GCFWATCH

46th Board Meeting of the Green Climate Fund

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**GCF Observer Network of Civil Society, Indigenous Peoples, and Local Communities**

Intervention on

# FP316: Fiji Coral Reef Resilience Project

**Access the document:** https://www.greenclimate.fund/board-document/gcf-b46-02-add09

We welcome this fully grant-financed, ecosystem-based adaptation proposal for Fiji, a heavily indebted Small Island Developing State. The living shorelines build on the traditional knowledge that has sustained the Great Sea Reef, and they protect community assets rather than commercial ones. We also appreciate the gender, disability and social inclusion assessment, including support for childcare, food and travel so women can attend meetings.

We welcome the Locally Led Adaptation Fund as a positive step in principle, giving communities direct access to finance for adaptation projects they design themselves. However, we question whether it is funded and structured to deliver locally led action that lasts. About USD 1.5 million of the USD 35.2 million grant, roughly four percent, will go to a minimum of twelve community projects over ten years across four provinces. The fund is not an incorporated entity but a grant mechanism managed by WWF Fiji, and as the ITAP notes, it has no means of continuing beyond its one-time funding. Its legal-entity requirement may also exclude the informal women's groups most likely to propose household-level adaptation.

By comparison, the enterprise component uses USD 4.4 million of grant against a leverage target of half a million. The framework to identify reef-positive enterprises will only be developed during implementation, while community groups already face eligibility criteria. We are concerned about pushing early-stage community enterprises toward commercial credit, and would welcome a commitment that support to them remains grant-based.

We note that WWF Fiji executes all sixteen activities and also serves as secretariat to the Project Steering Committee. We encourage wider involvement of Fijian fisheries networks, women's organizations and community groups. Locally led should be led by locals.

We are concerned that site-specific free, prior and informed consent will only take place after approval, while fisheries management plans in twenty customary fishing grounds may restrict access to resources. Restrictions in mangroves and inshore areas would fall hardest on women who glean on foot. We urge that alternative food and income be in place before any closures, that livelihood restoration plans are not dropped for budget reasons, and that both iTaukei and Indo-Fijian fishers give their consent.

Given the high levels of violence against women, we would welcome dedicated support for frontline services such as the Fiji Women's Crisis Centre, and fair pay for women carrying out restoration work.

We also share the ITAP's concern about roughly USD 2 million in maintenance costs after the project ends, and encourage early clarity on how these will be funded.

Finally, as carbon sequestration is the largest benefit in the economic analysis, we ask for a commitment that restored ecosystems remain public goods and are not used for carbon trading.