

UNDP – GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT FACILITY

National Capacity Self Assessment

Solomon Islands

United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity

Thematic Assessment

Prepared by Jackie Thomas

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Acronyms

ABS	Access Benefit Sharing
AMNH	American Museum of Natural History
ANU	Australian National University
APACE	Appropriate Technology for Community and Environment
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BD	Biological Diversity
BPOA	Barbados Programme of Action
BSSE	Bismarck Solomon Seas Ecoregion
CBD	Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation
CBD	Convention on Biological Diversity
CBO	Community Based Organisations
CCA	Community Conservation Agreement
CCOSI	Conservation Council of Solomon Islands
CI	Conservation International
CITES	Convention on Illegal Trade in Endangered Species of Flora and Fauna
COLP	Code of Logging Practice
COP	Conference of the Parties
COTS	Crown of Thorns
CROP	Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific
CSO	Community Service Organisation
CSP	Community Sector Programme
DAL	Department of Agriculture and Livestock
DFEC	Department of Forestry, Environment and Conservation
DFMR	Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources
DNPAC	Department of National Planning and Aid Coordination
DSE	Development Services Exchange
EAC	Environment Advisory Committee
ECANSI	Environmental Concerns Action Network of Solomon Islands
ECD	Environment and Conservation Division
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FD	Forestry Division
FRTUA	Forest Resources and Timber Utilisation Act
FSC	Forest Stewardship Certification
FSPI	Foundation for Peoples of the South Pacific
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GCCG	Grand Coalition for Change Government
GCRMN	Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network
GMO	Genetically Modified Organism
HRD	Human Resource Development
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IUCN	International Union for the Conservation of Nature (World Nature Conservation Union)
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KGA	Kastom Gaden Association
LLCTC	Lauru Land Conference of Tribal Community
LMO	Living Modified Organism
MEA	Multilateral Environmental Agreement
MCCF	Makira Community Conservation Foundation
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MNR	Ministry of Natural Resources
MOU	Memorandum of Understanding
MPA	Marine Protected Area
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action

NBSAP	National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan
NCSA	National Capacity Self Assessment
NEMS	National Environmental Management Strategy
NERRDP	National Economic Recovery, Reform and Development Plan 2003-2006
NGO	Non Government Organisation
NIS	National Implementation Strategy
NRDF	Natural Resources Development Foundation
NRM	Natural Resource Management
NRRC	Natural Resources and Rights Coalition
NSDS	National Sustainable Development Strategy
PGA	Provincial Government Act
RAMSI	Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands
RMO	Resource Management Ordinance
ROC	Republic of China
RVRMDP	Roviana and Vonavona Resource Management and Development Program
SBD	Solomon Islands Dollar
SD	Sustainable Development
SIAQS	Solomon Islands Agriculture and Quarantine Service
SIBC	Solomon Islands Broadcasting Corporation
SICHE	Solomon Islands College of Higher Education
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SIDT	Solomon Islands Development Trust
SIG	Solomon Islands Government
SILMMA	Solomon Islands Locally Managed Marine Area network
SIS	Small Island States
SISDAC	Solomon Islands Sustainable Development Advisory Council
SOLFRIS	Solomon Islands Forests Inventory System
SOPAC	South Pacific Applied Geosciences Commission
SPBCP	South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Project
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Communities
SPREP	South Pacific Regional Environment Programme
TCF	Tiola Conservation Foundation
TDA	Tetepare Descendants' Association
TK	Traditional knowledge
TNC	The Nature Conservancy
UCSB	University of California Santa Barbara
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework on Climate Change Convention
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNESCO	United Nations Education, Science and Cultural Organisation
UPNG	University of Papua New Guinea
UQ	University of Queensland
USP	University of the South Pacific
WHC	World Heritage Convention
WVSI	World Vision – Solomon Islands
WWF	World Wide Fund for Nature – Solomon Islands

Executive summary

The biodiversity of the Pacific region is recognised as being globally significant. The Solomon Islands was recently included into the famous “Coral Triangle”, the area of ocean considered to have the highest marine biodiversity in the world. This includes the waters of the Philippines, Indonesia and Papua New Guinea. The Solomon Islands Rainforest Ecoregion is recognised as “one of the world’s great Centres of Plant Diversity” (Wein, Chatterton, 2005). However, biodiversity in Solomon Islands is under threat from invasive species, loss of major land and marine habitats, over exploitation of natural resources and destructive harvesting techniques, climate change from sea level rise and more frequent destructive climatic events. The root causes, simply put, stem from human activity - increasing population, increasing consumption, changing economic circumstances and the need for cash, the drive for a more technological world, even globalisation.

Solomon Islands is a signatory to the UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) which aims for the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity across the globe. As a party to the Convention, Solomon Islands committed to obligations for addressing the loss of biological diversity in country. However, as the UNCBD Stocktake report and this thematic assessment have found, many of the key obligations have not been met nor has the national environmental agenda been effective. As a result, environmental degradation and biodiversity loss continues.

There are capacity constraints which impact on Solomon Islands’ people and government to deal with these issues. They include lack of political will, gaps in human and physical capability, limited financial resources, a public service in need of reform, a legal framework lacking in cohesion and not being fully implemented, gaps in scientific knowledge on the biodiversity of Solomon Islands, a lack of processes and capacity for data collection and management, a general lack of awareness and understanding across government and by natural resource owners about the importance of biodiversity and how to make traditional management methods complement contemporary natural resource management within a customary land tenure system.

However, opportunities do exist for addressing these constraints. There is a significant network within country of NGOs, research institutions and a growing number of postgraduate students with environmental based degrees. Through these avenues, community awareness raising and capacity building is taking place and scientific research is progressing. Solomon Islands also has overseas aid donors in country as well as the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) which provides a significant link into funds and technical assistance. The regional networks are also a source of technical expertise and support. Processes governing the regulation of natural resources such as forestry and fishing are being strengthened, resulting in increased revenue to Government. A strong focus on good governance and rural development, as indicated in new policies by the national government will also improve the conditions for addressing issues impacting on the environment and biodiversity such as poverty reduction, food security, education and land reform.

Solomon Islands is not likely to be able to meet all its obligations under international environmental conventions on its own. The international community recognises Small Island Developing States (SIDS) such as Solomon Islands, require support of the international and regional communities through networking, providing regional services where appropriate, partnerships and strong collaboration with NGOs and academic and research institutions. Participating in the new UNCBD Programme of Works for Island Biodiversity and taking advantage of financial mechanisms through that programme are opportunities for Solomon Islands.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) provides a source of funding to implement priority national environmental activities which complement and support the obligations of the UNCBD. These include development of a National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP), updating the State of the Environment Report and the National Environmental Management Strategy.

Achieving regional objectives set through the Pacific Island Forum’s “Pacific Plan” and SPREP’s Action Plan for Nature Conservation will also significantly progress commitments under the UNCBD. The focus for Solomon Islands is to encourage good governance at all levels from community leaders and chiefs to national politicians and government agencies; build the capacity of its institutions and empower stewardship in communities and natural resource owners to conserve and sustainably use biodiversity for the environmental, economic and social security of Solomon Islands and its people.

1.0 Introduction

The National Capacity Self Assessment (NCSA) is a Global Environment Facility (GEF) funded initiative for countries to undertake a systematic assessment of their capacity needs in respect of the three Conventions which arose from the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro - UN Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD), Framework for Climate Change Convention (UNFCCC) and Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). The aim is to identify capacity constraints to meeting the obligations of the three “Rio” Conventions, and the opportunities for addressing the constraints. The Solomon Islands NCSA is being undertaken by the NCSA project management unit through the national Environment and Conservation Division with support from a team of locally based consultants.

The objective of the thematic assessment is to develop a thematic profile that addresses the major needs, challenges and opportunities for capacity development in Solomon Islands in order to be able to implement the requirements of the conventions and to address national environmental issues. The thematic assessments build upon the Stocktake reports which looked at the commitments and obligations of the three conventions and the status of progress towards meeting the commitments. The thematic assessments involved researching existing reports and studies, and consultation with stakeholders including government agencies, provincial governments, non government organisations and academic institutions which have an involvement in Solomon Islands. Information was also included from two workshops held in Honiara. During the first workshop, participants considered the key capacity issues arising from the Stocktake reports and also carried out a series of activities to identify major environmental issues affecting Solomon Islands and identified their root causes.

The biodiversity of the Pacific region is recognised as being globally significant. The Solomon Islands’ marine environment is included in the Bismarck Solomon Seas Ecoregion, one of the top 200 ecoregions in the world. In 2004, following an assessment of the marine environment, areas of the Western Province were found to have the second highest level of fish and coral species diversity in the world. As a result of the survey, the famous “Coral Triangle” which included Papua, Indonesia, and PNG, was extended to include Solomon Islands.

The Solomon Islands Rainforest Ecoregion is also of global significance and rich in biodiversity with 4500 species of plants. It is “recognised as one of the world’s great Centres of Plant Diversity rich in unique palms, orchids and climbing pandanus”, (Wein, Chatterton, 2005). However, according to the Solomon Islands Forest Strategy 2006-2011, the country “has one of the poorest records for forest protection on the planet with only 0.28% of its territory included in protected areas. A number of regions recommended as priorities for conservation in 1990 have subsequently been logged or cleared for oil palm,” (Wein, Chatterton, 2005).

A healthy biodiversity is paramount to the well being and security of mankind, and in the Solomon Islands, with approximately 85 percent of the population relying on the environment for a subsistence lifestyle, sustainable use and conservation of biodiversity is critical. Loss of biodiversity can lead to hunger, poverty, disease and conflict and is a threat not just to human health but to the internal security of Solomon Islanders (NCSA Stocktake workshop July 2006).

Biodiversity in Solomon Islands is under threat. The threats are many, but include invasive species, loss of major land and marine habitats, over exploitation of natural resources and destructive harvesting techniques on land and at sea. Also, climate change from sea level rise and more frequent destructive climatic events and natural disasters. The root causes of these issues are considered in detail in the following section, but largely stem from human activity - increasing population, increasing consumption, changing economic circumstances and the need for cash, the drive for a more technological world, even globalisation.

The population of Solomon Islands is increasing at approximately 4.4% annually and is putting pressure on natural resources for food, building materials and other life support systems. Land is cleared for timber, forestry, oil palm plantations, farms, urban and rural developments and infrastructure. Marine habitats are destroyed from destructive fishing practices such as dynamite and poisons, and damage

from shipping, pollution and harvesting of rock and coral. The drive for cash means fishermen are looking for more efficient ways to harvest – a change from the traditional methods to night diving using torches, using scuba and spear guns so they are able to take more and go deeper into habitats previously left untouched. Outboard motorised canoes have enabled fishermen to broaden their range for harvesting. Solomon Islanders are moving to a cash economy for school fees, petrol and kerosene and for processed foods. This is resulting in a loss of the traditional methods of natural resource management and use.

The globalisation of markets is impacting here too. Overseas buyers are driving the demand for ornamentals from the marine environment for the marine aquarium trade, or demanding exotic birds and animals from Solomon Islands' forests. The increasing awareness by Solomon Islanders to technological advances in communications, entertainment, computers, transport and even changing fashions and desires in clothing are impacting on the demand from external and domestic markets for natural resources.

The changing pressures on biodiversity require action. Internationally, regionally and nationally there are a range of actions in the form of multilateral agreements such as the Convention on Biological Diversity, regional strategies and conventions such as the Apia (SPREP) Convention, Forum Fisheries Agency Convention, the SPREP Action Plan for Nature Conservation, SPC's various marine focussed strategies, and the Pacific Plan. In the Solomon Islands, there have been attempts at developing a National Environmental Management Strategy as well as the gazettal of an environmental legislative framework. To support national governments in the implementation of these various conventions and strategies, there are a number of regional networks such as the Roundtable on Nature Conservation, the Pacific Islands Forum, Melanesian Spearhead Group and a range of other forums for Pacific Island countries and Small Island States trying to grapple with a range of economic, social, environmental and security issues through a regional approach.

However, there are constraints which impact on Solomon Islands' people and government to deal with these issues. They include limited capacity (human and physical); limited financial resources; a public service in need of reform; a legal framework lacking in cohesion and not being fully implemented; poor governance structures; gaps in scientific knowledge on the biodiversity of Solomon Islands; limited processes and capacity for collecting, storing, analysing and sharing data; a general lack of awareness and understanding across government and by natural resource owners about the importance of biodiversity and how to make traditional management methods complement contemporary natural resource management within a customary land tenure system. In addition, there is a lack of coordination and collaboration between government agencies and between the two levels of government, national and provincial.

Solomon Islands has opportunities for addressing these constraints. There is a significant network within country of NGOs, research institutions and a growing number of postgraduate students with environmental based degrees. It also has the presence of the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) and a host of aid and development agencies which provide a significant link into donor funds and technical assistance. Regionally, the various networks are also a source of technical expertise and support.

This thematic assessment provides detail on the constraints and opportunities facing Solomon Islands in dealing with the environmental threats, the international obligations on Solomon Islands to conserve biodiversity, and the opportunities for addressing those constraints. This report looks specifically at the UNCBD and builds on the UNCBD Stocktake report. Assessments have also been undertaken on the Convention to Combat Desertification and the Framework on Climate Change Convention. The cross-cutting issues from these three thematic assessments have been combined into an overall report which also looks at issues cutting across national environmental agendas. The information from the thematic assessments and cross-cutting assessment will form a national plan of action to address the capacity constraints.

2.0 Roles and Responsibilities of Government

2.1 Government Departments and Agencies

The following is a brief overview of key government departments which play a role in the delivery of Solomon Islands' obligations under UNCBD and delivery of its own national environmental and sustainable development agendas.

Nationally, the Environment and Conservation Division (ECD), which comes under the Department of Forestry, Environment and Conservation (DFEC) in the Ministry for Natural Resources (MNR), is the focal point for the UNCBD and the Cartagena Protocol. In addition to its own responsibilities to the UNCBD, it has a coordination role with other national level departments including National Planning and Aid Coordination (DNPAC), Fisheries and Marine Resources (DFMR), Agriculture and Livestock (DAL), Infrastructure, Mines and Energy, Health, Forestry Division (FD), and Finance and Economic Planning. ECD is responsible for implementation of the *Environment Act 1998* and the *Wildlife Protection and Management Act 1998*.

The Forestry Division, also part of the Department of Forestry, Environment and Conservation, is responsible for implementation of the *Forest Resources and Timber Utilisation Act 1969* and 2005 Forest Regulations, the Forest Policy and Code of Logging Practice. Also under the MNR is the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources and its legal basis is the *Fisheries Act 1998* and supporting regulations.

This national level framework is complemented by the powers vested in provincial governments through the devolution orders under the *Provincial Government Act 1997* and the decentralised responsibilities for coastal fisheries management and development under the Fisheries Act. Provincial governments have powers to pass Resource Management Ordinances to protect and conserve their natural resources. The Town and Country Planning Boards provide planning control over provincial urban areas, excluding customary owned land.

Other key players in environmental management include the work carried out by NGOs, research organisations such as WorldFish Center, civil society and the communities who have traditionally managed their natural resources who are now working with NGOs to formally establish marine and terrestrial conservation areas such as at Makira and on Tetepare.

This national framework has a number of capacity gaps which are discussed further in this report.

2.2 Governance of Solomon Islands

The Solomon Islands has been through a period of political and civil unrest between 1998 and 2003. Weak governance and accountability (from local chief level to provincial and national government), have led to a period of mistrust in leadership and poor management of government funds and the nation's natural resources. In July 2003, the Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands (RAMSI) was instigated and this has involved, apart from restoring law and order, an institutional strengthening programme which is focussing on transparency, accountability and good governance. As part of this programme there have been a number of RAMSI advisors posted to key agencies of critical to the good governance of Solomon Islands such as Finance, Attorney General's Office, the courts, Public Solicitor's Officer, Public Prosecutions and the Auditor General's Office.

In May 2006, a new national government was elected. The Grand Coalition for Change Government (GCCG) has made ethical leadership and public service reform two key focus areas for government change. This will build on initiatives commenced under the former government such as the auditing of government departments, some of which had not been audited for 20 years. The Auditor General's Office, which had ceased to exist prior to RAMSI,

has since completed audits of the Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources and the Forestry Division. The audits allege serious cases of misappropriation of government revenue and funds and a lack of enforcement of regulations. Reforms are now taking place in these two departments.

Another key focus area for the new government is public service reform, land reform and constitutional reform. A new Constitution is expected to be introduced in 2007.

As part of the RAMSI good governance programme, national government departments are required to develop three year corporate plans with annual budgets. Recurrent funding allocations will be linked to the corporate plans.

3.0 Legislative Framework

Based on findings in the UNCBD Stocktake report, and other comprehensive reports including those prepared by the Auditor General's Office, International Waters Programme, WWF, the ADB country environmental analysis, as well as interviews with government and non government stakeholders, it seems fair to conclude that the national level legal framework, in principle, has powers to manage sustainably the marine resources of Solomon Islands. However, there are gaps, particularly for terrestrial resources, biodiversity conservation and habitat protection, recognition of protected area systems, as well as problems with implementation, enforcement and lack of capacity. The legal framework is not fully achieving national environmental objectives, nor is it helping Solomon Islands' deliver obligations under international and regional MEAs.

The national fisheries legislation and regulations need to be updated to facilitate the objectives of the new Convention on the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean, and a number of Solomon Islands' obligations under the Convention on Biodiversity are outstanding. While the Wildlife Act was developed to meet the obligations of CITES, Solomon Islands has not signed the treaty nor has it developed regulations for the Wildlife Act.

There is no framework to support protection of biodiversity or endangered wildlife and their habitats and no enabling legislation for integrated coastal management (ICM). There is no legislation regulating access to genetic resources or protecting traditional knowledge or otherwise facilitating access benefit sharing (ABS).

The paramount law in Solomon Islands is the Constitution which states that "the natural resources of our country are vested in the people and government of Solomon Islands". The Constitution recognises traditional systems of governance, providing that customary practice is part of the law of Solomon Islands. Article 75 of the Constitution provides that Parliament shall make provisions for the application of laws, which include customary laws. It also recognises customary landowners' rights over their land (Hauirae, 2003). However, the Constitution gives the State powers of compulsory acquisition of land under S8(2) which gives the State powers to interfere with property rights to promote the broader public good such as in "the interests of defence, public safety, public order, public morality, public health, town or country planning or the development or utilisation of any property in such a manner as to promote the public benefit", (McDonald 2006).

According to Lane (2005), there is a "culture" of belief that customary land owners have resource sovereignty and that government has limited regulatory control over customary held land and resources. Therefore, there is a strongly held perception that customary land owners have "largely unfettered decision making rights" (Lane 2005). However, legally and constitutionally the resources are vested in both the people and the government (Hauirae, 2003). The confusion over the rights of government to regulate use of natural resources makes environmental management complex. The new national government is proposing constitutional reform to a federal system and has indicated a new Constitution will be introduced in 2007.

Other key national level legislation relating to biodiversity conservation and sustainable use – *Wildlife Protection and Management Act 1998* and the *Environment Act of 1998* do not have regulations and are not being fully implemented or enforced. *The Forest Resources and Timber Utilisation Act 1969* is out of date, is failing to control and manage the forestry industry and needs replacing with a law which gives greater protection to biodiversity. The new Forest Regulations were gazetted in 2005 which brought into force the Code of Logging Practice which aims to reduce the impacts of logging and protect biodiversity.

Nationally and provincially, there is a lack of coastal or inshore fisheries management plans, and the existing tuna and live reef fish trade management plans had not been implemented as the Fisheries Advisory Council which needed to endorse the plans, had not met for a number of years. However, in 2006, the Council met twice. The Environment Advisory Committee, a provision of the Environment Act, has not been established, the Solomon Islands Sustainable Development Advisory Council (SISDAC) has not met since its establishment in 2005, and there is a serious lack of agency capacity and resources to enforce legislation.

There are limited powers at the provincial level for natural resource management and conservation through devolved powers under the *Provincial Government Act 1997* and decentralised powers under the Fisheries Act 1998. However, a number of issues need to be addressed to make this effective, such as dealing with land ownership over lagoons, reefs and coastal waters, developing a national framework to support protected area systems and tabu areas, as well having the resources for enforcement and monitoring of these areas. The Town and Country Planning Act also has devolved powers for land use planning to Provinces but it is only applicable to alienated land, not customary owned land. This creates a problem as many of the decisions about natural resource use are made by the customary owners who are not subject to major land use legislation. Other issues include the lack of capacity, resources, and support from national agencies for the provinces to carry out or implement their own ordinances and management responsibilities.

Other necessary measures to protect Solomon Islands' resources relate to the process of allowing research to be undertaken in Solomon Islands. There is concern about how well monitored research permits are and whether all researchers provide copies of data and research collected to the Solomon Islands government. The *Research Act (Chapter 152 of Laws of SI) revised (1996)* has no regulations and little detail. The National Research Committee which is supposed to implement the provisions of the Research Act is not functioning. There is no national framework for research in Solomon Islands or legislation to protect traditional knowledge or to regulate access to genetic resources.

4.0 Programmes, Policies & Strategies

4.1 Programmes

National Economic Recovery, Reform and Development Plan 2003-2006

The *National Economic Recovery, Reform and Development Plan 2003-2006, Strategic and Action Framework (NERRDP)* was the medium-term development policy document of the previous National Government. It set out strategies, policies and actions that were to be taken for economic recovery, social restoration, reform and development during the period of the plan. It aimed to address issues affecting the economy and well being of Solomon Islanders following the ethnic tension period from 1998 to 2003 and concentrated on five strategic areas:

- Normalising law and order and the security situation;
- Strengthening democracy, human rights and good governance;
- Restoring fiscal and financial stability and reforming the public sector;
- Revitalising the productive sector and rebuilding supporting infrastructure; and
- Restoring basic social services and fostering social development.

In virtually every industry sector, the need for reforming and building capacity of government agencies was a policy action. In terms of sustainable use of resources and biodiversity protection there were no specific policies which articulated the government's position. However, there were sector-specific strategies, policy actions and outcomes. NERRDP did not integrate the concepts of sustainable development and biological diversity protection across departments and work programmes.

The NERRDP Implementation Report, (September 2005), raised concerns about capacity and management within the public service. It stated that there was an opportunity to address human capacity needs through the significant technical and development assistance being provided to Solomon Islands, but that this was only being applied in selected areas of government.

It is expected that the new National Government's policy, which has a strong focus on rural development, will guide the preparation of the next national development plan. There is an opportunity to include the principles of sustainable development into programme actions and activities through this planning phase and to link the new development plan to a harmonised and coordinated aid programme for overseas donors, with a higher priority to environmental management.

Millennium Development Goals

Solomon Islands is a party to the UN Millennium Development Goals. They have been a measure of Solomon Islands' achievement towards its national goals outlined in NERRDP and monitored for implementation through the Department of National Planning. The MDGs are important as national targets and are a way of assessing the country's progress. However, an EU country profile assessment stated that Solomon Islands "is unlikely to meet the majority of the Millennium Development Goals by 2015", (Europa website). The NERRDP Implementation Report (2005) reported on Solomon Islands' progress towards achieving the MDGs. It found that with regard to Goal 7 *To ensure environmental sustainability*, Target 9 *Integrate the principles of sustainable development into country policies and programmes and reverse the loss of environmental resources*, sustainable development principles are gradually being considered in policies and programmes in Solomon Islands, but natural forest harvesting continues at an unsustainable rate and the loss of biodiversity is continuing.

Sustainable Forestry and Conservation Programme & Agriculture and Rural Development Programme

In August 2006, the new national government signed an agreement with the EU for Stabex funds of \$42 million SBD for a Sustainable Forestry and Conservation Programme and \$85 million SBD (with support from the World Bank and AusAID) for the Agriculture and Rural Development Programme. The agriculture programme is still in the programming stage and is not expected to be launched until mid to end 2007. It will be aimed at poverty reduction and rural growth. The Sustainable Forestry and Conservation Programme includes:

- Forest Management and Conservation – mobilizing the National Forest Conservation Strategy, an Endowment Fund to support the conservation of a 12,000 ha area of unlogged lowland forest on Tetepare Island; and a Forest Conservation Grant Scheme for community organisations and non state actors;
- Support to Customary Forest Landowners and community based organisations – landowner advocacy and a legal support unit within the Public Solicitor's Office
- Investment in Marketability of Solomon Islands Plantation Logs (support for Forest Stewardship Council standards)
- Support for National Capacity Needs – Support for Forestry Division and financial support to resurrect the National Forestry School.

Planning for the two programmes will require significant collaboration between key government agencies and departments. This could be an impetus for mainstreaming environmental and biodiversity considerations into national government planning and programmes.

4.2 Policies

National Government Policy (Grand Coalition for Change Government)

The national government has developed a “roadmap policy” which “is determined to bring about fundamental changes in the form of leadership and in critical policy areas” and steer the government “to a people-centred, growth-focused, more effective governance and transformational leadership” (GCCG policy 2006). Its mission “is to achieve development through a bottom-up and holistic approach that encompasses the empowerment of the people through rural advancement strategies, the pursuit of the Millennium Development Goals, the revitalization of the economy, improved law and order, effective service delivery and the devolution of powers and functions and decision-making authority to the periphery”.

Unfortunately, biodiversity conservation has not been included as a specific focus. However, in launching the policy document in 2006, rural development has become a key focus and the Prime Minister recognised that “The strength of Solomon Islands and the potential for economic growth lies in sustainable development of our natural resources, both renewable and non-renewable”, (Solomon Star, 10/8/06).

The policy highlights the following issues to be addressed: Constitutional Reform; Public Service Reform; Economic Recovery, Fiscal and Monetary Measures; Ethical Leadership; Foreign Policy; Regional Assistance Mission to Solomon Islands; Indigenization; Sovereignty; Truth and Reconciliation; and the Honiara Riots.

There are policies covering land reform and agricultural improvements, open and transparent public service, improved service delivery and training, implementation of the National Environmental Management Strategy (NEMS) and passing the Forests Bill 2004. If implemented over the life of this government, these initiatives should help towards addressing some of the root causes constraining Solomon Islands from meeting its national and international environmental and biodiversity goals. However, whilst still in the early phases of government transition, and budgeting processes and national planning, it is important that ECD, Fisheries, NGOs and other civil society groups impress upon the government the importance of mainstreaming environmental considerations across government programmes. (Refer to Appendix 1 for full policy document).

Environmental Policy

Currently there are no national environmental, sustainable development or biodiversity conservation policies. The Minister for the Environment has requested the establishment of a taskforce to develop a national environment policy. Aside from the policy actions outlined in the former national development plan (NERRDP) the only other guiding documents are the 1993 State of the Environment Report and the 1993 NEMS.

NEMS was a “Strategy seen as the first step forward to ensuring sustainable economic development and sound environmental management in Solomon Islands” (NEMS, 1993). It identified major environmental issues and priority programmes to address the issues. NEMS provided the foundation for implementing much of Agenda 21 in Solomon Islands. It was a “Snapshot in time – dependent on the economic and other circumstances” and was “not to be seen as a long term blue print for action” (NEMS 1993). Unfortunately many of the strategies were not implemented and the document is in need of review before implementation as a strategic plan for sustainable development, given the changes in economic circumstances over the past 13 years.

Fisheries Policy

Department of Fisheries and Marine Resources policy states that DFMR is “vested with the responsibility of developing and managing, in cooperation with provincial authorities, the exploitation of all fisheries and marine resources found within the Fishery Limits in such a manner as to secure optimum social and economic benefits for the people of SI, specifically;

- To achieve and maintain self-sufficiency in supply of fish to the domestic market;
- To improve cash income throughout the fisheries sector by way of assisting Solomon Islanders in developing their resources through self-employment;
- To maximise participation of SI nationals in commercial fishing and associated activities;
- To improve the foreign exchange position of SI by encouragement of local processing fisheries resources into value-added products; and
- Encourage farming of aquatic resources.” (Draft briefing note - Fisheries Minister 2006).

Code of Logging Practice

The Solomon Islands Code of Logging Practice 2002 finally came into force in 2005. The code sets out 13 priority standards which must be adhered to by logging companies. It also gives guidelines for planning and monitoring logging operations on a self regulatory basis with audits by the Forestry Division to ensure compliance.

The Code is “aimed at ensuring that where selection logging takes place, the ecological and cultural functions of the forest, and its productivity in terms of wood and water production, are protected”, (COLP May 2002). It is part of the legal regulatory framework for the forestry sector.

Forests Policy

A National Forest Policy, endorsed by Cabinet in 2002 aimed to achieve a more sustainable logging industry. However, much like the NEMS, very few actions were implemented. The five key policies are: (*Source AusAID Forestry Sector Review, 2006*)

Policy: Adopt a long term view of the forestry sector

Strategies: • Protect ecological functions by excluding high-impact uses and enforcing ecologically based standards

- Manage harvest towards sustainable level
- Support invigorated programme of tree planting
- Put in place appropriate legislation

Policy: Protect future economic forestry options

Strategies: • Apply ecologically based standards to commercial logging operations

- Forbid further increases in level of log harvesting and pursue reduction to sustainable level
- Support invigorated programme of tree planting

Policy: Promote greater provincial and local-level participation in forest planning and administration

Strategies: • Devolve some responsibilities to provinces

- Establish extension function within Forestry Division
- Provide legislative framework for ecoforestry

Policy: Provide strong support for environment and ecological sustainability

Strategies: • Protect ecological functions by excluding high-impact uses and enforcing ecologically based standards

- Observe SI’s international commitments

Policy: Leave commercial-scale plantations and sawn timber production for investment decisions by private sector

Strategy: • Remove the requirement in current logging licences for a portion of the volume harvested to be domestically processed

Forests Strategy for Solomon Islands 2006-2011

In 2005, WWF and its partners conducted a national workshop to develop a national forests strategy. The goal is “To support Solomon Islands peoples to conserve biodiversity and to ensure sustainable forest management through promotion of sustainable livelihoods and improved forest governance”. It sets a series of targets under the themes of 1) Forest Protected Areas; 2) Sustainable Forest Management through Market Mechanisms; and 3) Forest Governance. This strategy was the impetus for the granting of the EU Stabex funds for a National Sustainable Forestry Conservation Programme.

5.0 Human and Financial Resources

A major issue facing the Solomon Islands Government in terms of meeting its international obligations on UNCBD, and addressing its own national environmental agenda, is the lack of capacity within the public service. This is in relation to both human capacity and the process of government such as systems and management of the public service. According to the NERRDP Implementation Report (2005), management is a major cause of weak and weakening capacities in the government and “capacity building should be an essential component of technical assistance, not just to establish or develop systems, but also to assist the development of national human capacities and capabilities”. However, the report says that at present, apart from a few instances such as the capacity building in the legal and justice areas, this opportunity is lost and there is very little national capacity building resulting from the substantial technical assistance deployed in the country (NERRDP IR 2005).

The capacity issues include a limited pool of qualified people, lack of budget allocation to resource management departments to properly carry out their roles, poor standard of office accommodation, low salaries and poor working conditions for public servants. Weak governance and accountability and lack of political support in government have also led to a demoralised public service.

The Environment and Conservation Division, which is the technical focal point for the UNCBD and has responsibility for management of the national environment agenda, only has two staff members whose time is divided between dealing with international obligations and national level activities. ECD is undertaking a recruitment programme to fill its 13 vacancies which will provide the necessary staff. However, it also needs a significant budget allocation to ensure all staff has the resources to carry out their roles. The 2007 budget for the entire Department of Forestry, Environment and Conservation is only \$4 million SBD.

Fisheries and Marine Resources Department is undergoing a major recruiting and restructuring process with support from the NZ Government following the 2005 audit report. A new corporate plan has been developed and the restructuring plan is awaiting final Cabinet approval. This will see DFMR become a ministry in its own right with a staff complement increased from 48 to 98 and the number of departments increased from 4 to 6 or 7. Technical advisors from Australia or New Zealand will be appointed to assist with the establishment of the new departments. Fisheries legislation and regulations will also be updated. The Ministry will need staff with skills in marine sciences, engineering, marketing, policy and planning, economic analysis and people with technical and advisory skills.

The Forestry Division has more than 100 staff spread throughout the provinces and Honiara. However, according to the AusAID Forestry Sector Review, “It is a damaged organisation, recovering from a prolonged period of low morale and public humiliation surrounding the findings of the 2005 audit”. The review does state that the division now has a committed and capable new management team and that disciplinary action has been initiated as a result of the audit report.

The process of recruitment within the Ministry of Natural Resources is a positive step. However, the recruitment process is lengthy and the pool of qualified, skilled applicants is relatively small due to the competition from NGOs and other organisations which pay higher salaries. In addition, the Ministry needs sufficient funding and resources to carry out its important roles in sustainable use of Solomon Islands natural resources and protection of the environment.

Another key department responsible for natural resources, the Department of Agriculture and Livestock (DAL) faces problems with extension staff in the provinces who have virtually no support framework. According to the Solomon Islands Rural Livelihoods and Broad Based Growth Strategy, “Staff morale is low due to housing problems, no direct support from headquarter, and lack of promotion opportunities”.

Solomon Islands is already heavily reliant on donor assistance and much policy and programme level thinking is now directed at the country’s revenue earning capabilities and rural development. However, in the meantime, external support to the Solomon Islands Government and to agencies for project and capacity building, is available through organisations such as:

- AusAID which has a range of development assistance programmes in addition to the RAMSI programme:
 - Solomon Islands Forestry Management Project Phase II - aims to support legislative reform, strengthen the Forestry Division and improve rural livelihoods through better use of forest resources. Implementation of and compliance with the COLP was also a focus of the programme;
 - Transitional Support to Agriculture Project - to improve food security and increase rural incomes through funding at the provincial level for several small, practical projects at the same time as help with the development of the Agriculture and Rural Development Programme;
- Agriculture and Rural Development Programme – Joint EU Stabex Funds, AusAID and World Bank programme aimed at fostering the most effective and sustainable approach to broad based agriculture and rural development;
- Sustainable Forestry and Conservation Programme (EU Stabex Funds);
- AusAID funded Community Sector Programme(CSP) supports community based infrastructure and income generating rural activities;
- EU Microprojects Fund aimed at income generating and community infrastructure support.

Other sources of technical and financial support include:

- Asian Development Bank
- NZAID / NZVASS
- Republic of China – rural development and agriculture based support
- Japan International Cooperation Agency and its Grassroots Programme
- Private foundations – MacArthur Foundation, David and Lucile Packard Foundation; NGO generated funds (WWF, TNC, Conservation International)
- Scholarships from overseas donor countries
- Technical advisors through RAMSI, AusAID, ROC, JICA and other foreign governments and development partners
- Technical support from volunteer organisations including Australian Volunteers International, Australian Business Volunteers, CUSO, NGOs, universities and visiting researchers and academics
- Regional support through participation in the Pacific Islands Forum and the Melanesian Spearhead Group, Roundtable on Nature Conservation and Council of Regional Organisations of the Pacific (CROP) network.

Internationally, the Global Environment Facility (GEF) is available to Solomon Islands for specific projects which will help support the implementation of international conventions arising from the UNCBD. Although Solomon Islands has in the past received funding from GEF for the National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan (NBSAP), it has not fully delivered the outcomes expected and the NBSAP is yet to be completed. Attention to delivering the expected outcomes of project funding would mean GEF is open again to Solomon Islands to help it achieve some key national environmental objectives and in turn, meet UNCBD objectives.

Developed countries have a responsibility to support developing countries meet their objectives under a range of MEAs. The United Nations system has a key role to play in close cooperation and coordination with other international, regional and sub-regional organisations to support national effort with capacity building (Agenda 21). The international community should provide SIDS with concessional financial, technical and grant assistance to support sustainable development. Developing countries are not only expected to provide national financial support but also to assist with access to wider resources such as micro enterprise loans, environmental trust funds and trade. Clearly, SIDS need a supportive international economic climate and open and non discriminatory trading system to achieve their sustainability goals. This involves production and export systems, value adding of primary production and efficient transport systems and viable commodity markets.

In terms of encouraging resource owners to conserve biodiversity, some external organisations are now looking to conservation incentives to compete with the overpowering and misguided financial incentives from industrial logging – this could include conservation trust funds, conservation agreements and concessions, national biodiversity trust funds, debt for nature swaps, user fees, payment for ecosystem services and national funding of biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.

6.0 UN Convention on Biological Diversity

“Loss of biological diversity is a global concern: it can impoverish human life and the course of human development. The Convention on Biological Diversity (CBD) represents the first united effort by national leaders to address the rate at which the world’s natural resources are being degraded and destroyed” (WWF, 1996.)

The Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) was a key convention agreed to at the 1992 United Nations Conference on Environment and Development at Rio de Janeiro. The UNCBD came into force in 1993 and was ratified by Solomon Islands in 1995. According to the UNCBD Stocktake report, the UNCBD applies to species, ecosystems and genetic resources and explicitly recognises the importance of biodiversity conservation in achieving sustainable development. It also recognises the important role of traditional knowledge and management and deals with biotechnology for biodiversity conservation, technology transfer, benefit sharing, and biosafety. The Cartagena Protocol, adopted by COP in 2000, deals with biosafety issues. Solomon Islands has ratified the Protocol.

The UNCBD has three main objectives: the **conservation of biodiversity**, the **sustainable use of its components**, and the **fair and equitable sharing of the benefits** arising out of the utilisation of genetic resources. Key requirements of the UNCBD are the development of national plans, strategies or programmes for the conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity (NBSAP), or adapt for these purposes existing strategies and integration of these strategies into the national programmes and policies (Art 6). It also requires protection of biological diversity *in situ* – recommending the establishment of a system of protected areas or areas where special measures are needed to be taken to protect biological diversity (Art 8). Another important area is the integration of conservation and sustainable use of biological diversity into national decision-making (Art 10) (UNCBD text 1992).

6.1 Requirements under UNCBD

The UNCBD Stocktake report (McDonald, Lam 2006) provided a summary of the key obligations of the convention as follows (with editor's additions):

No	Obligations/Commitments
1	Develop plans for, and to mainstream, the conservation of biodiversity and sustainable use of the components of BD (Article 6).
2	Research, monitoring, education, and awareness , including identification of important elements of BD, assessment of the health and status of BD (Articles 7, 12, 13, 16, 17, 18).
3	In-situ conservation - Parties are required to establish and maintain a system of protected areas aimed at conserving significant habitat and ecosystems, regulate land use around protected areas in order to preserve the integrity of the area, and restore degraded areas of conservation importance and control the introduction and spread of alien invasive species. They should also implement a system of environmental impact assessment to prevent or minimise harm to BD arising from development activities (Article 8, 11, 14).
4	Ex-situ conservation - To complement in-situ conservation efforts for species that are highly threatened or endangered in their natural habitat, the Convention requires parties implement measures ex-situ, for example in zoos, wildlife parks, arboreta, herbaria, and botanical gardens (Article 9).
5	Sustainable use - Where biological resources are used commercially or for subsistence purposes, rather than conserved in situ, parties should establish a regime to ensure that resources are used and managed sustainably (Article 10, 11, 14).
6	Access to genetic resources - The Convention seeks to strike a balance between facilitating access to genetic resources that can contribute to global human well-being through development of medicines and other applications, and ensuring that centuries-old traditional knowledge is protected and rewarded through equitable arrangements for sharing the benefits of genetic resources (Article 15).
7	Access to and transfer of technology – Provide and or facilitate access for and transfer to other contracting parties of technologies that are relevant to the conservation and sustainable use of BD or make use of genetic resources and do not cause significant damage to the environment (Article 16).
8	Exchange of information – Facilitate the exchange of information from all publicly available sources relevant to conservation and sustainable use of BD; including exchange of results of technical, scientific and socio-economic research and information on training programmes etc (Article 17).
9	Technical and scientific cooperation – promote international technical and scientific cooperation; establish a clearing house mechanism (Article 18).
10	Regulate or control biotechnology and distribution of its benefits - The Convention recognises that new life forms resulting from modern genetic engineering have potential to create new risks to BD ie the creation of “super weeds” (pesticide resistant plants) and contamination of natural species, especially in the field of agricultural BD with genetically modified crops and aquaculture with genetically modified fish species. The UNCBD requires parties to put measures in place to regulate or control the risks associated with biotechnology, and these requirements are elaborated significantly in the Cartagena Biosafety Protocol (Article 19).
11	Financial resources – Each party undertakes to provide in accordance with its capabilities, financial support and incentives in respect of those national activities which are intended to achieve objectives of the convention in accordance with national plans, priorities and programmes (Article 20).
12	Reporting and participation - As well as the substantive obligations set out above, Parties are required to meet certain procedural requirements, including attendance at Conferences of the Parties (COPs), participation in expert committees, and the preparation of country reports (Article 26). Parties have so far been required to submit three reports to the Convention's Secretariat, the third national communication initiated in 2005.

The Conference of the Parties, (COP) through the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice (SBSTTA), developed thematic work programmes in key areas. In its 2nd national communications to COP, Solomons rated those programs of relevance accordingly:

Work Programme	Priority	Status
Marine and coastal BD	High	Resources a limiting factor
Agricultural BD	High	Resources a severely limiting factor
Forest BD	High	Resources a limiting factor
Island BD		Not included in 2001
BD of inland waters	Low	Resources severely limiting

The UNCBD Strategic Plan, agreed at COP 6, provides a guide to achieving the obligations. Its mission is “*To achieve by 2010 a significant reduction of the current rate of biodiversity loss at the global, regional and national level as a contribution to poverty alleviation and to the benefit of all life on earth.*” The Strategic Plan emphasises the development and active implementation of NBSAPs and the integration of biodiversity conservation into relevant sectors. As a Party to the Convention, Solomon Islands has committed to the basic treaty obligations as well as the commitments of the Strategic Plan (UNCBD Stocktake Report).

6.2 UNCBD Island Biodiversity

At the 2004 Conference of Parties (COP 7), island biodiversity was identified as the new thematic area for development under the UNCBD. A programme of works was drafted by the Ad hoc Technical Experts Group under the Subsidiary Body on Scientific, Technical and Technological Advice as a means to implement the objectives of the UNCBD for island states.

The programme of works incorporates priority actions to enhance conservation of island biodiversity, sustainable use of its components, and the fair and equitable sharing of benefits from the utilisation of genetic resources from islands. It contributes to the objectives of the UNCBD Strategic Plan, the Barbados Programme of Action, World Summit on Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation and the Millennium Development Goals. It seeks to avoid duplication of existing thematic work programmes and initiatives of the UNCBD, and it addresses threats of climate change and land degradation.

The programme of works was adopted at COP 8 in 2006 and recognises that “SIDS rely on biodiversity for sustainable development, have close links between culture and environment, have special concerns and particular vulnerabilities, limited land area, high levels of endemism and extensive coastal and marine biodiversity”, (SPREP Roundtable). It will be an important tool for countries such as Solomon Islands to achieve national and international commitments. Being able to meet GEF criteria for accessing resources was noted by SIDS at COP 8 to be a critical part to implementing the Island Biodiversity programme of works which is recognised as:

- one of the most significant new sources of financial and technical support for the implementation of National Biodiversity Strategies and Action Plans;
- deals with island biodiversity in an integrated way and avoids duplication with existing thematic work programmes of the UNCBD;
- is a platform for a stronger island voice within the UNCBD and related international negotiations; and
- strengthens the political and ecological connectivity and partnerships between governments and civil society and between small islands (*Source: SPREP Roundtable Website*).

6.3 Status of Implementation and Challenges

The UNCBD secretariat recognises there are many challenges to implementing the UNCBD. One of the key issues - mainstreaming conservation and sustainable use of biological resources across all sectors of national economy, society and policy making frameworks, is a complex challenge at the heart of the convention. “Integrated management of natural resources, based on the ecosystem approach, is the most effective way to promote this aim of the convention” (UNCBD Secretariat).

The secretariat identified the following areas as constraints to implementation:

Constraints to UNCBD Implementation

- *Political and societal obstacles*
- *Institutional, technical and capacity-related obstacles*
- *Lack of accessible knowledge and information*
- *Economic policy and financial resources*
- *Collaboration and cooperation*
- *Legal and judicial impediments - Lack of appropriate policies and laws*
- *Socio-economic factors (poverty, population pressure, unsustainable consumption and production patterns, lack of capacities for local communities)*
- *Natural phenomena and environmental change*

Solomon Islands has taken steps towards achieving its commitments to UNCBD but still has a long way to go (see summaries below). It is currently implementing the National Capacity Self Assessment and has gazetted environmental legislation which includes an Environmental Impact Assessment procedure. However, the original draft Environment Bill was reduced in scope due to lack of enforcement capacity within government and the resulting Environment Act 1998 falls short on original intentions. In addition, the Environment Act has not been implemented for lack of regulations. The Wildlife Protection and Management Act, gazetted to implement CITES, fails to protect threatened species and also lacks regulations. The ECD is trying to access funding to have regulations drafted for both Acts. Solomon Islands has initiated the development of a National Biosafety Framework dealing with living modified organisms (LMOs) but there is concern that the country does not have the necessary resources or capacity to implement the framework. A number of NGOs and CBOs are working to establish marine and terrestrial protected areas. However, selection of protected areas is ad hoc as there is no process for determining areas of significance, site selection, or a procedure for establishing, managing and monitoring protected areas.

Also outstanding is an NBSAP and mainstreaming sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity into national programmes and decision making. On this point, ECD has initiated actions to restart the NBSAP process with NGO support. Prior to responsibility for developing the next national development plan being switched to the Office of the Prime Minister, the Department of National Planning and Aid Coordination was aware of the need to incorporate sustainable development principles into the plan and had initiated action to try and facilitate this process.

There is limited in-situ and ex-situ biodiversity conservation, a need for more information and awareness programmes, poor coordination between government agencies, ad hoc data collection, and limited scientific data on biodiversity status or threatened species and habitats. There are no laws protecting traditional knowledge or regulating access to genetic resources. These actions all form part of the body of commitments to the UNCBD.

These issues are summarised below and documented in tables 1- 7, identifying the UNCBD objectives, status, strengths and activities undertaken so far, and the capacity gaps at an individual, institutional and systemic level.

Status of Commitments – Summary

Achievements

- National Capacity Self Assessment Project
- Environmental legislation gazetted (includes an EIA procedure)
- Steps taken to progress drafting of regulations for Wildlife & Environment Acts.
- ECD actions to restart NBSAP process with NGO support
- Development of National Biosafety Framework in progress
- NGOs/CBOs establishing marine & terrestrial protected areas.
- Arnavon Marine Conservation Area
- ECD 2007 Work Plan

Outstanding

- Implementation of environmental laws & EIA process
- NBSAP
- Mainstreaming sustainable use & conservation of BD into national programmes & decision making.
- Effective system and programmes for in-situ/ex-situ biodiversity conservation
- Effective information & awareness programmes
- Effective coordination between government agencies
- Systematic scientific data collection on BD status, threatened species & habitats
- Protection for BD, traditional knowledge & regulating access to and use of genetic resources.

7.0 Capacity Constraints and Opportunities Analysis

The thematic assessment includes two separate analyses of capacity gaps and opportunities - Section 7.1 considers the capacity constraints to delivering the objectives of the UNCBD. Section 7.2 considers the environmental issues and root causes facing Solomon Islands and the capacity challenges to addressing these issues. Section 7.3 combines these into an overall picture of the needs and challenges and Section 7.4 presents the opportunities which will help deliver both the international conventions and meet the environmental agenda, identified at the systemic, institutional and individual level.

The information was drawn from the UNCBD Stocktake report, environmental issues and capacity gaps identified in the NCSA workshop held in Honiara in July, a range of comprehensive reports, questionnaires and consultations.

7.1 Capacity Constraints and Challenges to Delivering the Objectives of the UNCBD

Tables 1-7 consider the convention requirements, the capacity strengths and the capacity gaps according to systemic, institutional or individual level. They are grouped into seven areas: 1) Plans, Programs and Policies; 2) Identification, Monitoring, Research, Education & Awareness; 3) In-Situ Conservation; 4) Ex-situ Conservation; 5) Access to Genetic Resources; 6) Biosafety; and 7) Reporting & Participation.

Table 1: Plans, Programs and Policies

Convention Requirement	Status/Issue	Capacity strengths	Capacity Gaps & Constraints		
			Systemic	Institutional/Organisation	Individual
Develop national strategies, plans or programmes for the conservation & sustainable use of BD (Art 5) (ECD)	<p>No NBSAP</p> <p>NEMS principal document – outdated and largely not implemented</p> <p>Limited previous environmental planning or policies</p>	<p>SI Signatory to the UNCBD</p> <p>New national government – new policies – focus on rural development</p> <p>NGOs offered technical support & funding towards NBSAP & drafting environmental regulations.</p> <p>Some NGO led conservation projects include BD planning components</p> <p>Environment, Wildlife & Fisheries laws developed and gazetted in 1998.</p> <p>Code of Logging Practice & forestry regulations gazetted in 2005</p> <p>ECD has developed a work plan for 2007 which includes key actions towards achieving UNCBD commitments.</p>	<p>Lack of political willpower & commitment from previous governments;</p> <p>No overarching BD framework - limited & uncoordinated actions;</p> <p>NEMS not linked to budget planning process – not implemented</p> <p>No coherent land use policy or national SD or BD policy;</p> <p>Absence of a well-articulated statement regarding env mainstreaming as a clear policy objective in NERRDP & other policy documents;</p> <p>Weak operational, technical & management capacities in the public service</p> <p>Some public service systems & procedures outdated.</p> <p>Forest Resources & Timber Utilization Act outdated & Forests Policy not fully implemented.</p> <p>Lack of understanding of forestry sector by policy makers</p>	<p>Limited capacity in ECD (legal) & human resources for informed contributions to policy development;</p> <p>Limited coordination & collaboration by ECD with other depts ie Finance, Planning, Forestry & Fisheries to advance BD agenda.</p> <p>Lack of funds and resources to agencies;</p> <p>Access to GEF funding stalled until financial safeguards provided – barrier to progress;</p> <p>No current environmental policy.</p> <p>Limited involvement of NGOs/ interest groups in developing environmental policy & strategy.</p> <p>Lack of capacity in environmental accounting & economics for staff in Fisheries, Forestry & Finance.</p> <p>Lack of coordination between UN Focal points</p> <p>Forestry Division under threat of overload with expected acceleration of logging.</p>	<p>Insufficient staff in ECD (2 out of complement of 13) with appropriate knowledge to lead NBSAP process</p> <p>Conflicting agendas with individuals</p> <p>Demoralised public service at national level & seconded staff working at provincial level</p>

			Customary Land Tenure system limits national & provincial govt ability to regulate land use – determined by holders of customary land rights.		
Integrate conservation & sustainable use of BD into relevant sectoral or cross-sectoral plans, programmes & policies (Art 5 & 6) (DP&AC & ECD)	<p>Limited or no mainstreaming of environmental concerns across govt planning, programmes or policies.</p> <p>NERRDP - environmental considerations lower priority than other sectors related to economic & social dev.</p> <p>ECD responsibilities not effectively carried out.</p> <p>Lack of informed environmental management & decision making</p> <p>Lack of full implementation of Env Act & Wildlife Act; Fisheries Act needs updating.</p> <p>Limited achievement of core national priorities – environmental education; establishment of a protected area system, & compliance with national laws.</p> <p>Lack of interagency coordination</p>	<p>National development plan – oppt for mainstreaming.</p> <p>Solomon Islands SD Advisory Council (SISDAC) established</p> <p>Conservation Council of Solomon Islands (CCOSI) established as forum for NGO & agency collaboration.</p> <p>Fisheries Act has potential to allow for conservation of marine biological resources.</p> <p>Env Act has potential to force BD factors to be mainstreamed into decisions of other agencies by being a barrier to approval (through EIA process)</p> <p>Postgraduate training of an ECD officer in EIA.</p> <p>ADB Environmental Analysis completed - includes recommendations for mainstreaming env considerations & an environmental roadmap.</p>	<p>Lack of national SD or BD policy;</p> <p>Absence of a well-articulated statement on environmental mainstreaming as clear policy objective of NERRDP & other policy documents;</p> <p>Weak institutions & lack of budget allocations reflecting lack of genuine commitment to support effective monitoring & management.</p> <p>National Environment law does not require strategic mainstreaming of BD</p> <p>Environmental responsibilities not well defined between agencies;</p> <p>Few agencies have determined their performance targets for environment or are held accountable for such targets.</p>	<p>Small operating budget for ECD</p> <p>Need to implement ECD restructure;</p> <p>Outward migration of officers from Fisheries & ECD to NGOs</p> <p>Severe shortage of staff capacity (ie Fisheries, ECD)</p> <p>Poor coordination within government agencies – SISDAC has not met & Environment Advisory Committee not formed</p>	<p>Individual ECD staff over committed.</p> <p>Low awareness across government officers about environmental considerations and obligations to refer matters to ECD for approval</p> <p>Information sharing & co-ordination between staff is poor</p> <p>Position descriptions in ECD poorly defined.</p> <p>Limited on the job coaching, training, or career planning.</p> <p>Few links between training opportunities, financial compensation & work performance or attendance</p>

Table 2: Identification, Monitoring, Research, Education & Awareness

Convention Requirement	Status	Capacity strengths	Capacity Gaps & Constraints		
			Systemic	Institutional/Org	Individual
<p>Identify & monitor important biological diversity;</p> <p>Identify threatening activities & processes & monitor the effects of those activities;</p> <p>Maintain & organise data (Art 7)</p> <p><i>(ECD plus Forestry, Agriculture, Fisheries, local communities)</i></p>	<p>No systematic identification of biodiversity in SI but independent activities undertaken in particular areas (snapshots).</p> <p>State of the Environment Report 1993 (no new research or identification).</p> <p>NEMS 1993 (Outdated & limited implementation)</p> <p>Little or no surveying, compliance monitoring, or other field based activities mandated by law.</p>	<p>NEMS advocated importance of research & monitoring.</p> <p>Survey of mammals & birds in Choiseul & Isabel in 2000 & other research activities.</p> <p>Preliminary listing of IUCN red-listed species facing immediate endangerment;</p> <p>Forest resource assessment in 2003 (only on commercial forestry supply).</p> <p>TNC Rapid Marine Assessment in 2004.</p> <p>Community based turtle monitoring in Western, Choiseul, Isabel Provinces</p> <p>Monitoring of status & trends in marine ecosystems in Roviana-Vonavona Lagoon</p> <p>Survey of freshwater BD in 2005</p> <p>Research activities at Tetepare in 2006</p> <p>UQ marine surveys of Marovo Lagoon</p> <p>AMNH ornithological research.</p>	<p>Absence of a national platform for external funding exacerbates already limited funding.</p> <p>Other than NEMS, no policies or laws relating to identification & monitoring;</p> <p>No strategic research & monitoring plan</p> <p>Current activities externally initiated (do not necessarily examine indicator species of fundamental ecosystem change).</p> <p>No comprehensive systematic monitoring of impacts on BD from threatening processes & activities</p> <p>Data collected from current activities not easily accessible – not collected or maintained in single location.</p> <p>Botanical information collected & stored in the past has been destroyed or transferred to USP herbarium in Fiji.</p>	<p>Lack of funding for R&M in Ministry of Natural Resources</p> <p>Small scientific & research community; Limited pool of conservation practitioners.</p> <p>Virtually no research facilities based in SI</p> <p>Lack of leadership & motivation within some govt departments</p> <p>Limited sharing of data & info between govt & NGOs</p> <p>No state of the art facilities & capabilities in data management, GIS & similar technologies within ECD;</p> <p>Forestry Division lacks logistical support – computer database, finance, expertise, data update, staff incentives.</p> <p>Forestry Division's capacity to monitor compliance with the new Forestry regulations is weak - will be further impacted by increased logging activity over the next five years.</p> <p>Court system is overloaded</p> <p>Lack of locally trained lawyers to prosecute cases of breaches of forestry regulations.</p>	<p>Lack of skills in data base management & data analysis (ECD & Forestry)</p> <p>Lack of skills in GIS (ECD, NGOs & community)</p> <p>Forestry & Fisheries audits suggest misappropriation; poor application of regulations</p> <p>Need for restructure of Fisheries & Environment Divisions. (Fisheries restructuring plan awaiting Cabinet approval)</p> <p>Lack of appropriate training & delegated authority for Forest Officers to undertake simple prosecutions.</p>

		<p>WWFGCRMN surveys of fish, inverts & substrates</p> <p>Kastom Gaden Assoc promoting in-situ use of traditional crops.</p> <p>NGOs working with communities on natural resource management, ecoforestry & advocacy</p> <p>SI Forestry Management Project Phase II</p>		<p>Centralised legal establishment (all government lawyers answer to Attorney General & all prosecutions must go through police) - results in long delays in stopping breaches of regulations & license conditions.</p>	
<p>Establish & maintain scientific & education programmes to support BD conservation;</p> <p>Promote research that contributes to BD conservation; & promote cooperation in use of science (Art 12)</p> <p>Promote international technical & scientific cooperation;</p> <p>Develop or implement appropriate policies & support to national technical & scientific capacities;</p> <p>Establish clearing house mechanism;</p> <p>Promote cooperation & joint research programmes;</p> <p>Develop methods for conservation & sustainable use & use of technologies, including traditional knowledge (Art 18) (ECD, Dept Ed, SICHE, USP, Museum)</p>	<p>Many researchers leave the country with important data.</p> <p>No framework for protecting intellectual property rights & TK.</p> <p>Lack of clearly articulated research agenda.</p> <p>On-the-job legal training has been provided to Forestry Division staff.</p> <p>Staff have participated in training courses & courses overseas.</p> <p>SOLFRIS database is updated with new information such as license application.</p>	<p>Most externally funded projects include research and/or training component.</p> <p>NGOs conduct research & capacity building.</p> <p>Some NGOs offer postgraduate scholarship.</p> <p>Museum collecting TK on usage of artefacts, Local Indigenous Languages Systems project, links with Norwegian Govt, other museums, unis & UNESCO project "Safeguarding Biological & Cultural Diversity of Tropical Island Systems"</p> <p>Some natural history collections donated to the museum by researchers</p>	<p>Lack of research framework.</p> <p>No single national organisation with the mandate & resources to conduct or coordinate research in a systematic way that responds to national priorities;</p> <p>No discrete policies or laws relating to research & education;</p> <p>Lack of university campus with in-country researchers, scientific society or council.</p> <p>Lack of resources for libraries in SI (ie access to internet).</p>	<p>Research permits & MOUs not fully enforced</p> <p>Lack of staff & other resources.</p> <p>Research Act has no regulations & is out of date</p> <p>Research Committee not functioning</p> <p>Research permit application process needs strengthening.</p>	<p>Limited pool of qualified & experienced scientists & researchers in SI</p>

		Parts of the Dodo Creek Research Station collection rescued by the Museum. SICHE (School of Natural Resources)			
<p>Promote understanding of importance of BD conservation & sustainable use through media & education;</p> <p>Cooperate with international organisations to develop education programs (Art 13).</p> <p><i>(Dept Ed, NGOs & funded projects, Media, Churches/ Civil society networks)</i></p>	<p>NEMS identified priority of improving environmental awareness & education including preservation of TK - strategy largely not implemented.</p> <p>Significant cooperation with NGO & GEF funded projects to develop public education programs – but on ad hoc basis subject to external agendas.</p>	<p>Resource library established in ECD & resources available at NGOs & Museum</p> <p>NGO/GEF funded public education programs – WWF, IWP, SPBCP, FSPI, Live & Learn Environmental Ed, village & community level initiatives ie TDA.</p> <p>ECD Director - member of Scientific Advisory Committee for Curriculum Development.</p> <p>Some ad hoc preparation of fact sheets, EIA info sheet (mid 1990s), radio broadcasts on SIBC.</p> <p>SIBC network reaches wide audience</p> <p>Subsidised email & internet access through PFNet in some rural areas.</p> <p>Partnership links with external academic & research organisations (eg: AMNH, UCSB, UQ, ANU, USP)</p>	<p>No policies or laws dealing specifically with public education & awareness.</p> <p>Limited circulation of national newspapers.</p> <p>High cost of internet in most parts of the country.</p>	<p>Lack of promotion & awareness about ECD resource library.</p> <p>Lack of trained staff to manage resource library</p> <p>ECD location prohibits easy public access.</p> <p>Lack of up to date environmental information</p> <p>ECD resources centralised in Honiara – poorly placed to conduct community level outreach.</p> <p>Lack of funding for radio (SIBC) as a medium for awareness raising & media programmes.</p>	<p>Lack of environmental awareness training for govt extension officers</p> <p>No designated staff person responsible for co-ordination or developing education strategy or materials.</p> <p>Limited educational resources available.</p> <p>Limited skills in community education & awareness within ECD</p>

<p>Provide or facilitate access & transfer of technologies to promote conservation & sustainable use & benefit sharing. (Art 16).</p>	<p>Few activities underway.</p> <p>Need to adapt, promote, protect local level & traditional technologies.</p>	<p>Private sector investment in use of renewable energy & training of Solomon Islanders (TAFE in Honiara)</p> <p>Kolombangara Forest Products Ltd (KFPL) undertaking plantation research & transference of knowledge & skills to communities.</p> <p>Kastom Gaden Association involved in protection & use of local plants, integrated pest management systems, transfer of local agricultural practices & knowledge</p>	<p>Limited research into what kinds of technologies are needed & how they can be developed from traditional knowledge & methods.</p> <p>Limited private sector involvement.</p>	<p>National Museum understaffed, lacks appropriate expertise & basic equipment/facilities.</p> <p>Need for improved partnerships between NGOs and DAL in sharing information, technical skills & knowledge, resources & support to communities & farmers.</p>	<p>Limited pool of people with skills & knowledge</p>
<p>Facilitate information exchange from all publicly available sources regarding conservation & sustainable use of BD (Art 17);</p> <p>Promote technical & scientific cooperation & establish a clearing house mechanism for scientific information about BD (Art 18). (ECD, NGOs, donors & govt agencies)</p>	<p>Clearing house mechanism established but too expensive for govt to host (funding was provided under NBSAP).</p> <p>Duplication of information & data gathering efforts.</p> <p>Existing information not fully utilised or shared.</p> <p>Information not flowing to provincial level or community levels.</p>	<p>SISDAC, CCOSI, NRRC, ECANSI, DSE & SILMMA networks</p>	<p>Compartmentalised govt depts - few formal processes for information exchange</p> <p>Physical infrastructure ie telecoms not readily available in govt agencies or provinces & remote areas</p> <p>Lack of internet & reliable postal services.</p> <p>No budgets within national depts for costs of duplicating & posting materials.</p> <p>Lack of coordination, feedback & policy dialogue between some aid programs & SIG agencies working on natural resources issues.</p>	<p>Resources limited for information sharing & distribution.</p>	<p>Lack of skills in information exchange, communications & data management</p>

Table 3: In-Situ Conservation of Biodiversity

Convention Requirement	Status	Capacity strengths	Capacity Gaps & Constraints		
			Systemic	Institutional/Org	Individual
<p>Protected Areas: Establish a system of protected areas;</p> <p>Develop guidelines for selection & management of protected areas;</p> <p>Regulate or manage biological resources for conservation & sustainable use;</p> <p>Promote protection of ecosystems, natural habitats & viable populations in nature;</p> <p>Promote environmentally sound & SD adjacent to protected areas;</p> <p>Wildlife Protection: Rehabilitate & restore degraded ecosystems & promote recovery of threatened species;</p> <p>Regulate, manage or control risks of use/ release of biotechnology organisms;</p> <p>Prevent introduction of, control or eradicate alien species;</p> <p>Compatibility between present uses & conservation of BD & sustainable use of its components;</p> <p>Indigenous knowledge;</p> <p>Develop legal regime for threatened species protection;</p> <p>Regulate & manage threatening</p>	<p>No activities towards developing national legislation dealing with establishment of protected areas, protection of endangered species or conservation of BD</p> <p>No system of protected areas – no inventory or systematic studies – Ad hoc.</p> <p>NGOs play critical role in in-situ BD conservation – ad hoc & often driven by overseas (donor) agendas.</p> <p>Wildlife Protection: Wildlife Act 1998 gazetted (no regs & does not establish a legal regime for wildlife or threatened species protection). Primary purpose is to regulate export of listed species & enable compliance with CITES.</p> <p>SI not a signatory to Ramsar or CITES conventions</p> <p>Lack of large protected area systems (except Tetepare and AMCA)</p> <p>No baseline assessment of species abundance or monitoring of population health in areas where capture occurs.</p>	<p>NEMS recognised need for protected area systems.</p> <p>Provincial govts have devolved powers for protection & natural resource management.</p> <p>Provincial Ordinances lay responsibility for managing & enforcing conservation areas on landowners – enables community to apply own arrangements according to customary practice.</p> <p>TK & models of resource stewardship.</p> <p>MPAs established by communities/NGOs on an ad hoc basis.</p> <p>AMCA model conservation area in partnership with provincial & national govt/communities/NGO.</p> <p>Community conservation initiatives at Makira & Tetepare.</p> <p>Funding & technical support available from externally-funded projects.</p> <p>NGOs, church based & research projects assisting</p>	<p>No national law or policy dealing with establishment or management of protected areas or BD conservation.</p> <p>Lack of funding for establishing systems of protected areas.</p> <p>Honiara based govt orgs geographically removed from most rural Solomon Islanders</p> <p>Belief that SIG legal power to regulate activities on customary land is limited - challenge for SIG on policy & legal interventions aimed at promoting in-situ conservation.</p> <p>Traditional approaches to management becoming ad hoc & are in decline – declining authority of traditional leaders.</p> <p>Inability of TK to address new levels of resource depletion & heightened pressures.</p> <p>Corrupt/weak chiefly leadership.</p> <p>Lack of overarching national strategies to safeguard biological ecological integrity</p>	<p>Govt officers rarely visit rural Solomon Islanders.</p> <p>No terrestrial equivalent of SILMMA network.</p> <p>Wildlife & Environment Acts not enforced, permits issued without following procedures required under Wildlife Act.</p> <p>Fisheries Act needs updated regs & revision to meet international conventions & FAO code of conduct requirements.</p> <p>Environment Advisory Committee not established</p> <p>Lack of management plans for coastal fisheries.</p> <p>Fisheries lacks staff capacity with appropriate skills & technical knowledge – research unit Honiara focussed.</p> <p>Serious financial concerns raised in Audit reports of Fisheries & Forestry.</p> <p>Enforcement of COLP extremely limited with reports of serious breaches.</p> <p>FRTU Act 1969 outdated & failing to control logging or protect BD.</p>	<p>Increasing need for cash for school fees, housing & other financial expenses</p> <p>Influence of Western development aspirations.</p> <p>Resistance by landowners to govt enforced constraints on land & resources.</p> <p>Land & resource owners vulnerable to exploitation from mining & logging companies.</p> <p>Land & resource owners take individual decisions without regard for impact on regional & national ecosystem integrity.</p> <p>Lack of consultation with provinces & stakeholders</p> <p>Concern over previous attitude & culture within Forestry Division.</p> <p>Lack of awareness of sustainable</p>

<p>processes/ activities;</p> <p>Co-operate in providing financial support;</p> <p>Adopt economically & socially sound incentives for in-situ conservation. (Art. 8)</p>	<p>Marine Biodiversity: Provincial & national govt may enact ordinances & regulations which include establishment & protection of marine reserves.</p> <p>Habitat destruction continues - clearing of mangroves; loss of coral & reef habitats from destructive fishing practices, over-harvesting & invasive species (ie COTs),</p> <p>Ocean warming trends</p> <p>Forestry Biodiversity: Absence of functioning protected areas network.</p> <p>Code of Logging Practice allows for set aside of areas for conservation but must be done under discrete legislation.</p> <p>Forestry legislation allows for establishment of protected areas for watershed management, not BD conservation.</p> <p>Scale & destructive style of industrial logging threat to in-situ terrestrial BD conservation.</p> <p>Loss of habitat due to land clearing for forestry, agriculture, human</p>	<p>communities establish protected areas & prepare management plans.</p> <p>NGOs assist in the creation of inclusive & participatory decision making structures ie community resource management committees (AMCA, TDA);</p> <p>In some cases ie Roviana/Vonavona MPA project provides equipment & training in alternative sustainable livelihoods or direct funding for schools & clinics.</p> <p>SILMMA network, ECANSI & Natural Resources & Rights Coalition</p> <p>UNDP-GEF South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Project.</p> <p>UNDP-GEF SPREP project alien invasive species (in development phase).</p> <p>Fisheries Act provides legal basis for comprehensive & responsive national fisheries management regime.</p> <p>Compliance with COLP made mandatory in 2005 requiring preparation of annual harvesting plans & individual coupe plans</p>	<p>(No NBSAP).</p> <p>Lack of scientific data or knowledge on status of BD, threatened species & habitats</p> <p>SIG not determining bioregional ecosystem demands, formulating guiding strategies or promoting sustainable coordinated resource conservation initiatives.</p> <p>SI Constitution sends confusing signals over power of the state to control or influence how landowners use their land.</p> <p>COLP has no provision for establishing protected areas& does not restrict overall location & scale of logging operations.</p> <p>Most provinces not proactive in identifying & supporting landowners develop conservation or resource management areas.</p> <p>No legal regime for wildlife or threatened species protection - Wildlife Act has no provisions to cover protection of endangered species in situ & is incapable of meeting broader BD conservation goals by protecting habitat.</p>	<p>Reforestation policies encourage monoculture & exotic species</p> <p>Low level of monitoring & enforcement capacity in Forestry Division</p> <p>Limited resources for provinces to monitor compliance with ordinances, regulations & business license arrangements.</p> <p>Provinces lack access to legal advisers & environment officers</p> <p>Limited support for provinces from national agencies (Fisheries & ECD)</p> <p>Lack of leadership in provinces</p> <p>Lack of adequate quarantine system & protocols</p> <p>Lack of co-ordination systems for Customs & Police.</p> <p>Mines Act not adequate to support in-situ BD conservation.</p> <p>Town & Country Planning Act 1979 loses potential because of exclusion of customary land from its regulatory reach.</p>	<p>forestry management in community based organisations & NGOS.</p> <p>Low awareness of env laws by public & government officers.</p> <p>Focus on community-led proposals at provincial level means a priority on use of specific resources for human use rather than conservation of ecosystem or BD values.</p>
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	<p>habitation, industrial & urban development</p> <p>Invasive species destroying habitats</p> <p>BD conservation in minerals development: Exploration & mining phase require environmental management plans & undertakings.</p> <p>Focus of controls is pollution control & mine site rehabilitation. No explicit mention of need to preserve BD values of an area – without proper identification & mapping of high conservation value areas in earliest stages of minesite planning.</p>	<p>Provinces can use business licensing to impose conditions ie compliance with COLP or BD conservation & strong environmental controls on mining operations.</p> <p>National Forest Policy – recognises conservation of BD as one of the non consumptive uses of forests.</p> <p>Some well qualified locals based in key organisations.</p> <p>National Turtle Strategy being implemented</p> <p>Tri-national MOU signed (SI, PNG, Papua Indonesia) on turtle conservation</p>	<p>Centralised legal establishment for prosecutions – leads to delays in stopping breaches of regs & license conditions.</p> <p>State constrained on controlling logging by sovereignty claims of customary land owners –</p> <p>FRTU Act out of date and not protecting BD – new Forest Bill stalled.</p> <p>Confusion over powers for community based management plans (enforcement & implementation)</p> <p>Reef, lagoon, coastal waters - ownership confusion</p>		
<p>To develop & implement procedures for EIA of projects likely to have significant impacts on BD;</p> <p>Make arrangements to ensure BD is considered in programmes & policies;</p> <p>Introduce measures for notification/ exchange of information on transboundary impacts through agreements;</p> <p>Give immediate notice to potentially affected countries of imminent or grave threat to BD originating in SI;</p> <p>National emergency responses to such threats (Art 14)</p>	<p>Environment Act 1998 establishes a national framework for development & EIA - but has no regulations</p> <p>EIA framework does not establish system for BD conservation & protected areas – but does create a mechanism for considering BD conservation in mainstream development.</p>	<p>Environmental Impact Statement procedure established under Environment Act 1998</p> <p>Environment Act expressly applies over & above provisions of any other Act.</p>	<p>Env Act does not cover strategic environmental impact assessment of govt policies & programmes.</p> <p>Env Act has no application to subsistence activities (cannot address cumulative impacts).</p> <p>No awareness programmes for departs, agencies & industries affected by Env Act.</p> <p>Public & govt awareness of laws is extremely low.</p>	<p>Lack of enforcement & awareness of Environment Act. (No regulations)</p> <p>Lack of resources, capacity, skills within Ministry of Natural Resources.</p>	<p>Limited understanding of Environment Act details & scope of its obligations</p>

<p>Parties to allocate sufficient financial resources to achieving convention objectives (Art 20). (SIG –PM & Cabinet; Finance; & National Planning.)</p>	<p>No resource pricing in national accounting or other economic policy.</p> <p>No accounting for resource degradation & budgeting for protection or conservation. Most conservation funding project based – limits long term potential.</p>	<p>Was a key initiative in NEMS.</p>	<p>Resource pricing not included in national accounting or other economic policy.</p> <p>No accounting for degradation of resources & budgeting for protection or conservation</p>	<p>Budget allocation for ECD & provinces too low</p> <p>Scarce departmental resources, lack of staff,</p> <p>Funds not allocated in line with convention obligations & priorities.</p> <p>Work of ECD focussed on areas of external funding.</p>	<p>Lack of awareness & or skills in environmental economics within govt agencies</p>
<p>Parties to adopt economically & socially sound incentives for conservation & sustainable use (Art11).</p>	<p>Govt offers no incentives for sustainable use of BD.</p> <p>Strong systematic disincentives to small scale conservation activities</p>	<p>Some NGOs using incentives – ad hoc – ie TDA for turtle conservation & conservation of Tetepare Island.</p> <p>New focus on use of conservation concessions as a means of encouraging resource owners to protect ecosystems.</p>	<p>National gov't's heavy reliance on logging & foreign fishing for export revenues compromises its ability to develop alternatives;</p> <p>Disincentives – poor transport & market infrastructure impacts rural development – unattractive compared to logging.</p> <p>Complexities of customary land & sea tenure & usage rights.</p> <p>Tax regime needs to be favourable for plantation forestry or tree crop agriculture.</p> <p>Need secure land tenure for large scale commercial plantations.</p> <p>Economic environment & policies need review to encourage long term investment in forestry.</p>		<p>Primary stakeholders in conservation – local people & resource owners – lack awareness of & access to info on benefits of conservation (ie ecotourism, sustainable use of genetic resources for medicine/health industry).</p>

Table 4: Ex-situ Conservation of Biological Diversity

Convention Requirement	Status	Capacity strengths	Capacity Gaps & Constraints		
			Systemic	Institutional/Org	Individual
<p>Parties to promote ex-situ conservation, preferably within the country that is the original habitat of the species:</p> <p>Adopt measures for ex-situ conservation;</p> <p>Establish & maintain facilities for ex-situ conservation;</p> <p>Adopt measures for recovery & rehab of threatened species;</p> <p>Regulate & manage collection of BD resources from natural habitats for ex-situ conservation so as not to threaten ecosystems & in-situ populations;</p> <p>Cooperate in providing financial support for ex-situ conservation (Art 9) (ECD, Museum, DAL)</p>	<p>Dodo Creek Agriculture Research Station destroyed during civil conflict.</p> <p>Specimens from Dodo Creek sent to Fiji for storage, but many others, including seed stock were lost. Some specimens rescued by Museum.</p> <p>Honiara Botanical Gardens managed under DFEC</p>	<p>National Museum</p> <p>Parts of SI herbarium collection in Fiji.</p> <p>Botanical gardens</p> <p>Work undertaken by Kastom Gaden Assoc. with UQ & SPC on protecting local plant species for food security.</p>	<p>No national strategy or policy for ex-situ conservation.</p> <p>No national facilities for housing BD resources ex-situ.</p> <p>No institution given responsibility for ex-situ conservation</p> <p>Limited knowledge of what specimens are held where.</p>	<p>Little or no agency funding for ex-situ conservation</p> <p>DAL's research facilities largely destroyed during tension.</p>	<p>Lack of qualified staff with skills in required areas in National Museum</p>
<p>Parties to:</p> <p>Integrate conservation & sustainable use factors into national decision making;</p> <p>Adopt sustainable use measures to avoid or minimise adverse impacts on BD;</p> <p>Protect & encourage customary use of biological resources in accordance with traditional cultural practices that conserve or use BD sustainably;</p> <p>Support local populations to develop & implement remedial action where BD has been reduced;</p> <p>Encourage cooperation between</p>	<p>NEMS identified sustainable use as key priority re: forest & fisheries resources.</p> <p>Limited or no mainstreaming SD, BD or environmental management across govt programmes & policies.</p> <p>Forestry Resources: Development of landowner awareness programme on forest management, processes & values - part of Forestry Division extension activities supported by AusAID Forests Management Programme.</p>	<p>COLP and Forest Policy</p> <p>Kastom Gaden Association</p> <p>ADB Mainstreaming Environmental Considerations Country Report provides a road map for SI National Government.</p>	<p>Limited documentation of traditional knowledge, silviculture & forest use.</p> <p>Existing legal regime for forest exploitation inadequate to achieve objectives of sustainable use.</p> <p>Lack of clear criteria on what is sustainable for key resources from BD conservation perspective.</p> <p>Previous national development plans do not recognise need for sustainable resource use &</p>	<p>Forestry regime & culture emphasises resource exploitation & sustainable commercial yield rather than conservation.</p> <p>Legal capacity to control rates of forestry limited under current legislation.</p> <p>Where powers of NRM devolved to provinces – no resource allocations to accompany - lack of support to develop management plans & guidelines for coastal fisheries.</p> <p>Lack of staff in AG office to support development of</p>	<p>Landowners lack scientific understanding of sustainable use requirements for their resources.</p> <p>Minimal capacity at local level to monitor health of resources.</p> <p>Limited enforcement capacity (funding, expertise, personal commitment of govt officers).</p>

<p>governmental authorities & private sector in developing methods for sustainable use;</p> <p>Adopt economically & socially sound incentives for sustainable use. (Art 10). (DP&AC & ECD)</p>	<p>Confusion over r/ship between national & provincial govt in conservation & powers over forestry – litigation clarified right of province to require business licenses with conditions.</p> <p>Some customary land reforestation under Forestry Division activities;</p> <p>NGOs & other civil society actors undertaking some awareness as part of own programmes – ad hoc.</p> <p>Marine resources: Fisheries Act created legal framework for equitable & sustainable economic return to nation from commercial fishing – poor enforcement & policing.</p> <p>Lack of guidelines & management plans for controlled harvest of reefs & lagoons - resp devolved to provinces.</p> <p>Lack of Fisheries regulations dealing with aquaculture</p> <p>National policy banning sale of turtle shell exports ignored or breached</p>		<p>conservation.</p> <p>Over centralisation of resource management & conservation - does not reflect decentralised structure of SI society & land ownership.</p> <p>Lack of incentives in current mechanisms to promote sustainable management,</p> <p>Existing frameworks lack enforcement.</p> <p>Lack of institutional culture within key agencies to achieve objectives.</p>	<p>regulations & laws.</p> <p>Fisheries & ECD not upholding national policy ie banning sale of turtle products – lack of staff for enforcement.</p> <p>Lack of resources for agencies with responsibility for BD conservation & sustainable use.</p> <p>ECD has limited staff, resources & capacity to evaluate EIA or enforce non-compliance with requirements.</p>	
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Table 5: Access to Genetic Resources

Convention Requirement	Status	Capacity strengths	Capacity Gaps & Constraints		
			Systemic	Institutional/Org	Individual
<p>Parties to:</p> <p>Create conditions for access to genetic resources for environmentally sound uses on mutually agreed terms, including prior informed consent;</p> <p>Support scientific research based on genetic resources;</p> <p>Adopt legislative, administrative & policy measures to share fairly & equitably results of research & development & their benefits.</p> <p>(Art 15). <i>(ECD & AG Office)</i>.</p>	<p>No activities undertaken at a national level</p> <p>Potential interplays with FAO Treaty on Plant Genetic Resources for Food & Agriculture.</p> <p>2nd National Communication to UNCBD indicated implementation of ABS measures in SI was a major part of medium term development strategy.</p> <p>Extent of bio-piracy in SI is unknown</p>	<p>SI recognised benefits of a regional approach to developing ABS frameworks.</p>	<p>No agency given responsibility for development of ABS arrangements.</p> <p>No policies or laws regulating ABS or access to genetic resources.</p> <p>No policies or laws protecting TK - not priority under current framework</p> <p>No assessment of risks & lost opportunities - No baseline assessment of biotrade or potential for commercialising BD</p> <p>No resources to control bio-piracy.</p> <p>Poor understanding of requirements & importance of conserving genetic resources.</p>	<p>Currently no lawyers or economists within ECD to design or implement framework for ABS.</p> <p>Potentially there are issues relating to common property & questions of ownership of shared resources & knowledge.</p> <p>Weak provisions in Research Act (Research Committee defunct)</p> <p>Weak provisions & implementation of quarantine regulations.</p>	<p>Lack of skills, knowledge, experience, awareness.</p>

Table 6: Biosafety

Convention Requirement	Status	Capacity strengths	Capacity Gaps & Constraints		
			Systemic	Institutional/Org	Individual
<p>Parties to adopt:</p> <p>Legislative, administrative & policy measures for effective participation in biotech research;</p> <p>Measures to facilitate access & benefit sharing;</p>	<p>Biotechnology new issue in SI.</p> <p>Lack of information on whether any GMOs or LMOs are already in the country used for crops, food or feed.</p>	<p>National biosafety framework project underway to address gaps.</p>	<p>No policy or legislative framework dealing specifically with biological safety as covered under Cartagena Biosafety Protocol – unclear whether such framework is needed since issues not well</p>	<p>Quarantine laws not rigorously enforced.</p> <p>Likely to be very limited human resources for implementation of recommendations of national biosafety framework project.</p>	<p>Expertise in biosafety issues concentrated in a small number of individuals.</p>

Information regarding use & safety regulations in handling living modified organisms (LMOs). (Art 19) (Ref Cartagena Protocol). (ECD, SIAQS, DFEC, Fisheries, Customs & Excise)			understood. EIA provisions of Environment Act are not triggered by importation of LMO/GMOs.	Will require high levels of coordination & communication	
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Table 7: Reporting and Participation

Convention Requirement	Status	Capacity strengths	Capacity Gaps & Constraints		
			Systemic	Institutional/Org	Individual
Participate in meetings of the UNCBD parties – including expert meetings where relevant – & prepare periodic reports on implementation. (ECD)	<p>SI attended most UNCBD COPS & regional preparatory meetings.</p> <p>Did not complete first National Communication but did complete the survey-style second National Communication in 2001.</p>	<p>Solomon Islands signed UNCBD.</p> <p>Foreign Affairs has bilateral arrangements with other countries (Malaysia, India, Britain, France) for diplomatic training programmes.</p> <p>SI has started to involve experts from NGOs to support participation in & reporting to the UNCBD (ie COP 8 in Brazil).</p>	<p>Lack of full understanding of convention processes.</p> <p>Little communication between UN focal point in Foreign Affairs & technical Focal Points.</p> <p>Current structures do not promote active involvement of NGO practitioners in preparation of COP reports.</p> <p>Limited transmission of convention activities & meeting outcomes to broader conservation community, especially in absence of effective institutional arrangements for information sharing & discussion.</p>	<p>Convention activities concentrated in small number of individuals who also have other focal point responsibilities – large proportion of time spent travelling to attend overseas meetings.</p> <p>Reports & national communications lack specificity & include material not directly related to, or attributable to convention membership.</p> <p>Foreign Affairs UN & Treaties Division short staffed. Needs legal expertise.</p> <p>Att Gen Office needs staff with knowledge & experience dealing with international conventions & for drafting regs/laws– No international convention division within AGO.</p> <p>Lack of coordination & networking between Foreign Affairs, AGO & technical agencies.</p>	<p>Conflicting priorities between attending to International obligations & national activities</p> <p>FA officers need legal background & diplomatic training.</p>

7.2 Priority Environmental Issues

In July 2006, the NCSA Project Management Unit held a workshop in Honiara to report back on the three Stocktake reports. As part of the workshop, participants undertook a series of activities to assess priority environmental issues associated with the three Rio Conventions but impacting on Solomon Islands. The root causes were identified and capacity constraints and opportunities recorded.

The priority environmental issue for the UNCBD is loss of biodiversity and the contributing environmental issues to this were identified as: Over exploitation of natural resources; Unsustainable use of forest resources; Habitat modification and destruction; Overexploitation of marine resources; Illegal exploitation of wildlife; Introduction of invasive species; Climate change; Biosafety; and Loss of traditional knowledge and genetic resources.

Table 8 presents the causes and root causes as well as capacity constraints. The capacity opportunities are presented in the next section and are combined with the capacity opportunities from Section 7.0 which looked at capacity constraints for meeting convention commitments. The same capacity constraints for implementing the convention are experienced in trying to manage key environmental issues in Solomon Islands.

Table 8: Loss of Biodiversity – Priority Environmental Issues

Environmental Issue	Causes	Root Causes	Capacity Constraints
1. Over exploitation (general)	<p>Over harvesting of commercial species</p> <p>Ineffective legal frameworks at national & provincial level</p> <p>Lack of implementation or enforcement of laws & regulations.</p> <p>Improvements in fishing techniques/more efficient</p> <p>Poor governance structure (between central, provincial govt & village level communities).</p> <p>Lack of priority for environmental management.</p> <p>Lack of integration of planning between environment & economic factors.</p> <p>Fragmented & uncoordinated government structure – sectoralised govt.</p>	<p>Increasing population</p> <p>Increasing demand for natural resources</p> <p>Lack of alternative income generating options & support: ie: Lack of market facilities, storage, fish substations closed, info & research on introduced species, feasibility studies, marketing & promotion, legislation & regulations.</p> <p>Need for cash for goods/ services/ school fees</p> <p>Lack of awareness & access to information</p> <p>Changing lifestyles & economic drivers (globalisation effects)</p> <p>High cost of living</p> <p>Inflation forcing people to look for ways of generating fast cash.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of scientific data & access to centralised database of information & scientific data. - State of Environment report & NEMS out of date & not implemented - Environment & Wildlife Acts have no regulations - Forestry Act out dated - Lack of national BD legislation or framework - No NBSAP or National SD Plan - No enabling legislation for ICZM - Limited capacity in ECD to provide advice, undertake research or implement Wildlife & Env Acts - Lack of staff to manage BD conservation & carry out necessary research - BD not considered by all govt depts (not mainstreamed) - Lack of environmental & legal services to provinces - Provinces lack capacity for BD research & monitoring - Lack of financial allocation to provincial govt strangling provinces' ability to sustainably manage natural resources - Centralised ECD office in Honiara - Lack of library & community awareness programmes & info. - Lack of understanding of legal provisions by govt officers & how/when provisions are to be enforced. - Lack of coordination between AG's

			<p>office & govt depts - public servants not getting appropriate & effective legal advice.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Penalties under relevant Acts are either not severe enough or punitive to discourage breaches of the law. - Need provision under env laws for victims of environmental damage to seek compensation from perpetrator. - Laws interpreted by courts on limited basis, often on grounds of public policy not to set precedents to allow collective law suits against developers in fear of discouraging foreign investments. - Confusion over natural resource sovereignty (customary ownership of natural resources vs govt regulation)
2. Unsustainable use of Forest resources	<p>Wrong perception of income from logging</p> <p>Uncontrolled/illegal logging</p> <p>Unsustainable agricultural practices</p> <p>Lack of awareness by resource owners to comply with env legislation</p> <p>Low compliance with Code of Logging Practice</p> <p>Lack of priority for environmental management.</p> <p>Lack of integration of planning between environment & economic factors.</p>	<p>Greed - landowner & commercial companies</p> <p>High economic pressure</p> <p>Weak governance & accountability</p> <p>Lack of alternative income options</p> <p>Lack of infrastructure & transport for rural products</p> <p>Limited access to banking & finance for villages and customary resource owners</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of landowner/ community management skills - Land tenure system - Lack of awareness by landowners of legislation - Penalties & fees too low for non compliance with regulations & COLP - Limited staff in Forestry Division - Poor enforcement of regulations - Previous problems with attitudinal issues within Forestry Division - Inadequate laws to protect land owners - Tax regime not conducive to forest plantations. - Law enforcement capability limited & constrained by centralised prosecution system. - Outdated Forest & Timber Resources Utilisation Act - Forestry Division lacks logistical support – needs improved resources ie computer database, finance, expertise, data updates, incentives for staff, more qualified staff, communication tools, improved financial system, accountant. - Logging Industry lacks skills - needs training to improve sustainable NRM & compliance with env laws & COLP
3. Habitat modification & destruction	<p>Uncontrolled human activities & consumption</p> <p>Pollution/improper waste disposal</p> <p>Technology manufacturing</p> <p>Land degradation (forestry & agriculture)</p> <p>Inadequate planning for sustainable use of resources</p>	<p>Increasing population - increasing demand for space for human habitation & food production</p> <p>Increasing pressure on timbers/ mangroves for building products & firewood</p> <p>Need for cash</p> <p>Fish harder to find therefore need different methods of harvesting</p> <p>Over reliance on fossil fuels</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited knowledge about natural habitats - No regulation on protection of threatened habitats & lack of national framework for establishing protected area systems - No enabling legislation for integrated coastal zone management (ICZM). - Limited capacity for ICZM planning, implementation & monitoring. - Lack of capacity to monitor social, economic & environmental impacts of development - Weak coordination between govt

	<p>Invasive species & Monoculture</p> <p>CC (extreme weather events & coral bleaching)</p> <p>Destructive fishing methods</p> <p>Loss of TK & methods of NRM</p> <p>Anchorage, Shipping & shipwrecks</p> <p>Sedimentation & Mining & exploration</p>	<p>creating GHG</p> <p>Changing lifestyles & economic drivers</p> <p>Increased commercialisation of economies</p> <p>Lack of public awareness</p> <p>Lack of appreciation by decision makers about environmental issues</p> <p>Lack of knowledge & data on current status & trends in BD</p> <p>Poor governance structure (between central, provincial govt & village level communities).</p>	<p>departments.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Limited or no waste management & disposal systems - Lack of capacity for pollution control & compliance monitoring - Limited application of EIA process & a lack of capacity for EIA - Limited mediation of CC factors or preparation against impacts of CC. - Limited physical planning/land use planning – need for understanding of SD / integrated land use planning. - Reforestation policies geared to commercialisation not ecological restoration - Land tenure system precludes holistic/strategic land use planning - Town & Country Planning Act limited to alienated land
4. Over exploitation of marine resources	<p>Overharvesting of commercial species</p> <p>Improved fishing methods result in more fish caught</p> <p>Lack of fisheries management & development plans</p> <p>Lack of implementation & enforcement of regulations & laws.</p>	<p>Limited sources of income - Lack of alternative income generating options</p> <p>Need for cash for goods/services/school fees</p> <p>Increasing population - increasing demand for natural resources</p> <p>Limited market options</p> <p>Low income from land based resources</p> <p>Limited aquaculture options</p> <p>Natural resource owners & users do not have full environmental knowledge about links between biology, ecology & processes in relation to harvesting rates.</p>	<p>See 1. above</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Insufficient research & information - Need more baseline studies & scientific data on marine resources & their uses/exploitation. - MPAs established in ad hoc manner – no protected areas system procedures for identification & establishment & management - Lack of capital & technology - Lack of staff in Fisheries to support provincial or community management & development of coastal resources - Lack of fisheries management plans - Lack of staff in Attorney General's Office for drafting legislation & regs. - Lack of environmental education (science, ecology & biology education for school children) - Fisheries regulations out of date & not compliant with new Tuna convention or FAO code of conduct. - Fisheries has been too focussed on tuna fisheries & not on coastal & inshore fisheries. - Lack of implementation & enforcement of provincial RMOs
5. Illegal exploitation of wildlife	<p>Lack of breeding in captivity or export license</p> <p>Limited implementation of Wildlife Act</p> <p>No support to other govt agencies & NGOs by ECD</p> <p>Lack of data & monitoring of wildlife harvesting & its impacts on native species</p> <p>Lack of resources at provincial level to monitor & prevent illegal trade.</p>	<p>Black market opportunities</p> <p>High economic pressure – need for cash for school fees, food, other expenses</p> <p>Lack of alternative income options</p> <p>Banking & financial access problems</p> <p>Changing lifestyles & economic drivers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of provincial level capacity to monitor trade in wildlife - No national research & data on the effect of wildlife harvesting - ECD lacks staff & capacity to implement Wildlife Act which has no regulations - SI not signed CITES - Lack of coordination & collaboration - Lack of management plans for trade in selected species of wildlife

6. Introduction of Invasive Species	<p>Alien species brought in on imported machinery & equipment (for logging)</p> <p>Ships (ballast water)</p> <p>People not declaring alien plants</p> <p>Alien species introduced as biological controls & through agricultural & forestry practices with exotic species of seeds, plants & trees (ie Giant African snail)</p>	<p>Limited capacity for quarantine & customs to stop invasive species entering the country</p> <p>Ignorance of dangers to agriculture, food production & timber resources</p> <p>Ignorance of danger to genetic resources</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of control mechanism on introduced species in Agriculture & Forestry - Insufficient background research on introduced species - Lack of focal point dealing with invasive or alien species. - Absence of national platform for research - Poor quarantine control & lack of regulations under Quarantine Act. - Lack of information & awareness for decision makers (farmers/foresters)
7. Climate change (Extreme floods, droughts, coral bleaching, land degradation, sea level changes)	<p>Reliance on fossil fuels (coal, petroleum, oil)</p> <p>Loss of forests</p> <p>Limited use of alternative sustainable energy sources</p>	<p>Economy, industry & society largely geared to running on fossil fuels</p> <p>Lack of empowerment for Pacific Island countries.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Failure to ratify Kyoto Protocol by US & Australia - Limited mitigation measures adopted by SI govt - Lack of political will power - Limited staff, funds & technology to introduce new alternative sustainable energy sources
8. Biosafety threat	<p>Genetically Modified Organisms/ Living Modified Organisms potentially being introduced into the country</p> <p>Biosafety framework not completed</p>	<p>Lack of awareness of dangers of GMO/LMOs</p> <p>Pressures for more efficient food production methods & faster growing trees</p> <p>Pressure for pest resistant & drought resistant food/seeds/plants.</p> <p>Increasing population – higher demand for food</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Lack of data on existence of GMO/LMOs - No biosafety framework in place - Limited knowledge of biosafety issues & mitigation
9. Loss of traditional knowledge & genetic resources	<p>Traditional systems of management being lost</p> <p>No clear understanding of status of genetic resources</p> <p>Researchers not always abiding by MOUs on how to share research data & information.</p> <p>Survey techniques not transferred to local communities</p> <p>Herbarium no longer functioning – collection fragmented (part in Fiji & much lost)</p>	<p>Changing demands & issues of environmental management</p> <p>Lack of awareness of opportunities & vulnerabilities on behalf of government & community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - No legal framework to protect TK or support access to genetic resources - Legal framework for research protocols out of date & Research Act needs regulations. - No framework for research in SI - Lack of suitable infrastructure for national collections of genetic resources - Lack of awareness, information & data - Need to complement traditional NRM methods with contemporary NRM.

7.3 Summary of Capacity Constraints

The following is a summary of capacity constraints and gaps for delivering convention requirements and addressing environmental issues.

Systemic Issues Summary:

- Environmental legislative framework requires strengthening and implementation
- Need tougher penalties as a deterrent to companies breaking environmental laws.
- Laws need to provide for compensation for victims of environmental damage.
- Enforcement capability needs strengthening and legal processes streamlined
- No overarching biodiversity framework – No NBSAP - environmental/sustainable development/biodiversity policies and plans need to be developed and implemented
- Lack of political willpower from previous governments
- Weak governance and accountability - Government needs to be transparent and accountable
- Environmental considerations and BD conservation and sustainable use need to be mainstreamed across government programmes and linked to the national budget
- Poor governance structure (between central, provincial government and village level communities).
- Lack of priority to environmental management.
- Fragmented and uncoordinated government structure – sectoralised govt.
- Educational facilities need to be resourced and curriculum expanded to include BD conservation and sustainable use, NRM, environmental sustainability.
- Need for Public Service reform (better working conditions, salaries, training, recruitment)
- Customary land tenure and natural resource ownership issues need to be clarified and linked to natural resource protection (need awareness on land and marine tenure system to clearly define the boundary in terms of land and marine resources)
- Limited scientific information, data analysis and dissemination
- Lack awareness raising and limited involvement opportunities for stakeholders in national policy setting or planning.
- Lack of protection for traditional knowledge and regulation of access to and use of genetic resources
- No national research framework or programme
- No protected area systems procedures, protocols, or national policy.
- No enabling legislation for integrated coastal zone management.
- Lack of information on alternative income opportunities and support for sustainable rural development.

Systemic Issues Discussion:

A key capacity constraint is the legal framework which is fragmented, with key components out of date, newer environmental laws are not being enforced and there are gaps in legislation particularly for biodiversity conservation, habitat and threatened species protection and protection against invasive species, access to and sharing of benefits from genetic resources, biosafety threats and loss of traditional knowledge. The centralised nature of the prosecution machinery also causes delays in prosecutions against breaches of laws, particularly with illegal logging and regulation breaches. Penalties are considered too low to act as a disincentive to companies breaching environmental laws and regulations when exploiting natural resources.

A major factor limiting holistic or integrated environmental planning is a lack of coordination across government. According to Lane (2005), the architecture of Solomon Islands' government is fragmented and uncoordinated and this is one capacity constraint to integrated planning processes. In addition, he says government is not able to harness the energy and coordinate the work of NGOs and church groups. Coordination was a key issue discussed at the NCSA workshop (Honiara, November 2006). Participants raised concerns over the Solomon Islands Sustainable Development Advisory Council (SISDAC), which was formed in 2005 and received Cabinet endorsement, but has never met. The group's original functions were: to serve

as the national project steering committee for all GEF-funded projects; oversee other externally funded projects relating to environmental protection or sustainable resource use; and provide high level advice to government and donors in relation to national sustainable development policies and priorities. The workshop participants recommended that the SISDAC terms of reference, mandate and composition be reviewed to determine whether changes are required to ensure the group can function effectively to coordinate environmental management activities and MEA obligations across government. It was also suggested that the existing NCSA thematic working groups (TWG) could be considered for this role.

Limited mainstreaming of BD conservation and environmental considerations across government programmes means that sustainable use of natural resources is not given a priority and this is reflected in the low budget and lack of staffing across the Ministry for Natural Resources. National government revenue is largely derived from forestry and fishing and therefore, despite concerns over the unsustainable rate of logging, little is being done at a national level to curb the rate of extraction. An example is the long overdue Forestry Bill and concern expressed that the Code of Logging Practice will not be properly enforced. A major constraint with the existing legal framework and any new legislation is the lack of awareness of government officers to the laws and a lack of staff to implement and monitor compliance with the Acts. This is also true of provincial governments which have powers for natural resource management but limited capacity to enforce them.

The customary land tenure system complicates strategic land use planning and conservation of natural resources. Confusion over the level of involvement the state has in determining land use and regulation of natural resources on custom owned land, and confusion over ownership of coastal waters, reefs and lagoons is a potential for conflict. The growing community level planning and management of resources is being driven by NGOs and resources owners themselves who are frustrated by the limited national agency support. Without a national framework for identifying priority habitats for conservation, there is no formal system for establishing protected area systems. Sites chosen for conservation are done so by NGOs and communities, with limited input from government. A lack of commitment to integrated coastal zone management is also limiting efforts at sustainable use and protection of biodiversity.

A lack of support infrastructure and an unreliable transport network also act as disincentives to rural development and to more sustainable alternative livelihoods for rural and village based resource owners.

A major issue is the limited information available on biodiversity and threatened habitats and species. Also, the need for proper implementation of the national environmental strategy and development of a national biodiversity strategy leaves the Solomon Islands vulnerable to continued exploitation and overharvesting of its terrestrial and marine resources with the potential for loss of biodiversity. This is compounded by a lack of coordination of data collection, analysis and dissemination. The lack of a national research framework is being filled by NGOs, academics and researchers operating to a potentially externally driven and ad hoc research agenda.

Limited tertiary education facilities and resources for delivering scientific and NRM education and skills development is also a capacity constraint. SICHE was severely weakened following the 2000 coup, the National Forestry School in the Western Province is closed, the Dodo Creek Research Station and Tenavatu Farm were destroyed during the tension and the University of the South Pacific Honiara based centre needs more staff and resources.

Systemic throughout the public service is weak operational, technical and management capacities, poor salary and working conditions, limited career development and training opportunities. Public Sector reform is recognised in the Grand Coalition for Change Government policies as is the need for open and accountable government. A crucial constraint to sustainable use of biodiversity is the lack of political willpower and also the weak

governance and accountability which has in the past, allowed unregulated logging to continue and foreign fishing fleets to evade payment of appropriate fees and taxes.

There is limited government and private sector investment in alternative technologies, poor telecommunications infrastructure through out the country, poor coordination between government agencies, and virtually no resource pricing in the national accounts system to put an economic value on natural resources or the loss of biodiversity.

In terms of monitoring compliance with MEAs, there is a need for more coordination between Foreign Affairs and the technical focal points.

Institutional Issues Summary:

- Lack of staff, funding and resources (ie GIS capability, telecommunications, vehicles, equipment for compliance monitoring and research for Fisheries, Forestry, Environment & Conservation Divisions).
- Lack of support to the provinces, NGOs and resource owners on management, research, monitoring – Fisheries and Environment & Conservation largely centralised in Honiara
- Fisheries and Marine Resources has been focused largely on offshore fisheries and not enough on coastal and inshore fisheries which are important to subsistence and artisanal fishers.
- Limited pool of qualified and educated people working in the public service (management, marine sciences and NRM, policy development and planning.)
- Low morale in public service – poor working conditions and salaries.
- Need for stronger discipline and strengthened management and administration
- Need for better coordination, collaboration and leadership to engage NGOs and scientific institutions and academics on development of proposal and funding applications
- Over reliance on NGOs to carry out some roles of Government agencies in dealing with resource management, community awareness and capacity building, research and monitoring and advocacy.
- Need for restructuring within the Ministry of Natural Resources to separate functions of exploitation and protection and development approval processes.
- Limited data collection and sharing
- Need for more information and awareness programmes
- ECD staff time divided between international obligations and national environmental activities.
- No overarching biodiversity framework or environmental policy guiding the ECD or other government agencies.
- National Museum lacks basic facilities and needs improved infrastructure, facilities and expertise for ex-situ conservation to support biodiversity protection.

Institutional Issues Discussion:

The focal point for the UNCBD and the Cartagena Protocol is the Environment and Conservation Division. It is clear the division lacks the capacity needed for driving the biodiversity agenda, particularly in relation to in-situ conservation. It is severely understaffed with only two positions filled out of a total of 15 positions. It suffers from a small annual budget, affecting its ability to carry out the responsibilities required for development controls, pollution and waste management, EIA process and implementation of the NEMS, preparation of the NBSAP, annual reporting to parliament on the State of the Environment, research and monitoring, data collection, analysis and dissemination. There is also a limited government led information and awareness programmes for other government officers and for resource owners, decision makers, farmers, foresters and potential investors in small scale alternative income generating businesses.

The Ministry of Natural Resources has limited appropriately qualified staff and inadequate resources which are constraints affecting fisheries and forestry management. In addition, poor

working conditions such as a lack of housing and limited equipment for carrying out expected functions such as boats, cars, computers and telecommunications, affect staff morale and can result in discipline and attitudinal issues.

An issue raised in both the NEMS and 2004 SPREP funded Human Resource Development Assessment of the ECD is the dual and possibly conflicting role within the Ministry of Natural Resources to maximise use of and protect Solomon Islands' natural resources. It has been recommended there be a separation of these functions through a restructuring of ECD or establishment of a separate unit to manage the environmental impact assessment and development proposals process.

ECD staff time is divided between attending international meetings and delivering the national environmental agenda. This puts pressure on the limited staff within the Division. ECD is also required to take a leadership role in terms of the BD agenda but needs to be more proactive and invite NGOs and other stakeholders to the table to participate in planning and policy and programme development. For example, there is a strong NGO willingness to support the NBSAP process and provide funding towards drafting of regulations for the Environment and Wildlife Acts. ECD also needs to be more proactive in collaborating with other government departments and despite the establishment of SISDAC, this group has not met. Expectations for ECD actions are high but with only two staff members, it is probably unrealistic to expect the Division to be more proactive at this stage.

The centralised nature of the ECD and the office's remote location on the outskirts of Honiara make access to services of ECD and its library difficult and restricts collaboration and networking with other government agencies and NGOs. Support to provinces and rural people is virtually non-existent. Currently, there are no ECD environmental officers seconded to provincial governments, (Malaita Province has appointed its own environment officer and Isabel Province is appointing an environment officer), however, under the new recruitment programme, it is proposed that three officers be appointed within provinces. Fisheries, forestry and agriculture extension services are available in the provinces but coordination between the agencies is weak and support from the national agencies is minimal. There is limited awareness and understanding of the importance of sound environmental management and BD conservation among the officers.

The lack of resources within government agencies with a responsibility for natural resource management exacerbates the already low level of data and scientific information and knowledge about Solomon Islands' biodiversity. There is an over-reliance by national and provincial governments to allow NGOs to lead the national environmental agenda and to carry out functions which should be led by government.

Solomon Islands has limited facilities for ex-situ conservation. For example, the National Herbarium's collection was relocated to Fiji for safekeeping during the tension although it is claimed parts of the collection have been lost; and the National Museum needs basic facilities such as computers and photocopiers. It also needs additional staff with qualifications in specific areas of expertise. Frequent power outages cause disruptions to the museum's infrastructure such as the environmental control unit which has been damaged.

The need for improved quarantine controls and a biosafety framework or focal point for invasive species control, expose Solomon Islands to continued introduction of invasive species and LMOs which can cause loss of biodiversity and habitat destruction.

The Fisheries Advisory Council and the Environment Advisory Committee offer a means for stakeholder input to these sectors. The Environment Advisory Committee has not been established and the Fisheries Advisory Council finally met in 2006 after being inoperative for a number of years. This limits stakeholder input in to national policy and decision making on environmental and natural resource management issues.

Other key agencies are short staffed such as the Attorney General's Office which requires additional resources for drafting legislation and regulations and providing advice to Foreign Affairs and other government agencies. The United Nations and International Treaties Division of Foreign Affairs is also under resourced with only three full time positions of which only one is currently filled.

Recommendations from the Fisheries and Forestry Audit Reports should be implemented to ensure good governance at the institutional level and improve regulatory processes and practices within these key revenue raising sectors. It is noted that both departments have taken action to address the issues raised in the audits.

Individual issues Summary:

- Limited pool of highly skilled individuals within NGOs, communities and government
- Limited number of conservation specialists/practitioners, research scientists.
- Brain drain of qualified & skilled personnel from Ministry of Natural Resources to NGOs
- Attitude to work (often caused by poor working conditions and salaries and lack of commitment to HR development in government)
- Training is often done outside the work environment and therefore is rushed and often leads to unrealistically high expectations on the individual
- Few links between training opportunities, financial compensation and work performance or attendance within public service.
- Limited pool of trainers in Solomon Islands results in limited on the job coaching, training or career planning.
- Some government officers unwilling to share information or transfer skills and knowledge.
- Focus on community led proposals at provincial/village level result in prioritizing use of resources for human use rather than conservation of ecosystems for biodiversity values.
- Limited understanding by resource owners of laws and regulations.
- Lack of awareness on economic benefit of conservation and sustainable use of BD.
- Limited skills in monitoring at community level
- Need to marry traditional management systems with contemporary conservation methods.

Individual Issues Discussion:

There are a small number of highly skilled and experienced Solomon Islanders working in natural resource management and conservation in government and NGOs. However, the pressure on this limited pool of individuals to attend a proliferation of meetings, workshops, planning and strategic planning forums and to participate in international and regional events, is enormous. The need for these different forums is not questioned but there is a need for more experienced and qualified people to spread the load and ensure that other activities do not suffer.

Officers in the public service face low morale and a need for stronger leadership at both a policy and departmental level. Offices are poorly resourced and equipped and staff often do not have the tools, skills or training to carry out the duties expected. On the job training opportunities are limited and there is little linkage between skills enhancement and training or financial compensation and commitment.

Certain skills are required in government agencies relating to BD conservation and sustainable use including: scientific monitoring skills, data analysis, GIS capability, awareness of responsibilities relating to legislation and regulations, and awareness across government about the importance of BD and environmental considerations.

Due to the low salaries, government officers may be open to bribery and lack of transparency in dealing with the forestry and fishing sectors. In the past, some officers have expected additional fees for carrying out work normally considered part of their duties. This can affect the integrity of some government agencies and officers. Officers also have limited data and

scientific information on which to base decisions and advice to resource owners. Other officers fear sharing of information and knowledge as resulting in a loss of power or control.

At the village level, resource owners have a limited knowledge of contemporary natural resource management systems and receive limited support from government to adapt traditional knowledge and methods to new factors affecting the sustainability of their resources. There is a reliance on NGOs to provide this support. In addition, the limited access to scientific data on the impacts of subsistence harvesting of marine resources and artisanal fishing leaves a vacuum in terms of understanding the status of resources and how to adapt management strategies to achieve sustainable use and ensure BD protection. Part of the problem for resource owners is the low completion rate of school for children. Environmental education is critical at primary school level and above so that resource owners and users have a clear understanding, at an early age, of the linkages between biology and ecology and hence the importance of sustainable use. This knowledge will help complement traditional knowledge and methods of natural resource management.

The increasing need for cash at village and community level is driving the push for fast income from natural resources. This can lead to poor decisions on sustainable use and potentially open villagers and resource owners to exploitation from some logging, fishing and mining companies.

7.4 Priority Capacity Development Needs

Based on the findings above, priority capacity development needs are presented below as short, medium and long term priorities. The focus is on the short to medium term due to the need to review and update the NEMs and State of the Environment Reports, the development of an NBSAP and the completion of the NCSA capacity development action plan. These key documents will help determine the longer term capacity development actions for Solomon Islands.

Short term – (Years 1-2)

Plans, Policies, Legislation

- Complete the NBSAP
- Update the National Environmental Management Strategy
- Update the State of the Environment Report – collect baseline data and establish indicators
- Sign/ratify CITES agreement
- Identify appropriate regulations for Environment Act & Wildlife Protection and Management Act, prioritise & complete drafting of regulations, and implement.
- Develop management plans for trade in wildlife
- Complete national biosafety framework & build national capacity to implement
- Incorporate/mainstream SD & BD conservation into new national development plan and link to economic and social actions across sectors and government.
- Prioritise recommendations from ADB Mainstreaming Environment report - begin implementation
- Establish a division within Attorney General's Office to deal with international conventions & drafting of laws and regulations
- Investigate feasibility of establishing an International Conventions Coordinating Unit within Foreign Affairs to improve sharing of information, and facilitating access to qualified govt & non govt people to support COP reporting and monitor compliance with obligations of MEAs
- Increase involvement of provincial govt, NGOs & stakeholders in environmental policy development, planning, reporting & management.

Good governance

- National dialogue on reform of governance to improve accountability, transparency, equity & accessibility;
- Build good governance through awareness & training
- Need a coordinating body to ensure coordination and collaboration across govt in relation to environmental management and delivery of international MEA obligations (could be the ongoing role of NCSA technical working group or a reformed SISDAC)
- Review TOR, mandate and composition of Solomon Islands Sustainable Development Advisory Council (SISDAC) and review potential as the required coordinating body for MEAs.

Institutional strengthening

- Increase annual funding to ECD, Fisheries, Forestry & relevant govt agencies & provincial govts
- Appoint ECD officers into provincial areas
- Establish the Environment Advisory Committee
- ECD prioritise recommendations from the Human Resource Assessment & begin implementation.
- Complete recruitment process for ECD & other depts involved in MEAs & environmental issues.
- Provide appropriate resources for National Museum & Herbarium to support in-situ and ex-situ conservation
- Strengthen the relationship between Foreign Affairs and Attorney General's Office – improve coordination and collaboration between two agencies.

Research, Information Sharing, Awareness

- Develop a programme of priority research activities in consultation & collaboration with NGOs, communities, stakeholders, partners.
- Develop a clearing house mechanism for SI research & information
- Develop an info & awareness programme within ECD - coordinate with Foreign Affairs, Fisheries, Forestry, Planning, NGOs, stakeholders, partners
- Establish framework for identifying, establishing, managing & protection of priority conservation areas

Funding & Support

- Improve the process for accessing & managing GEF funds for small & medium size projects
- Access regional networks for technical support & advice

Education, Training & Development

- P/ships with SPREP (regional education framework), NGOs, donor partners & education sector to enhance primary & high school curricula to include environmental studies
- Encourage industry (logging/fishing/agriculture/mining & exploration) to improve skills and awareness of sustainable resource management
- Build skills of logging industry to increase compliance with Code of Logging Practice

Provincial Government

- Develop formal mechanisms for govt agencies to participate in & support provincial govt planning & policy development activities ie:
 - Establish Provincial Development Teams in each province made up of heads of provincial depts & relevant SIG depts
 - Involve national MPs in provincial planning processes to act as a bridge between national & provincial concerns
 - Develop a Joint National/Provincial Development strategy to strengthen provincial institutions to make a major contribution towards achievement of govt objectives.

Medium Term – (Years 2-3)

Plans, Policies, Legislation

- Implement NCSA Capacity Development Plan
- Implement revised NEMS, NBSAP & other relevant frameworks, strategies, plans (NIS, NAPs, NAPA, biosafety framework)
- Develop legislation and/or frameworks to address current gaps in environmental management (BD/genetic resources protection & sustainable use, habitat protection)
- Develop a legal framework to protect TK & regulate access benefit sharing of use of genetic resources. Participate in proposed SPREP ABS project.
- Undertake regular review of State of Environment Report, NEMS & NBSAP
- Review quarantine & customs legislation, regulations, protocols & procedures to build capacity to prevent & control invasive species. (Participate in SPREP Invasive Species Learning Network & Invasive Species Management Project).

Education, Training & Development

- Seek partnerships & investors to establish a fourth campus of USP
- Establish partnerships with universities, research facilities, NGOs to provide education & training for govt & community based conservation practitioners
- Establish partnerships for more scholarships to increase graduates with skills in environmental management & planning (including BD, climate change, land management, integrated coastal zone management).

Research, Information Sharing, Awareness

- Develop national platform for research & strengthen legislative framework to control research & protect TK
- Build research capability through research fellows, scholarships, p/ships with research orgs/academic institutions/NGOs
- Build data/information collection, management, interpretation & analysis, storage & dissemination capacity in key govt agencies & NGOs
- Identify potential p/ships with private sector & research institutions for development of low cost, environmentally friendly technology & renewable energies - facilitate technology transfer

Governance:

- Public sector reform
- Review & reform institutional & administrative relations between govt & customary landowners to :
 - clarify respective rights & responsibilities
 - improve ability of govt to intervene on matters of national environmental importance
 - establish a mechanism to ensure customary landowners have access to advice prior to making important natural resource use decisions
- Review tax regimes & policies to remove disincentives to conservation & SD;
- Implement resource pricing/environmental accounting in national accounts.
- Build capacity of govt & non govt personnel in negotiation, diplomacy, conflict resolution.
- Review the vertical relations of governance; ie the relations between national & provincial govt to overcome current policy & fiscal imbalance;

Funding & Support

- Govt strengthen p/ships & collaboration with NGOs to coordinate activities & align to SI environmental agenda & international obligations (align with the new national development plan)
- Harmonise donor aid programmes to support & complement SI environmental agenda & international obligations (align with new national development plan)

Long Term (Years 3-5)

- Continue implementation of NEMS, NBSAP & other relevant frameworks, strategies & plans
- Review the architecture of national govt to reduce organisational fragmentation, increase administrative coordination & enhance policy coherence & efficacy;
- Investigate feasibility of establishing an independent environmental protection authority to deal with implementation of Environment Act regulations & to monitor & protect environment.
- Undertake a feasibility study of establishing a cooperative research centre for BD or a unit based on Vanuatu Cultural Centre as a possible model for an independent, govt sponsored unit to facilitate awareness raising and action on environmental and cultural issues.

7.5 Opportunities for Capacity Development

Table 9 details the opportunities for developing national capacity. This information is drawn from the assessment of capacity gaps in delivering the UNCBD commitments (Sect 7.1) and also in dealing with the environmental issues facing Solomon Islands (Sect 7.2) and from Section 7.3. The opportunities are categorised as individual, institutional and systemic and are grouped into the seven functional areas of: Policy, Planning & Programmes; Research & Monitoring; Training & Education; Public Awareness & Exchange of Information; Collaboration & Coordination; Human & Financial Resources; and Reporting & Participation.

Opportunities – Summary

- Grand Coalition for Change Government policy
- RAMSI & development partners (technical support, mentoring, capacity building, funds) ie EU Forestry Conservation programme, Agriculture & Rural Development programme, AusAID forestry programme, ROC agriculture programme, EU & ROC Microprojects, Japan Grassroots, CSP etc.
- Regional organisations (PIF, SPREP, SOPAC, CROP, SPC, FFA etc)
- Global Environment Facility (GEF)
- NGOs & CBO partnerships
- Alignment with regional plans ie Pacific Plan, SPREP Strategy for Nature Conservation
- Preparation of new national development plan
- Programmes undertaken by other research & academic partners ie WorldFish Center, USP, UPNG, UQ, ANU, AMNH, UCSB,
- Scholarships, graduate training programmes & on the job traineeships (UNDP, Japan Govt)
- Networks ie SILMMA, NRRC, ECANSI

Table 9: Capacity Development Opportunities

Individual	Institutional	Systemic
Policy Planning & Programmes		
- Scholarships/traineeships in legal training	- ECD capitalise on support from NGOs to complete NBSAP & drafting of environment & wildlife regulations.	- Public Sector reform process part of GCCG policy/RAMSI
- Scholarships/Traineeships in environmental law	- GEF small project funding for review of NEMS & update SOE report	- Constitutional reform process part of Govt policy
- Diplomacy training through bilateral arrangements (already in progress)	- Review Wildlife Act to focus more on protection (regulations to protect endangered or threatened species & habitats	- Land reform (New Tribal Lands Bill)
	- Complete recruitment processes for DFEC & DFMR	- Budgetary process to reflect importance of env, BD & SD considerations & link with programmes
	- Recommendations from HRD assessment for ECD (including restructure of Division)	- Maximise opportunities of RAMSI government strengthening programme & civil society commitment to review legislation
	- Appropriate budget allocations for staff,	- Review & pass Forests Bill (& implement with sound regulations to protect landowners, ecological integrity & BD)

	<p>equipment, resources & systems development for full implementation of Environment & Wildlife Acts & EIA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Planning & preparation of next national development plan an opportunity to mainstream env considerations & SD - Review penalties for Code of Logging Practice, enforce, monitor compliance - Legal officers in every province - Decentralisation of ECD to locate officers in provincial centres - Fisheries & Environmental officer counterparts in NGOs & organisations such as WorldFish Center - NZ Govt/FFA review of fisheries legislation - SPC review of coastal fisheries legislation & development of community fisheries programme for legal framework to provide local communities with power to manage fisheries resources - NGO partnerships - Regional organisations support - Partnerships between govt agencies & provinces on recruitment of provincial environment officers, fisheries support & legal support. - Strengthen capacity within AGO for drafting legislation & regulations. - In p/ship with NGOs, govt, research orgs, communities, develop in-situ programmes for protection & conservation of endangered wildlife & habitats - Revise reforestation policy to include ecological restoration. - Legal support for Forestry, Environment & Fisheries - Fisheries establish a coastal fisheries unit (to replace IWP office). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Govt implement recommendations from ADB Country Environmental Assessment - Sign & ratify CITES convention - Participate in regional forums on CC - Institutional strengthening - Strengthen & implement environmental legal framework - Develop a national BD framework - Complete & implement national biosafety framework - Develop a framework for ABS & access to genetic resources - Develop a framework for protection of research data & TK - Mainstream environmental, BD & SD considerations into govt plans, policies & strategies - Implement recommendations from Auditors Report into Forestry & Fisheries - Implement actions under UNCCD/UNFCCC - Strengthen & enforce existing legislation & develop protocols against introduction of alien species (ie Quarantine Act) - Build capacity of provinces, Quarantine & Customs departments to deal with invasive species control - Regulations to protect natural habitats (protected area systems framework & protocols for identification, establishment, monitoring & protection). - Implementation of the Pacific Plan - Implementation of SPREP Plans of Action - Partnerships with regional bodies ie SPC, PIF, SOPAC, SPREP, FFA, USP - Review Town & Country Planning Act to include all land tenures
Research & Monitoring		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop skills in government & community for monitoring, management, enforcement of management rules. - Link traditional knowledge & practices with modern methods of NRM - NGO partnerships with communities (WWF GCRMN monitoring, IWP, FSPI, TNC) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Govt p/ships with NGOs, research institutions & regional bodies to develop & implement programme of priority research & data collection, storage, info sharing. - Enforce conditions on research permits & MOUs with scientists & research institutions - Support work by WorldFish Center & extend beyond Western Province - Establish p/ships with NGOs & research orgs to undertake baseline studies for BD identification, identification of threatened species & habitats, cumulative impacts of subsistence & artisanal fishing & harvesting, - Identification of potential conservation areas & protected area systems. - Develop departmental data bases & mechanisms for sharing data across departs, NGOS & private sector (GIS office) - Inventory of invasive or alien species in country & identify potential threats. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the Research Act & reactivate the Research Committee - Support private research facilities - Develop a comprehensive national platform for research, identifying priority research requirements & data gaps - Govt develop strong p/ships with research, ed facilities, NGOs & community networks - Stronger p/ships between Customs, provinces & communities to stamp out illegal trade in wildlife. - Support SPREP regional invasive species programme - Research into areas vulnerable to CC for preparedness and adaptation plans.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Fisheries & NGOs to support communities & provincial govts develop management plans for coastal marine resources. - Fisheries/NGOs conduct baseline research on cumulative impacts of subsistence & artisanal fishing of inshore resources. - Strengthen resources & role of Museum in ex-situ conservation - Improve the curatorial/laboratory /zoological facilities in SI for ex-situ conservation (ie Herbarium/Museum) - Retrieve plant species from Fiji - DAL to improve relationship & collaboration with NGOs 	
Training & Education		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Scholarships & fellowships - UNDP/Japan model of traineeships - System of community/ govt/NGO counterparts on projects - Build decision making skills & critical thinking for resource owners - Training for logging operators & resource managers in SD principles & forestry management techniques. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Appoint technical advisors to key govt agencies with a focus on env, BD conservation & SD - Rural Training Centres incorporate NRM into curriculum - NGOs/govt establish MOUs to maximise cross training opportunities - Training for law enforcers about roles under various Acts - Reopen and strengthen the Forestry School in the Western Province. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Strengthen Public Service Training Council & Public Sector Management Office - Govt develop partnership with Live & Learn NGO on curriculum development to incorporate BD conservation into national curriculum - Establish stronger links with Australian & Pacific based universities & develop p/ships with USP, UPNG, ANU, UQ, UCSB & AMNH - Increase resources to & strengthen existing education facilities ie SICHE School of Natural Resources - Explore feasibility of a Centre for Biodiversity Cooperative Research - Increase places for physical planning students at SICHE - Build a fourth campus of USP (in Honiara) - Build NRM skills of govt & community - Govt access networks ie SILMMA for training in marine resource monitoring, GIS, data collection & management, info sharing. - World Conservation Learning Network – capacity development programme aimed at environmental professionals “on the job” – p/ship between unis, aid agencies & practitioners (NGOs & govt) (Macquarie Uni initiative with IUCN) - Increase resources to Rural Training Centres & expand curriculum to include BD conservation & SD, adaptation for CC.
Public Awareness & Exchange of Information		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop govt officers & community members' computer skills for email, internet research, website - Develop govt officers skills in developing & delivery of community awareness programmes - Develop skills for govt & community reps in workshop facilitation, radio presentations, dealing with the media 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - SISDAC to be reviewed as vehicle for coordination & information exchange. - CCOSI be reviewed & if appropriate, reconvened as regular forum for interagency & NGO discussion & info sharing - Environment Advisory Committee be established to enable input from stakeholders - DFEC establish an environmental education & awareness unit (similar units for Fisheries & Agriculture) - ECD develop policies & procedures outlining EIA process, pollution control requirements, development requirements, & make available to industry, other govt 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Expand & enhance government information website - Subsidised PFNet extension to more rural areas - Government Media Office to establish system of information exchange with government agencies & NGOs. - Establish a committee on invasive species as part of the South Pacific Invasive Species Learning Network

	<p>agencies, provincial govts & offices, NGOs, commercial & public.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Govt develop stronger links with existing networks such as SILMMA, DSE & NRRC. - Increase use of E-networks & radio - SI Govt website to include regulations, procedures & licensing requirements, forms, information bulletins, etc. - Together with NGOs & other non state actors, develop series of information fact sheets for distribution to schools, other govt depts, church & community groups. - Develop data base for storing env data. (GIS Officer for central storage – explore options for using Lands Dept systems) - Govt participation on provincial joint committees/planning bodies etc. - Partner with NGOs which have extensive networks with communities - Awareness campaign for provincial govts on powers for NRM & control - ECD to take a more collaborative & proactive role in establishing r/ships with other govt agencies & stakeholders. - Awareness campaign on dangers/impacts of invasive & alien species - Participate in SPREP alien species project. - Awareness & education programme on dangers/benefits of GMOs/LMOs - Forestry Division outreach programme. 	
Coordination & Collaboration		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communities use examples of CBOs such as Makira Community Conservation Foundation, Luru Land Conference, Tetepare Descendants' Association etc as models for community cooperation for management of resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Govt agencies be proactive in inviting NGOs & stakeholders to participate in policy making, strategic planning & programme/project development - Govt agencies be proactive in leading NRM & BD conservation. - Foreign Affairs consider establishing & chairing an International Conventions Coordination Unit for improving coordination between technical agencies, relevant govt departments & for enhanced delivery of obligations & meeting commitments. - Reduce the proliferation of committees & groups established to improve coordination & ensure one forum is being sufficiently resourced to operate regularly & effectively ie SISDAC. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establish a coordination mechanism between government agencies – ie review SISDAC & whether it should function within the ECD or Depart of National Planning & Aid Coord. - Govt be more supportive of & participatory in networks such as SILMMA & Natural Resources & Rights Coalition. - Need for provincial level led coordination to ensure extension services & aid support for villages & communities are coordinated, effective, reduce duplication & confusion. - Establish Provincial Development Teams with heads of provincial depts & relevant SIG depts to improve coordination, delivery of services, policy and planning. - Develop p/ship approach with national & provincial govt in policy making & administration. - Develop Joint national/provincial development strategy which allows for the strengthening of provincial institutions to make a major contribution towards the achievement of govt objectives.

Human & Financial Resources		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Redundancy for unsuitable public officers - Improved working conditions for staff - salaries & training - Recruit suitably qualified (educated) staff in Public Service - Provinces improve business licensing mechanism to control activities ie fishing, logging, mining & set aside revenue for NRM or restoration of env breaches by business - Training for govt, provincial, NGOs & communities in financial management, budgeting & proposal writing. - Training for govt & provincial finance officers in environmental accounting & economics. - Support for communities to understand conservation concessions & incentives & maximise opportunities arising from such schemes. - Cost benefit analyses on sustainable use of natural resources as demonstration to resource owners of value of conserving BD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased funding allocation for govt agencies involved in NRM - Increased resources to govt agencies - New leadership & management positions - Stronger discipline & leadership - Improved financial systems within govt agencies - Forestry & Fisheries implement recommendations from Auditor's Reports - Proper revenue collection & sharing of benefits from natural resources (forestry, fishing & mining) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Open & accountable govt, transparency, good governance - Public service reform - Strengthen management & administration functions across govt - Increase logistical support for govt - Diversified revenue base for govt (to overcome reliance on forestry & fishing) - Reduce reliance on overseas aid - Restructure revenue sharing/Increased ratio of funding to provincial govts - Accountability & transparency in all financial arrangements & dealings - Increased budgetary allocations to ECD, Fisheries & other agencies with responsibility for environmental management & planning - Regional & national level partnerships - EU Stabex funds - ADB (Mainstreaming Environmental Considerations Report) - AusAID; NZ Govt; ROC; Japan Grassroots - EU Microprojects; CSP - Stronger partnerships between govt, NGOs & marketing orgs, private sector to develop infrastructure, markets, feasibility studies & support for rural based enterprises to increase sustainable livelihood options. - Review banking & credit sector to encourage micro-financing/credit for new enterprises. - National govts new Land Bill "Tribe & Customary Land Titles Act" - Regional & national collaboration to ensure trade mechanisms & environment conducive to rural development.
Reporting & Participation		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Increased involvement in participation & reporting to COP forums by NGO & other non state actors & specialists. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Effective mechanism for including NGOs & other specialists to support reporting functions of govt (particularly ECD) - Update NEMS - Update SOE report - Foreign Affairs to establish library & website for storage of & public access to info relating to MEAs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Develop effective communications system & networks within govt & include stakeholders - Regular, accurate, specific reporting on international obligations & SoE to COPs, Parliament, provincial govts, NGOs, civil society & communities. - Regular briefings for govt ministers on MEAs & their obligations - Regular forum for focal points to meet & share information, identify synergies between their conventions (Coordination unit)

Discussion on Summary of Capacity Development Opportunities:

Systemic Opportunities

With the election of a new national government in May 2006 came an opportunity to initiate a series of reforms which would provide the structural changes required to improve Solomon Islands' performance in delivering its obligations on international conventions and also the national environmental agenda. The Grand Coalition for Change Government (GCCG) has released its policy framework which includes a focus on rural development, public sector reform, constitutional reform and the introduction of a new Tribe and Customary Land Titles Act to provide land owners with greater access to finance.

Other initiatives which are presented as opportunities include the technical and advisory support from overseas donor countries and RAMSI, and the Machinery of Government programme aimed at addressing problems in the public sector such as a lack of planning, limited capacity and training opportunities and a lack of accountability. Other support is available from regional organisations to review Fisheries legislation and strengthen capacity in the DFMR. NGOs are offering support for developing regulations for the Environment and Wildlife Acts, promoting the Forests Bill 2004, and developing a National Biodiversity Strategic Action Plan. These actions would significantly strengthen the environmental legal and policy framework in Solomon Islands. New policies or frameworks on biodiversity conservation, protected area systems establishment and management, regulating access to and benefit sharing of genetic resources, protecting traditional knowledge, and developing a national research framework are also important areas of government policy development which need to be undertaken with support from NGOs, stakeholders and regional organisations.

A key opportunity is the drafting process for the next national development plan, a process previously lead by the Department of National Planning but now moved to the Office of the Prime Minister. This is a new approach whereby ministries and permanent secretaries have been required to develop three year corporate plans, based on the national government policy. These initiatives will be formed into a new national development strategy for the period 2007 to 2010.

It is imperative that the key government agencies collaborate to develop cohesive plans and actions to help achieve national and international environmental goals which incorporate the pillars of sustainable development. The organisations should include Planning, Natural Resources, Finance, Lands and Agriculture, Tourism and Culture, Provincial Government, Mines and Energy and key agencies such as Meteorology, Customs, Quarantine and the National Museum. In the drafting process, wide consultation from stakeholders, including NGOs and networks is imperative.

It is also important that there be links with regional plans such as the SPREP Action Plan for Nature Conservation and the Pacific Plan. The AusAID Transitional Plan 2006 -2007 recognises one of the key challenges of RAMSI "is to assist the SIG take advantage of opportunities identified in the PIF Pacific Plan", and "continuing its work with regional institutions to ensure the environmental sustainability of aid activities". Careful planning at the national level now can help to incorporate the actions of these plans to maximise synergies across international convention requirements and commitments to regional strategies. The Review of RAMSI (May 2005) recommended regional support for Solomon Islands, through the PIF and FFA, such as providing expertise on land matters, fisheries management, development planning and rural development.

This process should be linked to the budgetary process to ensure appropriate allocations are made to enable government agencies to fulfil their functions and duties according to their enabling legislation. The Asian Development Bank's Country Environmental Assessment of Solomon Islands, provides an environmental road map for strengthening capacity to deliver environmental goals, and in particular, a process for mainstreaming environmental considerations across government programmes. It also provides tools and information to help

Solomon Islands enhance its planning and decision-making processes to achieve sustainable economic development.

Another opportunity is to establish an International Conventions Coordination Unit for improving coordination between technical agencies, relevant government departments and for enhanced delivery of obligations. The unit, which could be housed within Foreign Affairs, would help to streamline activities, reporting mechanisms and provide synergies for meeting obligations and commitments of MEAs. This work would be enhanced by a reformed SISDAC, which could take on an interdepartmental coordinating role to ensure coordination and collaboration across government to mainstream environmental considerations, and achieve the national and international environmental agenda for Solomon Islands.

Institutional Opportunities

There is a strong focus from NGOs, donor governments and regional programmes on the effectiveness of the existing national environmental legislative framework. For example, the New Zealand Government has supported the DFMR with finalisation of a new Corporate Plan 2006-2008 and a restructuring process to develop the department into a separate ministry. The next step will be the recruitment of staff and a review of the Fisheries Act, its regulations and provincial ordinances. The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) is involved in a review of legislation relative to coastal fisheries and developing a community fisheries programme in Solomon Islands which puts in place a legal framework to provide local communities with the power to manage their fisheries resources.

The Environment and Conservation Division has been offered support from conservation NGOs and SPREP to draft long overdue regulations to support the Wildlife and Environment Acts. The new Environment Minister has called for the establishment of a taskforce to develop national environmental policy and there has been ongoing dialogue with NGOs and ECD over a process for re-initiating the NBSAP process. The NCSA Stocktake workshop in July recommended ECD initiate GEF small projects grant proposals for reviewing and updating the National Environmental Management Strategy and the State of the Environment Report. The ECD is required to report regularly to Parliament on the State of the Environment but has not been able to do so.

The 2004 HRD assessment of the Environment and Conservation Division identified a series of recommendations for improving the functioning of ECD in terms of its capability to fulfil responsibilities under the Environment Act. The assessment recognised that the current structure of the Ministry of Natural Resources places staff in the difficult situation of having to maximise exploitation of natural resources at the same time as protecting resources and monitoring compliance with regulations. Therefore, the HRD recommended restructuring the Division and establishing a separate entity such as an environmental protection authority to deal with the environmental impact assessment process, development approvals and monitoring compliance with environmental regulations. This was similar to the NEMS which recommended formation of an Environmental Planning and Assessment Authority as a corporate body under its own Act, responsible to the Prime Minister and Cabinet. The HRD assessment also recommended establishing two separate teams within ECD, one to deal with international projects and an operational team to deal with national level responsibilities.

In consultation with NGOs, an area of opportunity for improving the capacity of Government to deliver its international and national environmental agendas is for the ECD (and government in general) to be more proactive in its relationship with NGOs and invite them to participate in setting policy, developing strategies and plans, preparing national reports and developing joint funding proposals.

AusAID is in its second stage of its Forest Management programme which includes legal reform, institutional strengthening for the Forestry Division, and improving rural livelihoods through better use of forest resources. This project, together with the EU Sustainable Forestry

and Conservation Programme, provides opportunity for improving governance of Solomon Islands forests.

The 2006 AusAID Forestry Sector Review reported that there is a changing culture within the Forestry Division. A new Commissioner for Forests, together with a new management team, are making changes in the organisation. However, funding and resources are not sufficient for the organisation to carry out its many roles, particularly in light of the expected escalation of logging as the timber resource nears the end of commercial supplies. Also, there is a need for technical assistance with corporate planning within the Division. The AusAID review also recommended that the Division's field operations need to be more holistic when dealing with householder level resource owners and users, the "Forests Division needs to operate within a system of provincial governance that coordinates extension services to rural householders," to reduce confusion and duplication of services to rural householders.

What appears to be lacking in Solomon Islands is a specific body with a mandate for promoting biodiversity conservation and good governance over natural resources. A feasibility assessment should be undertaken into the costs/benefits/effectiveness of establishing a cooperative research centre for biodiversity. Another suggestion made during the course of this assessment was looking at whether the Vanuatu Cultural Centre which operates in conjunction with the powerful theatre group Wan Smol Bag, may be a suitable model for an independent, government sponsored unit to provide a vehicle for information collection and sharing, a repository and source of resource materials for communities, students, academics, industry and government, and as a voice for addressing national environmental issues.

Individual Opportunities

Good governance from community level (chiefs) to national government level is a key element to the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity and to the long term sustainable development of Solomon Islands and its people. This is being recognised by many people and initiatives for raising awareness, providing training and encouraging good governance are being undertaken. For example, training and awareness is being undertaken to promote good governance for Councils of Chiefs, Isabel Province has an element of good governance in its partnership with UNDP, Western Province held a joint awareness workshop for its executive with WWF and WorldFish Center to raise awareness of sustainable development, and at a national level RAMSI is working on instilling good governance practices. The Review of RAMSI report (May 2005) recommended "consideration of the role of chiefs in mediation, reconciliation and consultation in the areas of land, good governance and justice should be recognised in the Constitution" and suggested the Pacific Islands Forum assist with identifying models for a "Great Council of Chiefs". Good governance is critical at all levels to ensure communities and villages are functioning in a transparent and supportive environment in the battle to sustainably manage their natural resources and to ensure the sustainability of income and food security.

In addition to good governance measures, government agencies have an opportunity to capitalise on the presence of RAMSI and other development partners to attract technical advisors who can work as mentors along side Solomon Islands counterparts. Once the Environment and Conservation Division and Fisheries and Marine Resources have completed their recruitment programmes, this is an option for "on the job" training of individuals. Other organisations such as overseas volunteer groups can provide short term technical support for education and building capacity on the job. As part of the Pacific Islands Forum and regional networks, ECD could also take greater advantage of the support and technical advisory services provided by organisations such as SPREP, SPC, SOPAC, and USP. This is noted in the Division's 2007 work plan.

A promising initiative for capacity building of future environmental management specialists is being piloted by the Honiara office of the UNDP. It initiated a graduate training programme, together with Japanese funding, whereby it hosts a graduate student on a two year training programme to work in UNDP. The graduate will be trained in everything that falls under the portfolio of the Environment programme and will work closely with government. This positive step towards addressing the shortage of educated people in the environment field needs support at a much broader level to fill the skills and knowledge gap of public servants across the board. Other opportunities for scholarships, fellowships and on the job cadetships could be further enhanced through donor countries, NGOs, universities and research institutions.

NGOs continue to develop capacity both at an organisational level and within the community. Conservation NGOs such as WWF, FSPI and TNC have proactive programmes of developing the skills within their own organisations through in-house training and externally funded training opportunities. These include computer skills development, project management, proposal writing, budgeting and organisational skills. In addition, NGOs provide organised training for community based resource managers as well as colleagues in other NGOs and the private sector, specifically dive businesses, in monitoring and data collection. This includes Reef Check and Seagrass Watch training programmes, training in Global Coral Reef Monitoring Network methodologies, monitoring of spawning aggregation sites, turtle monitoring, tagging and identification, and nest relocation. CBOs such as the Tetepare Descendants' Association also proactively provide training and development for its members in turtle conservation, MPA monitoring and management and service provision to the ecotourism sector. Another area of opportunity to fulfil the current gaps in the school environmental education curriculum is to support and partner with the Live and Learn biodiversity conservation curriculum development programme.

Research organisations such as WorldFish Center have undertaken specific research and developed sustainable methods of harvesting and growing marine specimens for aquaculture livelihood projects. In a joint project with WWF, WorldFish is extending that knowledge to selected communities in the Western Province. It also tries to encourage Fisheries Department to provide Fisheries Officers as counterparts in these programmes to enable skills sharing and continuity of knowledge and experience when projects finish. This is a potential area of learning and skills transference with other NGOs who could offer counterpart placements for government environment officers in NGO projects.

Other civil society groups and networks such as SILMMA and DSE have proactively undertaken capacity needs assessments and initiated training to address the gaps at the community and NGO/civil society level organisations. Many NGOs operating in Solomon Islands are also members of international networks and have access to significant sources of technical support and expertise. This can be made available to government and community representatives as shared learning experiences when NGOs undertake training and development for their own staff.

A number of universities and research organisations have developed relationships with Solomon Islands government, NGOs and communities through various research and capacity building projects. These organisations represent a major resource for Solomon Islands to build its own conservation and environmental management capacity. Opportunities exist through the Australian National University (ANU), University of Queensland (UQ), the American Museum of Natural History (AMNH), the University of California Santa Barbara (UCSB) and University of the South Pacific (USP).

A specialist with a long association with Solomon Islands through the **ANU Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies** is keen to facilitate collaborations to extend marine and terrestrial environmental education initiatives developed in PNG to Solomon Islands, and to look at establishing a research programme that enables proper assessment of the effectiveness of environmental education initiatives (pers. corr. S Foale 2006).

UCSB offers placements in its Pacific Islands Field School. It is aimed at undergraduate and graduate college/university students primarily of Pacific Islands descent and offers financial support for the participants. The programme consists of training in ethnographic and marine science field methods, cross-cultural understanding, basic Roviana language classes, and the development and completion of individual research projects. Five Solomon Islands students are enrolled for 2006 (pers. corr. S Aswani, 2006).

University of Queensland aims to develop further its existing links with SIG and NGOs including education opportunities for SI students. It is seeking additional funding for a project to build on work undertaken over the past two years at Marovo, studying the environmental health of Marovo Lagoon and establishing solutions to environmental problems. The follow up project would investigate the likely social impacts of conservation and management opportunities and facilitate culturally appropriate management by Marovo people. This would involve partnerships, building capacity of local communities, and village and school based education programmes to contribute to grassroots ownership of conservation management mechanisms. It would build community capacity to implement conservation management decisions. This would include scholarships for students to undertake environmental management courses; UQ academics working with Marovo and SI higher education centres to enhance the environmental management components of their courses; and funding positions within government institutions and local NGOs that support environmental conservation.

UQ is also developing a mangrove programme – establishing an international scientific specialist group to train, assist and provide advice on climate change and sea level rise, monitoring and adaptation to change in coastal areas. It would be a pilot project for a practical global network to monitor climate change and biodiversity loss and to help people adapt (pers corr. N Duke and M Love, 2006).

University of the South Pacific (USP) has a centre in Honiara which functions as an outpost and Distance and Flexible Learning centre for USP students. In addition to continuing education, vocational and short courses, it offers graduate certificate and diploma level courses in Solomon Islands. However, for completion of degree programmes students must go to one of the other campuses in Suva, Samoa or Vanuatu. Environmental education is spread across Sciences, Geography, Arts, Marine Sciences and covers the history of environmental conventions (including Rio conventions), environmental economics and accounting and environmental law as well as marine sciences, climatology and oceanography. The main campuses offer specialist consulting services in training (eg coral reef monitoring and data analysis) and applied research for communities.

The Solomon Islands government has indicated a desire to establish the fourth USP campus in Honiara which, if developed and properly resourced, would expand the USP resources for students and allow staff time for more research and to participate in environmental activities. The Pacific Centre for Environment and Development is a smaller institution of the USP and undertakes activities such as desk top research into climate change and dealing with international conventions. USP is also part of the regional network and collaborates with organisations such as SPREP and SOPAC (pers. disc. R Sulu, 2006).

American Museum of Natural History's involvement in Solomon Islands began in the early part of the last century with its ornithological exploration of the area, and more recently, through the Center for Biodiversity and Conservation's (CBC) collaborative biodiversity research and capacity development programs. As a result of an expression of interest from the new national government in combining biodiversity protection with its national Rural Development Plan, the CBC has prepared a concept for "Developing Protected Areas Capacity and Conservation Outreach across the Land-Sea Interface of the Solomon Archipelago". The project would 1) initiate a Community Conservation Agreement (CCA) approach to expand protected areas, with particular emphasis on the under-protected land-sea interface, and 2) build and strengthen local conservation capacity by developing Solomon-specific educational and

outreach materials, and training educators and conservation professionals to use, refine, and expand these resources.

In-country capacity for CCAs would be built through implementation frameworks to initiate and bind agreements, and to build the capacity of communities to develop, monitor, and steward a protected areas network. The proposed approach would be through the CRC's existing biodiversity research and conservation initiatives and the Network of Conservation Educators and Practitioners, a global initiative to disseminate open access teaching resources in topics related to biodiversity conservation (pers. corr. C Filardi, 2006).

Macquarie University in Australia is exploring the World Conservation Learning Network initiative which is an on-the-job capacity development programme aimed at environmental professionals. It would be a partnership between universities, aid agencies and practitioners (pers. corr. S Foale, 2006).

8.0 Provincial Governments

Structured questionnaires were used to obtain information about the capacity of provincial governments to fulfil roles and responsibilities in environmental planning and management. Provincial governments are vital in the sustainable use and conservation of biological diversity through management of and planning for natural resources. They can also offer a coordinating role to village and family level resource owners for the various national extension officers, NGOs and donor programmes. Provincial governments have devolved legal powers to manage natural resources within their provinces but, as mentioned earlier, there are many serious capacity issues. Section 8.1 is a summary of feedback about provincial government in relation to the capacity constraints it faces (See Appendix 2) and Section 8.2 (full table at Appendix 3) looks at the opportunities for addressing the constraints.

8.1 Capacity Constraints

Power for making ordinances over natural resources is devolved under the *Provincial Government Act 1997* and the accompanying devolution orders (PGA s33). Responsibility for management of coastal and inshore fisheries has been decentralised to the individual provinces (Section 9 Fisheries Act 1998). However, there are a number of issues impacting on the provinces' ability to carry out these roles such as the lack of management plans for coastal fisheries, lack of enforcement of regulations and bylaws relating to resource management, local courts for dealing with breaches of customary law are in some cases dysfunctional, police and provincial officers are often unfamiliar with their ordinances, provinces need legal advisors, there is confusion and complexities over ownership of lagoons, reefs and coastal waters and a lack of clarity on powers for provincial or national governments to make planning or land use decisions over customary owned land.

A serious capacity constraint for provincial governments is limited finances from the national government. The revenue sharing basis from central government to the provinces is considered inequitable with resource rich provinces such as the Western Province, generating much higher revenue to the central government but this is not reflected in budget allocations back to the province.

Central government is also falling down on its support to the provinces which have a significant responsibility for natural resource management but not the resources to fulfil this role. Seconded positions are not being filled in a timely way leaving provinces with long term vacancies. Agencies such as Environment and Conservation have no staff in the provinces and officers in the Forestry Division and Fisheries are under resourced with equipment, budgets and manpower.

Constraints include lack of trained staff to carry out the functions of provincial government or to implement programmes and policies and to enforce laws. Staff are not necessarily qualified

to do their jobs (ie in preparing funding proposals to central government, understanding provincial legislation and ordinances or developing plans). Provincial staff also lack awareness and knowledge of key environmental issues. Provinces need resources for integrated development strategies and effective institutional mechanisms between provincial, national and regional organisations.

Provincial autonomy is a serious impediment in controlling resource depletion at provincial level, there is a need for a national framework to support and recognise protected areas and community based management plans and regulations. The complexities and confusion of land ownership can lead to conflict between communities.

The traditional system of chiefs is breaking down and this affects local level use of resources and the enforcement of by-laws. In some provinces the local courts are not functioning properly leading to problems with dealing with breaches of customary laws.

Most provinces do not have environmental or sustainable development policies. Often, their budget allocations for environmental planning or natural resource management are low to non-existent. Most are not undertaking any research and monitoring, not carrying out awareness programmes with communities, have limited opportunities for training staff, have poor levels of infrastructure, lack logistical support and rely on NGOs and other civil society partners in the management of natural resources, liaison with communities and in accessing data.

Weak governance and self interest has also lead to poor management in some provincial administrations, resulting in a low priority for sustainable environmental management or planning.

8.2 Opportunities for Addressing Capacity Constraints

The main response from the provincial governments for overcoming constraints to effective environmental management and planning was for more support from the national government in terms of funding, staff (particularly environment and legal officers) and logistical support and resources. There is a need to build the capacity of public officers for improved governance and environmental and economic management. Recruitment and training of staff and the use of overseas volunteers in technical advisory roles and local research students for data collection can help to provide short term relief but also transfer skills and knowledge. The Review of RAMSI, (May 2005), also acknowledged that there is room for improvement in the consultative relationships and cooperation between the central and provincial government and NGOs, recommended consultative mechanisms be established.

Stronger partnerships between national government and NGOs, can enhance awareness raising, research and monitoring and training for provincial staff. Suggestions included establishing advisory committees or networks to ensure better flow of information between central and provincial governments, establishing a coordination mechanism for liaison with communities and villages, using the Isabel UNDP/GEF Community Led Conservation and Resource Management Project as a model for NRM and the Arnavon Marine Conservation Area as a model partnership between NGOs, community and provincial government for protected area management.

Provincial governments also need strengthened Resource Management Ordinances to deal with community based management plans, stronger penalties for breaches of by-laws, assistance with developing sustainable development plans (and implementation), biodiversity policies and communications strategies. A key responsibility for provincial governments is to take more of a leadership role with natural resource management, demonstrate good governance and transparency in their actions, and to be inclusive of communities and other stakeholders (particularly women and youth) in their planning and decision making processes.

8.3 Improving Collaboration between Provincial and National Government

The following suggestions arose from a joint workshop between the Western Province Government, WWF Solomon Islands and the WorldFish Center in July 2006. They form part of the Western Province's strategy document and are possible mechanisms for improving collaboration and interaction between national and provincial governments.

- Establish Provincial Development Teams in each province made up of the heads of provincial departments and relevant SIG departments. The teams will comprise all national and provincial departments engaged in extension, infrastructure, and provision of services. Their tasks will be to prepare coordinated provincial operational plans, on an annual basis, to implement development strategies with national and provincial budget funds.
- Develop a partnership approach with national government in policy making and administration.
- Involve national MPs in provincial planning processes to act as a bridge between national and provincial concerns
- Develop contacts and collaboration with other provinces in social and economic activities.
- Develop a Joint National/Provincial Development strategy which allows for the strengthening of provincial institutions to make a major contribution towards the achievement of government objectives. The strategy focus would be:
 - Re-orientation of the organisation and work structure of national departments;
 - Strengthening of provincial planning and management capacity; and
 - Upgrading of financial accounting system and procedures in provincial departments.

9.0 NGOs and Communities

A questionnaire was sent to key NGOs to obtain information on programme initiatives, priority capacity needs and opportunities, and mechanisms for greater involvement by NGOs and CBOs in supporting the central government to meet MEA requirements. It sought views on ways of improving coordination and collaboration between government agencies, provincial government, NGOs and community. (See Appendix 4 Capacity Constraints and Appendix 5 Opportunities for Addressing Constraints.)

9.1 Capacity Constraints for NGOs

Systemic

- National government should invite NGOs to participate in policy development, planning and strategy development.
- Need better coordination of national forums – currently duplication of groups but none functioning properly (ie CCOSI, SISDAC)
- Limited availability of trainers
- Need better system of exchange of information and reporting mechanism
- Lack of a national framework for biological diversity conservation
- Legal framework needs strengthening – (Environment Act/Wildlife Act, Forestry Bill, NBSAP, need enforcement of COLP)
- Environment Advisory Committee not working
- Lack of standard protocols for establishing MPAs
- Need improved communication systems and procedures.
- Lack of political will (national and provincial government)
- Land tenure issues
- Lack of technical back up for NGOs from government
- Lack of government engagement in NGO activities – strong reliance on NGOs.

Institutional

- Need for strengthening policy level input by NGOs to agency policy
- NGOs need to strengthen own capacity for contributing to national policy and planning
- NGOs need to strengthen relationships and communications with national government
- Limited pool of NGO staff to undertake analysis of national policies, plans and initiatives.
- Need increased capability for data analysis (biological and socio economic analysis)
- Need organisational management & leadership skills, communications, project proposal writing
- Forest Strategy Workshop identified need for sustainable forest management capacity building within community based organisations.
- Need a national environmental protection agency
- SICHE course material to include biodiversity conservation and sustainable use.
- No formal mechanisms for reporting between NGOs & national or provincial governments.
- Need support/information for alternative livelihood development
- Need IT support
- Provincial ordinances need strengthening/review/updating/stronger provisions.
- Cost of research and monitoring

Individual

- NGOs have a shortage of skills in the following areas: environmental policy and planning, land use planning, climate change, data analysis and interpretation, GIS capability, knowledge of government processes, lobbying skills, project proposal writing, scientific report writing, plant pathology and entomology, project budgeting and management.

9.2 Opportunities for Addressing Capacity Constraints for NGOs

The consultation with NGOs identified opportunities for addressing capacity constraints. These included the need for partnerships between NGOs, government and communities to improve the enabling environment for all groups involved in natural resource management or conservation of biological diversity. A key issue which is constraining the work of NGOs is the stalled NBSAP process and lack of regulations for the Environment Act and Wildlife Act. NGOs have taken a strong leadership role by offering to fund a position to initiative the NBSAP and funding towards drafting the regulations. The Natural Resources and Rights Coalition is also taking a strong role in the push for a new Forests Bill and Oxfam is appointing a Legal Rights Officer to work with NRRC. Government agencies such as ECD have the opportunity to capitalise on these offers of external support and take the lead role to undertake the necessary actions.

DSE, the umbrella organisation for NGOs, is offering to take on an information dissemination role and is appointing focal points in all the provinces as well as training trainers and developing a Code of Ethics for its members. NGOs are also working with provincial governments to strengthen their Resource Management Ordinances, and networks such as SILMMA, NRRC, and ECANSI are providing advocacy, training and information sharing opportunities. Regional bodies are a source of support and advice for partnerships between government, communities and NGOs (eg USP provided SILMMA members with GIS training). Establishment of the Environment Advisory Committee would provide better opportunities for stakeholders to have input to management of natural resources, but NGOs are tired of new groups being established as a means of coordination between government and NGOS, but not meeting regularly.

NGOs are calling on national government agencies to be more proactive in initiating involvement of NGOS into national policy and planning processes and there is a call for an Environmental Protection Agency.

9.3 Role of NGOs to Support National Government

NGOs and civil society have an important role in supporting government actions in Solomon Islands. The following section summarises the kind of support that NGOs can provide towards achieving international UNCBD obligations as well as the national environment and sustainable development agenda. (Also refer to Section 9.2 above)

NGOs are generally working at the grassroots level and have good working relationship with rural communities in Solomon Islands on issues of sustainable resource management and biodiversity conservation. This relationship and the skills which the NGOs have and are sharing with resource owners help towards achieving:

- Poverty reduction and sustainable livelihoods for rural communities, including marginalised groups such as women and youth, based on the equitable use and sustainable management of natural resources;
- The protection of the Solomon Islands' globally and economically important biodiversity through sustainable management of natural resources;
- The ability of rural communities to participate in national and provincial decision making processes through a strong and representative civil society;
- Improved capacity for resource management and the development of appropriate livelihood options through collaborative partnerships, shared learning, linkages and better communication for resource managers – including government, NGO, community and commercial sectors.

International NGOs have access to local and expatriate staff skilled in community participatory workshop techniques, biological monitoring, marine resource management, coral reef and fish survey techniques, and socio economic survey techniques. They provide valuable research and monitoring data and information, undertake extensive awareness programmes, and build the capacity of local resource owners to sustainably manage their resources through awareness, information, training in basic ecology and biology, and monitoring techniques. A number of NGOs provide an advocacy role for rural based people. They also have access to international networks of conservation experts who can provide training, support and advice through local programme offices.

Local NGOs have the advantage of usually being community based, operating at grassroots level and working to a locally directed agenda. They are also usually in direct contact with the resource owners and users. They provide a range of capacity building opportunities for community and NGO leaders in organisational and leadership skills, communications, computer literacy, proposal writing, basic GIS and accounting, environmental awareness and education, provide advocacy on legal rights, help encourage eco-timber and forestry production, sustainable livelihoods, marine resource management and monitoring, and outreach services to rural villages and communities.

NGOs could support the national government with policy, strategy and programme development input, national planning and preparation of reports to international COPs and regional forums, research and scientific data collection and information sharing, if invited to do so by government. What is required is a proactive and coordinated approach from government, a willingness to share information, and to cooperate on an agreed platform of clearly articulated goals.

The following is a brief outline of some key NGOs, Community Based Organisations (CBOs) and networks which have a role in supporting the government with its conservation of biological diversity, and the national environmental and sustainable development agenda:

Natural Resources Development Foundation (NRDF)

A local NGO established to support communities in sustainable management of their natural resources. It is funded by the Inter Church Organisation for Development Cooperation. NRDF facilitates training and awareness building and has two key programmes - Sustainable Forest Management (saw milling) and Women's Programmes (honey, sewing, forest maintenance). It carries out social surveys, project monitoring and evaluation and forest regrowth monitoring. NRDF works with local partners in project areas.

Solomon Islands Ecoforestry Programme (SIDT)

SIDT is a local community development NGO, affiliated with Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI) and working in partnership with Greenpeace. The Eco-Forestry Programme is aimed at offering solutions for and training in sustainable forestry management, project management, timber grading and milling, leadership training and reducing land disputes and establishing project committees. It also assists communities to obtain eco-forestry certification as a stepping stone to Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) certification to supply eco-labelled, certified timber. The programme has largely pioneered the "Ecoforestry Management Planning" approach and assists with securing markets through the Village Eco-Timber Enterprise which links producers to customers through the establishment of markets for Solomon Islands timber, mainly in NZ and now expanding into Australia. Partners in the programme include SIDT, Greenpeace, Imported Tropical Timber Group (NZ) and the Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation.

Greenpeace

The Solomon Islands office of Greenpeace carries out advocacy work on environmental issues particularly forestry issues, and Illegal, Unregulated and Unreported (IUU) fishing. It is working in collaboration with SIDT on the eco-forestry project. Greenpeace also works with communities to certify operations to Greenpeace Eco-forestry standards.

Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)

FSPI works with coastal communities on community resource management, mainly marine resources. It has worked with communities, provincial governments and Fisheries Division to establish MPAs at Marau, Guadalcanal Province, Nggela and Langa Langa in Malaita Province. Capacity building and awareness are undertaken through participatory learning actions, workshops and community resource management planning. Good governance is established through developing appropriate community structures. The next area of focus for FSPI in Solomon Islands is sustainable livelihoods, looking at feasibility studies into alternative income generating options. It is also starting awareness training for village development workers on climate change. FSPI has been a strong supporter of the Solomon Islands Locally Managed Marine Area Network (SILMMA) and was a driving force behind establishment of SILMMA.

Development Services Exchange (DSE)

DSE is a national NGO umbrella body which facilitates and coordinates services for NGOs and their partners. Its mission is to strengthen effective NGO coordination and its main activities are information and communication, capacity building, interagency cooperation and networking, governance and peace building. It has established focal points in the provinces through which it will disseminate information and train trainers who in turn will train members of the community.

In 2004, DSE carried out a series of provincial level training needs analysis workshops for leaders in NGOS and churches. Follow up training was provided in response to the needs identified. The aims of the leadership training were:

- To develop individual capacities within NGOs and civil society by supporting capacity building initiatives that address NGO and civil society needs, tailored to a Solomon Islands' context; and
- Encourage stronger networking and coordination between NGO and civil society groups in contribution to the development of Solomon Islands and strengthening workable partnerships.

Live and Learn Environmental Education Solomon Islands

Live and Learn's main role is environmental education awareness, educating Solomon Islands citizens with appropriate knowledge and to help them link and use their knowledge to change practices that enable environment and human sustainability. Its main activities are awareness raising, mobilising community advocacy for environmental change and improvement, management, and training of school teachers on environmental learning materials. Its key programmes are:

- Forestry, Water and Waste Management
- Advocacy
- Peace Education
- Education for Sustainable Development
- Biodiversity Education

Environmental Concerns Action Network of Solomon Islands (ECANSI)

ECANSI is a non-profit local NGO established to promote environmental awareness, action, and foster the conservation and sustainable use of natural resources in Solomon Islands. ECANSI is involved in moral advocacy, national environmental issues, (toxic waste, dolphin exports) environmental programmes, women in fisheries, solid waste management, coastal marine project in joint venture with Fisheries, coral gardening and forest advocacy project. It plays a role in capacity building and awareness raising through advocacy and training workshops, campaigning, rallying support for stakeholders, and networking. Its key area of work currently is the forestry project which is concerned with promoting the passing of a new Forests Bill.

Conservation International (CI)

Conservation International is establishing an office in Honiara and has recently appointed a country manager. In Solomon Islands, CI's main aim is to support species and ecosystem conservation, partner with other NGOs, civil society and government to build capacity to achieve conservation outcomes. It supports the efforts of NGOs such as the Tetepare Descendants' Association through scholarships and the Makira Community Conservation Foundation to help it designate areas of the Baoro Highlands as a conservation area and its sustainable development efforts through the ngali nut projects.

World Wide Fund for Nature (WWF) Solomon Islands

WWF Solomon Islands' goal is to support Solomon Islands peoples to conserve and manage sustainably their natural inheritance for present and future generations. WWF has operated largely in the Western Province in the Solomon Islands since the early 1990s, focused mainly on marine protected area establishment, capacity building of marine resource owners and users, and sustainable livelihoods. Its key focus is the Bismarck Solomon Seas Ecoregion (BSSE). WWF is now developing a forests programme and was the lead organisation in developing the "Strategy for the Future of Solomon Islands Forests". As a result, it attracted funding under the EU Stabex programme for a forestry conservation programme. It has strong community links and access to an international network of expertise in conservation. WWF conducts extensive community awareness programmes through workshops, theatre and radio and conducts capacity building in marine resource monitoring and management (Reefcheck and Seagrass Watch).

Solomon Islands Locally Managed Marine Area Network (SILMMA)

The SILMMA Network was established in 2004. Membership is open to community and NGO representatives involved in establishing and managing community based MPAs. The SILMMA network has established a programme of training, workshops and site visits to help fill the capacity gaps identified by its members.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC)

TNC is based in Honiara and works with partners in environmental conservation and management. Its capacity building and awareness is targeted at traditional leaders and community groups. TNC is involved in a number of conservation projects in the Solomon Islands, in particular the Arnavon Marine Conservation Area and work on marine turtle conservation at Choiseul and Isabel. TNC has worked in partnership with provinces, the national government, local communities and other NGOs. In 2004, TNC organised and carried out the Rapid Marine Assessment of Solomon Islands and recently launched the report from that survey. As a result of this survey, the famous “Coral Triangle” was extended to include Solomon Islands.

Lauru Land Conference of Tribal Community (LLCTC)

LLCTC was established in 1981 as a grassroots ecumenical non-government organisation. Its goal is to serve the entire population of Choiseul Province within Solomon Islands. Although the LLCTC has many areas of activity, one of its highest guiding principles is the fact that land is the life-blood of the people of Lauru and that it is commonly owned by tribal groups. For this reason it is in the interests of the people of Choiseul that they recognise the relationship between the quality of environment and the quality of life for themselves, and for future generations. Towards these goals, LLCTC has been educating and will continue to educate Lauru people through workshops, conferences and community visits on sustained community living supported by natural resources, wisdom and worthy customs of their ancestors. By strengthening and promoting its capacity building and linking rural and urban contextual situations, LLCTC seeks to stand ready to utilise modern communication tools for empowering the majority (rural populace) to become equal partners and owners of the means and the products of environmentally sustainable development. TNC partners with LLCTC on its environment committee.

WorldFish Center

The WorldFish Center is the lead agency in the region for developing low-cost farming methods for high-value coral reef species. Its vision is “Improving livelihoods through sustainable use and management of marine and coral reef fisheries. WorldFish has a proven track record of delivering technologies that have been tested in comprehensive demonstration projects at the village level. Current projects include sponge culture trials and extension; sustainable livelihoods; and beche de mer management. The project titled “Creating Rural Livelihoods in Solomon Islands through Environmentally-Friendly Aquaculture and Trade of Marine Ornamentals” seeks to promote rural employment and income generating opportunities. By doing this, the project strengthens the national development plan to provide employment opportunities in rural areas, and to increase the national capacity to improve the well-being of Solomon Islands people by recognising and developing opportunities to generate income in a sustainable way.

World Vision Solomon Islands (WVSI)

World Vision is an international aid organisation that provides technical assistance and training support for project managers and support for a range of community based projects. Activities in the Solomon Islands include expanding human capability through functional literacy and widening people’s capacities and choices for improving their well-being.

Oxfam

Oxfam SI is a not-for-profit organisation that seeks to address peace and security issues. Its activities aim to be conflict and gender sensitive, and contribute to improved livelihoods at family and village level. It does this by:

- Advocating for appropriate natural resources development activities which build in environmental and social factors into any economic growth activities;
- Building the capacity of civil society organisations, CBOs and mining and logging affected communities to have a say in decision-making at all levels and speak out for their rights when development activities threaten their livelihoods.
- Supporting the National Disaster Management Office with its Disaster Management Programme and responding to emergencies and disasters, and supporting the National Risk Management Programme for communities to reduce impacts of natural disasters.

Oxfam has programmes in Disaster Management, Advocacy and Research and HIV/AIDS. It supports four NGOs and does some direct work with community based organisations besides the emergency relief programs. It carries out mining and forestry awareness raising for affected or to be affected communities to ensure that they are aware of their rights and access to assistance in relevant areas. Through supporting partners in forestry legal awareness, including ECANSI and Natural Resources and Rights Coalition (NRRC) as well as an eco-forestry program, Oxfam provides legal advisory assistance to communities so that they can hold companies and decision-makers at village, provincial and national level to accountability and transparency as well as provide an alternative to destructive logging through sustainable harvesting of forests.

Tetepare Descendants' Association (TDA)

TDA is association of more than 2000 descendants of Tetepare Island. It was established to protect and manage the island's natural and cultural resources. TDA has established a field station, eco lodge and a marine protected area which includes nesting beaches for leatherback turtles. TDA provides outreach support for Rendova communities which also protect leatherback turtle nesting beaches. It offers scholarships to members and support for sustainable livelihoods through ecotourism and natural resource management and monitoring activities on the island.

Tiola Conservation Foundation (TCF)

TCF is a 'home grown NGO' that is currently working in partnership with the Roviana & Vonavona Resource Management and Development Programme (RVRMDP) under the University of California Santa Barbara project. The aim is to safeguard the interests of the Roviana and Vonavona Lagoon communities in marine conservation and sustainable rural development. TCF is independent and its functions are parallel to the RVRMDP program. The RVRMDP is building capacity to hand over all its roles and responsibilities to TCF.

Makira Community Conservation Foundation (MCCF)

MCCF aims to establish a conservation area at Baoro Central Highlands in Makira. The objective is to conserve the natural resources of Makira Island for the benefit of local communities through village level enterprises such as ngali nut processing and ecotourism. MCCF works closely with and, is supported by Conservation International.

Kastom Gaden Association (KGA)

KGA started in 1995 under the Australian NGO - Appropriate Technology for Community and Environment (APACE). In 2001, KGA became a charitable trust focused on food security issues and providing training in organic farming, integrated pest management, seed saving and now other projects such as sustainable food processing for isolated areas. Activities include bulking (grow out and distribution) of local planting materials, testing of local seeds and distribution through planting materials and farmers networks. KGA works in partnership with SPC and University of Queensland for storage and cleaning of Solomon Islands plant materials.

KGA provides training in agricultural activities and is involved in improving village level production of poultry and working in partnership with DAL on trialling feed for chickens. Farmer Field Schools, privately owned by families, act as provincial demonstration and training centres. KGA is also attached to rural training centres and provides live-in training at its farm in Honiara. It produces learning materials and through the Improved Plant Production for Solomon Islands ACIAR project, KGA is looking at integrated pest management and curriculum development on pests of Solomon Islands as well as safe handling of pesticides. KGA is involved with the Melanesian Farmer First Network, operates a “Green Waste Recycling” project in Honiara and is developing a resource centre which will include a library, conference room and media production area. KGA has a key role in collection of traditional knowledge on farming systems and plants, research, training, capacity building, awareness, seed bank collection and project implementation.

Natural Resources and Rights Coalition (NRRC)

NRRC is an extension of the 2004 Forestry Bill Coalition of NGOs. Oxfam has taken an interim coordinating role since the group started in November 2005. A secretariat is being established and the coordination role will be taken on by a Legal Officer. Membership includes more than 40 CSOs, CBOs and independent representatives. Provincial membership covers Malaita, Guadalcanal, Makira, Choiseul, Western, and Temotu Provinces. Information is shared via email networks, messages and radio interviews on SIBC.

9.4 Community Capacity Constraints

There is widespread agreement that community level management of natural resources is critical to the successful protection and sustainable use of biological diversity. Communities must be empowered with information for decision making on the use of their resources, and be assisted to develop capacity to monitor and manage their resources using traditional knowledge and contemporary conservation measures. They must also be included in national decision making processes. Communities and resource owners need support for identifying alternative sustainable livelihoods, and need improved infrastructure such as transport networks, markets, a tax and financial regime which offers incentives to sustainable resource use, and an equitable trade environment.

Communities rely on partnerships and collaborative effort from national and provincial governments, NGOs, donors, advocacy networks, academics and research institutions to develop the skills, acquire the information and knowledge and develop the capacity to manage their own resources in a sustainable way. This includes combining traditional knowledge and management practices with contemporary natural resource management practices in a setting of community ownership and stewardship.

In consultation with NGOs who work at grassroots level on a range of conservation, environment and poverty reduction activities, the following list of community constraints, issues and needs was identified (not prioritised in any order):

- Information & environmental awareness that is easy to access & presented in a format & through an avenue that is understandable
- Simple ways of monitoring resources at the community level
- Improved leadership and management (lack of respect for leaders in the community)
- Basic accounting & bookkeeping; education on complex development challenges; training on reforestation & forest restoration.
- Recognition and inclusion in rebuilding the nation
- Access to funding
- Alternative livelihoods (options, information and resources and support) & development initiatives – schools, clinics etc
- Support or skills to develop forest and marine management plans
- Tools/skills/intuition/training to be creative and manage resources wisely
- Support and backup from provincial level ordinances and forest/fisheries officers
- Access to information on regulations
- Access to enforcement agencies to back up decisions by communities
- Access to communications with NGOs and government in order to voice concerns
- Access to data on NRM
- Communities need to change their attitudes to accept conservation for conservation sake and for sustaining their own livelihood – not for the benefit of incentives
- Need improved community cohesion
- Access to EIA services for impacts of logging on terrestrial and marine areas
- Be organised at community level to overcome land tenure issues which impact on NRM
- Need business skills for ecoforestry
- Project cycle management and evaluation skills
- Need to balance environment, economics and social issues and impacts.
- Marine tenure system – open access can lead to conflict between users/managers
- Assistance to develop community management plans and progress plans through the provincial system.
- Poor knowledge of pesticides, their use and safe handling.

10.0 Environment and Conservation Division – Ability to Fulfil its Roles and Responsibilities

This section analyses the ability of the Environment and Conservation Division to fulfil its role and responsibilities as specified in the *Environment Act 1998* and *Wildlife Protection and Management Act 1998*. The analysis draws on interviews and consultation, the Human Resource Development Assessment and other reports including the WWF Legal Gap Analysis and the Asian Development Bank Country Environmental Assessment. Basically, ECD is unable to fulfil its role. The following is a summary of the key constraints:

- **Legislative framework not able to be implemented** - Environment Act and Wildlife Act need regulations so that the Acts can be implemented.
- **Lack of staff capacity** - The department has only 2 staff. It has started the recruitment programme to employ an additional 13 staff. It plans to deploy three staff to the Provinces.
- **Lack of financial resources** – the budget allocation for the entire Department of Forestry, Environment and Conservation in 2007 is expected to be \$4 million SBD.
- **Lack of suitable office accommodation and facilities.** Office space and the facilities for staff are poor. There are insufficient phones, power supply is irregular, and the building is run down and poorly maintained. The current location is difficult to access.
- **Lack of equipment** – Limited access to computers, no GIS facilities or software, limited data base systems, no vehicles for staff to use for monitoring, surveillance and community awareness.
- **Lack of Human Resource Development and Management systems** –there is a need for improved systems, processes, staff development and management.
- **Centralised Operations** - The ECD is Honiara focused with no staff in the provinces.
- **EIA and development/pollution controls** – not being implemented.
- **Lack of coordination with government/NGO/community** – There is a need for better collaboration with other key government agencies and with NGOs and the community. The SISDAC and Environment Advisory Committee are not functioning.
- **Competing International and National Priorities** – due to the small staff contingent, there is an ongoing competition for time and attention between international obligations and addressing the national environmental agenda.

Human Resource Development Assessment of ECD

In 2004, SPREP initiated a Human Development Review of the former Department of Environment and Conservation in light of the passing of the *Environment Act 1998* and the *Wildlife Protection and Management Act 1998*. The review was funded by AusAID and carried out by a representative from the Australian Volunteer International Programme.

The aim was to review the organisation's capacity to effectively implement the new Acts. The review provided recommendations on staffing and organisational structure, and human resource development improvements. The final report provided a comprehensive analysis of the organisation *at the time* and the summary table from the report is included (with minor edits) in this thematic assessment. However, it must be noted that at the time of the review there were (3) staff in the Environment and Conservation Division. Now there are only two and there is a new acting director. In addition, DEC has been involved with the Department of Forestry, Environment and Conservation to develop a three year corporate plan. It has also developed its own work plan for 2007 which includes addressing some of the issues outlined below such as developing regulations for the Environment Act, developing

environmental policy, completing the NBSAP and collecting data for a State of the Environment Report.

Table 10 summarises the findings of the HRD assessment. (See Appendix 6 for a Summary Analysis of ECD Organisational Requirements; and Appendix 7 for a Summary of ECD Training Needs).

Table 10: ECD – Ability to Fulfil Roles and Responsibilities under the Environment Act 1998.

Environment Act	Systemic	Institutional	Individual
Interagency Coordination	Environmental responsibilities not well defined between agencies. Few agencies have determined their performance targets for environment or are held accountable for such targets.		
Organisational structure		Needs review	
Environmental Regulations		No regulations	
Environment Advisory Committee		No EAC	
Director's Position		Frequent absence of the Director at International Conferences limits his capacity to focus on operational matters. Limited environmental policy developed. No previous state of environment report made. Limited baseline data on state of environment available. No established systems or forums for co-ordination of environmental activities	
HR Management processes	Staff living the legacy of four years of civil strife and deteriorating conditions of service	Lack of leadership Limited motivational factors within the system. No processes of work planning or accountability.	Information sharing & co-ordination between staff is poor Position descriptions poorly defined. Limited on the job coaching, training, or career planning. Few links between training opportunities, financial compensation & work performance or attendance.
HR Development		Nil - Some of these processes will be either in place or planned on completion of this project. Others will be addressed through an HRD Manual.	
Administration	Treasury responsible for collection & receipting of all monies from permits. No financial reporting made to ECD.	Limited availability to stores, including stationery. No asset registry available. Limited office equipment.	
Environmental Economics		Environmental initiatives constrained by lack of funding. No conscious links between income generated through the use of natural & physical resources & funds required to ensure sustainability ie environmental research/ education/ community development activities.	
Data Management		Nil	Support required to establish data base(s) & data analysis in the

		No records maintained. No data analysis to date.	following areas: EIA Statements & environmental reports; import & export licenses; stop notices & pollution abatement notices; Registration of scientific organisations; complaints; HRD. Training is required in data management & analysis.
Development control, EIA, Review & Monitoring		Lack of an Environmental Inspector No Regulations to prescribe systems. No environmental monitoring/ surveillance activity. Staffing numbers inadequate for the role. All staff are concentrated in Honiara.	Training required in systems. Additional staffing required as Environmental Inspectors
Complaints Management		Nil - No complaints data-base No staff, vehicle available to investigate and follow up on complaints Need funding to manage environmental projects in response to those complaints.	Staff training in data base management.
Environmental Planning		No environmental plan in existence. No GIS equipment. No capacity to complete plan independently.	
Development & Monitoring standards to promote SD		Limited research completed. Standards are not available. Limited monitoring of standards. Limited co-operation with other govt depts.	
Management of World Heritage properties		None declared (<i>not correct – East Rennell declared World Heritage</i>)	
Pollution Control		No work on waste/pollution control; Staffing numbers inadequate for role. No systems or monitoring equipment	Training required. Community and government education programme required
Conservation of BD & Ecological integrity		No NBSAP No project co-ordinator	
Monitoring & controlling import & export of all fauna & flora		No Regulations. Limited funding for implementation. Limited research into threatened species. No previous data on permits maintained. No data base	Position descriptions do not reflect new responsibilities; Training required in systems & protocols. Co-ordination systems required with Customs & Police. Training required in data base management.
Community development & participation		Limited routine and/or strategic involvement of NGOs/ interest groups in developing environmental policy & strategy. Lack of staff & other resources.	Continued training required to establish a network of trained community facilitators in all provinces
Library & Resources		Library currently not functional	
Community Education & Awareness		No designated staff person responsible for co-ordination or developing education strategy or materials. Limited educational resources available. Limited skills in community education & awareness	Individual officers expected to include community education within their duties. This does not routinely happen. Wantok system & tribal affiliations
Provincial government & outer islands		An organisational review is required to determine the structure & staffing required to enable environmental management	

(Information sourced from HRD assessment with consultant's summarisation)

The HRD assessment made numerous recommendations including that:

- a) Internationally driven, project based work be clearly delineated from general operations, monitoring and surveillance work. This would promote a better balance between local expectations and international responsibilities. This can be done through:
 - The establishment of an Operations Team to focus on local environmental issues, and on monitoring, control and surveillance
 - Using a position of Principal Environment Officer to establish Project Co-ordination and ensure reporting standards for internationally funded projects.

- b) Attracting technical assistance for:
 - The development of policy to provide direction to Environment Officers in:
 - Development Control, EIA, Review and Monitoring
 - Pollution Control
 - Wildlife Protection and Conservation.
 - The development of an Integrated Waste Management Plan
 - Information Management
 - Environmental Economics to provide a more accurate value of the environment to individuals and communities, giving consideration to health, aesthetic, social, cultural, and spiritual needs and in terms of the loss of ecosystems and biodiversity.
 - Consideration of the establishment of an Environmental Protection Authority, to be independent of the influence of other organisations, particularly those based on making commercial use of the environment.
 - The inclusion of a Council for Sustainable Development to promote co-ordination with other agencies.

The assessment identified the need for staff training, but cautioned that staff expertise needs to be supported by financial resources, effective leadership, good management and political will. It must be tied to financial resources (eg material and equipment for community education; equipment for monitoring pollution; a vehicle to conduct field trips).

Key training priorities from the HRD analysis emphasised two main areas:

- Capacity building processes, including basic management processes, planning and policy development and information management. It is believed that this is required first in order to make best use of any subsequent specialised environmental training.
- Training to support the development of an Operations Team to conduct monitoring and surveillance of development and pollution, and to monitor the export of wildlife.

The assessment recommended “on- the- job training” and coaching by technical advisors attached to ECD as opposed to sending staff away for training which exacerbates the staff shortage situation. Future consideration should be given to scholarships, particularly when (if) the operations team is established and running effectively. There is a need to attract school leavers to environmental sciences through raising the profile of ECD and through scholarships.

Given the important role ECD has in guiding the delivery of international commitments under the UNCBD, and for driving the national environment agenda, attention must be focussed on ensuring it has the staff, funding, resources and political support it needs to do the job effectively.

The current Acting Director acknowledges that the HRD assessment is still valid and that recommendations such as the establishment of an environmental protection agency will be considered in the longer term.

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