Developing a framework and methodology to carbon sinks from the forestry sector in Samoa

Deliverable 4.1.-The opportunity to use the REDD+ to develop REDD+ carbon projects in Samoa

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF GREEN TECHNOLOGY

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT

SURVEY ON REDD+ READINESS ASSESSMENT FOR SAMOA

Background

Samoa has demonstrated its commitment to forest protection and its role as a greenhouse gas sink through a range of government initiatives. These measures include the creation of National Parks, the prohibition of commercial logging, the initiation of reforestation programs, and the implementation of community forestry initiatives. The emphasis on forest protection is deemed essential for preserving Samoa's indigenous species, sustaining biodiversity habitats, and enhancing its capacity as a sink for greenhouse gases. The combined efforts contribute significantly to the safeguarding of Samoa's valuable forest resources. **Recent updates in Samoa's NDC include plans to expand agroforestry to an additional 5 percent of agricultural land, to manage forests sustainably and increase total forest cover by 2 percent by 2030.** Samoa remains committed to addressing climate change, preserving its forests, and achieving its NDC targets through a combination of local initiatives and international cooperation.

The Purpose of the Survey on REDD+ Readiness of Samoa

Within the context of Samoa's dedication to Sustainable Forest Management, this survey is prepared to understand and measure Samoa's readiness on core activities for REDD+, which is also included in its recent NDC as part of its efforts to address climate change. At the heart of the Readiness assessment is a self-examination by REDD+ country stakeholders to take stock of the activities and previous attempts for REDD+ preparation phase. The results of the readiness assessment documents the country's overall readiness, captures lessons learned, and assesses remaining gaps, and identifies activities for the way forward to transitioning to the implementation of performance-based activities (FCPF, 2013). **The survey enables to capture diverse perspectives of REDD+ stakeholders in Samoa, and the finding could be put to use for further identifying its needs, requirements and challenges in establishing the foundation for REDD+ implementation in Samoa.**

Contents

The following sections provide a guide on the Readiness assessment Survey

- Section I provides a brief overview of forest issues in Samoa
- Section II reiterates previous initiative and approaches to Sustainable Forest Management practice in Samoa
- Section III outlines survey questionnaire that is designed context-specific to REDD+ implementation in Samoa

Section I. Overview of the Samoa's Forest Issue

1. Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation

In recent years, Samoa, like many other regions worldwide, has been grappling with the escalating challenges and problems associated with deforestation and forest degradation. The remaining natural forests of Samoa, vital pockets of biodiversity and ecological significance, face a threat as the specter of deforestation and forest degradation looms large over the archipelago. Covering a mere 37.2 percent of the country's total land area, these indigenous forests, primarily nestled in steep, remote, and inaccessible regions, serve as crucial conservation and protected areas. However, the alarming statistics reveal a troubling trend; during the 1990s. **Samoa witnessed a deforestation rate of approximately 3,000 hectares annually, translating to a staggering 2.1 percent per year – a figure that resonates prominently on the global scale.**

Direct drivers of deforestation encompass immediate human activities impacting forest cover, such as agriculture expansion, infrastructure extension, and wood extraction. These actions are interlinked with economic growth derived from exporting primary commodities and meeting the increasing global demand for timber and agricultural products. Government-led large-scale developments targeting forested areas, previously reserved for their rich biodiversity, often involve the bulldozing of roads, providing convenient access for loggers to exploit these ecosystems.

⇨ The case of Salelologa, a new town on the Island of Savaii, where the government's claim to nearly 3,000 acres of virgin forest for the new town development proceeded without undergoing the necessary environmental impact assessment.

In contrast, indirect drivers encompass a broader spectrum of factors, including demographic, economic, technological, institutional, and socio-cultural influences. The insights derived from the "National Workshop on the Underlying Causes of Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Samoa" conducted in 2002 shed light on various root causes of forest degradation. These include issues such as poverty, **the presence of weak and outdated legislative frameworks, inadequate monitoring systems, government privatization of public goods like native rainforests, and a paradigm shift in values toward unsustainable consumption and production patterns.** The prioritization of quick cash from forest harvesting over the long-term value of forest resources emerged as a significant concern identified in the workshop.

2. Previous Initiatives and Approaches to Sustainable Forest Management

Samoa has demonstrated its commitment to forest protection and its role as a greenhouse gas sink through a range of government initiatives. These measures include the creation of National Parks, the prohibition of commercial logging, the initiation of reforestation programs, and the implementation of community forestry initiatives. The emphasis on forest protection is deemed essential for preserving Samoa's indigenous species, sustaining biodiversity habitats, and enhancing its capacity as a sink for greenhouse gases. The combined efforts contribute significantly to the safeguarding of Samoa's valuable forest resources.

Recent updates in Samoa's NDC include plans to expand agroforestry to an additional 5 percent of agricultural land by 2030, relative to 2018. This expansion is expected to contribute to various ecosystem services, such as protecting crops from cyclone damage, diversifying agricultural incomes, and reducing riverine flood risk. Additionally, **Samoa aims to manage forests sustainably and increase total forest cover by 2 percent by 2030,** relative to 2013[1]. Responsible forest management and afforestation are anticipated to moderate stream flow, protect indigenous ecosystems, preserve cultural values, and maintain the supply of non-timber forest products.

To achieve these targets, **Samoa plans to promote agroforestry through awareness-raising activities, leveraging traditional knowledge and providing targeted support.** The government of Samoa has prioritized a 2 million tree campaign, successfully achieving this target and extending it to a 3 million target. This initiative contributes to sustainable forest management and the gradual increase of total forest cover.

The GHG Inventory for 2022, currently being finalized, will include estimates of CO_2 removals in forests, albeit with uncertainties due to potential changes in forest area during the inventory period. While **Samoa actively participates in global discussions addressing these challenges, the existing data gap hinders the translation of these discussions into tangible, practical actions at the national level.**

Despite challenges and uncertainties, Samoa remains committed to addressing climate change, preserving its forests, and achieving its NDC targets through a combination of local initiatives and international cooperation. **Along with the external financial support for expanding forest areas, technical assistance and consent from landholders will be also critical for the success of the agroforestry program.**

[1] AFOLU: Reduct GHG emissions in the sector by 26 percent in 2030 compared to 2007 levels (or by 35.2Gg CO_2e compared to the new reference year levels once the GHG emissions inventory is updated. It aims to reach the target by reforestation, forest restoration and promoting agroforestry.

Section II. REDD+ Readiness Assessment Survey Guideline

There is no single framework or criteria used in various readiness studies, and this in a way means that there is no universal definition of who is ready for REDD+. It should be considered that although countries are using similar readiness funding sources, they are at different stages of readiness (ISU, 201; UN-REDD and FCPF, 2012) and have different own priorities (Johns, Johnson & Greenglass, 2010).

Against this backdrop, this survey was prepared by incorporating different REDD+ assessment surveys which are largely adapted from UN-REDD FCPF's framework. For each sub-component it provides general guidance on what to consider when answering and addressing the respective assessment criteria, as well as identifying supporting information which may be useful to inform the assessment.

Guide for REDD+ Specific Questions

- For each subcomponent, general guidance is provided under each category on what to consider when addressing the respective assessment criteria, as well as identifying supporting information which maybe useful to inform the assessment.
- Please refer the description under each category to better comprehend the questions.

Section III. REDD+ Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

Respondent Details

Name	Moafanua Tolusina Pauli
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Self-Rating questionnaire

Rating	Description	Conditions
0-1	Low/Poor	not yet discussed
>1-2	Medium/Fair	is being discussed
>2	High/Good	issues around it are agreed in principle
3	Very High/Very Good	Already exist on a good term

Note: Please indicate to the rating scale used in assessing REDD+ readiness functions and indicators.

1. The Concept REDD+ and Carbon Forestry

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
How much are you aware of Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Sustainable Management of Forests, Enhancement of Carbon Stocks and Conservation of forests (REDD+) mechanism?		2			
How many of your country/state officers have been trained on REDD+ and REDD+ projects?	1				

How much aware of the implementation phases of REDD+?	1				
- Depending on your level of understanding/awareness, which phase do you think Samoa is in?	1				
How much are you aware of the 5 components of REDD+?		1			

2. Forest Monitoring and Baselines

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What is/are the major purpose of forest monitoring in Samoa?			2		
Does Samoa GHG inventory collect carbon monitoring?	1				
Are working Plan inventory staff trained in carbon monitoring?	0				If so, how many dedicated staff members does this team have → If not, is there any other local agency that you utilize for? →
Does your department have a dedicated Remote Sensing (RS)/GIS team?		2			If so, what is the extent of use of RS/GIS in forest monitoring?
Is there a centralized DB/system to store inventory data (working plan or other) in Samoa?			✱	3	If so, is this data accessible to non-departmental stakeholders for potential project development? →

3. Socio-Economic Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What are the major sources of forestry related socio-economic data in Samoa?			2		Samoa Forest Resource Information System (SAMFRIS).
How would you rate the availability and access to these socio-economic data sets?			2		

Is the available socio economic data sufficient to identify historical drivers of forest change (e.g.: amount of firewood collected, extent to grazing etc)		2			
Does the accessible data capture relationship between change in forest cover and socio-economic condition?		2			

4. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What are the major sources of forest floral biodiversity data in Samoa?				3	Publication and Reports, Database
What are the major sources of forest faunal biodiversity data in your Samoa?				3	Publication, Reports and Database
How would you rate the availability and access to these biodiversity data sets in Samoa?				3	

5. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
In your understanding, which is the preferred institutional structure for benefit sharing in your State/UT?					→

REDD+ Specific Questions

1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements

→ This part of the question focuses on national REDD+ management arrangements and its effectiveness in fulfilling core functions.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Accountability and transparency	0				
2. Operating mandate and budget	0				
3. Multi-sector coordinating mechanisms and cross-sector collaboration	0				
4. Technical supervision capacity	0				

5. Feedback and grievance mechanism	0				

1b. Consultations, Participation and Outreach

➔ This part of the question focuses on how consultation, participation, and outreach are conducted around the issue of REDD+ and this intends to review how consultations with key stakeholders perform to ensure participation of different social groups, transparency, and accountability of decision-making.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
6. Participation and engagement of key stakeholders	0				
7. Consultation processes	0				
8. Information sharing and accessibility of information	1				
9. Implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes	0				

2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law and Governance

➔ This part of the question focuses on the causal relationship between the economic, legal, policy setting of Samoa and associated patterns of land-use change, deforestation and forest degradation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
10. Assessment and analysis	1				
11. Prioritization of direct and indirect drivers/barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement	0				
12. Links between drivers/barriers and REDD+ activities	0				
13. Action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure, governance	1				
14. Implications for forest law and policy			2		

2b. Strategy Options

→ This part should convey how REDD+ fits into the context of a country's national development framework and path.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
15. Selection and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options	0				
16. Feasibility assessment	1				
17. Implications of strategy options on existing sectoral policies	1				

2c. Implementation Framework

➔ Country-specific solutions need to define the role of government, landowners, and other participants in REDD+ transactions, to share and deliver REDD+ benefits (e.g., to local communities), to respect the rights of Indigenous people and forest-dependent communities. Please provide under each sub-component on how Samoa is prepared in this regard.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Adoption and implementation of legislation/regulations	1				
2. Guidelines for implementation	6				
3. Benefit-sharing mechanism	0				
4. National REDD+ registry and monitoring system	0				

2d. Social and Environmental Impacts

➔ Is there any national legislative requirements related to safeguards or the management of social or environmental risks and impacts? If so, please rate as per its readiness level.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Analysis of social and environmental safeguard issues			2		
2. REDD+ strategy design with respect to impacts	0				
3. Environmental and social management framework			2		

Subcomponent 3 – Reference Emission Level

➔ Estimates of changes in forest area and carbon content over time and the corresponding emissions to and uptake from the atmosphere are used to measure the performance of REDD+ policy interventions. Please provide detail, as per Samoa's recent establishment of FRL.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Demonstration of methodology		1			
2. Use of historical data and adjustment for national circumstances		2			
3. Technical feasibility of the methodological approach, and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines		2			

Subcomponent 4a – National Forest Monitoring System

➔ This part of the question focuses on progress made in designing and developing operational forest monitoring system.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Documentation of monitoring approach	.	1			
2. Demonstration of early system implementation	1				
3. Institutional arrangements and capacities	1				

Subcomponent 4b – Information system on multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

➔ Please draw upon the outcomes of the dialogues with key stakeholders and documentation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Identification of relevant non-carbon aspects, and social and environmental issues	0				
2. Monitoring, reporting and information sharing	0	1			

3. Institutional arrangements and capacities	1				

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Direct drivers of deforestation encompass immediate human activities impacting forest cover, such as agriculture expansion, infrastructure extension, and wood extraction. These actions are interlinked with economic growth derived from exporting primary commodities and meeting the increasing global demand for timber and agricultural products. Government-led large-scale developments targeting forested areas, previously reserved for their rich biodiversity, often involve the bulldozing of roads, providing convenient access for loggers to exploit these ecosystems.

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To achieve these targets, **Samoa plans to promote agroforestry through awareness-raising activities, leveraging traditional knowledge and providing targeted support.** The government of Samoa has prioritized a 2 million tree campaign, successfully achieving this target and extending it to a 3 million target. This initiative contributes to sustainable forest management and the gradual increase of total forest cover.

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Despite challenges and uncertainties, Samoa remains committed to addressing climate change, preserving its forests, and achieving its NDC targets through a combination of local initiatives and international cooperation. **Along with the external financial support for expanding forest areas, technical assistance and consent from landholders will be also critical for the success of the agroforestry program.**

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[1] AFOLU: Reduct GHG emissions in the sector by 26 percent in 2030 compared to 2007 levels (or by 35.2Gg CO_2e compared to the new reference year levels once the GHG emissions inventory is updated. It aims to reach the target by reforestation, forest restoration and promoting agroforestry.

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Against this backdrop, this survey was prepared by incorporating different REDD+ assessment surveys which are largely adapted from UN-REDD FCPF's framework. For each sub-component it provides general guidance on what to consider when answering and addressing the respective assessment criteria, as well as identifying supporting information which may be useful to inform the assessment.

Guide for REDD+ Specific Questions

- For each subcomponent, general guidance is provided under each category on what to consider when addressing the respective assessment criteria, as well as identifying supporting information which maybe useful to inform the assessment.
- Please refer the description under each category to better comprehend the questions.

Section III. REDD+ Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

Respondent Details

Name	TELESIA SILA.
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Address	SAMOA

Self-Rating questionnaire

Rating	Description	Conditions
0-1	Low/Poor	not yet discussed
>1-2	Medium/Fair	is being discussed
>2	High/Good	issues around it are agreed in principle
3	Very High/Very Good	Already exist on a good term

Note: Please indicate to the rating scale used in assessing REDD+ readiness functions and indicators.

1. The Concept REDD+ and Carbon Forestry

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
How much are you aware of Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Sustainable Management of Forests, Enhancement of Carbon Stocks and Conservation of forests (REDD+) mechanism?			✓		Information from relevant Division within MNRE
How many of your country/state officers have been trained on REDD+ and REDD+ projects?	✓				Not aware about those who work within the division who are responsible for this.

How much aware of the implementation phases of REDD+?		✓			Its new to myself and have some information from colleague who attend the COP but not in Samoa.
- Depending on your level of understanding/awareness, which phase do you think Samoa is in?		✓			
How much are you aware of the 5 components of REDD+?		✓			

2. Forest Monitoring and Baselines

Sub-component	Rating 0-1	>1-2	>2	3	Narrative Assessment
What is/are the major purpose of forest monitoring in Samoa?			✓		MNRE-Forestry Division were dealing with it.
Does Samoa GHG inventory collect carbon monitoring?				✓	Relevant Ministry & Corporate
Are working Plan inventory staff trained in carbon monitoring?				✓	If so, how many dedicated staff members does this team have, → Forestry Division (Unit) If not, is there any other local agency that you utilize for? →
Does your department have a dedicated Remote Sensing (RS)/GIS team?				✓	If so, what is the extent of use of RS/GIS in forest monitoring?
Is there a centralized DB/system to store inventory data (working plan or other) in Samoa?				✓	If so, is this data accessible to non-departmental stakeholders for potential project development? → It is based at the Forestry Division (MNRE)

3. Socio-Economic Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating 0-1	>1-2	>2	3	Narrative Assessment
What are the major sources of forestry related socio-economic data in Samoa?				✓	
How would you rate the availability and access to these socio-economic data sets?				✓	

Is the available socio economic data sufficient to identify historical drivers of forest change (e.g.: amount of firewood collected, extent to grazing etc)				✓	
Does the accessible data capture relationship between change in forest cover and socio-economic condition?				✓	

4. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What are the major sources of forest floral biodiversity data in Samoa?			✓		
What are the major sources of forest faunal biodiversity data in your Samoa?			✓		
How would you rate the availability and access to these biodiversity data sets in Samoa?			✓		

5. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
In your understanding, which is the preferred institutional structure for benefit sharing in your State/UT?			✓		➔

REDD+ Specific Questions

1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements

➔ This part of the question focuses on national REDD+ management arrangements and its effectiveness in fulfilling core functions.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Accountability and transparency			✓		
2. Operating mandate and budget			✓		
3. Multi-sector coordinating mechanisms and cross-sector collaboration			✓		
4. Technical supervision capacity			✓		

5. Feedback and grievance mechanism			✓		

1b. Consultations, Participation and Outreach

→ This part of the question focuses on how consultation, participation, and outreach are conducted around the issue of REDD+ and this intends to review how consultations with key stakeholders perform to ensure participation of different social groups, transparency, and accountability of decision-making.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
6. Participation and engagement of key stakeholders		✓			I am not so much involved in REDD+ but I am aware that those relevant ministry & cooperation are making good effort on working on this.
7. Consultation processes		✓			
8. Information sharing and accessibility of information		✓			
9. Implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes		✓			

2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law and Governance

→ This part of the question focuses on the causal relationship between the economic, legal, policy setting of Samoa and associated patterns of land-use change, deforestation and forest degradation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
10. Assessment and analysis		✓			Forestry Division: they may have more understanding on this area as I was not much involved.
11. Prioritization of direct and indirect drivers/barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement		✓			
12. Links between drivers/barriers and REDD+ activities		✓			
13. Action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure, governance		✓			
14. Implications for forest law and policy		✓			

2b. Strategy Options

→ This part should convey how REDD+ fits into the context of a country's national development framework and path.

Sub-component	Rating 0-1	>1-2	>2	3	Narrative Assessment
15. Selection and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options					Please refer to Forestry Division & other relevant Division of MNRE to provide information
16. Feasibility assessment					
17. Implications of strategy options on existing sectoral policies					

2c. Implementation Framework

➔ Country-specific solutions need to define the role of government, landowners, and other participants in REDD+ transactions, to share and deliver REDD+ benefits (e.g., to local communities), to respect the rights of Indigenous people and forest-dependent communities. Please provide under each sub-component on how Samoa is prepared in this regard.

Sub-component	Rating 0-1	>1-2	>2	3	Narrative Assessment
1. Adoption and implementation of legislation/regulations					Please refer to Forestry Division & other relevant Division of MNRE to provide information on this.
2. Guidelines for implementation					
3. Benefit-sharing mechanism					
4. National REDD+ registry and monitoring system					

2d. Social and Environmental Impacts

➔ Is there any national legislative requirements related to safeguards or the management of social or environmental risks and impacts? If so, please rate as per its readiness level.

Sub-component	Rating 0-1	>1-2	>2	3	Narrative Assessment
1. Analysis of social and environmental safeguard issues					//
2. REDD+ strategy design with respect to impacts					
3. Environmental and social management framework					

Subcomponent 3 – Reference Emission Level

➔ Estimates of changes in forest area and carbon content over time and the corresponding emissions to and uptake from the atmosphere are used to measure the performance of REDD+ policy interventions. Please provide detail, as per Samoa's recent establishment of FRL.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Demonstration of methodology					
2. Use of historical data and adjustment for national circumstances					
3. Technical feasibility of the methodological approach, and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines					

Subcomponent 4a – National Forest Monitoring System

➔ This part of the question focuses on progress made in designing and developing operational forest monitoring system.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Documentation of monitoring approach					
2. Demonstration of early system implementation					
3. Institutional arrangements and capacities					

Subcomponent 4b – Information system on multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

➔ Please draw upon the outcomes of the dialogues with key stakeholders and documentation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Identification of relevant non-carbon aspects, and social and environmental issues					
2. Monitoring, reporting and information sharing					

3. Institutional arrangements and capacities					

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Background

Samoa has demonstrated its commitment to forest protection and its role as a greenhouse gas sink through a range of government initiatives. These measures include the creation of National Parks, the prohibition of commercial logging, the initiation of reforestation programs, and the implementation of community forestry initiatives. The emphasis on forest protection is deemed essential for preserving Samoa's indigenous species, sustaining biodiversity habitats, and enhancing its capacity as a sink for greenhouse gases. The combined efforts contribute significantly to the safeguarding of Samoa's valuable forest resources. **Recent updates in Samoa's NDC include plans to expand agroforestry to an additional 5 percent of agricultural land, to manage forests sustainably and increase total forest cover by 2 percent by 2030.** Samoa remains committed to addressing climate change, preserving its forests, and achieving its NDC targets through a combination of local initiatives and international cooperation.

The Purpose of the Survey on REDD+ Readiness of Samoa

Within the context of Samoa's dedication to Sustainable Forest Management, this survey is prepared to understand and measure Samoa's readiness on core activities for REDD+, which is also included in its recent NDC as part of its efforts to address climate change. At the heart of the Readiness assessment is a self-examination by REDD+ country stakeholders to take stock of the activities and previous attempts for REDD+ preparation phase. The results of the readiness assessment documents the country's overall readiness, captures lessons learned, and assesses remaining gaps, and identifies activities for the way forward to transitioning to the implementation of performance-based activities (FCPF, 2013). **The survey enables to capture diverse perspectives of REDD+ stakeholders in Samoa, and the finding could be put to use for further identifying its needs, requirements and challenges in establishing the foundation for REDD+ implementation in Samoa.**

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- Section I provides a brief overview of forest issues in Samoa
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Section I. Overview of the Samoa's Forest Issue

1. Drivers of Deforestation and Forest Degradation

In recent years, Samoa, like many other regions worldwide, has been grappling with the escalating challenges and problems associated with deforestation and forest degradation. The remaining natural forests of Samoa, vital pockets of biodiversity and ecological significance, face a threat as the specter of deforestation and forest degradation looms large over the archipelago. Covering a mere 37.2 percent of the country's total land area, these indigenous forests, primarily nestled in steep, remote, and inaccessible regions, serve as crucial conservation and protected areas. However, the alarming statistics reveal a troubling trend; during the 1990s. **Samoa witnessed a deforestation rate of approximately 3,000 hectares annually, translating to a staggering 2.1 percent per year – a figure that resonates prominently on the global scale.**

Direct drivers of deforestation encompass immediate human activities impacting forest cover, such as agriculture expansion, infrastructure extension, and wood extraction. These actions are interlinked with economic growth derived from exporting primary commodities and meeting the increasing global demand for timber and agricultural products. Government-led large-scale developments targeting forested areas, previously reserved for their rich biodiversity, often involve the bulldozing of roads, providing convenient access for loggers to exploit these ecosystems.

> ⇨ The case of Salelologa, a new town on the Island of Savaii, where the government's claim to nearly 3,000 acres of virgin forest for the new town development proceeded without undergoing the necessary environmental impact assessment.

In contrast, indirect drivers encompass a broader spectrum of factors, including demographic, economic, technological, institutional, and socio-cultural influences. The insights derived from the "National Workshop on the Underlying Causes of Deforestation and Forest Degradation in Samoa" conducted in 2002 shed light on various root causes of forest degradation. These include issues such as poverty, **the presence of weak and outdated legislative frameworks, inadequate monitoring systems, government privatization of public goods like native rainforests, and a paradigm shift in values toward unsustainable consumption and production patterns.** The prioritization of quick cash from forest harvesting over the long-term value of forest resources emerged as a significant concern identified in the workshop.

2. Previous Initiatives and Approaches to Sustainable Forest Management

Samoa has demonstrated its commitment to forest protection and its role as a greenhouse gas sink through a range of government initiatives. These measures include the creation of National Parks, the prohibition of commercial logging, the initiation of reforestation programs, and the implementation of community forestry initiatives. The emphasis on forest protection is deemed essential for preserving Samoa's indigenous species, sustaining biodiversity habitats, and enhancing its capacity as a sink for greenhouse gases. The combined efforts contribute significantly to the safeguarding of Samoa's valuable forest resources.

Recent updates in Samoa's NDC include plans to expand agroforestry to an additional 5 percent of agricultural land by 2030, relative to 2018. This expansion is expected to contribute to various ecosystem services, such as protecting crops from cyclone damage, diversifying agricultural incomes, and reducing riverine flood risk. Additionally, **Samoa aims to manage forests sustainably and increase total forest cover by 2 percent by 2030,** relative to 2013[1]. Responsible forest management and afforestation are anticipated to moderate stream flow, protect indigenous ecosystems, preserve cultural values, and maintain the supply of non-timber forest products.

To achieve these targets, **Samoa plans to promote agroforestry through awareness-raising activities, leveraging traditional knowledge and providing targeted support.** The government of Samoa has prioritized a 2 million tree campaign, successfully achieving this target and extending it to a 3 million target. This initiative contributes to sustainable forest management and the gradual increase of total forest cover.

3 million now

The GHG Inventory for 2022, currently being finalized, will include estimates of CO_2 removals in forests, albeit with uncertainties due to potential changes in forest area during the inventory period. While **Samoa actively participates in global discussions addressing these challenges, the existing data gap hinders the translation of these discussions into tangible, practical actions at the national level.**

Despite challenges and uncertainties, Samoa remains committed to addressing climate change, preserving its forests, and achieving its NDC targets through a combination of local initiatives and international cooperation. **Along with the external financial support for expanding forest areas, technical assistance and consent from landholders will be also critical for the success of the agroforestry program.**

---

[1] AFOLU: Reduct GHG emissions in the sector by 26 percent in 2030 compared to 2007 levels (or by 35.2Gg CO_2e compared to the new reference year levels once the GHG emissions inventory is updated. It aims to reach the target by reforestation, forest restoration and promoting agroforestry.

Section II. REDD+ Readiness Assessment Survey Guideline

There is no single framework or criteria used in various readiness studies, and this in a way means that there is no universal definition of who is ready for REDD+. It should be considered that although countries are using similar readiness funding sources, they are at different stages of readiness (ISU, 201; UN-REDD and FCPF, 2012) and have different own priorities (Johns, Johnson & Greenglass, 2010).

Against this backdrop, this survey was prepared by incorporating different REDD+ assessment surveys which are largely adapted from UN-REDD FCPF's framework. For each sub-component it provides general guidance on what to consider when answering and addressing the respective assessment criteria, as well as identifying supporting information which may be useful to inform the assessment.

Guide for REDD+ Specific Questions

- For each subcomponent, general guidance is provided under each category on what to consider when addressing the respective assessment criteria, as well as identifying supporting information which maybe useful to inform the assessment.
- Please refer the description under each category to better comprehend the questions.

Section III. REDD+ Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

Respondent Details

Name	Finefein Simanu
Affiliation	MNRE
Position	Senior Forestry Research offical
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Address	Samoa (Vaitele fou)

Self-Rating questionnaire

Rating	Description	Conditions
0-1	Low/Poor	not yet discussed
>1-2	Medium/Fair	is being discussed
>2	High/Good	issues around it are agreed in principle
3	Very High/Very Good	Already exist on a good term

Note: Please indicate to the rating scale used in assessing REDD+ readiness functions and indicators.

1. The Concept REDD+ and Carbon Forestry

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
How much are you aware of Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Sustainable Management of Forests, Enhancement of Carbon Stocks and Conservation of forests (REDD+) mechanism?		2			
How many of your country/state officers have been trained on REDD+ and REDD+ projects?		1			

How much aware of the implementation phases of REDD+?		2			
- Depending on your level of understanding/awareness, which phase do you think Samoa is in?		2			
How much are you aware of the 5 components of REDD+?		2			

2. Forest Monitoring and Baselines

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What is/are the major purpose of forest monitoring in Samoa?			>2		
Does Samoa GHG inventory collect carbon monitoring?			>2		
Are working Plan inventory staff trained in carbon monitoring?		2			If so, how many dedicated staff members does this team have ➔ If not, is there any other local agency that you utilize for? ➔
Does your department have a dedicated Remote Sensing (RS)/GIS team?		2			If so, what is the extent of use of RS/GIS in forest monitoring?
Is there a centralized DB/system to store inventory data (working plan or other) in Samoa?		~			If so, is this data accessible to non-departmental stakeholders for potential project development? ➔

3. Socio-Economic Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What are the major sources of forestry related socio-economic data in Samoa?		2			
How would you rate the availability and access to these socio-economic data sets?		2			

Is the available socio economic data sufficient to identify historical drivers of forest change (e.g.: amount of firewood collected, extent to grazing etc)				3	
Does the accessible data capture relationship between change in forest cover and socio-economic condition?			>2		

4. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What are the major sources of forest floral biodiversity data in Samoa?			>2		
What are the major sources of forest faunal biodiversity data in your Samoa?			>2		
How would you rate the availability and access to these biodiversity data sets in Samoa?				3	

5. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
In your understanding, which is the preferred institutional structure for benefit sharing in your State/UT?			>2		→

REDD+ Specific Questions

1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements

→ This part of the question focuses on national REDD+ management arrangements and its effectiveness in fulfilling core functions.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Accountability and transparency			>2		
2. Operating mandate and budget		2			
3. Multi-sector coordinating mechanisms and cross-sector collaboration		2			
4. Technical supervision capacity		2			

5. Feedback and grievance mechanism		✓			

1b. Consultations, Participation and Outreach

➔ This part of the question focuses on how consultation, participation, and outreach are conducted around the issue of REDD+ and this intends to review how consultations with key stakeholders perform to ensure participation of different social groups, transparency, and accountability of decision-making.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
6. Participation and engagement of key stakeholders		2			
7. Consultation processes		2	>2		
8. Information sharing and accessibility of information		2	>2		
9. Implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes			>2		

2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law and Governance

➔ This part of the question focuses on the causal relationship between the economic, legal, policy setting of Samoa and associated patterns of land-use change, deforestation and forest degradation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
10. Assessment and analysis			>2		
11. Prioritization of direct and indirect drivers/barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement			>2		
12. Links between drivers/barriers and REDD+ activities			>2		
13. Action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure, governance			>2		
14. Implications for forest law and policy			>2		

2b. Strategy Options

→ This part should convey how REDD+ fits into the context of a country's national development framework and path.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
15. Selection and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options			>2		
16. Feasibility assessment			>2		
17. Implications of strategy options on existing sectoral policies		2			

2c. Implementation Framework

➔ Country-specific solutions need to define the role of government, landowners, and other participants in REDD+ transactions, to share and deliver REDD+ benefits (e.g., to local communities), to respect the rights of Indigenous people and forest-dependent communities. Please provide under each sub-component on how Samoa is prepared in this regard.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Adoption and implementation of legislation/regulations			>2		
2. Guidelines for implementation		2			
3. Benefit-sharing mechanism		2			
4. National REDD+ registry and monitoring system		2			

2d. Social and Environmental Impacts

➔ Is there any national legislative requirements related to safeguards or the management of social or environmental risks and impacts? If so, please rate as per its readiness level.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Analysis of social and environmental safeguard issues			>2		
2. REDD+ strategy design with respect to impacts		2			
3. Environmental and social management framework			>2		

Subcomponent 3 – Reference Emission Level

➔ Estimates of changes in forest area and carbon content over time and the corresponding emissions to and uptake from the atmosphere are used to measure the performance of REDD+ policy interventions. Please provide detail, as per Samoa's recent establishment of FRL.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Demonstration of methodology		2			
2. Use of historical data and adjustment for national circumstances		2			
3. Technical feasibility of the methodological approach, and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines	1				

Subcomponent 4a – National Forest Monitoring System

➔ This part of the question focuses on progress made in designing and developing operational forest monitoring system.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Documentation of monitoring approach		2			
2. Demonstration of early system implementation		2			
3. Institutional arrangements and capacities		2			

Subcomponent 4b – Information system on multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

➔ Please draw upon the outcomes of the dialogues with key stakeholders and documentation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Identification of relevant non-carbon aspects, and social and environmental issues			>2		
2. Monitoring, reporting and information sharing		2			

3. Institutional arrangements and capacities				3	

SURVEY ON REDD+ READINESS ASSESSMENT FOR SAMOA

Background

Samoa has demonstrated its commitment to forest protection and its role as a greenhouse gas sink through a range of government initiatives. These measures include the creation of National Parks, the prohibition of commercial logging, the initiation of reforestation programs, and the implementation of community forestry initiatives. The emphasis on forest protection is deemed essential for preserving Samoa's indigenous species, sustaining biodiversity habitats, and enhancing its capacity as a sink for greenhouse gases. The combined efforts contribute significantly to the safeguarding of Samoa's valuable forest resources. **Recent updates in Samoa's NDC include plans to expand agroforestry to an additional 5 percent of agricultural land, to manage forests sustainably and increase total forest cover by 2 percent by 2030.** Samoa remains committed to addressing climate change, preserving its forests, and achieving its NDC targets through a combination of local initiatives and international cooperation.

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Within the context of Samoa's dedication to Sustainable Forest Management, this survey is prepared to understand and measure Samoa's readiness on core activities for REDD+, which is also included in its recent NDC as part of its efforts to address climate change. At the heart of the Readiness assessment is a self-examination by REDD+ country stakeholders to take stock of the activities and previous attempts for REDD+ preparation phase. The results of the readiness assessment documents the country's overall readiness, captures lessons learned, and assesses remaining gaps, and identifies activities for the way forward to transitioning to the implementation of performance-based activities (FCPF, 2013). **The survey enables to capture diverse perspectives of REDD+ stakeholders in Samoa, and the finding could be put to use for further identifying its needs, requirements and challenges in establishing the foundation for REDD+ implementation in Samoa.**

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Direct drivers of deforestation encompass immediate human activities impacting forest cover, such as agriculture expansion, infrastructure extension, and wood extraction. These actions are interlinked with economic growth derived from exporting primary commodities and meeting the increasing global demand for timber and agricultural products. Government-led large-scale developments targeting forested areas, previously reserved for their rich biodiversity, often involve the bulldozing of roads, providing convenient access for loggers to exploit these ecosystems.

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To achieve these targets, **Samoa plans to promote agroforestry through awareness-raising activities, leveraging traditional knowledge and providing targeted support**. The government of Samoa has prioritized a 2 million tree campaign, successfully achieving this target and extending it to a 3 million target. This initiative contributes to sustainable forest management and the gradual increase of total forest cover.

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[1] AFOLU: Reduct GHG emissions in the sector by 26 percent in 2030 compared to 2007 levels (or by 35.2Gg CO_2e compared to the new reference year levels once the GHG emissions inventory is updated. It aims to reach the target by reforestation, forest restoration and promoting agroforestry.

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Guide for REDD+ Specific Questions

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- Please refer the description under each category to better comprehend the questions.

Section III. REDD+ Readiness Assessment Questionnaire

Respondent Details

Name	VAREA DAWN VAURASI
Affiliation	L NATIONAL UNIVERSITY OF SAMOA
Position	LECTURER
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Address	SAMOA

Self-Rating questionnaire

Rating	Description	Conditions
0-1	Low/Poor	not yet discussed
>1-2	Medium/Fair	is being discussed
>2	High/Good	issues around it are agreed in principle
3	Very High/Very Good	Already exist on a good term

Note: Please indicate to the rating scale used in assessing REDD+ readiness functions and indicators.

1. The Concept REDD+ and Carbon Forestry

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
How much are you aware of Reducing Emission from Deforestation and Forest Degradation, Sustainable Management of Forests, Enhancement of Carbon Stocks and Conservation of forests (REDD+) mechanism?			✓		MNRE observe events like International day of Forests, tree planting initiative provide awareness
How many of your country/state officers have been trained on REDD+ and REDD+ projects?	✓				First time for SLO to actually involve

How much aware of the implementation phases of REDD+?		✓			new
- Depending on your level of understanding/awareness, which phase do you think Samoa is in?		✓			its a global effort & Samoa as a developing state we are learning to conserve & sustainably conserve
How much are you aware of the 5 components of REDD+?		✓			new

2. Forest Monitoring and Baselines

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What is/are the major purpose of forest monitoring in Samoa?		✓			Conservation
Does Samoa GHG inventory collect carbon monitoring?		✓			maybe institute has not carried related research on this.
Are working Plan inventory staff trained in carbon monitoring?	✓				If so, how many dedicated staff members does this team have → If not, is there any other local agency that you utilize for? → students involvement
Does your department have a dedicated Remote Sensing (RS)/GIS team?	✓				If so, what is the extent of use of RS/GIS in forest monitoring? Low
Is there a centralized DB/system to store inventory data (working plan or other) in Samoa?	✓				If so, is this data accessible to non-departmental stakeholders for potential project development? → maybe potential opportunity to explore in future for Faculty staff.

3. Socio-Economic Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What are the major sources of forestry related socio-economic data in Samoa?		✓			not sure but am aware some community based consultation must be done
How would you rate the availability and access to these socio-economic data sets?	✓				not sure.

Is the available socio economic data sufficient to identify historical drivers of forest change (e.g.: amount of firewood collected, extent to grazing etc)	✓				not aware of.
Does the accessible data capture relationship between change in forest cover and socio-economic condition?	✓				not known

4. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
What are the major sources of forest floral biodiversity data in Samoa?	✓				not known off.
What are the major sources of forest faunal biodiversity data in your Samoa?		✓			maybe if ask MNRE
How would you rate the availability and access to these biodiversity data sets in Samoa?		✓			not sure of.

5. Biodiversity Monitoring/Safeguards

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
In your understanding, which is the preferred institutional structure for benefit sharing in your State/UT?		✓			→ Govt. Ministry MNRE

REDD+ Specific Questions

1a. National REDD+ Management Arrangements

➔ This part of the question focuses on national REDD+ management arrangements and its effectiveness in fulfilling core functions.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Accountability and transparency		✓			Slowly understanding concept.
2. Operating mandate and budget	✓				little information
3. Multi-sector coordinating mechanisms and cross-sector collaboration		✓			stakeholders involvement from other govt. ministries
4. Technical supervision capacity		✓			may enhance knowledge

5. Feedback and grievance mechanism		✓			Getting somewhere

1b. Consultations, Participation and Outreach

➔ This part of the question focuses on how consultation, participation, and outreach are conducted around the issue of REDD+ and this intends to review how consultations with key stakeholders perform to ensure participation of different social groups, transparency, and accountability of decision-making.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
6. Participation and engagement of key stakeholders		✓			Must involve stakeholders related to type of work
7. Consultation processes		✓			may need qualified personell.
8. Information sharing and accessibility of information		✓			Not sure but its possible
9. Implementation and public disclosure of consultation outcomes		✓			Not sure but its possible

2a. Assessment of Land Use, Land Use Change Drivers, Forest Law and Governance

➔ This part of the question focuses on the causal relationship between the economic, legal, policy setting of Samoa and associated patterns of land-use change, deforestation and forest degradation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
10. Assessment and analysis	✓				Need to incorporate in curriculum as a course ✓
11. Prioritization of direct and indirect drivers/barriers to forest carbon stock enhancement	✓				
12. Links between drivers/barriers and REDD+ activities	✓				✓
13. Action plans to address natural resource rights, land tenure, governance	✓				✓
14. Implications for forest law and policy	✓				✓

2b. Strategy Options

➔ This part should convey how REDD+ fits into the context of a country's national development framework and path.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
15. Selection and prioritization of REDD+ strategy options	✓				incorporate in curriculum
16. Feasibility assessment	✓				✓
17. Implications of strategy options on existing sectoral policies	✓				✓

2c. Implementation Framework

➔ Country-specific solutions need to define the role of government, landowners, and other participants in REDD+ transactions, to share and deliver REDD+ benefits (e.g., to local communities), to respect the rights of Indigenous people and forest-dependent communities. Please provide under each sub-component on how Samoa is prepared in this regard.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Adoption and implementation of legislation/regulations	✓				seek MNRE assistance on this
2. Guidelines for implementation	✓				✓
3. Benefit-sharing mechanism					✓
4. National REDD+ registry and monitoring system					

2d. Social and Environmental Impacts

➔ Is there any national legislative requirements related to safeguards or the management of social or environmental risks and impacts? If so, please rate as per its readiness level.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Analysis of social and environmental safeguard issues		✓			maybe can ask around how far that goes
2. REDD+ strategy design with respect to impacts	✓				newly introduce to date
3. Environmental and social management framework		✓			maybe can ask for more information

Subcomponent 3 – Reference Emission Level

➔ Estimates of changes in forest area and carbon content over time and the corresponding emissions to and uptake from the atmosphere are used to measure the performance of REDD+ policy interventions. Please provide detail, as per Samoa's recent establishment of FRL.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Demonstration of methodology		✓			Refer to ongoing research presentations
2. Use of historical data and adjustment for national circumstances		✓			maybe
3. Technical feasibility of the methodological approach, and consistency with UNFCCC/IPCC guidance and guidelines		✓			maybe

Subcomponent 4a – National Forest Monitoring System

➔ This part of the question focuses on progress made in designing and developing operational forest monitoring system.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Documentation of monitoring approach		✓			Collaboration with MNRE
2. Demonstration of early system implementation		✓			✓
3. Institutional arrangements and capacities		✓			Collaboration to capacitate individuals

Subcomponent 4b – Information system on multiple benefits, other impacts, governance and safeguards

➔ Please draw upon the outcomes of the dialogues with key stakeholders and documentation.

Sub-component	Rating				Narrative Assessment
	0-1	>1-2	>2	3	
1. Identification of relevant non-carbon aspects, and social and environmental issues		✓			maybe
2. Monitoring, reporting and information sharing		✓			maybe, these specific areas develop overtime.

3. Institutional arrangements and capacities		✓			possible

Developing a framework and methodology to carbon sinks from the forestry sector in Samoa

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF GREEN TECHNOLOGY

MINISTRY OF NATURAL RESOURCES AND ENVIRONMENT