



4 Million Trees in 4 years Initiative (4MT4Y)

Concept Note

In the fight against climate change and protecting our environment and rich biodiversity, the Fijian Government is embarking on the '4 million trees in 4 years initiative'(4MT4Y) as it recognizes the important service that the forest resources provides in terms, environmental and ecological services, conservation of biodiversity and sustenance of livelihoods.

THE 4MT4Y is more than just putting a seed in the ground – it is helping people and nature work thrive in a sustainable future.

Background

Over the last few years, two key environmental issues, closely related, have been on the top of the environmental agenda: climate change and deforestation. Forest is a subject for these two concerns.

According to the 2018 Forest Area Statistics Update, 388,415 ha have been opened for logging and other land use. This constitutes 42.5% of the total indigenous forest in Fiji. Additionally 757,309 ha is non-forest land (42.6% of total land area) is made up of grassland, agriculture land, forest plantations and other land use.

When we combine open forest with non-forest, it accounts for 64.43% of the total land area in Fiji. The figure above suggests a high level of socio-economic activities to meet current needs and wants. This trend can only intensify if we are to realise reasonable standard of living for this generation and for those to follow. Thus, the 4MT4Y could be our first effort to achieving sustainable livelihoods for all Fijians.

Project Objectives

We can help save the earth from deforestation. Every acre we protect, every river mile restored, every species brought back from the brink, begins with us.

The 4MT4Y aims to mitigate climate change, greenhouse gas emissions, land degradation, loss of biodiversity while creating socio-economic opportunities and food security through the planting of 4 million trees in four years.

Objectives:

The 4MT4Y project intend to:

1. Identify and collaborate with development partners, government agencies, communities, civil society organizations, NGO's, industries and corporate organisations in the delivery of project.
2. Establish a multi-sectoral steering committee to coordinate and monitor the implementation of the project.
3. Create awareness and promote the project to all Fijians
4. Mobilize divisional working groups to implement and supervise tree planting activities.
5. Secure funding sources for the implementation of the project
6. Engage schools, youth groups, women groups, resource owning communities, municipalities and farmers in tree planting programs

Plant appropriate wood and non-wood tree varieties that reduce soil erosion and siltation, grow well in grasslands, address food security and contribute to enhancing forest and agriculture sectors' GDP contribution.

Consequently the 4MT4Y will facilitate the achievement of some or parts of our national development targets stipulated in the 5year – 20-year National Development Plan going forward to 2036.

Some specific national development targets that 4MT4Y hope to contribute towards are:

- i. Access to clean and safe water in adequate quantities -100% by 2036 (SDG 6.1)
- ii. Access to clean and safe water in adequate quantities, rural -100% by 2036 (SDG 6.1)
- iii. Access to clean and safe water in adequate quantities, urban - 100 % by 2021 (SDG 6.1)
- iv. Renewable energy share in electricity generation - 100% by 2036 (SDG 7.2)
- v. Renewable energy share in total energy consumption - 25 % by 2031 (SDG 7.2)
- vi. Food sourced domestically compared to total food available (42% by 2021)
- vii. Incidence of Poverty, National - 20% by 2026 (SDG 1.2)
- viii. Incidence of Poverty, Rural - 32% by 2026 (SDG 1.2)
- ix. Reduction in Greenhouse gas emissions from 2013 baseline (NDC target) - 30% by 2031 (SDG 13.2)
- x. Forest area under long term conservation – 16 sites by 2036 (SDG 15.1)

The Ministry for Forestry also has four projects namely REDD+, Reforestation of Degraded Forest, Reforestation of Indigenous Species and Sandalwood Development that can be utilised to drive the 4MT4Y initiative. Collectively these projects aim to mitigate and adapt climate change, enhance watershed area management, boost timber and other wood production, reduce degradation of forest areas, improve opportunities for carbon financing, biodiversity conservation, reduce soil erosion and siltation, support food security and improve agriculture production and practice. As we envisage to continue this initiative, there is a need for private investment or donor aid to sustain this initiative and prolong the objectives as stated above in achieving a step closer towards a larger ambition of a carbon neutral economy.