

Environmental Futures Centre

Improving silvicultural and economic outcomes for indigenous communities

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A significant community-based teak plantation industry is now emerging in the Solomon Islands. Teak is a high value timber with a strong market demand that is likely to escalate as the supply of timber from natural forests dwindles. This is an Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research funded project that aims to develop systems, suitable for smallholders, based on traditional agroforestry practices but adapted to the growing of high value timber species inter-cropped with local timbers, food and cash crops. The project has recently been adopted for Australian aboriginal communities.

Solomon Islands

The project aims at improving silvicultural and economic outcomes for community timber plantations in the Solomon Islands by interplanting Teak with *Flueggea flexuosa* and other Pacific agroforestry species.

The project works with the School of Natural Resources and the SI Assoc. of



Rural Training Centres to provide training to students and future forest workers. Thinning trials and demonstration plots are used to educate local communities

Socio-economic Analysis

One of the unknowns with any type of project that involves encouraging people to adopt a particular way of doing things is the longer term effect on people, communities and livelihoods that these changes may have. This is particularly so when involving changes to agricultural practices and shifts away from farming for food to farming to produce an income. With this in mind, we have instigated a programme of social and economic analysis of the effects on communities of growing high value timbers such as Teak.

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Hopevale Aboriginal Community, Australia

The emphasis of the present government on increasing opportunities within Australian indigenous communities has presented the project with the chance to establish similar trials at Hopevale in Far North Queensland.

Under the addition to the project, field experiments similar to those undertaken in the Solomon Islands will be established, with the assistance of the traditional owners, on traditional land at Hopevale. This will include a range of silvicultural experiments, including interplanting trials of *Eucalyptus pellita* (red mahogany) with *Tectona grandis* and *Khaya senegalensis* African mahogany) as the high value timber species.

Working with the Australian Agricultural College at Mareeba, the project will provide opportunities for local capacity building and training in horticulture and agroforestry together with collaboration and cultural exchange between the Hopevale community and communities involved in the emerging teak industry in the Solomon Islands.

Project Partners

- Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research
- N&S Consulting, Solomon Islands
- Solomon Islands Association of Rural Training Centres
- Ministry of Forestry, Solomon Islands
- Maraghoto Consultancy Services, Solomon Islands
- Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, Solomon Islands
- Ministry of Education and Training, Solomon Islands
- Kolombangara Forest Products Ltd, Solomon Islands
- Hopevale Shire Council, Australia
- Australian Agricultural College, Mareeba Campus
- Integrated Tree Cropping Limited, Australia
- Queensland Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Australia

