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Pacific Education for Sustainable Development Framework

Endorsed by the Pacific Ministers of Education
27 September 2006, Nadi FIJI

PURPOSE

This paper presents a Pacific developed and driven Framework as a mechanism to assist in the implementation of the Pacific Plan and the basis for a regional approach to coordinating actions to achieve its vision of a prosperous region where “all people can lead free and worthwhile lives.” It further recognises the commitment made by Pacific countries in adopting the UN Decade of Education for Sustainable Development. The Framework can be adapted for national policy as well as regional strategy documents. The Framework can also be used by both national and regional organisations to identify priority initiatives for implementation in Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) within the Pacific.

INTRODUCTION

This paper briefly covers the background to the initiative, presents the Framework vision, goal and scope, and describes the three priority areas for ESD actions. The implementation of the Framework is discussed and a monitoring matrix provided. An outline of the proposed next steps is at the end of the paper. A background paper that presents more detail on ESD in the Pacific is also available.

The United Nations adopted 2005-2014 as the decade to recognise education and learning as the key to accelerate changes to a more sustainable way of life. The Education for Sustainable Development conceptual basis, socio-economic implications, and environmental and cultural connections make it an enterprise which potentially touches on every aspect of life.

The overall goal of ESD is to integrate the values inherent in sustainable development into all aspects of learning to encourage changes in behaviour that allow for a more sustainable and just society for all. The ESD approach requires this basic philosophy to be adapted to suit local conditions and culture. This Framework is the first step in a Pacific response to ESD, providing an umbrella for coordinated and collaborative action to achieve the region’s vision to integrate and mutually reinforce the three pillars of economic development, social development and environmental conservation (Pacific Plan:14). Regional and national level adoption and incorporation into policy and strategic documents will provide the next step towards an appropriate cultural context for regional, national and local actions. The flexible nature of the Framework enables each country to adjust the Framework and priorities for ESD implementation to suit national and needs.

Pacific Island countries joined their global counterparts in pledging support to ESD in the Mauritius Strategy for the Further Implementation of the Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States (s72e, January 2005). This meeting focused on important issues of island development including sustainable environments, education and culture and agreed a strategy for action for addressing these.

In line with the eight strategic objectives for sustainable development endorsed within the Pacific Plan, ESD provides a critical mechanism for achieving long term change to improve environmental sustainability, health, education and training, gender equality, youth involvement and the recognition and protection of cultural values, identities and traditional knowledge. It will also complement the realisation of universal and equitable educational participation and achievement outlined in the Forum Basic Education Action Plan.

This Framework was prepared by a regional ESD Working Group comprised of representatives of community, government, regional, international and private

organisations from across the Pacific at the request of UNESCO National Commissions¹ for a regional, collaborative and interlinked approach that can be used throughout the Pacific. Consultation has occurred with a variety of stakeholders from regional organisations, community organisations, governments, educators and the private sector. The Framework sets a course of coordinated action for ESD until 2014. However a five year review of the Framework will refine priority areas and objectives based on research findings to guide actions beyond this and regular reporting and adjustment will be conducted on an on-going basis to ensure that the Framework is consistent with regional and national needs.

PACIFIC ESD FRAMEWORK

This framework puts the “Think global, act local” adage into practice by taking the international vision and a specific goal for the Pacific, and translating these into focussed priority areas and objectives for action at local, national and regional levels appropriate to the Pacific. The development of local ownership respecting local context and culture is an important aspect to implementation of ESD at all levels.

VISION

The international implementation scheme for the Decade states its vision as:

A world where everyone has the opportunity to benefit from education and learn the values, behaviour and lifestyle required for a sustainable future and for positive societal transformation

GOAL FOR THE PACIFIC

To empower Pacific peoples through all forms of locally relevant and culturally appropriate education and learning to make decisions and take actions to meet current and future social, cultural, environmental and economic needs and aspirations.

PRINCIPLES

There are a number of important approaches to consider and use when working towards the priority objectives. These implementation principles are to:

- use participatory, people-based approaches
- foster partnership and collaboration (e.g building on Pacific WSSD type II partnership initiative)
- incorporate appropriate cultural and intergenerational elements
- use appropriate mix of regional, national and local approaches
- ensure that within the mix of ESD activities the needs of remote, rural and outer islands areas are met
- build on existing initiatives
- work for the long term, achieving sustainability and building social capital
- use information and communication technologies effectively

There are already many projects aligned with ESD and agencies working in this area. This Framework is not intended to add a new layer of effort on the Pacific community, rather to focus effort and form partnerships and collaboration among the diverse stakeholders to deliver improved outcomes for achieving a sustainable future.

¹ The UNESCO National Commissions are national cooperating bodies set up by the Member States for the purpose of associating their governmental and non-governmental bodies with the work of the Organization.

The priority areas and initiatives should be a focus for initial action but it is intended for major projects such as curriculum review to be phased into existing national timetables for reviews rather than be undertaken as separate exercises.

SCOPE OF THE FRAMEWORK

The sustainable development concept is one of “development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. This evolving concept is a vision of development that encompasses people, society, animal and plant species and natural resources, and that integrates concerns such as the fight against poverty, gender equity, human rights, education for all, health, peace and human security, and intercultural dialogue. It has environmental, social and economic domains operating in many cultural contexts. Education is critical for promoting sustainable societies and improving our capacity to address environment and development issues.

The idea behind the Framework is to provide a whole-Pacific response and approach to Education for Sustainable Development and into the future. Realistically the countries of the Pacific have many different characteristics and responsibilities, as do the agencies that work here. Some islands are part of much larger countries such as France and the USA. International, regional and NGO agencies operate within their own mandates and areas of expertise. The 16 Pacific Forum countries within this area are at different stages in addressing ESD.

The Framework is intended to take a strategic, big picture view of actions required and complement other regional and international initiatives, particularly the Pacific Plan, the Millennium Development Goals, the Forum Basic Education Action Plan, Education for All, the UN Decade for Literacy and the many regional initiatives developed to progress these such as the SPREP Education and Communication for a Sustainable Pacific.²

This Framework is therefore intended to provide a basis for both regional and national responses by the countries in the Pacific but is not limited to them. The Framework can be adopted at the national level by governments through incorporation into national policy and planning documents (such as the national sustainable development strategies and education policy). The priority areas can be used to focus regional, national and local responses to ESD. As more information is gathered on country specific needs to promote ESD these policies and programs of action can be reviewed and more tightly focused on country needs.

All countries and agencies have an interest and expertise in elements of education for sustainable development. This Framework is intended to focus effort into a few priority areas and be the starting point for collaboration and partnerships essential to the changes needed for a sustainable future.

FRAMEWORK PRIORITY AREAS

To give the broad vision, goals and philosophy some substance **three** priority areas for action have been developed based on what are considered as the key issues facing the Pacific. For each priority area, objectives have been identified to further enhance the focus on that area. Research and monitoring initiatives are integral within each priority area, as is the importance of developing partnerships within and between ESD collaborators.

² A comprehensive list of existing Pacific plans and strategies relevant to ESD is provided in Annex I.
Pacific Education for Sustainable Development Framework 23 September 2006

PRIORITY AREA – FORMAL EDUCATION AND TRAINING

Structured learning initiatives for improved knowledge and understanding to support implementation of sustainable practices

Formal education and training; at primary, secondary, tertiary and vocational levels as well as through traditional learning practices influences much of our way of thinking and, in turn, our attitudes and behaviour. Formal education is all structured learning which includes early childhood education, primary and secondary schools, TVET (technical and vocational education and training) and tertiary institutions usually leading to accreditation of some form. It is therefore an important transformative tool.

Rigorous teaching schedules, exam-based programmes, donor policies, parental desires and the way we tend to think about education all play a role in how education systems are shaped and their ability to be transformative. If formal education is to be able to play a prominent role in improving sustainability in the Pacific, the systems and structures will need to be strengthened and educational content reoriented by “rethinking” of education and its role and purpose³ to provide a stronger focus on the future needs of our children.

The objectives identified under this priority area build on existing education initiatives, such as the Pacific Forum Basic Education Action Plan, achieving Millennium Development Goal 2, implementing PRIDE and other local and regional efforts. The key delivery agents for these objectives would be national governments, Pacific Island researchers both at academic and operational levels, and education institutions supported by a wide range of other agencies with expertise in all aspects of sustainable development from health to the environment.

Objectives:

- 1 Support countries with implementing the Forum Basic Education Action Plan and other regional, national and international initiatives to improve the quality and deliver of basic education in the Pacific
- 2 Promote quality education in all member countries through:
 - 2.1 Development of education policies and strategies that recognise the critical role of learning in progress towards achieving sustainable development;
 - 2.2 Research and development of innovative models and resources that support ESD in Pacific contexts – schools, teacher training, technical and vocational education, field and extension educators, university, including cultural and traditional community values and associated local indigenous knowledge;
 - 2.3 Inclusion of learning outcomes that focus on sustainability content and learning activities in the curriculum at all levels;
 - 2.4 Development of strategies to assess student understanding of sustainability and sustainable living as part of core curriculum;
 - 2.5 Building teacher capacity to incorporate sustainable development topics into their teaching programmes using a practical and relevant approach; and

³ See Tree of Opportunity: Rethinking Pacific Education, USP 2001
Pacific Education for Sustainable Development Framework

- 2.6 Development and identification of appropriate ESD resources to support this priority area using appropriate information and communication technology tools.

PRIORITY AREA – COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

Community-based activities for improving people's knowledge, understanding and skills to implement and promote sustainability

All sections of the community have roles to play in ESD. These include the private sector, non-governmental organizations, civil society and community groups (women, youth, church, etc). People can only participate actively and effectively when they are equipped with the necessary knowledge, understanding, skills, perspectives, value systems and confidence to do so.

Although there are many training and awareness activities being implemented across the region, there is no clear picture of what these activities are, how successful they have been or where there are gaps that need to be filled.

A wide range of delivery agents are involved in the effort to achieve this non-formal education priority area and its objectives, including media, TVET, traditional leaders, sports groups, NGOs, church elders, business, Pacific Island researchers, regional agencies and national governments.

Objectives

- 1 Increase understanding of the meaning of ESD in the local, Pacific-wide and global contexts, taking into account the cultural diversities of the different countries
- 2 Develop community participation skills for both government officials and key community members to effectively engage in policy development and decision-making
- 3 Increase awareness of sustainable development among community leaders and influential groups and develop their knowledge and skills in ESD through training and participation in ESD activities to act as champions to undertake further ESD activities
(e.g, Influential community leaders such as media; traditional leaders; church leaders; women, youth and NGO groups, regional organisations, the policy community – all those that develop and decide policies)
- 4 Prepare communications resources that clearly articulate sustainability issues and their importance to the Pacific (i.e. what makes it necessary news and important to know)
- 5 Research and highlight good practical approaches to sustainable practices in businesses, communities and with individuals, including traditional practices and other areas related to lifestyles and livelihoods
- 6 Develop skills to enable sustainable development projects that strengthen existing, and promote new, long term revenue generating opportunities in communities
- 7 Identify other ESD mechanisms to engage the business sector in sustainable development activities

PRIORITY AREA – POLICY AND INNOVATION

Policy development and innovative models and approaches to implement ESD

Sustainable development and ESD will be more effective if embedded in the structures and policies at national levels of government and regional forums so that strategies and implementation of initiatives flow from these. At national and regional levels policy reform could enable more meaningful, sustainable development oriented learning and awareness programmes to be conducted through a wide range of government portfolios at all levels of society.

The effectiveness of any ESD initiative in the region will depend on the quality of the partnerships that are formed among stakeholders. Partners will need to work together, recognizing their differences while acknowledging they are working towards a common goal and by the development of new approaches and pathways to enable effective collaboration.

Many national and most regional development strategies include some elements of education and awareness activities for achieving their goals and objectives. In practice, however, education has not been used to its full potential. In many cases, it tends to be relegated to classrooms and the formal education arena where it does not fulfil its potential to maximise impact in terms of behaviour change.

The key delivery agents for this priority will be national governments, regional agencies, and Pacific Island researchers supported by all other stakeholders.

Objectives

- 1 Evaluate current ESD initiatives and their contributions to achieving sustainable outcomes for the Pacific thus establishing baseline information and support for policy development
- 2 Work with national governments to ensure appropriate national level policies and plans are in place to implement ESD across governments through an intersectoral approach so that the role of learning in achieving sustainable development and the role of sustainable development in education systems is clear and reinforced
- 3 Develop new, and foster existing, partnerships and models that support ESD
- 4 Research and highlight ESD examples of private-public partnerships
- 5 Collaboration with Australia, New Zealand and others who have identified similar priorities for ESD, e.g, teacher capacity building, educational resources, evaluation and research, and promote understanding and collaboration

Annex II presents some example activities and relates them to the target areas and objectives.

IMPLEMENTATION

The main roles envisaged for different stakeholders are:

- National governments – adopt the Pacific ESD Framework formally, incorporate it into national planning documents and identify ESD initiatives for implementation at the country level.
- Regional/international agencies – commit to the Pacific ESD Framework, identify priority areas in respective work programmes and use as a focus for ESD programmes and collaboration
- NGOs and community groups – commit to the Pacific ESD Framework, identify priority areas and use as a focus for ESD action programmes and collaboration
- Business sector and media – focus on the community-based activity priority area starting with own industry awareness raising, and use knowledge in wider communications with public
- All stakeholders – participate in projects, form partnerships and assist monitoring of the Framework

Overall coordination of the Framework will need to be developed and may include a regional coordinator and ESD advisory group to promote ESD and monitor progress. Capacity development to enable all stakeholders to have the skills and to participate in implementation may need to be incorporated into implementation activities.

Partner in principle mechanism

Regional programmes, organisations and development partners can, through an exchange of letters, agree with/adopt the Framework as ‘partners-in-principle’, the first step in greater regional collaboration. Detailed discussion and development of further responses and projects for ESD would then follow.

Review

The priority areas represent the initial analysis of the ESD activities that should be addressed. The Framework will be reviewed in five years to determine if these are still the appropriate priorities. The review will be based on monitoring and research gathered during implementation.

MEASURING PROGRESS

A monitoring and evaluation component is essential for an action oriented Framework. The monitoring focuses on indicators that will assist us to understand how much progress is being made in implementing this Framework and does not include measures of progress for implementing ESD and determining how effective this is in achieving transformative change. As implementation plans are developed for ESD, monitoring components to measure their success and the effectiveness of ESD investment in improving quality of life in the Pacific will also be developed.

Specific indicators relating to the outcomes sought through this Framework are outlined below:

PACIFIC ESD FRAMEWORK MONITORING MATRIX

To empower Pacific peoples through all forms of locally relevant and culturally appropriate education and learning to make decisions and take actions to meet current and future social, cultural, environmental and economic needs and aspirations.

Area	Desired Outcome	Indicator of Progress
Pacific ESD Framework	Acceptance and adoption by all Pacific countries and agencies ESD Framework reviewed and a forward plan developed	Critical mass of countries actively adopt Framework in time for project implementation in 2008 measured through; - ACCU/PP funding requests made. - Bi-annual country progress report by UNESCO Number of countries/agencies that contribute to bi-annual report First regional ESD Framework Implementation Report covering 2007-2008 completed by March 2009 ESD Framework reviewed 2011
Priority Area: Formal Education & Training	ESD contributes to FBEAP and EFA Pacific educators have ability to and do include sustainability issues in their work	ESD contribution evident in MDG/EFA reporting All levels of national curricula include ESD elements by 2014 Assessment of student learning of SD units in the curriculum occurs by 2014 ESD part of core teacher training at all levels by 2014 ESD skills building programme for trainers working in informal and technical education in place by 2014
Priority Area: Community-based education	ESD better understood in Pacific context and cultural terms Active participation in policy and decision-making Increased awareness of SD in the Pacific community Media well informed to report sustainable development issues Business groups engaged in sustainable development activity	Systematic research in 3 different countries using appropriate methodologies undertaken by 2011 Mapping of community-based education programmes in the Pacific Courses on community participation, and, participatory techniques of policy development available in 10 countries by 2014 Influential leader groups (including government officials) ESD training undertaken in all countries by 2014 and community champions identified Articles that clearly enunciate why SD matters to the Pacific appear in media Number of sustainable business projects that develop revenue generating skills underway

Area	Desired Outcome	Indicator of Progress
Priority Area: Policy development and innovation	Good understanding and data collected of factors necessary for successful ESD policy in the Pacific	Baseline data available by 2008 that identifies best practice, and gaps and challenges for ESD
	Innovative ESD programme models available	Research into effective ESD underway by 2011
	Improved communication between countries and agencies for data collection	Pacific ESD methodologies and resource materials available by 2014
	National policies recognise the key role of learning in achieving sustainable development	ESD programmes aimed and government and community leaders developed
	Partnerships that support ESD flourish	Empirical and anecdotal evidence of new or strengthened project collaboration between agencies
		The key role of learning in SD acknowledged in policies in 10 countries by 2014
		'Partner-in-principle' understanding achieved with all relevant CROP agencies and 10 NGOs/community groups by 2007 and two business or media ESD partnerships developed by 2011

This may also contribute to reporting on achievements for other international, regional and national level initiatives including the Forum Basic Education Action Plan, Education for All, the Millennium Development Goals, the Johannesburg Sustainable Development Plan of Implementation, and the Mauritius Strategy for Small Island Developing States.

WHERE TO FROM HERE?

The following shows the next steps in the process to progress this regional Pacific ESD Framework initiative:

1. Regional workshop meeting to finalise the Framework and develop specific initiatives for action – Nadi, September 2006.
2. Forum Education Ministers meeting – Nadi, September 2006. Seek endorsement of Framework and priority projects.
3. Endorsement of the Framework by CROP agencies, NGOs, community and church groups, business etc.
4. National level consultations, adoption and identification of programs of action to implement ESD in countries.
5. 2007 – finalise projects, seek partners, collaborations, and funding. Following the outcomes of the Ministers meeting, consultations will continue at the regional and national levels, including the development and negotiation of funding proposals, both within partner organisations' budgets and with external donors.
6. 2007 onwards new projects implemented.
8. 2009 First bi-annual report on the Pacific ESD Framework.
9. 2011 Pacific ESD Framework reviewed, target areas and objectives refined.

ANNEX I:

RELEVANT PACIFIC STRATEGIES AND PLANS

The Pacific Plan
Forum Basic Education Action Plan
Pacific Youth Strategy 2005
Pacific WSSD Type II Partnership Initiative on Education (2002)
Education and Communication for a Sustainable Pacific 2006 (SPREP)
Regional Framework for the Protection of Traditional Knowledge and Expressions of Culture
Pacific Platform on the Advancement of Women and Gender Equality
SPC Land Resources Division Strategic Plan 2006-2008
Action Strategy for Nature Conservation
Pacific Islands Framework for Action on Climate Change 2006-2015
SPC Oceanic Fisheries Programme 2006-2008 Strategic Plan
SPC Coastal Fisheries Programme 2006-2008 Strategic Plan
Pacific Ocean Pollution Prevention Programme – PACPLAN
Solid Waste Action Plan
Solid Waste Management Strategy for the Pacific Region
International Coral Reef Initiative (ICRI) Pacific Region Strategy
Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management – A Framework for Action 2005-2015
Mauritius Strategy of Implementation
Barbados Programme of Action for the Sustainable Development of SIDS
Forum Fisheries Agency Strategic Plan 2005-2020
The Regional Tourism Strategy for the South and Central Pacific

ANNEX II:

SOME EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES BY PRIORITY AREA

PRIORITY AREA – FORMAL EDUCATION & TRAINING

Structured learning initiatives for improved knowledge and understanding to support implementation of sustainable practices

EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- Mainstreaming of ESD into tertiary education programs across courses in many faculties at the University of the South Pacific (1)
- Educator capacity building for teachers, trainers and others involved providing formal, informal and non-formal education and building skills (crosses all three priority areas) (2)
- The PRIDE (Pacific Regional Initiative for the Delivery of basic Education) initiative working to strengthen the capacity of Pacific Ministries of Education to plan and deliver quality basic education (1)

PRIORITY AREA – COMMUNITY-BASED EDUCATION

Community-based activities for improving people's knowledge, understanding and skills to implement and promote sustainability

EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- Live & Learn's Rivercare programme which recognises the role of young people in managing future environmental issues by promoting action-based and discovery learning by students, teachers and communities (1)
- Partnership of schools, community and the private sector to develop programs to support youth through the transition process following leaving formal education to increase retention of skilled Pacific Islanders, address youth unemployment and build an employment base (2)
- UNICEF's Pacific Lifeskills Programme (1)

PRIORITY AREA – POLICY DEVELOPMENT & INNOVATION

Policy development and innovative approaches and models to implement ESD

EXAMPLE ACTIVITIES

- SPREP's promotion of reusable cloth shopping bags through local retail outlets to reduce the use of plastic bags to assist in sea turtle conservation (1)
- FSPI's Pacific Governance Programme to address critical governance issues facing Pacific communities through promoting participation of civil society, transparency, accountability and the rule of law using consensus oriented, inclusive and responsive methodologies (1)
- Mapping of TVET providers in the Pacific and their resources, courses and capabilities (1)

(1) These programmes are already being implemented in the region

(2) The ESD Workshop in Nadi on 21-22 September 2006 identified these as important projects that should be further investigated and developed

ANNEX III:

This is for presentation purposes only. Annex 2 will be completed and added to the framework only after each listed country/organisation has agreed to this.

List of Participating Countries and Organisations

Participating Countries

Cook Islands	Federated States of Micronesia
Fiji	Kiribati
Marshall Islands	Nauru
Niue	Palau
Papua New Guinea	Samoa
Solomon Islands	Tokelau
Tonga	Tuvalu
Vanuatu	

Participating Organisations (examples only)

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat (PIFS)
Pacific Association for Technical Vocational Education and Training (PATVET)
Secretariat for the Pacific Community (SPC)
Secretariat for the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP)
South Pacific Applied Geoscience Commission (SOPAC)
South Pacific Board of Educational Assessment (SPBEA)
University of the South Pacific (USP)
Pacific Islands News Association (PINA)
Australian National Commission for UNESCO
New Zealand National Commission for UNESCO
United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
World Health Organization of the United Nations (WHO)

Civil Society Organisations (examples only)

Commonwealth of Learning
Foundation of the Peoples of the South Pacific International (FSPI)
Live & Learn