

FCCC and Australia's MDF partner to boost use of solar energy in Fiji

MEDIA RELEASE - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Market Development Facility | Date: 10 April 2025

Suva, Fiji

The Fijian Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC) is working with the Australian Government's Market Development Facility (MDF) to identify solutions that can reduce regulatory barriers relating to solar energy licensing and installation. The partnership builds on growing demand for solar energy solutions in Fiji. FCCC and MDF will explore means of enhancing regulatory functions relating to solar energy, including introducing a digitised payment system and ensuring a streamlined approval process that allows for easy extraction of data for reporting.

The solar energy sector has significant potential to help Fiji achieve its climate change objectives, particularly to meet the government's Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) target of reducing carbon emissions by 30 per cent through transitioning electricity production to renewable sources. Fiji has had a solar energy market for over two decades, but its contribution to total electricity generation remains low. Key regulatory functions—such as licensing for electricity generation and regulating prices for feed-in tariffs—play a crucial role in enabling market growth.

Empowered by the FCCC Act 2010, the FCCC regulates various industries, including the energy sector, to ensure fair competition, protect consumer rights and foster economic growth. The FCCC, under the Electricity Act 2017, has been the sole authority for Generation and Installation Licensing since 30 September 2019.

"As such this partnership will help FCCC streamline regulatory licensing processes and create an environment that encourages investment in renewable energy and supports households and businesses in transitioning to solar energy," said FCCC Chief Executive Officer Senikavika L. Jiuta.

FCCC seeks to improve the efficiency and transparency of licencing by streamlining the current process, from receiving applications to approvals, while also incorporating complaint management to address consumer protection issues and stakeholder concerns.

The FCCC-MDF collaboration follows recent market research conducted by MDF and Solar Hub Fiji on urban household and business demand for solar energy. The survey revealed that nearly 70 per cent of households were willing to invest in solar energy systems using their own funds, while 50 per cent indicated an interest in loans or subscription models.

However, the survey also highlighted a key challenge: the need to improve regulatory frameworks to create a favourable environment for both commercial and residential adoption of solar energy solutions.

“MDF is proud to support FCCC in its critical work to streamline regulatory processes for renewable energy in Fiji. This partnership reflects our shared commitment to advancing the Fiji Government’s priorities in achieving its carbon emission reduction targets. Together, we aim to create an enabling environment that encourages investment in solar energy, benefiting both households and businesses while contributing to a more sustainable future,” said MDF Fiji Country Director Kelera Cavuilati.

The Solar Hub Fiji market research report is available on the MDF website: <https://marketdevelopmentfacility.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/09/Solar-Demand-Study.pdf>.

Market Development Facility (MDF)

Australia’s Market Development Facility (MDF) helps countries in the Indo-Pacific region to grow through improved productivity, economic diversification, competitiveness and trade.

MDF helps government and business partners to identify markets that have high potential to grow, be profitable, and deliver social and environmental value. MDF supports catalytic innovation in these markets by co-investing with local and international partners to reduce the costs and risks of early-stage commercial opportunities. This accelerates progress to profitability and scale.

Our aim is to do good by supporting good business. MDF supports business investment and innovation that reduces poverty, economically empowers women and combats climate change.

MDF currently operates in Fiji, Timor-Leste, Samoa, Vanuatu, Tonga and Sri Lanka. MDF is funded by the Australian Government and co-funded by the New Zealand Government in Samoa, Tonga and Vanuatu. It is implemented by Palladium, in partnership with Swisscontact.

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