PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

PROJECT TYPE: Full-sized Project
TYPE OF TRUST FUND: GEF Trust Fund

PART I: PROJECT IDENTIFICATION

Project Title:	Integrated forest management in the Solomon Islands		
Country(ies):	Solomon Islands	**GEF Project ID:**	
GEF Agency(ies):	FAO	**GEF Agency Project ID:**	618735
Other Executing Partner(s):	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology; Ministry of Forests and Research; Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	**Submission Date:**	February 07, 2013
GEF Focal Area (s):	BD, CC, LD, MFA	**Project Duration (Months)**	60
Name of parent program (if applicable): ➢ **For SFM/REDD+** X	n.a.	**Agency Fee ($):**	539,261

A. FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK:

Focal Area Objectives	Expected FA Outcomes	Expected FA Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant ($)	Indicative Cofin. ($)
BD-1	1.1 Improved management effectiveness of existing and new protected areas. *(Indicator: protected area management effectiveness score as recorded by METT).*	1.1 New protected areas (4) and coverage (100,000 ha) of unprotected ecosystems. 1.2 New protected areas (4) and coverage (100,000 ha) of unprotected threatened species (48).	GEFTF	1,843,299	4,500,000
	1.2 Increased revenue for protected area systems to meet total expenditures required for management. *(Indicator: Funding gap for management of protected area systems as recorded by protected area financing scorecards).*	1.3 Sustainable financing plans (1).	GEFTF	269,162	1,000,000
LD-3	3.1 Enhanced cross-sector enabling environment for integrated landscape management. *(Indicator: policies support integration of agriculture, rangeland, forest, and other land uses).*	3.1 Integrated land management plans developed and implemented.	GEFTF	375,183	900,000
	3.2 Integrated landscape management practices adopted by local communities. *(Indicator: application of INRM practices in wider landscapes).*	3.2 INRM tools and methodologies developed and tested. 3.4 Information on INRM technologies and good practice guidelines disseminated.	GEFTF	554,301	2,000,000

CCM-5	5.1 Good management practices in LULUCF adopted both within the forest land and in the wider landscape. *(Indicator: Number of countries adopting good management practices in LULUCF).*	5.1 Carbon stock monitoring system established.	GEFTF	643,654	1,500,000
	5.2 Restoration and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests and non-forest lands, including peatland. *(Indicator: Hectares restored).*	5.2 Forests and non-forest lands under good management practices.	GEFTF	0	5,000,000
	5.3 GHG emissions avoided and carbon sequestered. *(Indicator: Tonnes of CO2 equivalent)*	5.2 Forests and non-forest lands under good management practices.	GEFTF	370,328	0
SFM/REDD-1	1.2 Good management practices applied in existing forests. *(Indicator: forest area under sustainable management).*	1.2 Forest area (80,000 ha) under sustainable management, separated by forest type.	GEFTF	1,351,449	3,500,000
		Sub-total		5,407,376	18,400,000
Project management cost (BD- 105,119; LD- 46,252; CC-50,457;SFM/REDD-67,250)			GEFTF	269,078	600,000
		Total project Cost		**5,676,454**	**19,000,000**

B. PROJECT FRAMEWORK

Project Objective: To assist the Government of the Solomon Islands to implement integrated management of protected and productive forest landscapes for sustainable community development and multiple environmental benefits.

Project Component	Grant Type	Expected Outcomes	Expected Outputs	Trust Fund	Indicative Grant ($)	Indicative Cofin. ($)
1. Development of the terrestrial protected area network.	TA	1.1 Terrestrial protected area network expanded to improve ecosystem coverage. *(Indicator: protected area network increased from 140,000 ha to 240,000 ha or about 8.5 percent of land area).*	1.1 At least four new terrestrial protected areas (100,000 ha) established and legally designated with the consent of local landowners.	GEFTF	BD-2,010,080	5,500,000
		1.2 Improved management effectiveness of new and existing terrestrial protected areas. *(Indicator: protected area management effectiveness score as recorded by METT).*	1.2. Current weaknesses in protected area management identified and rectified through the establishment and implementation of conservation agreements with communities and management plans (8 PA management plans produced).			
		1.3 Sustainability of protected area management improved through sustainable financing and local income generating activities. *(Indicator: increased local incomes and funding for PA management - targets to be*	1.3 Trust Fund established under the Protected Areas Act (2010) is operational and supported by a PA financing strategy (one national strategy). 1.4 Sustainable income			

		determined during PPG).	generating activities pilot-tested in each protected area as part of PA management plans (at least two pilots in each PA).			
2. Integrated land management.	TA	2.1 Improved decision-making in management of production landscapes. *(Indicator: three major drivers of biodiversity loss and/or land degradation identified, measured and reduced).* 2.2 Poor land-use practices reduced or reversed in and around protected areas *(Indicator: forest cover increased by 10%, soil fertility and water quality better than the baseline measured at start of project[1]).*	2.1 Assessment of impacts of current land-use practices on biodiversity, land degradation and the provision of other ecosystem services (ecosystem valuation) and identification of potential areas for improvement. 2.2 Policy, legal and regulatory frameworks for land-use change reviewed and revised as necessary. National policy and/or plan for land-use issued by government. 2.3 Mechanism for policy coordination between sectors (i.e. government ministries and agencies) established and operating successfully. 2.4 SLM techniques tested, monitored and evaluated in and around protected areas (conservation agriculture, integrated soil fertility management, agroforestry- 20,000 ha) 2.5 Two-hundred (200) farmers and agricultural extension workers trained and best practice guidelines published and disseminated.	GEFTF	LD-929,484	2,900,000
3. Capacity building for the management of forest carbon.	TA	3.1 Ministry of Forests and Research staff have the tools and skills necessary to monitor and manage carbon stocks in natural forests and plantations. *(Indicator: Carbon monitoring reports produced and peer-reviewed).*	3.1 Existing carbon monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) systems reviewed and adapted to forests in the Solomon Islands. 3.2 Fifty (50) MFR staff trained in methods to control deforestation, forest degradation and carbon measuring and monitoring. 3.3 National forest carbon assessment produced, indicating high priority areas for forest restoration and	GEFTF	1,056,288 CC-404,839 SFM-651,449	1,500,000

[1] Technical measurements and indicators for soil fertility and water quality to be identified during PPG

			strengthened control of deforestation and forest degradation.			
4. Restoration and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests.	INV	4.1 Restoration of degraded forest ecosystems. *(Indicator: 80,000 ha of degraded forests restored with a 10 percent increase in tree cover).* *2,348,800 tCO2eq sequestered.*	4.1 Forest cover increased through agroforestry, small-scale tree planting and assisted natural regeneration (target area: 80,000 ha in total).	GEFTF	0	5,000,000
5. Capacity building for BD conservation, SLM and SFM.	TA	5.1 Increased local capacity to monitor, evaluate and manage biodiversity, land-use change and sustainable forest management. *(Indicator: M+E system operational and producing regular reports for use in national projects, policies and plans as well as reporting to international organisations).* 5.2 Community-based forest management (including tree planting) strengthened. *(Indicator: number of communities and area of forest put under more effective local control).* 5.2 Policymakers and the general public are better informed about biodiversity conservation, climate change, SLM and SFM. (Indicator: assessments	5.1 Central and provincial research stations produce baseline surveys of local flora and fauna, invasive species threats, genetic conservation, etc. and provide advice and training to local communities on SLM and SFM techniques. 5.2 Two hundred (200) people (MFR staff and landowners) trained in SFM techniques (forest restoration, land suitability, harvesting techniques, law enforcement, fire management, etc.).. 5.3 Training, awareness and educational materials produced and disseminated through National Biodiversity Information Centre at College of Higher Education.	GEFTF	1,411,524 CC-609,143 SFM-700,000 BD-102,381	3,500,000
			Sub-total		5,407,376	18,400,000
Project management cost (BD- 105,119; LD- 46,252; CC-50,457;SFM/REDD-67,250)					269,078	600,000
			Total project Cost		**5,676,454**	**19,000,000**

C. INDICATIVE COFINANCING FOR THE PROJECT BY SOURCE AND BY NAME IF AVAILABLE, ($)

Sources of Cofinancing	Name of Cofinancier	Type of Cofinancing	Amount ($)
National Government	Government of the Solomon Islands	Grant	8,000,000
National Government	Government of the Solomon Islands	In-kind	5,000,000
GEF Agency	FAO	Grant	1,000,000
GEF Agency	FAO	In-kind	500,000
Bilateral Aid Agency	AusAid	In-kind	1,500,000
Other Multilateral Agency	EU	In-kind	1,000,000
Other Multilateral Agency	SPC	In-kind	2,000,000
Total Cofinancing			19,000,000

D. GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY, FOCAL AREA AND COUNTRY

GEF Agency	Type of Trust Fund	Focal Area	Country Name/Global	Grant Amount (a)	Agency Fee (b)	Total c=a+b
FAO	GEFTF	Biodiversity	Solomon Islands	2,217,580	210,670	2,428,250
FAO	GEFTF	Land Degradation	Solomon Islands	975,736	92,694	1,068,430
FAO	GEFTF	Climate Change	Solomon Islands	1,064,439	101,121	1,165,560
FAO	GEFTF	Multi-focal Areas	Solomon Islands	1,418,699	134,776	1,553,475
Total Grant Resources				5,676,454	539,261	6,215,715

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

A. DESCRIPTION OF THE CONSISTENCY OF THE PROJECT WITH:

A.1.1 The GEF focal area strategies:

This project aims to improve the management of forests in the Solomon Islands by integrating biodiversity conservation, land degradation, sustainable forest management (SFM) and climate change issues into policymaking at the national level and livelihood activities of local communities living in and around forests. It includes activities targeted on existing and new protected areas that will be the focus of the project (140,000 ha and 100,000 ha respectively),[2] as well as capacity building and institutional development at the national level.

Biodiversity. About five percent of terrestrial ecosystems are currently protected in the Solomon Islands and the project will increase this to about 8.5 percent. Critical ecosystem gaps and proposals for new protected areas were first identified by Lees (2000)[3] and are currently being revised as part of the PoWPA in the Solomon Islands. New protected areas included in this project will be based on the results of this. Management effectiveness is currently very low, so the project will also identify key weaknesses and improve upon this at all sites. These activities will be supported by a financing strategy that will examine options for protected area financing and, most importantly, measures to improve local livelihoods that are compatible with conservation objectives.

Sustainable land management. Natural resources in the Solomon Islands are currently being degraded by unplanned and uncoordinated development activities in forestry, agriculture and other sectors. This problem is magnified by traditional land tenure arrangements in the country. The project will assist the country to take more rational decisions about land-use change by building capacity to analyse the impacts of potential developments and take appropriate actions. This will be supported at the national level by policy, legal and institutional reforms. Expansion of small-scale subsistence agriculture is another major driver of land-use change and land degradation, so the project will also work with local communities to help them improve land-use practices.

Climate change. Efforts to promote conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks by addressing LULUCF are at a very early stage in the Solomon Islands. The project will focus on building capacity for carbon monitoring, reporting and verification (MRV) as a first step towards policy and strategy development. As part of strategy development, it will also identify areas where there is most potential for conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through LULUCF. This will be used to guide the Government's National Reforestation Programme (a major part of the cofinancing for this project), where MRV methodologies developed by the project will also be tested in the field.

SFM/REDD. Activities on SFM/REDD will aim for both impacts set-out in the GEF-5 strategy, namely: protection of ecosystem services and strengthening of local livelihoods. It will also follow the overall approach described in the strategy to remove barriers, provide access to better techniques and scale-up the results achieved under other parts of the project. It will do this by generating knowledge and providing technical assistance on a range of SFM techniques as well as general awareness raising activities to support SFM. Due to the land tenure arrangements in the Solomon

[2] The exact selection of existing and new protected areas will be determined during project preparation, but the existing protected areas provisionally targeted for the project are: East Rennel World Heritage Site (37,000 ha); Komarindi Catchment Area (19,300 ha); Makira Highlands Conservation Area (63,000 ha); and Kolombangara Montane Forest (20,000 ha).

[3] Lees, A, 1990, A protected forests system for the Solomon Islands, Australian National Park and Wildlife Service, Canberra.

Islands, a major emphasis will be placed on developing and implementing community-based approaches to SFM.

Activities directed towards meeting the different GEF focal area objectives and outcomes will be integrated in two ways in the project. Activities on BD, SLM and SFM will be implemented together in the protected areas through the community agreements and management plans developed for those areas. Field-based activities in support of CC objectives may also be implemented at these sites, although it is quite likely that other places will show more potential for conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks. At the national level, activities supporting BD, SLM, CC and SFM objectives and outcomes will be integrated by ensuring that capacity building, knowledge generation, technical assistance and policy/legal developments are implemented in an holistic way that work towards improvements in all four focal areas.

A.1.2. For projects funded from LDCF/SCCF: the LDCF/SCCF eligibility criteria and priorities:

Not applicable.

A.1.3 For projects funded from NPIF, relevant eligibility criteria and priorities of the Fund:

Not applicable.

A.2. National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions, if applicable, i.e. NAPAS, NAPs, NBSAPs, national communications, TNAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, etc.:

Biodiversity. The Solomon Islands NBSAP was published in 2009 and the Fourth National Report to CBD was issued in 2011. Protected Area Objectives 1 and 2 have been met (management framework and policy/legal reforms), so Component 1 of this project will contribute to the other objectives, namely: Objective 3 (expand PA system); Objective 4 (develop financing); Objective 5 (strengthen management effectiveness); and Objective 6 (support livelihoods in and around PAs). Component 5 will contribute to all three objectives under the human resources and capacity building theme (environmental education, general awareness raising and technical training on biodiversity issues). Components 2 and 3 will also make some contribution to the NBSAP themes on agro-biodiversity and climate change.

Land degradation. The Solomon Islands has not officially finalised a NAP. However, the Third National Report to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (2006) mentions poor forest management, expansion of large-scale plantations (forestry and agriculture) and shifting cultivation as major drivers of land degradation that should be addressed by the NAP. Component 2 of the project will specifically address those concerns. Components 3, 4 and 5 will also address many of the current issues related to poor forest management and SLM (e.g. harvesting techniques, fire management, appropriate forest restoration measures, etc.).

Climate change. A paper on Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMA) is currently being prepared in the Solomon Islands. The concept paper for this (2011), highlights the contribution that forests and improved land management practices can make to mitigation measures. It also includes activities and outcomes proposed in this GEF project proposal (e.g. improved carbon monitoring, better land-use change decisions, improved forest and land management practices).

The Solomon Islands National Adaptation Programmes of Action (NAPA), issued in 2008, has an objective for agriculture and food security that includes a number of outcomes and outputs similar to those proposed for this project. These are mostly related to improving the sustainability of agriculture and land management. Although adaptation is not a focus of this project, some activities (especially capacity building in local communities under components 2 and 5) will contribute to achievement of the NAPA objective. The project will also ensure that need for adaptation is mainstreamed into project activities (e.g. appropriate selection of crops and trees for SLM and forest restoration, capacity building in fire management, etc.).

The action plans for climate change in the Solomon Islands have been integrated in the National Climate Change Policy 2012-17 (2012). This specifically mentions reducing emissions from forestry and agriculture, developing a national capacity in MRV and awareness raising as strategies that the Government will follow. Thus, Components 2 to 5 of this project will contribute to that effort.

National plans and strategies. The Solomon Islands Medium Term Development Strategy 2008-2010 included objectives for: the protection, restoration and enhancement of the environment, especially biodiversity resources; strengthening institutional capacities to meet this objective; and ensuring effective approaches to the mitigation of and adaptation to climate change. These objectives were reiterated in the Solomon Islands National Development Strategy 2011-2020, which also emphasised the need for greater community participation and more equitable distribution of

related resource-derived incomes. This GEF project will help the Solomon Islands to progress towards meeting these objectives, in particular through the restoration, biodiversity protection, capacity building and community-based activities planned for the project. It will also be consistent with the Ministry of Forests and Research Corporate Plan 2011-2014, which has shifted emphasis in the government's forestry activities away from commercial exploitation to reforestation and sustainable resource use.

PROJECT OVERVIEW:

B.1. Describe the baseline project and the problem that it seeks to address:

Background

Solomon Islands (SIs) comprises of over 992 islands including seven of the eight major island groups of the Solomon Archipelago. The country has total forest area of 2.2 million hectares, including 1.1 million hectares under protection and conservation (FRA 2010). The majority of the forested land mass in the SIs is under customary ownership. The existing traditional system of land ownership provides a welfare safety-net for the vast majority of Solomon Islanders. Nearly 85 percent of the population depends heavily on natural resources for their subsistence based lifestyle. Customary land tenure also supports the country's robust village-based subsistence gardening. On the other hand, customary ownership is sometimes regarded a constraint to major development or environmental initiatives (management of watersheds, protection of important biodiversity sites or conserving environmentally sensitive areas) as often it is problematic, costly and fraught with uncertainty due to the inevitable and often multiple disputes that arise between customary land owners. The Ministry of Forestry and Research of the SIs Government is responsible for the overall management of the forest resources. The Forest Resources and Timber Utilization Act, which guides the Ministry, provides for the conservation of forests and the improved management of forest resources, control of timber harvesting, encouragement and facilitation of sustainable forestry activities, establishment of plantations, and domestic processing of timber. The Forest Act 1999 was passed in Parliament, but has not been gazetted, thus it cannot be enforced. A review of the Act was carried out and the Forests Bill 2004 was produced, but is yet to be presented in Parliament. Once the Forests Bill 2004 is enacted, it will repeal and replace both the Forest Resources and Timber Utilization Act and the Forest Act 1999.

Forest cover in the SIs has decreased from 80% in the 1990s to 76% today indicating a significant loss in biodiversity. The need to protect or conserve forests is imperative to ensure that the biodiversity of the SIs is maintained. The terrestrial flora and fauna of all of the larger islands are renowned for high species diversity and high levels of endemism. SIs forest vegetation comprises of atleast 4,500 species of plants of which 3,200 are known to be native/indigenous. SIs is also a hotspot for bird endemism (e.g. Gizo White-eye) and every large island has its own endemic species and/or subspecies. In total, the Solomon Islands have 94 restricted range bird species, 16 of which are classified as threatened, including Makira Moorhen (Gallinula Silvestri) which is critically endangered. Of the 163 land bird species found in the country, 72 are found nowhere else in the world and another 62 are represented by unique races or subspecies. SIs has eighty reptile species and a third of these are endemic and five have been identified as threatened. The prehensile tailed skink is the largest skink in the world and is endemic to the SIs. There are nine endemic snake species in SIs (including Solomon Small-eyed Snake and Lake Tenggano Krait). In addition, there are numerous endemic species of lizards, snails, insects, butterflies and plants species such as orchids, indicating a rich historical environment resulting from dispersal, isolation, and speciation.

Currently, there are about 42 protected areas in SIs. Apart from these formally-established protected areas, the SIs also has a number of smaller protected sites that have been set up with assistance from NGOs, resource owners, and community groups. The ecosystem types and habitats protected include; evergreen forests, montane forests, lakes, rivers and streams, highlands, and coastal areas.

Threats

SIs has the highest rate of deforestation in the South Pacific. In recent years, pressure on SIs' forests has increased steadily and significantly, threatening the country's biodiversity. Major threats to SIs' forests resulting in deforestation and degradation are described below:

Illegal and unregulated logging operations

Timber industry is an important sector in SIs contributing about 13% of government revenues annually, and more than

67% of export revenues. It plays a central role in the country's economy. The government sets out the principal objectives of sustainable forest management, as developing the timber industry to maximize benefits to the country and its people, and ensuring rights to customary owners. But in practice, many forests do not come under formal management plans, and the rate of harvesting has far exceeded the sustainable capacity of the productive natural forests. SIs government estimates rate of commercial logging as 700,000 cubic meters per annum, whereas sustainable rate would be 200,000 cubic meters per annum (SIG, 2003c). With ongoing unsustainable harvesting in productive forests, the logging operations have also expanded into protected areas, which are poorly and ineffectively managed resulting in increased loss of natural forests and biodiversity.

Land use change and inappropriate land use practices

Conversion of large tracts of lands for commercial plantations (particularly oil palm) and large scale monoculture agriculture, especially in the lowlands has placed tremendous pressure on lowland rainforests of SIs. The oil palm plantations have been established in areas previously covered by natural forests. With the demand for oil palm constantly growing and economic incentives involved in oil palm plantation, it is a major threat to forests in SIs. Inappropriate land use practices such as slash-and-burn shifting cultivation with significantly reduced fallow periods and steep-slope farming systems, which accelerates land degradation (e.g. soil erosion, siltation, and loss of soil fertility) along with improper crop rotations and unbalanced fertilizer use for quicker economic returns, and the lack of soil conservation and management practices, have all contributed to degradation of natural forests and lands surrounding natural forests.

The above mentioned threats are also compounded by natural disasters, increasing population, invasive species and climate change. The resulting impacts are loss of habitats, extinction of species, and degraded ecosystems.

Baseline projects:

SIs government and other partners are implementing a number of programmes/ projects to address the threats. These include the **National Reforestation Programme.** This programme undertaken by the Ministry of Forest and Research and implemented by Forest Development and Reforestation Division serves as the main baseline for this project. The programme began in 2008 (currently ongoing), with an overall budget of 12 million USD. The objective of the programmme is to promote and support reforestation in logged out areas on customary lands of SIs. The programme has strategies and activities for extension, training & education, research and development.

This programme along with other co-financing activities presented in the below table will form key baseline elements for the project.

Co-financing sources	Brief Description of Co-funded Baseline Project Activities	Type of co-financing	Amount (USD)
Government of Solomon Islands - Ministry of Forests and Research	The activities being carried out under the National Reforestation Programme are; - Identifying and regulating use of appropriate endemic species - Developing and supplying planting materials to local communities - Providing technical advice and forestry services to communities through extension officers - Providing training and materials to extension officers.	Grant In-kind	8,000,000 5,000,000
Government of Solomon Islands - Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	- Providing technical advice and agricultural extension services to communities - Providing trainings to staff (particularly extension staff) on service provision - Procurement of facilities and equipment for farmer schools		
FAO	UN REDD - Enhancing understanding related to REDD+ (forest carbon management) and preliminary capacity development for	Grant In-kind	1,000,000 500,000

	MRV FLEGT - Providing facilitation services and technical assistance as support to VPA processes - Reducing illegal logging by facilitating the set-up of sustainable forest harvesting practices and enhancing natural forestry management		
AusAid	- Develop agroforestry systems for smallholders, with tree species that could be commercially harvested at an early age - Development of value-adding small scale industries for local communities from both timber and non-timber forest products	In-kind	1,500,000
EU	- Setting up a network of 6-8 forest conservation areas - Carrying out biodiversity assessments in the areas; - Establishing income generating projects in each of the areas such as nature based tourism	In-kind	1,000,000
SPC	- Producing extension materials for SFM - Provision of technical services and capacity building related to improvement forest management and in SFM practices for FSC certification	In-kind	2,000,000

SIs is also one of the UN REDD countries. Activities are being undertaken to establish the necessary institutional and individual capacities required to enable SIs REDD+ readiness.

Barriers:

The baseline projects fall short of adequately dealing with the above mentioned threats and ensuring sustainable management of forests and biodiversity conservation in SIs, due to the following interlinked and mutually reinforcing barriers;

Barrier 1: Inadequate and ineffectual management of Protected Areas (PAs)

The management plans of existing PAs are ineffective. They are poorly constructed due to weak institutional capacities at provincial and local level, lack of financial resources and do not have any buy-in from local communities. Community based management is one of the key component of SIs policies regarding natural resource management. But given the lack of any sustainable funding mechanism to manage PAs, and train and involve communities effectively and to take measures to provide financial and economic incentives for them to participate in the management of PAs, there has been very little support or participation from the local communities.

Barrier 2: Lack of adequate information and scientific awareness on the impacts of current unsustainable land use practices and weaknesses in policy and institutional frameworks

Policy makers in SIs lack awareness and access to reliable information on the impacts of current land use practices on biodiversity, and other ecosystem services, which results in formulation of policies and strategies that are irrelevant and often have detrimental effects on biodiversity, and forest conservation and management. For example, there are plans to increase current area of oil palm, approximately 6,000ha, mostly in Guadalcanal Province, to 40,000ha by 2014. These plans are being formulated without really understanding the long term impacts on the environment and biodiversity, and without coordination between relevant government ministries and agencies.

Barriers 3: Minimal capacities at institutional level and community level in SLM, SFM and biodiversity conservation

Institutional level: government staff at both national and local level has very limited capacities to implement, manage and monitor SLM, SFM and biodiversity conservation. Extension agencies, given their vital role in facilitating local communities adopt and implement sustainable practices, have very limited experience and capacities in providing such support. In spite of ongoing REDD+ readiness work, Ministry of Forestry staff have little knowledge or capacities to take up activities relevant to implementation of REDD+; methods to control deforestation and forest degradation, carbon monitoring and measuring.

Community level: with weak institutional capacities and little support from extension agencies, local communities, even if willing, have no opportunities to learn and adopt sustainable land use practices.

B. 2. Incremental cost reasoning: describe the incremental activities requested for GEF financing and the associated global environmental benefits to be delivered by the project:

Without GEF resources; as demonstrated by recent assessments of the state of the national forest and related natural resources, increasing deterioration and loss of biodiversity and ecosystem goods and services, as well as an unsustainable rate of resource use will continue. The baseline projects and business-as-usual approaches by the country do not fully address the critical barriers mentioned above. Without the proposed GEF project intervention, key issues undermining the efforts to conserve biodiversity and sustainably manage the forests in Solomon Islands will remain unresolved and the worrying trend will continue, and even continue at a more rapid rate. The increasing loss of forest cover will also have impacts on carbon sink and sequestering, and on community resource owners, with various perverse incentives affecting their choices for alternative land use and land use changes.

GEF resources will help the management of PAs become more effective through increased participation of communities (via conservation agreements and economic opportunities/incentives), new and effective management plans, and sustainable financing strategy and mechanism (PA trust fund). Capacities on biodiversity, sustainable forest and land management practices, and forest carbon monitoring will be increased at both institutional and community level. Information on impacts of current land use practices will be made available leading to more informed policies and regulations. All the above will contribute to improved biodiversity and forest conservation, effective sustainable land and forest management, thus reducing the rate of deterioration of biodiversity and other vital ecosystems services in SIs and generating global environmental benefits.

Global environment benefits will result through implementation of the following activities which have been arranged into five components, the work under BD focuses on expanding PAs and improving their management, the work under other focal areas are targeting the immediate areas around the PAs to ensure local communities manage the resources sustainably and obtain financial and other socio-economic benefits, thus resulting in reduced pressure on the PAs and these areas acting as buffer zones. The components combine to generate environmental benefits in PAs and the areas surrounding the PAs.

Component 1: Development of the terrestrial protected area network

This component will address one of the major barriers to biodiversity and forest conservation in SIs; ineffective management of PAs. Under this component, GEF support will enable the establishment of four new terrestrial protected areas covering 100,000 hectares which will expand the protected area network and improve ecosystem coverage. GEF incremental resources will enable these areas to be legally designated with full consent of customary land owners. The work under the component will address the identified areas of weaknesses in the management of existing PAs. This will be carried out by developing new and effective management plans along with local communities, with whom conservation agreements will be signed. Capacity building will be an integral part of this activity, the establishment and implementation of PA management plans will involve building capacities of local communities, CSOs and government agencies. To ensure communities' involvement and commitment to the agreements, sustainable income generating opportunities will be provided to them as part of the management plans itself. GEF resources will also enable the establishment of a trust fund under the Protected Areas Act which will be supported by a national strategy on PA financing. This will ensure a sustainable funding mechanism for managing PAs in SIs.

Component 2: Integrated Land Management

Under component 2, GEF resources will enable review and revision of policy, regulatory and legal frameworks for land use change, that are outdated and ineffective. A thorough assessment of impacts of current land-use practices on biodiversity, land degradation and ecosystem services will be conducted and this will feed into the review and revision; providing the policy makers with reliable information to base their policies and strategies on. A multi-sectoral coordination mechanism between sectors will be established to ensure the frameworks are streamlined and complementary rather than contradictory.

GEF resources will also enable piloting of sustainable land management techniques in and around protected areas to

halt the ongoing degradation from unsustainable land use practices. The techniques to be piloted will include conservation agriculture (combining minimum soil disturbance, permanent soil cover, and crop rotation) integrated soil fertility management (combining maximization of use of organic sources of fertilizer, minimization of loss of nutrients and judicious use of inorganic fertilizer according to local needs and economic availability), and agroforestry. Agroforestry activities will complement AusAID's work on agroforestry systems for smallholders and FAO's work on setting up of sustainable forest harvesting practices. These techniques will be assessed and evaluated before training 200 extension workers and farmers. Best practice guidelines will be published based on the experiences from the trainings and subsequent piloting.

Component 3: Capacity building for the management of forest carbon
Under this component, it will be ensured that the Ministry of Forests and Research staff has the required tools to monitor and manage carbon stocks in both natural and plantation forests. SIs is current preparing for REDD+ readiness, and GEF incremental resources will contribute to activities that will complement the UN REDD activities. Under the UN REDD programme, activities that are planned include a) collating and analyzing forest resource data b) preliminary capacity building for MRV. The national forest carbon assessment proposed in this project to identify high priority areas for action, where forest restoration and increased control for deforestation and degradation needs to be implemented, will complement and contribute to the collation and analysis of forest resource data under UN REDD. Reviewing and adapting the existing carbon MRV systems in SIs, and training Ministry staff (fifty) in appropriate methods to control deforestation, forest degradation, and measure and monitor carbon stocks, will build on and complement the capacity building activities carried out under UN REDD for MRV.

Component 4: Restoration and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests
The results of the national forest carbon assessment conducted to identify areas where there is most potential for conservation and enhancement of carbon stocks through LULUCF will guide the Government's National Reforestation Programme (a major part of the cofinancing for this project). Through implementing agroforestry practices, small scale tree planting and assisted natural regeneration 80,000 ha of forest area will be restored. This component will be entirely financed by the Government.

Component 5: Capacity building for biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and sustainable forest management
This component will address the significant barrier of lack of knowledge and capacities at institutional and community level in biodiversity conservation, sustainable forest and land management practices. Communities and the Ministry of Forests and Research staff will be provided training in sustainable forest and land management techniques leading to the strengthening of sustainable management of natural resources in communal lands of SIs, this activity will build on capacity building initiatives undertaken by SPC in building capacities in SFM practices among local communities. GEF incremental resources will enable the establishment of a monitoring and evaluation system for monitoring and managing biodiversity in SIs. This will be incremental to EU's work on capacity building of local communities to carry out biodiversity assessments.GEF resources will support targeted education and awareness campaigns focusing on different audiences (policy makers- government agencies and department, general public) to enhance understanding of the benefits of biodiversity conservation, sustainable land and forest management, and the risks associated with loss of biodiversity and forests.

Global Environmental Benefits: (i) protected area network increased from 140,000 ha to 240,000 ha or about 8.5 percent of land area to improve ecosystem coverage; (ii) 80,000 hectares of forest ecosystems restored (10% increase in forest cover), total sequestration of 640,000 tC; (iii) increased land area under INRM practices leading to improved land cover and soil fertility.

Calculation of carbon benefits; Restoration will take place in the lowland rainforests of Solomon Islands, containing conservative estimate of 150 tC/ha (IPCC 2006 estimates a significantly higher amount). Assuming the degraded forests have 80 tC/ha, and 10% increase in forest cover (above ground biomass) will lead to increase of 8tC/ha. The total carbon sequestered will be 8 tC/ha x 80,000 ha = 640,000 tC or 2,348,800 tCO2eq. The measurement of the carbon benefits will be through the MRV system established under the UNREDD programme.

B.3. Describe the socioeconomic benefits to be delivered by the Project at the national and local levels, including consideration of gender dimensions, and how these will support the achievement of global environment benefits

This project includes activities at both the national and local levels across four main focal areas (BD, CC, SLM and SFM) with socioeconomic benefits expected in all of these areas. Some of the socioeconomic benefits expected from the project are listed below:

Local employment and income generation: The project will create new opportunities for local employment and income generation in the PAs and areas around the PAs. This will include field work activities directed at biodiversity conservation and protected area management (e.g. surveys, control of invasive species, other conservation activities, etc.). The income generating activities include community based ecotourism, and measures to increase value-addition, improved management and use of non-timber forest products and local agricultural development (funded through co-financing). The non-timber forest products based income generating activities envisaged at this stage are apiculture, and handicraft making. Other options (e.g. candle-nut oil processing, essential oil production, etc) will be explored through co-financing partners during the PPG.

Improvements in land management (SLM) will also be targeted at measures that can both increase sustainability and profitability (e.g. soil and water conservation measures that reduce the needs for other inputs and can prolong soil fertility).

At the national level, improvements to decision making about land-use change will benefit the national economy by ensuring that all of the costs and benefits of changes in land uses are included in decisions. Prioritisation of areas for reforestation and measures to build capacity for SFM will improve the economic returns to forest management in the country. Building capacity for REDD+ and carbon MRV will also pave the way for carbon trading in the future (most likely, beyond the end of this project).

Empowerment: Capacity building and training activities to be developed by the project will contribute to the empowerment of local people and institutions (local NGOs, local government, etc.). In particular, the development and implementation of community-based approaches to protected area management and SFM will improve upon the current situation where forests and other natural resources are weakly governed and are usually not used sustainably. Improvements to decision making about land-use change will also give local people a voice in those decisions that they currently do not have.

Off-site benefits: Increasing forest carbon stocks, improving forest management and avoiding inappropriate land-use changes are all expected to lead to some off-site benefits. The most obvious of these is improved water quality for others living downstream of the areas where the project will be implemented. Measures to improve forest management (better fire management, better harvesting practices) may also lead to other off-site benefits such as reductions in pollution and waste.

These socioeconomic benefits will be more clearly articulated and evaluated during the project preparation phase.

Gender dimensions

The main way that gender issues will be incorporated into the project is through the adoption and use of participatory approaches in all important decisions and activities under the project. The project will ensure that adequate representation of both genders is achieved in all project activities (especially development of income generating activities) and will ensure that local project partners are given appropriate training in this respect. Reporting on project activities, outputs and outcomes will also be disaggregated by gender (where applicable), so that performance in this respect can be monitored.

Support for the achievement of global environmental benefits

Support for the project's objectives will be generated by demonstrating to the local populations in and around protected areas how biodiversity conservation, SLM, SFM and protection and enhancement of carbon stocks can produce socio-economic benefits (such as those listed above). The project will deliberately focus on activities that are likely to produce real and tangible socioeconomic benefits for communities as well as benefits for the global environment (e.g. tree planting to increase carbon stocks and for eventual sale). The project will also support local development activities (funded through cofinancing) as part of the incentives provided to them in return for their agreement to create protected areas.

Activities at the national level will not create socioeconomic benefits so clearly and immediately. However, by taking steps towards integrating carbon considerations into forest management, the project will establish a basis for carbon trading (in the future) and the economic benefits of this will be explained to stakeholders. Improved decisions on land-use change will also have broader positive economic impacts in the country and this will be explained to project partners and policymakers through studies on ecosystem valuation and capacity building in this area.

B.4 Indicate risks, including climate change risks that might prevent the project objectives from being achieved, and if possible, propose measures that address these risks to be further developed during the project design:

Risk	Rating	Mitigation measures
Environmental risks (mostly due to climate change)		
Natural changes in ecosystems and associated species due to gradual changes in climate and extreme weather events.	Unknown	The monitoring system developed under Component 5 will be designed to identify changes in ecosystems likely to be linked to climate change (e.g. occurrence of forest fires, pests and diseases, spread of invasive species) so that remedial actions can be taken. If necessary, this will be supported by research activities under the same component.
Productivity changes in forestry and agriculture.	Unknown	Plant and tree species used for restoration and improvements to agriculture (for SLM and income generation) will be selected so that they are resilient to the most likely impacts of climate change (e.g. drought, outbreaks of pests and diseases, etc.). Climate resilient forest and land management techniques will also be promoted in local communities (e.g. water conservation).
Economic risks		
Inadequate funding for protected area management.	Medium to high	The financing strategy will assess all possible sources of funding and focus on those most easily secured. Protected area management activities will also be prioritised in case funding is limited.
Incentives are too low to persuade landowners to change their behaviour.	Medium to high	The project will focus on PA management, CC, SLM and SFM activities that are both good for the environment and economically viable. The project will also devote time and resources to explain why and how improved forest and land management techniques can benefit them economically. The project will minimise and try to avoid monetary incentives wherever possible, unless these can be sustained. Instead it will focus more on income generating activities. When these are proposed, they will be based on a detailed and realistic analysis of costs and benefits, learning from experiences on other similar projects. The project will also ensure that the benefits are distributed in a way that is reasonable, fair and equitable.
Social and institutional risks		
Limited support and implementation capacity in government.	High	The capacity of government agencies in the Solomon Islands is quite weak. The project will emphasise working in collaboration across agencies and with local communities to reduce the demands placed on government staff. Capacity building will also target key weaknesses in government and develop strategies to overcome these for the long-term sustainability of project outcomes. Broader support for the project will be generated by awareness raising targeted at influential decision makers at local and national levels. These mitigation measures will also be supported by regular monitoring of project progress, so that corrective actions can be taken if necessary.

Landowners refuse to set-aside areas for conservation purposes.	Medium	Collaboration and involvement of landowning communities will be crucial for the long-term success of this project. Therefore, communities will be active participants from the very beginning in the design, implementation and management of project activities. The project design will also be guided and learn from the ongoing work on customary land reform and from the stakeholders involved in that process. The main strategy proposed to overcome reluctance will be the provision of incentives (i.e. development benefits) for communities to engage in conservation (see above). However, the project will also build upon the existing interest in conservation and explain how conservation and improved forest and land management techniques can benefit them in other ways.[4]

B.5. Identify key stakeholders involved in the project including the private sector, civil society organizations, local and indigenous communities, and their respective roles, as applicable:

A detailed stakeholder analysis and mapping will be conducted during the project preparation (PPG) phase to define more precise roles and responsibilities. The list of key stakeholders and roles envisaged at this stage is as follows:

Stakeholders	Roles
Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology; Ministry of Forests and Research; Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock	Main implementation partners. Responsible for day to day execution, management, coordination and monitoring of the project
Extension Staff- Ministry of Forests and Research	Project beneficiaries through the training programmes. Project partners providing support to the project implementation at community level
FAO	GEF Executing Agency. Responsible for providing technical assistance and overall management and supervision of the project implementation
SPC	Co-financing partner
EU	Co- financing partner
AusAID	Co-financing partner
Local communities	Main project beneficiaries
Civil Society and Non- Governmental Organizations	Providing support in community mobilization, building capacities, dissemination of knowledge. Given their role in community mobilization, local CSOs will be involved as project partners at community level. During project preparation phase, individual CSOs, which are reputable, trusted by local communities, efficient, and located in project sites, will be identified and their involvement in the project will be garnered. Potential of the identified CSOs to act as co-financiers (through in-kind support) for the project will be seriously explored.
Academic and research institutions	Providing support in implementing training programmes and awareness raising
Private sector	They are key actors in adding value to both forest based and agricultural products, they are vital to generating sustainable income to local communities, and will act as project partners.

[4] The Fourth National Report to CBD mentions that there are already over 100 unofficial conservation areas (mostly small and many marine areas) where local communities are already keen to conserve and improve the management of their natural resources. This suggests that formal arrangements/agreements for conservation, may actually be preferable to current arrangements that are unclear and uncertain. Thus, the probability of this risk occurring has been assessed as medium.

Project implementation/execution arrangements

FAO will serve as the implementing agency. The project will be executed by the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology, Ministry of Forests and Research and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock. General oversight of the project will be the responsibility of a national multi-stakeholder committee meeting regularly in the country. Technical backstopping will be provided by FAO with a minimum of two missions per year, with back-up from a multi-disciplinary Project Task Force. Implementation and execution arrangements will be evaluated for cost-effectiveness during project preparation and will be fully elaborated in the final FAO-GEF Project Document.

B.6. Outline the coordination with other related initiatives:

National Initiatives. At present, the Solomon Islands already has a number of government and/or multi-stakeholder bodies co-ordinating activities on biodiversity, land degradation and climate change. These include the following: Environment Advisory Council; National Climate Change Council; National Climate Change Working Group; and NAP National Steering Committee. These existing bodies would be the primary mechanisms used to co-ordinate activities in the country. They would be regularly briefed about project activities and members of these bodies would be invited to participate in project steering committees. Members of these bodies would also be targeted for capacity building activities, because these existing institutional arrangements are quite weak.

Another focus for co-ordination at the national level would be the many small projects (often supported by NGOs) that have established the many small, informal protected areas in the country. The project will evaluate and assess what has or hasn't worked on these projects and build on these lessons learnt to enhance and improve the management effectiveness of the existing and new protected areas proposed under this project. This will include, in particular, an analysis of the relations between stakeholders (e.g. communities, private sector operators and government agencies) and their impacts on protected area management. Ad-hoc consultations and local workshops are likely to be the main vehicle for collaboration, along with participation of stakeholders from some of these projects in project workshops and steering committee meetings (as appropriate)

Other agency projects. GEF, FAO and other agencies (AusAid, EU, SPC, SPREP, WWF, TNC, etc.) also have some projects that are very relevant to this project. Many of these agencies will be approached during PPG to collaborate with the project as cofinanciers. Agencies that cannot cofinance the project will still be invited to attend steering committee meetings (as observers) and to implement joint activities such as training events, workshops and information exchanges, where their activities are complementary to those of the project.

A key project that this one will build upon is the PoWPA (currently supported by GEF) that has worked on policy and legal reform and is currently working to refine proposals for new protected areas. The project will build-upon the lessons learnt during the PoWPA project. The project will also share experiences and lessons learnt with the existing GEF-FAO project on forestry and protected areas in Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Niue, especially the activities in Samoa where a very similar approach to community-based management of protected areas is being developed. It will also seek collaboration with the GEF-5 MSP *"Integrating global environment commitments in investment and development decision-making"*, should that project be approved.

Co-ordination could include activities such as exchanges of information and study-tours, joint publications and training events. Collaboration with existing FAO projects on REDD+ and agricultural development (Food Security and Sustainable Livelihoods Programme for the Pacific Islands) will also be a focus for co-ordination, with an emphasis on joint activities on data collection (MRV) and pilot-testing of development options for income generation and increased value-addition.

C. DESCRIBE THE GEF AGENCY'S COMPARATIVE ADVANTAGE TO IMPLEMENT THIS PROJECT:

FAO is the United Nations institution with the mandate to work on forestry, agriculture and natural resource management. It is already identified by the GEF as the agency with comparative advantage in this area and was specifically chosen by the Solomon Islands as the agency most technically qualified to implement this project. The mandate of the Forestry Department of FAO is to support member countries to implement sustainable forest management by providing policy advice, technical knowledge and reliable information, so that the contribution of forests and trees to sustainable livelihoods may be increased.

FAO's technical expertise and experience relevant to this project has been gained through a number of global projects and regular programme activities implemented over the last decade. These include the following:

- Expertise in monitoring, reporting and verification of forest carbon sinks is one of FAO's major contributions to the UN-REDD Programme (including a country project in Solomon Islands).
- Expertise on forest restoration through the publication of tools, models and guidelines for best practices, as well as activities under the Global Partnership on Forest Landscape Restoration.
- A long and proven track-record in providing assistance to countries in community-based forest management through projects and regular programme activities such as: Forest Connect; Market Analysis and Development; and the Growing Forest Partnerships initiative.
- Technical capacity for multi-disciplinary and cross-sectoral approaches to NRM with the presence of many experts in forestry, agriculture, soil and water conservation, located in Rome and in the multi-disciplinary teams at FAO's regional and sub-regional offices.
- Expertise in developing and implementing financing strategies for forestry and conservation (including an existing GEF project working on this in Fiji, Samoa, Vanuatu and Niue).

In addition, FAO's forestry programme in the region has focused a lot in recent years on forestry policy and legal reform, support to community forestry, forest resource assessment and technical assistance for forest restoration. Working often in partnership with local regional organisations (such as SPC, SPREP, SOPAC, etc.), these activities have provided useful experiences that can be utilised on this project.

C.1 Indicate the co-financing amount the GEF agency is bringing to the project:

FAO will bring the following co-financing to the project:

- USD 500,000 in kind: This will include the provision of technical assistance and expertise from FAO Rome and from the Sub-regional Office for the Pacific Islands.
- USD 1,000,000 grant: This co-financing will be provided through FAO's Technical Co-operation Programme (TCP) and global projects with activities in Solomon Islands, such as the UN-REDD Project.

C.2 How does the project fit into the GEF agency's program (reflected in documents such as UNDAF, CAS, etc.) and staff capacity in the country to follow up project implementation:

This project fits very well into FAO Forestry Department's regular programme activities to support sustainable forest management. At the broad level, key departmental programmes at the moment include forest law enforcement and governance, forest monitoring and evaluation to support SFM and REDD+ activities as well as development and dissemination of technical manuals, guidelines and best practices on SFM and biodiversity conservation. The Forestry Department's assistance to countries is country-driven and the technical assistance likely to be required for this project can be built into FAO Forestry Department's forthcoming biennial work-programmes.

FAO has a Sub-Regional Representation for the Pacific (in Samoa) with twenty full-time staff, including a forestry specialist. The office currently manages a portfolio of projects amounting to about USD 12 million. In addition to the operational aspects of project implementation, technical backstopping will be provided by a multi-disciplinary project task force comprising FAO technical staff based in Rome.

PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT AND GEF AGENCY

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S): (Please attach the Operational Focal Point endorsement letter(s) with this template.

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE *(MM/dd/yyyy)*
Mr. Joe HOROKOU (Operational Focal Point)	Director, Environment and Conservation	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster	April 20, 2012

horokoujoe@gmail.com	Division	Management and Meteorology PO Box 21 Honiara Solomon Islands	

B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF policies and procedures and meets the GEF/LDCF/SCCF/NPIF criteria for project identification and preparation.					
Agency Coordinator, Agency name	**Signature**	**Date**	**Project Contact Person**	**Telephone**	**Email Address**
Laurent Thomas Officer-in-Charge Investment Centre Division Technical Cooperation Department FAO Viale delle Terme di Caracalla 00153, Rome, Italy, TCI-Director@fao.org Barbara Cooney FAO GEF Coordinator Barbara.Cooney@fao.org tel: +3906 5705 5478		October 23, 2012	Aru Mathias, Forestry Officer, FAO Subregional Office for the Pacific Islands, Lauofo Meti's Building, 4 Corners, Matautu-Uta, Apia, Somoa	Apia Tel: +685 20710 Fax: +685-22126	Aru.Mathias@fao.org