



# Fiji Forest Policy



**Workshop on Mainstreaming Gender Issues Into Forest Policies**

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# Presentation Outline

- Background
- Overview of the Fiji Forest Policy
- How gender perspectives have or have not been integrated into the policy
- Initiatives to support gender equality into the Policy
- Challenges /gaps with regards to gender mainstreaming in forest policy
- Conclusion and Recommendations to address the challenges



# Background

- 1950 First national forest policy which was approved by the Legislative Assembly
- 1953 Endorsement of the Forest Act (viewed forest management primarily for timber production)
- 1988 Forest sector review (initiated changes in forest legislation)
- 1990 Review of the Forest Act
- 1992 Forest Decree (replaced Forest Act)-taking into account social, economic, environmental, cultural and political developments)
- 2003 Need to redefine forest policy (to reflect the adoption of SFM and to ensure the full and successful implementation of current strategic directions and landowners aspirations on the management of their resources. Focus on SFM, increased landowner aspiration, CC and globalisation, global concern for the environment and wider stakeholder consultation.
- 2004 Review of Forest Policy
- 2005 Endorsement of the RLUP (framework for Fiji Forest Policy on sustainable land use)
- 2007 Forest Policy approved and endorsed



# WHY A FOREST POLICY FOR FIJI AND THE NEED FOR REVIEW?







# The need for a Forest Policy for Fiji

- Fiji is mainly a country of agriculture & forest land with expanding industrial developments.
- The process and rate of destruction of Fiji's natural resources is a concern.
- Deforestation is largely due to commercial and subsistence agricultural activities and cultural shifting cultivation. Logging plays a key role in opening up access, that starts of a chain of other actions leading up to forest Degradation and finally deforestation
- To manage the change in forest development, it is essential to have in place an overall, broad, long term policy & plan. **(this would indicate the direction in which major forestry developments should proceed)**





# Why review the Forest Policy?

- Careful planning and management of the use of Fiji's forests are important to ensure that the values supplied by forest are not threatened by development
- Need to balance environmental protection and economic development through SFM
- Need to focus on natural forests and plantation forest (pines and mahogany). Proper planning and regulations to ensure sustainable harvest for timber
- Continued decline in log production from both indigenous and planted forest due to over logging. Need for detailed forest inventory and guideline to determine sustainable logging
- Formulation of Fiji's Rural Land Use Policy on sustainable land use. Need to review the Forest Policy which was developed in the 50s
- The first forest policy is out-dated, initially focussed on timber production and the need to address the requirements of the forestry sectors to focus on SFM, increased landowner aspirations, climate change and globalization.
- Policy reviewed in 2004 and endorsed by cabinet in 2007



# **PROCESS OF REVIEWING THE FOREST POLICY**

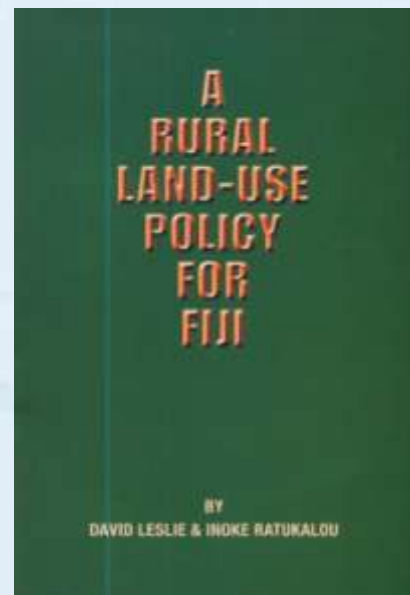


# Formulation

2004 SPC/GIZ Pacific German Regional Forestry Project collaborating with Forestry Department welcomed the opportunity and supported the review of the forest policy for Fiji

- Stakeholder consultations
- 2 Stakeholder workshops
- Consultations with divisional Forestry Departments
- Draft Policy statement

2007 Cabinet approval







# Fiji Forest Policy Statement 2007

- Goal is to “ **ensure the sustainable management of Fiji’s forests to achieve greater social, environmental and economic benefit for current and future generations**”
- Policy areas:
  - Conservation of forests and biological resources
  - Integrated forest management
  - Resource owners and community involvement in sustainable forest management
  - Upgrading of forest industries and promotion of high quality products
  - Institutional framework and human resources
- Policy objectives, policies and activities are directed towards forest management, conservation, development, utilization, research, extension, training, education and administration



# MAINSTREAMING GENDER INTO THE POLICY PROCESS





- **Policy goal**

- Sustainable management of Fiji's forest to maintain their natural potential and to achieve greater social, economic and environmental benefits for current and future generations

- **Policy area**

- Resource owners and community involvement in sustainable forest management

- **Guiding principles**

- Conservation and sustainable use of forest resources is a collective responsibility of all levels of government, the private sector, resource users and landowners
- Forest management should be implemented in a way that local communities are actively involved in its planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation
- Through active participation in the administration and implementation of SFM, resources owners should receive stable income from forest products and diversified employment opportunities.



- The guiding principles broadly refers to resource owners, stakeholders and local communities
- The policy does not specifically outline how the forestry sector aims to enhance the involvement of women in forest management
- Gender has been identified to be vital in the process and to be considered in the next review
- Gender addressed during their community conservation and climate change projects





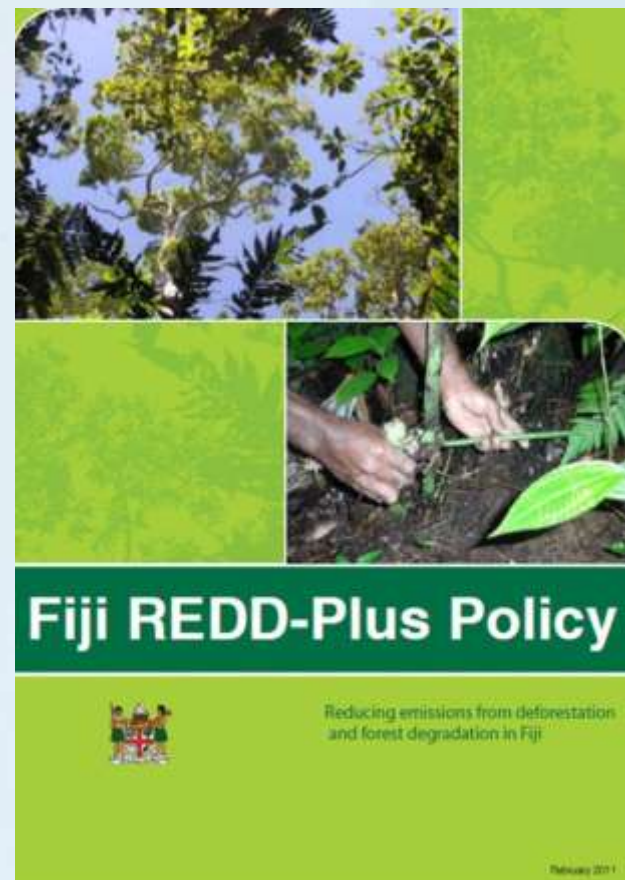
# **INITIATIVES TO SUPPORT GENDER EQUALITY INTO FOREST POLICY**



# Fiji REDD-Plus Policy

Fiji recognises REDD-plus as an opportunity to provide incentives to

- protect its forest ecosystems.
  - strengthen the socio-economic status of its forest resource owners
  - contribute towards global efforts to reduce ghg emission
  - identifies appropriate scope, scale, distribution of benefits, institutional support, and safeguards for the implementation of REDD-plus
- Policy development
- Phase 1- Policy and institutional framework
  - Phase 2\_ Development of national REDD + strategy and pilot sites





## Community based forest management

- Forestry Department support s community management of natural forest and support management licenses based on fair benefit sharing arrangements
- Resource owners and communities will be supported in the planning, implementation and monitoring of SFM

## National Forest Programme

Multi stakeholder dialogue process in the formulation and implementation of NFP





## Traditional Medicine Workshop

- encourage the documentation and promotion of indigenous knowledge about medicinal plants.
- In response to a request from women, the Forestry Department began to promote the identification and awareness of traditional medicinal plants. A non-governmental organization (NGO), Wainimate, also promotes traditional medicinal plants.

## Women and Forest Workshop

- identified values of trees and forests such as fruits, nuts, husks, leaves, wood, trees to supply craft materials and for medicines
- Biological diversity are important to women, their families and their communities







- **International Women's Day**

- Panel discussion on the role of women in integrated forest management
- Women have specialized knowledge of forests, such as which plants are suitable for medicinal purposes.
- Men who make the most important decisions on forest management, while women's voices are not properly heard.
- Vital to understand how a given forest management project will affect men and women differently in the long run, and to ensure that women's opinions are taken into consideration.
- Tree planting programme organised by Fiji Women's Rights Movement





# **CHALLENGES TO GENDER MAINSTREAMING**



# Situation of women/gender in agriculture and forestry

- Agriculture and forestry -traditionally believed as male dominant industry
- Women contribute to labour on family farming, small scale business such as floriculture and food processing
- Access to land ownership, in most cases, women are excluded from their indigenous inheritance systems
- indigenous hierarchies in the communities, especially in rural areas, have remained and male members have been dominating decision making processes in the communities.
- Although women are involved in community forestry, male still dominate the decision making process



# Challenges

- Gender mainstreaming has not been sensitized and practiced sufficiently
- Any gender-inclusive practice in Fiji may have difficulties in terms of getting understandings from the people of why gender-inclusive approaches are essential and how the approaches are practiced.
- People's perspectives on gender are various. One of that diversity is the mixed ethnicities in Fiji. Ethnicities in Fiji have their own religion, customs, historical backgrounds, permission and allowances given by the government.





# Conclusion/Reccomendation

- Addressing the role of women in forestry is vital to sustainable forest management
- Women traditionally have specialised knowledge of forests eg which wood is best for firewood and plants for medicinal purposes. But often men make important decisions on forest management, and women's voices are not properly heard
- Important to examine the different roles of men and women in forest management programmes, how forestry projects will affect both women and men to ensure that women's opinions are taken into consideration.
- Need to encourage the participation of women in the planning and management of forestry activities



# THANK YOU

