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Contents

Acronyms

DoE	Department of Environment
DTCP	Department of Town and Country Planning
EbA	Ecosystem based Adaptation
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EMA	Environment Management Act
FPIC	Free Prior Informed Consent
FSC	Forest Stewardship Council
GHG	Greenhouse Gases
ICM	Integrated Coastal Management
ICMF	Integrated Coastal Management Framework
ICZM	Integrated Coastal Zone Management
IFSS	Interim Forest Stewardship Standards
iTLA	iTaukei Lands Act
iTLTB	iTaukei Land Trust Board
IUCN	International Union for Conservation of Nature
IWRM	Integrated Water Resource Management
LCIA	Land Conservation and improvement Act
MMP	Mangrove Management Plan
MNI	Matters of National Importance
MRV	Monitoring Reporting and Verification
NAP	National Adaptation Plan
NBSAP	National Biodiversity and Strategy and Action Plan
NbS	Nature based Solutions
NDC	National Determined Contribution
NDP	National Development Plan
NRM	National Resource Management
NFP	National Forest Policy
NOP	National Ocean Policy
REDD+	Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and forest Degradation (activities)
R2R	Ridge to Reef

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report examines the extent to which Nature-based Solutions (NbS) are currently reflected, enabled, and operationalised within Fiji's policy, legal, and institutional frameworks governing the forestry and coastal protection and restoration sectors. Its purpose is to assess alignment with internationally recognised NbS principles, identify systemic gaps and barriers, and provide an evidence based pathway for strengthening NbS integration across national development, climate, biodiversity, and resource-governance systems.

Nature-based Solutions are increasingly recognised globally as a critical approach for addressing interlinked challenges of climate change, biodiversity loss, disaster risk, and sustainable livelihoods. In Fiji, forests, mangroves, reefs, watersheds, and coastal ecosystems play a foundational role in climate resilience, food security, carbon sequestration, and community well-being. While many of Fiji's sectoral policies and strategies reference ecosystem-based management or sustainability concepts, most were developed prior to the emergence of NbS as a unifying framework and therefore do not explicitly or systematically embed NbS principles.

The review undertook a comprehensive stock-take and alignment assessment of national-level policies, legislation, regulations, strategies, and plans relevant to forestry and coastal protection and restoration, including cross-cutting frameworks related to climate change, biodiversity, land use, water, and disaster risk management. The analysis was primarily desk-based and was informed by stakeholder inputs gathered through questionnaires and a validation workshop. All instruments were assessed against internationally recognised NbS principles, including ecosystem integrity, adaptive management, inclusive governance, equity, and long-term sustainability.

The findings demonstrate that Fiji possesses a comparatively strong enabling policy environment for NbS. High-level instruments such as the C*onstitution, the Climate Change Act 2021, the Environment Management Act 2005, the National Development Plan and Vision 2050, the National Adaptation Plan 2018, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020,2030, and the National Ocean Policy 2020,2030* reflect many NbS-consistent objectives. In particular, Fiji's emphasis on ecosystem-based adaptation, ridge-to-reef management, community-based resource governance, and Indigenous land and marine tenure provides a solid foundation for NbS mainstreaming.

However, the assessment also identifies significant gaps and barriers that limit effective NbS implementation at scale. These include the absence of explicit NbS provisions in many legacy laws; fragmented institutional mandates across forestry, fisheries, environment, lands, agriculture, and infrastructure portfolios; weak coordination mechanisms; limited technical and monitoring capacity; and uncertainty around tenure, consent, and benefit-sharing arrangements, particularly on customary land and in *qoliqoli* areas. In several cases, NbS concepts are recognised in policy but lack clear legal authority, operational guidance, financing mechanisms, or monitoring and evaluation frameworks.

The report finds that these challenges are not primarily conceptual, but structural and institutional. Existing governance systems continue to operate largely in sectoral silos, favouring short-term, engineered, or extractive solutions over integrated, ecosystem-based approaches. Where NbS initiatives are implemented, they are often project-based, donor-driven, and insufficiently embedded within national planning, budgeting, and regulatory systems to ensure durability and scalability.

In response, the report sets out a comprehensive package of evidence-based recommendations to strengthen NbS integration across Fiji's forestry and coastal sectors. These include mainstreaming NbS explicitly within key legislation and policies; embedding NbS assessment requirements within environmental impact assessment and land-use planning processes; operationalising the coordinating powers of the *Climate Change Act* through inter-agency mechanisms; strengthening free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and benefit-sharing arrangements for NbS on customary land; and developing national monitoring, reporting, and verification frameworks capable of capturing ecological, climate, and social co-benefits.

These recommendations are consolidated into a phased strategic roadmap that outlines priority actions, indicative timelines, responsible institutions, and mechanisms for adaptive management. The roadmap emphasises six interlinked domains: policy and legislative reform; planning and implementation; coordination and governance; monitoring and evaluation; financing and incentives; and capacity building and research. Together, these measures are designed to move Fiji from partial and implicit NbS adoption toward a coherent, enforceable, and adaptive NbS governance framework.

The report concludes that Fiji is well positioned to emerge as a regional leader in the application of NbS. By aligning constitutional principles, statutory powers, sectoral mandates, and Indigenous governance systems within a unified NbS framework, Fiji can enhance ecosystem resilience, meet its international climate and biodiversity commitments, and secure long-term social and economic benefits for its people. The successful operationalisation of this framework will require sustained political commitment, institutional coordination, and investment in community-centred implementation and learning.

1. INTRODUCTION

This report has as its objective synthesising the findings, analysis, gaps and opportunities for integrating Nature-based Solutions (NbS) into Fiji's policy and regulatory frameworks for the Forestry and Coastal Protection and Restoration sectors.

In recent years, NbS have gained global recognition as an integrated approach for addressing climate change, biodiversity loss, and sustainable development. They are increasingly seen as essential for achieving national climate adaptation goals, enhancing ecosystem resilience, and supporting community well-being. Within this context, Fiji's forestry and coastal sectors are of strategic importance not only as sources of livelihood and biodiversity but also as frontline systems for climate mitigation and adaptation.

1.1. Background and Purpose

Fiji's natural resource governance frameworks have evolved over several decades, reflecting efforts to balance economic growth, environmental sustainability, and social equity. The forestry sector plays a vital role in maintaining ecosystem integrity, supporting rural livelihoods, and contributing to Fiji's carbon sequestration objectives. Similarly, the coastal protection and restoration sector has become increasingly important in addressing the impacts of coastal erosion, habitat degradation, and climate-induced threats to community resilience.

However, most of the existing policy and legal instruments were developed prior to the emergence of NbS as a unifying framework for integrating ecological, social, and economic objectives. As a result, while several sectoral policies and plans reference ecosystem-based or sustainable resource management concepts, the integration of the principles of NbS remains limited and uneven.

This report seeks to bridge that gap by recommending policy and legislative changes, along with evidence-based institutional reforms, in that they reflect the findings from a comprehensive stock-take and alignment assessment of all relevant legislation, policies, regulations, strategies, and plans that govern the forestry and coastal sectors, together with input from stakeholders. The recommendations are incorporated into a strategic roadmap to guide the integration of NbS across both sectors, outlining priority actions, timelines, responsible institutions, and mechanisms for monitoring, adaptive management, and long-term policy coherence.

Ultimately, this report should contribute to a more coherent, adaptive, and climate-resilient policy environment incorporating NbS principles that support the Government of Fiji's national development priorities and its international commitments under frameworks such as the Paris Agreement, the Post-2020 Global Biodiversity Framework, and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

1.2. Scope and Methodology

The scope of this review encompasses all national-level policy, legal, and strategic instruments relevant to the Forestry and Coastal Protection and Restoration sectors in Fiji. This includes primary and subsidiary legislation, national policies, regulations, strategies, plans, standards, and codes of practice that directly or indirectly influence the management, protection, and restoration of forests and coastal ecosystems. Where appropriate, cross-cutting frameworks such as those related to climate change, biodiversity conservation, land use, and disaster risk management have also been considered to capture policy linkages and interdependencies.

The methodology employed for this deliverable was primarily desk-based and analytical. It involved a systematic stock-take and mapping of existing instruments, followed by a comparative alignment assessment against internationally recognised NbS principles. The analysis focused on identifying areas where NbS concepts are already embedded, where significant policy gaps exist, and where opportunities for policy integration and institutional strengthening can be leveraged. The review and recommendations also drew on national development frameworks, and stakeholder inputs regarding findings and draft recommendations obtained through responses to questionnaires, and stakeholder validation workshop discussions.

1.3. Structure

This report is organised into key sections to provide a logical and coherent flow of analysis and findings. Following this introductory section, Section 2 presents a detailed policy stock-take and mapping of all legislative, regulatory, and policy instruments that are relevant to the health of the Forestry and Coastal Protection and Restoration sectors. Section 3 addresses the hierarchy of policy and law in Fiji and the potential for gaps and barriers in policy and legislation, while Section 4 analyses the alignment of Fiji's relevant policies, legislation, regulations and plans with NbS principles. Section 5 provides the alignment analysis, assessing the extent to which current instruments reflect or enable the integration of NbS principles, while Section 6 outlines the gaps, challenges, and opportunities identified through the review process, and Section 7 presents recommendations and a strategic roadmap for strengthening NbS integration, including proposed actions, responsible institutions, and indicative timelines. The final section offers concluding observations on the implications of the findings for policy coherence, institutional reform, and future implementation.

2. IDENTIFYING FIJI'S RELEVANT POLICY FRAMEWORKS

Globally, there is no single binding definition of *Nature-based Solutions.* The International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) definition is: 'actions to protect, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems, that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously providing wellbeing and biodiversity benefits', and its 2025 principles (revised from 2020) now serve as the main reference for policymakers assessing how NbS concepts are embedded in national systems. These principles emphasise the protection, sustainable management, and restoration of ecosystems to address societal challenges such as climate change, food and water security, and disaster risk through a systems approach with safeguards, while enhancing biodiversity, ecosystem integrity and connectivity, ensuring distributional equity (costs and benefits), and long-term viability through inclusivity in governance and participation (stakeholders, rights-holders and Indigenous Peoples), adaptive management and mainstreaming.

Most of Fiji's resource management laws predate the 2020 global standard and therefore lack explicit provisions that reflect NbS principles. This suggests a clear need for a comprehensive legal and policy analysis to determine how existing forestry and coastal sector laws, regulations, and policies align, whether explicitly or implicitly, with NbS objectives. Mindful that activities from the ridge of the mountains to the reef offshore (R2R) can also result in cumulative impacts on the health of these sectors, this report in the first instance also briefly reviews law and policy that impact the management of natural resources R2R, such as inland waters and soils. Such review is essential to identify reform opportunities, bridge legislative gaps, and guide future policy harmonisation.

Despite the lack of explicit NbS provisions in Fiji's laws, Fiji benefits from a suite of cross-sectoral instruments shaped by its international obligations. Frameworks such as the *Climate Change Act 2021, Environment Management Act 2005, National Development Plan, and Fiji Vision 2050* demonstrate progressive, adaptive approaches consistent with NbS goals. These instruments provide valuable entry points for mainstreaming NbS across sectors through collaborative planning and institutional coordination.

An extensive legal and policy analysis assists in clarifying how Fiji's forest and coastal policy and legislative frameworks can evolve from traditional regulatory models toward ecosystem-based management and resilience frameworks embracing NbS. This process is critical to embedding NbS principles into law and ensuring that sustainable resource governance becomes an operational reality rather than a policy aspiration. The table at Annex 1 summarises the results of interrogating frameworks to identify relationships with the relevant sectors, oversight and overlaps in responsibility for implementation, whether NbS is referenced or reflected in the framework, the nature of the NbS measure(s), provision for meeting NbS criterion 5 (inclusive, transparent and empowering governance processes), tools for implementing/facilitating NbS, and opportunities to meet criterion 7 (evidence-based adaptive management).

3. THE STRUCTURES OF POLICY AND LEGISLATION IN FIJI

3.1. Hierarchies of Law and Policy for NbS in Fiji

Fiji's legislative and policy landscape for NbS is anchored at the highest level by the Constitution, (see Constitutional Preamble 1(h), and Bill of Rights section 40), which provides overarching principles for environmental protection and sustainable resource management, namely that a fundamental value of the Republic of Fiji is a prudent, efficient and sustainable relationship with nature, and thus that every person has the right to a clean and healthy environment and to have Fiji's natural resources protected now and for future generations.

Beneath this supreme law sit two overarching critical national statutes: the Climate Change Act 2021 and the Environment Management Act 2005. These Acts reflect government policies and establish the enabling framework for climate adaptation and mitigation; that is, to safeguard the future of Fiji and its people, ecosystems, and biodiversity in the face of the declared climate emergency, including the protection of natural carbon sinks. They set out the environmental governance and impact assessment processes that shape project implementation in the interests of the preservation of the coastal environment and the protection of areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitat of indigenous fauna, and other specified matters of national importance. Sectoral legislation such as the Forest Act 1992, the Fisheries Act 1941, the iTaukei Lands Act 1905 and the iTaukei Lands Trust Act 1940 further determine access to and management of forests, coastal ecosystems, and customary lands, while planning laws such as the Town and Country Planning Act 1946 and the Land Conservation and Improvement Act 1953 govern land use decisions and therefore may be relevant to NbS.

These statutes are (or should be) reflective of Fiji's national policy frameworks, such as the National Adaptation Plan 2018, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020, and the Fiji Forest Policy 2007. These instruments articulate policy priorities and pathways for integrating NbS into adaptation, biodiversity protection, and sustainable land management, but require legislation to mandate them. At the implementation level, regulations, guidelines, and standards translate national policies, via legislation, into practice while project-level agreements and community protocols support and determine the ground-level success of NbS initiatives.

3.2. Identifying Gaps and Barriers

Barriers in policy may include inconsistent policies and sector policies that omit any mention of either NbS or ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches. In the case of such policy gaps, it is likely that implementing legislation, regulations, plans, guidelines, and institutional protocols would also fail to embrace NbS or EbA approaches. Barriers in the law may include that:

- legislation or legal support for NbS approaches to implement policy is lacking;
- laws exist but they are too narrow in focus or fail to guide NbS approaches or implementation;
- legal systems are too complex; and
- the laws around land tenure systems are conflicting or inadequate[1]

In general, barriers may be institutional, procedural, or substantive.

Institutional barriers in the context of this report concern the distribution of functions and powers across government that may hinder NbS approaches or implementation, such as the absence of binding rules dictating collaborative practices to be followed, the failure to mandate cross-agency decision-making and articulate clear allocations of responsibility for monitoring, evaluation and ongoing (adaptive) management. The result of such siloed governance may be business-as-usual practices, favouring the dominant economic or political interests, and negativing any attempt to transition to NbS.

Procedural barriers include the lack of or inadequate approaches to appropriate community engagement and stakeholder participation, the outcome of which may result in negative attitudes to NbS approaches, resulting also in a lack of NbS awareness and thus hindering the implementation of NbS. Where the policy of free, prior and informed consent is mandated as an approach before NbS projects are considered, this is unlikely to be an issue.

Substantive barriers may exist by virtue of the nature of landowners' and customary rights. This may not be an issue for land under customary ownership as iTaukei owners who are living on the land and operating on customary principles are likely to recognise the need to incorporate NbS approaches to use of the land for the continuing health or restoration of ecosystems, in the interests of the entire community. This is a different situation from land owned under the freehold system, where a private landowner enjoys a private property right that is subject to the land use or development laws, but little else, and thus cannot be ordered to be utilised for NbS in the public interest without compensation being paid. However, where customary-owned land has been leased on behalf of the customary owners, without a condition mandating NbS approaches, a substantive barrier may exist by virtue of the lessee's rights.

While Fiji's constitutional and legal structure as outlined above might appear to create an enabling environment for NbS, it contains barriers. Institutional barriers include overlaps and intersections across ministries, agencies, and customary institutions. For example, mangrove restoration projects must engage simultaneously with fisheries regulations, *qoliqoli* owners, iTaukei Land Trust Board processes, and *Environment Management Act* environmental approvals. Similarly, forest restoration projects fall under both forestry law and customary tenure systems, requiring careful navigation of the dual legal and traditional governance structures. These overlaps, while complex, also provide multiple entry points for mainstreaming NbS into national and local decision-making processes, which, unless coordinated, are likely to lead to fragmented and uncoordinated approaches with little or no monitoring or evaluation.

However, significant gaps remain. Tenure complexity on iTaukei land and in *qoliqoli* areas continues to complicate long-term security for NbS projects. Institutional fragmentation across ministries weakens coordination and creates uncertainty around accountability. The absence of a consolidated Protected Areas statute means that critical ecosystems are governed by a patchwork of provisions, undermining consistent protection. Further, regulatory and technical capacity constraints, particularly in environmental assessment, enforcement, and monitoring of ecosystem services, limit the scaling of NbS beyond pilot projects.

Addressing these challenges requires targeted legal and institutional reforms. Priority should be given to fully operationalising the *Climate Change Act* coordinating powers (Part 4, section 12) [1] to create a formal inter-agency NbS mechanism. Integrating NbS into environmental assessment guidelines under the *Environment Management Act* would ensure they are systematically considered in project design and approvals. Finalising and enacting the new Forestry Bill (2025) with explicit recognition of ecosystem services and benefit-sharing frameworks would provide legal clarity for forest-based NbS. Standardising consent and benefit-sharing agreements through the iTaukei Land Trust Board and Fisheries authorities would reduce transaction costs and strengthen community partnerships. Finally, enacting dedicated Protected Areas legislation, or harmonised cross-sectoral regulations, would address current fragmentation and safeguard NbS sites across land,sea interfaces.

In summary, Fiji's legislative architecture provides a strong foundation for advancing NbS, but it requires coordinated refinement to overcome tenure, institutional, and regulatory gaps. By aligning constitutional principles, statutory powers, sectoral mandates, and community and indigenous rights within a coherent NbS governance framework, Fiji could better protect, and harness the resilience of its forests and coasts to confront climate change and secure sustainable livelihoods for its people.

[1] The official Laws of Fiji website states that the Climate Change Act 2021 (No 43 of 2021) has not commenced [https://www.laws.gov.fj/Acts/DisplayAct/3290 ; last accessed 14/1/2026]. The Ministry of Environment and Climate Change Facebook post of 4 April 2025 states that 13 of the 17 parts of the Climate Change Act commenced on that date; the exclusions being Parts 5, 10, 11 and 15. This appears to reflect the Commencement Notice issued under the Climate Change Act [Legal Notice No. 19] by the Minister for Environment and Climate Change dated the 2nd April 2025 [https://www.paclii.org/fj/legis/sub_leg/cca2021cnl192025304 ; last accessed 14/1/2026].

4. ANALYSIS: ALIGNMENT TO NbS PRINCIPLES

The alignment to NbS principles assessment provides a structured evaluation of how Fiji's national and sectoral policies, strategies, and legislative instruments integrate or reflect NbS approaches across the forestry, coastal, and related sectors. Anchored in the IUCN Global Standard for NbS, the analysis assesses the extent to which each policy or legal framework embodies core NbS principles such as ecosystem integrity, adaptive management, inclusive governance, and equitable benefit-sharing. Key instruments examined include the Climate Change Act, Environment Management Act, Fiji Forest Policy Framework, and the National Adaptation Plan (2018), with a focus on understanding their support for ecosystem-based design, resilience, and climate adaptation outcomes.

Each policy and regulatory instrument was interrogated to identify areas of alignment, partial reflection, or absence of NbS provisions. The results were summarised in Table 1 addressing policy coherence, institutional responsibilities, and potential barriers or inconsistencies that may affect the operationalisation of NbS measures across forestry and coastal management. This evidence-based assessment highlights where existing policies enable ecosystem-based approaches, as well as gaps that present opportunities for strengthening the integration of NbS principles in national planning and sectoral implementation.

Table 1: ***NbS Integration Analysis***

Sector	Policy / Instrument	Reflection / Reference of NbS Principles	Gaps or Barriers to NbS Approach or Integration	Inconsistencies with Other Policy / Instrument	Opportunities for Integration NbS	Potential Policy Entry Point for NbS	Inclusivity: engagement / consultation / FPIC	NbS Alignment
Cross-sectoral	Climate Change Act 2021	Explicitly references EbA and enables NbS within adaptation planning	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Mangrove restoration, reforestation, ecosystem-based flood management	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Requires community consultation and provisions for FPIC where applicable	High
Water / Drainage	Drainage Act 1961	No explicit NbS references; opportunities for green infrastructure integration	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Natural drainage restoration, riparian vegetation buffers	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Limited statutory community engagement provisions; local consultation common	High
Environment	Environment Management Act (2005)	Promotes ecosystem protection; supports NbS principles implicitly	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Protected area designation, habitat restoration, riparian buffers	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Mandatory public consultation for EIA processes	High
Agriculture	Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda (2014)	References sustainable land management; NbS implicit in practices	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Agroforestry, soil conservation, contour planting	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Farmer engagement and extension services used for planning	High
Cross-sectoral	Fiji Green Growth Framework (2014)	Explicitly promotes NbS as part of green growth interventions	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Forest carbon projects, mangrove protection, ecosystem restoration	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Public-private-community engagement promoted	High
Mining	Fiji Mining Act (1965)	No NbS focus; rehabilitation and environmental management required	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Mine site rehabilitation, revegetation and erosion control	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	EIA public consultation processes require limited engagement	High

Sector	Policy / Instrument	Reflection / Reference of NbS Principles	Gaps or Barriers to NbS Approach or Integration	Inconsistencies with Other Policy / Instrument	Opportunities for Integration NbS	Potential Policy Entry Point for NbS	Inclusivity: engagement / consultation / FPIC	NbS Alignment
National Planning	Fiji National Development Plan (NDP) & Fiji Vision 2050	Supports NbS through green economy and resilience objectives	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Large-scale reforestation, coastal buffers, blue carbon initiatives	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Nationwide consultations during NDP development	High
Housing	National Housing Policy (2025,2030)	References green infrastructure but NbS mention is limited	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Urban greening, retention basins, coastal setback buffers	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community consultation in housing developments	High
Forestry / Climate	Fiji REDD+ Policy (2010)	Strong NbS alignment via forest-based mitigation and adaptation	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Afforestation, reforestation, community forest management for carbon	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community-based management and FPIC procedures in REDD+ projects	High
Infrastructure	Fiji Roads Act (1914)	No explicit NbS language; opportunities for green engineering exist	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Road corridor replanting, erosion control and bioengineering	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Limited statutory community engagement; project consultations common	High
Fisheries	Fisheries Act (1941)	Implicit NbS support through habitat protection and MPAs	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Mangrove rehabilitation, coral restoration and MPAs	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Strong customary and community fisheries engagement	High
Forestry	Forestry Act (1992)	Supports restoration and sustainable forest management (NbS aligned)	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Afforestation, reforestation, sustainable harvesting practices	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community forestry engagement and iTaukei involvement via iTLTB	High
Forestry / Certification	FSC Interim Forest Stewardship Standard (IFSS) 2024	Explicit NbS principles embedded in certification criteria	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Biodiversity protection, restoration and sustainable harvesting	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	FPIC and stakeholder consultation central to certification	High

Sector	Policy / Instrument	Reflection / Reference of NbS Principles	Gaps or Barriers to NbS Approach or Integration	Inconsistencies with Other Policy / Instrument	Opportunities for Integration NbS	Potential Policy Entry Point for NbS	Inclusivity: engagement / consultation / FPIC	NbS Alignment
Coastal / Mangroves	Mangrove Management Plan for Fiji (2013)	NbS-focused; promotes ecosystem-based coastal protection	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Mangrove planting, conservation, buffer zoning	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community-based mangrove management and stewardship	High
Climate / Adaptation	National Adaptation Plan (2018)	Explicitly promotes EbA and NbS approaches in adaptation	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Ecosystem restoration, wetland and mangrove rehabilitation	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Local-level participatory adaptation planning emphasised	High
Biodiversity	NBSAP 2020,2030	Strong NbS orientation for conservation and restoration	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Habitat restoration, invasive species control, protected areas	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community-managed protected areas and participatory approaches	High
Forestry	National Forest Policy (2007)	References ecosystem services and sustainable management (NbS relevant)	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Forest protection, plantation establishment and restoration	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community forestry initiatives and consultations	High
Coastal / Ocean	National Ocean Policy (2020,2030)	Strong emphasis on ecosystem-based management (NbS)	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Seagrass, mangrove and reef restoration; marine protected areas	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community consultations and inclusion of traditional knowledge	High
Fisheries	Offshore Fisheries Management Act (2012)	No explicit NbS focus; habitat considerations present	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Ecosystem-based fishery management and habitat protection	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Limited direct community engagement for offshore zones	High
Coastal / ICZM	ICM Framework (2011)	Explicitly NbS-aligned; core NbS framework for coastlines	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Dune stabilisation, mangrove & coral rehabilitation, buffer zones	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Participatory coastal planning with communities and stakeholders	High

Sector	Policy / Instrument	Reflection / Reference of NbS Principles	Gaps or Barriers to NbS Approach or Integration	Inconsistencies with Other Policy / Instrument	Opportunities for Integration NbS	Potential Policy Entry Point for NbS	Inclusivity: engagement / consultation / FPIC	NbS Alignment
Land / Customary	iTaukei Land Act (1905)	No direct NbS text; customary land rights crucial for NbS projects	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Community-led restoration, customary stewardship	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	FPIC and mataqali consent procedures required	High
Land / Customary	iTaukei Land Trust Act (1940)	No explicit NbS references; leases can enable NbS activities	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Leases for restoration projects, community benefit-sharing	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	FPIC and leaseholder consultations are required	High
Land / Agriculture	Land Conservation and Improvement Act (1953)	Supports NbS through soil and vegetative conservation measures	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Contour planting, reforestation, terraces and vegetative cover	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Farmer and community involvement through landcare programs	High
Finance / Climate	National Climate Finance Strategy (2022,2029)	Directs financing toward NbS and EbA-eligible projects	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Grants and blended finance for restoration and blue carbon	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Stakeholder engagement required for funded projects	High
Water / Rivers	Rivers and Streams Act (1880)	No explicit NbS mention; restoration potential exists	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Riparian buffer planting and re-meandering where feasible	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Limited community processes historically; local consultation occurring	High
Land / Rural	Rural Land Use Policy (2005)	Promotes sustainable land management; NbS alignment implicit	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Agroforestry, village woodlots, erosion control	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community land-use planning and participatory mapping	High
Land / State	State Lands Act	No direct NbS text; state lands can host NbS projects	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: State-led reforestation and urban greening	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Public consultation on major allocations	High

Sector	Policy / Instrument	Reflection / Reference of NbS Principles	Gaps or Barriers to NbS Approach or Integration	Inconsistencies with Other Policy / Instrument	Opportunities for Integration NbS	Potential Policy Entry Point for NbS	Inclusivity: engagement / consultation / FPIC	NbS Alignment
Land / Soil	Sustainable Land Management Framework (2012)	Explicitly supports NbS via SLM practices	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Soil restoration, reforestation, erosion control	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community-driven SLM and participatory planning	High
Water / Infrastructure	Waterways, Drainage and Irrigation Programme Policy (2020)	Encourages eco-engineering and NbS in water projects	Institutional capacity and funding constraints	Overlap with sectoral mandates; need harmonisation	Scale up: Riparian replanting, constructed wetlands, buffer zones	National Adaptation Plan / Sectoral plans / NDP	Community participation in irrigation and drainage planning	High

Table 1 provides a demonstration for the Gaps and Opportunities Analysis (see below), which examines strategic entry points for embedding NbS across Fiji's forestry and coastal sectors. This stage focuses on enhancing cross-sectoral coordination, addressing policy gaps, and strengthening mechanisms for stakeholder participation, including customary landowners and local communities, to ensure NbS measures are effectively implemented, monitored, and sustained. The approach ensures that NbS principles are not only reflected in policy documents but also operationalised in a manner that supports ecological resilience, social equity, and sustainable development outcomes.

The principal overarching legislation is the Climate Change Act (not yet fully in operation[2]) and the Environment Management Act (recognised as needing updating).

The Climate Change Act sets out a framework for a whole-of-government approach to address the climate emergency in Fiji, which would strongly encourage NbS approaches if it were fully operational. Under it, the principles that must be applied by all responsible persons and bodies whenever making policy and implementing decisions under the Act include: respect for, promotion and consideration of the constitutional rights and freedoms; that measures to protect against climate change should be appropriate for Fiji; gender equality, social inclusion, and participation of the people in decision-making, along with recognition of the indigenous peoples, their land ownership, unique cultures, customs, traditions and languages, thus aligning with the NbS concept. The Act acknowledges that healthy oceans are an urgent priority. Significantly, the Act also requires that all State ministers must promote the achievement of sectoral GHG emissions reductions (Part 1, s.4), and that all State entities must ensure decisions, policies, programmes and processes are consistent with achieving the Act's objectives (Part 5, s.18). Specifically, in relation to proposals for new infrastructure, under the Act all ministers and State entities may only decide to approve an infrastructure proposal if it is consistent with the mandatory climate risk and resilience assessment of the proposal (Part 11, s.71). It also establishes a National Climate Change Committee (Part 4, s.12) with a collaborative, assistive, supportive, and advisory role, comprising the Climate Change director and permanent secretary along with representatives from other ministries, departments and State agencies. Once established the Committee will have extensive functions (and powers) in the interests of implementing the Act across Government, including ensuring the creation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of relevant sector plans.

The Environment Management Act binds the State, and its application cannot be limited. Its purposes are to apply the principles of sustainable use and development of natural resources, and to identify matters of national importance (MNI) for Fiji. The latter are identified in the legislation and include the preservation of the coastal environment and areas of significant indigenous vegetation and significant habitat of indigenous fauna, the relationship of iTaukei with their ancestral lands and waters, and the protection of human life and health. The environmental impact assessment (EIA) process must be followed for a proposed activity or undertaking that will cause, in the determination of the approving authority, a significant environmental or resource management impact. Where the proposal could (in addition to other natural resources impacts) result in, for example, the erosion of any coast or foreshore, pollution of marine waters, alteration of natural processes of the sea including mangrove areas and foreshore, harm to or destruction of designated or proposed protected areas including mangrove conservation areas, fishing grounds, fish nursery areas, or destruction of or damage to an ecosystem of national importance including a seagrass bed, mangrove swamp, pelagic ecosystem and estuary, an EIA must be conducted, reviewed and approved before further consideration by the approving authority.

Once the Climate Change Act is fully in force, an EIA required under the Environment Management Act for a proposal for new infrastructure must include an assessment of material GHG emissions, increased climate vulnerability of the surrounding areas (including upstream and downstream) and potential adverse impacts of climate change on the infrastructure, if any of these consequences might result (Part 5, s. 22, Climate Change Act), and Part 11, s.71 Climate Change Act would apply requiring a climate risk and resilience assessment to be conducted on the proposal. Under the Environment Management Act, the Department of Environment is charged with monitoring the conditions of approval of EIAs, preventing dumping and pollution, and monitoring the status of mangroves as a natural resource.

2 See note 1, above.

Having regard to the hierarchy where in theory, policy precedes legislation, regulation, plans, guidelines and protocols, the report will now focus on the policy frameworks relevant to the forestry and coastal protection sectors, by which NbS approaches could be mainstreamed. They are set out in Table 2 below.

Table 2: ***NbS References in Relevant Policy Frameworks***

Sector	Policy	Year	Reference to NbS/EbA
Cross-sectoral	Fiji Green Growth Framework	2014	Explicitly promotes green growth (integrated and inclusive development that is sustainable), incorporating principles of NbS.
Cross-sectoral	Fiji National Development Plan (NDP) & Fiji Vision 2050	2025	Supports NbS to increase ecosystem protection and long-term environmental resilience
Cross-sectoral	National Climate Change Policy 2018-2030	2018	Promotes NbS as a climate adaptation strategy
Cross-sectoral	National Environment Strategy	1993	None- but supports NRM approaches
Cross-sectoral	National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2018-2030	2018	Supports NbS via tree & mangrove planting campaigns (see: Green Growth F/work) for DRR and RDR
Forestry	Fiji REDD+ Policy	2010	None , but Strong NbS alignment via forest-based mitigation and adaptation for CC National Forest Policy
Forestry	National Forest Policy	2014	None , but encourages adoption of ecosystem -based management approaches
Coastal	National Ocean Policy 2020, 2030	2020	Strong emphasis on ecosystem-based management (NbS)
Coastal	Integrated Coastal Management Framework	2011	Explicitly NbS-aligned; core NbS framework for coastlines.
Coastal	Fiji Water Sector Strategy 2050	2024	Prioritise NbS in water treatment, recycling for circular economy and sanitation in some settlements

The principal provisions emerging from the reviewed policy frameworks demonstrate Fiji's progressive integration of NbS and ecosystem-based adaptation (EbA) approaches across key national sectors.

At the cross-sectoral level, the Fiji Green Growth Framework (2014) provides the earliest and most explicit reference to NbS, positioning it as a core mechanism for promoting sustainable economic development through environmental stewardship. This approach is further strengthened in the National Development Plan and Fiji Vision 2050 (2025), which embed NbS principles within broader national objectives for a green economy, climate resilience, and sustainable livelihoods. Similarly, the National Climate Change Policy 2018,2030 identifies NbS as a central adaptation strategy, aligning natural resource management and biodiversity conservation with

Fiji's mitigation and adaptation commitments under the Paris Agreement. Although the National Environment Strategy (1993) predates the formal NbS concept, it nonetheless supports natural resource management approaches consistent with the later NbS principles. The National Disaster Risk Reduction Policy 2018,2030 also operationalises NbS measures through activities such as mangrove reforestation, watershed restoration, and community-based ecosystem rehabilitation to reduce vulnerability to disasters.

In the forestry sector, while neither the Fiji REDD+ Policy (2010) nor the National Forest Policy 2014 explicitly mentions NbS, both frameworks strongly align with NbS principles. They promote forest-based mitigation and adaptation measures, emphasising sustainable forest management, ecosystem restoration, and carbon sequestration as key tools for climate action. These policies highlight the forest sector's pivotal role in delivering multiple ecosystem services that underpin climate resilience and community well-being.

Within the coastal and marine domain, the National Ocean Policy and the Integrated Coastal Management Framework 2011, provide some of the most direct articulations of NbS in Fiji's policy landscape. Both frameworks emphasise ecosystem-based management of marine and coastal areas, promoting coral reef and mangrove restoration, sustainable fisheries, and community-led coastal zone planning as integral adaptation and conservation strategies.

The Fiji Water Sector Strategy 2050 (2024), recognising the impacts of climate change and the negative impacts of activities from ridge to reef on water quality, biodiversity, and ocean health, extends NbS application into water governance, prioritising nature-based interventions such as wetland restoration, green infrastructure, and water recycling to promote a circular and climate-resilient economy.

Collectively, these frameworks reflect a coherent and evolving policy trajectory toward mainstreaming NbS across Fiji's national planning systems, linking ecological integrity with climate resilience, disaster risk reduction, and sustainable development.

5. GAPS AND BARRIERS, CHALLENGES/INCONSISTENCIES, AND OPPORTUNITIES

5.1. Gaps and Barriers

While policy recognition of NbS has increased, implementation remains constrained by legislation that needs updating (or in the case of the Climate Change Act needs to be brought fully and practically into operation with regulations and guidelines), institutional fragmentation, gaps in technical capacities, and weak coordination mechanisms.

Despite growing awareness and inclusion of NbS in Fiji's national and sectoral frameworks, significant operational gaps persist. Many policies within the mentioned resource sectors reference the NbS conceptually but lack clear implementation pathways, dedicated budgets, and measurable indicators. The absence of integrated institutional mandates has resulted in fragmented responsibilities across government agencies, particularly within the Ministries of Forestry, Agriculture, Lands, and Environment. This fragmentation impedes effective coordination, monitoring, and data sharing. Technical and human resource limitations at the provincial and community levels also reduce the ability to design and implement NbS interventions at scale. Moreover, there are inadequate monitoring and evaluation systems to track performance and co-benefits, particularly in linking NbS outcomes to climate adaptation, biodiversity conservation, and livelihood improvement and adapting interventions for improved outcomes and scaling. Without a harmonised national coordination mechanism or cross-sectoral roadmap, the scaling of NbS across multiple governance levels remains inconsistent and slow.

5.2. Challenges and Inconsistencies

Inconsistencies between policy intent and practical implementation continue to weaken NbS integration, compounded by conflicting land-use priorities, short-term project cycles, and limited recognition of Indigenous governance systems. Challenges include technical capacity and financial resources.

Although national strategies such as the Fiji National Development Plan and Vision 2050 emphasise sustainable and resilient development, sectoral implementation often prioritises short-term economic or infrastructural objectives over long-term ecosystem integrity. Many legislative instruments continue to operate in silos, with limited coordination between terrestrial, coastal, and marine sectors. Competing sectoral interests such as agricultural expansion, resource extraction, and tourism development frequently undermine or displace NbS interventions that depend on maintaining natural ecosystems. These policy and institutional inconsistencies are further exacerbated by high staff turnover, limited continuity between project cycles, and donor-driven approaches that are not always aligned with national priorities. Additionally, the under-representation of customary institutions and Indigenous ecological knowledge within formal frameworks weakens local ownership and the long-term sustainability of NbS outcomes. These disconnects between modern governance structures and traditional systems presents both a practical and cultural challenge to cohesive NbS implementation.

5.3. Stakeholder Feedback

Questionnaire responses from stakeholders (Annex 2) during early stages of the project and during the validation exercise were consistent and articulated repeatedly. The questionnaire responses are summarised at Annex 3, with the feedback from workshop group discussions briefly summarised at Annex 4 of this report. Fiji can strengthen Nature-based Solutions (NbS) by aligning key laws and policies, integrating land, water, and forestry planning, and embedding customary land and community participation. Scaling is limited by fragmented data, weak technical capacity, overlapping mandates, and reliance on donor funding. Priority actions include revising legislation, establishing a national NbS coordination platform, creating sustainable financing mechanisms, unifying MRV systems, and formalising gender and social inclusion. Together, these steps provide a coordinated, inclusive, and well-resourced framework to enable effective and sustainable NbS adoption.

Stakeholder consultations show that NbS in Fiji are still in early stages and fragmented. In forestry, opportunities exist through the proposed Forest Bill and updates to the Mahogany Industry Development Act, but unclear institutional roles, especially enforcement by forest wardens, limit progress. Women's contributions to forestry are underrepresented, and land-use planning decisions often prioritise short-term economic gains over ecosystem health. Weak inter-ministerial coordination, lack of a lead NbS agency, and insufficient management plans for forests and reserves further restrict access to climate and NbS funding, despite strong potential for community-based and traditional management approaches.

In the coastal sector, misalignment between legislation (e.g., Environment Management Act), and policy (e.g., NBSAP) hinders integrated coastal management. Critical gaps include the absence of a dedicated mangrove protection framework, inconsistent mangrove mapping, and limited policy reviews. Provincial Conservation Officers support implementation but lack resources and technical support. Fragmented mandates and siloed agencies impede NbS uptake, with stakeholders recommending strengthening existing coordination platforms rather than creating new committees. Key priorities include improved land-use zoning, mandatory mangrove management plans, and ridge-to-reef spatial planning.

A national land use policy would assist to integrate NbS approaches across sectors. The absence of an overarching policy remains a major barrier, leading to fragmented decisions and conflicts between sectors. The existing Rural Land Use Policy by definition is inadequate for integrated R2R planning for NbS to benefit the coastal sector. Communities are willing to engage in NbS initiatives, but unclear governance and responsibilities limit participation. Strengthening monitoring, evaluation, and data systems, particularly ecological valuation and cost,benefit analysis, is essential to improve policy coherence, guide budgeting, and access international NbS and climate finance.

5.4. Opportunities

Emerging policy reforms, climate financing avenues, and the recognition of Indigenous-led solutions provide a strong foundation to mainstream NbS as a central development strategy.

Fiji's ongoing policy reform processes present a timely opportunity to embed NbS as a core component of climate and development planning. Updates to the National Adaptation Plan and Vision 2050, and Climate Change Policy frameworks offer platforms to integrate NbS into national programming, financing, and monitoring systems. International momentum and donor interest in funding NbS-related initiatives, including initiatives related to the blue and green economies, further enhance this opportunity. Establishing an inter-ministerial NbS coordination taskforce or utilising the National Climate Change Coordination Committee proposed under the Climate Change Act could result in a coherent approach across sectors and facilitate data and resource sharing. Targeted capacity development for local governments, civil society, and community institutions would also help translate policy commitments into tangible on-ground outcomes. Importantly, integrating Indigenous and community-led governance mechanisms provides a culturally resonant pathway to achieve environmental, social, and economic co-benefits. Aligning Fiji's broader priorities on food security, sustainable tourism, and coastal resilience with NbS could result in an holistic vision for an inclusive and climate-resilient future.

It is further noted that the Minister for Climate Change has the power to make and implement regulations, policies, measures and actions that promote an evidence-based approach to the conservation and restoration of Fiji's internal waters (as well as its archipelagic waters, territorial seas, etc.) under the Climate Change Act (Part 13, s.84), which presents an opportunity for NbS approaches to coastal protection and restoration.

6. EVIDENCE-BASED RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1. Legislation and Policy Frameworks

The following are general recommendations based on the analyses above, for integrating NbS into forestry and coastal protection sectors and related policy and planning frameworks. The recommendations are provided in summary form at Annex 5 of this report.

1. *Climate Change Act 2021*

Observation: Recognises climate risks and mandates adaptation and mitigation actions but lacks explicit integration of NbS at national and subnational levels.

Recommendations:

- Embed NbS principles in ecosystem restoration, mangrove rehabilitation, forest carbon projects, and urban green infrastructure as recognised adaptation and mitigation measures.
- Integrate NbS indicators and metrics into national MRV systems for NDC compliance and reporting (NDC Implementation Roadmap 2017,2030).
- Develop guidelines for NbS project eligibility under national climate finance mechanisms.
- Encourage local government-led pilot NbS initiatives in flood-prone and erosion-prone areas.

2. *Drainage Act 1961, and Waterways Management Regulation 2018*

Observation: These focus on engineered drainage and neglect ecological functions of wetlands and riparian systems.

Recommendations:

- Amend legislation to promote hybrid drainage approaches using green infrastructure (wetlands, riparian buffers) as primary flood mitigation mechanisms.
- Establish community-based watershed restoration programs supported under the Waterways, *Drainage and Irrigation Programme Policy* (2020).
- Introduce incentives for private landowners to maintain natural drainage corridors and riparian vegetation.
- Integrate NbS performance indicators (flood reduction, water quality improvement) into national reporting frameworks.

3. *Environment Management Act 2005*

Observation: Provides broad environmental management framework but lacks explicit reference to NbS in EIA or project approval processes.

Recommendations:

- Revise EIA regulations to require evaluation of NbS alternatives for all development projects.
- Recognise NbS as certified tools for reforestation, watershed protection, and coastal zone management (NBSAP 2020,2030).
- Introduce NbS-specific compliance incentives for developers adopting ecosystem-based measures.
- Establish a national NbS registry to track implementation and outcomes.

4. *Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda (2014)*

Observation: Emphasises productivity and climate resilience but limited ecosystem service integration.

Recommendations:

- Promote approaches such as agroforestry, regenerative agriculture, and silvopastoral systems as NbS to improve soil health, biodiversity, and coastal protection.
- Align the Policy Agenda with the National Adaptation Plan (2018) and Sustainable Land Management Framework (2012)
- Introduce farmer training programs and financial incentives for NbS adoption.
- Develop measurable NbS indicators linking agricultural practices to carbon sequestration and soil erosion reduction.

5. F*iji Green Growth Framework (2014)*

Observation: Encourages low-carbon and inclusive development; partial recognition of NbS principles.

Recommendations:

- Establish restoration and reforestation targets with measurable NbS indicators.
- Incentivise private sector investment in NbS, carbon sequestration, and ecosystem service projects (*National Climate Finance Strategy 2022,2029*).
- Integrate NbS considerations into national low-carbon development roadmaps.
- Promote multi-sectoral coordination to ensure NbS outcomes contribute to climate, biodiversity, and socio-economic objectives.

6. *Mining Act 1965*

Observation: Focused on mineral extraction with weak ecological safeguards.

Recommendations:

- Mandate post-mining ecosystem rehabilitation using NbS approaches (e.g., reforestation, slope stabilisation, wetland restoration).
- Require NbS-based compensation for environmental impacts under the *Environmental Management (EIA) Regulations 2008*, or require financial guarantee (bond).
- Integrate NbS planning into mining licenses/leases and environmental approvals.
- Encourage community co-management of restored ecosystems and benefit-sharing of carbon or biodiversity credits.

7. N*ational Development Plan (2025-2029), and Vision 2050*

Observation: Provides medium-term development vision with some focus on sustainable management but lacks systematic NbS mainstreaming. Limited mention of NbS.

Recommendations:

- Integrate NbS into strategic objectives for land use, forestry, coastal resilience, and urban planning.
- Align with climate, biodiversity, and economic development policies.
- Establish multi-sectoral NbS coordination mechanisms.
- Develop monitoring frameworks to track NbS contributions to national development targets.

8. *National Housing Policy 2025,2030*

Observation: Focus on urban development; recognises urban resilience but underutilises natural systems.

Recommendations:

- Require NbS through, e.g., urban green corridors, mangrove buffers, and reforestation for urban and peri-urban settlement planning.
- Link housing projects to ecosystem services assessments and hazard reduction metrics.
- Incorporate NbS performance indicators in municipal building codes and zoning regulations.

9. *REDD+ Policy (2010)*

Observation: Supports Forest carbon initiatives, but coastal ecosystem integration is limited.

Recommendations:

- Bring the *Climate Change Act* fully into operation with regulations.
- Expand REDD+ programs to include mangrove, seagrass, and wetland restoration.
- Support community-managed forest ecosystems with equitable carbon benefit-sharing.
- Integrate NbS into forest monitoring and reporting requirements.
- Develop guidelines for combining REDD+ and coastal NbS interventions.

10. *Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012, and National Fisheries Policy 2024-2028*

Observation: These lack habitat restoration and integration initiatives. The Policy promotes the management of coastal areas through community-based management, while recognising conflicting environmental policies.

Recommendations:

- Promote evidence-based mangrove and seagrass restoration actions as NbS for fish stock enhancement and shoreline protection.
- Strengthen co-management frameworks with traditional custodians under the *iQoliqoli* areas.
- Include NbS in fisheries management plans and licensing conditions.

11. *Forest Act 1992 and Forestry Strategic Development Plan 2017-2030*

Observation: These provide a forest management framework, partially integrate a sustainable management approach, and incorporate sustainable logging practice approaches.

Recommendations:

- Embed NbS principles of restoration, biodiversity corridors, and carbon enhancement.
- Develop community benefit-sharing mechanisms for carbon and ecosystem services.
- Promote landscape-level connectivity for biodiversity conservation.
- Bring the *Climate Change Act 2021* fully into operation; finalise and enact the Forestry Bill (2025).

12. *National Adaptation Plan (2018)*

Observation: Recognises NbS but requires stronger cross-sectoral integration.

Recommendations:

- Use the National Adaptation Plan as the anchor for mainstreaming NbS in forestry, agriculture, coastal, and infrastructure sectors.
- Harmonise NbS monitoring indicators with national climate and biodiversity targets.
- Promote NbS pilot projects across vulnerable communities for scalable adaptation solutions.

13. *National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020,2030*

Observation: Supports ecosystem-based management but lacks operational NbS linkages

Recommendations:

- Directly connect biodiversity targets to NbS projects (forest restoration, mangrove rehabilitation, coral reef recovery).
- Integrate ecosystem service valuation into NbS monitoring frameworks.
- Encourage multi-sectoral coordination to align biodiversity, climate, and coastal management objectives.

14. *National Forest Policy (2007)*

Observation: Provides Forest management guidance but lacks explicit NbS framing.

Recommendation:

- Revise to integrate NbS as a central principle, emphasising forest restoration, carbon sequestration, community co-management, and ecosystem service valuation.

15. *National Ocean Policy 2020,2030, and Integrated Coastal Management Framework 2011*

Observation: These support integrated coastal management with NbS partially referenced.

Recommendation:

- Strengthen NbS approaches for implementing shoreline protection, reef restoration, and mangrove rehabilitation measures. Use integrated coastal monitoring to track NbS effectiveness.

16. *iTaukei Affairs Act 1944, iTaukei Lands Act 1905, and iTaukei Land Trust Act 1940*

Observation: These confirm and protect customary land ownership through control and management, but lack environmental stewardship guidance.

Recommendations:

- Incorporate the concept of NbS into policy formulation functions for provincial, tikina, and village councils, and by-law-making powers.
- Promote community capacity-building for NbS governance.
- Review forms of leases and licences to include standard conditions to protect the environment and ecosystems (noting the SPREP-supported current work on the development of a Natural Resource and Environmental Management Policy for TLTB[1]).
- Institutionalise FPIC for NbS interventions on iTaukei land.
- Establish benefit-sharing mechanisms for ecosystem services and carbon projects.

17. *Land Conservation and Improvement Act 1953, and Sustainable Land Management Framework 2012*

Observation: These address soil and erosion control but lack modern NbS references.

Recommendations:

- Promote integrated watershed and slope management using NbS (agroforestry, terracing, forest buffers).
- Link NbS interventions to climate adaptation and disaster risk reduction objectives.

18. *National Climate Finance Strategy 2022,2029*

Observation: Recognises NbS as eligible but limited disbursement mechanisms.

Recommendations:

- Create dedicated NbS funding windows for forest, wetland, and coastal restoration.
- Leverage GCF, GEF, private sector green bonds, and REDD+ funds.
- Prioritise community-led NbS projects with co-benefit indicators.

19. *Rivers and Streams Act 1880, and Waterways, Drainage and Irrigation Programme Policy (2020)*

Observation: These prioritises water control structures over ecological functions.

Recommendations:

- Integrate riparian vegetation restoration, floodplain wetlands, and natural riverbank stabilisation as NbS for disaster risk reduction and water quality improvement.
- Include NbS in national flood risk management plans and community-level hazard mitigation programs.

20. *Rural Land Use Policy for Fiji (2006), and State Lands Act 1945*

Observation: The Policy recognises the need for conservation and protection of natural resources and eco-systems. The Act guides land allocation but lacks ecological zoning provisions.

Recommendations:

- Integrate NbS into rural development planning and land-use permits.

6.2. Cross-Cutting Recommendations

1. **Mainstream NbS:** Revise sectoral policies, laws and regulations to recognise NbS as a formal adaptation and mitigation strategy aligned with Paris Agreement 2015, and the *National Adaptation Plan (2018).*
2. **Community Engagement & FPIC:** Ensure full participation of customary landowners and coastal communities in NbS design, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, adaptive re-design and benefit-sharing.
3. **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Develop MRV frameworks with NbS-specific indicators for carbon storage, ecosystem health, and disaster risk reduction performance; harmonise with NDC Implementation Roadmap 2017,2030.
4. **Cross-Sectoral Coordination:** Establish an NbS Interagency Taskforce linking forestry, agriculture, fisheries, housing, and infrastructure portfolios.
5. **Financing Mechanisms:** Prioritise NbS investments within national climate budgets and external financing instruments (*National Climate Finance Strategy (2022)*, REDD+ pipelines, Green Climate Fund (GCF), Global Environment Facility (GEF), and private green bonds).
6. **Capacity & Research:** Strengthen institutional and community capacity to design, monitor, and upscale NbS interventions, supported by research partnerships with the University of the South Pacific, the Pacific Community (SPC), and IUCN; include technical guidelines for ecosystem service valuation and NbS implementation.

6.3. Strengthening Institutional Practices

The systematic integration of NbS into Fiji's national policy and planning frameworks requires targeted reforms across six institutional domains. Strengthening these practices will enhance coherence, accountability, and adaptive capacity across forestry, coastal resilience, and related sectors. The necessary measures are summarised below and in Table 3.

Policy and Regulatory Reform: Laws, policies, and regulations should be harmonised to embed NbS principles. This includes mainstreaming NbS in national development plans and sectoral frameworks, integrating compliance criteria into EIAs, permits, and licences, and establishing NbS-specific guidelines and indicators. Agencies such as the Department of Environment, Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Agriculture, and Ministry of Waterways are central to these reforms.

Planning and Implementation: NbS must be integrated into spatial, urban, coastal, and land-use planning. Using ecosystem service valuation and hybrid infrastructure approaches in project design, and embedding NbS in zoning, building codes, and permits, will ensure development aligns with ecological and community resilience goals. Town planning, agriculture, and forestry ministries lead these practices.

Coordination and Governance: Effective implementation requires multi-sectoral coordination through interagency taskforces, shared monitoring systems, and cross-sectoral data platforms. Incorporating customary governance structures and institutionalising free, prior and Informed consent (FPIC) processes for NbS on customary lands will enhance participatory decision-making and alignment with Indigenous institutions.

Monitoring, Reporting, and Evaluation: Establishing NbS-specific MRV frameworks, performance indicators (carbon, ecosystem health, disaster reduction, co-benefits), and a national NbS registry will strengthen evidence-based policy and adaptive management. Ministries responsible for climate, environment, and development are central actors.

Financing and Resource Allocation: Sustainability requires dedicated NbS funding windows, integration into national climate finance frameworks, and incentives for private sector and community uptake, including grants, tax benefits, and carbon credit mechanisms. Financial guarantees for ecosystem restoration and mainstreaming NbS into budget and investment planning will further embed these practices.

Capacity, Research, and Technical Support: Building institutional capacity for NbS design, monitoring, and evaluation is essential. Developing technical guidelines, engaging and retaining qualified agency staff, training programs for agency staff, and research partnerships with USP, SPC, IUCN, and civil society will enhance government, academic, and regional expertise.

Table 3: Summary of Targeted Institutional Practices

Domain	Practices	Key Actors
Policy & Law	Policy review, legislative reform, NbS integration	Environment, Forestry, Agriculture, Climate Change Division
Planning	Land use, housing, infrastructure, coastal planning	Town & Country Planning, Housing, Waterways Ministries
Governance	Interagency coordination, customary governance, FPIC	iTaukei Affairs Board, TLTB, Provincial Councils, Taskforce
Monitoring & Evaluation	NbS indicators, registry, MRV systems	Climate Change Division, SPC, IUCN
Finance	NbS funding, incentives, carbon finance	Ministry of Finance, Climate Finance Unit
Capacity & Research	Training, technical guidelines, research partnerships	USP, SPC, CI, NGOs, Government Ministries

This approach would ensure that NbS is embedded systematically across policy, planning, governance, financing, and technical domains, delivering lasting benefits for ecosystems, communities, and climate resilience.

7. STRATEGY/ROADMAP FOR RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. Strategic Guide to NbS Integration

This section provides a strategic guide for mainstreaming Nature-based Solutions (NbS) within national forest policy and coastal resilience frameworks, aligned with the IUCN Global Standard for NbS. The table below maps NbS criteria to policy, legal, and institutional mechanisms, identifying actionable pathways to embed ecosystem integrity, inclusive governance, and adaptive management into national resilience planning.

Table 4: ***NbS Policy Integration-Nature-based Solutions (NbS) Integration for National Forest Policy & Coastal Resilience***

Policy / Instrument	Sector / Mandate	Current NbS Alignment / Evidence	Gaps / Barriers to NbS Integration	Strategic Recommendations for Policy Integration / NbS
Climate Change Act (2021)	***Climate Adaptation & Mitigation***	Recognises climate risks; NbS not fully operationalised	Weak implementation guidance for NbS projects	Explicitly include NbS as adaptation/ mitigation measure; integrate MRV for NbS effectiveness
Drainage Act (1961)	***Water Management***	Traditional engineering focus	Ecosystem-based solutions not recognised	Incorporate wetlands, riparian buffers, and vegetated drainage as NbS
Environment Management Act(2005)	***Environmental Protection***	Broad framework; NbS indirectly referenced	Lacks clear operational guidelines	Include NbS in EIAs and environmental permits; promote restoration projects
Fiji 2020: Agriculture Policy Agenda	***Agriculture***	Climate-resilient agriculture; limited ecosystem focus	NbS integration limited	Promote agroforestry and silvopastoral systems as NbS
Fiji Green Growth Framework (2014)	***Sustainable Development***	Low-carbon and sustainability measures	Limited metrics for NbS	Embed forest restoration, mangrove rehabilitation targets; incentivise private sector NbS projects
Fiji Mining Act(1965)	***Mining & Environment***	Environmental safeguards exist	NbS not recognised for post-mining restoration	Mandate ecosystem restoration using NbS; include NbS in environmental permits
Fiji National Development Plan 2025-2029 & Vision 2050	***National Development***	Strategic guidance; NbS not systematic	Policy silos limit NbS coordination	Integrate NbS across sectors (forestry, agriculture, coastal zones) with aligned targets

Policy / Instrument	Sector / Mandate	Current NbS Alignment / Evidence	Gaps / Barriers to NbS Integration	Strategic Recommendations for Policy Integration / NbS
National Housing Policy 2025,2030	***Urban & Housing***	Resilience recognised	NbS largely absent in urban design	Incorporate green belts, mangroves, urban forests for climate and coastal resilience
REDD+ Policy (2010)	***Forest Carbon & Management***	Supports sustainable forest management	Operationally limited; coastal NbS absent	Expand REDD+ to include mangrove restoration and community forest NbS
Roads Act (1914)	***Infrastructure***	Engineering-based	NbS not considered	Integrate bioengineering and vegetated buffers for erosion/coastal protection
Fisheries Act (1941)	***Fisheries***	Conservation focus	Weak link to coastal protection	Integrate mangrove and seagrass restoration for fisheries and shoreline stabilisation
Offshore Fisheries Management Act(2012)	***Fisheries***	Limited NbS reference	Ecosystem restoration not included	Support community-based NbS for marine/coastal resilience
Forest Act (1992)	***Forest Management***	Sustainable forest management; partial NbS alignment	NbS not explicit	Embed NbS principles (restoration, corridors, carbon) into policy; enact Forest Bill (2025)
Mangrove Management Plan 2013 [not yet adopted]	***Coastal Protection***	Mangrove protection; NbS implied	Limited implementation	Integrate mangrove NbS in DRR, carbon projects, and local livelihoods
National Adaptation Plan (2018)	***Climate Adaptation***	NbS recognised	Sectoral mainstreaming limited	Use NAP as anchor for cross-sector NbS integration
NBSAP 2020,2030	***Biodiversity***	Ecosystem-based management	Operationalisation limited	Link biodiversity targets to forest restoration, mangroves, and coastal NbS projects
National Forest Policy (2007)	***Forest Management***	Forest sustainability focus	NbS not central	Revise to include NbS for carbon, restoration, and community co-management
National Ocean Policy 2020,2030	***Ocean & Coastal Management***	Integrated management; partial NbS reference	Implementation gaps	Strengthen NbS in coastal protection, reef and mangrove restoration

Policy / Instrument	Sector / Mandate	Current NbS Alignment / Evidence	Gaps / Barriers to NbS Integration	Strategic Recommendations for Policy Integration / NbS
ICM Framework (2011)	***Coastal Management***	Ecosystem-based approach	Weak enforcement	Mainstream NbS in local and national coastal plans
iTaukei Lands Act (1905)	***Customary Land Governance***	Land rights recognised	FPIC processes for NbS interventions unclear	Ensure NbS on customary land is FPIC-compliant; co-benefit sharing
iTaukei Land Trust Act(1940)	***Land Management***	Customary land administration	NbS integration limited	Include NbS in land leases and trust management plans
Land Conservation & Improvement Act(1953)	***Land & Soil***	Soil and land management	NbS measures absent	Promote reforestation, watershed management, agroforestry as NbS
Rural Land Use Policy (2005)	***Land Planning***	Planning guidance	NbS alignment weak	Include zoning for forest, wetland, and coastal NbS measures
State Lands Act (1945)	***Land Administration***	State land management	NbS not addressed	Require NbS planning for public land development projects
Sustainable Land Management Framework (2012)	***Land & Environment***	Soil & water conservation	NbS integration limited	Promote integrated NbS approaches for soil, watershed, and forest management
National Climate Finance Strategy 2022,2029	***Finance & Climate***	Climate financing for projects	NbS underfunded	Prioritise NbS for forests, wetlands, mangroves, and community resilience
Rivers & Streams Act (1880)	***Water & Flood Management***	Traditional engineering	NbS absent	Embed NbS like riparian planting, wetland restoration, bio-engineering
Waterways, Drainage & Irrigation Programme Policy 2020	***Water & Irrigation***	Infrastructure focus	NbS not included	Integrate ecosystem-based water management, wetland restoration
Fiji Mining Act(1965)	***Mineral Exploitation***	Environmental regulation	NbS not enforced	Require post-mining restoration using NbS techniques
Fiji Roads Act (1914)	***Infrastructure***	Engineering solutions	NbS absent	Include NbS in design to reduce erosion, improve flood management
National Forest Policy (2007)	***Forest Management***	Sustainability	NbS not central	Update to embed NbS for restoration, carbon, and biodiversity
Mangrove Management Plan 2013 [DRAFT]	***Coastal Protection***	Mangrove-focused	Limited integration with other sectors	Mainstream mangrove NbS into national DRR, carbon, and livelihood programs

7.2. Strategic Guide for NbS Policy Integration

Effective integration of NbS requires cross-sectoral mainstreaming to address fragmented policy and implementation. National coordinating frameworks—such as the National Adaptation Plan (NAP), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), and the Green Growth Framework—should serve as central guiding frameworks. This is to align NbS across forestry, agriculture, infrastructure, and coastal governance, ensuring coherence between climate, biodiversity, and development objectives.

This mainstreaming must be supported by targeted legislative reform. Legacy statutes governing roads, drainage, and rivers should be revised to encourage NbS as viable approaches and where appropriate, preferred solutions for land and coastal protection. At the same time, framework laws such as the Environment Management Act and Climate Change Act should explicitly define and mandate NbS, providing legal certainty and removing regulatory barriers to ecosystem-based approaches.

Furthermore, NbS implementation must embed customary governance and Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) protocols. Planning and decision-making processes should formally recognise customary landowners and coastal resource users, implementing existing iTaukei land and resource management laws to ensure NbS interventions are socially legitimate, locally grounded, and aligned with customary stewardship systems.

Scaling NbS requires dedicated financial enablement. NbS initiatives should be linked to national climate finance mechanisms, REDD+ frameworks, and green growth incentives to unlock international climate funds, carbon finance, and blended investment, positioning NbS as cost-effective alternatives to grey infrastructure.

Robust monitoring and evaluation are also essential to demonstrate effectiveness and enable adaptive management. Cross-sector NbS indicators should be established within government departments to track ecosystem health, carbon sequestration, coastal resilience, biodiversity outcomes, and community co-benefits, strengthening accountability and alignment with national and international commitments.

Finally, institutional capacity must be strengthened across ministries and implementing agencies to plan, regulate, and monitor NbS consistently. Targeted capacity building will support effective cross-agency coordination, ensure application of NbS standards, and enable long-term integration of ecosystem-based solutions into national resilience and development planning.

7.3. Strategic Roadmap for Policy and Legislative Integration of NbS in Forestry and Coastal Protection

The objective culmination of this strategic framework is to mainstream NbS into Fiji's forestry and coastal management systems to strengthen ecosystem resilience, support climate adaptation, conserve biodiversity, and enhance community well-being. This approach promotes long-term sustainability and cross-sectoral policy coherence by embedding NbS principles within national strategies and institutional processes. It reflects a shift from fragmented interventions toward integrated, ecosystem-based planning that recognises the interdependence of environmental health, livelihoods, and national development.

The framework is structured around six key components encompassing policy, legal, institutional, operational, financial, and social dimensions. The first component focuses on policy revision and alignment, calling for the updating of the Forest Policy Statement 2007 and National Forest Policy 2014 to incorporate NbS principles, while ensuring consistency with the National Ocean Policy 2020,2030, Integrated Coastal Management Plans, the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan 2020,2025, and the Climate Change Policy 2018,2030. These revisions will be supported through policy reviews, technical workshops, and inclusive consultations to integrate scientific knowledge with Indigenous and community perspectives.

Table 5: Strategic Components

Strategic Area	Priority Actions	Timeline	Responsible Institutions	Required Reforms / Capacity Building	Monitoring / Adaptive Management
Policy Revision & Alignment	- Revise Forest Policy Statement 2007 and National Forest Policy (2014) to include explicit NbS principles. - Integrate NbS objectives into National Ocean Policy 2020,2030 and ICM Plans. - Ensure cross-sectoral alignment with NBSAP 2020,2025 and Climate Change Policy 2018,2030.	**12,24 months**	Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Economy	Policy review units; technical workshops on NbS; stakeholder consultations including local communities	Annual policy review reports; gap analysis; adaptive updates
Legislative & Regulatory Integration	- Amend Environmental Management Act, Climate Change Act, Forest Act, and EIA regulations to include NbS criteria. - Introduce mandatory NbS assessment in EIAs and land-use planning. - Establish incentives for NbS adoption (grants, tax relief, subsidies).	**12,36 months**	Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Attorney-General's Office, Parliament	Legal drafting support; capacity-building for enforcement officers	Compliance monitoring; periodic audits; impact evaluation
Institutional Strengthening	- Establish an inter-agency NbS Taskforce. - Develop a dedicated NbS unit in Ministries of Forestry and Environment. - Build community-level NbS technical capacity.	**6,18 months**	Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Local Government Authorities, NGOs	Institutional reform to create NbS units; staff training on NbS concepts and monitoring	Taskforce quarterly reports; stakeholder feedback mechanisms; adaptive management meetings

Strategic Area	Priority Actions	Timeline	Responsible Institutions	Required Reforms / Capacity Building	Monitoring / Adaptive Management
Monitoring, Evaluation & Adaptive Management	- Establish NbS monitoring and evaluation framework. - Implement adaptive management cycles for forestry and coastal projects. - Use data to refine policies and regulations continuously.	**Continuous**	Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Ministry of Forestry, Local Government Authorities	Training for monitoring teams; data management systems	Annual M&E reports; dashboards for decision-making; policy adjustments based on lessons learned
Financing & Incentives	- Create a National NbS Fund to support multi-sectoral projects. - Integrate NbS criteria into climate finance and donor programs. - Offer financial incentives for private sector and community participation.	**12,36 months**	Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Environment, Development Partners	Financial mechanism design; capacity building for grant management	Fund performance audits; tracking of NbS project outcomes
Public Engagement & Awareness	- Conduct NbS awareness campaigns targeting local communities, policymakers, and private sector. - Develop participatory platforms for local NbS planning.	**6,24 months**	Ministry of Environment, NGOs, Community-Based Organisations	Community engagement programs; technical workshops	Feedback surveys; community participation metrics; adaptive communication strategy

1. **Phase 1 Policy and Institutional Foundations (0,12 months)**
    - Establish NbS Taskforce and NbS units.
    - Initiate policy and regulatory review.
    - Begin capacity-building programs.

2. **Phase 2 Legal and Operational Integration (12,24 months)**
    - Amend legislation and develop operational NbS guidelines.
    - Standardise monitoring indicators.
    - Mainstream pilot NbS projects nationally.

3. **Phase 3 Scaling and Financing (24,36 months)**
    - Launch National NbS Fund.
    - Incentivise NbS adoption in private and community projects.
    - Strengthen monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems and adaptive management frameworks.

4. **Phase 4 Long-Term Coherence and Adaptive Management (36 months+)**
    - Continuous policy refinement based on monitoring results.
    - Periodic stakeholder consultations and knowledge updates.
    - Integration of NbS lessons into new sectoral strategies and plans.

7.4. Mechanisms for Long-Term Policy Coherence

Long-term NbS effectiveness depends on governance mechanisms that promote coordination, learning, and alignment across sectors and planning horisons. The following measures identify practical institutional pathways to sustain policy coherence and adaptive implementation.

- I**nter Agency Coordination:** Regular meetings between forestry, coastal, environment, and planning ministries to ensure alignment.
- **Adaptive Management:** Institutionalise a cycle of monitoring, evaluation, reporting, and policy adjustment.
- **Stakeholder Engagement:** Engage communities, NGOs, private sector, and development partners in planning, implementation, and monitoring.
- **Knowledge Management:** Develop an NbS knowledge repository including case studies, best practices, and technical guidelines.
- **Integration into National Development Planning**: Ensure NbS interventions are incorporated in the *National Development Plan 2025,2029 and Vision 2050*.

7.5. Expected Outcomes

This strategy would establish fully operational NbS policies and laws in the forestry and coastal sectors, closing regulatory gaps and clarifying institutional responsibilities. By embedding NbS in legal and policy frameworks, consistent, enforceable application of NbS across landscapes and seascapes would be assured.

Operationally, implementation of the strategy would strengthen capacity at national and community levels, equipping government agencies, local resource managers, and customary governance bodies with the skills, tools, and authority to plan, implement, and manage NbS interventions effectively.

Standardised monitoring and reporting systems would track ecological, climate, and social outcomes, supporting evidence-based decision-making, accountability, and adaptive learning at both local and national levels.

The strategy would also deliver enhanced ecosystem services, climate resilience, and community benefits, including coastal protection, sustainable fisheries, carbon sequestration, and improved livelihoods, linking environmental restoration directly to human well-being.

Finally, these measures if adopted would promote long-term policy coherence and adaptive management, aligning forestry, coastal, and climate policies while enabling continuous learning and adjustment in response to changing ecological and socio-economic conditions.

9. Conclusion

This framework by design, provides a clear pathway for embedding NbS across Fiji's forestry and coastal sectors. Aligning policies, legislation, and institutional practices with NbS principles, it would ensure that ecosystem health, climate resilience, and sustainable development are central to decision-making. While some existing policies recognise NbS and Indigenous governance, gaps remain in legislation, coordination, and operational guidance.

The proposed roadmap addresses these gaps through phased actions: updating policies and laws, strengthening institutions, integrating NbS into planning and EIAs, securing finance, and ensuring community engagement with FPIC. Standardised monitoring, evaluation, and adaptive management systems will track ecological, social, and climate outcomes, enabling evidence-based adjustments and long-term learning.

Operationalising this framework will deliver measurable benefits, including improved ecosystem services, enhanced climate and disaster resilience, sustainable livelihoods, and strengthened community well-being. By linking environmental restoration to national development and Indigenous stewardship, Fiji can establish a coherent, enforceable, and adaptive NbS approach, positioning itself as a regional leader in sustainable, inclusive, and climate-resilient growth.

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ANNEX 1

SUMMARY NBS REVIEW OF FIJI FRAMEWORKS RELEVANT TO FORESTRY AND COASTAL PROTECTION AND RESTORATION

Sector Affected	Policy / Legislation / Instrument	Scope	Relationship with Forestry / Coastal Protection (incl hierarchy)	Responsible Ministry / Agency (and overlap)	How Responsibility Overlap is Managed	How NbS / EbA is Reflected / Referenced	NbS Measures	Nature of Customary and Community Engagement for NbS Planning	Tools Available to Agency for Implementing / Facilitating NbS	MRV for NbS Measures
Cross-sectoral	*Climate Change Act 2021*	National climate governance framework covering adaptation & mitigation	Cross-cutting; integrates forestry, coastal and terrestrial resilience measures	Ministry of Environment & Climate Change Division; overlaps Forestry, Fisheries, Lands	Coordinated via National Climate Council and sectoral climate plans	Explicitly references EbA and enables NbS within adaptation planning	Mangrove restoration, reforestation, ecosystem-based flood management	Requires community consultation and provisions for FPIC where applicable	Climate finance mechanisms, adaptation planning tools	National MRV and reporting under the Climate Change Division
Water / Drainage	*Drainage Act 1961*	Regulates drainage works, flood control and reclamation within declared drainage areas	Affects watershed health and coastal sedimentation influencing forests and coasts	Ministry of Infrastructure & Waterways; overlaps Local Councils and Agriculture	Managed through local drainage boards and inter-agency project coordination	No explicit NbS references; opportunities for green infrastructure integration	Natural drainage restoration, riparian vegetation buffers	Limited statutory community engagement provisions; local consultation common	Engineering design standards; drainage plans	Routine inspection reports; limited formal MRV for NbS
Environment	*Environment Management Act 2005*	Framework for environmental protection, EIAs and pollution control	Provides regulatory oversight for forestry and coastal impact management	Ministry of Environment/ Department of Environment; overlaps sector agencies	EIA and permit processes coordinate cross-sector responsibilities	Promotes ecosystem protection; supports NbS principles implicitly	Protected area designation, habitat restoration, riparian buffers	Mandatory public consultation for EIA processes	EIA/Environment Management Policy templates and compliance monitoring tools	Environmental monitoring and compliance reporting
Agriculture	*Fiji 2020 Agriculture Sector Policy Agenda 2014*	Policy for agricultural productivity and sustainability	Links to forestry via agroforestry, watershed protection and land use	Ministry of Agriculture; overlaps Forestry and Lands	Coordinated via inter-ministry advisory committees	References sustainable land management; NbS implicit in practices	Agroforestry, soil conservation, contour planting	Farmer engagement and extension services used for planning	Best-practice guidelines and extension toolkits	Sector reporting; limited NbS-specific MRV

Sector Affected	Policy / Legislation / Instrument	Scope	Relationship with Forestry / Coastal Protection (incl hierarchy)	Responsible Ministry / Agency (and overlap)	How Responsibility Overlap is Managed	How NbS / EbA is Reflected / Referenced	NbS Measures	Nature of Customary and Community Engagement for NbS Planning	Tools Available to Agency for Implementing / Facilitating NbS	MRV for NbS Measures
Cross-sectoral	*Fiji Green Growth Framework 2014*	National sustainable development and low-carbon growth plan	Guides sustainable resource use including forests and coastal zones	Prime Minister's Office and relevant ministries (Economy, Environment)	Green Growth Taskforce coordinates across sectors	Explicitly promotes EbA as part of green growth interventions	Forest carbon projects, mangrove protection, ecosystem restoration	Public-private-community engagement promoted	Policy toolkits and green financing mechanisms	Progress reporting and indicators for green growth goals
Mining	*Fiji Mining Act 1965*	Regulates mineral exploration, prospecting and mining operations	Potentially impacts forests, rivers and coastal areas via extraction activities	Ministry of Mineral Resources (Lands) with Environment oversight	Environmental permitting and EIA conditions manage overlap	No NbS focus; rehabilitation and environmental management required	Mine site rehabilitation, revegetation, and erosion control (Environmental Management Plan)	EIA public consultation processes require limited engagement	Rehabilitation plans and environmental bonds	Permit compliance monitoring and EIA follow-up
National Planning	*Fiji National Development Plan (NDP) & Fiji Vision 2050*	Long-term national development and strategic vision	Sets high-level direction for forestry, coastal resilience and NbS integration	Ministry of Finance and National Planning with sector ministries	NDP steering committees align sector plans with national goals	Explicitly supports NbS through green economy and resilience objectives	Large-scale reforestation, coastal buffers, blue carbon initiatives	Nationwide consultations during NDP development	Planning and budgeting frameworks; indicators	Sustainable Development Goals and NDP indicator reporting
Housing	*National Housing Policy 2025,2030*	Policy for affordable, resilient and climate-smart housing	Influences land use, clearance, and coastal housing resilience measures	Ministry of Housing; overlaps Lands and Environment	Urban planning committees and cross-ministry steering groups	References green infrastructure but NbS mention is limited to disaster risk management	Urban greening, retention basins, coastal setback buffers	Community consultation in housing developments	Urban planning and building codes; resilience toolkits	Monitoring of housing resilience indicators
Forestry / Climate	*Fiji REDD+ Policy 2010*	Framework to reduce emissions from deforestation and degradation	Directly relevant to forest restoration and conservation for carbon benefits	Ministry of Forestry & Climate Change Division; multi-stakeholder bodies	REDD+ governance arrangements coordinate roles and benefits	Strong NbS alignment via forest-based mitigation and adaptation	Afforestation, reforestation, community forest management for carbon	Community-based management and FPIC procedures in REDD+ projects	REDD+ guidelines and carbon project tools	Carbon MRV systems under REDD+ protocols

Sector Affected	Policy / Legislation / Instrument	Scope	Relationship with Forestry / Coastal Protection (incl hierarchy)	Responsible Ministry / Agency (and overlap)	How Responsibility Overlap is Managed	How NbS / EbA is Reflected / Referenced	NbS Measures	Nature of Customary and Community Engagement for NbS Planning	Tools Available to Agency for Implementing / Facilitating NbS	MRV for NbS Measures
Infrastructure	*Fiji Roads Act 1914*	Legislation for road development and maintenance	Roads intersect coastal zones and forest edges, influencing erosion and drainage	Ministry of Infrastructure (Roads Authority); overlaps Environment and Lands	EIA and project review processes used to manage overlaps	No explicit NbS language; opportunities for green engineering exist	Road corridor replanting, erosion control and bioengineering	Limited statutory community engagement; project consultations common	Engineering standards with environmental clauses	Project environmental compliance monitoring
Fisheries	*Fisheries Act 1941*	Regulation of fisheries, coastal habitats and licensing	Supports coastal ecosystem health including mangroves and reefs	Ministry of Fisheries; overlaps Environment and provincial authorities	Co-management and community fisheries arrangements manage overlaps	Implicit NbS support through habitat protection and MPAs	Mangrove rehabilitation, coral restoration and MPAs	Strong customary and community fisheries engagement	Management plans, licensing frameworks	Fisheries stock assessments and reporting
Forestry	*Forestry Act 1992*	Legal framework for forest management, plantations, and protection	Central to forest restoration, conservation, and sustainable harvesting	Ministry of Forestry; overlaps with Lands and Environment	Forest management boards and planning processes coordinate roles	Supports restoration and sustainable forest management (NbS aligned)	Afforestation, reforestation, sustainable harvesting practices	Community forestry engagement and iTaukei involvement via iTLTB	Forest management plans and guidelines	Annual forest inventories and reporting
Forestry / Certification	*FSC Interim Forest Stewardship Standard (IFSS) 2025*	Voluntary certification for sustainable forestry practices	Aligns with national forestry regulation and promotes best practices	FSC bodies and Ministry of Forestry with private stakeholders	Certification audits and stakeholder grievance mechanisms	NbS ,type principles explicitly embedded in certification criteria	Biodiversity and ecosystem services protection, restoration and sustainable harvesting; identified High Conservation Values to be maintained	IP rights, FPIC and stakeholder consultation central to certification	FSC audit tools and social safeguards	Certification audit reports and compliance tracking; must monitor social & environmental impacts; engage in adaptive management

Sector Affected	Policy / Legislation / Instrument	Scope	Relationship with Forestry / Coastal Protection (incl hierarchy)	Responsible Ministry / Agency (and overlap)	How Responsibility Overlap is Managed	How NbS / EbA is Reflected / Referenced	NbS Measures	Nature of Customary and Community Engagement for NbS Planning	Tools Available to Agency for Implementing / Facilitating NbS	MRV for NbS Measures
Coastal / Mangroves	*Mangrove Management Plan for Fiji 2013 (but DRAFT only)*	Policy guiding mangrove protection and restoration][ot adopted]	Directly supports coastal defence, fisheries, and carbon sequestration	Ministry of Environment and Forestry; overlaps Fisheries	Inter-agency mangrove coordination mechanisms	NbS-focused; promotes ecosystem based coastal protection	Mangrove planting, conservation, buffer zoning	Community-based mangrove management and stewardship	Restoration guidelines and GIS mapping tools	Periodic monitoring of mangrove extent
Climate / Adaptation	*National Adaptation Plan 2018*	Sectoral adaptation priorities and actions	Mainstreaming adaptation across forestry, agriculture, water and coasts	Ministry of Environment/ Climate Change Division; sector leads	NAP steering committees and sectoral working groups	Explicitly and strongly promotes EbA and NbS approaches into adaptation planning	Ecosystem restoration, wetland and mangrove rehabilitation	Local-level participatory adaptation planning emphasised	Adaptation planning tools and vulnerability assessments	NAP progress reporting and MRV indicators
Biodiversity	*NBSAP 2020,2030*	National biodiversity conservation and restoration plan	Supports habitat restoration across forest and coastal systems	Ministry of Environment in partnership with sectors	Multi-stakeholder biodiversity committees coordinate actions	Strong EbA approach for biodiversity conservation and restoration	Habitat restoration, invasive species control, protected areas	Community-managed protected areas and participatory approaches	Biodiversity databases and monitoring tools	Biodiversity indicators and periodic reporting
Forestry	*National Forest Policy 2007*	Policy guidance for forest conservation and sustainable use	Provides strategic direction for forest restoration and management	Ministry of Forestry; coordination with Environment and Lands	National forest councils and planning mechanisms	References ecosystem services and sustainable management (NbS relevant)	Forest protection, plantation establishment and restoration	Community forestry initiatives and consultations	Forest planning and monitoring toolkits	Forest resource monitoring and reporting
Coastal / Ocean	*National Ocean Policy (2020,2030)*	Framework for ocean governance and coastal resilience	Connects terrestrial and marine policy for integrated NbS	Ministry of Fisheries and Environment	Ocean governance bodies coordinate cross-sector responsibilities	Strong emphasis on ecosystem-based management and NbS	Seagrass, mangrove, and reef restoration; marine protected areas	Community consultations and inclusion of traditional knowledge	Marine spatial planning and monitoring systems	Ocean health indicators and reporting

Sector Affected	Policy / Legislation / Instrument	Scope	Relationship with Forestry / Coastal Protection (incl hierarchy)	Responsible Ministry / Agency (and overlap)	How Responsibility Overlap is Managed	How NbS / EbA is Reflected / Referenced	NbS Measures	Nature of Customary and Community Engagement for NbS Planning	Tools Available to Agency for Implementing / Facilitating NbS	MRV for NbS Measures
Fisheries	*Offshore Fisheries Management Act 2012*	Conservation, management and sustainable development of fisheries resources in Fiji fisheries waters	Indirectly influences coastal ecosystem health through offshore-fisheries linkages	Ministry of Fisheries with enforcement agencies	Fisheries management committees and regional coordination	No explicit NbS focus; habitat considerations present	Ecosystem-based fishery management and habitat protection	Limited direct community engagement for offshore zones	Licensing, observer and reporting systems	Catch and effort reporting systems
Coastal / ICZM	*ICZM Framework 2011*	Framework for integrated coastal zone management plan(s) for the sustainable management of coastal resources	Directly links land, sea and resource governance for coastal protection	Ministry of Environment with multi-sector ICM committees	ICM committees coordinate cross-sector planning and implementation	Implicitly NbS-aligned; focus on conservation and restoration of coastal areas	Dune stabilisation, mangrove & coral rehabilitation, buffer zones	Participatory coastal planning with communities and stakeholders	ICM toolkits, coastal planning maps and guidelines	ICM monitoring indicators and reporting cycles
Land / Customary	*iTaukei Lands Act 1905*	Legal framework recognising customary land ownership by iTaukei	Shapes access to land for forestry and coastal restoration projects	iTaukei Land Trust Board (iTLTB) and Ministry of iTaukei Affairs	Customary decision-making and iTLTB governance manage overlaps	No direct NbS text; customary land rights crucial for NbS projects	Community-led restoration, customary stewardship	FPIC and mataqali consent procedures required	Land ownership records and customary registers	Reporting to iTLTB; project-level monitoring
Land / Customary	*iTaukei Land Trust Act (1940)*	Provides mechanisms for leasing and managing iTaukei land	Affects where forestry and coastal projects can be implemented on customary land	iTLTB administers leases and liaises with sector ministries	Lease agreements and board approvals manage overlaps	No explicit NbS references; leases can enable NbS activities	Leases for restoration projects, community benefit-sharing	FPIC and leaseholder consultations are required	Lease management databases and templates	Lease performance reporting

Sector Affected	Policy / Legislation / Instrument	Scope	Relationship with Forestry / Coastal Protection (incl hierarchy)	Responsible Ministry / Agency (and overlap)	How Responsibility Overlap is Managed	How NbS / EbA is Reflected / Referenced	NbS Measures	Nature of Customary and Community Engagement for NbS Planning	Tools Available to Agency for Implementing / Facilitating NbS	MRV for NbS Measures
Land / Agriculture	*Land Conservation and Improvement Act 1953*	Statute for erosion control, land improvement and soil, water resources conservation	Directly relevant to watershed, forest and coastal protection measures	Ministry of Agriculture and Lands; local land boards	Local conservation boards coordinate implementation with sectors	Supports NbS through Land Conservation Board [wers	Contour planting, reforestation, terraces, and vegetative cover	Farmer and community involvement through landcare programs	Soil conservation planning tools and extension services	Project-level monitoring and reporting
Finance / Climate	*National Climate Finance Strategy 2022,2029*	Strategy to mobilise finance for climate action and adaptation	Channels funding to forestry and coastal hybrid/ NbS and EbA interventions	Ministry of Economy & Climate Change Division; donor partners	Finance steering groups coordinate funding allocations	Directs financing toward NbS and EbA-eligible projects	Grants and blended finance for restoration and blue carbon	Stakeholder engagement required for funded projects	Climate finance instruments and tracking systems	Financial reporting and project MRV requirements
Water / Rivers	*Rivers and Streams Act 1880*	Regulates use and maintenance of rivers and streams	Impacts riparian zones and sediment flows affecting coasts and forests	Ministry of Waterways/ Infrastructure with Environment overlap	Operational coordination via water management units	No explicit NbS mention; restoration potential exists	Riparian buffer planting and re-meandering where feasible	Limited community processes historically; local consultation occurring	Hydrology and river management plans	Flow monitoring and inspection reports
Land / Rural	*Rural Land Use Policy 2005*	Guides rural land zoning, agriculture and resource use	Influences forestry and coastal land use at community level	Ministry of Lands and Agriculture; local councils	Land-use committees and planning forums coordinate overlaps	Promotes sustainable land conservation and management; NbS alignment implicit	Agroforestry, village woodlots, erosion control	Community land-use planning and participatory mapping	Land zoning and mapping tools	Land-use monitoring reports

Sector Affected	Policy / Legislation / Instrument	Scope	Relationship with Forestry / Coastal Protection (incl hierarchy)	Responsible Ministry / Agency (and overlap)	How Responsibility Overlap is Managed	How NbS / EbA is Reflected / Referenced	NbS Measures	Nature of Customary and Community Engagement for NbS Planning	Tools Available to Agency for Implementing / Facilitating NbS	MRV for NbS Measures
Land / State	*State Lands Act 1945*	Regulates state-owned land administration and allocations	Governs use of state lands which can host restoration/NbS projects	Ministry of Lands; coordination with Environment and Forestry	Land allocation procedures and inter-agency approvals manage overlap	No direct NbS text; state lands can host NbS projects through lease/ licence	State-led reforestation and urban greening	Public consultation on major allocations	State land records and planning tools	Lease and project reporting
Land / Soil	*Sustainable Land Management Framework 2012*	Framework to combat land degradation and support SLM	Strong linkage to forestry, watershed and coastal protection	Ministry of Agriculture with Environment and Forestry inputs	Cross-sector SLM committees manage implementation	Explicitly supports NbS via SLM practices	Soil restoration, reforestation, erosion control	Community-driven SLM and participatory planning	SLM toolkits and training materials	Project MRV and impact reporting
Water/ Infrastructure	*Waterways, Drainage and Irrigation Programme Policy 2020 [in MoWE Strategic Plan 2020-2024]*	Policy for integrated water infrastructure and drainage	Impacts wetlands, riparian forests and coastal sediment delivery	Ministry of Waterways and Agriculture; Environment overlap	Joint water project committees coordinate across ministries	Encourages sustainable and adaptive management, and EbA in water projects	Riparian replanting, constructed wetlands, buffer zones	Community participation in irrigation and drainage planning	Hydraulic and planning tools	Operational monitoring and reporting

ANNEX 2

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ANNEX 3

SUMMARY TABLE , COLLATION OF KEY STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSE

No.	Agency / Department	Sector / Mandate	Policy / Legal Frameworks Referenced	NbS Measures Mentioned	Integration Across Sectors	Implementation Mechanisms	Capacity / Resources	Prioritisation vs Structural Solutions	Stakeholder / Community Engagement	Coordination / Overlap Management	Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation (MRV)	Barriers / Gaps Identified	Opportunities / Recommendations	References / Evidence Provided
1	**Department of Environment (DoE)**	Environmental management, climate change, and coastal resilience	NAP, NDC, EMA, Climate Change Act, NBSAP, State Lands Act	Mangrove & wetland restoration, riverbank stabilisation, watershed rehabilitation, NbS seawalls	Works with Waterways, MECC, FRA, iTLTB, Lands, Housing	Coastal & riverbank stabilisation programs, Adaptation Fund, IWMPs	Moderate , supported by donor projects; tech/data limitations	NbS prioritised over hard engineering; integrated into adaptation planning	Community inclusion via coastal NbS projects; buffer zones enforced	Overlaps managed via IWMP and inter-agency plans	Project-level MRV; NDC/NAP reports	Overlaps in mandates; limited LiDAR/data access	Strengthen IWMPs, expand ridge-to-reef models, scale community NbS	Adaptation Fund, ADB reviews, IISD CAPA Inventory
2	**Ministry of Forestry / Agriculture**	Forestry, agroforestry, reforestation, and landscape restoration	Forest Policy 2007, REDD+ Policy 2011, Harvesting Code 2013, Forest Plantation Policy (draft), SDP 2024,2030	Reforestation, mangrove rehabilitation, agroforestry, mixed coastal species	Strong links with Environment, Climate Change, Agriculture & communities	RDF Project, 30mil15yrs program, community nurseries, plantations	Moderate , funding & incentives available; technical training ongoing	NbS integrated in forestry, though commercial forestry still prioritised	Community forestry schemes, lease benefits, royalties	Coordination via leases, trust arrangements, inter-ministerial projects	Program-level MRV and reporting	Conflicts between conservation and commercial logging priorities	Expand community forestry, integrate agroforestry,food security	RDF Program, Forest Code, Forestry SDP
3	**iTaukei Land Trust Board (TLTB)**	Customary land administration, leasing & benefit-sharing	TLTB EOM, Conservation Policy, Forest Policy, Land Use Policy, Master Land Use Plan, Carbon Market Strategy	Mangrove buffers, REDD+, carbon areas, reforestation, conservation leases	Works with iTaukei Affairs, Environment, Forestry, Lands, Provincial Offices	Lease conditions with NbS clauses, conservation lease categories, TDF, LDF	Moderate , strong admin, low technical expertise; building capacity	NbS embedded in lease conditions; some structural projects allowed	High , participatory "Planning with the People" and FPIC practices	Collaborates on IDAs and master land-use plans	Lease reviews and audits; NbS MRV evolving	Overlapping mandates; weak environmental bond system	Institutionalise bonds; mainstream NbS across lease types; build valuation expertise	TLTB Policies, Carbon Market Strategy, SPREP,Talanoa NRM Policy
4	**Dept. of Town & Country Planning (DTCP)**	Urban/rural planning, zoning, land-use management	Town Planning Act, Subdivision of Land Act, State Land Act, NAP, Climate Change Act, EMA	Urban greening, mangrove & riparian buffers, green belts, open spaces	Aligns with Environment, Lands, Forestry, Housing, Water Authority	Zoning (Open Space, Conservation, Special Use), setbacks, EIAs	Limited staff & resources; reliance on collaboration	Increasing NbS uptake alongside traditional controls	Extensive , public consultations, landowner inputs	Managed via integrated development planning	Compliance tracking, EIA monitoring	Low technical capacity, unclear agency roles	Strengthen NbS legal zoning; enhance inter-agency platform & ICZM integration	DTCP written response 2025, Acts cited

No.	**Agency / Department**	Sector / Mandate	Policy / Legal Frameworks Referenced	NbS Measures Mentioned	Integration Across Sectors	Implementation Mechanisms	Capacity / Resources	Prioritisation vs Structural Solutions	Stakeholder / Community Engagement	Coordination / Overlap Management	Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation (MRV)	Barriers / Gaps Identified	Opportunities / Recommendations	References / Evidence Provided
5.	**Ministry of Lands**	Land administration, state lands, foreshore, rivers/streams management	State Lands Act 1945, Rivers and Streams Act 1880, Environment Management Act 2005, EIA Regulations, Fiji Constitution 2013	Consultation with customary owners (iQoliqoli), consideration of NbS through EIA, lease conditions may include restoration/ rehabilitation	Works with DoE, Provincial Offices, iQoliqoli owners; consultation-based integration with customary rights and environmental safeguards	Lease approvals, foreshore and seabed development permits, EIA processes, review of Ministry legislations to incorporate NbS	Moderate , relies on internal capacity and consultation; may be limited by bureaucratic processes	NbS considered alongside structural measures; review of Acts aims to strengthen NbS incorporation	Engagement through consultation with iQoliqoli owners (60% signature for waivers), Provincial offices, customary fishing rights holders	Some overlaps with other legislations and agencies (DoE, Provincial offices), but coordinated via EIA and lease processes	MRV primarily via lease conditions and approval checklists; outcomes incorporated into lease special conditions	Legislative overlap and bureaucratic procedures delay or inhibit development; lack of systematic NbS protocols	Review of Ministry Acts to explicitly include NbS, stronger integration in lease approvals, restoration requirements for tenement holders	State Lands Act s21(1), Environment Management Act 2005, EIA processes, Fiji Constitution 2013, consultation records with iQoliqoli and Provincial offices
6	**Ministry of Agriculture**	Agriculture, food security, climate-resilient land use, watershed & soil conservation	Fiji Non-Sugar Agriculture Policy (2025,2035), Climate Smart Agriculture Action Plan, National Adaptation Plan (NAP), National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP), Sustainable Land Management Framework	Agroforestry, ecosystem-based farming, vegetative buffers, riparian restoration, reforestation of degraded catchments, mixed cropping, soil rehabilitation	Works with Waterways Division, Forestry Department, and Climate Change Division on watershed, drainage, and reforestation initiatives	Extension services, model farms, CSA training, Farm Support Programme, pilot incentive schemes (tree planting, mulching, riparian buffers)	Moderate , strong technical expertise; scaling limited by funding and extension coverage	NbS prioritised as part of CSA and watershed restoration over hard engineering; integrated with flood control	Farmer engagement through extension services, demo farms, and partnerships with Waterways & Forestry; participatory catchment management	Coordination through joint watershed and flood mitigation projects; institutional linkages exist but not always synchronised	MRV through CSA reporting, farm monitoring, and NAP tracking; site-based evaluation of soil/water outcomes	Limited incentives and financing for scaling; dependency on donor support; fragmented data sharing between sectors	Expand NbS incentives and insurance schemes; strengthen CSA,Forestry, Waterways coordination; mainstream NbS into land-use permits	Fiji Non-Sugar Agriculture Policy, CSA Plan, NAP, NBSAP, SLM Framework

No.	Agency / Department	Sector / Mandate	Policy / Legal Frameworks Referenced	NbS Measures Mentioned	Integration Across Sectors	Implementation Mechanisms	Capacity / Resources	Prioritisation vs Structural Solutions	Stakeholder / Community Engagement	Coordination / Overlap Management	Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation (MRV)	Barriers / Gaps Identified	Opportunities / Recommendations	References / Evidence Provided
7	**Ministry of Waterways and Environment , Waterways Division**	River management, drainage, irrigation, and flood control	Waterways Drainage and Irrigation Programme Policy, Integrated Flood Management Framework, Environment Management Act, Climate Change Act, National Adaptation Plan (NAP), Integrated Water Resource Management (IWRM), Ridge to Reef (R2R) Framework	Mangrove replanting, riparian buffer restoration, wetland rehabilitation, vegetative and boulder revetments, catchment reforestation	Works with Forestry, Agriculture, Environment, and Climate Change divisions under R2R and IWRM coordination	Hybrid engineering,NbS designs for flood and erosion control; community-based mangrove planting; drainage and irrigation works aligned with NbS	Moderate to high technical capacity; limited by resource allocation and coordination logistics	Shift from purely engineered to hybrid NbS-structural approaches; NbS increasingly prioritised for sustainability and cost-effectiveness	Community engagement in mangrove restoration, watershed rehabilitation, and buffer planting; participatory planning encouraged under R2R	Cross-sectoral coordination through R2R/ IWRM; strong partnership with Forestry and Agriculture for upstream catchment management	Joint watershed monitoring proposed with Forestry; MRV through EIA compliance, NAP, and flood management reporting	Limited MRV data integration; occasional overlap in sectoral mandates; insufficient long-term financing for NbS maintenance	Institutionalise hybrid NbS,engineering guidelines; enhance watershed-level monitoring; expand community-based river restoration programs	Waterways Drainage & Irrigation Policy, Integrated Flood Management Framework, EMA, Climate Change Act, NAP, R2R/ IWRM frameworks
8	**Soqosoqo Vakamarama (National Women's Organisation)**	Women's empowerment, community leadership, social inclusion in environment and climate resilience	Gender and Climate Change Policy, NAP (gender mainstreaming component), community-based planning processes	Women-led mangrove planting, reforestation, awareness programs, community forestry activities	Engagement through village-level consultations; coordination with local authorities and environment/ forestry officers	Informal mechanisms — women's committees and youth groups lead awareness and implementation of NbS activities	Moderate; relies on voluntary participation, limited financial and technical support	Women prioritise practical NbS (mangrove, reforestation) due to tangible livelihood benefits rather than formal policy mandate	Strong community participation; women often lead field-level restoration and awareness; engagement mostly informal	Coordination mainly through local governance or NGO partnerships; limited formal integration into national programs	Limited , gender outcomes not systematically tracked or reported; project-based feedback only	Lack of formal engagement frameworks; gender issues raised but not acted upon; NbS not institutionalised in women's networks	Formalise women's leadership roles in NbS planning; provide capacity-building and funding; embed gender metrics in NbS MRV	Consultations and local engagement evidence; no formal policy citations from respondent

No.	Agency / Department	Sector / Mandate	Policy / Legal Frameworks Referenced	NbS Measures Mentioned	Integration Across Sectors	Implementation Mechanisms	Capacity / Resources	Prioritisation vs Structural Solutions	Stakeholder / Community Engagement	Coordination / Overlap Management	Monitoring, Reporting & Evaluation (MRV)	Barriers / Gaps Identified	Opportunities / Recommendations	References / Evidence Provided
9	**Ministry of iTaukei Affairs (Provincial Offices, TAB Operations)**	Oversight of iTaukei governance systems; safeguarding customary rights; coordination of community programmes; cultural policy	TKEC Bill; Draft UNDRIP National Action Plan; Draft FPIC Guide; National Culture Policy	TEK as core NbS practice; FPIC; Community collaboration; Traditional leadership engagement	Collaboration between communities and ministries; TEK integration (partial)	FPIC processes; Provincial Office facilitation; TAB monitoring; Ministry guidelines and policy development	Limited budget; TEK capacity varying; Ministry dependent on other agencies for technical support; CSOs fill technical gaps	Depends on recognition of TEK; structural gaps due to bureaucracy and limited technical/ data systems	Customary structures consulted at early stages; community collaboration; FPIC respected	Provincial Office coordinates: TAB provides oversight; Ministry develops policies—no clear central harmonisation mechanism	Monitoring through Provincial Offices and TAB; no detailed MRV system for NbS specifically	Bureaucracy; lack of technical expertise; limited data; TEK not fully recognised in govt systems	Strengthen partnerships via: funding, capacity building, technical support, data access; empower TEK & FPIC frameworks	Internal references only (TKEC Bill, Draft FPIC Guide, UNDRIP NAP, National Culture Policy); no external study citations
10	**Conservation International (CI) , Fiji Programme**	Environment, oceans, forestry, climate resilience, livelihoods; mandate includes biodiversity protection, NbS, community governance	Forest Policy 2007; REDD+ 2011; Forest Plantation Policy (draft); FHCoP 2013; Forestry Strategic Plan 2024,2030; Fisheries & Offshore Fisheries Acts; EMA; Rural Land Use Policy	Coral restoration; mangrove/ Blue Carbon; beekeeping & nurseries; land-use mapping; eDNA citizen science; climate vulnerability assessments; trust deeds	Integration with communities, traditional leaders, provincial councils, Forestry, Environment, iTaukei Affairs; limited integration with agriculture, infrastructure, finance	Community restoration; participatory mapping; eDNA programs; trust deeds; capacity-building; policy co-development	Strong technical expertise: ministries have limited capacity; CI's own internal constraints not specified	Focus on community-level solutions; structural reforms noted but not fully defined	Strong: community-led work, traditional leaders, mapping, livelihoods; FPIC/benefit-sharing not fully articulated	Some coordination with ministries; limited mechanisms for NGO / regional overlap management	Community data; Blue Carbon mapping; coral/ mangrove monitoring; lacks national MRV alignment	Technical capacity gaps; fragmented policy frameworks; weak financing; limited TK integration	Strengthen ministry partnerships; scale pilots; embed NbS into planning; develop MRV; improve coordination	Descriptive project evidence given; no quantitative metrics or published reports cited

ANNEX 4

SUMMARY OF STAKEHOLDER WORKSHOP FEEDBACK

Sector	Subject	Feedback
Forestry	Legislation	Development of Forest Bill (and regulations) opportunity to embed NbS
		Proposed amendments to Mahogany Industry Development Act 2010 complementary; could set coherent NbS standards
	Operational Gaps	Need for clearer definition of hierarchical management roles, notably the responsibilities of Forest wardens in enforcing new statutory requirements.
	Gender inclusion	Need strongly emphasised. Noted that women undertake substantial forestry-related labour but are inadequately recognised in policy frameworks.
		The future Gender Policy for Forestry must articulate explicit roles, capacities, and safeguards for women's participation.
	Land use planning	Conservation objectives undermined by dominance of short-term economic land-use preferences.
		Recommendation towards more balanced land use planning integrating more diverse stakeholder perspectives.
	Ministry and Agency coordination	Need for greater institutional buy-in to support national NbS coordination. Decision needed on Ministry to lead coordination of NbS platforms, including responsibilities for budgeting, convening and monitoring.
	Use traditional sources of knowledge	Collaborate with academia, CSOs, landowners (especially to leverage traditional ecological knowledge).
		Traditional resource management systems, e.g., tabu areas and community-led protected zones, offer proven approaches aligned with NbS and should be integrated into national policy processes.
	Financing NbS	Lack of management plans for Forest and Nature Reserves has weakened ability of the Ministry of Forestry to attract climate financing.
		Recommend strengthening economic justification for NbS through return-on-investment assessments and targeted pursuit of global loss-and-damage financing streams.

Sector	Subject	Feedback
Coastal	Legislation	Stronger integration between the Environment Management Act (2005) (EMA), and the *National Biodiversity Strategic and Adaptation Policy* (NBSAP) was proposed to renew operational clarity for Integrated Coastal Management (ICM) at the national level.
		The absence of a dedicated statute for mangrove protection is a critical gap. Recommend the creation of a mangrove-specific regulatory instrument or strengthened safeguards under existing frameworks.
	Policy Gaps	Inconsistent mangrove mapping and inadequate periodic reviews undermine implementation.
		Recommended mainstreaming NbS into Fiji's national inventory systems.
	Operational Gaps	Provincial Conservation Officers currently serve as effective intermediaries but require additional funding, training, and support.
		Recommended mandatory management plans especially for mangrove areas to guide development approvals and maintain ecological integrity.
		Dept of Environment could be more pro-active. Integrated Coastal Management (under the *Environment Management Act)* could provide mechanisms for improving coordination, addressing compensation gaps, and resolving resource-use conflicts.
	Land use planning	Improved land-use zoning and demarcation would help harmonise stakeholder interests and reduce conflicts.
	Ministry and Agency coordination	Identified siloed operations and overlapping mandates as major constraints to effective coastal governance and NbS integration.
		Reinvigorate national platforms such as the ICM Committee and establish a Wetlands Committee to coordinate multi-agency implementation.
		Additional committees to overcome the agency 'silo' effect NOT recommended.
		Resource mapping of R2R for coastal area protection is required: needs cooperation between agencies such as Dept of Environment, Ministry of Lands & Mineral Resources (geo-mapping, State Lands land use master plan) and Ministry of Tourism (Tourism Development Master Plan), Department of Town and Country Planning (town planning schemes), iTaukei Lands Trust Board (regional plans) and the Ministry of Agriculture and Waterways, Land Use Division (district land use plans).
	Use traditional sources of knowledge	Community-level engagement: communities are generally willing to participate in conservation, they often lack clarity on their roles within existing management mechanisms
	Financing NbS	Strengthening monitoring functions and data collection will support national budget allocations and position Fiji to access international NbS financing and donor support.
	Capacity building	Traditional ecological knowledge and ecosystem-based management training should be delivered at tikina and yasana levels to support consistent operationalisation of existing policies.
	Monitoring & Evaluation	Recommend agencies apply provincial-level ICM approaches and incorporate ecological valuation and cost-benefit analysis to improve decision-making.
General	Policy Gaps	The absence of a *National Land Use Policy* contributes to fragmented decision-making and conflict among sectoral interests. Reliance on the Rural Land Use Policy (2005) alone is insufficient to guide coherent multi-sectoral planning.

ANNEX 5

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS: Priority Actions. Timelines, Responsible Institutions, Reforms and Capacity Building, M&E, Adaptive Management

Strategic Area	Priority Actions	Timeline	Responsible Institutions	Required Reforms / Capacity Building	Monitoring / Adaptive Management
Policy Revision & Alignment	- Revise Forest Policy Statement (2007) and National Forest Policy (2014) to include explicit NbS principles. - Integrate NbS objectives into National Ocean Policy (2020,2030) and ICM Plans. - Ensure cross-sectoral alignment with NBSAP 2020,2025 and Climate Change Policy 2018,2030.	12,24 mths	Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Economy	Policy review units; technical workshops on NbS; stakeholder consultations including local communities	Annual policy review reports; gap analysis; adaptive updates
Legislative & Regulatory Integration	- Amend Environmental Management Act, Climate Change Act, Forest Act, and EIA regulations to include NbS criteria. - Introduce mandatory NbS assessment in EIAs and land-use planning. - Establish incentives for NbS adoption (grants, tax relief, subsidies).	12,36 mths	Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Attorney-General's Office, Parliament	Legal drafting support; capacity-building for enforcement officers	Compliance monitoring; periodic audits; impact evaluation

Strategic Area	Priority Actions	Timeline	Responsible Institutions	Required Reforms / Capacity Building	Monitoring / Adaptive Management
Institutional Strengthening	- Establish an inter-agency NbS Taskforce. - Develop a dedicated NbS unit in Ministries of Forestry and Environment. - Build community-level NbS technical capacity.	6,18 mths	Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Local Government Authorities, NGOs	Institutional reform to create NbS units; staff training on NbS concepts and monitoring	Taskforce quarterly reports; stakeholder feedback mechanisms; adaptive management meetings
Operational Guidelines & Standards	- Develop sector-specific NbS operational guidelines for forestry and coastal projects - Standardise NbS indicators for ecological, social, and economic outcomes. - Integrate successful pilot projects (RESCCUE, Kiwa Initiative) into national guidelines.	12,24 mths	Ministry of Forestry, Ministry of Environment, NGOs, Research Institutions	Technical advisory teams; knowledge transfer workshops; toolkits for local governments	Indicator-based monitoring; annual reporting; iterative guideline revisions
Monitoring, Evaluation & Adaptive Management	- Establish NbS monitoring and evaluation framework. - Implement adaptive management cycles for forestry and coastal projects. - Use data to refine policies and regulations continuously.	Continuous	Ministry of Environment & Climate Change, Ministry of Forestry, Local Government Authorities	Training for monitoring teams; data management systems	Annual M&E reports; dashboards for decision-making; policy adjustments based on lessons learned

Strategic Area	Priority Actions	Timeline	Responsible Institutions	Required Reforms / Capacity Building	Monitoring / Adaptive Management
Financing & Incentives	- Create a National NbS Fund to support multi-sectoral projects. - Integrate NbS criteria into climate finance and donor programs. - Offer financial incentives for private sector and community participation.	12,36 mths	Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Environment, Development Partners	Financial mechanism design; capacity building for grant management	Fund performance audits; tracking of NbS project outcomes
Public Engagement & Awareness	- Conduct NbS awareness campaigns targeting local communities, policymakers, and private sector. - Develop participatory platforms for local NbS planning.	6,24 mths	Ministry of Environment, NGOs, Community-Based Organisations	Community engagement programs; technical workshops	Feedback surveys; community participation metrics; adaptive communication strategy

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