

## WORKSHOP 1

### STRENGTHENING MITIGATION HIERARCHY AND BIODIVERSITY OFFSETS IMPLEMENTATION IN THE PACIFIC

#### ORGANISER NAME(S):

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#### ORGANISATION AFFILIATION(S):

<sup>1</sup> The Pacific Community (SPC)

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#### PRESENTER(S):

Raphaël Billé (The Pacific Community)

Guy Dutson (The Biodiversity Consultancy)

Pacific Island Countries representatives to be identified at a later stage

#### TARGET AUDIENCE:

All Forum participants are welcome; government departments tasked with implementing the mitigation hierarchy in Pacific Island Countries and Territories, Australia, New Zealand and the US are especially encouraged; as well, local and international NGOs and media, international organisations such as IUCN, the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank, and business, companies and industry bodies

#### BRIEF:

Global efforts towards the objective to stop biodiversity and ecosystem services erosion translate among other into a strengthened focus on the impact mitigation hierarchy (avoid, minimize, rehabilitate/restore, offset) as a coherent whole. In the Pacific the situation regarding the implementation of the full mitigation hierarchy remains highly disparate depending on national circumstances, including needs and capacity. A recent regional review commissioned by SPC (Dutson et al. 2015) shows that there is room for progress in virtually all Pacific Island Countries and Territories. A particular challenge pertains to developing and implementing robust biodiversity offsets policies and practices. Offsets are both praised as a key way to achieve No Net Loss or Net Gain without halting development, and feared to have potentially strong adverse impacts. So far offsets have developed on a very *ad hoc*, project-by-project basis and without much exchange of experience in the region. This workshop will contribute filling this gap while allowing the Pacific region to take a more active part in a key global conservation debate. It will be organized around four steps:

- Presentation of the regional review taking stock of recent developments in implementation of the mitigation hierarchy and biodiversity offsets in the Pacific;
- Introduction of the draft regional roadmap to move beyond a project-by-project approach towards strengthened mitigation hierarchy policies and practices in the Pacific;
- Exchange of experience with colleagues from other countries, especially Australia, on challenges and opportunities associated with the mitigation hierarchy in general and biodiversity offsets in particular;
- Discussion on challenges and opportunities to integrate ecosystem services in the mitigation hierarchy – a globally emerging issue (Jacob et al. 2016).