activities, environmental and social impacts of the activities, and measures to mitigate identified risks. Mitigation actions will avoid, minimize and mitigate negative impacts during Project implementation and operation. Mitigation actions will be in line with FAO and GCF ESS policy, and national legislation, and adhere to whichever is most stringent. The ESMF also sets out the modalities for stakeholder engagement, and the procedure and process for dealing with complaints, through the Grievance Redress Mechanism.

The ESMF will be disclosed on relevant portals, and shared with stakeholders during stakeholder engagement consultations, so they will be aware of potential consequences of Project activities. Consultations with stakeholders during Project implementation will take place yearly, at the time of the preparation of Annual Work Plan and Budgets (AWPB). The AWPB will be presented by the PMU and reviewed by all stakeholders, including at the national and community levels. During these stakeholder consultations, the Grievance Redress Mechanism - including gender-responsive and SEAH-specific GRM procedures - will also be presented and explained.

In order to ensure a smooth and effective ESMF process, one person in the PMU will be responsible for the environmental and social safeguards process (including GRM and stakeholder engagement).

Proposed Project investments are designed to have positive social and environmental benefits; the Project has been classified as moderate risk (Category B) largely due to forest restoration efforts. FAO ESS triggered are:

ESS 1 (Biodiversity conservation, and sustainable management of natural resources). This safeguard was triggered because of forest regeneration and waterways and riparian zones restoration activities. The Project will only plant with native or locally adapted species and involving local communities. Activities will be executed according to the responsible management of planted forests. No seeds will be procured and no new planting material (tree, shrub, crop varieties) will be introduced into the country.

ESS 4 (Decent work). This safeguard is triggered to ensure that adverse impacts on health, safety and livelihoods of involved and affected communities are anticipated and avoided. Community exposure to health risks is not envisaged, however occupational health and safety (OHS) risks need to be considered with regards to afforestation/reforestation activities. OHS risks will be dealt with by providing training and protective measures and gear as well as provisions for protecting workers as needed.

ESS 8 (Indigenous Peoples). This has been triggered because almost 90 percent of the land is owned by indigenous Fijians. Considering the guidelines developed within the WB REDD+ project and given the national ownership of the project that includes the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs among its partners, it was agreed with the Government of Fiji that the Project already satisfies the FPIC requirements. Should it be determined that a detailed FPIC will be needed, this will be executed at Project start-up.

5.2 FAO ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS (ESS)

Table 3 (below) lists the FAO Safeguards that are applicable to this Project and gives a description of why ("justification" of applicability).

Table 3. FAO applicable safeguards

FAO Safeguard	Applies	Justification
ESS 1: Biodiversity conservation, and sustainable management of natural resources	Yes	This safeguard was triggered because of forest regeneration and waterways and riparian zones restoration activities. The Project will only plant with native or locally adapted species and involving local communities. Activities will be executed according to the responsible management of planted forests. No seeds will be procured and no new planting material (tree, shrub, crop varieties) will be introduced into the country. The project will not intervene in existing protected areas. Intervention in natural habitats will be restricted to degraded areas and agriculture land. Intervention will follow FAO guidelines and international standards. Furthermore, in full alignment with its ESS standards and FAO code of practice, the project will not allow nor promote loss or conversion of remaining natural forests. As planned within the CLMPs the project will secure detailed mapping of natural resources and identify natural areas and related buffer zones.
ESS 2. Resource efficiency and pollution prevention and management	No	The Project aims restore the productive capacity and ecosystem quality of Fiji's forest landscapes. The project will not lead to increased use of pesticides through intensification or expansion of production. No seeds will be procured and no new planting material will be introduced into the country; the Project will only select native or locally adapted species. No GMO or seeds with insecticidal seed coatings will be used in the project. No significant waste will be generated.
ESS 3. Climate change and disaster risk reduction	No	On the contrary, the project will lead to efficient reduction of forest and land use change GHG emissions, contributing to Fiji's goal of net zero emissions by 2050, and will strengthen the resilience of communities and ecosystems with reduced risks of climate hazards and disasters (floods, landslides soil erosion and pollution).
ESS 4. Decent work	Yes	The project will promote and respect fundamental principles and rights at work. The employment of project workers will be based on the principle of equal opportunity and fair treatment, and there will be no discrimination with respect to any aspects of the employment relationship. Hiring of workers will be made following the laws and regulations of Fiji, and workers will need to abide with the FAO code of conduct and FAO policies. All

		workers will be above 18 years old. Any potential occupational health and safety (OHS) risks will be dealt with by providing training and protective measures and gear as well as provisions for protecting workers as needed. The project will also enhance community participation by also empowering youth and women on forestry investments and forest management. Furthermore, thanks to the introduced practices and technologies the project will contribute to creating new jobs and new markets (e.g. CO2 management, green biomass, climate adaptive nurseries). The Project will protect and promote the safety and health of all workers; the planned range of field activities in afforestation/reforestation/infrastructure development and respective OHS measures will be implemented as elaborated in the ESS mitigation plan (Table 6, ESMF).
ESS 5. Community health, safety and security	No	Community health, safety and security will not be compromised by Project field activities. Any impacts on communal ecosystem services will be positive impacts. No hazardous materials or waste will be used or generated. The project will not create the conditions for exposure to health-and life-threatening hazards.
ESS 6. Gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence	Yes	Project activities are not expected to directly cause, exacerbate, or introduce gender inequality or gender-based violence risks through their design, scope, or implementation modalities. The project will not involve mechanisms typically associated with heightened ESS6 risk, such as cash or in-kind transfers targeted to individuals, relocation or infrastructure works among others. Furthermore, the project will not introduce new power asymmetries or dependency relationships at household or community level. Having said that, ESS 6 has been triggered because the project operates in rural and forest-dependent communities with a documented high prevalence of violence against women (as acknowledged in Annex 8). With regards to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), through its Grievance Redress Mechanism the Project will ensure that all concerns and/or incidents will be reported to the PSEA focal point and the FAO Office of the Inspector General, as appropriate. The Project will include sexual exploitation and abuse awareness raising, and stakeholder-differentiated understanding, during stakeholder engagement. As part of the Community Landscape Management Plans (CLMPs), the project will complete a district-level GBV/SEAH service-provider mapping in each target area, undertaken with local CSOs and relevant experts and aligned with national referral protocols (Sub-activity 1.3.1.4). Results will be annexed to the project GRM and the SEAH risk-management plan, so that referral pathways (health-first response for sexual violence; psychosocial support helplines; police/legal aid upon survivor consent) are explicit, consistent, and accessible at site level. Furthermore, if site-specific screening will identify elevated risks during implementation, the ESMP and the Gender Action Plan provide sufficient flexibility to scale mitigation measures accordingly, including enhanced monitoring, stakeholder engagement, and referral mechanisms.
ESS 7. Land tenure, displacement, and resettlement	No	There are no unclear land tenure issues. Project activities will only include forestry investments in existing forest areas or in areas previously covered with forests – these areas are always owned by communities. Land can be cleared by communities or leased out via the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB). Land management plans, developed with communities, will

		determine the sites - therefore, there will be no involuntary resettlement or displacement, nor any restrictions of land use or access to resources, resulting from project activities. Project investments will be voluntary and limited to degraded areas and agricultural lands that are identified with and by communities through the CLMPs, or to areas already leased through formal agreements with customary landowners. Accordingly, all project-supported land-use changes identified through CLMPs will be subject to a PS5 screening step to assess whether they would result in loss of income, assets, or restriction of access to land or resources currently used for livelihoods, regardless of formal tenure status. Where screening confirms that participation is fully voluntary and does not entail livelihood loss, activities will proceed under the standard ESMP. Potential conflicts will be identified early through the CLMP process. Where differing interests or concerns emerge, the project will prioritize consensus-building and adaptive design, including adjustment of activity siting and phasing to avoid disadvantaging specific sub-groups. Benefit-sharing arrangements supported by the project will be required to be transparent, documented, and communicated within the community, and aligned with customary and legal governance structures that are available. Via the CLMPs, the project will assess that potential loss of access or livelihood effects not only at community level, but also for affected users, households, or sub-groups who may rely on the relevant land or natural resources.
ESS 8. Indigenous Peoples	Yes	The project is not designed to cause harm or suffering to Indigenous Peoples; this has been triggered because almost 90 percent of the land is owned by indigenous Fijians. A 19 March 2024 letter from the Permanent Secretary for iTaukei Affairs, Culture, Heritage and Arts to the Acting Permanent Secretary for Fisheries and Forests confirmed that the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs – which represents the ITaukei – states that the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs supports the project, that the project will be implemented in coordination with iTaukei legislations and that all activities relating to communities will be in consultation with the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and relevant agencies such as the TLTB. Hence, it was agreed with the Government of Fiji that the Project already satisfies the FPIC requirements but should it be determined that a detailed FPIC will be needed, this will be executed at Project start-up. The project operates entirely on customary land under Fiji's legal system, where Indigenous iTaukei communities are the sole landowners and no land or resource can be allocated, accessed, or used without the explicit consensus of the relevant mataqali (landowning unit). The project follows a zero-tolerance approach for activities that would affect Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories, or resources. In practice, FPIC is embedded throughout project design. All Community Landscape Management Plans (CLMPs) are designed with and by communities, using culturally appropriate engagement processes and securing documented consent from landowners prior to validation. CLMPs will identify only activities that landowners will have agreed to. This ensures that community priorities—and therefore Indigenous Peoples' rights—drive all land and resource decisions. No activity will be implemented in target areas if not included in the CLMPs that will follow the FAO FPIC protocols. Should screening identify any unresolved land claims, competing uses, or sub-group concerns, no activity will proceed until FPIC is fully obtained and documented; if FPIC cannot be secured, that activity will be excluded.

ESS 9. Cultural heritage	No	Cultural heritage will be neither undermined nor compromised by the Project. 90 percent of the land is owned by indigenous Fijians, and the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs among Project partners. Cultural considerations are embedded in the Project's design and implementation approach. Finding of artefacts of cultural importance is not envisaged but should this occur, chance find procedures will be followed in line with FAO guidelines, and would include the notification of relevant authorities and stakeholders; the avoidance of further disturbance or damage; and the protection, documentation and assessment of the found objects, artifacts and spaces by experts.

5.3 GREEN CLIMATE FUND SAFEGUARDS

GCF has provisionally adopted the Performance Standards (PS) and directives of implementation of the International Financial Corporation, for the purposes of safeguarding GCF projects. There are eight IFC Performance Standards that include the main environmental and social questions that must be considered when starting a project, using the best international practices. This Project has been screened against FAO environmental and social standards, ensuring that the Project is consistent with the objectives of GCF Performance Standards[34]. Table 4 lists, and aligns, them against the (nine) FAO Standards.

Table 4. Green Climate Fund safeguards

IFC - Performance Standards	FAO Standards
PS 1: Assessment and Management of environmental and social risks and impacts	ESOP 1: Screening, assessment and management of environmental and social risks ESOP 2: Stakeholder Engagement ESS 3: Climate change and disaster risk reduction ESS 6. Gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence
PS 2: Labor and Working conditions	ESS 4: Decent Work
PS 3: Resource efficiency and pollution prevention	ESS 2: Resource efficiency and pollution prevention and management
PS 4: Community health, safety and security	ESS 5. Community health, safety and security
PS 5: Land acquisition and involuntary resettlement	ESS 7. Land tenure, displacement, and resettlement
PS 6: Biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources	ESS 1: Biodiversity conservation, and sustainable management of natural resources
PS 7: Indigenous Peoples	ESS 8. Indigenous Peoples
PS 8: Cultural Heritage	ESS 9. Cultural heritage

The most stringent policy and/or law will be followed in any instances of discrepancy between national legislation and GCF/FAO requirements. In practice, this means that the Project will follow national policy and/or law to the extent that it is applicable/relevant, while ensuring that supplementary actions and/or

[3434] This includes associated policies such as FAO and GCF Indigenous Peoples policies (https://openknowledge.fao.org/server/api/core/bitstreams/9e6c8d97-971f-478e-8a1f-a7d3b22bbd16/content) (https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/ip-policy.pdf)

measures are taken in the event that the application of the relevant national policy and/or law is not sufficient to adhere to GCF/FAO requirements. In so doing, the Project will ensure that the most stringent standards are consistently adhered to, while still applying (and building directly on) the relevant national policies and/or laws.

6. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The Project was designed in close consultation with and involvement of relevant government agencies, technical line departments, other national institutions, UN agencies, civil society and private sector stakeholders. This has ensured that the components and activities proposed are in line with national policies and strategies with strong country ownership and relevance for local communities.

Stakeholders were initially identified through discussions between the Nationally Designated Authority (NDA), which is the Climate Change Division (CCD) of the Office of the Prime Minister, and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) during the design of the preliminary project concept. These discussions led to the identification of the ministries, national finance institutions and civil society organizations (CSOs) that would likely be involved.

Subsequently, during project formulation, the project was subject to a consultation process. Through the consultation process, entities and other stakeholders were mapped for project implementation, including on management and technical leadership. Stakeholders were then identified for the implementation of project components. Table 5 below lists key institutional stakeholders and their roles.

Table 5. Role of the main institutional stakeholders

Institution	Description
Ministry of Environment (NDA)	The Ministry of Environment the National Designated Authority (NDA) Secretariat is the fundamental intermediary between stakeholders in Fiji and the Green Climate Fund (GCF). The NDA is the Hon. Prime Minister with the Director of the Climate Change Division as his representative. The NDA provides broad strategic oversight of the GCF activities in the country. Within the project the NDA will ensure coordination among Climate projects with specific functions to facilitate the coordination and complementarity of the projects funded by the GCF to the Fiji Development Bank, the WWK and FAO. It will participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.
Ministry of Fishery and Forestry	The Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry is responsible for initiatives for the conservation and sustainable management and development of the fisheries & forest resources and the industry they support. The Department of Forest has various functional divisions organized to ensure the management of forestry resources and to support with the management of recreation and conservation areas. Office locations. Within the project the MFF will guide and support the work of the project with regards to forestry investments and forest related activities. It will participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.
Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways	The Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways is responsible for: (a) Maintaining food security; (b) Quick Economic Recovery through the implementation of the Demand Driven Approach Programme (DDA) and other commodity projects; (c) Poverty alleviation by building capacity of farmers; and (d) Sustainable management of Natural Resources through the Flood Protection programmes and other Sustainable Land Management practices. Within the project the MAW will guide and support the work of the project with regards to agriculture and other investments involving farmers as well as flood control investments such as riparian forests and others. Participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.
Ministry if iTaukei Affairs	The Ministry is tasked in formulating government policies and programs for the indigenous population. It provides a direct link between iTaukei institutions and its administration across the fourteen provinces with the government and other expressions on the national and international governance. It keeps official records relating to iTaukei land and livelihood grounds (e.g. fishery, forestry, agriculture) and it keeps traditional knowledge and expressions of culture among its priorities. It is the responsible entity to deal with disputes and it formulate advocacy programmes to safeguard the iTaukei heritage. Within the project the MIA will guide the work of the project with regards to landscape planning related activities. It will participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.

iTaukei Land Trust Board	The iTaukei Land Trust Board (former Native Land Trust Board) is a statutory trust established to control and administer iTaukei land on behalf and for Yavusa, Mataqali and Tokatoka indigenous owners. It deals with iTaukei land via leases and licenses issued over such land on behalf of communities. It facilitates access to lands and land-based resources for social and economic development. Its purpose is to secure, protect and manage land ownership rights assigned to the iTaukei landowners and to facilitate the commercial transactions that revolve around its use. It is doing all this for the national good and public interests but in particular for the benefit of the iTaukei landowners. Within the project the ITLTB will support and coordinate the work of the project with regards to landscape planning related activities. It will participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.
Ministry of Lands & Mineral Resources	The Ministry of Lands and Mineral Resources is a key facilitator and contributor to the nations socio-economic development. It is responsible for policy formulation, monitoring and implementation of programs in the areas governing state land administration, mineral sector and Fiji's groundwater resource. This includes facilitating the Development and Management of Land Resources for Sustainable Socio-Economic Development. Within the project the MLMR will support the work of the project with regards to landscape planning related activities. It will participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.
Ministry of Education, National Heritage, Culture & Arts, Youth & Sports, Labor	The MENHCAYSL is mandated to provide a holistic and innovative system that enables all children to realize and appreciate fully their inheritance and potential to succeed and contribute productively to a peaceful and sustainable Fiji. Within the project the MENHCAYSL will support the mainstreaming of introduced practices and technologies into the curricula of national university and vocational schools.
Ministry of Environmental Protection	The Ministry's mandate covers urban and rural areas. It is responsible for hydrological forecasting, drainage surveillance and realignment, waterways dredging and river embankment management to improve storm water management, mitigate flooding and improve irrigation. It provides a wide range of services from drainage, irrigation, river improvement, river dredging, watershed management and coastal erosion management. Within the project, The Ministry will guide and support the work of the project with regards to biodiversity, natural regeneration as well as in ensuring environmental safeguards and conservation of key ecosystems in project areas. It will participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.
Ministry of Trade, Co-operatives, Small and Medium Enterprises (MCTTT)	The Ministry is responsible for formulating and implementing policies and strategies that create and facilitate growth in industry, investment, trade, tourism, transport, co-operative businesses, micro small and medium enterprises (MSME's) and enhance metrology, standards and consumer protection. Within the project, the MCTTT will work on issues related to landscape planning related activities and will facilitate the participation of co-operatives, small and medium companies. It will participate in and provide inputs to all the other activities.

6.2 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

The detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan is in Annex 7 of the project proposal package.

6.2.1 Stakeholder engagement during project formulation

The *Forest Landscape Restoration for Climate Benefits and Resilience (Fiji FLR)* project was developed following collaboration established between the MoFF of the Government of Fiji and FAO to develop the Green Climate Fund (GCF) proposal, under the guidance and support of the GCF-National Designated Authority (NDA) in Fiji. During 2023 and 2024, consultations were held to develop and finalize the Full Funding Proposal (FFP).

Full Funding Proposal (FFP) formulation-stage workshops were held in September 2023, February 2024 and June 2024. At the national level, three workshops (Fiji NDA, FAO, FDB and WWF Workshop (27 September 2023)); GCF Proposal Government Stakeholder Meeting (19 - 21 February 2024)); and the GCF Validation Workshop (June 2024)) were held with relevant stakeholders including, among others, Ministries (MoFF, MoAW, Ministry for iTaukei Affairs), Fiji Development Bank (FDB), WWF-Fiji and local governance authorities including the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB).

The 27 September Fiji NDA, FAO, FDB and WWF Workshop was organized by FAO together with the MoFF to agree on a common vision to develop a Green Climate Fund (GCF) Concept Note, by elaborating the project goal, objectives, expected outcome and beneficiaries as well as the Monitoring and Evaluation strategy. The 19-21 February 2024 GCF Proposal Government Stakeholder Meeting involved holding a: (i) Coordination Workshop (20th February 2024, Suva); and (ii) a Local Engagement Workshop

(21st February 2024, Labasa, Vanua Levu). Discussions centered on confirming project goals, objectives, expected outcomes, and beneficiary selection criteria and methodology. Key outcomes of these workshops were the identification of shared priorities and objectives across the FDB and WWF-Fiji projects, as well as the delineation of roles and responsibilities for each stakeholder group. Additionally, participants agreed on the importance of aligning project activities with national policies and strategies, ensuring coherence and maximizing impact at the local and national levels. Consensus was reached on maintaining coordination and complementary of interventions, emphasizing collaboration among stakeholders. Consultations with technical staff from MoFF and MoAW helped refine target area selection and data needs. Discussions with relevant Ministries and offices explored the issue of conducting a Free Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) for Indigenous Peoples, proposing the exchange of letters to confirm the way forward. Consultations with technical staff from MoFF and MoAW helped refine target area selection and data needs. Discussions with MoFF led to agreements on implementation modalities, including FAO's direct execution and the establishment of oversight mechanisms such as a Steering Committee or National Climate Change Committee. Confirmation of executing entities, including the TLTB, MoAW, and the Prime Minister's Office (Department of Environment), concluded the project planning phase. The June 2024 workshop served to validate the GCF proposal, following the finalization of key parts of the FFP. The workshop also served for FAO to presented its findings as well as the state of the art of the design process. The project goal, objectives, expected outcome, output, activities, beneficiary selection criteria and methodology, rational, paradigm shift, theory of change and logical framework matrix were confirmed except for Activities 2.2.1 and 3.3.3, which were adjusted and validated for no duplication of activities with WWF, FDB and Government. Consensus was expressed during the workshop, as well as the recommendation of maintaining coordination and complementarity among interventions.

“Non-structured” bilateral meetings were also held on both technical and project management/implementation issues. The meetings gave meaningful direction on the design of project objectives, expected outputs, components, and main activities of the project. The meetings were an opportunity for the design team to present the ridge-to-reef approach applied in the targeting and to obtain feedback from local technicians. It was also an opportunity for the team to learn about the existing activities and capacities of the Ministries with regards to forest landscape restoration. The meetings were an opportunity for the design team to present the ridge-to-reef approach applied in the targeting and to get feedback from local technicians. It was also an opportunity for the team to learn about the existing activities and capacities of the ministries with regards to forest landscape restoration.

An on-line consultation (March 25, 2024) also served to consider preliminary ideal project sites. Bilateral meetings were also held with: FDB staff to discuss the synergies within the project’s third component and the specific support that FAO will provide to the FDB in designing the full funding proposal; and the MoFF to prepare a preliminary logical framework matrix. Meetings held in June 2024 served to finalize key parts of the full funding proposal such as the budget, to engage with partners to obtain support letters (Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways, Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, WWF-Fiji and Fiji Development Bank (FDB)), and discuss the project with potential co-financing actors (e.g. Australia, New Zealand, Canada, Fiji Hardwood Corporation, Fiji Pine Tree Corporation). Meetings also served to confirm the proposed implementation arrangements with MoFF and confirmed that FAO will be the Accredited Entity. FAO and MOFF also confirmed the inclusion the following Executing Entities (EEs): MoFF, MoAW, the Fiji Pine Wood Corporation, the Fiji Hardwood Corporation. Likewise, FAO and MoFF acknowledged that the project will guarantee to the extent possible the participation of other partners (e.g. NGOs, and regional organizations such as the Pacific Community, the South Pacific Regional Environmental Program, and the

University of South Pacific). Finally, meetings between FAO and MoFF served to agree to maximize efforts to achieve a co-financing worth about 50 percent of the total value of the project.

6.2.2 Stakeholder engagement during project implementation

Consultation at all levels during implementation is a good practice to assume in order to ensure that potential negative impacts and concerns are adequately addressed, by all potentially impacted stakeholders, during the operation of the project. Stakeholders will be engaged in project implementation throughout the duration of the entire project using engagement methods appropriate to the context and needs. An extensive consultation with the involved populations is required when the sub-activities could include impacts that would affect the natural resources that sustain the livelihoods of the local population. Engagement with women and women focused organizations in the geographic area and focal sectors of the project is crucial to understand the challenges and barriers that they face. At project inception, women and women-focused organizations (such as *Soqosoqo Vakamarama iTaukei)* will be included in consultations to ensure that perspectives, needs and challenges are considered by the project. Key strategic areas for overcoming gender barriers and leveraging opportunities reach, include and empower women in the project are detailed in the GAP. These include: providing opportunities for improving women's incomes and economic empowerment; training and capacity building; including and engaging women; promoting communities' and women's traditional knowledge; preventing violence against women; and gendered grievance redress. The project's gender-specific consultations and activities are detailed in the Gender Action Plan (GAP). Concerning Indigenous Peoples, through a 19 March 2024 letter, it was agreed with the Government of Fiji that the Project already satisfies the FPIC requirements but should it be determined that a detailed FPIC will be needed, this will be executed at Project start-up. Hence an informed and properly registered consultation will be conducted to ascertain whether or not an FPIC is needed.

Consultations with (national and community-level) stakeholders during project implementation will take place yearly, at the time of the preparation of Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB) – i.e. at the beginning of each of the seven project Fiscal Years (FY), as well as during the planning, implementation and monitoring of forest restoration/sustainable forest management investments. The AWPB constitutes the main formal instrument to ensure ownership and participation of stakeholders and beneficiaries. It represents the results of the national engagement process and the main planning tool of the project. To this end the PMU, via its M&E unit and partners, will secure constant dialogue with target stakeholders and administrations and will ensure their participation in the AWPB formulation process. The AWPB will be presented by the PMU and reviewed by all stakeholders, at all levels.

During these stakeholder engagement consultations, the ESMF – including the ESMP prepared for the project, the Gender Action Plan (GAP), and the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) - including gender-responsive and SEAH-specific GRM procedures - will be shared with and explained to stakeholders, for their feedback and validation. This will take place as part of the stakeholder engagement process, throughout project implementation. Stakeholder consultations prior and during project implementation will also include awareness raising and stakeholder-differentiated understanding of sexual exploitation and abuse-related risks and mitigation measures. The Project will not tolerate manipulation, interference, coercion, or intimidation against stakeholders who share their views about the project; the Project Grievance Redress Mechanism is established to address such occurrences, should they happen. Stakeholder engagement will also take place at the community level throughout the process of developing land management plans.

Stakeholder engagement will also take place at the community level throughout the process of

developing Community Land Management Plans. Details of stakeholder engagement are available in Annex 7 to the FFP.

6.3 DISCLOSURE

According to GCF and FAO policies on access to information, all safeguard instruments under this project, including the ESMF and Gender Action Plan must be disclosed online in the English and local language at least 30 days prior to GCF Board meeting and approval of the project. Access to the documents must be possible for any locals (i.e. it must be disclosed locally in an accessible place) in a form and language understandable to key stakeholders. Such disclosure of relevant project information helps stakeholders effectively participate. FAO is committed to disclosing information in a timely manner and in a way that is accessible and culturally appropriate, placing due attention to the specific needs of community groups which may be affected by project implementation (e.g. literacy, gender, differences in language or accessibility of technical information or connectivity).

For moderate risk projects like this one, FAO releases the applicable information as early as possible, and no later than 30 days prior to project approval. The 30-day period commences only when all relevant information requested from the project has been provided and is available to the public. FAO undertakes disclosure for all moderate risk projects, using a disclosure portal to publicly disclose all of the projects' documentation related to environmental and social safeguards (e.g. Environmental and Social Management Frameworks, Gender Action Plans, Indigenous Peoples Plans, and other relevant documents, as applicable). The website is: http://www.fao.org/environmental-social-standards/disclosure-portal/en/.

In order to ensure the widest dissemination and disclosure of project information, including any details related to applicable environmental and social safeguards, local and accessible disclosure tools including audiovisual materials (e.g. flyers, brochures, community radio broadcasts) will be utilized in addition to the standard portal disclosure tool. Furthermore, as relevant, particular attention will be paid to farmers, indigenous peoples, illiterate or technological illiterate people, people with hearing or visual disabilities, those with limited or no access to internet and other groups with special needs. The dissemination of information among these groups will be carried out with the project counterparts and relevant local actors.

FAO shall disclose fit-for-purpose environmental and social impact assessment, an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), and as appropriate any other associated information required to be disclosed in accordance with the GCF Information Disclosure Policy (Project Disclosure Package). FAO shall disclose the sub-activity safeguards information at least 30 calendar days prior to commencing execution of any sub-activities that have been categorized as Category B, in English and in the local language (if not English), on its website and in locations convenient to affected peoples, and provide the Project Disclosure Package to the GCF Secretariat for further distribution to the Board and Active Observers and for posting on the GCF website. Within 180 days of the GCF Board approval of the Project, FAO and the GCF Secretariat shall agree on a process to enable communication of any comments to FAO, including from the GCF Board members and Active Observers, on Category B sub-activities relating to the Project Disclosure Package, and to take account of such comments in the finalization of such documents.

The above ESMP and the accompanying GAP will be disclosed in the three official languages of the country: i) English; ii) Bau Fijians; and iii) Fiji Hindi on the websites of FAO, GCF and Fiji's MoFF. Both documents will also be disclosed at the community level in, prior to project implementation.

6.4 GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

FAO is committed to ensuring that its programs are implemented in accordance with its environmental and social obligations. In order to better achieve these goals, and to ensure that beneficiaries of FAO programs have access to an effective and timely mechanism to address their concerns about non-compliance with these obligations, the Organization, in order to supplement measures for receiving, reviewing and acting as appropriate on these concerns at the program management level, has entrusted the Office of the Inspector-General with the mandate to independently review the complaints that cannot be resolved at that level.

FAO will facilitate the resolution of concerns of beneficiaries of FAO programs regarding alleged or potential violations of FAO's social and environmental commitments. For this purpose, concerns may be communicated in accordance with the eligibility criteria of the Guidelines for Compliance Reviews Following Complaints Related to the Organization's Environmental and Social Standards35, which applies to all FAO programs and projects (Guidelines for Compliance Reviews Following Complaints Related to the Organization's Environmental and Social Standards).

Concerns must be addressed at the closest appropriate level, i.e., at the programme management/technical level, and if necessary, at the Regional Office level. If a concern or grievance cannot be resolved through consultations and measures at the project management level, a complaint requesting a Compliance Review may be filed with the Office of the Inspector-General (OIG) in accordance with the Guidelines. Program and project managers will have the responsibility to address concerns brought to the attention of the focal point. With regards to the prevention of sexual exploitation and abuse (PSEA), through its Grievance Redress Mechanism the Project will ensure that all concerns and/or incidents will be reported to the PSEA focal point and the FAO Office of the Inspector General, as appropriate.

Project-level grievance mechanism

The project will establish a grievance mechanism at field level to file complaints, including worker complaints. The grievance mechanism will ensure that issues raised by Indigenous Peoples and are accessible, fair, transparent and culturally appropriate; if and where appropriate, grievances will escalate to traditional conflict resolution mechanisms.

Contact information and information on the process to file a complaint will be disclosed in all meetings, workshops, and other related events throughout the life of the project. In addition, it is expected that awareness raising material be distributed to include the necessary information regarding the contacts and the process for filing grievances. The Project will include sexual exploitation and abuse awareness raising, and stakeholder-differentiated understanding, during stakeholder engagement.

The PMU will be responsible for addressing incoming grievances regarding environmental and social standards; as part of the safeguard's performance monitoring, the Project Coordinator of the PMU will be responsible for documenting and reporting on any grievances received and how they were addressed.

Grievance Redress Mechanism Structure:

[35] Available online at: http://www.fao.org/3/a-i4439e.pdf

1. The complainant files a complaint through one of the channels of the grievance mechanism, which will be set up (email address, telephone number(s), contact person or physical address) before Project implementation.

2. This will be sent to the PMU, where the Safeguards Specialist, who also acts as the GRM Focal Person, will assess whether or not the complaint is eligible. *The confidentiality of the complaint must be ensured throughout the process.*

3. Eligible complaints will be addressed by the PMU Safeguards Specialist together with the Project Coordinator of the PMU. The Project Coordinator will be responsible for recording the grievance and how it has been addressed if a resolution was agreed upon.

4. If the situation is exceptionally complex, or the complainer does not accept the resolution, the complaint must be escalated to a higher level (FAO Regional Office for Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific), until a solution or acceptance is reached.

5. If the situation is still not resolved, the grievance will be escalated to the FAO Office of the Inspector-General.

6. For every complaint received, written proof of receipt will be sent within seven (7) working days; afterwards, a resolution proposal will be made within twelve (12) working days.

7. In compliance with the resolution, the person in charge of dealing with the complaint may interact with the complainant, or may call for interviews and meetings, to better understand the situation.

8. All complaints received, their response and resolutions, must be duly registered.

Internal process

1. Project Management Unit. The complaint can directly contact the PMU either in writing, or orally. At this level, received complaints will be registered, investigated and solved by the PMU.

2. FAO Representative. The assistance of the FAO Representative is requested if a resolution was not reached and agreed upon in level 1.

3. FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific. If necessary, the FAO Representative will request the advice of the Regional Office to resolve a grievance, or will transfer the resolution of the grievance entirely to the regional office, if the problem is highly complex.

4. Only on very specific situations or complex problems, the FAO Regional Representative will request the assistance on the FAO Inspector General who pursues its own procedures to resolve the problem.

The project GRM, which by its nature is survivor centered and gender responsive, sets out lines of reporting and action. Confidentiality is detailed in the FAO Office of the Inspector-General investigation guidelines which state that all investigations are carried out in a confidential manner. The identity of a complainant who submits a complaint to OIG in good faith is not made public, nor is the identity of any witness who provides information to OIG.

Resolution

Upon acceptance a solution by the complainer, a document with the agreement should be signed, clearly indicating the terms of the resolution.

Level of Redress Mechanism	Details
PMU	Must respond within 7 working days. Contact details to be established before project implementation.
FAO Representation	In consultation with PMU, must respond within 12 working days. Name: Ms Yao Xiagjun, FAO Fiji E-mail: FAO.FJ@fao.org
FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands (FAO SAP)	Must respond within 12 working days in consultation with FAO's Representation. FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands (FAO SAP) Mail Bag Apia, SAMOA. Name: Ms Yao Xiagjun, FAO Fiji Tel: +685 22127. Fax: +685 22126. E-mail: SAP-SRC@fao.org
FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific	Must respond within 12 working days. Jong-Jin Kim, Assistant Director-General and Regional Representative FAO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific Maliwan Mansion Phra Atit Road Bangkok 10200, Thailand. Phone: (+66 2) 697 4000 Fax: (+66 2) 697 4445 E-mail: FAO-RAP@fao.org
Office of the Inspector General (OIG)	To report possible fraud and bad behavior by fax, confidential: (+39) 06 570 55550 By e-mail: Investigations-hotline@fao.org By confidential hotline: (+ 39) 06 570 52333 SEHA complaints can be lodged through FAO's Office of the Inspector General by email, phone or online using Ethics Point

GCF Independent Redress Mechanism

GCF established an Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) that reports directly to the Board[2]. The IRM's mission is to address complaints from affected people and provide recourse in a way that is fair, effective and transparent, and enhance the performance of GCF's climate funding. The IRM also accepts requests from Developing Countries seeking reconsideration of funding proposals that were denied by the GCF Board. To deliver its mandate, the IRM is guided by a number of GCF policies pertinent to GCF's general operations and its projects and programmes: Revised E&S Policy, Interim E&S Safeguards, Indigenous People Policy, Updated Gender Policy and Information Disclosure Policy of the GCF.

As per the Procedures and Guidelines of the IRM, the main function of the IRM include among others: address grievances or complaints by a person, group of persons or community who/which have been or may be adversely impacted by a GCF funded project or programme through problem solving and/or compliance review, as appropriate; initiate proceedings on its own to investigate grievances of a person, group of persons or community who/which have been or may be adversely impacted by a GCF funded project or programme; monitor whether decisions taken by the Board based on recommendations made by the IRM, or agreements reached in connection with grievances or complaints through problem solving, have been implemented, and report on that monitoring to the Board.

Regardless of the different E&S mitigation measures and procedures in place, climate adaptation and mitigation projects can inadvertently people can de adversely impact communities. Taking this into consideration GCF provides a platform where communities, indigenous people and civil society can present complaints regarding a specific GCF financed project and seek remedy (redress harm) and improve project performance in the long run. There are no formal requirements for filing a complaint. A complaint should generally include: i) the complainant's name, address and contact information; ii) If the complaint is being filed by a representative of the complainant, the name and contact information of the representative, as well as evidence that the representative is authorized to act on the behalf of the complainant; iii) A description of the project or programme that has caused or may cause adverse impacts to the complainant; iv) A description of how the complainants have been or may be adversely impacted by the project or programme; v) Whether confidentiality is being requested and the reasons for it.

Some exclusions apply, as indicate in the IRM guidelines. The complaint can raise issues related to any of GCF's policies and procedures, including those relating to social and environmental issues, indigenous peoples, gender, information disclosure, among others. However, the IRM cannot accept a complaint if it is: i) About a project or programme where the GCF is not directly and/or indirectly involved; ii) About GCF's non-operational housekeeping, such as human resources and finance; iii) Allegations of corruption or procurement issues (these complaints are handled by the Independent Integrity Unit (IIU) and other Units at the GCF); iv) Only about whether the GCF's policies and procedures are adequate; v) About a matter already dealt with by the IRM, unless there is new relevant information that was not available before; or vi) Malicious, frivolous and/or fraudulent or filed to gain a competitive advantage.

Who and how can grievances or complaints be summitted.

- Any person or a group of persons, or a community that has been or may be affected negatively by a GCF project or programme (including those being actively considered for funding by the GCF) may file a complaint. The affected person(s) can authorize their government or representative to file and pursue the complaint on their behalf.
- The IRM shall provide confidentiality to a complainant or to a representative, if so, requested by the complainant. A grievance or complaint may be submitted in English or in any language the complainant uses.
- The IRM will provide confidentiality upon receiving a complaint if requested to do so by the complainant. Complaints or grievances can be submitted to the IRM through any means such as submission through an online complaints form, mail, email, voice or video recording, or by calling a toll-free hotline where one has been designated for that purpose by the IRM or directly through a web form:
    - https://gcf.i-sight.com/external/case/new/group=Complaint
    - Complaints can also be submitted to the Grievance redress mechanism of Accredited Entities (AE)[3].

The IRM will cooperate and collaborate with the accountability and/or grievance mechanisms of AEs. The IRM on the one hand, and the accountability and/or grievance redress mechanisms of the respective AE on the other, will each perform their duties and exercise their powers and functions, in accordance with the policies and procedures applicable to them.

Independent Redress Mechanism - Green Climate Fund
By email: irm@gcfund.org
Office telephone: +82 32-458-6186; Fax: +82 32-458-6096; Cell phone: +82 10-4296-1337.

7. MITIGATON MEASURES AND APPROACH TO ENHANCE POSITIVE IMPACTS

7.1 EXPECTED PROJECT IMPACTS

Positive impacts of the Project are environmental, social and economic. With regards to ecosystems and ecosystem services, the project will ensure increased resilience and adaptability of 80,737 ha of forest landscapes, contributing to the protection of over 90,000 ha of coastal and marine ecosystems, and increase carbon removal of 6 million tCO2eq over 20 years. Project investments will have a direct impact on all forests in Fiji. In addition to direct forestry and agroforestry investments, the project will reduce the adaptation deficit of the country by transferring knowledge and technologies to the country by increasing people's participation in forest management and by enhancing the policy and access to credit framework of the country. In addition to the positive impacts in terms of CCA and CCM, the project will have positive impacts on biodiversity, on soil quality and water availability, decrease of evapotranspiration and slow down soil erosion, increase agricultural yields, and protection of rural communities and infrastructures from flash floods, floods and landslides. Additionally, thanks to its ridge to reef approach the project will contribute to the resilience of at least 90,000 ha of coastal and marine ecosystems thanks to the reduced erosion and consequent siltation of reefs, mangroves and seagrass beds. Finally, the project will partner during the entire execution with key NGOs such as WWF-Fiji that will support and advice on community participation as well as biodiversity and nature conservation. The project will also enhance community participation also empowering youth and women on forestry investments and forest management. Furthermore, thanks to the introduced practices and technologies the project will contribute to creating new jobs and new markets (e.g. CO2 management, green biomass, climate adaptive nurseries). The project will benefit the entire population of Fiji with some specific focus on sectorial stakeholders and private companies. In all training and investments, when possible, the project will give higher priority to women owning/leasing lands for bioenergy or other purposes and will ensure that at least 30% of beneficiaries are women. Furthermore, the project will ensure women participation and their empowerment in all the activities related to forestry investments. Through investments in community nurseries women will be reached and involved in community behavioural change activity. The project is expected to increase climate resilience of 196,877 most vulnerable people (~21% of Fiji's population) and indirectly benefit 149,715 people (~16% of the population).

Potential negative impacts are mitigatable, and are mainly related to on-ground activities in the forestry sector. On-ground activities will include implementing ecosystem-based forest restoration adaptation solutions; restoring and bringing 80,737 ha of forests under Sustainable Forest Management practices; and developing Short Rotation Plantation strategies. Potential impacts are limited to the Project footprint and could occur as a result of forest-related activities, but these are localized and are mitigated thanks to Forest Landscape Restoration (FLR) and Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) activities which

will establish community and farmer enterprise-led FLR for afforestation – using native species - and agroforestry and conservation of HCVF and achieving reforestation and SFM through Public-Private-Community Partnership. In relevant coastal areas, Nature-based Solutions (NbS) seawalls with mangrove forest will be built for complete Ridge to Reef ecosystem resilience. The project follows a zero-tolerance approach for activities that would affect Indigenous Peoples' lands, territories, or resources, but the Indigenous Peoples safeguards was triggered because approximately 90% of land in Fiji is owned by indigenous Fijians (iTaukei) through their mataqali (clan); given the national ownership of the project that includes the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs among its partners, it was agreed with the Government of Fiji that the Project already satisfies the FPIC requirements. Should it be determined that a detailed FPIC will be needed, this will be executed at Project start-up. Gender-based violence is a reality, but project activities are not expected to directly cause, exacerbate, or introduce gender inequality or gender-based violence risks through their design, scope, or implementation modalities; potentially needed risk mitigation actions (including reference to the Gender Action Plan) are in Table 6. Potential risks in relation to community health and safety are not foreseen, however these will be addressed by providing training and protective measures and gear as needed. **FAO Safeguards that are applicable for this Project** are presented in Table 3, above. **The ESS Mitigation Plan** is in Table 6, below.

7.2 MITIGATION OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL IMPACTS

The project is **designed** to have positive environmental and social outcomes. Major Project interventions will contribute to national climate change adaptation and mitigation priorities. Project priority criteria were developed and agreed upon with stakeholders for each Project component. The Gender Action Plan is a tool prepared to ensure gender objectives and targets are met.

Some Project activities could, however, create localized and unintended impacts. Table 6 (below) identifies the main activities and potential issues that may emerge depending on the Project activities – and then identifies actions that need to be ensured to happen, or mitigation measures to take - in order to *not* have negative consequences. All on-ground activities will undergo an environmental and social assessment prior to activity commencement, and a project-level ESMP will be prepared. The ESMP will take into account the mitigation actions described in the table below.

Table 6: ESS mitigation plan: potential environmental and social impacts, and actions

Activity	Potential risk	Actions (ensure avoidance of/mitigation of) to address potential impacts
Land planning and management (including CLMP, FLR and SFM activities).	Not all relevant stakeholders fully engaged in land planning and management. Communities and their needs, and the benefits expected, insufficiently engaged/expressed.	- Planning activities actively engage all relevant stakeholders during all phases of planning. - As detailed in the GAP, a gender-sensitive process will be taken to facilitate communities and smallholder farmers to develop Community Landscape Management Plans (CLMP) and implement restoration activities. - Roles and responsibilities for management activities are clearly defined and agreed by relevant stakeholders. - Management activities use best, and context/location-specific, practice. - Specialized CSOs will be engaged (through bidding process) to have the main function of liaising between technical experts and communities and ensure community's engagement and participation facilitating knowledge transfer.

Activity	Potential risk	Actions (ensure avoidance of/mitigation of) to address potential impacts
		- Benefits are felt by up- and downstream communities by ensuring their engagement in planning and management. During the process, stakeholders are informed of the benefits.
Forestry and agroforestry investments (linked to above activity).	Community and farmer enterprise-led FLR for afforestation and agroforestry not thoroughly developed. Endangerment of indigenous ecosystems. Inappropriate planting techniques used. Forest/land ownership not considered. Communities not engaged/consulted.	- FLR, SFM and agroforestry approaches are taken up by involving communities in planning and implementation. This will be especially considered during the process of designing climate risk informed and integrated participatory community landscape management and investment plans (CLMP), but also during the establishment of community-supported High Conservation Value Forests. - FLR is thoroughly developed, to include all considerations for afforestation, including land preparation. During the planning process, it is also necessary to assess the risk of fire in the area intended for afforestation and have into account the relevant national and sub-national fire protection plans. The planning process shall also assess any threats of spread of invasive species, in order to adopt any necessary mitigation measures. - Changes in forest structure and species composition are assessed through the continuous collection of data and analysis with the framework of the National Forestry Management (NFM) system following FAO good practices. - As part of CLMPs, all local management planning will include a biodiversity assessment; each site will be assessed with communities and experts from local universities and the project. During the preparation of the ESMP, an account of threats, including regional level threats that are relevant to the project site and its area of influence will be discussed in detail. - Where applicable, all plant material will be sourced from legally approved points. - Autochthonous species of local provenances will be used for afforestation. - The use of chemicals or other substances that adversely affect soil, water resources and biological diversity are not envisaged however, if necessary, preference is given to natural, biological and mechanical interventions as an alternative to chemicals. - Planting techniques will be undertaken according to up-to-date knowledge and verified practices of afforestation, also to ensure survival rate of planted seedlings, and include planting techniques related to fire prevention (e.g. tree spacing, fire breaks). - As applicable, fencing for tree plantings protection should be maintained, and kept for at least five years before being removed to an appropriate disposal site.

Activity	Potential risk	Actions (ensure avoidance of/mitigation of) to address potential impacts
		- Fencing will be of different form including biological depending on specific context of the forestry investments. Each will be defined during the inception phase when precise sites will be formalized at which time appropriate screening for types of fencing and their handling and disposal will be conducted. - Monitor vegetation regeneration.
	Unclear and insecure land tenure for forested lands.	- The project will not acquire land nor displace people. - There are no unclear land tenure issues. Areas are always owned by communities. Land can be cleared by communities or leased out via the iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB): Home. Project areas will be selected based on CLMPs developed with communities, and which will which address the use and management of land. All project-supported land-use changes identified through CLMPs will be subject to a PS5 screening step to assess whether they would result in loss of income, assets, or restriction of access to land or resources currently used for livelihoods, regardless of formal tenure status. Where screening confirms that participation is fully voluntary and does not entail net livelihood loss, activities will proceed under standard the ESMP. - Through clear landscape management plans and including these in the national plan, the project will update the key framework to enhance land tenure aspects for forested lands and will provide coordination mechanisms for improved landscape planning.
	Unfair employment	- The workforce will be recruited from local communities. - Employment will be in line with national legislation and/or UN/FAO regulation, whichever is most stringent.
Support the restoration and SFM of commercially logged over natural forests and plantations.		- Planning and management taken place at the Mataqaali level and most suitable restoration and management options identified for each target area. - All local management planning will include a biodiversity assessment.
Establishment of community-supported new Protected Areas/High Conservation Value Forests	New Protected Areas/HCVF not established according to best practice.	- Beneficiary communities to be chosen by the MoFF considering their location in priority watersheds and river basins in and outside CLMPs. - Specific criteria must be applied: (i) forest areas with demonstrated value or among the list identified by the Protected Area Committee (PAC); (ii) documentation available on the rationale for establishing the protected areas; and (iii) presence of draft management plans with community consultations. All local management planning will include a biodiversity assessment. - Agreements between resource customary owners and the government must be properly recorded and filed.

Activity	Potential risk	Actions (ensure avoidance of/mitigation of) to address potential impacts
	Lack of capital for conservation leases slowing progress in establishing large tracts of HCVFs despite landowners' willingness to engage.	- The project will cover the cost of the initial years of the lease while the State will cover the remaining ones. - Communities to retain the right of use of lands as per the existing land lease mechanism; communities participating in HCVF will be formally prioritized for future result-based payment and payment for ecosystem services.
Creating adaptive nurseries	Poor planning for seedling quality and/or availability. Lack of long-term vision for viability of nurseries and seedling production. Lack of suitable seeds, leading to a disruption of production continuity or requires the use of seeds of inappropriate origin.	- Ensure adequate technical and professional capacity at the nurseries for the continuous production and secured placement of seedling, and appropriate quantities of high-quality seeds. - Ensure that the assortment of constantly available seeds for the needs of nursery production correspond to the perennial dynamics of the planned planting works (i.e. the production of planting material). - The quality of the planned seedlings for afforestation must be produced from seeds of verified origin and meet the requirements intended for the highest quality classes; they must be sourced through officially recognized channels. No GMO or seeds with insecticidal seed coatings will be used in the project. - Completeness of upgrading and alignment with international standards will be verified by an independent expert. - No new construction will take place. Selection criteria for public, private and community nurseries are complied with: (1) *Public Nurseries:* (i) are directly linked to reforestation activities in the target area; (ii) have sufficient staff to guarantee the sustainability of activities. (2) *Private Nurseries:* (i) are located in or close by forestry investment activities; (ii) are formally registered and clear from pending procedures; are willing to allocate staff for trainings and maintenance. (3) *Community Nurseries:* (i) are directly linked to reforestation activities in the target area; groups operating on behalf of the community are recognized formally and can receive financing from the MoFF or others; (ii) have sufficient persons to guarantee the sustainability of activities; (iii) can operate on land free from leases, suitable for the establishment of the nursery and agreed with the community via the CLMPs.
Communities' adoption of the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification and the integration of the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure (ES PRO).	Communities not fully aware, or capacitated, for FSC certification and integration of ES PRO.	- Support, such as training and Information sessions, is provided to communities.

Activity	Potential risk	Actions (ensure avoidance of/mitigation of) to address potential impacts
Development of a new Forestry Loan Facility (FLF) to ensure effectiveness and efficiency of resilience investments via forestry loans.	Women are excluded from benefitting from the FLF.	- Active gender working groups will be engaged to guarantee that all actions needed to ensure access to the facility products is secured to women. - Women's participation in community-based forest enterprises fostered, and women's leadership in policy-making promoted, through ensuring adequate human and financial resources for gender mainstreaming.
Entire Project.	Exclusion of females.	- Issues related to gender equity are addressed in Project design/activities and the Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan (GAP). The GRM is established as the platform whereby grievances related to the Project ESMF, including gender-based violence related issues, can be addressed. - Annex 2 of the Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan (GAP) provides information on the enabling environment for gender-inclusive labour and business in Fiji. - The GAP makes provisions to establish a Gender Working /Reference Group as a consistent mechanism for ad hoc inputs in review processes. This platform will have a 'gender quality assurance' function and be a point for dedicated project engagement with outputs requiring reviewing from a gender perspective and/or gender mainstreaming (e.g.) policy revisions, training materials, guidelines, TORs (eg on PPPs) etc. Some activities, including products developed, will require more representation from local and grassroots women. The role of the gender working group is to call on that need so that core members will involve different women from different areas and geographies or expertise depending on need.
	Sexual exploitation and abuse.	- Preventing SEAH is envisaged by engaging with women through the duration of the project – more specifically, stakeholder consultations prior and during project implementation will include awareness raising and stakeholder-differentiated understanding of SEAH related risks and mitigation measures. The Grievance Redress Mechanism provides an accessible and inclusive survivor-centred and gender-responsive grievance redress mechanisms with specific procedures for SEAH including confidential reporting with safe and ethical documenting of such cases, that indicate when and where to report incidents, and what follow-up actions will be undertaken.

Activity	Potential risk	Actions (ensure avoidance of/mitigation of) to address potential impacts
		- The Project uses FAO training[36] and guidance for Project personnel and contractors/consultants, as well as country-specific information and toolkits as awareness raising for sensitization about violence against women (VAW) in the local context. Project SEAH risk management plans are developed and include specific requirements (protocols) to support the prevention of VAW associated with any project activities or personnel, as well as supporting reporting and handling of VAW, in line with the National Action Plan. Specific to the project field activities, risks associated with women's safety when travelling to meetings, carrying out work related to land management and nurseries, and in relation to PPPs that increase women's status and expose them to domestic or intimate partner violence will be proactively addressed and monitored. - The Project will ensure that all concerns and/or incidents will be reported to the PSEA focal point and the FAO Office of the Inspector General, as appropriate. The Project PMU will also have a gender specialist with PSEA expertise. - The Project Grievance Redress Mechanism will include avenues for female complainants to interface with female case officers, and provide guidance for safe as well as anonymous reporting for all, safeguarding women from intimidation, harassment and violence and also for any unexpected or undue impacts from project interventions. The GRM provisions will be reviewed by the Gender Working/ Reference Group and socialized based on their advice, overseen by the Project Gender Specialist. Provisions will be made for special intervention if grievance log patterns reflect gender issues during the Project period.
	Operational Health and Safety Risks (OHSR).	- Within a framework of general rules and regulations on OHSR, develop and apply project specific Labour Management and Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) Guidance during implementation. - Community-interface risks might arise during implementation of project activities (e.g. afforestation/reforestation and SFM works, agroforestry and HVCF-related activities, temporary fencing, fire-risk considerations in planting areas, work in degraded/logged-over forests, and possible

[36] FAO training materials are available for Achieving Gender Equality in FAO's Work; Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority; and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

Activity	Potential risk	Actions (ensure avoidance of/mitigation of) to address potential impacts
		NbS coastal protection measures); as relevant, risks will be screened and addressed. - As applicable, ensure workers are equipped with protective gear. - As applicable, ensure the availability of first aid kit at work sites and necessary information on rescue during emergency. - Ensure workers are trained on OHSR risk prevention and management on site.
	Exclusion of Indigenous Peoples.	- A 19 March 2024 letter from the Permanent Secretary for iTaukei Affairs, Culture, Heritage and Arts to the Acting Permanent Secretary for Fisheries and Forests confirmed that the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs – which represents the ITaukei – states that the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs supports the project, that the project will be implemented in coordination with iTaukei legislations and that all activities relating to communities will be in consultation with the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and relevant agencies such as the TLTB. Hence, it was agreed with the Government of Fiji that the Project already satisfies the FPIC requirements but should it be determined – through informed and properly registered consultations - that an FPIC will be needed, this will be executed at Project start-up. - Each project activity will be anchored within a (project developed) Community Landscape Management Plan. There, rightful landowners (i.e. Indigenous Peoples) will identify all possible forest and agroforestry investments to be supported by the project. Communities in each target areas will therefore have to be informed and agree on each planned investment according to FAO FPIC procedure (including FPIC handbook). No activity will be implemented in target areas if not included in the CLMPs that will follow the FAO FPIC protocols.
Monitoring.	Any potential negative impact not captured.	- While this is not an environmental and social impact per se, it has implications for tracking project success or shortcomings so these can be mitigated, but also to contribute to larger, national-scale data collection. Therefore, training on monitoring (e.g. forest restoration) is crucial. Each inventory and assessment as well as investment will be georeferenced and uploaded in earth map. - Capacity building activities (including training and awareness raising) will be held at different management levels and at national level. - Monitoring of the ESMF will be undertaken by a specifically hired person at the PMU.

8. PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES TO MITIGATE IMPACTS FOR IMPLEMENTATION

This chapter describes the process for ensuring that environmental and social concerns are addressed through the institutional arrangements and procedures used by the Project for managing the identification, preparation, approval, and implementation of activities.

This ESMF identifies the ESS policy triggers for the Project, the potential environmental and social impacts of Project activities, and measures to mitigate the identified risks. In the early stages of the Project, once specific target activity areas have been identified, and activities fully defined, an environmental and social screening exercise will be carried out at the activity level (refer to Appendix 3 for FAO´s Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) checklist). Category A projects will be excluded. This tool will help identify those activities that may require mitigation measures.

In order to ensure that the environmental and social issues are addressed properly in accordance and in compliance with the FAO and GCF Policies, all Project activities shall undergo screening, assessment, review, and clearance process before execution of the Project activities. Biodiversity assessments will be conducted to ensure that project activities will not negatively impact, but enhance, critical habitats and that if and as necessary, appropriate mitigating measures are adopted. *In line with Fiji's ESIA procedures, this ESMF constitutes the initial environmental impact assessment; Fijian environmental impact assessment falls under the overall responsibility of the Ministry of Environmental Protection (MoEP), who is a partner Ministry in this project.*

None of these project activities are envisaged to cause environmental damage, therefore the EIA is not required, but this ESMF will be used for ensuring environmental and social safeguards are in place. Furthermore, project sub-activities will undertake, as applicable, further environmental and social impact assessments, where FAO and/or national environmental impact assessment standards/regulation will be followed, whichever is most stringent. No sub-activity will commence until applicable assessments take place and are cleared.

Table 7. Project compliance with Fijian ESIA procedures and steps

Stage Activity	Fijian ESIA Procedures and Steps
Initial Screening	• The ESS Specialist of the Project PMU completes FAO's ESS Screening Checklist (provided in Appendix 3) for the intended activity and submits it to FAO's Environmental and Social Management Unit (ESMU), for screening and endorsement. • The ESS Checklist determines the activity classification: o Category I (A) project; for which a full EIA/EMP report is required. o Category II (B) project, for which an initial EIA/EMP is required. o Category III (C) for which no environment analysis is required. (*Ref.* Section 8.2, below)
Environmental and Social Plans	• The ESS Specialist of the Project PMU prepares the Terms of Reference for the ESMP, based on Sections 8.2 and 8.3, below. • The ESS Specialist of the Project PMU, together with technical specialists, prepares an project level Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP).

	• FAO's ESMU and Fiji's MoEP review and approve the ESMP. • The ESMP is publicly disclosed, and presented and discussed during stakeholder consultations. (*Ref.* Sections 8.2 and 8.3, below)

8.1 DEFINING ACTIVITIES

By design, the Project is expected to have far greater environmental benefits than adverse environmental impacts. The potential adverse environmental impacts from the Project are likely to be small and localized. However, it is recognized that such impacts can accrue into larger impacts if they are not identified early during the planning cycle and their mitigation measures integrated into the Project planning and implementation.

Considering the activities to be implemented in each implementing site will be very similar in nature and scale across the implementation area, it is proposed that screening for potential risks is undertaken at activity level. Activities constitute a valid tool to identify expected impacts and mitigation and monitoring measures.

In this context, implementing sites will be identified along with activities, including capacity building/training and stakeholder engagement information specific to each site.

In order to ensure a smooth and effective ESMF process, there will be one person in the PMU responsible for the environmental and social safeguards (ESS) process (including GRM and stakeholder engagement).

8.2 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISK SCREENING OF ACTIVITIES

FAO's Environmental and Social Screening (ESS) checklist (Appendix 3) will determine if an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) is needed. The nature, magnitude, reversibility, and location of impacts are main elements in the screening of activities; expert judgment is a main factor in deciding whether an ESMP is required for a specific activity or not, and national SEIA legislation must also be consulted.

For an activity that requires an ESMP, the proposal must include a set of mitigation measures with monitoring and institutional arrangements to be taken during the implementation phase to correctly manage any potential adverse environmental and social impacts that may have been identified.

FAO will undertake environmental and social screening following FAO's ESS Checklist. Once the implementation sites and beneficiaries are determined, a screening checklist will be completed per activity and signed off by the ESS specialist at the Project Management Unit (PMU). The results of the screening checklists will be aggregated by the ESS specialist. FAO will exclude high risk activities.

Screening of activities involves:

a) checking the activity is permissible (as per the legal and regulatory requirements of the Project); and
b) determining the level of environmental assessment required based on the level of expected impacts.

The ESS screening checklist will result in the following screening outcomes:
a) determine the category for further assessment; and

b) determine which environmental assessment instrument to be applied.

It will also determine whether the ESMP will require, as appropriate, any other specific, associated, plans (e.g. Indigenous Peoples Plan).

Pre-implementation safeguards documents (one per sub-activity) will be under the responsibility of the project Safeguards Specialist prior to the implementation of activities and sent to the ESM Unit for endorsement.

The documents will outline the following information relative to each activity:

a) Description of the activities to be carried out in all sites

b) Description of each implementing site:
   i. Geography and specificities in terms of activities
   ii. Beneficiaries and stakeholders
   iii. Map of the site

c) Description of the stakeholder engagement process that was carried out in the inception phase and the stakeholder engagement plan to be carried during implementation.

d) Break down of information by site about the grievance mechanism and disclosure.

e) Aggregated results of the environmental and social screening checklists per sub-activity signed off by the Safeguards Specialist in the Project Management Unit.

e) Where applicable, Environmental and Social Management Plans identifying mitigation measures, indicators, responsibilities and timeframe. The ESMP will be added to the monitoring plan to ensure safeguards performance is regularly reported upon along with stakeholder engagement monitoring per site.

8.3 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISK MANAGEMENT

For an activity that requires an ESMP, a set of mitigation measures with monitoring and institutional arrangements to be taken during its implementation must be included. Funds have been budgeted for the ESS Specialist, who is responsible for the overall preparation of this (see Appendix 2).

The ESMP should include:

Mitigation Measures: Based on the environmental and social impacts identified from the checklist, the ESMP should describe with technical details each mitigation measure, together with designs, equipment descriptions and operating procedures as appropriate. As appropriate, the ESMP will also include relevant information on Indigenous Peoples, including FPIC-related processes, specific risk management, benefit-sharing arrangements, timelines, budget, and consultation in consistency with the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy.

Monitoring: Environmental and social monitoring during the implementation of the activities should be described, in order to measure the success of the mitigation measures. Specifically, the monitoring section of the ESMP provides:

- A specific description and technical details of monitoring measures that include the parameters to be measured, the methods to be used, sampling locations, frequency of measurements, detection limits (where appropriate), and definition of thresholds that will signal the need for corrective actions.
- Monitoring and reporting procedures to ensure early detection of conditions that necessitate particular mitigation measures and to furnish information on the progress and results of mitigation, e.g. by annual audits and surveys to monitor overall effectiveness of this ESMF.

Institutional Arrangements: The ESMP should also provide a specific description of institutional arrangements, i.e. who is responsible for carrying out the mitigating and monitoring measures (for operation, supervision, enforcement, monitoring of implementation, remedial action, financing, reporting and staff training). Additionally, the ESMP should include an estimate of the costs of the measures and activities recommended so that the necessary funds can be budgeted and included in the proposal. The mitigation and monitoring measures recommended in the ESMP should be developed in consultation with all affected groups to incorporate their concerns and views in the design of the ESMP.

Once the pre-implementation documents with the ESMP are endorsed by the ESM Unit in FAO and Fiji's MoEP, the Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialist from the PMU will ensure the ESMP is included and reported upon, along with stakeholder engagement in the context of the monitoring plan.

In this context, field staff will be responsible for monitoring the progress as relevant in the monitoring plan, as well as to identify any potential risks that may emerge through the implementation phase. This information will be compiled in progress reports and templates will include a section on Environmental and Social Risk Management, where the above information will be reported upon.

Information from progress reports will be received by the ESS specialist in the PMU, who will compile the information received in the progress reports, as well as that related to grievances to feed in a semi-annual report on Environmental and Social Safeguards Performance to be endorsed by the ESM Unit in FAO. This report will also include aspects of the Grievance Redress Mechanism to ensure its efficacy, and will be used in the preparation of the M&E Unit's Annual Performance Reports (APR): based on the previous years' experience, at AWPB meetings, the GRM will be evaluated and refined, if and as needed.

9. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

Within the Project governance structure described in Section 2.4, above, there will be a Project management structure (Project Management Unit, or PMU), within which the Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialist will work.

9.1 PROJECT MANAGEMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION

FAO will serve as the Accredited Entity (AE) for the Project. FAO will be responsible for overall oversight of the Project, including: i) All project evaluation aspects; ii) Administrative, financial and technical supervision throughout implementation of the Project; iii) Supervision of effective management of funds to achieve the results and objectives; iv) Quality control of Project monitoring and reporting to the GCF; and v) Project closure and evaluation.

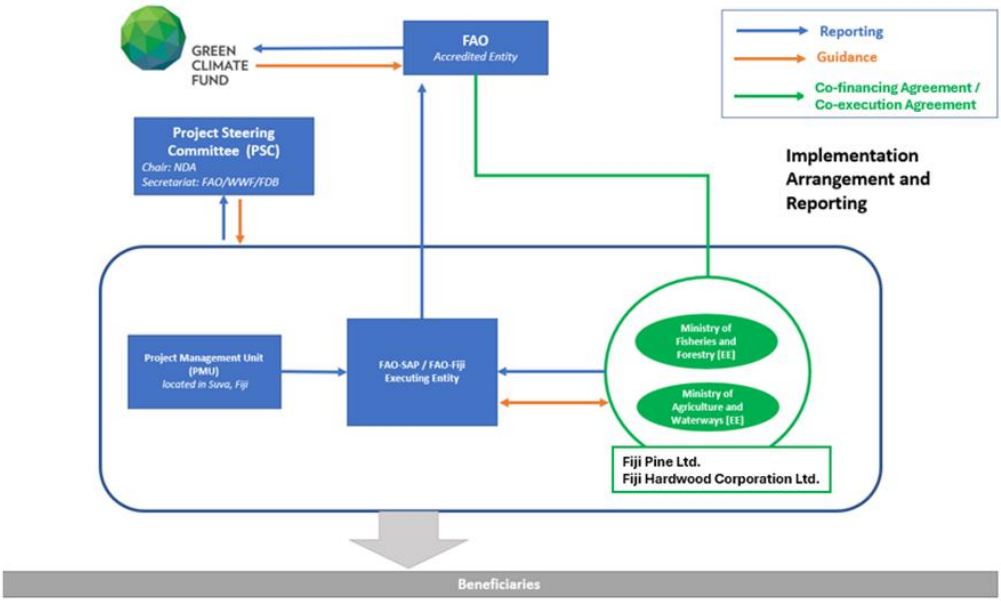
The **Project Steering Committee** (PSC) will be established for the overall strategic guidance of this project as well as of the projects implemented by WWF-Fiji and the Fiji Development Bank. The PSC of the project will be housed within the NDA (Ministry of Environment and Climate Change, Office of the Prime Minister). The PSC will be composed of primary stakeholders such as: the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry (MoFF), the Ministry for iTaukei Affairs, the Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways (MoAW); Ministry of Environmental Protection (MoEP), Ministry for Tourism and Civil Aviation; Minister for Finance, Strategic Planning, National Development and Statistics (MoFSPNDS), the Ministry of Interior (MoI), as well as representatives of provinces, in project areas, the Chamber of Commerce/Finance Institutions, Forest Owners Guild, FAO (Observer) and Civil Society (Observer).

The role of the PSC will be to: (i) Provide overall guidance and direction to the project; (ii) Ensure that co-financing support is provided in a timely and effective manner and reported against its availability and use; (iii) Address project issues as raised by the Project Management Unit (PMU) and/or PSC members or EEs; (iii) Review the project progress, and provide direction and recommendations to ensure that the agreed deliverables are produced satisfactorily and within the approved project framework; (iv) Review and approve annual work plan and provide necessary strategic guidance for its implementation;(v) Appraise the annual project reports; (vi) make recommendations for subsequent work plans to build on achievements and address any shortcomings, etc. One representative from the PMU will act as Rapporteur to the PSC that should ensure through its overall leading and central role a strong country ownership.

The Climate Change Division of the Office of the Prime Minister in its capacity as the NDA and as the lead authority will use its convening power to facilitate consultations at the national level as well as assist in conducting knowledge exchange processes for scaling up the innovations and investments, enhancing impact and introducing a paradigm shift in the management, allocation and use resources and improved adaptation to climate risks. The NDA will also support coordination among institutional stakeholders active in the sectors relevant to the project, its execution and post project sustainability.

The Executing Entities will be (1) the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), (2) the Government of Fiji acting through the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry (MoFF) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways (MoAW), (3) the Fiji Hardwood Corporation Limited (FHCL) and (4) the Fiji Pine Limited (FPL). FAO will also act as the EE for all GCF-funded project activities and be responsible for the GCF proceeds. FAO-SAP will establish a dedicated PMU in Suva, Fiji to oversee the execution of the project as a whole. The PMU will be located in the premises of the MoFF. The GoF, acting through the MoFF, the MoAW, will be Executing Entities for activities funded by their own co-financing resources. Likewise the FHCL and the FPL will be Executing Entities for activities funded by their own co-financing resources. As such, they will be responsible for managing and executing their co-financing funds but will not execute any GCF Proceeds

Figure 4. Project implementation arrangements



Source: Author's own elaboration.

A dedicated **Project Management Unit (PMU)** will be established and hosted by the Ministry of Fisheries and Forestry or FAO (in Suva), as appropriate. The PMU will be functional for the entire duration of the project. The PMU will coordinate directly with institutions as well as with the PSC and the equivalent offices in the regions and districts and will be responsible for providing support to the execution of day-to-day activities with participating regional and local governments and other stakeholders. The PMU will be led by a project-recruited Senior Project Coordinator (NPC), responsible for overall project management and coordination with project stakeholders. Key responsibilities and executing responsibilities are presented in Table 8, below. The PMU will host dedicated Environmental and Social Safeguards capacity responsible for coordinating environmental and social (ESMF, ESMP) and gender safeguards (Gender Action Plan) compliance, including GRM functionality and referral pathways, and stakeholder engagement, and consolidated safeguards monitoring and reporting. Executing Entities and implementing partners are responsible for day-to-day implementation of mitigation measures and stakeholder engagement in the field, in accordance with cleared safeguards instruments and contract clauses, with PMU oversight and escalation arrangements defined below.

Table 8. Key responsibilities and executing responsibilities

Entity	Role	Specific Responsibility
FAO	AE	Supervision, backstopping and oversight
FAO	Co-financier and EE	In-cash financing, and execution of GCF financing activities
MoFF	Co-Financier and EE	In-kind contribution and execution for respective activities; policy review, stakeholder coordination and in-field support
MoAW	Co-Financier and EE	In-kind contribution and execution for respective activities; policy review, stakeholder coordination and in-field support
FHCL	Co-Financier and EE	In-kind contribution to Output 3.3: Support the restoration and SFM of commercially logged over natural forests and plantations

FPL	Co-Financier and EE	In-kind contribution to Output 3.3: Support the restoration and SFM of commercially logged over natural forests and plantations
Service Provider / NGO	Implementation	Communication, forestry investments, seeds production
Service Provider / NGO	Implementation	Community engagement and community work.

A review of the activity assigned to the relevant main partner for each of the components and sub-components is given in Table 9, below. The ESS Specialist will work with these partners to ensure the implementation of this ESMF. As identified during the course of Project implementation, this includes ESMP preparation and training on aspects of ESMP execution (e.g. stakeholder engagement, GRM, monitoring).

Table 9. Activity responsibility L = Lead, Oversight/quality assurance,

Activity	Main partners
Activity 1.1.1: Institutionalize inter-sectoral and inclusive collaborative mechanisms	FAO (L/QA) / (Prime Minister Office / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Ministry of Tourism / Ministry of Education / Representative (s) of: civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia / IFIs (e.g. FDB) / NFIs / The SPC / UNOSAT.)
Activity 1.1.2: Establish Natural Resources Management-related Public-Private-Community Partnerships mechanisms	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Ministry of Tourism / IFIs / NFIs.
Activity 1.1.3: Establish community-supported ecological monitoring procedures across the target districts	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Education / Ministry of Youth and Sport.
Activity 1.2.1: Update of key natural resources management policies for climate resilience and mitigation	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Representative (s) of: civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 1.2.2: Develop and introduce the standards and code of practices necessary to ensure climate change mainstreaming via sustainable forest management and forest landscape restoration	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Representative (s) of: civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 1.2.3: Prepare Fiji and communities for	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Representative (s) of: civil society / Academia.

accessing carbon trading schemes to increase Fiji's climate financing options	
Activity 1.2.4: Assess with stakeholders available options to adopt forest ecosystem services incentives and levy	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Representative (s) of: civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 1.2.5: Disseminate policies across institutions and communities	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry.
Activity 1.3.1: Design climate risk informed and integrated participatory community landscape management and investment plans (CLMP)	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Representative (s) of: civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 1.3.2: Facilitate Sustainable Forest Management (SFM) for permanent forest estates via public private partnerships	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Representative (s) of: civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 1.3.3: Transfer knowledge produced by the project to national stakeholders in charge of formal and informal education of youth and professionals	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Ministry of Education / Ministry of Youth and Sport / Representative (s) of: civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 2.1.1: Upgrade knowledge on FLR and climate adaptive nurseries development	FAO (L/QA), Ministry of Fishery and Forestry, Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, Private Sector Organizations, and academia.
Activity 2.1.2: Expand/upgrade the public nurseries	FAO (L/QA), Ministry of Fishery and Forestry, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways, Ministry of iTaukei Affairs, representative (s) of civil society, Private Sector Organizations, and academia.
Activity 2.2.1: Implement community-led forestry investments identified in the CLMPs	FAO (QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry (L) / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / representative (s) of civil society / Academia.
Activity 2.2.2: Establish community-supported High Conservation Value Forests	FAO (QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry (L) / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / representative (s) of civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 3.1.1: Support private sector operators in the adoption of the Forest Stewardship Council certification and the integration of the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Ministry of Environment / Representative (s) of: Private Sector Organizations.

Activity 3.1.2: Support communities' adoption of the Forest Stewardship Council certification and the integration of the FSC Ecosystem Services Procedure	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / Ministry of Environment / Representative (s) of: civil society organizations.
Activity 3.2.1: Strengthen/de-constrain existing forestry financial mechanisms of the FDB and other national financing institutions to support sustainable natural resources management (SNRM)	FAO (L/QA) / Fiji Development Bank and other national finance institutions, private sector organizations / Academia.
Activity 3.2.2: Facilitate the enhancement and upgrade of forestry financial products to ensure the effectiveness and efficiency of resilience investments	FAO (L/QA) / Fiji Development Bank and other national finance institutions, private sector organizations / Academia.
Activity 3.2.3: Support the capacity of public and private financial institutions to identify climate risk investments and to ensure Paris Agreement alignment of the pipeline portfolio	FAO (L/QA) / Fiji Development Bank and other national finance institutions, private sector organizations / Academia.
Activity 3.3.1: Facilitate the restoration and the SFM of degraded lands in logged-over natural forests on community land following climate adaptive silviculture approaches	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / representative (s) of civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 3.3.2: Facilitate the introduction of FLR and SFM on degraded lands and commercial plantation areas following climate adaptive silviculture approaches	FAO (L/QA) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / representative (s) of civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.
Activity 3.3.3: In partnership with the Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways, support forest landscape restoration via agroforestry investments	FAO (QA) / FHCL/FPLL (L) / Ministry of Fishery and Forestry / Ministry of Environment / Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways / Ministry of iTaukei Affairs / representative (s) of civil society / Private Sector Organizations / Academia.

9.2 ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS MANAGEMENT

The Project will ensure that this Environmental and Social Management Framework is adhered to, and

its sections used as guidance for the preparation of a project-level Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), including monitoring and capacity building aspects. For this purpose, an Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Specialist will be hired, within the PMU, for the duration of the Project. A total budget of USD 196,907 has been allocated for the salary of this person. The ESS Specialist will be responsible for ensuring overall compliance with this ESMF, including ensuring the implementation of the various mitigation measures proposed; presenting and explaining the ESMF and Grievance Redress Mechanism to all stakeholders during consultations, and incorporate feedback into the Project's implementation; and monitoring the safeguards process. This includes ensuring that stakeholders have the capacity to implement the ESMP, and if not, provide training. The ESS Specialist will also support safeguard performance monitoring during the life of the Project. This includes all aspects of environmental and social safeguards, grievance redress, stakeholder engagement, reporting, coordinating and supervising sub-activity screening and related ESMP preparation and execution. The ESS Specialist will be responsible for ensuring ESS screening for sub-activities prior to implementation, and will ensure that the ESMP is cleared by FAO's ESMU and Fiji's MoEP. The ESS Specialist will also be responsible for preparing the Terms of Reference of the ESMP (using the guidance provided in Section 8, above), and the overall oversight of mitigation for any medium-risk activities using the ESMP developed during implementation, in collaboration with the entities involved in the implementation of those components (as outlined in Tables 8 and 9, above).

The ESS Specialist will receive support from the Project's Gender Specialist and other technical specialists. The ESS Specialist will also work closely with the M&E unit, and the Gender Specialist, on matters related to reporting for the environmental and social safeguards and stakeholder engagement aspects of the Project.

A workplan describing the implementation of the commitments, and budget, are outlined in this Environmental and Social Management Framework and included in Appendix 2.

Monitoring[37]. A monitoring and evaluation system will be established for the Project in keeping with GCF guidelines to report on its Integrated Results Management Framework (IRMF), designed to measure the Project's core indicators. The PMU will be responsible for monitoring of the Project activities. An M&E system will be developed with an M&E Officer and a Monitoring Information System to keep track of performance and core indicators. All service contracts, Letters of Agreements and Memoranda of Understanding with implementing partners will specify their responsibility with respect to sex-disaggregated data collection and reporting. The implementing partners will submit reports to the PMU which will prepare a consolidated report on an annual basis. Regular meetings for monitoring and follow-up will be organized where problems will be discussed and, when needed, corrective measures will be recommended. FAO, as the main implementing agency, will be responsible for maintaining records on all Project activities on standard reporting formats. All implementing partners will be required to provide information on the core indicators, impact, outcome and output level indicators specified in the IRMF. FAO-HQ will support the PMU in reviewing and analyzing progress reports and to assess performances against baseline and targets. FAO will manage and coordinate reporting to the GCF according to its standards procedures. Functions of the M&E include verification and respect of the social and environmental safeguards. The ESS Specialist will work in close collaboration with the M&E Officer to provide information for timely reporting on ESMF implementation, in the appropriate (M&E) format. Furthermore, in order to measure the success of the mitigation measures of ESMP,

[37] Additional details on project monitoring and evaluation are available in Section 6 of Annex 2 (Feasibility Study), and Annex 11 (Monitoring and Evaluation Plan) of the FP.

environmental and social monitoring during the implementation of any activities will be described in the ESMP (this will be included in the Terms of Reference of the ESMP preparation). The information gathered through this will feed back into Project M&E reporting (Section 8.3, above).

APPENDIX 1. NON-ELIGIBILITY LIST

In order to avoid adverse irreversible impacts on the environment and people, the following activities are explicitly excluded from funding:

1. Harmful or exploitative forms of child labour.
2. Harmful or exploitative forms of forced labour.
3. Forced evictions without the provision of and access to appropriate forms of legal and other protection.
4. Activities that result in the exploitation of and access to outsiders to the lands and territories of Indigenous Peoples in voluntary isolation and in initial contact.
5. Destruction of protected areas or other high biodiversity and High Conservation Value areas
6. Construction or financing of dams over 15 m in height.
7. Activities that are illegal under host country laws, regulations or ratified international conventions and agreements relating to biodiversity protection or cultural heritage.
8. Activities or materials deemed illegal under host country laws or regulations or international conventions and agreements, such as:
    1. products that contain any substances that are banned for use or trade under applicable international treaties and agreements, or meet the criteria of carcinogenicity, mutagenicity, or reproductive toxicity as set forth by relevant international agencies; and
    2. wildlife or products regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species or Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES).
9. Cross-border trade in waste and waste products, unless compliant to the Basel Convention and the underlying regulations.
10. Trade related to pornography and/or prostitution.
11. Production and distribution of racist and discriminatory media.
12. Project's activities for which any of the following products is having a primary role:
    1. production, use or trade in radioactive materials1 and unbounded asbestos fibres or asbestos-containing products;
    2. blast fishing and large-scale pelagic drift net fishing using nets in excess of 2.5 km in length;
    3. production or trade in alcoholic beverages (except beer and wine) and tobacco;
    4. production, use, trade or distribution of weapons and munitions; and
    5. gambling, casinos or equivalent enterprises.
13. Use of Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs) and invasive species.
14. Production or activities that impinge on the lands owned, or claimed under adjudication, by Indigenous Peoples, without full documented consent of such peoples.

APPENDIX 2. ESMF TIMELINE AND BUDGET

The Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Specialist will be part of the PMU. S/he will be hired for the duration of the Project, and will work in collaboration with/be supported by other project staff. (e.g. Gender Specialist, M&E Officer). The ESS Specialist will be responsible for ensuring the overall implementation of this ESMF, including: (i) conducting Environmental and Social Assessments using FAO's ESS Screening Checklist, and preparation of a project-level ESMP for activities requiring them (in collaboration with technical experts such as the MoE technical advisor, forestry specialist, gender specialist, and relevant service providers); (ii) training PMU staff and relevant implementing agencies staff on the ESMF (including stakeholder engagement process and Grievance Redress Mechanism), with support from the Gender Specialist; (iii) ESMF validation: during stakeholder consultations, presenting, explaining to, and receiving feedback from stakeholders on the ESMF (including the Grievance Redress Mechanism) and incorporate, as needed, into the AWPB process; and (iv) as part of project M&E, and in collaboration with the PMU M&E Officer, preparing input on environmental and social safeguards aspects of the Project for annual reporting, and for Mid-Term and Final evaluations.

Project costs of relevant staff.

Costs description	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	Year 5	Year 6	Year 7	USD total costs
ESS safeguard specialist (1 Social Expert)	$30,075.00	$30,150.00	$ 30,225.00	$ 30,300.00	$ 24,047.00	$ 25,375.00	$ 26,735.00	$ 196,907.00
ESS safeguard specialist (1 Environmental Expert)	$30,075.00	$30,150.00	$ 30,225.00	$ 30,300.00	$ 24,047.00	$ 25,375.00	$ 25,521.00	$ 195,693.00
Gender Specialist	$15,038.00	$30,150.00	$ 30,225.00	$ 30,300.00	$ 30,375.00	$ 30,450.00	$ 15,263.00	$ 181,801.00
Gender M&E Officer	$ -	$ 6,633.00	$ 6,650.00	$ 6,666.00	$ 6,683.00	$ 6,699.00	$ 6,716.00	$ 40,047.00
TOTAL	**$75,188.00**	**$97,083.00**	**$ 97,325.00**	**$ 97,566.00**	**$ 85,152.00**	**$ 87,899.00**	**$ 74,235.00**	**$ 614,448.00**

Workplan and responsibilities.

ACTIVITY	INDICATOR	YEAR 1				YEAR 2				YEAR 3				YEAR 4				YEAR 5				YEAR 6				YEAR 7				RESPONSIBILITY
		Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
CAPACITY BUILDING																														
Capacity building of project staff/implementing partners on ESS	Training of PMU staff on ESS provided at AWPB meetings																													ESS Specialist
ESS SCREENING AND ASSESSMENT																														
Identification of sub-project activities	List of sub-activities																													ESS Specialist/FAO ESM Unit
ESS screening of sub-project activities	ESS Checklists																													ESS Specialist/FAO ESM Unit
Environmental and Social Assessment and preparation of safeguards related documentation for compliance by sub-project activity	Pre-implementation documents per sub-project activity and and ESMPs																													ESS Specialist/FAO ESM Unit
ESS oversight																														
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT-IMPLEMENTATION																														
Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB)	Approved AWPBs																													PMU/Steering Committee/Project ESS Specialist
Stakeholder consultations	Consultation reports																													PMU M&E Officer and Specialist/ESS Specialist/Gender Specialist/
GENDER ACTION PLAN																														
Mainstreaming gender in project interventions	Details in Gender Action Plan																													Gender Specialist/PMU M&E Specialist
MONITORING AND REPORTING																														
Monitoring on ESS performance and stakeholder engagement, including Grievance Redress Mechanism	Project Progress reports																													PMU M&E Specialist/ESS Specialist/Gender Specialist/FAO ESM Unit
Mid-Term and Terminal Review and Reporting	Mid-Term and Terminal Reports																													FAO/PMU/PMU M&E Unit/External Independent Auditor
PROJECT MONITORING	Project Monitoring				AWPB*	APR**			AWPB	APR			AWPB	APR		Interim Evaluation	AWPB	APR			AWPB					APR			Final Evaluation	FAO/PMU/PMU M&E Unit/External Independent Auditor
* Annual Work Plan and Budget																														
** Annual Performance Report																														

APPENDIX 3. FAO ESS SCREENING CHECKLIST

Environmental and social Standard (ESS)	Guidance	No, Yes, to be determined (TBD)	Likelihood	Impact	Risk mitigation measures
ESS 1 - Biodiversity conservation, and sustainable management of natural resources: **Could the project positively or negatively affect biodiversity or habitats (water or land), through activities or policy?**	Guidance Note	X Yes O No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low Risk. The project builds on FAO experience in reducing forest and land degradation such as the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) 4th cycle (GEF4) project on 'Forestry and Protected Area Management' in Fiji, and plans to enhance biodiversity conservation.
ESS 1.1 Could the project lead to conversion, or land use change, or fragmentation, or degradation of natural habitats, modified habitats or critical natural habitats (water and/or land)?[38]		O Yes X No O TBD	X Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Any negative impacts on biodiversity are expected to be negligible. O **Moderate impact**: Project will only affect modified habitats, not critical natural habitats. O **High impact**: Project may lead to significant adverse impacts on ecologically sensitive areas, areas of global/national significance for biodiversity conservation, and/or biodiversity-rich areas	Low Risk. The project will restore degraded and deforested land; promote natural reforestation in logged over forest areas; promote agroforestry and shade agriculture and development of Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs); promote sustainable forest management (SFM); protect watershed, reduce coastal runoff, erosion and sediments and promote climate resilient and ecological agriculture that altogether will not only reduce deforestation and forest fires but also downstream pollution.

[38] **Natural habitats** are land and water areas where the biological communities are formed in large part by native plant and animal species, and where human activity has not essentially modified the area's primary ecological functions and species composition. **Modified habitats** are areas that may contain a large proportion of plant and/or animal species of non-native origin, and/or where human activity has substantially modified an area's primary ecological functions and species composition. Modified habitats may include areas managed for agriculture, forest plantations, reclaimed coastal zones, and reclaimed wetlands. **Critical habitats** are areas with high biodiversity value that are of significant importance to endemic, restricted-range, threatened, endangered, migratory, or congregatory species. Or they may include highly threatened and/or unique ecosystems associated with ecological functions or characteristics that are required to sustain the previously described biodiversity.

				and habitats upon which endangered species depend.	
ESS 1.2 Could the project include activities in legally protected areas (either marine or terrestrial)? Or include activities in areas that may become legally protected?[39]	* To see the relevant areas, visit the Protected Planet website * For programmes and projects operating in protected areas, FAO will: * * how that the proposed activities in these areas are legally permitted; * * operate in a manner that is in line with management plans that have been recognized by the government; * * engage in consultations with the sponsors and managers of the protected area, and involve them and other stakeholders, including Indigenous Peoples and local communities as appropriate.	O Yes X No O TBD	X Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Any impacts on biodiversity in these areas are expected to be positive (e.g. policy advice to strengthen management of protected areas) or, in case they are negative, they would be negligible. O **Moderate impact**: Project could significantly affect the protected area if not properly regulated, however regulatory controls are strong. Impacts can be minimized or mitigated. O **High impact**: Project activities could significantly and negatively affect biodiversity in an area that is/may become legally protected. In case impacts cannot be mitigated directly in the area, they would be compensated for/offset elsewhere.	Low risk. The project will identify and establish 8,000 ha of new Protected Areas/HCVF, generating 2.07 mtCO_2eq sequestration over 30 years through public-private partnership (PPPs) agreements between resource owners and government.
ESS 1.3 Could the project include any activity on the ground related to agroforestry, forest plantation, harvesting, or management of forest resources (native or	* adhere to existing national forest policies, forest programmes or equivalent strategies; * and the Voluntary Guidelines on Planted Forests.	X Yes O No O TBD	N/A	N/A	The project objective is to restore the productive capacity and ecosystem quality of Fiji's forest landscapes, improve climate resilience of vulnerable local communities and improve storage and carbon sequestration. All local management

[39] Nationally and Internationally recognized terrestrial or marine areas of high biodiversity value include World Heritage Natural Sites, Biosphere Reserves, Ramsar Wetlands of International Importance, Key Biodiversity Areas, Important Bird Areas, and Alliance for Zero Extinction Sites, among others.

planted) for timber and non-timber forest products uses (e.g. seeds collection, spices, honey, mushrooms, bush meat)?					planning will include a biodiversity assessment.
ESS 1.4 Could the project implement fisheries and/or aquaculture activities that may result in degradation of habitats or other negative consequences for biodiversity?		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Any impacts on biodiversity are expected to be positive (e.g. policy advice) or, in case they are negative, negligible given the characteristics of the project sites. O **Moderate impact**: Any negative impacts on biodiversity can be easily mitigated. O **High impact**: Project may lead to significant alteration of habitats and negative impacts on biodiversity would need to be offset or compensated for.	Low risk. The project will not implement fisheries or aquaculture activities.
ESS 1.5 Could the project provide or lead to the use of non-native/non-local species, varieties, breeds, strains or farmed types of domesticated or wild plants or animals (terrestrial or aquatic)?	* Animals: Follow the World Organisation for Animal Health terrestrial or aquatic code to ensure the introduced species/breed does not carry different diseases than local ones; * Plants: Follow appropriate phytosanitary protocols in accordance with International Plant Protection Convention; * Importing or transfer of seeds and/or planting materials for research and development: Ensure compliance with Access and	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: These will only be used in demonstration plots or similar activities and any negative impacts on biodiversity are expected to be non-existent or negligible. O **Moderate impact**: These will be used at a larger scale than demonstration plots. However, monitoring and conservation measures exist for local varieties, breeds, strains or farmed types that may be threatened and the project could support expanding these measures.	Low risk. The project aims to restore Fiji's forest landscapes, therefore non-native / non-local species are not part of the framework.

	Benefit Sharing norms as stipulated in the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture and the Nagoya Protocol of the Convention on Biological Diversity as may be applicable.			O **High impact**: These will be used at a larger scale than demonstration plots, and there is reason to believe the species may become invasive.	
ESS 1.6 Could the project lead to the introduction of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) or Living Modified Organisms (LMOs)?[40]	* Adhere to the Convention on Biological Diversity and the Cartagena Protocol on Biosafety in the handling, transport, and use of living modified organisms resulting from modern biotechnology; * The FAO Biosafety Resource Book is an important training tool for guiding activities; * Adhere to biosafety requirements in the handling of Genetically Modified Organisms or Living Modified Organisms according to national legislation; * Take measures to prevent geneflow from the introduced varieties to existing ones and/or wild relatives.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Any negative impacts on biodiversity and human health are expected to be non-existent or negligible. O **Moderate impact**: GMOs or LMOs may carry risks to biodiversity and/or human health, but strict controls are in place to avoid these risks. O **High impact**: Regulations are not in place or controls are not strictly enforced.	Low risk. The project will not introduce GMOs or LMOs.
ESS 1.7 Could the project potentially affect animal welfare e.g. terrestrial or aquatic animals?	At a minimum, follow the World Organisation for Animal Health Terrestrial and Aquatic Animal Health Codes.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project unlikely to impact negatively animal welfare and may even improve it. O **Moderate impact**: Project could work with animals at family farming scale. Measures to guarantee	Low risk. The project aims to restore degraded and deforested which might improve animal welfare.

[40] LMO is any living organism that possesses a novel combination of genetic material obtained through the use of modern biotechnology.

				animal welfare e.g. during transport and slaughter are enforced in the project area. O **High impact**: Project could work with animals at large scale. Measures to guarantee the welfare of the animals involved are not well enforced in the project area.	
ESS 1.8 Could the project use genetic resources for research or (commercial) development - including from Indigenous Peoples or local communities, and/or associated traditional knowledge - for which prior informed consent/mutually agreed terms are required?	If yes, specific project document requirements may apply related to plant genetic resources for food and agriculture falling under the Multilateral System of Access and Benefit-sharing of the International Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: The genetic resources or knowledge are not from Indigenous Peoples or local communities. O **Moderate impact**: The genetic resources or knowledge may be from Indigenous Peoples or local communities. O **High impact**: The ownership of the genetic resources or knowledge may be disputed, or access and benefit-sharing (ABS) guidance is otherwise challenging to implement.	Low risk. The project will not use genetic resources for research.
ESS 1.9 Could the project potentially lead to procurement of processed natural resource materials through primary/retail suppliers? e.g. buying wood/ timber or processed products for the project such as school tables and chairs.		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project-related procurement cannot reasonably be expected to lead to negative impacts on biodiversity. O **Moderate impact**: Procurement may lead to some, but not significant, negative impacts on biodiversity. Resource extraction is strictly regulated in the project areas. O **High impact**: Procurement may lead to significant	Low risk. The project will not lead to procurement of processed natural resource materials.

				negative impacts on biodiversity. Implementation of natural resource extraction regulation is either non-existent, or extremely weak.	
ESS 2 - Resource efficiency and pollution prevention and management: **Could the project positively or negatively affect soil and water resources, or water-related ecosystems, through activities or policy (e.g. through pollutants, pesticides, fertilizers, hazardous materials or waste)?**[41]	Guidance Note	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low Risk. the project will restore degraded and deforested land; promote natural reforestation in logged over forest areas; promote agroforestry and shade agriculture and development of Non-timber Forest Products (NTFPs); promote sustainable forest management (SFM); protect watershed, reduce coastal runoff, erosion and sediments; and promote climate resilient and ecological agriculture that altogether will not only reduce deforestation and forest fires but also downstream pollution. No pesticide or fertilizer use is envisaged and no hazardous waste or materials will be either used or generated.
ESS 2.1 Could the project lead to significant consumption/extraction of raw materials, surface or ground water and/or energy (e.g.: water extraction is above sustainable levels or recharge capacities)?	Minimize adverse impacts on the environment e.g. through energy-efficient machinery and equipment, cleaner production methods, nature-based solutions, green designs, sustainable infrastructure and procurement, etc.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Consumption or extraction will have no or minimal potential negative impacts on the environment and communities. O **Moderate impact**: Consumption or extraction could have significant negative environmental and social impacts if insufficiently regulated. However, regulatory controls in the project sites are strict.	Low risk. The project does not include consumption / extraction of raw materials.

[41] Water-related ecosystems refers to water resources and water-related ecosystems, including mountains, coasts, oceans, forests, wetlands, rivers, aquifers and lakes.

				O **High impact**: Significant consumption or extraction. Regulatory controls are weak, and/or the environment is particularly sensitive. Water extraction may be above sustainable levels or recharge capacities.	
ESS 2.2 Could the project implement irrigation activities? **AND/OR:** **Potentially lead to wastewater or runoff of contaminated water?** **AND/OR:** **restrict or alter riverine systems (e.g. dams, reservoirs, river basin development, significant water diversion or withdrawals)?**	* Promote integrated water resources management approaches; * More than 20 ha of irrigation, or improving existing irrigation schemes: The ICID-checklist will be included in the prodoc or Environmental and Social Assessment, as well as appropriate actions to mitigate identified potential negative impacts; * FAO activities will avoid direct discharge of wastewater into freshwater courses, marine coastal areas, and surface runoff originating from production units or processing areas.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Negative impacts on the environment of these activities are expected to be negligible and can be managed. E.g. the project will rehabilitate/modernize irrigation schemes below 300 hectares per scheme, and not construct new schemes. O **Moderate impact**: Relevant activities at a scale that could negatively affect the environment, for example lead to groundwater depletion. E.g. rehabilitation/modernization of irrigation schemes between 300 and 1,000 hectares per scheme, construction of schemes up to 300 hectares per scheme, activities leading to wastewater or runoff of contaminated water. O **High impact**: Relevant activities at a large scale that could have high environmental impacts. E.g. rehabilitation/modernization	Low risk. The project will not implement irrigation activities

				of irrigation schemes of more than 1,000 hectares per scheme, or construction of schemes over 300 hectares per scheme; and/or activities leading to wastewater or runoff of contaminated water; significant diversion of surface water which leaves river flow less than 5% above the environmental flow when downstream user requirements are taken into account; withdrawal of groundwater in areas already experiencing soil subsidence due to over-abstraction and/or increasing groundwater depth (e.g. observed in existing wells); withdrawal of groundwater close to the recharge rate considering all abstraction needs from the groundwater unit.	
ESS 2.3 Could the project implement activities on, or potentially lead to, degraded, depleted or polluted soil?	* Follow the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management; * Following the guiding principles of the Revised World Soil Charter; * Utilize the Protocol for the assessment of Sustainable Soil Management to assess impact on soil health.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project uses soil, provides relevant policy advice, or works in an area with degraded/depleted or polluted soil. However, only positive impacts on soil quality expected. O **Moderate impact**: Project may implement activities on, or potentially lead to, degraded, depleted or polluted soil. However,	Low Risk. The project builds on FAO experience in reducing forest and land degradation such as the Global Environmental Facility (GEF) 4th cycle (GEF4) project on 'Forestry and Protected Area Management' in Fiji, and plans to enhance biodiversity conservation.

				mitigating circumstances exist. E.g. partial or complete decontamination or restoration was undertaken; impacts from previous pollution can easily be managed with existing technology. O **High impact**: Project is situated in an area of (pre-existing) degradation/depletion/pollution and could worsen these conditions. Risk mitigation measures may be challenging to implement.	
ESS 2.4.1 Could the project directly or indirectly result in procurement, supply and/or use of pesticides on crops, livestock, aquaculture or forestry?[42]	* See World Health Organization hazard classification; * Utilize Integrated Pest Management and Integrated Vector Management approaches as the frameworks for sustainable pest management; * The types and quantities of pesticides and the associated	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Negative impacts on people and/or the environment are expected to be negligible. The project will directly or indirectly result in procurement, supply and/ or use of biological control agents (e.g. microbials and semiochemicals) or pesticides from WHO hazard class U (Unlikely to cause acute	Low risk. No procurement or use of pesticides.

[42] Examples of pesticide use include:
- as seed/crop treatment in field or storage; and/or
- through input supply programmes including voucher schemes; and/or
- caused by activities such as irrigation schemes and crop intensification; and/or
- for small demonstration and research purposes; and/or
- for strategic stocks (locust) and emergencies; and/or
- causing adverse effects to health and/or environment; and/or
- result in an increased use of pesticides in the project area as a result of production intensification; and/or
- result in the management or disposal of pesticide waste and pesticide contaminated materials; and/or
- result in violations of the Code of Conduct.

	application and protective equipment that people are provided with must always comply with the conditions specified in FAO's Framework for Environmental and Social Management under ESS2 and should be included or referenced in the project document.			toxicity). Health risks can easily be avoided and mitigation measures are included in the workplan e.g. through training and provision of personal protective equipment (PPE). If the pesticide is going to be provided in a form of treated seeds, data to justify its needs in the particular crop/ area are available and can be shared upon request. O **Moderate impact**: Project may require use of pesticides from WHO hazard class II or III in low concentrations, either as a product for direct application or seed treatment. Health risks can easily be avoided, e.g. through training and provision of personal protective equipment (PPE). If the pesticide is going to be provided in a form of treated seeds, data to justify its needs in the particular crop/ area is available and can be shared upon request. O **High impact**: Project will procure/supply/use large volumes (above 1,000 litres or kilograms of packaged product) of pesticides, and/or it is difficult to manage negative impacts on people and the environment e.g. people in or near the project	

				sites could be exposed if insufficiently protected or trained to prevent health impacts; it is challenging for the project to monitor the effective use of PPE; pesticides are very likely to reach people not targeted by the project, who may suffer grave health consequences because they are not trained to use the inputs responsibly.	
ESS 2.4.2 Could the project include activities related to management or disposal of waste pesticides, obsolete pesticides or pesticide contaminated waste materials?	Follow the guidance in the FAO Environmental Management Toolkit for obsolete pesticides.	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. The project will not encourage the use of pesticides.
ESS 2.5 Could the project lead to the use and/or management of fertilizers?	* Follow FAO International Code of Conduct for Sustainable Use and Management of Fertilizers (the Fertilizer Code); * Practice Integrated Soil Fertility Management. Utilize the Protocol for the assessment of Sustainable Soil Management to assess impact on soil health; * Include (synthetic and organic) fertilizer and soil nutrient quality analysis according to the standard protocols and guidelines	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Use of fertilizers is managed in the most efficient and sustainable way. O **Moderate impact**: Project conducted relevant analyses (e.g. soil analysis) and identified options to replace polluting fertilizers with alternatives. Ad/or the adaptive capacity of the environment is high, which should reduce any potential pollution problems. O **High impact**: Project is expected to use considerable inputs of fertilizers, and has	Low risk. Chemicals and fertilizers will not be promoted throughout the project.

	provided by the International Network on Fertilizer Quality.			not yet conducted relevant analyses (e.g. soil analysis) to determine whether fertilizer use could be more sustainable. Therefore, the project may have the potential to cause considerable pollution and resulting impacts on biodiversity and human health.	
ESS 2.6 Could the project activities lead to the one-time or continuing increase in the release of pollutants with potentially negative impacts on air quality, the environment and/or local communities?[43]	* Examples include black carbon, methane and other short-lived climate pollutants, nitrous oxide, ozone-depleting substances, petroleum hydrocarbons, Persistent Organic Pollutants, heavy metals, large amounts of agroplastics etc; * Follow the Voluntary Guidelines for Sustainable Soil Management; * Use performance levels and measures that are specified in national law or that are in accordance with good international practice, whichever are more stringent; * Avoid and minimize significant emissions in previously polluted or degraded areas.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Pollutants may be released. However, any environmental and social impacts are expected to be non-existent or negligible e.g. the receiving environment has high absorptive capacity or concentrations would not lead to health risks. O **Moderate impact**: Pollutants may be released, either routinely or by accident. The receiving environment is sensitive and/or pollutants may have negative impacts on local communities, even if small. However, treatment systems are proven and verified and regulatory controls are strict. O **High impact**: Project involves release of routine	Low risk. Chemicals and fertilizers will not be promoted throughout the project.

[43] For the purposes of this thematic area, the term "pollution" refers to both hazardous and non-hazardous pollutants in the solid, liquid, or gaseous phases, and includes other components such as pests, pathogens, thermal discharge to water, greenhouse gas emissions, ozone-depleting substances, nutrient pollution, nuisance odours, noise, vibration, radiation, electromagnetic energy, and the creation of potential visual impacts including light.

				pollutants, and negative environmental or social impacts could be difficult to manage. E.g.: the proposed treatment system is not proven in local circumstances; non-routine incidents have not been planned for; receiving environment is sensitive; negative impacts on local communities are likely.	
ESS 2.7 Could the project lead to: **Significant generation and handling of wastes (e.g. plastic, wastewater, pesticide-related waste, veterinary waste or animal residue);** **AND/OR:** **The use of hazardous substances and materials that may have negative environmental impacts?**[44]		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Any generation and handling of wastes is expected to be minimal, and NO use of hazardous substances and materials is foreseen. O **Moderate impact**: Project will lead to significant handling/use of wastes and/or some use of hazardous substances and materials. Regulatory controls are strong in project sites, or negative impacts on the environment can otherwise be avoided. O **High impact**: Project will generate or handle considerable amounts of wastes and/or hazardous	Low risk. The project will not lead to significant generation of waste.

[44] FAO activities will not support the manufacture, trade, or use of chemicals or hazardous substances that are subject to international bans, restrictions or phase outs. Exceptions will only be permitted for acceptable purposes as defined under international conventions or protocols (e.g. the Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer; the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and Their Disposal; the Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent Procedure for Certain Hazardous Chemicals and Pesticides in International Trade; the Stockholm Convention on Persistent Organic Pollutants; and the Minamata Convention on Mercury).

				substances and materials. Regulatory controls are weak or not in place	
ESS 3 - Climate change and disaster risk reduction: **Could the project positively or negatively affect people's vulnerability to climate change?**	GUIDANCE NOTE	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. Restoring the productive capacity and ecosystem quality of forest landscape will be vital for climate resilience of forest dependent communities, of downstream coastal ecosystems and for coral reef protection.
ESS 3.1 Could the project activities negatively affect communities not targeted by the project that rely on the same natural resources? E.g. a community that depends on the same river downstream.		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: No reason to assume the activities would worsen the impacts of climate change on their livelihoods. O **Moderate impact**: Project may affect ability of non-targeted communities to use natural resources that are under pressure due to climate change. The potential impacts are known and manageable. O **High impact**: Project may affect non-targeted communities and their ability to use natural resources that are under pressure due to climate change. Potential impacts are unknown or the known impacts are challenging to manage	Low risk. The project indicates that integrated watershed management and ecosystem-based approaches to prevent potential harm. These measures aim to reduce soil erosion and water pollution.
ESS 3.2 Could beneficiaries develop dependencies on climate-		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely	O **Low impact**: Climate-related resources or services promoted by the project	The project aims to prevent dependency on its resources by building local capacity through training in sustainable practices.

adaptation resources or services promoted by the project that may be hard to maintain after project completion (due to factors such as cost, expertise, etc.)?			O Highly likely	could lead to dependencies after project completion, but it is reasonable to assume that stakeholders can overcome these on their own accord. O **Moderate impact**: Climate-related resources or services promoted by the project could lead to dependencies after the project is completed, but a sustainable exit strategy is agreed (e.g. the government will continue to fund updates to a weather information app). O **High impact**: Climate-related resources or services promoted by the project could lead to significant dependencies, or the dependencies are difficult to overcome without dedicated support.	It also establishes financial mechanisms, such as a Forest Ecosystem Services Levy and involvement in carbon markets, to create ongoing revenue streams. Additionally, the project encourages partnerships with the private sector and community-driven initiatives to integrate climate-smart practices into local businesses and livelihoods. These efforts are designed to ensure that communities can maintain the project's benefits independently after its completion.
ESS 4 - Decent work: **Could the project positively or negatively affect working conditions, generate employment or provide work-related training or technical support?**		X Yes O No O TBD	N/A	N/A	
ESS 4.1 Could the project lead to work-related training, cash for work, or	* These activities are positive if they contribute to decent work. They can cause unintended harm if the	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project will only provide training or policy advice, or if the project does generate employment, only	The project is expected to positively impact working conditions, generate employment, and provide work-related training and technical support. It will

will the project employ people?	regulatory context and working conditions in the project sites are poor and not properly addressed in the project. Examples of weak regulatory contexts include not meeting national labour laws or international commitments or with such high levels of informality that national regulations do not apply or cannot be monitored; * Poor working conditions may include discriminatory practices, high gender inequality and the lack of equal opportunities, denial of freedom of association and collective bargaining, no respect of minimum wages or low pay below the national poverty line, discrimination of migrant workers or specific groups of marginalized workers, etc.			positive impacts on working conditions are foreseen. The project will ensure the enforcement of national labour laws or international commitments regarding working conditions for any employment it generates. O **Moderate impact**: Project will lead to (cash for) work for a small number of people. It may need to take extra care to follow international commitments as regulatory controls are not strictly enforced in the project area, e.g. levels of informality are so high that national regulations are not applied or cannot be monitored. O **High impact**: Project will lead to work for a medium or large number of people, or hire various types of workers (e.g. direct, contracted, community workers, migrants, primary supply workers, or civil servants). Workers in the project area and sector are particularly vulnerable to negative effects of poor working conditions: e.g. they are not (fully) covered by labour law and discouraged from raising (collective) concerns; the employment conditions in the project area and sector	create approximately 16,000 incremental rural employment opportunities in areas such as forest landscape restoration and agroforestry, with both part-time and full-time positions. Additionally, the project will offer extensive training programs to improve local capacities in sustainable practices, benefitting not only direct participants but also the broader community.

				typically do not meet the minimum principles of equality of opportunity and treatment; and there are known cases of discrimination, including issues related to recruitment and hiring, compensation (including wages and benefits), working conditions, terms of employment, etc.	
ESS 4.2 Could the project use, or operate in, a value chain where there have been reports of forced labour? Or will it work in areas with increased risk of forced labour e.g. crisis, fragile and conflict-affected area or a host community for internal migration or refugees?	Note that risks of forced labour may be increased for projects located in remote places or where migrant workers are employed.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project does not lead to employment (e.g. only provides training). O **Moderate impact**: Project will lead to work. However, FAO is confident that it can effectively monitor implementing partners' compliance with FESM ESS4 guidance. O **High impact**: Project will lead to work and additional monitoring efforts may be needed to ensure partners' compliance with ESS4 guidance, and/or the project involves various types of workers (e.g. direct, contracted, community workers, migrants, primary supply workers, or civil servants).	The project does not operate in value chains with reported issues of forced labor, nor does it specifically target areas known for high risks of forced labor, such as crisis or conflict-affected regions, or areas hosting large numbers of internally displaced persons or refugees. The focus is on sustainable development in relatively stable regions, primarily in rural and forested areas of Fiji.
ESS 4.3 Could the project operate in a context or agricultural value chains		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely	O **Low impact**: Project activities (e.g. policy advice) should have minimum or no	Low risk. The project does not plan to operate in value chains. Child labour will not occur in the project.

where there have been recent documented reports of child labour?			O Highly likely	impact on household distribution of tasks, and may even reduce the number of cases of child labour. O **Moderate impact**: Project activities may affect household distribution of tasks (e.g. restricting access to school). Project can and will take measures to mitigate negative impacts that could otherwise lead to child labour. O **High impact**: Project activities could (in)directly restrict children's access to school or negatively affect their health including mental health. What is more, national legislation does not provide for agriculture or small-scale farming as an occupational sector, or legislation to prevent child labour is not well enforced in the project sites.	
ESS 4.4 Could the project: (a) operate in a sector, area or value chain where producers and other agricultural workers are typically exposed to significant occupational and safety risks, and/or (b) promote or use technologies or practices that pose Occupational	* OSH risks in agriculture might include: dangerous machinery and tools, hazardous chemicals, toxic or allergenic agents, carcinogenic substances or agents, parasitic diseases, transmissible animal diseases, confined spaces, ergonomic hazards, extreme temperatures, and contact	X Yes O No TBD	O XUnlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project will only improve occupational safety and health and will not promote or use any technologies or practices that pose risks for farmers, other rural workers or rural populations in general. O **Moderate impact**: Project will promote or use new technologies or practices that	The project does not appear to operate in sectors, areas, or value chains where producers and other agricultural workers are typically exposed to significant occupational and safety risks. It also does not promote or use technologies or practices that pose specific Occupational Safety and Health (OSH) risks to farmers or rural populations. Instead, the project emphasizes sustainable and safe agricultural practices, enhancing the

Safety and Health (OSH) risks to farmers, other rural workers or rural populations in general?	with dangerous and poisonous animals, reptiles and insects; * Psychosocial hazards might include violence and harassment; * Awareness raising and capacity development activities on the needed gender-responsive OSH measures should be included in project design to ensure workers' safety and health, including for informal workers; * Complementary measures can include measures to reduce risks and protect workers, as well as children working or playing on the farm, such as alternatives to pesticides, improved handling and storage of pesticides, etc.			pose OSH risks e.g. new equipment or hazardous chemicals/pesticides. Or, in the project area, workers are typically exposed to significant OSH risks. E.g. regulation is known to be weak or not strictly enforced; there is evidence linking illness or death to exposure to OSH risk; health services are not equipped to deal with common OSH issues. O **High impact**: Project activities may cause significant OSH risks e.g. introduce heavy machinery or inputs/equipment with unknown and potentially high risks, while operating in a sector, area, or value chain where workers are regularly exposed to significant OSH risks. Regulation in the sector and project area is nonexistent or extremely weak and/or there is evidence linking illness or death to exposure to OSH risk through similar activities.	resilience of local communities without introducing new health hazards.
ESS 5 – Community Health, Safety and Security: **Could the project positively or negatively affect health, safety and**		O Yes XNo O TBD	N/A	N/A	The project is expected to have a positive impact on the health, safety, and livelihoods of communities, including women, men, youth, and marginalized or disadvantaged groups. It aims to improve food security and safety through diversified livelihoods, increased cash

livelihoods of communities (including women, men, youth, as well as marginalized, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups)?					income, and enhanced resilience to natural disasters. Additionally, the project promotes gender empowerment and inclusivity, ensuring equitable participation and benefits for women, and addresses power imbalances in community decision-making processes. Adverse impacts on health, safety and livelihoods of involved and affected communities are anticipated and avoided. Community exposure to health risks is not envisaged, however occupational health and safety (OHS) risks need to be considered with regards to afforestation/reforestation activities. OHS risks will be dealt with by providing training and protective measures and gear as well as provisions for protecting workers as needed.
ESS 5.1 Could the project expose communities to health risks such as: pollution and the contamination of land, resources or food; biological hazards, including transboundary animal diseases; incidents of soil-borne, water-borne, vector-borne diseases, zoonotic diseases, food-borne diseases; the availability of drinking water; injuries; and detrimental	Note that where endemic disease (e.g., malaria) exists in the project areas, it should explore ways to improve environmental conditions that could minimize the incidence of these diseases.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Health risks to communities and their livestock due to the project's activities are expected to be non-existent or negligible. E.g. project will not implement activities on the ground, or communities are already familiar with these minimal health risks and capable of avoiding them. O **Moderate impact**: Project areas have past evidence of significant negative impacts of similar activities on human or animal health. However, regulation or containment of	Low risk. Professional safety and risk will be regulated with all service providers working with the project.

effects on mental health and well-being?				these impacts has been shown to be effective. O **High impact**: Project areas have evidence of recent significant negative impacts of similar activities on human or animal health. Regulation is not strictly enforced in the foreseen project areas or the monitoring of partners' compliance requires extra care.	
ESS 5.2 Could the project jeopardize the availability, accessibility and/or affordability of safe and nutritious foods that contribute to healthy and balanced diets? E.g. by sourcing foods from polluted sources.		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Risks of the project negatively affecting dietary practices and/or the existence of toxins and pathogens in food are expected to be non-existent or negligible. O **Moderate impact**: Project may negatively affect dietary practices and/or the existence of toxins and pathogens in food. However, risks to healthy and balanced diets are known and can be mitigated. O **High impact**: Project's scale and duration may negatively affect dietary practices and/or increase toxins and pathogens in food. Risks to healthy and balanced diets are not well understood and targeted communities may be vulnerable to these risks.	Low risk. The project is not expected to jeopardize the availability, accessibility, or affordability of safe and nutritious foods. Instead, it aims to improve food security through diversified livelihoods, agroforestry productivity, and enhanced resilience of housing and natural infrastructure. Additionally, the project focuses on safe food and water security, indicating measures are in place to ensure that food sources remain safe and nutritious.

ESS 5.3 Could the project expose communities to hazardous materials or equipment e.g. agricultural machinery accessible to the community, design or construction of new infrastructure, changes to existing infrastructure, transportation, or storage?		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project will not implement infrastructure that poses risks to communities, or lead to disposal of hazardous materials. O **Moderate impact**: Project may introduce agricultural machinery accessible to the community; design, construct or change infrastructure; or lead to disposal of hazardous materials e.g. through transportation or storage. Related health risks to communities are well known and well regulated in the foreseen project areas. O **High impact**: Project may introduce agricultural machinery accessible to the community; design, construct or change infrastructure; or lead to disposal of hazardous materials e.g. through transportation or storage. Related health risks to communities are not well known or regulated, and may be significant: e.g. activities could lead to loss of life or significant environmental damage if not properly managed.	Low risk. The project will not expose communities to hazardous materials or equipment, including agricultural machinery, new or existing infrastructure, transportation, or storage.
ESS 5.4 Could the project lead to an influx of project workers?		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: No significant influx of project workers foreseen, meaning non-existent or negligible impacts	Low risk. the project will not lead to an influx of project workers.

				on community dynamics, health and natural resources. O **Moderate impact**: Project-related labour influx may alter community dynamics, increase risk of communicable diseases or sexual exploitation and abuse, or increase pressure on natural resources. However, the affected population has recent experience of successfully managing labour influx and mitigating associated risks. O **High impact**: Project-related labour influx may be significant. The affected population does not have previous experience with labour influx; or previous experience has negatively affected community dynamics e.g. increase prevalence of communicable diseases or sexual exploitation and abuse, or put greater pressure on scarce natural resources.	
ESS 5.5 Could the project have impacts on ecosystems and ecosystem services that may result in direct and indirect health and safety risks to communities? E.g. loss of natural buffer that		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project foreseen to have minimal impact on ecosystems/ecosystem services. Negative impacts on the health and safety of communities likely to be nonexistent or negligible.	Low risk. The project is designed to improve ecosystem resilience through diversification of livelihoods, agroforestry productivity, and enhanced natural infrastructure. These measures aim to enhance, rather than harm, ecosystem services and reduce risks such as flooding. Therefore, it is unlikely that the project will have negative impacts on ecosystems

increases the risk of flooding.				O **Moderate impact**: Project could have impacts on ecosystems/ecosystem services that, in turn, could negatively affect the health and safety of communities in the direct proximity of project sites. However, similar projects have shown that impacts can be mitigated or offset. O **High impact**: Project could have impacts on ecosystems/ecosystem services that, in turn, could have irreversible or diverse impacts on the health and safety of communities.	or ecosystem services that would increase health and safety risks to communities.
ESS 5.6 Could the project construct buildings or infrastructure; and/or be implemented in an area of increased vulnerability to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding, forest fire?		O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Impact on risk of emergency events is expected to be very small e.g. the project will not implement activities in areas that are known to be vulnerable to (natural) disasters, will not lead to removal of vegetation cover (risk of landslides), significant construction etc. O **Moderate impact**: Project may implement activities in areas that are known to be vulnerable to (natural) disasters, however any damage due to project activities would be reversible.	Low risk. The project will not construct buildings or infrastructure, nor will it be implemented in an area of increased vulnerability to earthquakes, subsidence, landslides, erosion, flooding, or forest fire.

				O **High impact**: Project may implement activities in areas that are vulnerable to (natural) disasters, and potential damage due to project activities could be irreversible.	
ESS 5.7 Could the project lead to the engagement of security personnel to protect facilities and property or to support project activities?	Note that FAO will take action (or require appropriate parties to take action) to prevent any recurrence of abuses and/or reprisals against individuals and communities. When necessary, FAO will report unlawful and abusive acts to the appropriate authorities.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Small operation in stable environment. O **Moderate impact**: Project requires the introduction of a moderately-sized security force. The force is well trained, and protocols are in place. O **High impact**: Larger operation in unstable environment. Project cannot proceed without security personnel. No history of security personnel employed in previous projects, and no locally trained security personnel available. Risk of conflict with local communities is high.	The project will not lead to the engagement of security personnel to protect facilities and property or to support project activities.
ESS 6 - Gender equality and prevention of gender-based violence (GBV): **Could the project positively or negatively affect people based on their gender, through activities or policy?**		X Yes X O No O TBD	N/A	N/A	The project positively impacts gender equality by boosting women's participation in forest management and decision-making, improving their access to resources, and integrating gender considerations into policies. It also supports women through capacity-building and aims to develop gender-

					sensitive policies addressing their specific needs.
ESS 6.1 Could the project lead to increased gender-based discrimination or inequalities?	For example through: * Not assessing social identities intersecting with gender (such as age, minorities and disabilities), which can exacerbate inequality); * Not addressing gender dimensions when providing policy advice; * Increasing the work burden for women; * Perpetuating women's poor labour conditions or displacing work currently carried out by women to men; * Using approaches that are not culturally and socially contextualized nor accepted; * Engaging implementing partners/service providers that are not gender-sensitive; * Excluding or failing to engage women in decision-making and planning processes; * Overlooking the specific constraints women face in gaining access to resources (natural and productive) and services (advisory and financial); * Not engaging/sensitizing men and boys in efforts to address gender inequalities and women's empowerment;	O X Yes O No O TBD	X Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project areas do not experience high levels of gender inequalities or gender-based discrimination, and activities are not expected to increase these. However, the project may inadvertently perpetuate existing gender inequalities, if it does not properly identify and address gender-related concerns. O **Moderate impact**: Specific risks are well understood by the project team and implementing partners. However, the project may inadvertently increase or perpetuate existing gender inequalities if it does not properly identify and address gender-related concerns. O **High impact**: Significant increases in gender-based discrimination or inequalities are foreseen and social risks are not well known at this time.	The project is designed to reduce gender-based discrimination and inequalities rather than increase them. It aims to enhance women's participation in forest management, improve their access to resources, and integrate gender considerations into policies. By addressing cultural barriers and promoting gender equality, the project seeks to empower women and create more equitable conditions.

	* Overlooking women's major capacities and their skills (leadership/negotiation/technical) and knowledge gaps.				
ESS 6.2 Could this project operate in a context with high risks of gender-based violence and discrimination against women and girls, such as in conflict-affected situations, camps or shelters, areas where women's mobility is restricted, or with high numbers of poor female-headed households or unaccompanied minors?[45]	* Note that any person can be the perpetrator of GBV; * Refer to the GBV assessment conducted by the national UN GBV cluster if available, and consider these guiding questions: What are the socio-cultural factors affecting the groups who will directly or indirectly benefit or be affected by FAO's intervention/response? (age, gender, health and wealth status, disabilities etc..); What are the gender and other intersecting factors affecting the target groups that might render them more susceptible to GBV (high vulnerabilities among single female headed households, children, ethnic groups, elderly, disabled and refugees)?; * Examples of GBV include: * * Increased violence in the household as women are the sole recipients of inputs and services;	X Yes O No O TBD	O Unlikely X Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Foreseen project sites do not suffer high levels of gender-based violence and gender inequalities. Implementing partners DO NOT have direct contact with women and children. O **Moderate impact**: Increased risks of GBV due to project activities are foreseen. These are well understood by the project team and implementing partners and can be mitigated e.g. by organizing separate distribution points for women and girls, selecting venues and time acceptable for women when planning training and demonstration sessions, and considering the socio-cultural context that could reduce risks of GBV. O **High impact**: Significantly increased risks of GBV due to project activities are foreseen. Exact risks are not well known	Low risk. The project will promote gender equality and addressing cultural barriers, which suggests it may be well-positioned to operate in contexts with high risks of gender-based violence and discrimination. Issues related to gender equity are addressed in Project design/activities and the Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan (GAP). The GRM is established as the platform whereby grievances related to the Project ESMF, including gender-based violence related issues, can be addressed. The GAP makes provisions to establish a Gender Working /Reference Group as a consistent mechanism for ad hoc inputs in review processes. This platform will have a 'gender quality assurance' function and be a point for dedicated project engagement with outputs requiring reviewing from a gender perspective and/or gender mainstreaming (e.g.) policy revisions, training materials, guidelines, TORs (eg on PPPs) etc. Some activities, including products developed, will require more representation from local and grassroots women. The role of the gender

[45] GBV may include sexual, physical, mental and economic harm inflicted in public or in private. It also includes threats of violence, coercion and manipulation. This can take many forms such as intimate partner violence, sexual violence, child marriage, female genital mutilation and so-called 'honour crimes' (UNHCR). It also implies to exclude certain socio-economic and ethnic groups from project's activities and ignoring their specific needs and priorities.

	* * Violence against women and girls residing in refugee camps; * * Gender insensitivity among project partners and project team; * * People excluded from activities (i.e. training and distribution of inputs) by other members of their communities, based on their gender, age or ethnic group; * * Not allowing women and youth to participate in negotiation tables around climate change and planning humanitarian assistance; * * Giving access at night to irrigation for women exposing them to increased risks of GBV; * * Excluding men and boys from project activities, raising competition within households and communities; * * Arrangement of refugee camps that might increase risks of violence against women and girls, as well as against men and boys; * * Water scarcity in pastoral communities creating competition among poor people with limited resources.			at this time and could be difficult to mitigate.	working group is to call on that need so that core members will involve different women from different areas and geographies or expertise depending on need.
ESS 6.3 How is the project planning to address Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) risks?	Note that SEA would refer to misconduct by FAO employees, or any other personnel associated with the	N/A	N/A	N/A	Preventing SEAH is envisaged by engaging with women through the duration of the project – more specifically, stakeholder consultations prior and during project

(Describe risk mitigation measures in the comments column).[46, 47]	work of FAO, against beneficiaries and vulnerable populations, meaning any person who benefits or may benefit from FAO assistance, including any vulnerable member of the affected population (not limited to women, children, elderly, disabled, ethnic minorities, etc.);				implementation will include awareness raising and stakeholder-differentiated understanding of SEAH related risks and mitigation measures. The Grievance Redress Mechanism provides an accessible and inclusive survivor-centred and gender-responsive grievance redress mechanisms with specific procedures for SEAH including confidential reporting with safe and ethical documenting of such cases, that indicate when and where to report incidents, and what follow-up actions will be undertaken. The Project uses FAO training[48] and guidance for Project personnel and contractors/consultants, as well as country-specific information and toolkits as awareness raising for sensitization about violence against women (VAW) in

[46] "Sexual exploitation" means any actual or attempted abuse of a position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially or politically from the sexual exploitation of another. Similarly, the term "sexual abuse" means the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

[47] Examples of risk mitigation measures:

* * Budgetary support to Prevention of SEA (PSEA) such as for hiring PSEA expertise, raising awareness in the local communities etc;
* * Ensure all project staff completed the mandatory FAO course on SEA before starting their work (in particular frontline workers e.g. M&E personnel, personnel involved in the distribution of inputs and/or cash; drivers, security guards supporting the project implementation etc);
* * Assess PSEA capacity of project IPs before engaging with them and build their capacity accordingly;
* * Sensitize project staff working on stakeholder engagement (in particular at community level) on how to communicate effectively on SEA (i.e. language and means of communication);
* * Ensuring project beneficiaries/local community know how to submit complaints on SEA issues (i.e. OIG FAO hotline);
* * Make use of inter-agency/joint Community Based Complaint Mechanism and SEA referral pathways (when applicable);
* * Sensitize project staff on the importance of confidentiality when dealing with SEA matters.
* For more information, see the ESS 6 Guidance Note and the SEA section in the GBV assessment conducted by the GBV sub-cluster/sub-sector in the project country if available;
* Stored data, including documents and material related to SEA allegations, should only be accessible to authorized persons and must be stored safely to prevent accidental disclosure. Options for secure data storage include locked filing cabinets; digital storage on a secure server, computer or laptop; and official cloud storage.

[48] FAO training materials are available for Achieving Gender Equality in FAO's Work; Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority; and Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA).

					the local context. Project SEAH risk management plans are developed and include specific requirements (protocols) to support the prevention of VAW associated with any project activities or personnel, as well as supporting reporting and handling of VAW. Specific to the project field activities, risks associated with women's safety when travelling to meetings, carrying out work related to land management and nurseries, and in relation to PPPs that increase women's status and expose them to domestic or intimate partner violence will be proactively addressed and monitored. The Project will ensure that all concerns and/or incidents will be reported to the PSEA focal point and the FAO Office of the Inspector General, as appropriate. The Project PMU will also have a gender specialist with PSEA expertise. The Project Grievance Redress Mechanism will include avenues for female complainants to interface with female case officers, and provide guidance for safe as well as anonymous reporting for all, safeguarding women from intimidation, harassment and violence and also for any unexpected or undue impacts from project interventions. The GRM provisions will be reviewed by the Gender Working/ Reference Group and socialized based on their advice, overseen by the Project Gender Specialist. Provisions will be made for special intervention if grievance log patterns reflect gender

					issues during the Project period.
ESS 7 - Land tenure, displacement, and resettlement: **Could the project, through activities or policy, positively or negatively affect areas where people live or their access to locations they need for their livelihood? Note that this includes tenure rights that are not formally recognized.[49]**	GUIDANCE NOTE	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. The project will not potentially affect land tenure, displacement, or resettlement. It focuses on addressing land tenure issues and the complexities of customary leadership, but does not imply any direct changes to land ownership, relocation, or access to locations necessary for livelihoods. Exercise of eminent domain and any other permanent or temporary, and economic and physical displacement due to involuntary resettlement will not be supported under the project.
ESS 7.1 Could the project activities lead to voluntary, temporary or permanent, full or partial physical displacement of people in the project area? I.e. people may be living in the project sites and be asked to move.[50]	Follow the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project will only provide policy advice and/or capacity building and will not implement activities on the ground. O **Moderate impact**: Project is or will be fully aware of any people living in the project areas, whether they have formal land rights or not. Any physical displacements would be temporary and compensated for by the project. Any permanent displacement would impact no more than ten households or businesses.	Low risk. The project activities will not lead to voluntary, temporary, or permanent physical displacement of people.

[49] Be sure to take into account the use rights of people who may only seasonally be present in a landscape; for example, herders who may have traditional arrangements with farmers. Note that access to land includes use rights, rights-of-way, easements, riparian/irrigation rights, public access, footpaths, gleaning rights, forest and wood product permits, others.

[50] Including people without legally recognized claims to the land they are currently living on.

				O **High impact**: Project can be expected to physically displace more than ten households or businesses, or cannot guarantee that forced evictions will not occur.	
ESS 7.2 Has there to the best of your knowledge been prior displacement in anticipation of the project?	If yes, contact the ESM Unit for guidance ESM-unit@fao.org.	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	There has not been prior displacement in anticipation of the project.
ESS 7.3 Could any of the project activities be expected to lead, even unintentionally, to the loss of ownership of, use of, or access rights to resources (agricultural or livestock or fish production, forest products, soil, land and water resources, grazing areas, etc.)?* I.e. people may be using the project sites for their livelihoods and lose access. ***In case this affects Indigenous Peoples, see also ESS 8.**	* Examples include: * * Loss of land and access to land or natural resources needed to support livelihoods; * * Loss of jobs and sources of livelihoods; * * Reduced access to markets; * * Dislocation from social networks. * Follow the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project will not implement activities on the ground. OR in the unlikely event the project would result in loss of access to resources and/or livelihood opportunities, this would have minimal negative effects on stakeholders and could be quickly and easily mitigated and offset within the project scope. O **Moderate impact**: Project may lead to modest potential losses in terms of access to resources and/or livelihood opportunities and loss of ownership for a small number of persons. O **High impact**: Project-related economic displacement may lead to significant loss of ownership, use, or access rights to resources and/or lead to wider consequences such as	The project activities will not lead, even unintentionally, to the loss of ownership, use, or access rights to resources such as agricultural, livestock, fish production, forest products, soil, land, water resources, or grazing areas.

				community unrest; disruptions to human mobility including increased risks of involuntary immobility; conflict and security threats; impoverishment and/or food insecurity.	
ESS 8 - Indigenous Peoples **Could the project positively or negatively affect Indigenous Peoples, through activities or policy?**	GUIDANCE NOTE	O Yes O No X TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. The project is designed to positively affect Indigenous Peoples through its activities and policy. It aims to incentivize sustainable and climate-resilient practices among customary landowners and farmers, to enhance ecosystem resilience and diversify agriculture. This approach is intended to increase income, food security, and overall well-being for Indigenous communities. If necessary, an FPIC will be conducted at project start-up (refer to Risk Mitigation Matrix)
ESS 8.1 Could the project be located on or near lands and territories owned or claimed by Indigenous Peoples?	If yes: * Plan for a Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) Process as this is required; * Include FPIC expertise in design/project team; * Please contact the ESM/PSUI unit as needed.	O Yes O No X TBD	N/A	N/A	Almost 90 percent of the land is owned by indigenous Fijians. The project aims to incentivize more sustainable and climate-resilient practices by customary landowners, farmers and the private sectors, addressing compounded impacts of climate change and aggravating poor planning and management practices.
ESS 8.2 Could the project potentially negatively affect Indigenous Peoples, through its activities or policy advice – e.g. effects on their human rights, lands, natural resources,	If moderate or high-risk: * Plan for an FPIC Process as this is required; * Include FPIC expertise in design/project team; * Please contact the ESM/PSUI unit as needed.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project would not implement activities on the ground, but only provide policy advice or training. O **Moderate impact**: Project activities could lead to negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples. However,	Low risk. The project aims to develop community led climate resilient agroforestry activities that will not only help them enhance ecosystem resilience and generate climate benefits but also diversify agriculture and livelihoods for increased income, food security and well-being.

territories, and traditional livelihoods?				risks are well understood by the project team and implementing partners. O **High impact**: Project may lead to significant negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples.	
ESS 8.3 Could the project use genetic resources or associated knowledge from Indigenous Peoples for research or commercial purposes?	* Refer to the Nagoya Protocol and the Convention on Biological Diversity introduction to access and benefit-sharing; * If you answered the question with "yes": * * Note that IPs must be informed of their rights under national and international law; * * Plan for an FPIC Process as this is required; * * Include FPIC expertise in design/project team; * * Contact PSUI and ITPGRFA as needed.	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. The project will not use genetic resources or associated knowledge from Indigenous Peoples for research or commercial purposes.
ESS 8.4 Could the project negatively affect Indigenous Peoples' access to resources upon which their livelihoods depend ("economic displacement")?	* Follow the Voluntary Guidelines on the Responsible Governance of Tenure of Land, Fisheries and Forests in the Context of National Food Security; * Adhere to FAO's Policy on Indigenous and Tribal Peoples.	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Project will not implement activities on the ground. OR in the unlikely event the project would result in loss of access to resources and/or livelihood opportunities, this would have minimal negative effects on stakeholders and could be quickly and easily mitigated and offset within the project scope.	Low risk, the project will not negatively affect Indigenous Peoples' access to resources upon which their livelihoods depend or cause economic displacement.

				O **Moderate impact**: Project could lead to modest potential losses in terms of access to resources and/or livelihood opportunities and loss of ownership for a small number of persons. O **High impact**: Project-related economic displacement could lead to significant loss of ownership of, use of, or access rights to resources and/or lead to wider consequences such as: community unrest; disruptions to human mobility including increased risks of involuntary immobility; conflict and security threats; impoverishment and/or food insecurity.	
ESS 9 – Cultural Heritage: **Could the project positively or negatively affect tangible or intangible cultural heritage, through activities or policy?**[51]	GUIDANCE NOTE	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. The project will always respect cultural heritage and will not negatively affect tangible or intangible cultural heritage through its activities or policy.
ESS 9.1 Could the project through activities or policy advice negatively affect places, objects,	* For example, the project may affect communities' lands, natural resources, territories, water sources,	O Yes X No O TBD	O Unlikely O Likely O Highly likely	O **Low impact**: Negligible or no negative impacts foreseen from the project on cultural heritage.	Low risk. The project will not negatively affect places, objects, values, or knowledge and practices of cultural

51 Intangible cultural heritage refers to values or traditions, practices and knowledge. It includes living expressions inherited from our ancestors and passed on to our descendants, such as oral traditions, performing arts, social practices, rituals, festive events, knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe or the knowledge and skills to produce traditional crafts.

values or knowledge and practices of cultural importance to communities?[52]	sites of memory, structures or objects with historical, cultural, artistic, scientific, (oral) traditional or religious values and rituals, livelihoods, knowledge, social fabric, traditions, governance systems, cultural expressions, performing arts. "Cultural expressions" are those expressions that result from the creativity of individuals, groups and societies, and that have cultural content; * Screening for this safeguard will be done with full and effective participation of local people. Where a project or programme proposes to use cultural heritage, including knowledge, innovations or practices of local communities for the benefit of the project or for commercial purposes, communities should be informed of their rights under national law, the scope and nature of the proposed use, and the potential consequences. Documented consent should be obtained.			O **Moderate impact**: Any negative impacts would have only limited effect on cultural heritage and could be directly mitigated by the project. O **High impact**: Project could lead to significant negative impacts in one or multiple aspects of cultural physical and/or cultural heritage. These negative impacts would need to be offset.	importance to communities through its activities or policy advice.
ESS 9.2 Could the project lead to excavations, flooding, demolitions, movement of earth, landscape	Screening for this safeguard will be done with full and effective participation of local people. Their documented consent should be obtained.	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. The project will not lead to excavations, flooding, demolitions, movement of earth, landscape transformation, or alteration to social/cultural uses or heritage.

52 Note that in case cultural heritage of Indigenous Peoples is affected by the project, ESS 8 requirements also apply (e.g. FPIC)

transformation, or alteration to social/ cultural uses or heritage?					
ESS 9.3 Could the project lead to the use of tangible and/or intangible forms (e.g. collections, areas, practices, traditional knowledge) of cultural heritage for commercial or other purposes?	Screening for this safeguard will be done with full and effective participation of local people. Their documented consent should be obtained.	O Yes X No O TBD	N/A	N/A	Low risk. The project will not lead to the use of tangible and/or intangible forms of cultural heritage for commercial or other purposes.

APPENDIX 4. SEAH RISK SCREENING MATRIX

Ensuring basic risk mitigation measures are in place ahead of stakeholder engagement	Responsibility	Comments	Link	Source	Comments
Does the AE have a SEAH Policy (or SEAH provisions in another policy)?	AE	Yes. FAO has zero tolerance to SEAH as harassment in all forms is contrary to the United Nations Charter, the FAO Staff Regulations and Rules and the Standards of Conduct for the International Civil Service. In line with Article 1 of the FAO Staff Regulations, the Director-General will ensure high standards of conduct by staff members at all times. This Policy on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority is consistent with the principles and values of the UN system concerning the prevention of harassment and abuse of authority. FAO staff is strongly encouraged to ensure that every possible occasion be taken to reiterate to staff and partners, FAO's anti-harassment policy and zero tolerance for SEAH. Country offices also have a responsibility to distribute 'No Excuse' cards (available in various languages) which include a concise and portable statement of the UN rules and prohibitions related to SEAH and provide contact details for reporting allegations. These are distributed to all deployed personnel, affiliated staff, implementing partners and contractors.	https://www.fao.org/3/br629e/br629e.pdf https://www.un.org/womenwatch/osagi/UN_system_policies/(FAO)Policy_on_the_prevention_of_harassment.pdf		FAO PSEA Framework Standards of Conduct in the International Civil Service Incorporated in 2003 in FAO rules under Manual Section 304 Appendix A FAO applies zero-tolerance towards Sexual Harassment and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse. The relevant FAO policies that address SEAH are Policy on Sexual Harassment Policy on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority Protection from Sexual Exploitation and Sexual Abuse (PSEA) Whistleblower Protection Policy

If the AE has contracted out stakeholder consultations, does that entity have a SEAH Policy (or are they contractually bound to apply the AE's)?	AE/Consultant	Stakeholder consultations were not outsourced.			The FAO policy on sexual exploitation and sexual abuse (PSEA) relevant policies are also binding to person of any contractual status with FAO. As per contracts with external entities, PSEAH measures also apply, in accordance with relevant contractual clauses in agreements. FAO Implementing Partners are now required to sign to confirm that they understand that any SEAH activities committed by their staff in the course of implementing FAO contracts will be automatic grounds for termination and confirm that they have internal reporting procedures etc. UN Agencies, including FAO are now required to undertake an assessment of capacity of implementing partners before entering into partnerships in line with the United Nations Protocol on Allegations of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Involving Implementing Partners. This can also be done through PSEAH networks at the country level.
Does the AE have an employee Code of Conduct?	AE	Yes, FAO disposes of a personnel code of ethical conduct (2021) that provide clear indication about PSEA and Prevention of Sexual Harassment, Abuse of Authority and Harassment.	https://www.fao.org/3/cb4863en/cb4863en.pdf	FAO	FAO has an established Code of Conduct for its employees FAO Code of Ethical Conduct
If the AE has contracted out stakeholder consultations, does that entity have an employee Code of Conduct (or are they contractually	AE/Consultant	Stakeholder consultations were not outsourced			For this project, stakeholder consultations were not outsourced. However, as indicated above, in case a contract/LoA is signed with an implementing partner, FAO is required to undertake an assessment of capacity of implementing partners before entering into partnerships in line with the UNITED NATIONS PROTOCOL ON ALLEGATIONS OF SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE INVOLVING IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS During the assessment proof of evidence of the organization code of conduct is required.

bound to apply the AE's)?					
Have AE employees and consultants conducting stakeholder consultations been trained on preventing SEAH and the Code of Conduct?	AE/Consultant	PSEA and training on Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority training is among the mandatory trainings for all FAO employee	https://www.fao.org/3/nd482en/nd482en.pdf	FAO	PSEA training is among the mandatory trainings for all FAO personnel of all categories. Below is the list of mandatory trainings on SEAH and Ethical Code that all FAO employees must complete at the start of their employment. Prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (PSEA) (Mandatory) Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Abuse of Authority (Mandatory) United Nations Course on Working Together Harmoniously (Mandatory) Ethics and Integrity at the United Nations (Mandatory) FAO Whistleblower Protection Policy (Mandatory) In addition, at Country level the following applies: - FAO Action Plan for the Prevention of SEA and SH/SEA Risk assessment - Training , awareness sessions for staff and IPs on standards code of conducts, PSEA, AAP etc. - Community based complaints mechanisms set up part of FAO interventions

					- Awareness sessions of FAO beneficiaries on their rights and entitlements, including PSEA. - Communication materials in languages, formats that are easily understood, accessible, gender sensitive and culturally appropriate developed for FAO beneficiaries. - PSEA & Awareness sessions for FAO PSEA Focal points and staff at regional level etc.
Does the AE have a grievance mechanism in place in case of early SEAH complaints from stakeholder engagement?	AE	Yes, FAO has a GM in place for early SEAH complaints. FAO has a specific channel for SEA, which goes directly to the Office of the Inspector General. There is a 24h/ 7 days hotline for contacting (comment by ESM)	https://www.fao.org/environmental-social-standards/en/	FAO	SEAH complaints can be lodged through FAO's Office of the Inspector General by email, phone or online using Ethics Point The FAO encourages and facilitates the use of local PSEAH networks wherever available to guide implementation of PSEAH activities
Does the AE have a specialist on staff who can undertake the more advanced assessment in Stage 4 as well as deal with early SEAH complaints if they arise; and if not, does the AE require	AE	FAO confirms that sufficient technical resources and capacities to ensure compliance with GCF requirements regarding SEAH are available (see also the FAO Annual Report on Corporate Policy, Processes and Measures on the Prevention of Harassment, Sexual Harassment and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse,)	https://www.fao.org/3/nk304en/nk304en.pdf	FAO	FAO has PSEA specialists at global level that can support country-level PSEA Focal Points to undertake risk assessments.

budget and /or assistance with this?					
Contextual Level (and Baseline Conditions)	Reference	Comments			
Does the country have laws prohibiting sexual harassment / stalking generally?	National /State law (Gender Assessment)	Yes, the Fijian Employment Relations Act (ERA) 2007 addresses harassment in employment and the workplace (Section 76) and it is included in the 2009 Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission Act [Section 19(2)]. Several laws set out the statutory rights of a victim of sexual harassment to bring a complaint or grievance under the Human Rights Act 1999, Crimes Act, and/or the personal grievance procedure under the ERA [Sections 109-114].			https://webapps.ilo.org/dyn/travail/docs/820/Employment%20Relations%20Promulgation%202007.pdf
Do labor laws prohibit sexual harassment in the workplace?	National /State law (Gender Assessment)	Yes, the Fiji ERA (2007) Sexual harassment in employment and the workplace is covered in the ERA (Section 76) and in the 2009 Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Commission Act [Section 19(2). Civil remedies for sexual harassment in the workplace are available under the ERA [Sections 110(1)(b) and 230] and the Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination Act [Section 50]. In 2007, the government adopted the National Policy on Sexual Harassment in the Workplace,		ADB /PSDI, ILO	Despite progress in policies, laws and regulations, reporting and prosecution of cases of sexual harassment can be weak. There is change in evidence that private corporations and sports leagues are increasingly instituting and enforcing policies to curtail workplace harassment (Government of Fiji, Ministry of Women, Children and Poverty Alleviation 2023). Source: https://www.pacificpsdi.org/publications/read/unlocking-potential-a-gender-inclusive-private-sector-framework-for-the-pacific-report-and-country-assessments

		pursuant to provisions of the ERA [Section 76(3)]. The national policy provides a definition of sexual harassment and a non-exhaustive list of what constitutes sexual harassment; it requires that every employer have an internal written policy and grievance procedure on sexual harassment; and it sets out the statutory rights of a victim of sexual harassment to bring a complaint or grievance under the Human Rights Act 1999, Crimes Act, and/or the personal grievance procedure under the ERA [Sections 109-114]. The Ministry of Employment website (www.employment.gov.fj) provides phone numbers, email addresses, and a contact form that can be used to contact government officials. The Government of Fiji was also the second country to ratify the ILO Convention 190 on violence and harassment in the workplace.			https://webapps.ilo.org/dyn/travail/docs/820/Employment%20Relations%20Promulgation%202007.pdf
Does the country have laws prohibiting intimate partner violence (IPV)?	National /State law (Gender Assessment)	Yes. The Domestic Violence Act (DMV)(no 33 of 2009), supported by Fiji's domestic violence protection order system, was designed to ensure easy application and access to legal protection from domestic violence. Breach of a protection order results in a criminal offense. The DMV Act enables GBV victims to obtain a Domestic Violence Restraining Order (DVRO); the Crimes Decree that defines sexual offences, including expanding the definition of rape; and the Criminal Procedure Decree that establishes that no corroboration is required in sexual offence cases and no evidence of past sexual history is permissible that enables GBV victims to obtain a Domestic Violence Restraining	https://pacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/VAWClinicalGuideline_02122015.pdf	UNFPA	

		Order (DVRO); the Crimes Decree that defines sexual offences, including expanding the definition of rape; and the Criminal Procedure Decree that establishes that no corroboration is required in sexual offence cases and no evidence of past sexual history is permissible.			
What is the prevalence of GBV in the country?	National statistics (Gender Assessment)	GBV takes many forms in the Pacific. Fiji alone has reported that 72 percent of Fijian women experience one or more types of violence in their lifetime from husbands or intimate partners, with 800 cases of GBV reported in 2018 and 834 in 2019 (Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, 2020). The lifetime prevalence of physical and sexual violence amongst women in Fiji is 71%, regardless of perpetrator. In Fiji, intimate partners are the most common perpetrators of GBV (ADB, 2016). The FWCC survey found that 64% of women who have been in an intimate relationship had experienced physical or sexual violence from their partner in their lifetime. One-quarter of women were currently experiencing physical or sexual violence from intimate partner. The prevalence of extreme physical violence (e.g., choking, burning, threatened use or actual use of a weapon) was strikingly high at 44%. The prevalence of intimate partner violence, including extreme violence, is higher in rural areas and amongst iTaukei women. Sexual and physical violence from non-partners is less common in Fiji, but still prevalent; around one-third of women and girls have experienced physical or sexual violence from someone other than a partner since age 15 (FWCC, 2013). In cases of non-partner physical	From FWCC's database for cases of GBV that they receive, including attempted suicide, cited in https://www.wi-her.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/08/USAID-RISE-Gender-and-Environment-Analysis-Fiji.pdf (Marstel-Day and WIHER 2021, 'Gender-Based Violence and REDD+ In Fiji: Tackling Resource Conflict and Addressing Gender-based Risk in the Environment Gender and Environment Analysis, USAID RISE Challenge Activity Grant #2020-Catalyst-GA001, pp. 28-29)	WB and GoF	Control from partners is another common form of GBV, with 69% of women indicating that their partner had used at least one method of control. Around four in ten women are required to seek permission from their partner to seek health services, and just over half of women (57%) must always alert their husbands to their whereabouts. Levels of control of women's mobility are even higher in rural areas. Community sanctioned violence also appears to be acceptable in Fijian society, where 43% of women believe that husbands are justified to use physical violence against their wives in at least one of seven given situations

		and sexual violence, the perpetrator is most often known to the survivor. Non-partner perpetrators of physical and sexual violence are most often male family members, teachers, and female family members.			
What is the legal age a person can marry?	National law	According to the Fiji Department of Justice, any persons who have attained the age of 18, and are intending to get married under the provision of the Marriage Act CAP 50 Section 14, can apply for notice of intention to marry.	https://www.justice.gov.fj/births-death-marriages/marriage-services/#:~:text=Any%20persons%20who%20have%20attained,)%2C%20or%20outside%20the%20registry.	GoF	There is conflicting information on the legal age of marriage in Fiji: Some sources say that valid marriages ages in Fiji are 16 years and above for female and 18 years and above for male
Despite any laws, what is the prevalence of child marriage in the country?	National statistics	Fiji Bureau of Statistics (FBoS) 2022 data shows that about 9 per cent of women aged between 20 and 29 were married off when they were under the age of 18. Girlsnotbrides database states that 4% of women in Fiji aged 20-24 years were married before the age of 18; 0.2% before the age of 15; and for men aged 20-24, and 2% were married before the age of 18. The year of these statistics is not provided.	https://www.girlsnotbrides.org/learning-resources/child-marriage-atlas/regions-and-countries/fiji/		
What is the income level of the country?	World Bank ranking (H, HM, M, LM, L)	Fiji is an upper middle-income country.	https://data.worldbank.org/country/fiji https://thedocs.worldbank.org/e	WB	

			n/doc/c6aceb75bed03729ef4ff9404dd7f125-0500012021/related/mpo-fji.pdf		
Where does the country rank on global gender indices?	UNwomen database Reports / Other	In 2023, global gender gap index for Fiji was 0.65 index. Though Fiji global gender gap index fluctuated substantially in recent years, it tended to increase through 2012 - 2023 period ending at 0.65 index in 2023 (UNWomen); Men and women have a 38%-point gap in labor force participation (2022 – World Bank).	https://data.unwomen.org/country/fiji	UNW	Data has not been identified for: Global Gender Gap Educational Attainment Subindex: Global Gender Gap Health and Survival Subindex: Global Gender Gap Political Empowerment Subindex: Gender Gap Economic Participation and Opportunity Subindex:
Is there a national action plan on GBV and/or sexual harassment?	UNFPA/ National government	Yes. The National Action to Prevent Violence Against All Women and Girls 2023-2028 has five key strategies to comprehensively address violence.	https://sites.google.com/view/fijinap/home	GoF / UNFOA	The five strategies of the Plan are: i) Transformative public education and social norm change ii) Strengthening of equal and respectful relationships iii) Survivor-centered services for survivors of violence iv) Coordinated legal protection for survivors of violence v) Fostering a gender equal society.

Does the country have specialized services for survivors of GBV (at both the national and local level) including women's shelters, adequate medical facilities and facilities which provide psycho-social support?	WHO/ NGOs	The NAP includes a strategy on survivor-centered services. The Fiji Women's Crisis Centre (FWCC) and the Ministry of Health and Medical Services has produced a clinical guideline for "Responding to Intimate Partner Violence and Sexual Violence against Women and Girls".	https://pacific.unfpa.org/sites/default/files/pub-pdf/VAWClinicalGuideline_02122015.pdf	GoF / UNFOA	FWCC is a key provider of support with trained counsellors, 24-hour hotline, emergency assistance and coordination with the government through Department of Social Welfare, Police and the Military. FWCC receives extensive financial support from Australian government.
Is the country currently experiencing war, internal conflict or humanitarian disaster?	National / Media	Fiji is not currently experiencing war, internal conflict, or humanitarian disaster. Climate disasters such as cyclones and hurricanes are frequent threats.	https://www.smartraveller.gov.au/destinations/pacific/fiji	DFAT	
Project Level Risks	Responsibility	Comments			
Are women concentrated in lower paid roles and mostly line-managed and supervised by men?	AE	Yes. According to the data, women in Fiji earn less than half of the income that men do or only about 40%. A 2021 study found that women's representation on SOE Boards grew from 5% in 2015 to 21% in 2020 but declined to 12% in 2021, significantly below the NDP target (PSDI 2021b). Among 50 organizations including SOEs, publicly listed companies and other private organizations, gender parity on boards	https://www.ilo.org ; / http://www.fwrm.org.fj/images/fwrm2017/publications/analysis/Giving-Women-A-Fair-Go-.pdf	ILO; GoF	Fiji, women spend 2.9 times as much time on unpaid domestic and care work than men. The data, expressed as a proportion of time in a day, measure the average time an individual spends on household provision of services for own consumption. In 2016, women in Fiji spent 15.2% of their day and men spent 5.2% of their day on unpaid work. (Data rin 2913-2019).

		was 12%. 27% of boards had no female members and 51% had fewer than 30% female membership (PSDI 2021b). A 2023 report by the Fiji Women's Rights Movement (2023) found that the women's participation on state boards and commissions had decreased between 2020 and 2023. The most recent round of appointments to the boards of state-owned enterprises has seen an increase in the representation of women from 21% to 30% (Government of Fiji, Ministry of Public Enterprise n.d.).			
Are piece-rate systems or other performance-related pay structures used where individuals are in control of how much other workers get paid?	AE	No information available; may be applicable in some sectors and relevant for plantation or nursery businesses – to be researched further for this project			As regards seed collection, seedlings and saplings, a piece rate system may be utilized in current practices, so needs to be investigated to ensure the power dynamics, payment laws and their application are understood. Information on this will be included in project products (guidelines and training materials), to prevent or address potential for exploitative practices, including against women who are engaged in the nursery-related activities.
Will project workers have control over life-changing resources such as the allocation of compensation for displacement or access to basic or highly	AE	Project workers will not be displaced. Opportunities to access resources which may be life-changing if well invested may arise through project activities such as PPP development and roles for communities, including women, through the Community Land Management Plans (CLMP) and associated agreements to be facilitated by the Project.			

sought-after resources?					
Will security personnel be used? Will they be armed?	AE	No, the project will not employ armed security personnel.			
Will there be an influx of male workers into the project area (as opposed to only using local labor)?	AE	The project will promote opportunities for local communities and community-based enterprises in 20 districts; there will be no influx of male workers anticipated with this Project.			
Are local communities poor and lacking basic resources?	AE	Although the poverty rate is higher in rural areas, local communities, by large, do not lack basic resources.			
Will migrant workers be employed by the project, especially those who may not speak the local language? Will they be employed on a temporary or daily basis?	AE	Hiring of workers will be made following the laws and regulations of the Republic of Fiji and workers will need to abide with the FAO code of conduct and FAO policies. The project does not expect to have migrant workers.			

Will project workers all have formal contracts?		Yes, hiring of workers will be made following the laws and regulations (Fiji ERA 2007). These regulate contracts, wages, all the other aspects related to labor. In all cases, workers will need to abide with the FAO code of conduct and FAO policies.			
Will goods frequently be transported over long distances, especially through poor and/or remote communities?	AE	The project will generally not require transport of good and materials over medium distances, but it will source local materials (seeds, agricultural inputs) from some participating poor and/or remote communities.			
Are worksites or project activities based in remote locations? Will worksites be spread out, with isolated spaces?	AE	Worksites may be in remote areas of the country.			
Will project workers live in the community or in worker housing? If in worker housing, is it mixed sex?	AE	Workers will come from local communities and be housed at home.			

Will workers be required to travel long and potentially unsafe distances, and at times of day when transport options may be limited?	AE	Workers will be selected from communities.			
Will the project operate in highly pressurised work environments, with tight seasonal deadlines?	AE	The project may involve some seasonal deadlines but it will not be in highly pressurized work environments.			
Is the project located within a male-dominated sector where female workers will be employed?	AE	All paid work in Fiji is dominated by males however there are laws in place to ensure equal opportunity and equal pay for women. Project employment will be open and accessible to all without any gender restriction (gender targets will be set in GAP).			
Have communities, especially low income/ vulnerable communities, voluntarily raised concerns in	AE	Communities have not raised any raised concerns in relation to SEAH/GBV during consultations.			

relation to SEAH/GBV during consultations?					
Have any changes been made to project design or adaptive management undertaken due to concerns of stakeholders and communities? (If yes, work through this checklist again)	AE	No, stakeholders have not raised concerns.			

APPENDIX 5. SEAH RISK MITIGATION MATRIX

Description of [Potential] Risks	Likelihood (LMH)	Potential Impact (LMH)	Risk Mitigation Measures
Contextual Risks			
National Level Risks • Lack of strong legal system to enforce laws • Low levels of prosecution of SEAH incidents	M	M	• Ensure presence in the PMU of a gender and social expert with extensive experience of local context • Ensure Constant coordination between the project gender and social expert, the National Gender Coordinator, and the Regional Gender Coordinator in FAO. • Work with relevant gender/social welfare Government ministries and departments, other anti-gender-based violence organizations or networks. • Strong enforcement of the AEs SEAH (and/or its equivalent) policy. • Enforcement of SEAH related laws as it pertains to the project/program. • Liaise institutional stakeholders with providers of SEAH training (e.g. UNFPA, UNWOMEN, UNICEF, OCHA among others) to project stakeholders and communities.
Societal Risks • Sociocultural norms that do not challenge SEAH • Low levels of awareness on rights, SEAH etc. • Limited services for SEAH survivors	M	M	• Ensure regular visits to communities and local institutions of the gender and social expert to work with local government or authorities and to sensitize community members on SEAH safeguarding. • Identify champions where applicable to act as allies on SEAH safeguarding. • Partner with a feminist NGO or CSO with experience in implementing conservation/forestry/climate adaptation projects with local communities. • Provide SEAH training to project stakeholders and communities.
Project Risks			

• Limited SEAH protection services in project/program area • High rates of femicide or sexual violence (e.g., used as a tactic of war) in project/program areas • Women fear that participation or employment in the project/program may exacerbate ongoing forms of SEAH.	M	M	As above societal risks and: • Explicitly monitoring gendered conflict in target communities. • Training project staff and contractors how to identify, address, appropriately flag, report, and respond to potential GBV-related disputes within the project. • Referring cased to existing reporting pathways and mechanisms. • Leveraging existing relationships with government stakeholders; identifying champions / supporters / changemakers within the government (specifically on SEAH). • Embedding mitigation measures in program design and implementation - i.e. clear communication with women about obligations of updated policies, gender-aware planning of financial impacts, using methodologies that are sensitive to women's roles and dynamics of families (i.e. taking a 'family systems' approach). • Informing the community on SEAH risks, explain how to report them and the services available including SEAH GRM established by the project. • A robust and gender sensitive Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to protect women from intimidation, harassment and violence and also for any unexpected or undue impacts from project interventions. It will be communicated in basic language and accessible formats and protect the privacy and confidentiality of complainants.

APPENDIX 6. LETTER MINISTRY OF iTAUKEI AFFAIRS

Memorandum

From:	Permanent Secretary for iTaukei Affairs, Culture, Heritage and Arts	**Phone:** 3100909
To:	Acting Permanent Secretary for Fisheries & Forests	**File:** MTA23/2-3
Subject:	**Request for Response on FPIC Requirements under the Forestry GCF Project**	**Date:** 19.3.24

1. With reference to the GCF/Fiji "Forest Landscape Restoration for Climate Benefits and Resilience (Fiji FLR)" project, the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs supports the project. It will be implemented in coordination with the iTaukei legislations. All activities relating to communities will be in consultation with the Ministry of iTaukei Affairs and relevant agencies such as the TLTB.

2. Based on the objectives of the proposed GCF project and the related activities and considering the FPIC Guidelines that were produced for REDD+ projects, Environmental and Social Safeguards that will be undertaken for this project there would be no need for conducting an FPIC *a priori*.

3. The Ministry of iTaukei Affairs represents the iTaukei and project activities will be in line with the iTaukei Land Trust Act (1940). The Environmental and Social Safeguards that will be developed under the GCF Project will, however, need to state that, during project implementation, if it is deemed necessary, an FPIC will be conducted.

Pita Tagicakirewa
Permanent Secretary

[i] Data Source: Fiji Marine Atlas. The contribution of the project is based on calculations made via the project intervention targeting methodology presented in Annex 25.
[ii] The FSC Ecosystem Services procedure is currently under revision. This project in Fiji could be used as a potential test case for the rollout of the revised procedure and to convey real benefits to forest operators.