Cross-cutting Report

National Capacity Self Assessment Project
(NCSA)

SAMOA

GEF

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Acronyms:

ABS&PTBK	-	Access and Benefit Sharing & Protection of Traditional Knowledge
CBD	-	Convention on Biological Diversity
DLM	-	Division of Land Management
DEC	-	Division of Environment and Conservation
EIA	-	Environment Impact Assessment
EPC	-	Electric Power Corporation
GEF	-	Global Environment Facility
GEF-UNEP	-	Global Environment Facility – United Nations Environment Programme
GIS	-	Geographic Information System
MEAs	-	Multilateral Environment Agreements
MESC	-	Ministry of Education, Sports and Culture
MFAT	-	Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade
MNRE	-	Ministry of Natural Resource and Environment
MOA	-	Ministry of Agriculture
MOF	-	Ministry of Finance
MWCSD	-	Ministry of Women, Community and Social Development
NAPA	-	National Adaptation Programme of Action
NAP	-	National Action Programme
NBF	-	National Bio-safety Framework
NCCCT	-	National Climate Change Country Team
NCSA	-	National Capacity Self Assessment
NGO's	-	Non-government Organisations
NSC	-	National Steering Committee
NTT	-	National Task Team
SDS	-	Strategy for the Development of Samoa
SPREP	-	Secretariat of the Pacific Region for Environment Programme
SWA	-	Samoa Water Authority
TA	-	Thematic Assessment
TWG's	-	Technical Working Group
UNCCD	-	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNFCCC	-	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change
USP-SAFT	-	University of the South Pacific – School of Agriculture and Food Technology
WaSSP	-	Water Sector Support Programme

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Information

The cross-cutting phase is the fourth stage of the NCSA process. It identifies cross-cutting capacity issues and cross-cutting thematic environment issues as well as opportunities for linkages and synergies. This phase builds on the findings and results of the Thematic Assessment phase which identified capacity issues or common areas for each convention.

The cross-cutting phase will form the basis of the Action Plan which will identify capacity development actions to address cross-cutting capacity issues and cross-cutting thematic environment issues as well as promoting synergies between the conventions.

Given that cross-cutting issues refer to issues that cut across to more than one Convention, it is important to distinguish between cross-cutting thematic environment issues and cross-cutting capacity building issues.

Cross-cutting Capacity Building Issues: C*apacity building issues that cut across or common to more than one convention*

Cross-cutting Thematic Environment Issues: *Refers to connections among themes and issues addressed under the 3 Conventions or sometimes called the inter-linkages between the three Conventions*

The main purpose of the cross-cutting assessment is to conduct an analysis of capacity and environmental issues, needs and opportunities that cut across the conventions. This includes identification of common needs and possible synergies that could be achieved in Samoa by addressing requirements across two or more issues. A number of thematic environmental and capacity issues identified in the Thematic Assessment Reports are issues that Samoa is obligated to meet under all three Conventions. For instance, a cross-cutting capacity issue is research and development whilst a cross-cutting thematic environmental issue is sustainable land management.

The cross-cutting assessment is important to Samoa because it involves more than one sector/agency and requires strong coordination and support amongst all stakeholders. The assessment is also extremely beneficial because when Samoa addresses a cross-cutting issue, obligations under all three Conventions is addressed. The extent to which cross-cutting issues are successfully managed by Samoa reflects on the extent of coordination, integration and application of good governance principles. It encourages the addressing of environmental management issues in a holistic and synergistic manner.

1.2 Institutional Arrangements to Coordinate the 3 Conventions

There is currently no existing mechanism to exclusively coordinate all three Conventions. All three Conventions operate under a common national framework for MEAs in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade (MFAT) is the National Operational Focal Point and the Ministry of

Natural Resources and Environment (MNRE) is the National Implementing Agency for all three Conventions. In addition, the Ministry of Finance (MOF) is the National Executing Agency and is the finance treasurer of the country therefore responsible primarily with channelling funds from external donor sources to implement the Conventions.

The three Conventions are currently being coordinated by MNRE and are accommodated under different divisions of the Ministry. The CBD is being executed by the Division of Environment and Conservation (DEC); UNFCCC by the Meteorology Division and the UNCCD by the Division of Land Management (DLM). All three Conventions has its own institutional structure resourced by MNRE staff to coordinate activities obligated under the three Conventions. Having the three conventions implemented by the same Ministry has collaboratively provided substantive efforts to effectively implement Samoa's obligations under the three Conventions.

1.2.1 United Nations Framework Convention to Climate Change (UNFCCC)

The Government of Samoa has signed and ratified both the UNFCCC and its associated Kyoto Protocol. Since ratifying these international agreements in 1998 and 2000 respectively, Samoa has made good progress on their implementation.

Samoa's climate change activities are coordinated by the Climate Change Section now part of the Meteorology Division of the MNRE. The NCCCT acts as a steering committee for all the climate change activities in Samoa. The NCCCT is made up of all relevant stakeholders, including government agencies, academic institutions and NGOs.

1.2.2 United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD)

Samoa ratified the CBD on 9 February 1994. Samoa's ratification therefore of the CBD both reflects its continuing commitment to its conservation work, and more importantly the high level of priority it has accorded to international collaborations, that will provide the much needed assistance it require, in terms of financial and technical expertise resources, to improve the management and sustainable use of its biological resources.

The CBD is currently being administered through the DEC of MNRE. A National Multi-Stakeholder Committee which provide technical advice and mobilizes resources to assist the implementation of the country's biodiversity work is the National Biodiversity Strategy & Action Plan Stakeholders Committee. Local implementing agencies that directly managed the conservation and use of most of the country's biological resources are the Village Chief Councils.

1.2.3 United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD)

Samoa acceded the Convention on 20 August 1998, four years after the Convention was adopted in Paris on 17 June 1994, and two years since the Convention entered into force on 26 December 1996. Since then, the implementation of UNCCD in Samoa has continued to advance beginning with the development of the First National Report to the UNCCD (2002), a process which began and completed in late 2002.

The DLM, through the Land Development Section, is officially assigned as part of the Institutional Strengthening Arrangement, with the administration of the Convention which includes coordination, facilitation and implementation at all levels; local, national and international levels. The National Steering Committee (NSC) was established in 2003 and constituted a higher-level representation of Government Ministries, Tertiary Institutions, Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs) and regional organizations. Its core responsibilities include the provision of overall policy guidance for the implementation of the Convention. The UNCCD Taskteam (TT) was instituted by the NSC on 19 March 2004 to spearhead the formulation of Samoa's National Action Programme (NAP) as obligated under the Convention. Membership of the NTT comprises technical persons source from members of the NSC. Since its establishment in 2004, the NTT has significantly expanded to include more stakeholders whose contribution is significantly relevant to formulation of the NAP and other reporting requirements.

1.2.4 Other Implementing Agencies

Establishing respective technical working groups (TWGs) under the three Conventions has involved government ministries, non-government organisations, government corporations, academic institutions and societal committees as part of obligations under the Conventions. With the existence of these TWG's saw representations of these organisations in not only one Convention but in all three Conventions. The following is a tabulation of organisations involved in the three Conventions.

Table 1: Implementing and Supporting Agencies

Government Agencies	**Role**
MNRE	National Implementing Agency
MFAT	National Operational Focal Point
MOF	National Executing Agency of funds
MAF	Responsible in providing agricultural and marine information relevant to the implementation of the three Conventions
MWCSD	Focal point between the Conventions and societal groups e.g. Womens Committee, Chiefs and Orators
MESC	Responsible for the integration of environmental issues into education curriculum
AG	Responsible for legal matters in implementing obligations of the three Conventions
SLC	Provides information on government land not administered by MNRE
SWA	Responsible in providing water related information/data in implementing the Convention obligations
EPC	Responsible in providing energy information to assist implementation of the UNFCCC obligations particularly the SNC
STA	Responsible in providing information pertaining to tourism relevant in the implementation of the three Conventions
Non-Government Organizations	**Role**
Samoa Umbrella for Non-Governmental Organizations (SUNGO)	Responsible in providing support and advice from Non-governmental organisations on matters that needs to be addressed in assisting the implementation of the three Conventions

METI	An independent environment trust responsible in providing support in the implementation of the three Conventions obligations
National Council of Churches	Responsible in providing advice from the religious perspective in the implementation of the three Conventions
Red Cross	Responsible in assisting climate change unit in implementing its obligations
Academic Institutions	**Role**
National University of Samoa	Responsible in providing research data in the implementation of the three Conventions obligations
University of the South Pacific	Responsible in providing existing research land information in the implementation of convention obligations
Societal Committees	**Role**
Chiefs and orators of villages	Responsible in ensuring support and commitment from the communities are reflected in the implementation of the three Conventions obligations
Environment Committees in villages	Responsible in ensuring that activities in the communities are well monitored and controlled

1.3 Inter-linkages between the 3 Conventions

There are respective Convention obligations implemented under the 3 Conventions that noted the collaboration between the three Conventions. These include;

- NAPA: CBD and UNCCD providing backstopping support to clarify issues pertaining to the Conventions with regards to marine ecosystems and land use practices along the coastal areas.
- National Communications: CBD and UNCCD focal points are members of the NCCT to the SNC.
- National Action Programme (NAP): UNFCCC and CBD focal points are members of the UNCCD Task Team and the National Steering Committee in formulating the NAP.
- Third National Report to the UNCCD: UNFCCC and CBD as members of the Task Team have been involved in completing the report.
- Protected areas of both marine and terrestrial: UNFCCC and UNCCD are involved in conservation programmes regarding marine and terrestrial conservations.
- 1st, 2nd and 3rd National Reports to the CBD: These National Reports reflects the involvement of UNFCCC and UNCCD members in implementing activities pertaining to these reports
- First national to UNCCD 2003: UNFCCC and UNCBD activities relating to land degradation are highlighted in this report
- 3rd National to UNCCD 2006: Updated of activities already implemented under UNFCCC and UNCBD that relates to land degradation
- NAP 2006: UNFCCC and UNCBD members assisted the formulation of the NAP

2. THEMATIC PROFILES

This section provides summary of the analysis of priority areas identified under the three Conventions as detailed in the three thematic assessment reports to assist Samoa's implementation of its obligations and requirements. The summary looks at the analysis of causes why Samoa is unable to implement or achieve its obligations looking at the individual, institutional and systemic levels.[1]

2.1 CBD Profile

The CBD identified five areas for priority actions to improve Samoa's implementation of its commitments and obligations under the CBD.

2.1.1 Management of Protected Areas

- Basically there is a very small pool of individuals mostly staff of national organizations, with experience and skills relevant to the management of protected areas, which they have largely gained during many years of on the job training and practical initiatives.
- Few of these groups are directly involved in protected area management, the rest with a range of other responsibilities beside this work. Thinly spread over a range of many activities, this small pool of individuals can not provide for much of the management needs of existing protected areas.
- For most of the conservation communities or village communities with terrestrial and marine protected areas, they lack the knowledge and resources to systematically make and implement plans for the management of their sites, much less to mobilize the resources they need. Even efforts to empower them in the past have not generally endure or were incapable of addressing all pertinent technical, social, environment and economic issues, related to the management of their areas.
- In spite of the extensive media promotion of Samoa's natural features as an important element in the tourism industry, national development planning have not seriously considered the potential contributions protected areas may have on the country's economy. As such the needs of these sites have not been sufficiently addressed in annual government budgets, and external development aid arrangements.
- The absence also of definite plans for improving the management and development of these sites, is a situation that certainly has not progress forward their improvement and does not encourage the interests of potential donors to their needs.

2.1.2 Management of species and habitats of global value

- The general public and national policy makers are not fully informed of the different conservation status or global conservation values of species and habitats. This is due in part to the lack of awareness raising, using the potential of available means such as the media, to familiarize them with these important specifics, and also the lack of information integration

[1] The CBD, UNFCCC and UNCCD profile analysis are extracted as detailed in the Three Conventions Thematic Assessment Reports

and sharing among national holders of valuable information. In terms of the lack of appraisal of traditional biological knowledge in national policies and conservation efforts, holders of this knowledge are not fully engage in policy formulation and conservation work.

- For the lack of experts in specialized fields, this is due in part to the fact that most of the training in these capacities is on the job, and with individuals with wide ranging administrative responsibilities which too often lacks time and resources to fully commit to the required technical services. Moreover, the existing formal education and training – primary, secondary and tertiary – lacks students progressing along scientific studies that would lead to these fields of expertise.

2.1.3 Management of Invasive Species

- Weak border control is not only due to lack of commitment of border control government staff, but more so on the lack of staff and equipments to adequately screen and quarantine all potential chances for the introduction of new invasive species, and the non-compliance of peoples with quarantine rules and regulations.
- The continuing increase of spread of existing invasive species is due both to the lack of human and financial resources to manage them, but is also due to native species becoming invasive once their natural control are absence, such as the case of the Pacific ship rat's increase in the islands of Nu'utele and Nu'ulua, where it has escaped its natural predators on mainland Upolu.
- Again the lack of public awareness and experts in this field is due to the untapped potentials of existing networks of media facilities and formal education schools systems, for raising public awareness and to develop the country's resources of individuals with the knowledge, skills and commitment, for required technical services in this field.
- Apart from the search for effective methods of invasive species control, the full potentials and impacts also of various methods, have not be adequately assessed especially their impacts on native biodiversity. For instance the biological control of the African snail using a type of red flatworm is suspected to also impact severely on endemic snail species.
- The full potentials also of local village communities have not been fully utilized in this cause, and no definite plan is yet in place to empower and encourage these communities to carry out invasive management on their own lands.

2.1.4 Bio-safety

- The national bio-safety framework (NBF) for addressing biodiversity issue was only recently developed and approved last year (2005) through a multi-stakeholder process which helped increase the knowledge and commitment of national stakeholders on the formulation of actions for addressing bio-safety issues.
- While awareness raising were carried out which have initially informed the general public on the nature of the issue, much more time and effort is required to develop the understanding, capacities and commitment of the peoples and their institutions to the implementation of the established national biodiversity framework.
- As a relatively new issue, the challenge is getting the financial resources required to start the implementation of its national policy. An application for donor assistance in this respect is

currently underway for submission to GEF-UNEP to secure funding for initial implementation of the NBF.

2.1.5 Access and Benefit Sharing and Protection of Traditional Biological Knowledge

- In general there is no definite national policy framework in place for addressing issues of ABS&PTBK in Samoa, apart from experiences gained through incidences of bio-prospecting activities in the country within the last twelve years. These experiences have consequently resulted out of individual concern for the key governmental organizations to institute their own individual policies to partially address the issues.
- Village communities strongly claimed the right to be key component of any national framework for addressing issues of ABS&PTBK, as in the proposed model below that came out of the national capacity needs assessment exercise of these issues in 2003.
- Moreover while three government ministries have significant involvement in ABS&PTBK issues, none of them has an over-riding authority over the issues. As such collective cooperation for addressing the issues is very weak. Opportunities therefore still exists for bio-piracy and abuse of the country's sovereignty over access and use of its genetic resources, and its people's traditional biological knowledge.
- In spite minimal cooperation and commitment of key stakeholders to address the issues, local communities places a very high value on the country's genetic resources and their traditional biological knowledge. A regional project currently underway with funding assistance from GEF and co-coordinated by SPREP and other inter-governmental organizations in the region, is an important opportunities for the country to undertake serious steps for establishing a definite national framework policy to address the issues.
- A partnership between village and government to operate with the 'faa-samoa' has also been considered. It will be comprised of the government representative through the Ministry which will be the focal point, researchers, National Access and Benefit Sharing Committee

2.2 UNFCCC profile

The UNFCCC identified six key areas for Samoa to develop in order to implement its obligations under the Convention.

2.2.1 Mainstream of climate change objectives

An overarching capacity gap for Samoa is that climate change objectives are inadequately mainstreamed. This means that climate change is still treated as a separate, isolated issue, rather than an issue of concern and importance for all sectors. Not all sectors and stakeholders affected by climate change are taking responsibility for this issue.

2.2.2 Adaptation

Adaptation to adverse impacts of climate change is a major priority for Samoa. However, recent adaptation efforts have highlighted a limited capacity of relevant sectors and stakeholders to implement adaptation strategies.

2.2.3 Mitigation

Climate change mitigation essentially involves reducing greenhouse gas emissions. Samoa has focused its mitigation efforts on increasing renewable energy production. However, a number of other mitigation options also have some potential in Samoa, including energy efficiency and the use of carbon sinks (forests). The NCSA consultations revealed an inadequate capacity to identify mitigation opportunities and implement actions.

2.2.4 Research and systematic observation

Research into all areas relating to climate change is important as it helps enhance the understanding of how climate change will affect Samoa and what activities can be taken to adapt. Systematic observation of climate change is also important as it helps to monitor Samoa's climatic trends and to provide locally relevant climate predictions. Consultation with relevant stakeholders has revealed that overall Samoa has a limited capacity to conduct research and systematic observations into areas related to climate change.

2.2.5 Data management

All climate change activities depend on the availability of relevant data. Such as, climate data, agricultural production data, and energy consumption data. While Samoa has been collecting a lot of relevant data, there is a limited capacity to manage this data effectively.

2.2.6 Education and public awareness

Education and public awareness is important as it helps build understanding of climate change issues and to strengthen Samoa's capacity to adapt to the adverse impacts. However, to date, there has been limited education and public awareness.

2.3 UNCCD profile

The UNCCD identified twelve areas for development in order to implement and achieve Samoa's obligations and requirements under the Convention.

2.3.1 Administrative management of resource and resource allocation

The level of commitment and collaboration of key sectoral actors including NGOs is essential for the successful implementation of Convention requirements. However, it is often noted that representation of stakeholders is inconsistent during dialogue and consultation forums. There are also limited resources available to undertake effective awareness programmes and consultations to local communities regarding the Convention and sustainable land management issues. Unlike other Conventions another notable gap is the absence of a National Commemoration Day for Land Degradation issues in line with the World Day Commemoration of UNCCD. In addition, existent legislation lacks specific provisions to address the effective implementation of UNCCD Objectives. In terms of resource allocation there is an obvious gap whereby the channeling of funds at the national level do not filter down to communities. However this is necessary to strengthen responsible local management of resources and to ensure that transparency and accountability of the flow of resources from the national to local level is maintained.

2.3.2 Mainstreaming sustainable land management into National Plans and Initiatives

The commercial development of land and land-based resources have been clearly mainstreamed as key priority areas into national plans and initiatives. In contrast, Sustainable Land Management is not adequately recognized by government for streamlining into national goals as well as educational curricula.

2.3.3 Land development management

Land Development issues are a priority area in the SDS 2005-2007 and involve a web of complex factors. These include aspects of customary land ownership subject to change when the new Torren System of Registration materializes as well as the use of customary land for tourism investment and development purposes. This is in recognition of government attempts to intensify agricultural growth and enhance forest developments as main sources of income for land owners. A result is the invention of new committees often without land management mandates and lacks full representation of relevant stakeholders with significant roles in the management and development of land. The resultant capacity gap is the fractured coordination to manage land development issues within the framework of sustainable development as the main focus involves mainly commercial interests. In addition, there is a need for proper landuse planning to guide the sustainable use of land for development purposes and restrict the transfer of productive arable land to other uses as well as the need to promote enforcement of appropriate and sustainable landuse standards and codes of practice such as land zoning, and land use capability and enforcement of EIA on all landuse developments to ensure standards and codes of practice are complied with.

2.3.4 Forest resource management

The focus of the management of forest resources has dramatically changed from a commercially-oriented approach to the need to sustainably manage forest resources. This is a result of growing recognition of diminishing forest resources due to unsustainable logging and clearance for agriculture. A major capacity gap lies in the ineffectiveness of existing Forestry legislation whereby roles and responsibilities of the Forestry Division are vague and unclear. There are also inadequate

efforts focused on the promotion of sustainable livelihood options and the empowerment of communities to sustainably manage their local forest resources.

2.3.5 Agricultural management practices

Agriculture is the most commonly practiced livelihood activity for the majority of Samoan households and remains the backbone of Samoa's economy. The current SDS highlights accelerating agricultural growth with particular emphasis on large scale commercial farming and diversification of crop productions into new high value crops and products. Food security is also a priority area to ensure sustenance of local consumption with reference to organic farming as a key aspect of diversification. However the promotion of agriculture in the SDS has adopted a vigorous commercially driven focus with minimal consideration of consequences on the environment. A major capacity gap is the significant decline in traditional sustainable practices of land cultivation in tandem with the rapid increase of unsustainable technological innovations to agriculture. This is due mainly to the shift from small-scaled subsistence farming to large-scale commercial plantations and limited efforts to adopt sustainable measures of farming. There is also a weak enforcement of existing legislation to curb unsustainable landuse practices and to incorporate environmental concerns into existing Agriculture legislation and policies.

2.3.6 Management of deforestation

Deforestation is a key contributing factor to land clearance of virgin forest for logging and agricultural purposes. The management of deforestation is not a responsibility specific to one individual or a single national agency but is practiced generally by most farmers, loggers, developers and residents of newly settled areas. Therefore, it is important to manage it in a synchronized effort. Consequently, the most notable capacity gap is the absence of a specified national mechanism to manage issues specific to deforestation and to coordinate appropriate advice across sectors as well as local communities. Such responsibility can be allocated to one of the relevant existing national mechanisms to manage the issue more effectively and to bring it under sustainable control. The Forestry Division or the Division of Land Management with the key mandate to issue logging license and lease customary lands could take responsibility for addressing deforestation. In addition there is a need to strengthen the enforcement of the existing planning mechanism which legitimizes forest clearance to conserve and protect areas in which forests play an essential role and to promote sustainable methods of logging and felling for agricultural purposes. There is also the lack of enforcing the village council's authority in the management of communal forests in contrast to its current role in resource management which is widely evident in the management and protection of coastal and marine resources such as the regulation of sandmining and reclamations and banning of destructive fishing methods such as dynamites and fish poisoning. The same role should be encouraged and supported in the management of village lands to ensure forests are used sustainably and watersheds protected.

2.3.7 Water resource management

Land degradation affects the quantity and quality of freshwater supplies. Over the years, the management of water resources was relatively fragmented with Samoa Water Authority (SWA) responsible for ensuring water supply to all Samoan households. Other aspects of the protection and

conservation of water resources had been addressed through multiple environmental programmes by MNRE while protection of water-shed areas was the responsibility of the Forestry Division formerly under MAF. This fragmentation raised a number of concerns regarding water quality to ensure public health sanitation and the treatment of wastewater in view of scarcity of the resource. The newly established Water Resource Division funded by WSSP is expected to effectively address these concerns. This entails dedication of resources to raising awareness and capacity development of newly recruited staff. However it is recognized that the scope must extend to addressing governance issues at the local level where management of water sources and catchment areas involving differing ownerships often rife with heated disputes. In addition, infrastructural set-ups and technology transfer must transpire to enable effective quality management of water resources focusing on sanitation and wastewater treatment.

2.3.8 Soil resource management

The management of soil as a national resource is fragmented under institutions and individuals whose work and interests are soil related. Under the auspices of GoS, MNRE considers soil from the environmental and forestry perspectives and MAFF from that of food production. But both recognize the prevention of land degradation in order that the utilisation of soil resources are sustainable according to their individual mandates. USPs School of Agriculture and Food Technology (USP-SAFT) and NUS are educational institutions that utilise soil resources for educational and research purposes, the former as a means of sustainable food production and the latter as a biological resource. At the local level, individual landowners/farmers make decisions and undertake activities to exploit what they understand as theirs. The overarching capacity gap is the lack of multidisciplinary approach to the use of soil in the production of goods and services with the view of preventing land degradation. This has made worse by the absence of a national coordinated mechanism specific to soil research and conservation of soil resources and for rehabilitating purposes of degraded land soils due to valuable top-soil erosion and the consequent loss of soil fertility.

2.3.9 Management of drought/flood prone areas

Drought and Flood events are induced mainly by factors of climate variability, the management of which requires reliable information, good facilities and monitoring system and softwares to allow for prediction and forecast to be as accurate as possible. Climate variations can strongly affect drought (and rainfall) patterns and there is limited awareness and coping capacity of vulnerable communities to adapt to onset of a drought whereby incidents of fire spread and scarcity of water are often the predominant issues due to acute rainfall deficiency especially during the dry season. Communities also have limited capacity to cope with flooding events and where farmed steeplands are notably vulnerable to top-soil erosion, there is not only poor drainage system but limited effort to realize the impacts and provide for soil protection measures. Often this result in downstream runoffs contaminating coastal waters and degrade land areas along the path.

2.3.10 Rehabilitation of degraded lands

Degraded land areas are visible in and around the country yet not highly recognized by the SDS as a priority issue to be addressed. Interior land both flat and steep suffer from excavations for land-filling and construction purposes and the latter from rainfall splash on cultivated lands resulting to erosion of top-soils which without much trouble made significant deposits into the coastal sea environment generating high turbidity levels and impact on inshore fishery. Coastal land areas are visibly degraded from aggressive acts of coastal wave actions which can penetrate 200m of solid land at a time of storm surges. This represents a threat to loss of significant lands into sea and reduced the land cover statistics over time. A significant gap is that there is limited coordinated effort at the national level to enforce any significant control over the use of land resources and with the government focus on infrastructural development, application of control can be seen as impeding development intentions. Deforestation is the most notable driver behind which started the process of land degradation and this practice needs to be strictly controlled. Not much effort is accorded to this department of degradation especially on neglected land after use for aggregate extraction and steeplands also are not protected with significant mitigation structures to prevent it from soil erosion. Treatment of polluting chemicals from organic and toxic wastes lack the infrastructure to coordinate efforts and manage these concerns well.

2.3.11 Poverty reduction and livelihoods

Poverty reduction is highly dependent on sustained food security for the local populations and while poverty in Samoa is rather interpreted in terms of hardship and/or poverty of opportunity, it is highly noticeable that Samoan society is strategized in ways that have resulted in limited access to equitable social services, limited employment opportunities and crippled in the ability to attain economic assets. This has inevitably force the majority especially local communities to face social exclusion and political marginalization. Another key feature associated with poverty and hardship is inequity and unfairness arising out of the system of customary land administration. As well there is fractured recognition and coordination of poverty issues from the national to local level institutions. It is increasingly noted also that macro-economic growth and stability could not help reduce poverty and income inequality except it is creating and expanding the current gap between rich and the poor. Hence there is a need to increase attention on poverty issues through awareness and increase designed programmes to assist the poor or for planners and policy-makers to target the poor for poverty alleviation programme implementation.

2.3.12 Information management and sharing

Informed decision making is often based on the availability of relevant and reliable information. There is limited up-to-date land information in Samoa for the specific analysis of landuse patterns to determine the extent of land cover removal as well as degradation of land resources. There are numerous literatures on land components of the environment including advanced land information database but the ownership of such information is fragmented into various institutions. For instance, GIS land mapping technology exists under the Forestry Division and Mapping Section of MNRE, there is existing critical data for key land uses in forestry, watershed, land management and nature of conservation under various Divisions of MNRE, whilst research on soils and related land components are institutionalized in academic institutions. Therefore a significant gap is the absence

of a central repository and coordinated mechanism for all land related information to enable easy access and information sharing in a timely manner. This set-up will also enable the development of a strategy to allow meaningful data to be collected and relevant information to be presented to information users

3. APPROACHES AND METHODOLOGY

The cross-cutting exercise is the fourth phase of the NCSA process after the Thematic Assessment (TA) phase. It imparts an integral part of the NCSA process and builds on the thematic profiles presented in the preceding section.

Samoa's cross-cutting phase undertook several planned activities to produce the identified cross-cutting issues. These planned activities consist of the preliminary exercise and two workshops consulting relevant stakeholders.

3.1 Preliminary Exercise

The main purpose of the preliminary exercise was to identify cross-cutting issues highlighted in the thematic assessment reports which was primarily carried out by a sub-committee of focal points and staff members of MNRE.

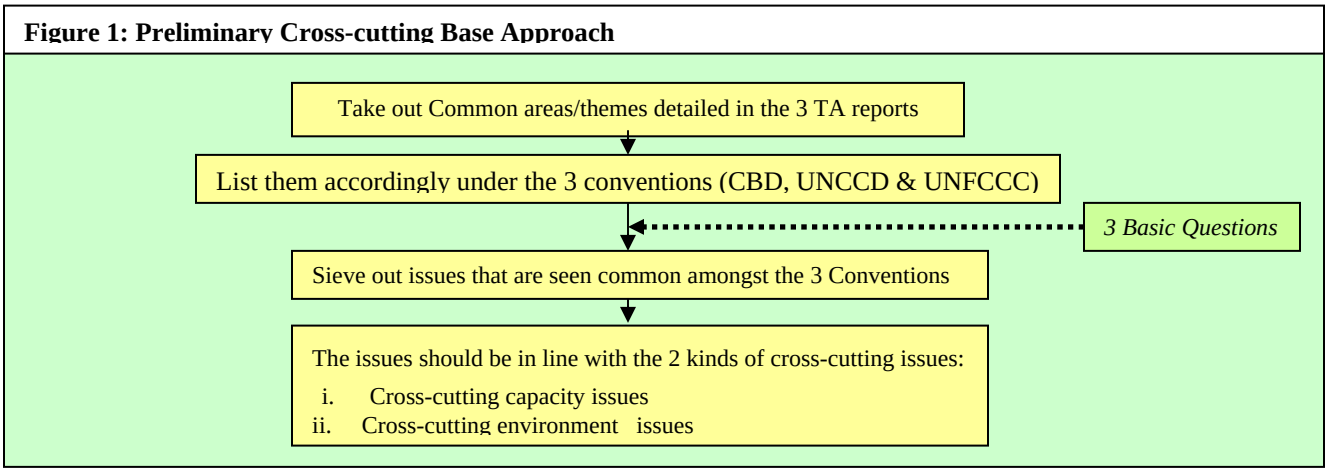
The sub-committee began its preliminary analysis by reviewing each of the TA Report and looking for possible cross-cutting issues. The analysis of the information from the TA reports was based on past, on-going and current initiatives to provide basis to identify cross-cutting issues. The following questions were considered as probing questions during the exercise to assist members in identifying cross-cutting issues:

- What are the past, on-going and current initiatives (laws, policies, plans, strategies, programmes and projects) that needs building on and are seen cross-cutting?
- Are there ways these initiatives that are seen cross-cutting link to each other?
- How are the results/findings contributes to on-going and future initiatives?

With these three basic questions, it allowed the sub-committee to distinguish issues that cut across the three conventions.

The three basic questions produced the approach used which was the issue base approach. The approach looked at all the issues detailed in the three TA reports and then sieve out issues that are seen common or cut across the conventions using the three basis questions. This approach is road mapped below:

Figure 1: Preliminary Cross-cutting Base Approach



3.2 Workshop Approach

There were two (2) workshops conducted by the project unit which are elaborated below.

3.2.1 First Workshop

The aim of the first workshop was to confirm cross-cutting issues identified in the preliminary exercise by the sub-committee. Various assessment tools were used during this workshop to identify synergies in order to confirm cross-cutting thematic environment issues as well analysing of cross-cutting capacity building issues:

1. Issue based approach – looked at understanding synergies of the thematic environment cross-cutting issues across the three Conventions
2. Problem analysis – looked at root causes of each capacity building cross-cutting issues
3. Objective analysis – looked at positive options to provide basis for actions and methods to address identified capacity building cross-cutting issues

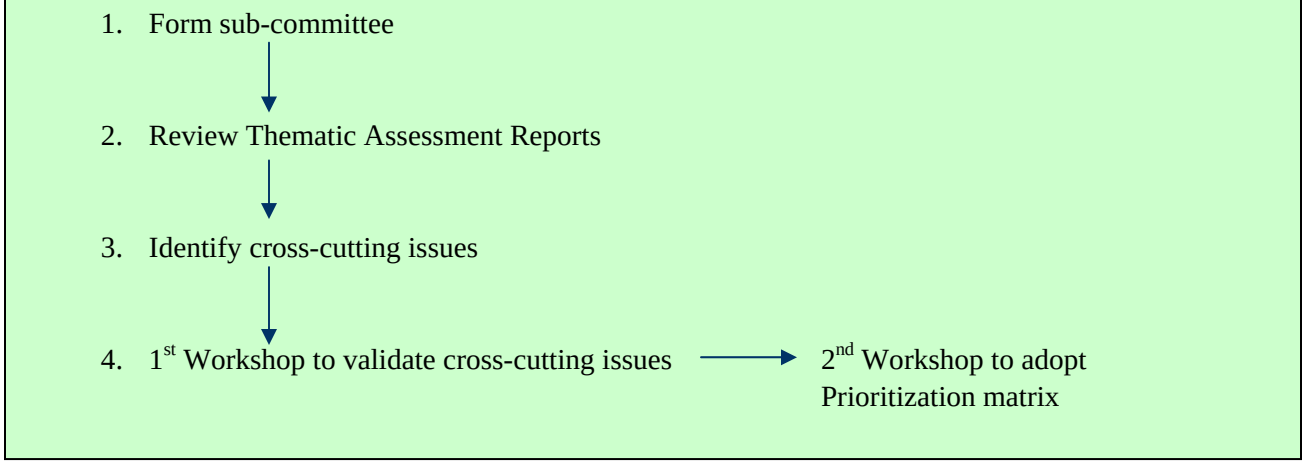
3.2.2 Second Workshop

The second workshop was a resolution from the first workshop. It was aimed to confirm the analysis of the cross-cutting issues detailed in the cross-cutting workshop report. The workshop also determined prioritization of cross-cutting capacity building issues using a matrix recommended in the Guide for Self-Assessment of Country Capacity Needs for Global Environmental Management,

3.3 Overall Approach for the Cross-cutting Phase

In summary the process undertaken to assess cross cutting issues is as follow:

Figure 2: Overall Approach



4. CROSS-CUTTING ANALYSIS

The cross-cutting analysis is based on the thematic profiles generated during the TA. It enabled the identification of thematic environment and capacity building issues found common amongst all three Conventions. This section provides a summary list of the cross-cutting issues identified during the cross-cutting analysis.

4.1 Cross-cutting capacity building issues

The following are the cross-cutting capacity building issues from the analysis.

4.1.1 Limited cross-sector cooperation

There is an existing low level of cooperation and collaboration from sectoral and other relevant stakeholders at the national level which needs to be addressed. The representation of sectors to the three Conventions related meetings or forums are usually inconsistent, thereby generating an ineffective participation and involvement which has affected the implementation of the three Conventions obligations and requirements.

4.1.2 Inadequate institutional data and information management and dissemination

Considerable work has been implemented under the three Conventions generating vital information for educational and public awareness purposes. However, much of this information remains with the Convention's focal points and are not readily accessible to users. This has reflected the absence of a central repository mechanism for all the information relating to the three Conventions to enable effective dissemination to all potential users like the general public, students, government ministries and non-government agencies. It is also eminent that with the abundance of information relating to the three Conventions, the procedures to manage and share this information or data is ineffective.

4.1.3 On-going human and financial resources constraints

Limited human and financial resources are one of the major constraints in implementing the three Conventions obligations. Samoa has limited expertise in specialized areas or appropriate expertise to implement activities obligated by the three Conventions for example botanists for biodiversity; soil specialist for land degradation and energy specialist for climate change.

4.1.4 Limited education and public awareness

There is not much emphasis of the Conventions issues in education curriculum. However, with existing awareness campaign of the three Conventions, there is limited institutional capacity to raise awareness not only MNRE as the national executing agency but also involved sectors assisting the implementation of obligations of the Conventions.

4.1.5 Limited strengthening and enforcement of policies and legal framework

Existing policies and regulations have been developed under the three Conventions in accordance with provisions under the Conventions obligations. There is limited systemic capacity to enforce these legal frameworks that needs to be addressed..

4.1.6 Limited training and staff skills development

To ensure effective implementation of the Conventions obligations, there should be on-going and specialized trainings to maintain qualified and un-qualified staff members working under the Conventions. Providing technical on the job training on environmental issues and administration aspect should also be considered.

4.1.7 Mainstreaming of environment issues into national plans

The effective implementation of the Conventions requires that they are mainstreamed into relevant national plans. This includes the SDS as well as all relevant sectoral plans.

4.2 Cross-cutting thematic environment issues

The analysis identified the following cross-cutting thematic environment issues pertaining to linkages and synergies across the three Conventions.

4.2.1 Ineffective land development management

To ensure effective management of land development, emphasis should focus on the type of land use practices in place. The land use practices in Samoa comprises of agricultural development, infrastructure development, settlements, conservation of national parks and reserves as well as forest use. It is these general practices that have induced various environmental problems such as deforestation, loss of soil fertility, land mining, development of drought prone areas and unsustainable land use practices.

4.2.2 Inadequate water resource management

Water is an essential and central natural resource for the livelihood of Samoa. There have been considerable awareness programmes particularly in communities on the sustainable management of water resources. However due to significant environmental threats of activities such as deforestation, agricultural irrigation and land clearance, more work is required to adequately manage this resource and to ensure the mitigation of severe impacts particularly in drought prone areas, watershed areas and wetlands.

4.2.3 Ineffective coastal land and inshore resource management

There are existing policies and mechanisms to control and manage coastal land and inshore resources. These policies and mechanisms pertains to activities such as reclamation, sand mining and fishing practices. But the existence of environmental problems such as coastal erosion and coastal sedimentation hinder the effectiveness of these control mechanisms.

4.2.4 Ineffective agricultural management

Agricultural development is an evidently common practice in Samoa. It has led to severe environmental concerns which have been observed in areas where these agricultural developments are performed. These concerns include land degradation, loss of soil fertility, deforestation, loss of agro-biodiversity, loss of native ecosystems and species, introduction and outbreak of pest diseases and invasive species.

4.2.5 Ineffective forest management

There is a notable increase in logging activities in Samoa. This activity has inevitably led to existing environmental problems such as land degradation, loss of native ecosystems and species and has contributed to the high vulnerability of land to severe whether conditions such as cyclones, droughts, flooding, erosions and rising temperatures.

4.3 Setting Priorities

It is not possible to do a comprehensive priority analysis of all cross-cutting capacity building issues given that all issues are of equal importance in the three Conventions.

However, since NCSA is an initiative to assist countries like Samoa to assess its capacity to meet obligations under the three Conventions, Samoa has considered setting its priorities later in the cross-cutting phase. Prioritization tools have been identified. The matrix detailed in the NCSA Resource Kit looking at the scale of the issue, the level of concern, ability to address the issue and at what capacity level the issue falls under. The result of the prioritization exercise is tabulated in Table 2 below.

Table 2: Prioritization exercise

Cross-cutting capacity building issue:	Scale of problem:	Capacity level:	Level of concern:	Ability to adequately address issue:	Priority ranking:
1. Limited cross-sector cooperation	N	Ind. Ins. Sys.	H M H	H H H	5
2. Inadequate institutional data and information management & dissemination	N	Ind. Ins. Sys.	H H H	M M M	3
3. On-going human and financial resources constraints	N	Ind. Ins. Sys.	H H H	M L-M L-M	4
4. Limited education and public awareness	N	Ind. Ins. Sys.	M M M	M M M	3
5. Limited strengthening and enforcement of policies and legal framework	N	Ind. Ins. Sys.	H H H	M M M	5
6. Limited training and staff skills development	N	Ind. Ins. Sys.	M M M	H H H	3
7. Mainstreaming of environment issues into National Plans	N	Ind. Ins. Sys.	H H H	M M M	5

For scale of problem, enter L – local, N – National

For capacity level, enter Ind – Individual, Ins – Institutional, Sys – Systemic

For level of "concern" and for "ability…", enter L – low, M – medium and H – high

Provide relative ranking from 1 to 5 being 5= highly needed, 4 = second highly needed, etc.

5. CONCLUSION

Following its thematic assessment, Samoa has produced twelve cross-cutting issues which is categorized into two categories, cross-cutting capacity building issues and cross-cutting thematic environment issues. These cross-cutting issues will provide basis for Samoa's Action Plan to identify capacity development actions to address cross-cutting capacity building issues and actions to promote synergies across the three conventions through its cross-cutting thematic environment issues.

Samoa has identified seven cross-cutting capacity building issues and five cross-cutting thematic environment issues. The cross-cutting capacity building issues are (1.) limited cross-sector cooperation, (2.) inadequate institutional data and information management & dissemination, (3.) on-going human and financial constraints, (4.) limited education and public awareness, (5.) limited strengthening and enforcement of policies and legal frameworks, (6.) limited training and staff skills development and (7.) mainstream of environment issues into national plans.

The cross-cutting thematic environment issues are (1.) ineffective land development management, (2.) inadequate water management, (3.) ineffective coastal land and inshore resource management, (4.) ineffective agricultural management and (5.) ineffective forest management.

6. WAY FORWARD

Samoa's analysis of its cross-cutting issues produced a substantive seven cross-cutting capacity building issues and five cross-cutting thematic environment issues. Its prioritization exercise on cross-cutting capacity building issues highlighted three issues of high priority focusing on cross-sectoral cooperation; strengthening and enforcement of policies & legal frameworks and mainstreaming environment issues into Samoa's national plans to effectively achieve and implement activities obligated under the Conventions.

As an obligation to have priorities for countries undertaking NCSA initiative, the priority cross-cutting capacity building issues will provide basis for capacity development actions to address in the Action Plan which will be the next phase for Samoa. Cross-cutting thematic environment issues will also be addressed in the Action Plan to highlight and address linkages as well as promoting synergies across the three Conventions.

The next way forward for Samoa is to identify actions to address its priority cross-cutting capacity building issues to initiate the Action Plan. Its cross-cutting thematic environment issues will be addressed to highlight the interrelationships and synergies across the three Conventions.

7. REFERENCES

1. United Nations Development Programme, Global Environment Facility, October 2004, *National Capacity Self Assessment: A Resource Kit*

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3. UNCBD Task Team, April 2006, *Thematic Assessment for the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity*

4. UNFCCC Task Team, April 2006, *Thematic Assessment Report for the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change*