



**PACIFIC ISLANDS FORUM SECRETARIAT**

PIFS(09) FEDMN.06

**FORUM EDUCATION MINISTERS' MEETING**

Nuku'alofa, Tonga

24-26 March 2009

**SESSION FIVE**

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF  
THE PACIFIC EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE  
DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN IN THE REGION**

This paper was prepared by the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development, University of the South Pacific



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### PROGRESS REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE PACIFIC EDUCATION FOR SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT ACTION PLAN IN THE REGION<sup>1</sup>

#### **Purpose**

To update the Forum Education Ministers Meeting (FEEdMM) on the implementation of the Pacific Regional Education for Sustainable Development (ESD) Framework and Action Plan upon its endorsement in 2006 and 2007

#### **Background**

2. At their meeting in Nadi, Fiji in September 2006, Forum Ministers of Education endorsed the Pacific ESD Framework, which was developed in 2006 at the request of UNESCO National Commissions by a wide range of stakeholders in education and sustainable development. Recognising the cross-cutting and inter-disciplinary nature of ESD, the Ministers, in approving the Pacific ESD Framework, requested that a Regional Action Plan for ESD be developed with wide consultation and taking into account other relevant regional frameworks and action plans. There was consensus that the Joint Forum Sustainable Development (SD)/Human Resource Development (HRD) Working Group be the mechanism which the Council of Regional Organisations in the Pacific could use to progress the regional ESD Framework, for which they in turn endorsed the University of the South Pacific (USP) through the Pacific Centre for Environment and Sustainable Development (PACE-SD) to develop an Action Plan.

3. This Action Plan for Implementing ESD in the Pacific Islands was developed using a broad-based and extensive consultation process. In line with the strategic objectives for sustainable development endorsed within the Pacific Plan, the Action Plan provides a strategy for achieving long-term change to address issues such as environmental sustainability; health; education and training; gender equality; youth involvement; and the recognition and protection of Pacific Island cultural values, identities and traditional knowledge. A consultant was hired to develop the Action Plan, which drew on information obtained from a survey

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conducted by USP to identify current regional and national/local ESD-relevant activities. In addition to the Pacific Plan, the Action Plan also complements other regional and international initiatives, particularly the Millennium Development Goals, the Forum Basic Education Action Plan, Education for All, the UN Decade for Literacy, the South Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP) Education and Communication Guiding Framework and the Pacific Youth Strategy. The Action Plan was later developed and endorsed by FEdMM 2007 and the Ministers requested that USP continue the facilitation/coordination role of ESD.

### **What the Action Plan is and how it may be used**

4. The Action Plan will serve as the primary document for guiding the implementation of ESD in the Pacific Islands region. The Action Plan is intended to be a dynamic document that establishes a series of actions to guide national governments and regional partners in developing appropriate responses for ESD in the Pacific islands region.

5. The main focus of the Action Plan is to support capacity development through formal education as well as non-formal education, targeting *individual, institutional* and *systemic* capacity. Thus, the Action Plan is aimed at developing appropriate governance policies and structures; the capacity of individuals; government agencies at all levels; non-governmental organisations; and local communities in order to empower them to assume responsibilities and acquire values, behaviours, technical knowledge, skills and decision-making abilities to create a sustainable future.

6. The Action Plan will serve as a guide for the development of national ESD action plans or for incorporating ESD within existing sustainable development and/or education plans. Pacific Island Countries and Territories (PICTs) will be able to use the Action Plan to identify their ESD priorities and develop national responses aligned to the regional document. Regional and national level indicators will have to be developed for monitoring and evaluating ESD implementation. This approach will ensure that each PICT is able to approach ESD in a way that fits in with existing national processes and matches national needs, while also having a system in place to enable reporting at regional and international levels, as required under the UN Decade of ESD (UNDESD).

7. An important aspect of the Action Plan is the acknowledgment that ESD (and sustainability/sustainable development) will be conceptualised differently, depending on the socio-cultural, economic, ecological and political contexts, as well as individual aspirations. There is a need, therefore, to ensure that appropriate approaches and processes are developed to address these issues. An innovative example that was being piloted in the region is the USP/Institute of Education (IOE) Sustainable Livelihoods and Education Project (SLEP), which seeks to identify perceptions of ESD through culturally appropriate research and use the findings to inform national curriculum reform.

8. A series of objectives and activities (and sub-activities) were proposed under each of the priority areas for action. The Action Plan also identifies examples of ESD-relevant initiatives currently in action and highlighted areas for potential partnerships. Expected outcomes (with relative timelines) are identified against most of the activities and can be further developed into indicators of progress at the national level.

### **Endorsement of the Pacific ESD Action Plan**

9. In November 2007, Forum Education Ministers met in Auckland, New Zealand and endorsed the Action Plan. As a follow up to this meeting, UNESCO National Commission New Zealand and USP through PACE-SD co-sponsored a Pacific DESD Implementation

Workshop. This meeting considered four regional ESD projects that were essentially synthesised from earlier project ideas considered before the 2006 FEEdMM and decided to develop them into full proposals with appropriate national level consultation. The consultant brought in to develop the Action Plan was also tasked, in consultation with members of the working group (via email), to submit comments on these proposals and, as a result, a wide range of ideas was received and integrated into the proposals.

10. The projects have been designed to be pilot projects that would showcase regional partnerships for ESD that have national/local level impact. Additionally, the projects are expected to contribute to the Pacific's overall participation in the UN Decade. A brief description of the four projects, as discussed and concluded at the workshop in breakout groups and plenary, is presented in Annex 1.

## **Conclusion**

11. There already exists in the Pacific a vast array of local/community-based, national and regional initiatives aimed at improving the quality of people's lives. A wide range of donors provide funding and technical assistance to many of these initiatives. Whilst there has been some attempt to coordinate activities, the fact remains that most occur in isolation, sometimes overlapping so much in their objectives that the same individuals are involved in several projects at once.

12. There is much to be learnt from these different initiatives and the need to support their coordination is paramount. As further plans are made to implement activities during the United Nations Decade of Education for Sustainable Development, it is important that there be meaningful coordination and that support be paramount in our considerations and deliberations.

## **Recommendation**

13. Ministers are invited to:

- (a) **note** the progress made by USP in trying to facilitate ESD activities with partner stakeholders since 2007;
- (b) **reaffirm** the role of USP in coordinating ESD/DESD activities in the region;
- (c) **reaffirm** support and commitment of partner stakeholders with regard to the coordination and implementation of ESD/DESD activities in the region; and
- (d) **consider** and endorse the immediate actions to be undertaken by the coordinating body to progress ESD in the region.

Pacific Islands Forum Secretariat, Suva

16 March 2009

**Annex 1 ESD Regional Pilot Projects**

<b>Project Title</b>	<b>Implementing Agency</b>	<b>Progress to date</b>	<b>Follow-up Recommendations</b>
<b>Project 1: Re-orienting Teacher Education for Sustainability</b>	IOE, USP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The ground work laid down by the Sustainable Livelihood Education Project (SLEP 1) piloted in Tonga and the Teacher Education Project (TEP), both implemented by IOE, could be used to provide support for Project 1, the teacher education component of ESD.</li> <li>• IOE has been bidding for other projects in the Pacific, using a similar approach, and so far, has been able to secure a Nauru sub-project through PRIDE for a curriculum development project.</li> <li>• PACE-SD has incorporated much of the activities of this project into an EDULINK: ACP-EU Cooperation Programme in Higher Education Proposal that has been officially approved. This EU programme primarily benefits higher education institutions. The major goal of the EDULINK Programme is to strengthen the capacity of ACP higher education institutions (HEIs) in institutional, administrative, academic, research and technology areas, consistent with ACP socio-economic and environmental priorities.</li> </ul>	<p>Establish an ESD advisory committee within USP to provide direction and guidance on the development and implementation of this project as well as to give guidance to the development of the remaining projects.</p> <p>Feed into the ESD Technical Working Group on matters pertaining to ESD in the region</p>

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Project 2: Identifying Innovations and Best Practices in ESD in the Pacific</b></p>	<p>PIFS,SPC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SPC, with support from PIFS, emphasised the synergies between their own strategic work plans and Project 2, and would look at ways to accelerate its implementation.</li> <li>• The project idea was tabled at an APCEIU UNESCO meeting in Nadi (2008) and as a result there has been a call for applications to scholars, educators and practitioners to submit innovative initiatives to develop comprehensive guidance for effective and well-grounded educational materials within the framework of EIU/ESD.</li> <li>• USP is also taking the initiative to collate ESD best practices from member stakeholders to promote ESD in the region.</li> </ul>	<p>The University will continue to work in collaboration with SPC and UNESCO APCEIU to collate local ESD Best Practices from partner stakeholders and showcase these alongside Education for International Understanding best practices. This will be done immediately to meet the April 10th deadline.</p> <p>USP will continue to also collate ESD Best Practices from partner stakeholders and publish these as best practices with the region to promote ESD.</p>
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<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Project 3: The Pacific Leadership Skills Development Programme</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PACE-SD, USP</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ProSPER.Net and the Ministry of Environment in Japan had an interest in the leadership development for the public policy and implementation of SD from TERI University, India and USP.</li> <li>• The USP and TERI proposals had a lot of synergies and so they were asked to work as a team, with other partners, to develop a unified proposal, each developing sections where they have comparative advantages. At a follow-up meeting in Japan, however, the award was given to TERI so TERI will coordinate and pilot the programme in June 2009 and it will be implemented in the other three universities (USP, University of Science Malaysia and the Asia Institute of Technology in Thailand) at a later date.</li> </ul>	<p>USP will continue to work in collaboration with TERI University of India and UN University-IAS to progress this proposal.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Project 4: Communicating Education for Sustainable Development in the Pacific</b></p>	<p style="text-align: center;">PINA</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The PINA governing board endorsed its lead role in facilitating the Communications Project.</li> <li>• PACE-SD had discussions with PINA on ways that PINA could develop the proposal. PACE personnel suggested possible donors that PINA could approach to fund the project activities.</li> <li>• The Vodafone Foundation was approached, but this was not successful as it did not fall within its thematic area.</li> </ul>	<p>USP will continue to engage PINA in discussions to further progress the development and implementation of the project and solicit the expertise of UNESCO Apia and SPREP (through the Social and Communications Advisor).</p> <p>In the immediate future, consult with SPREP to align proposal activities with that of the Year of the Reef Programme</p>

## Annex 2 : Updates from Relevant ESD Stakeholders on their Contributions to the ESD AP

Name of Organisation	Actions Undertaken/Progress to Date
Live & Learn Environmental Education (LLEE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote integration of ESD in the education systems at all levels (Early Childhood Education to Tertiary) in all PICTs by specifically by Providing ESD input to national curriculum development initiatives.</li> <li>• Support current initiatives to improve the quality and delivery of formal education in the Pacific by Strengthening and improving current in-school programmes relevant to ESD.</li> <li>• Improve the ability of communities to effectively engage in ESD policy development, decision making and implementation by providing opportunities within the non-formal education approaches that nurture holistic development of people and strengthening the capacity of community leaders (village/ local govt. officials) to address SD issues at policy level (including governance, leadership, etc).</li> <li>• Engage the business sector in sustainable development activities by identifying lessons from current/ past initiatives that involve the private sector.</li> <li>• Other ESD Related Initiatives of Live &amp; Learn: (i) empowering young people to take action to develop sustainable futures for themselves and their communities by using an integrated approach to waste management; (ii) Improving drinking water quality in rural schools in Fiji will improve accessibility, quality and availability of safe drinking water in 13 rural primary &amp; secondary schools in Fiji.</li> </ul>
WWF – Fiji Country Programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving the ability of communities to effectively engage in ESD policy development, decision-making and implementation by encouraging and supporting specialised short ESD training opportunities that strengthen existing, and promote new, long term revenue generating opportunities in communities</li> </ul>
PACE-SD, USP	<p>In addition to its role in facilitating the Leadership Proposal, the centre has been engaged in the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitating the Pacific Young Leaders meeting on the environment</li> <li>• Facilitated the development of the first ever Climate Change Course to be offered by the university for Pacific Islanders involved with medium-to-long term planning for natural resources, economic and social development, and/or the natural environment, especially graduates working in governments or NGOs who are yet to be familiarized with climate-related issues but need to be so.</li> <li>• Facilitating the development of an Integrated Waste Management Course</li> <li>• Providing Advisory services to town councils – Composting of organic wastes</li> <li>• More recently, facilitating the process of mainstreaming ESD into a network of Island Universities.</li> </ul>



<p>Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environmental Programme (SPREP)</p>	<p>SPREP has been very active in the field of ESD and for this they recognize the importance of media and communications in promoting environmental sustainability, and works closely with key partners and media organizations to build capacity in this area. Over the last year they have been involved with the following activities:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Pacific Youth Environmental Leaders Forum</i> for which they worked in collaboration with PACE-USP and IUCN on this.</li> <li>• <i>Pacific Climate Change Film Festival</i> – sponsored by the British High Commission, the festival was organised to train and support media professionals, filmmakers and producers from five countries to research, develop and produce their own short films on how climate change was affecting their country. Their stories did not only highlight the effects of climate change, but shared the inspirational stories about what was being done to reduce its impact. Participants involved in this project were from: Cook Islands, Fiji, Kiribati, Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu and Vanuatu.</li> <li>• <i>2008 Pacific Year of the Reef</i> – SPREP took the lead role in initiating regional action to save the Pacific’s coral reefs. The goal was to encourage Pacific islanders to take action to reverse the current degradation of their coral reefs and build their resilience to natural stresses such as climate change. The campaign was part of the International Year of the Reef that aims to raise awareness of the value and importance of coral reefs and threats to their sustainability, and to motivate people to take action to protect them. Coral reefs play critical roles as providers of Pacific islanders' livelihoods and cultures and protectors of our islands. Their conservation is key to the sustainable development of our region at large.</li> </ul>
<p>UNESCO Apia</p>	<p>Following the endorsement of the Pacific ESD Framework in 2006, UNESCO has focused its activities on supporting ESD efforts at the national level.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a first step in supporting countries to implement ESD, the Pacific Office conducted a mapping exercise to determine existing ESD initiatives that had been launched. In so doing, a methodology that links with the global ESD monitoring and assists to establish a baseline for current ESD activities was developed. In 2007 this methodology was trialed in Palau, the Solomon Islands and Tonga. Initially a desktop study and survey, with the assistance of the Tonga National Commission for UNESCO, the Tongan study was expanded to include site visits and interviews. Only partial results have been able to be obtained from Palau and the Solomon Islands, while a more detailed analysis has been possible for Tonga.</li> <li>• Building on the 2007 activities, the organization’s 2008-2009 activities included the expansion of the mapping process to determine the baseline for ESD approaches and activities in other Pacific countries, including additional data collection and analysis for Palau and the Solomon Islands. The outcomes from these mapping exercises are expected to contribute to the development of a Pacific ESD monitoring system that would inform the development of national approaches to ESD and guide the development of ESD materials and activities within the region.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• UNESCO Apia has produced and contributed to the development of a number of ESD materials including the Our Pacific Heritage Kit, Canoe is the people interactive CD-ROM and MAB Discovery Kits. To enable these to be more useful to countries and more widely implemented the 2008-2009 program includes exercises to review entry points into the national curricula. This review will occur in some 4-5 pilot countries and will be accompanied by a consultative process of working with countries to identify pathways for expanding ESD content in existing school curricula, informing the design (or re-design) of ESD materials to be more widely implemented in the context of the current curricula, and the development of localised approaches and materials for ESD. Following confirmation from a recent Heads of Education meeting in Nadi October 2008, the mapping and curriculum studies are to be launched in early 2009.</li><li>• UNESCO is working on the redevelopment of the Our Pacific Heritage kit to be provided in a more flexible format, an ESD resource with more Pacific content and a wider scope linking not only to cultural and natural heritage, but also to the contemporary aspects of living in the Pacific community. The regional resource materials will be available to all countries and will form core materials for the development of localised national Our Pacific Heritage kits adapted to individual country and curriculum needs.</li><li>• The remainder of 2008-2009 and into 2010 and onwards, UNESCO proposes to gradually complete the mapping, curriculum analysis and development of localised “Our Pacific Heritage Kits” across all 15 Pacific member countries and territories. Particular attention will be paid to the inclusion of local languages, national requests for content such as climate change in Kiribati, and working in partnership with countries in the process of identifying and developing ESD in each country.</li></ul>
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