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**Integrating Environment Commitments in Investment and Development Decision Making
(IGECIDDM)/CB2**

PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION

ANNUAL REPORT 2016

Approved by (.....Date :.....)

Project Title	Integrating Environment Commitments in Investment and Development Decision Making (IGECIDDM)	
Project ID	00091738	
Award Title	00083083	
Business Unit	FJ110	
Department ID	43301	
Fund	04000 & 62000	
Donor	00012 & 10003	
Implementing Agency	0001981	
Operating Unit	SLB	
PIMS No:	4928	
Executing Agency/ Implementing Partner	UNDP/ MECDM, MoFR & MAL	
Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount(USD)
SIG	In-kind	250,000
UNDP	Grant	150,000
GEF	Grant	850,000
Total		1,250,000

Forward

Despite the challenges, 2016 been a very busy year for the project. This is the year whereby the project outputs begun to be realised. The key one being the launch of the first ever National REDD+ Website for Solomon Islands. This website was funded by the project and administered by the Ministry of Forestry and Research (MoFR). This launching marks the fulfilment of output 3.4 under the project. Also this year, all the consultants required of the project has been finally recruited following a second round of advertisements. This was after the revision of the Terms of References (ToR) carried out by the Project Management Unit (PMU) and the project's international technical specialist in consultation with the Ministry of Environment Climate Change Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM), MoFR and Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL). Next year 2017, is the third and final year of the project life. As such it is anticipated it will be a busier year than this year. Especially given the PMU will be pushing to try and implement its work plan to fulfil the remaining and yet to be achieved outputs.

Introduction

Parallel to the objective¹ the two key intended outcomes of the project includes; strengthened policy coordination and planning mechanism, and improved communication and dissemination of information related to Rio Conventions². In the face of the challenges faced, implementation has slowly gain momentum over these past two years. It is the hope of the Project Management Unit (PMU) that the majority of the outputs will be fulfilled when the project winds down next year 2017. This report reflects on; (i) the key project activities and outputs fulfilled during the year, (ii) the progress to date on the overall project implementation, (iii) the funds spent on the implementation so far, and (iv) the key challenges faced and how they have been mitigated and opportunities to enhance the project implementation.

(i) Project activities and outputs already fulfilled-achievements of 2016

Since the project inception last year, implementation of the project activities in 2016 has not been progressing at the level expected by the PMU. Implementation has been very slow. The key to this is the difficulty in recruiting the right people to fill the consultancy posts as defined in the project document. That is despite adverts being made. The preferred candidates are consultants who has expertise and knowledge in environmental economics and sociology, REDD+, and the Rio Conventions. The underlying reason for this preference is most of the project outputs requires development of policies, strategies, and frameworks related to these fields and these should be factored in as the consultants' deliverables. In other words, the deliverables are directly related to the project outputs. To illustrate this difficulty, the project only manages to recruit the international technical advisor in May this year following several advertisements being put out on the local new papers and the UNDP rooster several months earlier.

This was confirmed by the international technical advisor in his first mission report that the project is going nowhere in its implementation and is in a dire situation of closing down if people are not recruited into these posts as soon as practical. As a result, all the TORs previously developed and advertised by the PMU³ has been revised by both the technical advisor and the project manager and again in consultation with the Government. In October all the consultancy post has been filled after a second round of advertisement. This was following the blessing of the revised TORs by the project board.

The departure of the project assistant early June this year has also impacted upon the project implementation. Luckily towards the end of the same month, a replacement was recruited. The newly recruited project assistant has begun duties at 27th of the month. He is Mr Eric Houma. Mr Houma is well versed with UNDP and SIG processes from his previous employment as project assistant to UNDP SWoCK project.

¹ The objective of the project is to enhance the capacity of relevant policy and institutional stakeholders to enable compliance with the three Rio Conventions and other multilateral environment agreements (MEAs).

² To that end it is envisaged that the Rio Convention obligations are an integral part of national policies and measures identified in the National Environmental Capacity Development Action Plan; the REDD+ Roadmap incorporates Rio Convention objectives and serves as an overarching plan of action for the environmental and sectoral action plans; and the Government of the Solomon Islands and a wide range of stakeholders systematically review natural resource and environmental policies in a holistic manner in line with the Rio Conventions requirements

³ For the Environmental Economist, two Public Administration REDD+ Specialists, the Rio Conventions (FCCC, CCD, CBD) Specialists, and the Environmental Sociologist.

Despite the difficulties encountered during the year, 2016 has seen some notable achievements. The key ones include the:

- Establishment of the National REDD+ Committee. The PMU has already delivered appointment letters signed by the REDD+ Focal point (Mr Channel Iroi) to the committee members. The next step is to have discussion with Permanent Secretary of MoFR on the way forward for the committee. The establishment of the committee marks the fulfilment of activity 1.1.2 of the project and partial fulfilment of output 1.1 in general.
- The formal launching of the National REDD+ Website administered by MoFR and funded by the project. This event took place at the Solomon Kitano Mendana Hotel on the 24th of June 2016 and this marks the fulfilment of output 3.4 of the project. See **Attachment 1** for an article on the launch published by Island Sun newspaper.
- Successful and completion of the environmental education module and high school teacher material.
- The project participation in the world environment day held this year on the 8 of June. During the event, questions on the Rio Conventions and REDD+ has been asked with prizes awarded for the right answer. The PMU has also shared with the public, awareness materials (especially brochures) it develops on the project itself, REDD+, and the Rio Conventions as required under activity 3.2.3. Participation in this event is mainly to raise awareness on the project activities and objective, some of the good community practices to safeguard the environment in the phase of climate change, and general information on what REDD+ is all about and why the country has decided to engage in it. This is part of fulfilling output 3.2⁴ which aims at strategically raising the awareness of the project activities and its significance to the country's effort in adapting and mitigating climate change.

Figure below shows the PM sharing the price money for one of the student winners of the quiz questions asked during the event.



Source: CB2 PMU

⁴ Public awareness campaign, survey and education materials. This output includes a number of activities that strategically organise awareness raising activities of the project.

(ii) The progress to date on the overall project implementation

To ensure continuous implementation of the project activities, the PMU has taken the initiative to implement several activities some of which resulted in the achievements highlighted above. Table 1 below provides a summary of the on-going activities which are expected to be completed first quarter of 2017.

Table 1: summary of ongoing activities initiated by the PMU and is expected to completed first quarter of 2017.

Related Output	Project Activities	Progress
1.1	1.1.1: Strengthen organizational capacities of the REDD+ Implementation Unit	<p>As part of the project support rendered to the MoFR-RIU, in terms of institutional strengthening, the project's Environmental Economist as required under his TOR (under deliverable 1) has already develop and submit:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Policy on REDD+ economics, benefits sharing etc. • REDD+ economic models on appropriate mechanisms • Report on financial mechanisms that could be used in the Solomon Islands for benefit sharing and incentive mechanisms for the greater uptake of REDD+. <p>These reports have already been shared with key Government officials from the three main implementing partner ministries (MECDM, MAL, MoFR) for their inputs.</p> <p><u>Next step</u> As soon as feedbacks are received the drafts will be finalised and will be presented again during a planned wider stakeholder consultation expected to be hosted early February next year.</p>
	1.1.2: Formally establish the National REDD+ Committee and Focal Points	<p>Formal letter of appointment has already been delivered to committee members.</p> <p><u>Next step</u> Discuss with PS MoFR (the chairman of the committee) on way forward for the committee. The discussion is expected to be done in February 2017.</p>
1.2	1.2.1: Develop analytical framework for Rio Convention obligations into sector planning	<p>This is deliverable 1 of the Environment and Customary Law Specialist. A draft has been submitted and already reviewed by the PMU.</p> <p><u>Next step</u> This will be send shortly to the three key ministries technical people and UNDP for their inputs. The consultant will then incorporate the inputs and finalise it. This is expected to be finalised by the end of January 2017.</p>
	1.2.2: Convene expert working group to integrate conventions into	<p>The establishment of these working groups is actually deliverable 1 of the REDD+ Specialist. The TORs of these working groups has already been submitted and widely</p>

	forest sector planning	<p>reviewed by the PMU, UNDP, SIG, GEF and the project International Technical Advisor. The TORs is already in its draft final form and is ready to be finalised. As a result, payment for this deliverable is already released.</p> <p><u>Next step</u> The Consultant to finalise and submit the final TORs to the PMU. Expected date of submission is end January 2017.</p>
	1.2.3: Convene expert working group to integrate conventions into agriculture sector planning	
	1.2.4: Convene expert working group to integrate conventions into provincial development plan	
1.3	1.3.2: Identify best practices and instruments to pilot and implement REDD+ Roadmap	<p>This is deliverable 2 of the REDD+ Specialist. A draft report has already been submitted and reviewed by the PMU.</p> <p><u>Next step</u> PMU to send the revised and updated version of this report to UNDP and the Government for their inputs. Expected timeframe for this is third first week of March 2017.</p>
2.1	2.1.1: Develop safeguards framework integrating Rio Conventions and REDD+ safeguards	<p>This is part of the Environmental Safeguard Specialist and the Social Safeguard and Gender Specialist deliverable 1. The Reports they currently produce will inform the development of the safeguards framework when the Government decide to. Both have already submitted their draft which is also already reviewed by the PMU with commentary from UNDP, SIG and the project International Technical Specialist.</p> <p><u>Next step</u> The consultants to finalise the reports and submit to PMU for project board approval. Expected timeframe for submission first week February 2017.</p>
3.2	3.3.3: Prepare comprehensive public awareness implementation plan	<p>This is deliverable 1 of the Community Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist. A draft has already been submitted and reviewed by the PMU, UNDP, SIG and the International technical specialist.</p> <p><u>Next step</u> Consultant to finalise and submit to PMU for approval by project board during the board sitting in January 2017.</p>
	3.2.4: Prepare and integrate, as appropriate, an education module that focuses on the global environment for high schools into the high school teaching curricula. This module should be designed	<p>Based on the initial project board discussion held early February this year, further discussion has been pursued by the PMU with Solomon Islands National University (SINU) purposely to collaborate and implement activity 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 of the project.</p> <p>On 27 of April, a Letter of Agreement (LoA) has been signed by UNDP on behalf of the project and University. The Agreement is for SINU to develop an education module on REDD+ and Rio Conventions and a teacher resource guide hence fulfil activity 3.2.4 and 3.2.5 of the project. Since then the development of</p>

	<p>to help students think critically about the complex social, economic, and environmental issues affecting The Solomon Islands, the surrounding region, and the global community as a whole.</p>	<p>these materials has been progressing well.</p> <p>See Attachment 2 for an Islands Sun News article on the signing ceremony which took place at the SINU's Vice Chancellor's office.</p> <p>As per the LOA the first and second tranche payments has already been released.</p> <p>The draft final materials have already been submitted.</p>
	<p>3.2.5: Prepare and integrate, as appropriate, an education module that provides links between global environmental priorities and national legislation for inclusion within the Environmental Sciences course at Solomon Island National University (SINU).</p>	<p><u>Next step</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Release of the third and final tranche upon submission of the hard copies. • SINU to commissioned the materials. • Training of teachers on the materials.

(iii) Funds spent on the implementation

The Approved budget at the beginning of the year is USD 598,500.00. Since then two revisions have been done. At first the budget was reduced to USD 345,000.00 and then later to USD 278,625 in December.

The key reason underpinning these revisions is the delay in the recruitment process of the project consultants. All of the consultants only managed to signed their contracts with UNDP in October this year.

The late recruitment has resulted in most of the consultants' deliverable being pushed forward to 2017. Much cannot be done during the month of November and December as most of the key implementing partner ministries officials are away attending the UNFCCC Conference of Parties (COP) meetings whilst some have already taken their holiday leaves. This necessitates the need for the revision as a larger part of the budget are to pay for the consultant fees on deliverables they produce.

The table below provides a summary of the funds spent for the whole year⁵. Note the remaining GEF funds are brought forward to be used in 2017. This is already factored in the 2017 Budget and AWP.

Table 2: summary of funds spent in 2016

Outputs	Funds Spent from Jan-to date 2016 (USD)	Brief explanation
Output 1.1	\$ 22,762	These fund comprise of purchase of the new laptop, UNDP Cost recovery, and consultancy fees due to the international technical specialist and the web-designer
Output 1.2	\$ 22,713	Funds used to pay for the Environment and Customary law specialist deliverable 1
Output 1.3	\$ 38,330	Funds used to pay for Environmental Economist deliverable 1
Output 2.1	\$ 44,003.55	Funds used mainly for the Safeguard Specialist deliverable 1
Output 2.2	\$ 39,755.66	Funds used mainly for adverts of ICs on Solomon Star newspaper
Output 3.1	\$ 0.00	
Output 3.2	\$ 43,941.34	Funds used mainly for tranche 2 payment of SINU and deliverable 1 of Community Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement Specialist
Output 3.3	\$ 0.00	
Output 3.4	\$ 4,384.13	
Output 4.1	\$ 78,819.76	These funds are used for the Telekom bills, salaries, UNDP cost recovery, sundry, and internet bills
Total	\$ 291, 997.76	

(iv) Challenges faced and available opportunities

Carrying on from the 2015 experience, in 2016 the key challenge faced remains the unavailability of right people with the right skills to carry on the project's consultancy roles so as the time taken to recruit them. As already highlighted above the consultants are only recruited in October and this has huge impacts on the project implementation as most of the

⁵ Source: Project Budget Balance as of 31st December 2015.

project activities are delayed and pushed forward for next year. Apart from that implementation has slowly been progressing. This can be verified in table 1 provided above.

In terms of the time taken for recruitment, part of the delay comes from the slowness in the UNDP bureaucratic process to procure goods and services. However, given the consultants are already on board, the PMU is looking to further enhance its collaboration with UNDP to ensure goods and services required for each project activities are sourced and procured on time in 2017.

Also the time taken to receive feedbacks from both UNDP and Government counter parts has been the other issues of concern. There have been very little feedbacks, commentaries and inputs received on the reports (which are the deliverables) produced by the project consultants. On the contrary, there has been very few people within UNDP and the Government who are committed in providing their inputs. The project unit really appreciate that and is looking to strengthened the relationship with these key individuals to ensure their continuous feedbacks.

Table 3 below provides an overview of the challenges discussed and how they have been and will be mitigate in 2017.

Table 3: Mitigating the challenges

Challenges	Category	Mitigation measure
1. Bureaucratic process and limited capacity challenges		
<u>UNDP</u> Delays in procurement within UNDP – Honiara sub-office resulting in long delays in procuring of goods and services essential for moving the project forward.	High	A procurement plan has already been developed to address this issue. Initial discussion to be convened with the Project Assistant and UNDP for him to spent at least two days in a week with UNDP staff on procurement issues of the project.
<u>SIG</u> Competing for priority with other UNDP Projects and Donor Agencies – All projects demanding time and effort from a limited pool of officers within the Government and partner agencies. This drags the time taken to provide feedbacks.	High	Organize face to face meeting with them to update and discuss issues at stake. Convene Quarterly meetings and share the quarterly reports with MECDM, MoFR & MAL PSs and directors to update them on progress as well as rallying their support for the project.
2. Political will challenge		

<p>SIG</p> <p>Change in Government or minister in MoFR is volatile.</p>	<p>High</p>	<p>This is beyond everyone's control. Liaising with PSs of MECDM and MoFR to monitor the situation.</p>
<p>3. Project life</p>		
<p>The project ends June 30 next year. This poses a lot of challenge to try and implement approximately 95% of the project activities which are still outstanding.</p>	<p>Medium</p>	<p>Initiate discussion with SIG, UNDP and GEF on a possible extension.</p>

Opportunities

The current review of the Forest Resource Timber Utilisation (FRTU) Act and Environment Act 1998 provides a platform of opportunity for the project to have a greater impact on important legal frameworks which directly regulates the country's forest resources and its environment. That is if the key recommendations provided by some of the project consultants are mainstream into these laws. These key areas include:

in the reports produced by the can have a The key areas of opportunity and to which the project unit will be focusing on includes:

- Collaborating with PS MoFR to ensure there is a strong link between the FRTU Act and Development consent process in the Environment Act. The Reports produced by the project's consultants for example the safeguard specialists will be used as the basis for this proposal.
- Collaborate with PS MECDM on certain sections identified by project that needs strengthening of the Environment Act.

Annex 1: Island sun article on the REDD+ Website launch

UNDP WILL CONTINUE TO ASSIST SI IN REDD+ PROGRAMME: COUNTRY MANAGER KUBOTA

BY SAMIE WAIKORI | June 27, 2016 (ref: <http://theislandsun.com/undp-will-continue-assist-si-redd-programme-country-manager-kubota/>)



UNITED NATION Development Program (UNDP) office in the country will continue to work more closely with the Government and people of Solomon Islands in the implementation of the REDD+ Roadmap in the country.

UNDP Country Manager, Azusa Kubota told this when explaining UNDP's relationship with Solomon Islands emphasizing that UNDP's partnership with the government of Solomon Islands goes back many years.

She said during the launch of the REDD+ Programme Website under the Ministry of Forest and Research over the weekend, that three years after REDD+ emerged from the 2007 13th UNFCCC COP in Bali, in February 2010 Solomon Islands joined the UN-REDD Programme.

Kubota added that this partnership is still maintained as there are lots of collaborations between the two institutions in addressing the issues of RED+ Programme in the country and other issues.

However, explaining the issue of REDD+ she said REDD+ has been widely recognized for many years as a unique opportunity for developing countries to reduce emissions from forest lands, and to invest in low-carbon pathways to sustainable development.

"REDD+ stands for Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation. And the + sign refers to the role of conservation, sustainable management of forests and enhancement of forest carbon stocks.

“Perhaps, REDD+ is not only about reducing emission by tinkering around the edges of natural resource management.

“It is a transformational initiative which aims to advance every strand of sustainable development for current and future generations of humanity and for the planet.

“REDD+ has a great significant in the context of the post 2015 global agenda as it is vital for building resilience to disasters and for building better futures for the world’s poor,” Kubota said.

She stated that achieving such transformational calls for strong and visionary leadership.

She added that Solomon Island can be and should be a pioneer in showing the rest of the world how REDD+ can be done in tackling climate change and to advance sustainable development and a transformational post 2015 agenda.

“UNDP is grateful for the partnership and looks forward to work closely with national partners in making contributions domestically and internationally to the achievement of the sustainable development goals.”

ANNEX 2: SINU-UNDP LOA SIGNING CEREMONY

SINU AND UNDP SEAL AGREEMENT TO DEVELOP ENVIRONMENT STUDIES MODULE

BY BEN BILUA | April 29, 2016 (ref: <http://theislandsun.com/sinu-undp-seal-agreement-develop-environment-studies-module/>)



THE Vice-Chancellor of Solomon Islands National University (SINU) and Country Representative of United Nation Development Programme (UNDP) to Solomon Islands have sealed an agreement to develop an environmental module aimed at improving awareness and understanding of environmental issues affecting the country.

Dr Glyn Galo and Ms Azusa Kubota signed the Letter of Agreement (LOA) yesterday to officially announce the beginning of the agreement.

Speaking during the signing Ceremony, Ms Kubota said the environmental module will enhance high school teachers with effective resource guide to advocate and promote global environmental issues affecting Solomon Islands.

She said SINU was identified as a suitable partner to develop an education module to be taught as part of the university's environment programme, as well as a teacher resources guide to be used in high schools throughout the country.

Ms Kubota stressed that the module will enable students to think critically about why global environmental issues especially global warming is a concern and how it affects people's lives and what people can do as global citizens to mitigate the impacts.

She further explained that the resource guide will provide the teachers with information related to the critical environmental topics facilitating the sharing of useful environmental information amongst high school students throughout the country.

Ms Kubota is confident that the module will broaden the knowledge of students and teachers with some good community practices that can be applied and scaled up in local communities to help safeguard the country's environment.

“This model will be a great instrument to assist teachers in the rural areas who lack access to well-resourced libraries and internet to get further background materials useful in teaching students,” she added.

Meanwhile, Ms Kubota said the partnership aims to improve awareness and understanding of environmental issues affecting people’s day to day life.

She stressed that the signing of the LOA marks a strategic partnership between SINU, UNDP and Solomon Islands Government.

Ms Kubota said UNDP through its vibrant partnership with focal Ministries have been supporting the Solomon Islands Government with plans and strategies to address environmental issues in the country.

She reiterated that the agreement signed between UNDP and SINU demonstrates the ongoing partnership Solomon Islands Government and UNPD share over the past years.

Ms Kubota said UNDP, through the support of Integrating Global Environment Commitments in investment and development decision making project, commonly referred to as the IGECIDDM project, has supported the Solomon Islands government through strengthening of government’s institutional capacities for improved implementation of the MEAs stipulated in the Rio Convention.

She said part of the project is to strengthen the development of consent process by mainstreaming the Rio Conventions into process and promoting public awareness understanding the REDD+ as a strategy to meet the Rio Convention.

Ms Kubota acknowledged the leadership demonstrated by the Solomon Islands government at the forefront, fighting to address environment issues.

She also salutes Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology, Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock, Ministry of Forest and Research and the Ministry of Development Planning and Aid Coordination for delivering technical support in implementing the project.

On the same note, Ms Kubota wishes SINU the best in developing the module and the teacher resource guide to achieve its intended purpose.

