



GEF-6 PROJECT IDENTIFICATION FORM (PIF)

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

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PART I: PROJECT INFORMATION

Project Title:	EREPA - Ensuring resilient ecosystems and representative protected areas in the Solomon Islands		
Country(ies):	Solomon Islands	GEF Project ID: ¹	9846
GEF Agency(ies):	IUCN (select) (select)	GEF Agency Project ID:	P02461
Other Executing Partner(s):	SPREP	Submission Date:	
GEF Focal Area(s):	Multi-focal Areas	Project Duration (Months)	48
Integrated Approach Pilot	IAP-Cities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Commodities <input type="checkbox"/> IAP-Food Security <input type="checkbox"/>	Corporate Program: SGP <input type="checkbox"/>	
Name of parent program:	[if applicable]	Agency Fee (\$)	442,653

A. INDICATIVE FOCAL AREA STRATEGY FRAMEWORK AND OTHER PROGRAM STRATEGIES²

Objectives/Programs (Focal Areas, Integrated Approach Pilot, Corporate Programs)	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
		GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
BD-4 Program 9 (select) (select)	GEFTF	2,016,125	3,390,000
BD-1 Program 1 (select) (select)	GEFTF	1,005,991	1,800,000
BD-1 Program 2 (select) (select)	GEFTF	1,005,240	1,800,000
LD-3 Program 4 (select) (select)	GEFTF	891,008	1,520,000
(select) (select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select) (select)	(select)		
(select) (select) (select)	(select)		
Total Project Cost		4,918,364	8,510,000

B. INDICATIVE PROJECT DESCRIPTION SUMMARY

Project Objective: Effective ecosystem management for healthy, complementary networks of protected, productive and restored landscapes in Guadalcanal, Malaita, Rennell-Bellona and Temotu						
Project Components	Financing Type ³	Project Outcomes	Project Outputs	Trust Fund	(in \$)	
					GEF Project Financing	Co-financing
Component 1 Integrated terrestrial ecosystem management and restoration	TA	1.1 Stakeholders and planning mechanisms use EREPA outputs for improved management of land, forest and water resources. (Indicator: The degree to which sector policies and regulatory frameworks incorporate	1.1.1 Institutional partnerships formalized between government bodies and key sector partners. 1.1.2 Provincial scale land characterization studies completed.	GEFTF	1,903,946	3,390,000

¹ Project ID number will be assigned by GEFSEC and to be entered by Agency in subsequent document submissions.

² When completing Table A, refer to the excerpts on [GEF 6 Results Frameworks for GETF, LDCF and SCCF](#) and [CBIT guidelines](#).

³ Financing type can be either investment or technical assistance.

		<p>biodiversity considerations and implement the regulations.)</p> <p>1.2 Strengthened community capacity in harmonizing livelihood needs, income generation and good land management practices.</p> <p>(Indicator: Production landscapes that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their management as demonstrated by objective data.)</p>	<p>1.1.3 A standardized data platform(s) provides information from existing sources and new studies.</p> <p>1.1.4 Communication and outreach programme designed and delivered.</p> <p>1.1.5 3 spatially based local land use plans are negotiated, produced and implemented.</p> <p>1.2.1 6 to 10 local communities coached in diversifying their land use activities, enterprises, and income sources.</p> <p>1.2.2 A good practice forest use and restoration manual developed and applied in 3 demonstration sites with results documented.</p> <p>1.2.3 An income generation model based on sustainable land management and degraded forest management is developed and trialed in 2 demonstration sites.</p> <p>1.2.4 The project monitoring and evaluation system is in place providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcome and output targets.</p>			
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<p>Component 2</p> <p>Declaration of terrestrial protected areas and their effective management</p>	<p>TA</p>	<p>2.1 Increase in protected area coverage incorporating biogeographically representative, critical ecosystems and key habitats.</p> <p>(Indicator: Area of terrestrial and marine ecosystems and number of threatened species.)</p> <p>2.2 Effective, equitable governance and management occurring and sustained by capacity building, reliable funding and viable incentives.</p> <p>(Indicator: Protected area management effectiveness score as recorded by METT.)</p> <p>(Indicator: Funding gap for management of protected areas systems as recorded by protected area financing scorecards.)</p>	<p>2.1.1 A participatory program designed and implemented assisting communities, CBOs and provincial government in formulating protected area proposals.</p> <p>2.1.2 Declaration of at least 200,000 hectares of protected areas across four (4) provinces with landowner consent.</p> <p>2.2.1 One model protected area management plan is produced to guide the completion of four specific protected area management plans with on the ground management and monitoring actions occurring.</p> <p>2.2.2 An approved protected areas financing plan for annual budget and resource needs.</p> <p>2.2.3 Complementary livelihood activities are introduced and trialed as integral elements of effective management in the four protected areas.</p>	<p>GEFTF</p>	<p>1,930,000</p>	<p>3,600,000</p>
<p>Component 3</p> <p>Improved land management in rural production landscapes</p>	<p>TA</p>	<p>3.1 The environmental quality and livelihood benefits of production landscapes are sustained.</p> <p>(Indicator: Application of integrated natural resource management (INRM) practices in wider landscapes.)</p> <p>(Indicator:</p>	<p>3.1.1 Land condition inventory assembled for selected landscapes in three (3) provinces.</p> <p>3.1.2 Legislative review processes establish a supportive contemporary framework for rural land use planning.</p>	<p>GEFTF</p>	<p>850,210</p>	<p>1,520,000</p>

		Demonstration results strengthening cross sector integration of SLM.)	3.1.3 100 government extension staff , CBO people and landowners trained in conservation agriculture and agro forestry practices.				
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
	(select)			(select)			
Subtotal						4,684,156	8,510,000
Project Management Cost (PMC) ⁴				GEFTF		234,208	
Total Project Cost						4,918,364	8,510,000

For multi-trust fund projects, provide the total amount of PMC in Table B, and indicate the split of PMC among the different trust funds here: ()

C. INDICATIVE SOURCES OF **CO-FINANCING** FOR THE PROJECT BY NAME AND BY TYPE, IF AVAILABLE

Sources of Co-financing	Name of Co-financier	Type of Co-financing	Amount (\$)
Recipient Government	Government of Solomon Islands, Ministries of: Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology Forests and Research Agriculture and Livestock	In-kind	6,810,000
Donor Agency	BIOPAMA project	In-kind	700,000
Donor Agency	PEBACC project	In-kind	500,000
Others	SPC/GIZ climate change and forest conservation	In-kind	500,000
(select)		(select)	
(select)		(select)	
Total Co-financing			8,510,000

D. INDICATIVE TRUST FUND RESOURCES REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), COUNTRY(IES), FOCAL AREA AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS ^{a)}

GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/ Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					GEF Project Financing (a)	Agency Fee (b) ^{b)}	Total (c)=a+b
IUCN	GEFTF	Solomon Islands	Biodiversity	(select as applicable)	4,027,356	362,462	4,389,818
IUCN	GEFTF	Solomon Islands	Land Degradation	(select as applicable)	891,008	80,191	971,199
(select)	(select)		(select)	(select as applicable)			0

⁴ For GEF Project Financing up to \$2 million, PMC could be up to 10% of the subtotal; above \$2 million, PMC could be up to 5% of the subtotal. PMC should be charged proportionately to focal areas based on focal area project financing amount in Table D below.

(select)	(select)		(select)	(select as applicable)			0
(select)	(select)		(select)	(select as applicable)			0
Total GEF Resources					4,918,364	442,653	5,361,017

a) Refer to the [Fee Policy for GEF Partner Agencies](#).

E. PROJECT PREPARATION GRANT (PPG)⁵

Is Project Preparation Grant requested? Yes No If no, skip item E.

PPG AMOUNT REQUESTED BY AGENCY(IES), TRUST FUND, COUNTRY(IES) AND THE PROGRAMMING OF FUNDS

Project Preparation Grant amount requested: \$150,000					PPG Agency Fee: 13,500		
GEF Agency	Trust Fund	Country/ Regional/Global	Focal Area	Programming of Funds	(in \$)		
					PPG (a)	Agency Fee ⁶ (b)	Total c = a + b
IUCN	GEF TF	Solomon Islands	Biodiversity	(select as applicable)	122,826	11,054	133,880
IUCN	GEF TF	Solomon Islands	Land Degradation	(select as applicable)	27,174	2,446	29,620
(select)	(select)		(select)	(select as applicable)			0
Total PPG Amount					150,000	13,500	163,500

⁵ PPG requested amount is determined by the size of the GEF Project Financing (PF) as follows: Up to \$50k for PF up to \$2m (for MSP); up to \$100k for PF up to \$3m; \$150k for PF up to \$6m; \$200k for PF up to \$10m; and \$300k for PF above \$10m. On an exceptional basis, PPG amount may differ upon detailed discussion and justification with the GEFSEC.

⁶ PPG fee percentage follows the percentage of the Agency fee over the GEF Project Financing amount requested.

F. PROJECT'S TARGET CONTRIBUTIONS TO GLOBAL ENVIRONMENTAL BENEFITS⁷

Provide the expected project targets as appropriate.

Corporate Results	Replenishment Targets	Project Targets
1. Maintain globally significant biodiversity and the ecosystem goods and services that it provides to society	Improved management of landscapes and seascapes covering 300 million hectares	50,000 Hectares
2. Sustainable land management in production systems (agriculture, rangelands, and forest landscapes)	120 million hectares under sustainable land management	10,000 Hectares
3. Promotion of collective management of transboundary water systems and implementation of the full range of policy, legal, and institutional reforms and investments contributing to sustainable use and maintenance of ecosystem services	Water-food-ecosystems security and conjunctive management of surface and groundwater in at least 10 freshwater basins;	0 Number of freshwater basins
	20% of globally over-exploited fisheries (by volume) moved to more sustainable levels	0 Percent of fisheries, by volume
4. Support to transformational shifts towards a low-emission and resilient development path	750 million tons of CO _{2e} mitigated (include both direct and indirect)	0 metric tons
5. Increase in phase-out, disposal and reduction of releases of POPs, ODS, mercury and other chemicals of global concern	Disposal of 80,000 tons of POPs (PCB, obsolete pesticides)	0 metric tons
	Reduction of 1000 tons of Mercury	0 metric tons
	Phase-out of 303.44 tons of ODP (HCFC)	0 ODP tons
6. Enhance capacity of countries to implement MEAs (multilateral environmental agreements) and mainstream into national and sub-national policy, planning financial and legal frameworks	Development and sectoral planning frameworks integrate measurable targets drawn from the MEAs in at least 10 countries	Number of Countries: 1
	Functional environmental information systems are established to support decision-making in at least 10 countries	Number of Countries: 1

PART II: PROJECT JUSTIFICATION

1. *Project Description.* Briefly describe: 1) the global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed; 2) the baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects, 3) the proposed alternative scenario, GEF focal area⁸ strategies, with a brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project, 4) [incremental/additional cost reasoning](#) and expected contributions from the baseline, the GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF, CBIT and [co-financing](#); 5) [global environmental benefits](#) (GEFTF) and/or [adaptation benefits](#) (LDCF/SCCF); and 6) innovation, sustainability and potential for scaling up.

1.1 Global environmental and/or adaptation problems, root causes and barriers that need to be addressed:

The Solomon Islands is a vast archipelago with a number of rugged, mountainous islands of considerable size relative to most Pacific Islands countries. The country's tropical humid climate, geological and tectonic history and diverse range of islands of varying age and development have shaped the islands' rich biodiversity. The islands and their surrounding waters are well documented in terms of their diverse and largely pristine ecosystems and unique flora and fauna of international value and concern. The Annex to this PIF identifies the Key Biodiversity Areas in the Solomon Islands (East Melanesian Islands Biodiversity Hotspots Ecosystem Profile, 2012). Given the high dependence on farming and agroforestry, maintaining plant and agricultural biodiversity is also vital to the well-being of rural communities.

⁷ Provide those indicator values in this table to the extent applicable to your proposed project. Progress in programming against these targets for the projects per the *Corporate Results Framework* in the [GEF-6 Programming Directions](#), will be aggregated and reported during mid-term and at the conclusion of the replenishment period. There is no need to complete this table for climate adaptation projects financed solely through LDCF, SCCF or CBIT.

⁸ For biodiversity projects, in addition to explaining the project's consistency with the biodiversity focal area strategy, objectives and programs, please also describe which [Aichi Target\(s\)](#) the project will directly contribute to achieving.

Land ownership in Solomon Islands is primarily through customary law with an estimated 83% of the total land area under customary tenure (more than 90% of the forested land area is under customary tenure). Land is normally held by a group or community who are linked by a combination of blood relationship, by residence and/or by contributions to village enterprise. Land-holding groups differ in size between families, villages, clans and tribes. Each group is usually represented by a male member or members, who make decisions relating to land by virtue of their political status in the local community. Inheritance is the main method of land transfer. Land disputes are common and pose significant challenges for rural development. In this context, the participatory involvement of local communities in the design and implementation of the project is imperative (from PPG phase forward).

The country has been the initiator and recipient of numerous environmentally motivated projects in the past and many continue. However, the geographic scale and accessibility constraints means that there remain substantial areas, particularly terrestrial, requiring new and ongoing attention to mitigate pressures associated with steady population growth, internal migration and economic improvement interests. The 1,000 (approx.) islands that constitute the Solomon Islands are home to over 600,000 people, mostly living in rural areas and who are either wholly dependent or partially reliant upon the country's natural resources for their food, water, shelter, livelihood and cultural identity. The island provinces experiencing the greatest pressure trends are Guadalcanal, Malaita and Rennell-Bellona. In particular, Guadalcanal and Malaita (2017) host over 50% of the population of the ten provinces of the Solomon Islands with this trend steadily increasing. The Solomon Islands have the lowest per capita income in the region, and also the youngest population. Incorporating this burgeoning population into a sustainable and productive labour force is a major challenge, not least given the intensive focus and reliance of communities on forest natural resources and agro-ecosystems. Additionally, health and nutrition levels are generally poor.

Widely scattered islands, and their geo-physical composition, results in major development challenges, particularly in the provision of infrastructure, transportation, communication networks and rural development. It also presents hurdles in the delivery of on the ground project results, especially at a national level. Development challenges have been exacerbated by previous (and recurring) natural disasters, as well as by periods of civil unrest which have significantly disrupted government operations and displaced civil society and that continue to exert repercussions. Exposure to the global economy, social and economic transformation and 'modernization' now occurring, is challenging traditional norms such as reciprocity, solidarity and collective support. Consequently, the social conditions which prevail today and recent history in the Solomon Islands need to be carefully considered in designing and implementing projects. For example, there is a strong imperative to engage youth and embrace gender equity in project activities to ensure community acceptance.

The majority of rural communities depend almost exclusively on a mixture of subsistence and cash crop farming, traditional agroforestry, gathering of forest products and fishing on for their food security. Natural forest timber also underpins national revenue generation. Relatively few people are involved directly in the cash economy apart from those that derive monetary income from royalty payments by logging companies or by selling excess agricultural produce. At the national level, the main sources of revenue are also based on forestry and fishing. Forest ecosystems also hold the inherent values of reducing the impacts from extreme natural events (e.g. releasing stored water during drought, protection from peak run off/flash floods from tropical storms, stabilizing steep terrain, reducing soil loss and siltation of coastal reefs) which can cause considerable human and economic losses.

Threats to biodiversity, forests and land resources:

Unsustainable timber harvesting:

The most confronting issue for terrestrial biodiversity conservation and natural forests in the Solomon Islands has been the high rate of timber harvesting, associated poor logging practices and limited post-logging site rehabilitation. While the rates of commercial logging through Felling Licenses are now beginning to plateau (according to official observations), it remains a critical issue due to ongoing local and national reliance on the revenues provided and weak supervision systems for adherence to good practices. The government sets out the principal objectives of the sector's development, being to 'maximize benefits to the country and its people', and ensure sustainable forest

management and the rights of customary owners. In practice, however, many forests do not come under formal management plans and many sites are left without any form of rehabilitation action as most commercial operators are based offshore making them difficult to pursue on compliance matters. Forest restoration work then often defaults to becoming a community responsibility, although without the benefit of any overt revenue streams to support it. Poorly conducted logging operations have negative impacts both socially (e.g. landslides destroying farms and as a source of conflict among communities) and environmentally (e.g. degraded waterways, siltation of coral reefs, fragmentation of forest habitats, loss of mangroves where log ponds are created).

Small scale harvesting for sawn timber production also occurs throughout the Solomon Islands. It is primarily operated by on-site milling techniques and continues to be a main stay of rural livelihoods. It is regulated by the Ministry of Forests and Research (MOFR) through the issuance of Milling Licenses (with sustainability requirements included). Milling Licenses operate at a much reduced scale to commercial Felling Licenses and although their relative impacts on forest loss and condition are minimal, it is important that they are supported in applying good practice regimes that enable livelihood continuity and to support and engender community based forest management. Communities also rely heavily on firewood, the harvesting of which is depleting some forest areas, and mangroves in particular.

At both national and local levels there are limited alternatives to the established and generally reliable revenue streams available from logging (i.e. wage labour, timber sales, royalties). Without intervention, this situation is unlikely to change significantly in the medium term as viable replacement incomes often demands new skills, time investment and may not provide as much income as can be won from logging. Excessive harvest rates are being exacerbated by pressure in some locations to maintain the economic role of the industry at a national level. One example of this is re-entry logging (i.e. logging consecutively in previously logged areas without allowing adequate time for regeneration). This form of excessive exploitation compounds degradation of the forest and land resource base. Pressure to maintain logging rates is also influenced by landowner desires to access the cash revenue (through royalties and employment) available to them for utilisation of their resource. From the perspective of many local Solomon Islanders, logging is the only form of large scale ‘development’ that is available to them and the revenue provided is naturally an enticing and time-proven option.

The agencies responsible for governance of the forest sector are constrained by a lack of political momentum to change forest practices, as well as limited resources with which to implement existing policies and requirements. Effective monitoring of operations and enforcement of license conditions is made difficult by the high numbers of Felling Licenses issued. This puts both upward pressure (from landowners and logging companies) and downward pressure (from politicians) on MOFR to issue licenses at the expense of quality control. To a lesser extent, this also affects the Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) which are required to issue a Development Consent for any new logging operation (i.e. each new Felling License). A key condition of each Felling License is compliance with the Code of Logging Practice, which sets out practical measures for management of in-forest operations. It is widely considered that enforcement of this Code is currently inadequate and could be strengthened through additional inspection visits, community monitoring auditing and active enforcement of penalties for non-compliance.

The legislation governing the forest sector, the Forest Resources and Timber Utilization Act (1969), is currently being amended and if passed, will improve mechanisms required to bring harvesting activity toward more appropriate regimes. However, these statutory processes have been delayed many times before. As a result, ongoing improvement in forest management will continue to be underpinned by public awareness, education, technical support and incentive programs encouraging sustainable forest use practices, agro-forestry, income diversification and augmentation, and forest restoration.

Subsistence agriculture and forest conversion:

Subsistence (shifting) agriculture is practiced throughout the country and, along with fishing, is the main livelihood activity. The main cash crops are cocoa, coconut (copra and oil) and, in some areas, coffee, vanilla, watermelon and kava, most of which are grown at small scale. Community timber production (as distinct to selling logging rights) is

also an important source of income for many communities. Common staples include sweet potato, yam, cassava, banana and taro. Where local populations are increasing, there is a commensurate impact created by additional conversion of natural forest for subsistence agriculture purposes in order to maintain sufficient food supplies and capitalise on larger markets. With higher demands for agricultural products and/or cash income, traditional land use practices of slash-and-burn shifting cultivation can be modified in ways that are not always desirable when undertaken at greater intensities. Less favorable practices include: significantly reduced fallow periods; steeper-slope farming systems that accelerates land degradation (e.g. soil erosion, siltation, and loss of soil fertility); improper crop rotations; unbalanced fertilizer use for quicker economic returns; and poor soil conservation and management practices. The collective impact contributes to degradation of natural forests and lands surrounding natural forests as well as declining crop yields and increased pests and diseases. The Solomon Islands has relatively few large scale commercial agricultural developments, however they do represent a potentially impacting activity for the future if they progressively gain momentum.

Mining:

Although not yet a significant national industry, mining activity in the Solomon Islands could be activated in the future due to the large prospective deposits of gold, copper, nickel and bauxite identified across the country. Temotu and Rennell-Bellona provinces are particularly subject to this scenario. Despite strong interest and intense prospecting, there has only ever been one fully operational mine in the country, which means communities and government agencies have little experience working with the mining sector. In addition, the Solomon Islands government has highlighted their limited capacity to manage the complex demands of regulating, managing and overseeing the mining development process. While mining offers opportunities for economic development, without adequate management and access to information, it also poses direct and urgent threats to natural systems, livelihoods, culture and social well-being. The negative social and environmental impacts of mining are well documented in nearby Papua New Guinea. Without proper policy and planning, access to information and community input, developments like mining have high potential to jeopardize the natural resources upon which most Solomon Islanders depend and conflict with other national aspirations, such as protected area declarations.

Climate change and natural disasters:

Pacific Island countries are some of the most directly affected areas from climate change. Land formations of Solomon Islands consist largely of coral atolls, low lying coral islands, and volcanic islands, all of which are impacted by changing climate and weather patterns and communities are vulnerable to the associated impacts on land and marine resources. The health and survival of Solomon Islands' biodiversity resources are also at risk from climate change, as shifts in temperature and rainfall may result in the disappearance of fragile ecosystems and species. The productivity of food gardens, the growth of traditional staple food crops and reliable water supplies are also high risk areas.

Extreme weather events have been increasingly evident in Solomon Islands, and in recent years people have been severely affected by earthquakes and tsunamis, droughts, floods and cyclones. Destructive storms and associated high rainfall and flooding have physically ruined many communities and laid waste to housing, forests and crops, caused disruption to subsistence livelihood activities and have led to severe shortages of food and sometimes drinking water supply. Although these types of events are a product of global trends that are beyond the influence of small rural communities, the most realistic response is that forests, waterways and cultivation areas should be managed in optimum health condition, in order to offer the highest possible levels of resilience and to reduce susceptibility to changing weather patterns and natural disasters.

Invasive Alien Species:

Logging and other land use practices that create unmanaged disturbances have opened up forested habitat to invasive alien species. In tropical conditions and without natural limiting forces, these modified environments provide ideal locations for weed species (particularly climbing vines) to establish faster and in greater abundance, than native

species regeneration, and significantly impede post-logging or post cultivation recovery of the forest, land and waterway habitats. They prevent the recovery of native species removed or damaged by the land use practice.

Barriers to be addressed.

Barrier 1 - Fragmented inter-governmental coordination

There are a number of national government ministries that share fundamental responsibilities for natural resources and land use planning and decisions. These are the ministries of: Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management, and Meteorology; Forestry and Research; Agriculture and Livestock; Rural Development; Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification. A number of other national ministries also have influence, interests and roles (i.e. planning, health, finance, infrastructure, trade, tourism, education). Provincial administrations then add a further local layer of governmental responsibility and decision making and are often pivotal in deciding, supporting and regulating land use. While staff across these sectors generally have sound informal working relationships and understand their respective roles, well-coordinated responses to land use issues and decisions can be challenging - a situation exacerbated by varying policy and regulatory bases, the minimal resources available to ministry staff and political influences. There is also a need to have coordinated messaging to landowners from natural resource management ministries in order to present and consolidate unified approaches and targets for improved land management.

Barrier 2 - Insufficient baseline information

Baseline information deficiencies are a significant constraint to informed decision making. Some information sets in regular daily use are decades old and there is no guarantee of their quality. Current information concerning vegetation cover, soils and land use and trends is urgently required as is the need to obtain and reveal the large and useful body of current information that is freely available from open sources. Although anecdotal knowledge is often high, there is a need to commit land use related information onto standardized, accessible platforms that allow widespread illustration (particularly spatial) for decision-making. Information that is available is often in singular and/or inaccessible locations, and there is a need to communicate information in an amalgamated way and in up-to-date format. Information on pressures and threats, trends and forecasts are also particular gaps.

Barrier 3 - Lack of knowledge and awareness of the value of biodiversity

Despite the depth of traditional knowledge and management systems, reliance on natural resources and various awareness programs over time, the tried and trusted models for local economic development, agricultural production and local forestry practices exert continuing pressure through the extraction of natural resources or the substitution of natural ecosystems. Although there is general basic awareness about the value, interdependence and functioning of natural systems, the concept of sustainable provision of natural resources under elevated use and extraction pressures, remains a more abstract view or perhaps a more undesirable reality versus decisions about immediate needs. This occurs at civil society level and also at bureaucratic and political levels. Models using nature-based solutions for development, and production that promote the conservation of biodiversity and ecosystems services, are a more sustainable approach.

National attitudinal change, with accompanying practical and technical advice, is required to support positive consideration and uptake of nature-based solutions as a viable pathway to national development goals. There is a significant opportunity to create context-specific communication material, stakeholder awareness campaigns and practical trainings that demonstrate the socio-economic benefits of safeguarding ecosystem goods and services and biodiversity, and how realistic livelihood options can still be maintained. Education, public awareness and the dissemination of local knowledge is highlighted as a priority in all relevant Government policy.

Barrier 4 - Protected area declaration and financing

Declaration: The Protected Areas Act (2010) has not substantially progressed declarations on protected areas since its enactment. Although there are many community-based resource management areas subject to conservation management, formally declared areas of national importance are minimal (one to date of this PIF) and none for terrestrial areas. Reasons for this are not for lack of commitment by the responsible government ministry (MECDM) but more related to: the need to work through customary land tenure systems and boundary confirmations; inter agency consultations; lengthy process familiarization sessions with communities (declaration procedures are quite involved including committee formulation and management plan development); limited testing of the full declaration process; and underlying this, the scarce resources of the MECDM itself.

Given the extent of natural land in the Solomon Islands and its international biodiversity credentials, the presence of a variety of land use pressures and the legislative structures being in place for protected areas declarations, there is a need to capitalize on declaration process lessons to date and to step up the pace of declaration as the principle tool for biodiversity conservation and achievement of national targets. While assessments of priority areas for declaration have already been done, this information needs to be well presented in conjunction with related land attribute maps and information in order to inform other land use decisions. The development of appropriately directed and structured management plans during the protected area declaration process, introduces a need for capacities that are not well developed and trialed in the Solomon Islands.

Financing:

The lack of sustainable finance sources to support protected area work remains one of the most critical barriers. Low or intermittent funding conditions are a major problem at local, provincial and national levels where resources are needed for surveys, site management activity, enforcement, capacity development activities, awareness initiatives and monitoring and reporting. At the provincial government level, the very low institutional capacity to meet conservation mandates is a direct consequence of a lack of staff with conservation responsibilities and associated funding to implement work programs. National government ministries have hugely inadequate budgets to support enough staff to do country-wide field assessments, policy development, planning, community support, consultations, information management, reporting, and to be responsible for national commitments on international agreements. While some communities self-fund customary practices to initiate establishment of small community-conserved areas, they mostly lack the financial resources to scale up their efforts to protect larger areas or to even maintain their smaller site efforts.

Adequate and reliable annual budgetary allocation (including to provincial governments) for conservation and protected area functions, along with other sustainable sources of finance is urgently needed. There is a need to fully identify all relevant costs involved in establishing and maintaining a protected areas network and to determine projected valuations based on various management scenarios. The Protected Areas Act 2010 establishes provisions for a Trust Fund, and this important tool needs to be put into motion through prudent investment management.

Barrier 5 - Low capacity

Local tenure and ownership systems mean that the predominant national model for protecting and managing natural resources revolves around individuals and communities. This will continue to be the case even for declared terrestrial protected areas, which will not be established as centrally-governed public assets in the conventional protected areas sense.

While these traditional governance systems have been generally adequate at very small local scales, they require capacities and skill sets to manage new management imperatives, such as advocacy, financial enterprise and income generation, governance, project design and coordination, participatory processes, enforcement requirements, monitoring, use of new technologies, and being able to scale up activities. Issues such as invasive species and impacts of climate change also represent new challenges that require new skill sets.

Investment in capacity has characteristically been through site specific interventions and less focused on capacity needs or systematic gaps at the national and provincial level. National and provincial government have had minimal

capacity development in undertaking the critical extension work that their roles demand in helping communities adopt and implement sustainable practices. In particular, provincial administrations have prohibitively low capacity, leaving administrative gaps at the village level, often with customary and church leaders attempting to fill the void.

Barrier 6 - Inadequate policy and regulatory framework

There are national processes underway with the aim of improving the broad environmental management agenda and its policy and regulatory basis. While this trajectory is positive, should these processes stall as they have in the past, then lack of suitable policy will remain a major barrier.

1.2 The baseline scenario or any associated baseline projects

Overview:

The main finding of gap analyses undertaken for this GEF-6 PIF is that relevant projects contributing to the baseline scenario are limited by their primary geographic focus and activity sites, thus leaving other provincial areas and local communities lacking necessary resources to respond to equally (or more) pressing environmental problems. This situation is understandable for most environmental improvement projects due to the sheer scale of the Solomon Islands archipelago, the fact that extensive community level interaction is required in every project, and that the critical issues to be addressed are similar right across all provinces. However, project activities done in specific locations do provide useful information and lessons for underpinning and guiding similar activities in other areas and contexts. Examples include: information collection methods; communication materials; consultation processes; capacity gaps; livelihood diversification options; good practice education, and how to sustain momentum and the continuity of activities.

While policy and legislative review is also an objective of existing projects, multifarious administrative and political machinations mean that it is likely that such work will require ongoing attention to produce and maintain suitable frameworks. Basic pre-requisite statutes and regulations for sound environmental management either exist or are currently in the process of amendment through the support of existing projects. The rate or finality point of required amendments is unknown and there is always potential for progress to languish. However, there is an assumption that suitable legislative frameworks will eventually be in place. Notwithstanding this, inadequate enforcement and implementation of statutes and regulations stands in the way of progressing sound and sustainable management of biodiversity, forests and other land based assets.

Added to this situation are national and provincial government ministries lacking capacity and resources to perform their roles and responsibilities under the legislation. Effective synergies between agencies are non-existent or weak and similarly between these and the NGO/CBO sector and private stakeholders. Communities, who retain ultimate ownership and control over forests and land, are not always exercising responsible guardianship for the present and future generations, either because they lack capacity or motivation, or because the collective responsibility for asset use, or returns is being captured by only a few beneficiaries. While enforcement and compliance actions are important, participatory, educational and instructional engagement are also essential tools for improved behaviour.

The Solomon Islands Government is supporting and/or hosting a number of projects designed to address threats to biodiversity, forests and land resources in various locations across the country. Some of the projects are limited to time horizons that finish prior to the intended commencement of this project, and many are focused on study and activity sites other than those that will be selected for this project. Some general overlaps between this project and others are inevitable due to the constancy of the fundamental national environmental problems that projects seek to address, the fact that these problems take significant time scales to arrest and the number of development projects for which the Solomon Islands is a fortunate beneficiary.

Associated Baseline Projects

The key initiatives that provide a baseline scenario for this GEF-6 PIF are outlined as follows:

Regional projects

There are three regional projects that will support and/or may provide co-finance to the project.

The first is the IUCN Biodiversity and Protected Areas Management Programme (BIOPAMA, EU-funded from 2017-2023). BIOPAMA is supporting 15 Pacific ACP countries to develop and improve baseline information inventories, including maps, that guide planning, designating and managing protected areas and enable more accurate reporting. An online regional portal (Pacific Islands Protected Areas Portal, PIPAP), hosted at SPREP, was developed under BIOPAMA Phase 1 and will continue to improve during BIOPAMA Phase 2 to 2023. From 2018, up to five small to medium sized grants will be available per country for targeted priority work concerning protected areas.

The second regional project is the Ecosystem-based Adaptation to Climate Change (PEBACC), a five-year project funded by the German Government (BMUB) and implemented by SPREP, to explore and promote ecosystem-based options for adapting to climate change. The overall intended outcome of the project is that EbA is integrated into development, climate change adaptation responses, and natural resource management policy and planning processes in three Pacific island countries (including the Solomon Islands) providing replicable models for other countries in the region. PEBACC has four outputs: ecosystem and socio-economic resilience analysis and mapping (ESRAM) completed as a basis for adaptation planning at national, provincial and community levels; EbA options analyzed, prioritized and plans developed; EbA plans implemented with demonstrated benefits; communications and outreach products developed to promote integration of EbA options into climate change policies, plans and projects.

The third regional project relevant to EREPA is titled Climate Protection through Forest Conservation in Pacific Island Countries - Forests, and overseen by SPC-GIZ. This project involves national planning and technical support for implementing climate protection, through forest conservation activities, and on the ground activities at selected demonstration sites. National REDD+ pilot site surveys include: forest inventory, carbon pool measurements, detailed biodiversity survey and mapping, cultural and archaeological mapping, and participatory socio-economic assessment. It also involves conducting a 'carbon rights' study in support of the national REDD+ programmes. Additional site activities include: rehabilitation of coastal vegetation and degraded forest areas; tree nurseries, and; promotion of agroforestry systems.

National projects

National government ministries implement ongoing projects, and hold mandated responsibilities, that have close links with the EREPA project. Ministry-based responsibilities and projects that will actively work with the EREPA project are highlighted as follows:

The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM): oversight of management framework for protected areas and biodiversity conservation; support and training for community protected area management; climate change adaptation and REDD+; low carbon development program, including in agriculture and forestry sectors.

The Ministry of Forestry and Research (MFR) oversees the National Reforestation Program which is of strong relevance to the EREPA project. Its main components include: 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 services; providing training and materials to extension officers. This ministry also oversees the Solomon Islands National REDD+ Program which includes: ongoing establishment and maintenance of pilot sites for forest carbon measurement; awareness activities among communities for REDD+ and

forest carbon; establishment of network of permanent field plots and associated data collection for the National Herbarium and botanic garden; establishment of national laboratory for botanical research; plant inventory programme; downstream processing and sustainable forest management; training communities in sustainable forest management and timber production; and supporting communities in small-scale harvesting and timber milling.

The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL) is active in: agricultural research and development - general work program research into suitable and improved crop varieties; agricultural extension services - providing technical advice and agricultural extension services to communities; providing training to staff (particularly extension staff) on service provision; agriculture and land use planning - land use planning for improved agricultural production

In addition to the regional and national government links outlined above, there are a number of more discrete current and ongoing projects that will be instructive to the EREPA project based on their practice experiences. Such projects involve: support to communities on teak planting, other plantation types and agroforestry activity; forest sustainability certification for local producers; forest biomass surveys; impact assessment, management planning and community benefit associated with a hydro dam; and involvement of landowners in biological studies.

Other projects with which EREPA will maintain a strong cooperative relationship are:

The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund CEPF (regionally operational in the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and the eastern provinces of Papua New Guinea) will be a significant cooperation partner in the EREPA. In CEPF, small to medium grants are provided for the implementation of: biological assessments or target species surveys; capacity development and strengthening of practical approaches to conservation management including legal, management plans, project management and livelihood needs; traditional knowledge capture, and advocacy and awareness campaigns. CEPF has produced a register of key biodiversity areas for the East Melanesian Islands (as provided in the Annex to this PIF), which will form one of a number of important base information layers for integrated land use planning, and which will be captured in the land characterization activity of this project. CEPF grants are mostly focused on discrete sites and issues rather than addressing issues at national scale, however the work undertaken by grantees can be shared, replicated, up-scaled and will generally inform initiatives such as EREPA. There is strong potential for consideration of existing CEPF grantee sites to be enhanced as trial/pilot/demonstration sites under this project.

At the national level, the Ridge-to-Reef (GEF-5) Integrated Forest Management in the Solomon Islands involves the development of the terrestrial protected area network in five selected locations; integrated land management particularly policy and regulatory review and pilot demonstration projects in land and forest practices; capacity building for the management of forest carbon in natural and plantation forests; restoration and enhancement of carbon stocks in forests, and knowledge sharing for biodiversity conservation, sustainable land management and sustainable forest management. A closely-related GEF-5 project through the Secretariat of the Pacific Community is focused on the provincial area of Honiara City in Guadalcanal province, where an ecosystem management approach is to be implemented. There will be important lessons and information to be obtained from these two projects, which will assist in refining the project through the PPG phase and during the course of project implementation. As these two projects are likely to overlap with EREPA in their duration, there is opportunity to consolidate the mutual aims of the existing projects with EREPA, to increase national profile and awareness levels of the importance and benefits of good ecosystem management models.

Conclusions about baseline projects:

Despite the interventions outlined above, the main threats to landscapes and biodiversity, and the barriers to improvements, require ongoing attention. This is in part due to the sheer geographic scale of the archipelago, but also the nature of fundamental national socio-economic circumstances. Progress is being made particularly in locations where interventions can be implemented with quite specific effect and with targeted stakeholders, and where sufficient time and /or political resolve has been able to occur in supporting national level changes in planning frameworks supporting environmental betterment.

There are clear synergies between the regional EU-funded BIOPAMA project and this project. The provision of the information portal (PIPAP) will offer an important facility for hosting baseline information relevant to this project. An additional important function of the PIPAP is that SPREP as its administrator will provide hands on capacity building to support key national stakeholders with natural resource information management skills and particularly the identification and mapping of important biological circumstances. Additionally under BIOPAMA, national and provincial stakeholders will be able to apply for grants for activities relating to protected areas. These grants will enhance information inventories, enable management effectiveness assessments and support management planning and good practices for protected and managed areas. Consideration will be given to the alignment of BIOPAMA grants with EREPA actions to enhance the range of relevant, representative actions that are being undertaken through the EREPA.

The two baseline regional projects addressing climate response also have close connections with EREPA. The German government funded PEBACC is undertaking ecosystem and socio-economic resilience analysis and mapping as a basis for ecosystem based adaptation planning at national, provincial and community levels. It also has a focus on the inclusion of ecosystem based adaptation in the policy framework. This gives strong potential for information capture and analysis, resource sharing and policy alignment between EREPA and PEBACC. Additionally, the SPC GIZ project has strong connections with the EREPA project through its REDD+ forest conservation focus including inventories, rehabilitation, agroforestry promotion and on the ground activities at selected demonstration sites.

At the national level, government ministries will be the main contributors to co-finance support. They will have direct responsibility for implementing project components and will integrate their allied ministerial portfolio project work to strengthen EREPA outputs.

The EREPA project will enable the maintenance of critically-needed momentum in redressing unsustainable logging and poor farming practices. It will incrementally build on three significant projects funded by non-GEF bodies and through specific national projects implemented under government ministry mandates, by consolidating cross-sectoral partnerships and enabling targeted interventions in priority landscapes. While many previous and current projects in the Solomon Islands have given attention to the provinces in the north and western areas, this project will focus on the central provinces due to the need to address growing population pressures on land and forest resources, socio-economic drivers and the national targets for declared protected areas. As a flagship environmental project, the EREPA will assist in maximizing support for the ongoing inception and implementation of related projects at national, provincial and local level.

The main linkages between the baseline scenario and implementation of the EREPA project will be founded on:

- Commitment by relevant ministries to integrating their existing projects, work and responsibilities that relate to land management, with the EREPA project;
- Commitment to cross ministry integration and partnership forming and that there is no replication of previous or current implementation effort;
- Forming working connections with other related projects to ensure that useful documented practice experience is obtained and utilized in the EREPA project;
- Finding opportunities for resource sharing between closely related projects, particularly in the areas of baseline information, capacity building activities, training materials, technical know-how and the presentation of awareness raising messages.

1.3 The proposed alternative scenario, GEF focal area strategies, with brief description of expected outcomes and components of the project

Component 1- Integrated Terrestrial Ecosystem Management and Restoration

This component will promote and establish an ecosystem-based approach to land use planning and activity in priority locations in Guadalcanal, Malaita and Rennell-Bellona, where trends in population growth and land use conflict are

particularly pronounced. Malaita in particular is a provincial population known to have high aspirations for strong economic growth and development. Importantly, forming closer working relationships between national and provincial government bodies and key sectors through partnership agreements is a key action to generate collaborative messages, approaches and activities where their responsibilities intersect in biodiversity protection aims, forest use and agricultural activity. The acquisition of land information, the process of land use plan formulation in selected locations and the implementation of forest restoration plans, provides practical opportunities for cross-government involvement. It is also critical that communities that are being encouraged to improve their resource use practices will also be supported with realistic options for supplementing their income streams.

Outcome 1.1 Stakeholders and planning mechanisms mobilized for improved management of land, forest and water resources.

Output 1.1.1 - Institutional partnerships formalized between national and provincial government bodies and key sector partners.

This output will support an active shift away from the commonly found situation where multiple bodies with natural resources mandates, interests and influence (government [both national and provincial], NGOs, CBOs, faith based organizations, private sector) are working independently on planning, project sites and activities or specific thematic issues. Partnerships that do develop are generally ad-hoc and rely on individual goodwill rather than more officially endorsed and structured linkages. To achieve this output, cross sector partnership agreements (MOU style frameworks) will be developed to facilitate improvements to the coordination of decision making, policy reviews and sharing of information, costs, resources, services and expertise and agreement setting. These agreements will principally involve the three national government agencies (sister ministries) that will be implementing components of this project (MECDM, MOFR, MAL) and they would also provide a useful format and process that could be used to link a wider number of sectors. The three principal agencies will work together to bring other relevant sectors together in a collaborative project review process. This process will identify where delivery overlaps occur, where opportunities exist to promote and develop similar partnership arrangements and where projects can be delivered more effectively using a partnership approach. A fundamental objective in providing this type of exchange forum will be to recognize 'common ground' and to increase the degree of understanding between sectors concerning their respective experiences, needs and potential contributions. This output is intended to underpin Output 1.1.4 and will make an essential contribution to shared delivery of this project through mutually connected project implementation partners and related sectors.

Partnership agreements will describe how, where and when coordinated and shared efforts should occur. They will also serve to formalize and strengthen the level of mutual obligation from various sectors in coming together and collaborating in a more overt and structured manner. The intent is that natural resources policy is developed more coherently, scarce resources are better utilized, duplication is avoided, and organization attitudes, culture and messages become more empathetic and consistent across sectors. All opportunities for joint activity will be optimized such (ie; through project steering meetings, training development and participation, through involvement in consultation planning and execution, when developing communication messages).

For example, the partnerships will set in place practical institutional and operational linkages to improve the mainstreaming of ecosystem management information and requirements that will inform jointly formed policies, strategies, and practices of provincial/national government, community and private sector that impact or rely on natural resources. Skills development in policy setting, project management and partnership building will be prioritized for government staff to ensure they are capable leaders and participants in this output. Through supportive partnerships, there will be particular focus on the strengthening of linkages and support to provincial administrations due to their close relationships and impact points with local communities. Provincial inspectors and extension officers will be specifically supported from the national level to enable them to take on increased autonomy in promoting and facilitating natural resource based issues and projects. Provincial level laws and ordinances will be strengthened particularly for enforcement and compliance of restoration requirements for commercial logging.

Output 1.1.2 - Provincial scale land characterization studies completed for up to date description of forest cover, soils, landform and uses, impacts and trends.

A review will be conducted of existing information relating to terrestrial ecosystems and resources, and including its accompanying metadata, to ascertain its format, holding location, applicability, accuracy, currency, quality, accessibility and usability. Where important information is found to be deficient on any of these criteria or where necessary information for planning, management and monitoring simply does not exist, then specific studies, surveys, assessments and mapping activity will be prioritized and commissioned. The intent of this output is to improve the quality, usefulness and extent of baseline information required to guide a well-informed approach to implementation of all components of this project - ecosystem management and restoration, establishing new protected areas and, improved land management in rural production landscapes. Importantly, ability to visualize all of these elements in an illustrative format (mapped) will be invaluable for cross agency and sector participation, stakeholder consultations and awareness, project monitoring and in enabling improved planning decisions by the relevant responsible agencies.

Based on a general understanding of the current information status, the particularly important information needs (both report and digital content) include: updated forest cover; land form and contour elevation; water catchment boundaries and river/stream lines; current land usage patterns; ecosystem condition mapping at selected sites at provincial scale; identification of the locations of operating licenses for activities such as timber felling and milling and mining (deposits or activity); important infrastructure both existing and proposed; proposed protected areas, and; records of project sites (previous, existing and proposed).

There is a number of existing data platforms that can be harnessed for storage, curating and display of natural resource information, with each having been designed for access by a wide range of users. The platforms themselves do not undertake baseline information creation activity, but do provide the means of collation and display. There would not be a need to establish an additional separate information access platform, although the platforms could continue to be improved and customized. The existing platforms include: the Solomon Islands CBD Clearing House Mechanism; the SolGeo, and; the PIPAP. These three platforms would be encouraged to connect with each other by means of a technical liaison group. Utilization of a preferred, or multiple, platforms for this project will be determined during the PPG. Other options for information distribution and sharing include the provision of key reports and maps on CDs or USBs which removes reliance on access to the internet and offers a reasonable usage lifespan before updates need to be produced. There is opportunity to introduce new and now proven technologies for data collection by mobile devices and for transfer to central storage and this mechanism would be explored further in those project outputs that involve community capacity building for land management.

Output 1.1.3 - A standardized spatially-based data platform(s) provides information from existing sources and new studies.

Access to information helps improve understanding of biodiversity values, functions, status, threats and the consequences of its loss. To support planning decisions and enable prioritization of responses, existing natural assets information sets (potentially several useful, yet disaggregated inventories available) will be amalgamated to illustrate the current state of natural systems and assets, biodiversity values, land use patterns and categories, and highlight impacts and conflicts. Newly developed information will also be incorporated as outlined in Output 1.1.2.

The three 'core' partnering government ministries for this project (MECDM, MOFR, MAL) will be able to access a shared 'ready reference' information platform that houses and displays the key baseline information sets (those developed in country as well as those available through open sources) and that can also be accessed/viewed by other sectors. The collection and exchange of information provides a useful activation point for cooperation. Necessary technical support will be delivered through the executing agency SPREP (who are involved in all three of the information platforms identified). A directory of relevant, useful and accessible information that can be obtained through wider open source information platforms will be created and provided to project partners and related sectors.

To encourage ongoing use and contribution to information updating, capacity building associated with information capture and utilization of spatial tools will be provided to national/provincial government staff, CBOs, community people and students. Commercial enterprises, local communities and CBOs will be able to use information inventories and apply improved understanding of good practices that integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their resource management and production activities.

This information will be brought together via the organized, accessible information platform (per the three options identified in Output 1.1.2) that can display maps and supporting information and be updated easily by the respective system managers and authorized users. The choices for which platform (or platforms) is selected as the host system for this project will be made during the PPG. While all three platforms are openly accessible, each is maintained by separate groups – CBD CHM (MECDM), SolGeo (Secretariat of the Pacific Community), and PIPAP (SPREP) on behalf of a wide range of users and on a longer term basis than the project duration.

Output 1.1.4 - Provision of a stakeholder communication and outreach programme on EREPA objectives and catalyzing community involvement.

This output is an essential intervention for developing project understanding, acceptance, contribution, involvement and empowerment. Genuine and effective outreach is especially important in the Pacific Islands context where information provision, explanation and consultation, allowance for consideration by stakeholders and inclusive participatory approaches, are crucial ingredients for success during a project and to maintain actions beyond the project duration. This output specifically supports and links with Outputs 1.1.5, 1.2.1 and 2.1.1. It will involve designing and conducting broad outreach, awareness and information programs about ecosystem based approaches to landscape management and particularly the concept of ecosystem services (what it is, pertinent issues, reasons for the approach, activities, benefits, implications, who is involved).

The output will be geographically focused on the key provincial landscape areas identified for this project. Stakeholders in these locations have not yet had the benefit of being engaged with integrated information about ecosystem conditions and trends as they relate to socio-economic livelihood. It will engage provincial government staff, community, CBOs and private sector about sustainable use of natural areas and resources and will involve conducting awareness and education forums about the impacts and risks associated with unsustainable practices. These stakeholder groups will be encouraged to integrate biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into their resource management and production activities and will be advised about the nature of the project and what it offers including the aims in regard to establishment of protected areas.

The three ‘core’ project agencies will establish joint responsibility for delivery of this output using such GEF resources that are able to be allocated within reason and by prioritizing allocations of a sufficient percentage of their co-finance (including in-kind) contribution to ensure satisfactory implementation of the output. A cooperative approach to stakeholder engagement and communication concerning sustainable management of natural resources is one of the primary objectives of Output 1.1.1. by bringing together the relevant government agencies in a joint working relationship and being better able to deliver consistent messages.

Output 1.1.5 - Three spatially-based local land use plans are negotiated, produced and implemented.

Using such bio-physical reference information and general knowledge of relevant issues held by agencies, as is available at the time of the PPG, three representative landscapes will be selected within the provinces of Guadalcanal, Malaita and Rennell-Bellona for the preparation of local land use plans. By nature, these ‘holistic’ landscapes selected will be relatively broad scale and characterized by inclusion of the following features: important watersheds; proximity to protected areas (including proposed areas) and ecological linkages; landscapes subject to (or threatened by) degrading practices, conditions, trends; Key Biodiversity Areas; circumstances of sub-optimal use practices in forests and agricultural land or where there are conflicts between (or within) these two uses. The precise locations for this output will be defined through the PPG stage. It is expected that communities, new protected areas and demonstration sites activated through other project component outputs would be located within these same project landscapes.

The consent of landowning communities will be required to confirm selected locations. The process will include analysis of context, threats, opportunities, identification of necessary resourcing, assessment of capacity gaps and priority needs, development of a capacity development plan responding to priority gaps and investments. Once plans are documented, completed and agreed through participatory processes, priority actions will be implemented and monitored. The plans will also be used to inform the development of similar plans in other locations in the same provinces. These plans will also incorporate an environmental health monitoring program, wherein people at community level are given training in codes of practice and basic environmental quality indicators, and supported with observational recording tools. An accepted reporting process for provincial extension officers will be arranged so that harmful or illegal activities (focused initially on environmental/social aspects of commercial logging) can be reported and addressed by the right authorities. The intention is that this measure will build broad community confidence in having direct influence in better land use outcomes.

Outcome 1.2 - Strengthened community capacity in harmonizing livelihood needs, income generation and good land management practices.

Output 1.2.1 - Six to 10 local communities trained in diversifying their land use activities, enterprises, and income sources.

This output will provide landowners with information and skills to widen their existing sphere of land use practices. They will be supported in practices that enhance ecosystem integrity, maintain good livelihoods and make use of the traditional knowledge base in responding practically to local conditions. The specific communities selected for this activity will be defined through the PPG stage. The incentive for community participation will be based on seeing the benefits derived from incomes generated in sustainable ways and will not be based on expectation for payment simply by adopting or undertaking a different practice. A review will be undertaken of a range of applicable, innovative and proven enterprise options and incentive based mechanisms that encourage and help landowners to adopt and maintain improved resource usage and land management practices. These may include cultivation of alternative crop and tree species, oil or honey production, handicrafts, eco-tourism. From this review, practical enterprise options and incentives for change will be selected and promoted. On-the-ground actions will be implemented to strengthen community engagement and resilience, with field advisers, women and youth informed and coached in sustainable income-generating activities.

While incentives for change will be based primarily on incomes generated in sustainable ways, the provision of related supportive mechanisms, where possible, will add value and demonstrate project commitment beyond the expectation that community is solely responsible for, and expected to, achieve outcomes. Appropriate support measures may include: technical training; information resources; small-scale infrastructure; stronger policies; active enforcement of regulations that protect landowner interests; support in targeted eradication of invasive alien species; provision of health or education related services. Opportunity for provision of these types of supportive measures and who will be able to contribute to them will be assessed during the PPG. A trial accounting process will be undertaken for determining the full value of ecosystems, services and biodiversity in a specified location with findings then being available for use in establishing comparative benchmarks applicable to other locations.

Output 1.2.2 - A good practice forest use and restoration manual developed and applied in three demonstration sites with results documented.

A good practice forest recovery manual will be developed providing guidelines on rehabilitating, replanting, regenerating and enriching degraded land in forest areas previously felled or milled, or other previously modified areas. Active restoration management will occur at three sites that will be identified during the PPG stage. The sites will be selected on the following desirable criteria: in and around locations of native forest and waterways; where previous logging and cultivation uses have resulted in modification or some deterioration of forests, land and water quality; that are not overly steep, and; that have suitable existing access for transporting any required forest management equipment. Biodiversity criteria on which to base site selection include: locations with significant, rare or noteworthy flora assemblages or individual species; important fauna habitat; a remnant forest structure and species

diversity with good regenerative capacity and that lends itself to successful restoration, and; presence of useful or marketable timber species and other forest resources. Targeted management of climber weed species will occur in specific locations where proven, low-cost, and effective techniques would provide positive results. From review of restoration activity, a body of knowledge would be developed on successful forest restoration and the prevention, control, and management of aggressive climber weed species in island forest situations.

Output 1.2.3 - An income generation model based on sustainable land management and degraded forest management is developed and trialed in two demonstration sites.

This output intends to develop an innovative model for generating primary income based on the restoration of degraded natural areas (particularly previously logged areas), and for the model to be applied as a proven sustainable funding option after the term of the GEF investment. Again, the sites selected for this activity will be defined through the PPG stage. The model will capitalize on existing logging footprints by planting commercially beneficial timber and food species along access road margins and close environs, where there has been substantial disruption and degradation. Plots of planted timber species become assets which appreciate as they grow over time and can be harvested on a progressive basis (thinning) to generate timber/income through until maturity and final harvesting. Horticultural products can also be incorporated within and around planted timber plots. These plots have potential to become assets against which (micro) venture capital can be raised for other income-generating businesses. Local labour, particularly youth and women, would be used and whose input could be additionally supplemented using Government funds available for rural employment initiatives. Environmental benefits accrued would redress some of the loss of biodiversity from previous and continuing timber extraction activities and be intended to offset pressures on upland timber assets. There will be a need for additional support in terms of: technical decision making about site selection, ground preparation and species choices; local grower coordination to facilitate marketing capacity, and regulatory design to enshrine the income generating initiatives in a legal framework.

Output 1.2.4 - The project monitoring and evaluation system is in place providing systematic information on progress in meeting project outcome and output targets

The Executing Agency will establish a monitoring and evaluation system, including knowledge management and communication. A focus of this output is on empowering relevant government staff to be able to more directly and comprehensively engage in the GEF and allied UN TF funding sources in order to independently design projects and ensure continuity of progress in environmental management. A targeted training course for the above for National Government employees is envisaged which could include relevant Provincial Government staff where appropriate (to be determined at PPG stage). This training will also empower local staff in the project management, monitoring and reporting cycle of GEF projects.

Component 2 - Declaration of Terrestrial Protected Areas and their Effective Management

There are many coastal areas in the Solomon Islands that have some form of systematic conservation management regime overseen by local communities, and to a lesser degree a number of marine and terrestrial areas under similar systems. However, to date there has been only one protected area declared (May 2017) under the Protected Areas Act 2010 - a 150km² marine area in the Arnavon Islands which lie between Choiseul and Isobel provinces. There is growing interest across the Solomon Islands in the establishment of legally recognized protected areas as local communities seek to more deliberately protect their land, coastal and marine surroundings. This component focuses on activating the Protected Areas Act through a substantial declaration agenda for terrestrial protected areas in the provinces of Guadalcanal, Malaita, Rennell-Bellona and Temotu in conjunction with a program of community participation, capacity building for effective management and assuring financing frameworks.

Outcome 2.1 - Increase in protected area coverage incorporating biogeographically representative, critical ecosystems and key habitats.

Output 2.1.1 - A participatory program designed and implemented assisting communities, CBOs and provincial government in formulating protected area proposals.

This output involves the preparatory tasks conducted prior to embarking on commitment to the more formal protected area declaration processes and development of associated management plans. Initially, there will be review and documentation of practical experiences and recommendations gained in the process of formalizing or legislatively declaring protected areas elsewhere in the Solomon Islands, particularly in regard to community involvement aspects. This is a critical action as declaration processes have proven to be unfamiliar and demanding of all participants and any productive measures found to simplify and improve the overall process should be further considered and tested. Secondly, while government is the facilitator of the declaration process, the involvement of communities, CBOs and provincial government through participatory and consenting processes is an unequivocal mandate. In the Pacific context, communities must fully own and endorse the design, establishment and management of protected areas based on their needs, values and cultural heritage. If these sectors are not suitably involved it is highly unlikely that protected area coverage will increase. The aim is to assist the community toward becoming supportive landowners and partners in ongoing protected area management by building their participation early in the process. Therefore it is essential that the declaration process ensures provision of clear information to build understanding about: the legislative steps involved; the powers and certainties granted; the governance arrangements and registrations involved; livelihood benefits possible; resource protection outcomes; management objectives and implications, and; the scope to continue landscape and resources usage and sustainable income generating enterprises.

During this preparatory phase, there will be a need to undertake consultations and feasibility studies to inform action (or not) toward declarations. Landowners will also be encouraged to contribute their interests and opinions and be assisted in clarifying boundary locations and arrangements, which is a matter of great significance with any type of land declaration process in Pacific countries. The technical data platforms identified in Component 1 will be used as an informative, illustrative engagement tool through portrayal of satellite imagery (terrain and forest cover), biodiversity values (flora and fauna) and cultural values and documentation of land boundaries. Where possible, should be documented in conjunction with rapid biodiversity surveys. Rapid biodiversity assessments in conjunction with documentation of traditional knowledge will be done with community support as an effective way of enlisting their involvement in identifying biodiversity and cultural values and livelihood needs as key considerations in formulating management opportunities.

Output 2.1.2 - Declaration of at least to 200,000 hectares of protected areas across four (4) provinces with landowner consent.

The geographical focus criteria for the identification of protected area declarations will be: areas above 400m in elevation in Malaita, Guadalcanal and Rennell-Bellona (these upland zones are already restricted in use through other legislation and offer a clear opportunity for substantive progress on increasing the extent of the national terrestrial protected area estate); the East Rennell WHS (Lake Tenggano); key biodiversity areas in each province; ; areas representative of critical habitat, threatened species, culturally valuable species; specific areas where communities demonstrate strong commitment to protected area regimes, understanding of declaration processes and resources required and capacity to implement suitable governance and management plans/practices; an 'in situ reserve park' accessible site for hands on actions such as: trialing management techniques; providing showcase education and practical training on good practice conservation work; and visitation/eco-tourism roles. The understandings gained in the entire declaration processes will be documented and analyzed, with recommendations for ways to improve future declarations.

Outcome 2.2 - Effective, equitable governance and management occurring and sustained by capacity building, reliable funding and viable incentives.

Output 2.2.1 - One model protected area management plan is produced to guide the completion of four specific protected area management plans with on the ground management and monitoring actions occurring.

A model management plan template and guideline suitable for the provincial terrestrial context will be developed as a step by step procedure and used to support the formulation of specific management plans at four locations. The

precise protected area locations where management plans will be prepared will be defined through the PPG stage. The model plan, along with guidance notes, will be used as an awareness and capacity building tool to engage CBOs, communities and other stakeholders in the methods of formulating, adopting and implementing specific management plans at the four locations.

Elements contained in the model plan will include: description of the biological-physical-cultural situation and values; assessment of threats and issues; register of community concerns, interests and needs; management objectives and actions to support conservation and livelihoods, and; annexes providing relevant examples of successful governance options, local knowledge recording techniques, survey and monitoring methods, typical indicators for assessing effectiveness and work plans and financing. Particular emphasis will be given to co-management governance options and maintenance of sustainable livelihood opportunity (aligned to Output 2.2.3) and infrastructure investment for those communities living within and close to the protected areas. Management plans will ensure that communities are able to obtain an equitable share of access and benefits from appropriate sustainable resource use as an essential mechanism for effective protected area management.

The ‘ranger’ program successfully implemented in other community-based resource management areas in the country will be initiated (and funded) with newly created protected areas to ensure specific people are allocated to conducting management activity and monitoring. Specific learning and review opportunities will be offered, via a model ‘in-situ reserve park’ which provides opportunity for trial and demonstration of management approaches, and new initiatives, as well as through learning forums convened for exchange of experiences and skills between those involved in protected area management. Active management and monitoring will occur in protected areas and be supported by adequate resources and capacity building. Management plans will include suitable performance parameters to assess management activity and its effectiveness and enable review of issues and adaptive adjustments where required.

Output 2.2.2 - An approved protected areas financing plan for annual budget and resource needs.

A costing study analysis will be completed calculating the full range of costs (up to a ten-year period) of supporting newly declared (and highly probable) protected areas with effective planning and management actions. This will inform the development of an approved financing plan identifying all revenue sources including ministry allocations, grants, co-financing, targeted investment returns and innovative financing windows allied with the Protected Areas Trust Fund. While acknowledging that not all protected area needs can generally be funded, estimated allocation requirements will be identified for all necessary activities with mechanisms in place for prioritizing in order to account for available funding limits.

Output 2.2.3 - Complementary livelihood activities are introduced and trialed as integral elements of effective management in the four protected areas.

Engendering the support and commitment of landowners and communities within and adjoining protected areas is fundamental to successful co-management arrangements typically applied across Pacific Island countries. Drawing on the range of activities identified in 1.2.1, landowners and communities associated with declared protected areas will be proactively encouraged and supported to undertake sustainable land use management and other livelihood ventures that are complementary with protected area objectives and biodiversity conservation generally. Complementary livelihood activities could include: small agro-forestry sites (food crops, trees, honey and coconut products), bush foraging, handicrafts and eco-tourism. The promotion and uptake of land uses practices, natural resource usage and livelihood choices that converge positively with biodiversity conservation and environmental quality is a consistent fundamental intervention mode across all sites benefiting from this project – in forested areas, within or adjoining protected areas and in rural production landscapes.

Component 3 - Improved Land Management in Rural Production Landscapes

The objective of this component is to improve the practices used by landowners conducting agro-forestry and agricultural activity and to continue to build a more supportive policy framework. The collation of relevant land condition information will contribute to the selection of representative provincial landscapes, which will become the focus areas for targeted awareness and skills building for nominated individuals. Skills building interventions will incorporate: improved understanding of carrying capacity thresholds, sustainable harvesting regimes and means to implement practices that alleviate the impacts of activities that lead to degradation.

Outcome 3.1 - The environmental quality and livelihood benefits of production landscapes are sustained.

Output 3.1.1 - Land condition inventory assembled for selected landscapes in three (3) provinces.

The land resources information obtained for, and captured on, the technical data platforms identified in Component 1 will be utilized as an educational reference set illustrating characteristic land conditions and trends in the project landscapes selected. Baseline information will be used to support the capacity building in Output 3.1.3 and to influence appropriate policy and legal amendments in Output 3.1.2.

Output 3.1.2 - Legislative review process establishes a supportive contemporary framework for rural land use planning.

This output will advance necessary review and amendment of outdated policy and laws that still prevail at the time of this project commencing to address contemporary issues and needs (i.e. 1935 Agriculture Act). Compiled reference information about current land uses, land condition and trends will be used to impel the drafting of more contemporary policy and laws.

Output 3.1.3 - 100 government extension staff, CBO people and landowners trained in conservation agriculture and agro forestry practices.

A training course with structure and content to be developed through the PPG stage, will be developed to deliver technical support, practical local knowledge and latest research that promotes movement away from resource use practices (and personal lifestyle choices) that deplete and degrade ecosystem quality. The training model is to be based on the 'train-the-trainers' type of model, whereby key extension staff and appropriately chosen CBO and community representatives assume greater autonomy and responsibility for conveying to the local level the skills and knowledge they have gained. Training modules will include: catchment relationships; productivity improvement; agro-forestry usage blends; cultivation site selection; soil fertility; ground preparation and erosion control; water use; waterway protection; use of fire, harvesting techniques, and tree and crop species options and their commercial/market considerations. In support of Output 3.1.1, any critical data gaps identified during the training activities (e.g. soil classification, land cover, degradation hotspots, areas trending toward rural degradation pressures) would be the subject of practical exercises designed to generate improved information sets and conducted under supervision by the training groups. Opportunities will be sought to work closely with the fields of provincial health and nutrition in educational delivery due to the close alliances that exist with the project directions of improved land and resources quality and community livelihoods and also because of the similarity in preferred training models.

1.4 Incremental/additional cost reasoning and expected contributions from the baseline

Without the initiatives proposed by this project there is risk that the learning and improvement pathway in motion at locations across the Solomon Islands in the protection and management of terrestrial ecosystems, may falter through lack of critical impetus. Most importantly, this project intends to draw from, build on and extend the reach of results and experiences gained in capacity building, stakeholder engagement, technical measures and awareness and policy improvements that have transpired through allied projects both recent and ongoing.

The project will focus its attention on selected priority landscapes within the central Solomon Island provinces of Guadalcanal and Malaita, where population pressures and trends are most pronounced and demands on land and resources are converting and depleting forests, impairing waterways and reducing rural land quality. It will also give attention to Rennell-Bellona province due to the urgent need to address the vulnerability of the World Heritage Site to nearby logging activity and mining interests. Additionally, Temotu province with its high biodiversity, yet remote access, will receive attention specifically for protected area declarations. These four provincial areas have not in the past (in general) benefited from the same degree of support from environmental management programs that have occurred elsewhere in the archipelago.

In order to deliver net benefits to national environmental quality, the project will expand the geographic coverage of a number of environmental improvement interventions completed, underway or proposed at specific sites, at provincial level or at country wide scale. It will also initiate additional measures that respond to, and help redress, certain threats and needs that are considered likely to remain unanswered at the GEF-6 timing point.

While the declaration and sound conservation management of protected areas will be a significant component, the overall project approach will be founded on integrated, multi-pronged approaches to ecosystem management which recognize the practical interplay and relationships that co-exist between productive, protected and managed restoration landscapes and those responsible for their effective stewardship.

The Government has stressed the ongoing need for capacity development (and necessary resource development). The project will be underpinned by capacity building interventions in all component interventions and at all levels (community, provincial and national government) through direct stakeholder engagement, information provision and sharing, training in knowledge and skills development, exposure to new ideas and opportunities, learning by doing and review of practice effectiveness.

In summary, and in line with the key threats and barriers identified and the business as usual scenario, a GEF-6 investment presents significant opportunities to:

- Establish proactive planning and operational partnerships between government ministries, provincial government and key sectors responsible for, or having interests in, land, forest and water resources so that coordination of information, budgets, resources and expertise is improved. Capacity development for government staff will underpin this objective.
- Build technical skills and capacity in provincial government staff to raise their autonomy in facilitating and monitoring local natural resource based issues and projects.
- Address deficiencies in policy and legislative arrangements.
- Generate necessary baseline information sets and make them accessible.
- Inform and empower landowners in community led conservation, particularly women and youth.
- Extend the coverage of a representative network of declared terrestrial protected areas, particularly in upland areas, and strengthen necessary participation, funding sources, governance and management capacities.
- Support landowners involvement in natural resource protection and management through establishment of improved livelihood and supplementary income benefits.
- Restore ecological quality and functionality in deforested and degraded areas.
- Modify agricultural development activity toward cultivation locations, ground preparation methods, crop choices and production techniques that contribute to sustaining natural resources in healthy condition.

The project responds to the following specific direct drivers of environmental degradation identified by the GEF-6 Programming Directions, and that are most relevant to the Solomon Islands:

- Terrestrial biodiversity loss and ecosystem decline - habitat removal, over-exploitation of natural resources, and invasive alien species.
- Deforestation and forest degradation - over-harvest of timber and non-timber forest products, forest removal.
- Land degradation - small scale shifting cultivation, unsustainable land use practices and inadequate or ineffective land use policies.

In doing so it will address the GEF Focal Area strategies as below:

BD 1 - Improve sustainability of protected area systems - Program1: Improving Financial Sustainability and Effective Management of the National Ecological Infrastructure, and Program 2: Nature's Last Stand: Expanding the Reach of the Global Protected Area Estate.

BD 4 - Mainstream biodiversity conservation and sustainable use into production landscapes and seascapes and sectors- Program 9: Managing the Human-Biodiversity Interface.

LD 3 - Reduce pressures on natural resources by managing competing land uses in broader landscapes: Program 4 Scaling-up sustainable land management through the Landscape Approach.

The expected change (increment) with the GEF intervention is summarized as follows:

Weak cross-sectoral frameworks for integrated communication, planning, decisions, management and monitoring of terrestrial natural resource issues will be improved by the establishment and agreement of structured partnerships leading to stronger government level coordination and in delivering improved decisions and shared messages, resources and expertise

Existing modest technical skills and capacity within national and provincial government will be increased giving greater autonomy in facilitating and monitoring local natural resource based issues and projects, particularly at provincial administration level. Land owners and communities will receive increased assistance from government extension officers and inspectors who can deliver support based on an improved knowledge base.

Ongoing deficiencies in policy and legislative arrangement will be addressed with review of ongoing critical gaps with policy, laws and ordinances strengthened. Policy and legislation is subjected to a continual improvement cycle and adjusted toward a more effective framework for integrated natural resource management.

Non-existent, out dated or inaccessible baseline information on terrestrial natural resource will be reviewed and improved. Reviews of available information and targeted surveys to obtain or update baseline information and management and display of information obtained on a shared technical platform will enable more informative and accessible information sets about terrestrial natural resources at provincial scale.

Where there is minimal awareness, engagement and incentives for landowners and communities in areas undergoing more pronounced forest or land modification and degradation, there will be a well communicated, multi-ministry outreach program building awareness of land management issues, options for improvements and provision of customized training. The outcome is better informed and empowered landowners in community led conservation and natural resource usage practices, particularly women and youth.

The pace of declaring terrestrial protected areas will be stepped up. Declared protected area coverage particularly in upland forests, will be progressed with a structured participatory engagement approach leading to well informed stakeholders supporting new protected area declarations and who are capably involved in their management.

To give insight into funding needs and sources for declared protected areas, a costing study will be undertaken to inform financing forecasts for declared protected areas and putting in place an approved government financing budget for declared protected areas for a five-year period.

Limited site and context oriented guidelines for planning, designing and managing terrestrial declared protected areas and undertaking forest restoration will be addressed through the development and testing of manuals and training courses to improve the technical knowledge base, and support skills development with practice demonstration sites established.

Unsustainable use of forest resources and agricultural development will be alleviated by supporting landowner involvement in natural resource protection and management through augmented and diversified livelihood and

income options and practical alternative methods of agro-forestry and cultivation activity. Agricultural and forest related activity will be modified toward locations, ground preparation methods, species/crop choices and production techniques that contribute to sustaining natural resources in healthy condition.

Sustainable funding mechanisms for community based restoration of natural areas projects has been largely absent and will be addressed through innovative model(s) to be tested, proofs of concept developed, and capacity development and outreach activities delivered. Community based restoration projects can then successfully adopt sustainable finance generating ventures to support restoration and protection of natural and modified areas over the longer term.

Where there has been limited attention to active management of aggressive weed species, there will be skills development in weed management in conjunction with forest restoration, resulting in weed free forest restoration sites and improved monitoring for newly impacted sites.

1.5 Global environmental benefits (GEFTF)

The main global environmental benefit of this project is to protect against further loss of biodiversity within a recognized global biodiversity hotspot (East Melanesia Islands) which holds national, regional and global importance. The project will contribute to global CBD Strategic Development Targets Aichi Targets (Directly - Targets 1, 3, 5, 7, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17; Indirectly - Targets 2, 10; potentially directly benefitted - 16, 18, 19, 20) and thereby makes responses to NBSAP objectives. The investment will continue to strengthen community well-being and will reduce vulnerability to effects associated with climate change. Baseline information gathered on natural resources and other variables will contribute to meta-analysis, such as State of the Environment reporting for the Pacific (as well as Solomon Islands), which in turn will inform decision making at regional level (and contribute to global assessments).

A further outcome of the project is to consolidate a platform of measures that will assist in reducing the degradation of ecosystems, habitats and natural resources by putting in place more coordinated approaches to the maintenance of healthy, complementary networks of protected, productive and restored landscapes. The wider benefit is the documentation of the practical experiences of integrated approaches to landscape improvement that will be to add to the body of knowledge available to other island countries facing similar landscape pressures.

1.6 Innovativeness, sustainability and potential for scaling up

Innovation:

The EREPA project recognizes that important technical solutions need to be supported by positive political, bureaucratic and social sector group dynamics, which are often more influential in determining ultimate impact. In response, the project will significantly progress the formation of coordinated partnerships between government sectors, and other stakeholders as feasible, in a move to reduce silo-ed policy application, varying messages in public communication products and inefficient distribution of scarce collective resources. Another major endeavor will be the transition of upland forests from a default tenure condition that provides for discretionary limitations on development, to a more robust and secure conservation tenure under the Protected Areas Act 2010 accompanied by the participatory endorsement of landowners.

Sustainability:

A major challenge in Small Island Developing States is achieving financial sustainability in environment related programmes. While not an entirely new concept or project focus, this project aims to consolidate experiences gained to date in other related projects in the Solomon Islands, and elsewhere, in establishing realistic income augmentation and diversification options for landowners and communities needing reasonable incentives to contribute to land conservation objectives. Experiences gained from other similar pilot studies will be assessed for their suitability to be undertaken through this project. In particular, a model based on generating supplementary income through

restoration of degraded natural areas (particularly previously logged areas) will be trialed in selected demonstration sites. The project also aims to stimulate more proactive application of the Protected Areas Trust Fund and to obtain multi-year government commitment to funding through a prioritised financing plan based on a thorough costings analysis.

In terms of sustainability of the core project principles - resilient ecosystems and an expanded protected area network - those project activities centred on engagement, awareness raising and capacity building are the most critical to sustainability and establishing a more solid continuity platform across a wide range of sectors. The EREPA project will also ensure sustainability by:

- ensuring ownership of all interventions through alignment with relevant national policies, priorities and targets and demonstration that EREPA actions have contributed to those targets.
- bringing relevant government sectors together in improved collaboration arrangements for long term efficacy of policy delivery.
- ensuring that local, provincial and national stakeholders are closely involved in project design and implementation and supported in achieving more integrated and sympathetic approaches.
- ensuring that the rights, needs, interests and knowledge of landowners and local resource using communities (men, women, young and older people) in particular will be respected, and EREPA will ensure they are able to participate strongly in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.
- ensuring that existing government fora will be vehicles for ensuring in-country ownership of project supported processes.
- ensuring that all interventions will be designed in ways that are appropriate to education and socio-cultural factors.
- Implementing a “learning-by-doing” approach (with carefully-designed feedback loops) will be applied to both build capacity and ownership; and maintaining a strong focus on local management of EREPA and enhanced capacity for program management and design.

Scaling up:

The project will propel the country forward in terms of having some substantial areas declared for the protected area network that capture biological and ecological representativeness. The network will be systematically and scientifically designed and its management / maintenance established with the relevant roles and responsibilities between National and Provincial Governments tested and set up. The roles of CSO’s and communities will also be trialed and methods for integrating their roles within the declared protected area network documented. With its linkages via Implementing and Executing Agencies, lessons learnt from this project will be able to be transferred to other provinces providing further opportunity for scaling up throughout the country. Dissemination of lessons learnt and best practices will be achieved using existing IUCN and SPREP networks, and nationally using any existing networks plus those developed in related outcomes/outputs described for this project.

2. [Stakeholders](#). Will project design include the participation of relevant stakeholders from [civil society organizations](#) (yes /no) and [indigenous peoples](#) (yes /no)? If yes, identify key stakeholders and briefly describe how they will be engaged in project preparation.

The entire project is reliant on effective engagement with civil society organizations and indigenous peoples in their roles as customary landowners and stewards of the natural resources. The field based activities of the project center around local communities being empowered to have active involvement in protected areas, to restore forests and to cultivate land using sustainable practices. The process of identifying landscapes and/or communities for implementation of component activities will be fully incorporated into the consultative processes during the PPG phase. Consideration of stakeholder aspirations and gaining their buy-in must be incorporated from the outset of the project. Wherever possible, those executing the project locally will engage with existing local administrative systems, such as village councils, churches, women’s groups etc. Careful attention will be paid to link local activities through provincial and national government stakeholders to ensure the former retain the support (administrative and

technical) throughout the roll-out phase of the project, and that the necessary linkage mechanisms are firmly in place and operational. During the PPG phase off and on-shore based NGOs/CBOs will be canvassed to exactly determine what their work programmes involve in the Solomon Islands, in order to align projects (or avoid duplication) and build as much added value to this project as possible. Additional specific stakeholder groups will be identified in the PPG phase.

3. *Gender Equality and Women’s Empowerment.* Are issues on [gender equality](#) and women’s empowerment taken into account? (yes /no). If yes, briefly describe how it will be mainstreamed into project preparation (e.g. gender analysis), taking into account the differences, needs, roles and priorities of women and men.

Gender inequality remains prevalent in the Solomon Islands and is a constraint to land use innovation. Women are less educated than men and often poorly represented in community, provincial and national decision making bodies. Adult men are mostly seen as the primary points of contact, especially for obtaining information from government officers. This project will seek gender transformative approaches. The advice of UN Women colleagues at the UNW office in Honiara will be sought during the PPG phase of the project and ensure the Gender score-card criteria are met in the project design. UN Women have supported the design of GEF projects elsewhere in the Pacific, and they’re support will again will be sought in this project. UN women will engage on the development of the gender disaggregated results framework and further co-finance WILL be sought from them during the PPG phase. Disadvantaged groups, such as women and youth, will particularly benefit from the local roll-out of this project with much of the work on the land traditionally involving at least the former and the high demand for employment for youth, whose unemployment rate is in the order of 70-80% in rural areas.

National agencies, which will be involved in the project in all phases, already observe gender equity practices. During this gender planning process, particular emphasis will be given to designing local income diversification activities that cater for gender needs.

4 *Risks.* Indicate risks, including climate change, potential social and environmental 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 (table format acceptable).

Risk description	Rating (H, M, L)	Mitigation measures	Responsibility
Pace of sectoral partnership establishment and ongoing commitment	H	Convening of cross sector project inception forum agreements made and continuity of project team	IA/EA
Unmet timeframes	H	Establish an agreed project time chart and activity plan with regular review checkpoints	IA/EA
Weak participation by landowners and communities in target locations	M	Staged inclusive and participatory process for information provision to landowners and communities and well-supported involvement	IA/EA/Local communities
Equitable gender and youth involvement is limited due to the traditional dominance of adult men in decisions and receipt of benefits	H	Particular attention to consideration of appropriate ways to maximize the involvement of women and youth during the PPG stage and with specific follow up and monitoring during project engagement and implementation activities	IA/EA/Local communities
Low uptake of practices and tools for natural resources management	M	Ensure relevance of project to landowner and community in terms of benefits potential	IA/EA/Local communities
Success conversion time relative to initial		Realistic analysis and portrayal of times involved in converting improved practices into successful results	IA/EA/Local communities

stakeholder interest and efforts		and use of progressive achievement reporting	
Climate change impacts including extreme weather events	M	Build on risk management programmes underway, vulnerability assessment, planning to duplicate representativeness and better ensure resiliency	IA/EA/Local communities
Continuity of programme staff in Government and local communities	H	Careful consultation with employing agencies in country to make clear the expectations that staff are expected to be retained throughout the term of the project at least and beyond as far as financial sustainability will allow	IA/EA/Local communities
Inadequate Government budget to maintain activity continuity post project	H	Programme management support to ensure local communities and their business ventures are financially viable before the end of the project term. Ensure agreements with Provincial and National Governments that any new positions created during the project are committed as permanent positions surviving the project term. Government funding commitment for at least a five year plan based on analysis of costings	IA/EA

5. *Coordination.* Outline the coordination with other relevant GEF-financed and other initiatives.

The national Project Coordinating Committee (“project steering / advisory committee”) could be a continuance of the GEF-5 Ridges-to-Reef project committee, or at least have many of the same serving members. This scenario is relatively easy to achieve in a SID’s country and should ensure close collaboration, avoid duplication and leverage each other’s resources. The phasing of the two projects should be advantageous with the roll-out of the GEF-5 commencing in 2017, so it should have established itself by the time the PPG phase for this GEF-6 project is due to commence. This means complementarity can be maximized and coordination and administration of the two projects is optimized. The Government ministries involved in all of the current and future GEF-funded projects are also largely the same, as are the Executing and Implementing Agencies, so it is expected that the closest coordination will be possible via business planning and other modalities (e.g. regional meetings). Coordination arrangements will be determined during the PPG stage.

6. *Consistency with National Priorities.* Is the project consistent with the National strategies and plans or reports and assessments under relevant conventions? (yes /no). If yes, which ones and how: NAPAs, NAPs, ASGM NAPs, MIAs, NBSAPs, NCs, TNAs, NCSAs, NIPs, PRSPs, NPFE, BURs, INDCs, etc.

The Solomon Islands have a sound strategic and policy framework for protecting and utilizing the countries biodiversity assets and ecosystem services in a sustainable manner. The overarching framework of the National Development Strategy (2011-2020) NDS provides specific sustainable natural resource management objectives relevant to the EREPA project. The NBSAP and the Protected Areas Act (2010) and Protected Area Regulation (2012) demonstrate substantial government commitments to objectives that fully align with the project. While the national framework supporting natural resources planning and management has evolved to be relatively well articulated,, this GEF project contributes significantly to the focus and resources required to improve the tangible implementation of actions set out in the relevant national policy framework. Relevant National strategies and plans relating to this project are outlined below.

National strategy or plan –	How
NDS 2011-2020	The NDS contains conservation and environmental management policy objectives that specifically align with the project: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sustainable approach to natural resources management addressing biodiversity

	<p>and forestry</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • enactment of environmental laws, regulations and ordinances on harvesting of natural resources • supporting conservation and sustainable use of natural resources for food security and agriculture through integrated agriculture and land management strategies and the conservation and rehabilitation of agro-ecosystems • protecting remaining forest resources, re-establishing forests and sustainably manage logging extractions in the remaining forests • review of forestry legislation in close consultation with provinces and resource owners <p># The NBSAP adopted the NDS as its resources mobilization plan, mainstreaming instrument, poverty eradication strategy and the instrument for addressing environmental development challenges. It is therefore viewed as a complimentary and reciprocal instrument to the NBSAP.</p>
<p>NBSAP 2016-2020</p>	<p>The NBSAP is the most prominent national plan allied to this project as it has as its central principle the protection and utilisation of the countries biodiversity assets in a sustainable manner and maintaining and restoring ecosystems and species as essential steps for the delivery of ecosystem services that underpin community livelihoods. Key objectives of the NBSAP (by 2020) that align with this project include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • by 2020, at least 10 percent of the terrestrial and inland water protected • by 2020, the current deforestation rate of native forest by industrial logging and agricultural development have been reduced by 50%, 15% of fragmented logged areas restored and 10 % of the remaining virgin forests thereby able to enhance the Solomon islands forest ecology • people of Solomon Islands are aware of the value of biodiversity, and have taken the necessary steps for conserving, sustainable using, and sharing of benefits derived from biodiversity • equitably managed ecosystems that provide essential services, particularly services related to water, its contribution to human health, livelihood and well-being, are restored and safeguarded, taking into account the needs of women, land owners, local communities, and the poor and vulnerable. • 25% of the Solomon Islands communities have adopted and are practicing a Community Based Resource Management modal (CBRM) • 50% of the mountain forest is in some form of active protection particular the highest peaks of Guadalcanal and Malaita thereby contributing to the target terrestrial protected area

	<p>coverage</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of sustainable financing mechanisms <p>The project will directly contribute to Solomon Islands ability to deliver on key actions of the NBSAP and meet its reporting obligations relating to their NBSAP using information that will be collected during the roll-out of the project # The earlier POWPA has been largely subsumed by more recent NBSAP priority setting and the enactment of the Protected Areas Act 2010. However the project continues to carry forward POWPA actions.</p>
NAPA 2008	<p>The NAPA contains many direct and indirect actions relevant to biodiversity management and this project. In this regard, the NBSAP has therefore adopted these same action plans as the relevant action points for the NBSAP to ensure the effective implementation of the two policy documents while promoting the principle of synergy between climate change and biodiversity. The NBSAP has also reinforced the relevant action under the REDD+ road map</p> <p>SIs is a party to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and has ratified the Kyoto Protocol. A paper supporting these ratifications highlights the contribution that better land-use change decisions, forest protection, improved forest and land management practices forests and improved land management practices, can make to mitigation measures.</p> <p>The Solomon Island Climate Change Policy 2012-2017 includes a focus on restoration of degraded land with forest/horticultural based projects which will directly benefit climate change adaptation responses, especially when they are scaled up nationally.</p>
NAP	<p>During the monitoring and evaluation process associated with this project data gathered on land degradation will be available to allow the Solomon Islands to plan forward on its land resources management needs and adaptations to climate change Previous NAP reporting concerning the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification has identified Land degradation: identified that 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. These issues align closely with the areas that this project will address.</p>
NCSA national capacity self-assessment	<p>Lessons learnt for expanding local projects at national level and maintaining the national PAN will provide data on national needs and hence for future planning Similarly, lessons learnt, especially from the capacity building activities, should inform the NCSA process and further needs.</p>
NPFE 2016	<p>Future NPFE's should also benefit from the knowledge acquired during the implementation of the project through the monitoring and evaluation process (including Tracking Tools).</p>
UNESCO WHS	<p>The Lake Tenggano WHS on East Rennel Island will be a prominent focus in this project due to the need to consolidate its protected status at national level and to address numerous uncomplimentary land use pressures that are endangering the site. A UNESCO approved Roadmap for delisting its WHS in danger status contains numerous recommendations that align with the project.</p>

7. *Knowledge Management.* Outline the knowledge management approach for the project, including, if any, plans for the project to learn from other relevant projects and initiatives, to assess and document in a user-friendly form, and share these experiences and expertise with relevant stakeholders.

The EREPA project has a number of activities concerning knowledge management. The first are those projects identified in the baseline scenario, essentially the information products, resources and reports that they will have been developed, and that are particularly instructive for informed, effective, step-wise implementation of this project. In essence, accessing this information is intended to avoid reinventing existing proven processes and also to be able to learn from any limitations that they may have documented. Examples include: land resource information; technical advice on plantation forestry and cultivation techniques; experiences in supplementary income generation; marketing and certification; training modules; management plan templates; communication products; consultation program design. This information will be gathered and organised into concise advisory notes for convenient reference in EREPA.

Secondly, the EREPA is to be underpinned by the development of more up-to-date sets of land characterisation resources, mapping in particular. This will involve collation of disparate information, updating important information and bringing together a wide range of useful open source information. A common information platform is to be established to store and curate the resultant information gathered and to enable accessibility to a wider range of users. SPREP has particular skills and resources to assist in information platform development and data management.

Thirdly, it will be critical that information and awareness about the EREPA is packaged in a contextually suited way and reaches key audiences effectively. Finally, the ideas, processes and experiences that emerge during the project will be captured as a summary of what works and why, what doesn't work and why, and recommendations going forward.

Both SPREP and IUCN have access to a comprehensive range of information products and advisory bodies that are able to contribute to the design of information materials. SPREP has a highly experienced and technically advanced out-reach programme throughout the region. Similarly, IUCN has a highly evolved global commissions network, which it can bring to bear to benefit the project and add value to the GEF's global objectives.

PART III: APPROVAL/ENDORSEMENT BY GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT(S) AND GEF AGENCY(IES)

A. RECORD OF ENDORSEMENT⁹ OF GEF OPERATIONAL FOCAL POINT (S) ON BEHALF OF THE GOVERNMENT(S):
 (Please attach the [Operational Focal Point endorsement letter](#)(s) with this template. For SGP, use this [SGP OFP endorsement letter](#)).

NAME	POSITION	MINISTRY	DATE (MM/dd/yyyy)
Mr Chanel Iroi	Undersecretary - Technical	MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT, CLIMATE CHANGE, DISASTER MANAGEMENT AND METEROLOGY	03/05/2017

⁹ For regional and/or global projects in which participating countries are identified, OFP endorsement letters from these countries are required even though there may not be a STAR allocation associated with the project.

B. GEF AGENCY(IES) CERTIFICATION

This request has been prepared in accordance with GEF policies¹⁰ and procedures and meets the GEF criteria for project identification and preparation under GEF-6.
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Agency Coordinator, Agency name	Signature	Date (MM/dd/yyyy)	Project Contact Person	Telephone	Email
Jean-Yves Pirot		12/06/2017	Solstice Middleby		Solstice.Middleby@iucn.org

¹⁰ GEF policies encompass all managed trust funds, namely: GEFTF, LDCF, SCCF and CBIT

C. ADDITIONAL GEF PROJECT AGENCY CERTIFICATION (APPLICABLE ONLY TO NEWLY ACCREDITED GEF PROJECT AGENCIES)

For newly accredited GEF Project Agencies, please download and fill up the required [GEF Project Agency Certification of Ceiling Information Template](#) to be attached as an annex to the PIF.

Date: 12 June 2017

To: The GEF Secretariat
Washington, DC 20433

Subject: GEF Project Agency Certification of Ceiling Information

Per Council requirement for GEF Project Agencies, I am pleased to inform you that:

- (a) the value of the largest project implemented (or executed) by IUCN to date is USD 27.4 million¹¹; and
- (b) the total value of all projects under implementation by IUCN as of the end of FY 2016 was USD 330 million.¹²

I certify that the GEF financing currently being requested by IUCN for the project, “Ensuring resilient ecosystems and representative protected areas in the Solomon Islands (EREPA)”, in the amount of 4,918,364 USD, is lower than the largest project that IUCN has implemented (or executed) to date.

I further certify that the total amount of GEF financing currently under implementation by IUCN plus the requested GEF financing for the above mentioned project does not exceed 20 percent of the total amount of all projects that IUCN had under implementation as of the end of FY 2016.

Sincerely,



Jean-Yves Pirot
GEF Coordinator
IUCN

¹¹ This amount excludes co-financing.

¹² In support of these statements, a copy of (a) the signed loan/grant agreement for the largest project implemented (or executed), and (b) a list of all projects (together with their amounts in US dollars) need to be sent via email, under a separate cover, to the GEF Secretariat at Project_Agency@theGEF.org. These supporting documents will be treated as confidential and will not be shared with any parties external to the Secretariat. The PIF will not be approved in the absence of these supporting documents.

Annex - Key Biodiversity Areas in the Solomon Islands, showing comprehensive listing and KBAs highlighted as priority areas by CEPF (extracted from the East Melanesian Islands Biodiversity Hotspots Ecosystem Profile, 2012)

