



Participants of the recent National Consultative Workshop on the Melanesia Forest Programme at the Mendana Hotel in Honiara, Solomon Islands August 2018

## **28 August 2018**

A three-day national stakeholder workshop and consultations successfully concluded in Honiara, Solomon Islands.

Hosted by the MSG Secretariat in collaboration with Griffith University, the Stakeholder workshop brought together government officials from the Ministry of Environment, Climate

Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology (MECDM) and the Ministry of Forestry and Research and other key stakeholders on the Melanesia Forest Programme (MFP).

The MSG's Melanesia Forest Programme (MFP) is a synchronized sub-regional effort on forests and their wise use in Melanesia to support long-term sustainable development and help meet commitments to climate change mitigation and adaptation, biodiversity conservation and a healthy environment. MFP can also be regarded as a catalyst for MSG members to place more focus on strategically developing the Forests and Landscapes through the wise use of their resources.

Program Manager for Sustainable Development for the MSG, Mr Stanley Wapot said that the key components of MFP include development of a Community Forest Protection Knowledge Hub. The Hub will enable knowledge sharing within, and between communities across the Melanesian region.

Mr Wapot said under MFP, communities would be able to develop livelihood activities for sustainable income generation; developing local governance arrangements with the community for benefit sharing, development of Micro-enterprises and access to micro-finance and payments for ecosystem services.

He says another component of the MFP is building capacity for national resources management within forest communities, and most importantly the establishment of formal community forests conservation areas and supporting mechanisms.

Meanwhile, the MSG Director General Ambassador Amena Yauvoli expressed his gratitude to the continuous cordial relationship between the Secretariat and Griffith University in developing such regional initiatives aimed at assisting Melanesian communities best mitigate the environmental, social and economic impacts of climate change.

Ambassador Yauvoli said that forests and the Land are two important natural resources in Melanesia. The MSG Director General said that forests provide food, water, and all livelihood necessities in all Melanesian communities and a vital source for traditional Melanesian lifestyles and culture.

“With the threat of unsustainable round log timber harvest (logging) activities and other environmentally irresponsible activities in the region, communities must be supported to protect their natural ecosystems,” said Ambassador Yauvoli. He adds that with initiatives such as the MFP, communities may able to explore environmentally sustainable economic activities in the medium to long-term such as in non-timber products, payments for ecosystem services, and high production food systems.

The MFP aims to create eight pilot sites within the four member MSG countries and work on the project proposal for site selection is now in the process.

For more information, please contact the program Manager for Sustainable Development on email [sj.wapot@msg.int](mailto:sj.wapot@msg.int)