



SOLOMON ISLANDS NATIONAL WATER RESOURCES AND SANITATION POLICY

An integrated, National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy.

Adequate, reliable and safe supplies of freshwater and appropriate sanitation are essential for economic development, public health and food production. The aim of this public policy is to ensure that all communities have access to such supplies and services and that the nation's water sources are protected and well managed.

Wata hem laef

Gud wata hem presis fo evriwan

Evriwan mas luk aftarem wata

**National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee
Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification**

June 2017

FOREWORD

I am pleased and honoured to present to you The National Water Resource and Sanitation (WATSAN) Policy. The policy provides a framework for leadership and coordinated action in the supply of safe, adequate and financially, technically and environmentally sustainable water supply and sanitation services to rural and urban communities in Solomon Islands and for the protection, conservation, sustainable use and efficient management of the country's water resources. The WATSAN policy is directed at improving the welfare and livelihood of the people and represents the vision of the Government for the water and sanitation sector.

Most parts of the Solomon Islands enjoy high average rainfall annually. However, this does not mean that water resources can be taken for granted. Rainfall and river flows are highly variable in certain areas; drinking water supplies may be short at some stage, yet a few months' later roads and gardens may be threatened by floods. There are special problems in the outlying atolls of the Solomon Islands, where there are only limited supplies of groundwater. Even where water resources are abundant they may not be suitable for a particular use, such as human consumption.

Water resources management in Solomon Islands has traditionally been fragmented, where different related issues have been managed in isolation, leading to ineffective, counteractive approaches and duplication of efforts. A lack of linkages between national and local level management has also led to big gaps between national policy and on-the-ground implementation.

The increasing demand for water is evident in the country thus necessitates proper water resources management and development. Evidence exists that the quality and quantity of fresh water is reducing; although the rate of reduction is not very well understood because of inadequate hydrological data and limited knowledge of local hydrology and water resources.

Water supply and sanitation has been not adequately addressed in the Solomon Islands with the result that existing infrastructure both in urban and rural areas is in a serious state of disrepair. Furthermore, there are significant gaps in governance and institutional arrangements along with serious shortfalls in both human and financial capacity to provide safe water to both urban and rural communities.

The Government recognizes the importance of sustainable and reliable water supply and appropriate sanitation systems as the basis for providing enabling environment to stimulate economic growth in the rural areas. In response the Government implements key policy objectives for ensuring the sustainable utilization and conservation of natural resources, including water and the protection of the environment and successfully combating the adverse effects of climate change.

Over the years the Government gave relatively low attention towards water and sanitation compared to other sectors. There are currently limited programs to address urban and rural sanitation issues. There is limited financial and human capacity of responsible organisation to respond to the existing requests for assistance in the installation of sanitation systems in the rural communities. The focus has traditionally been the provision of water supplies rather than sanitation although this is changing with a focus on sanitation to reach the SDG goals.

In order to improve the livelihoods of the people of Solomon Islands, the NDS called for the development of sector plans. For water and sanitation, this development was co-ordinated by the Water Resources Division of the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification through the Cabinet-appointed National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee (NIWCC).

This WATSAN Policy is a key Government strategy for ensuring that economic development, public health and food production are not compromised by inadequate, unreliable and unsafe water supplies and lack of appropriate sanitation. It is a response to priority concerns of rural and urban communities and most sectors throughout Solomon Islands about water supply and sanitation. These concerns were identified during nation-wide consultations for the National Development Strategy 2011-2020 and now the NDS 2016-2035 (NDS).

The WATSAN Policy builds on the outcomes of the National Development Strategy 2016-2035 where by recognises and prioritises water supply and sanitation. This policy concentrates on freshwater resources and their protection and recognises the complementary of Rural WASH policy. Implementation of the WATSAN Policy is addressed in the accompanying National Water Resources and Sanitation Implementation (WATSAN) Plan.

As the Minister responsible I have pleasure in presenting the WATSAN Policy and do hope that this policy will pave the way to improve the planning, development, utilisation and management of the country's valuable water resources for the people of Solomon Islands. I believe that successive Governments of this nation will continue to support the policy to achieve key policy objectives and goals through the execution of the National WATSAN Implementation Plan by the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification and other stakeholders in the water resources and sanitation sector in Solomon Islands.

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Hon. Bradley Tovosia, MP

Minister

Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification

OVERVIEW

Solomon Islands is signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals particularly concerning water and sanitation for all by 2030. These SDGs Goal Indicators were developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators and agreed upon at the 48th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission held in March 2017. SDG Goal Indicator 6 concerns water “by 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all and on sanitation “by 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations”.

The NDS 2016-2035 is the central policy document of SIG. It identifies four key focus areas. Although the NDS, assigns water and sanitation to one focal area, Improving Livelihoods of All the People of the Solomon Islands under the objective: Develop Physical Infrastructure and Utilities to Ensure all Solomon Islanders have Access to Essential Services and Markets, water and sanitation underpin almost all focus areas in the NDS. Within infrastructure and utilities, NDS aims to: Improve water supplies and sanitation in urban and rural areas in terms of quality, reliability and coverage by 2035.

The National Water Resources and Sanitation (WATSAN) Policy builds on that aim. NDS also calls for the development of sector plans and policies as a linkage between the broad goals of NDS and the specific activities of Ministry Corporate and Provincial Plans and Programmes. This Policy and its accompanying Implementation Plan is therefore a direct response by Cabinet through MMERE to the NDS.

The purpose of the WATSAN Policy is to:

- Provide Government leadership in the vital water and sanitation sector
- Improve development opportunities, the health, and well-being of all Solomon Islanders
- Protect sources of water and receiving environments
- Respond to wide-spread rural and urban concerns about the safety, adequacy and reliability of water supply and sanitation services
- Identify national priority areas and issues which require government and donor intervention in the WATSAN sector
- Build on WATSAN sector goals in the NDS
- Give clear policy goals and objectives
- Signal Solomon Island’s priorities in water and sanitation
- Provide strategies for adapting to Global Change including Climate Change
- Assign agency responsibilities for carrying out policy goals
- Provide mechanisms for monitoring policy outcomes and reviewing policy
- Fulfil Solomon Islands’ international and regional obligations in the sector

The growing impacts of national developments and those of climate variability and change on freshwater resources and the linkage between development, poverty alleviation and water availability require a commitment by the community and continued determination and leadership by the national government to protect and use wisely the nation’s scarce water resources.

The difficult challenges faced in the water sector span the responsibilities of a number of Ministries, Non-Government Organisations, Provincial and local authorities. There are critical issues that need to be addressed through an enlightened and coordinated approach led by the Government using Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) or whole-of-government approach and engaging the entire community particularly at the village level.

Implementation of this WATSAN policy requires integrated and coordinated action by many government agencies with responsibilities directly in or related to the WATSAN sector. It also

needs leadership by the government. Formation of a high-level committee, the National WATSAN Reform Committee, is required to ensure the required leadership and coordination of policy implementation. The Committee should consist of the Permanent Secretaries and Heads of the key Government Ministries and SOEs with responsibilities in the WATSAN sector.

While overall implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the lead water ministry, MMERE, other ministries and agencies also have joint responsibilities for carrying out policy goals and objectives. Responsibilities for actions to achieve Policy Objectives using the current Divisional, Ministerial and agency structures are detailed in the accompanying Implementation Plan. These can be incorporated directly into Ministerial and Provincial Corporate Plans

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Dr. Melchior Mataki

Permanent Secretary (Ag)

Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The National Water Coordination Committee (NIWCC) was appointed by the Cabinet to provide integrated agency advice on the WATSAN sector. NIWCC is made up of Government Ministries, State-owned enterprises (SOEs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs). The NDS identified wide-spread, high priority rural and urban community concerns over water supply and sanitation. These concerns have driven the integrated process used by NIWCC to develop this policy and its accompanying implementation plan.

The first step in the development of this Policy and its accompanying Plan involved the review and analysis of previous Government policies, laws, plans, strategies, and the many key reports dealing with WATSAN and WATSAN-related issues.

The formulation of the WATSAN Policy and its accompanying Plan was guided by wide-spread, high priority rural and urban community concerns over water supply and sanitation identified in the National Development Strategy 2011-2020 and has been updated to NDS 2016-2035 as well as other priority concerns identified in other national strategies and policies, namely the, the SI National Infrastructure Investment Policy and the Rural Water Sanitation and Hygiene Policy.

The vision specified under the WASTSAN policy is that **“adequate, reliable and safe supplies of freshwater and appropriate sanitation are essential for economic development, public health and food production”** thereby fulfilling its mission of **“ensuring all communities have access to water supplies and sanitation services as well as protecting the resource through sound water management governance”**.

This policy is guided by the National Inter-sectorial Water Coordination Committee (NIWCC) that comprises up to 14 stakeholders from line government Ministries and NGOs as well as a tertiary institution during the national consultations. The policy therefore receives inputs from a wide range of sectors that results in a comprehensive contribution during its formulation. Consequently, the WATSAN Policy is one that is expected to contribute to effective implementation of the country’s water resources and sanitation development in the future.

Based on Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) principles, this process is a means to involve stakeholders from sectors in decision making to implement the plan accompanied under the National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy.

The WASTSAN Policy is presented in three parts with its implementation plan. **Part One (I)** present the overall purpose and outlines its values and basic principles as well as the process involved to develop both policy and plan.

Part Two (II) presents the challenges, opportunities and benefits that are evident during the policy development process. The policy anticipates that upon implementing the plan these three areas will result in positive outcomes to address the needs of the people of Solomon Islands.

Part Three (III) presents the Policy Statement as the result of completing policy development process, in particular, establishing the statement of water sustainability as widely-held and central to this policy and plan that **“Wata hem laef, Gud wata hem presis for evriwan ans Everiwan mas luk aftarem wata”** as the introduction.

The policy statement explicitly outlines the areas that the country needs to address in order to solve current and future challenges in this sector. Seven of the policy goals outlined include:

- 1) governance and information;
- 2) capacity development and education;
- 3) community partnerships;
- 4) safe, secure water sources;

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- 5) sustainable supplies and conservation;
 - 6) sanitation and waste management and
 - 7) climate extremes, disaster and climate change.

The policy goals given calls for sectorial integration in water resources governance, developing human resources, involving communities in planning and developments, the protection of water resources now and in the future, safe and appropriate waste disposal and making the resources resilient to the negative impacts of climate extremes as floods, droughts and the long term effects of climatic changes.

The above challenges are vital and complex. Solomon Islands, however, has a number of advantages and strengths which provide opportunities for addressing these challenges. Despite the many and diverse challenges facing the Solomon Islands in the WATSAN sector, the above advantages and strengths provide the basis for overcoming these challenges and ensuring that development, health and food production will not be limited by the adequacy, reliability or safety of water supplies and sanitation.

The broad issues of water resources, public water supply and sanitation covered by the goals and objectives of this policy are the mandated responsibilities of many SIG agencies and SOEs and involve contributions from NGOs, peak community-based organisations and local communities. In the current ministry structure, no single government agency has sole responsibility for implementing this integrated national WATSAN policy.

The National WATSAN Reform Committee, NWSRC, is responsible for monitoring and reporting progress on policy goals and objectives, reviewing sector performance, identifying opportunities for improvements and reforms and ensuring that the necessary coordination, embodied in this policy occurs. The National WATSAN Reform Committee will be assisted with technical advice provided by the Cabinet-appointed National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee, NIWCC, through the MMERE. The NIWCC should be strengthened to include peak community-based organisations who have a direct interest in WATSAN outcomes.



Figure 1 The highly dispersed provinces and islands of Solomon Islands. This Policy is for all Solomon Island communities in rural and urban regions, small and large islands, remote villages, towns and regional centres

(http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/cia12/solomon_islands_sm_2012.gif)

This Integrated National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy was developed by the Cabinet-appointed National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee (NIWCC) led by the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification (MMERE). Its development was encouraged and supported by the Secretariat of Pacific Countries (SPC) Applied Geoscience Division (SOPAC) under the Pacific IWRM National Planning Programme in a process facilitated by Professor Ian White of the Australian National University.

The NIWCC is chaired by the Permanent Secretary, Ministry of Mines, Energy & Rural Electrification (MMERE) or his delegate and includes representatives from:

- Water Resources Division (WRD), MMERE
- Environmental Health Division (EHD), Ministry of Health and Medical Services (MHMS)
- Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECDM)
- Geology Division (GD), MMERE
- Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock (MAL)
- Ministry of Development Planning & Aid Coordination (MDPAC)
- Ministry of Finance and Treasury (MFT)
- Fisheries Division (FD), Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources (MFMR)
- Commissioner of Forest, Ministry of Forest Development & Research (MFDR)
- Commissioner of Land, Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey (MLHS)
- Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening (MPGIS)
- Solomon Islands Development Trust (SIDT)
- Solomon Water (SW) formerly Solomon Islands Water Authority (SIWA)
- Ministry of Women, Youth & Children Affairs, (MWYCA)

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AG	Attorney Generals (MJLA)
AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CBO	Community-based Organisation
CSO	Community Service Obligation
EC	The European Community
EHD	Environmental Health Division, MHMS
ENSO	El Niño Southern Oscillation
EIB	European Investment Bank
EU	The European Union
FD	Fisheries Division, MFMR
GD	Geology Division, MMERE
HCC	Honiara City Council (MHA)
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
L	litre
L/pers/day	litre per person per day (per capital water consumption rate)
MAL	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals (UN)
MDPAC	Ministry of Development Planning & Aid Coordination
MECDM	Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management & Meteorology
MEHRD	Ministry of Education and Human Resources Development
MFDR	Ministry of Forest Development and Research
MFMR	Ministry of Fisheries and Marine Resources
MFT	Ministry of Finance and Treasury
MHA	Ministry of Home Affairs
MHMS	Ministry of Health and Medical Services
MJLA	Ministry of Justice and Legal Affairs
MID	Ministry Infrastructure Development
MLHS	Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey
MMERE	Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification
MPGIS	Ministry of Provincial Government and Institutional Strengthening
MPS	Ministry of Public Service
MRD	Ministry of Rural Development
MWYCA	Ministry of Women, Youth & Children Affairs
NDS	National Development Strategy 2016-2035
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office, MECCMDN
NGO	Non-Government Organisation
NIWCC	National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee
NIIP	Draft National Infrastructure Investment Plan 2013
NPP	National Population Policy
NWSRC	National WATSAN Reform Committee
OPMC	Office Prime Minister and Cabinet
PCCSP	Pacific Climate Change Science Program
pers	persons
PEHD	Provincial Environmental Health Division
PG	Provincial Governments
PIAC	Pacific Infrastructure Advisory Centre (ADB, AusAID)
PIC	Pacific Island Country
PWA	Pacific Water Association
PRIF	Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility (ADB, AusAID, EU, EIB, NZaid, WB)
RAP	Pacific Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Water Management 2003
RO	Reverse osmosis (desalination)
RWSS	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Unit (in EHD, MHMS)
SI	Solomon Islands
SICA	Solomon Island Christian Association
SICC	Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce
SIDT	Solomon Islands Development Trust
SIEA	Solomon Islands Electricity Authority (an SOE)
SIG	Solomon Islands Government

SIEA	Solomon Islands Electricity Authority
SIWA	Solomon Islands Water Authority (now Solomon Water an SOE)
SOE	State-owned-enterprise
SOPAC	Applied Geoscience Division of the SPC
SPC	Secretariat of the Pacific Community
SST	Sea surface temperature
SW	Solomon Water (formerly Solomon Islands Water Authority)
ToR	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UTC	Urban Town Councils
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation
WASH	Water Sanitation and Hygiene
WB	World Bank
WRD	Water Resources Division (MMERE)

Definitions

Brackish Water	Water containing more salinity than freshwater but less than seawater. Water having total dissolved salt concentrations between 0.05% and 3%
Catchment	An area of land where water from rain converges to either a single point, or where the waters join another water body, such as a river, lake, reservoir, estuary, wetland, sea, or ocean. Also referred to as drainage basin or water shed.
Demand management	Strategies used to control the use of freshwater through incentives, tariffs, restrictions and rationing
Down-stream ecosystems	Ecosystems that are downstream from water sources and receive discharge from them, these include near-shore reefs and coastal environments.
Ecosystem	A community of living organisms (plants, animals and microbes) in conjunction with the nonliving components of their environment (things like air, water, mineral soil, rocks and logs), interacting as a system. These living and nonliving components are linked together through water and nutrient cycles and energy flows.
Fresh water	Water containing low concentrations of dissolved salts and total dissolved solids. Sometimes called “sweet water” with total dissolved salts less than 0.05%
Governance	The act of governing. It relates to decisions that define expectations, grant power, allocate resources or verify performance. Governance is the use of institutions, structures of authority and collaboration to allocate resources and coordinate or control activity in society or the economy
Governance instruments	Those measures which help define expectations, grant power, allocate resources, verify performance, or coordinate or control activity, including policy, plans, legislation, regulation, strategies and budgets
Groundwater	Water below the ground surface in soils, sediments and rocks in which the pore space is fully saturated with water
Hygiene	Conditions and practices that help to maintain health and prevent the spread of diseases.
Incentive program	A formal scheme used to promote or encourage specific actions or behaviour by a specific group of people during a defined period of time. These can include payment for environmental services, eco-compensation or partnership arrangements
Non-revenue water	Unbilled water consumption and water losses
Saline water	Water containing dissolved salts with total dissolved concentrations between 3% and 5%
Sanitation	Procedures for and application of hygienic measures designed to protect public health, especially the provision of clean drinking and bathing water and the adequate disposal of sewage, wastewater and other wastes.
Surface water	Water in streams, rivers, lakes, ponds, reservoirs, dams and swamps
Wastes	Materials that can cause health problems or degrade the environment including human and animal faeces, solid wastes, domestic wastewater (sewage, sullage, greywater), industrial wastes and agricultural wastes.
Water quality	The chemical, physical and biological characteristics of water. A measure of the condition of water relative to the requirements of human need or purpose. Most frequently used in reference to a set of standards against which compliance can be assessed. The most common standards used to assess water quality relate to safety of human drinking water or contact or to health of ecosystems.
Water Resources	Sources of water which are useful or potentially useful. In this policy water resources include both fresh water and brackish water
Water source areas	Those areas of land which contribute water to surface and groundwater sources
Water sources	Surface and groundwater sources of fresh or brackish water including rainfall, swamps, creeks, rivers, springs, groundwater from shallow unconfined aquifers and deeper confined aquifers and contained in karstic limestone, fractured rock and freshwater lenses, and urban drains
Water-related ecosystems	Ecosystems that are either involved in the capture and transition of water in catchments such as forests and agricultural lands or aquatic ecosystems in streams, ponds reservoirs and lakes.



Solomon Islands

National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy

Part 1

**Purpose, Values, Principles, Process,
Consistency & Obligations**

Title: National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy:

Short Title: National WATSAN POLICY

1.1. Purpose of this Policy

This National Water and Sanitation Sector Policy (National WATSAN Policy) is a key Government strategy for ensuring that economic development, public health and food production are not compromised by inadequate, unreliable and unsafe water supplies and lack of appropriate sanitation. It is a response to priority concerns of rural and urban communities and most sectors throughout Solomon Islands (SI) about water supply and sanitation, identified in nation-wide consultations for the National Development Strategy 2016-2035 (NDS).

The purpose of this policy is to:

1. Provide Government leadership in the vital water and sanitation sector
2. Improve development opportunities, the health, and well-being of all Solomon Islanders
3. Protect sources of water and receiving environments
4. Respond to wide-spread rural and urban concerns about the safety, adequacy and reliability of water supply and sanitation services
5. Identify national priority areas and issues which require government and donor intervention in the WATSAN sector
6. Build on WATSAN sector goals in the NDS
7. Give clear policy goals and objectives
8. Signal Solomon Island's priorities in water and sanitation
9. Provide strategies for adapting to Global Change including Climate Change
10. Assign agency responsibilities for carrying out policy goals
11. Provide mechanisms for monitoring policy outcomes and reviewing policy
12. Fulfil Solomon Islands' international and regional obligations in the sector

1.2. Central Values of this Policy

Water is the basis of all life, it is everyone's business. The widely-held values central to this Policy and its accompanying Implementation Plan in plain language are:

❖ **Wata hem laef**

❖ **Gud wata hem presis fo evriwan**

❖ **Evriwan mas luk aftarem wata**

Water is life

Good water is precious for everyone

Everyone must look after water

1.3 Basic Principles of this Policy and Implementation Plan

1.3.1 Water is God's gift

Abundant, pure water, like His Grace, is God's gift to all Solomon Islanders. It is therefore every Solomon Islander's responsibility, from Cabinet to the remotest village household, to

look after water, to value it, not pollute, misuse or waste it and to share it with others.

1.3.2 Good governance

The foundations of good governance are: clear policy goals and objectives based on reliable, widely-available information; clear responsibilities for carrying out policy; provision of necessary resources to carry out policy and plans; equity; community engagement and support; appropriate coordination and financial sustainability of public service providers.

1.3.3 Leadership is service

Leadership in water and sanitation involves serving people through: understanding and protecting their water sources; making sure they have adequate, safe, reliable, sustainable, well-managed, affordable water supplies, appropriate sanitation and waste management; sustaining water-related and downstream ecosystems; and forming community partnerships.

1.3.4 Integrated water resource management

Integrated water resource management (IWRM) is a partnership for managing water resources between government agencies, state-owned-enterprises, corporations, non-government organisations (NGOs) and communities. IWRM involves sustainable management of water, sanitation and associated land resources and land uses. It extends from ridge to reef and incorporates impacts of sector development and impacts on the environment. IWRM includes people from Cabinet to remote rural communities. It is management for multiple purposes and multiple objectives using multiple means with communities as key participants.

1.3.5 Water use efficiency

The total amount of water on the earth is fixed. The number of people in SI is increasing along with growing household, industry and agricultural demand for water. In order to meet human institutional and industry needs for water and for irrigated food production it is necessary to conserve and use water efficiently and wisely, and reduce losses.

1.3.6 Social and gender equity

Government's goal is to create a nation in which people of different ethnicity, culture, religion, gender, political affiliation and economic circumstances, including people with disabilities, have equal opportunity and access to safe, affordable water and appropriate sanitation.

1.3.7 Sustainable ecosystem management

Many of the water-related ecosystems of Solomon Islands and their amazing biodiversity are unique. The Government recognises it is fundamentally important to protect and manage them sustainably. This is especially so for the near-shore reef and water-related ecosystems which are particularly vulnerable to sediment and nutrient discharges following major land use changes, such as mining, logging, urbanisation, drainage and disposal of wastes.

1.3.8 Respect for cultural diversity

Diverse, traditional value systems and cultures have evolved over the past 12,000 years in Solomon Islands. This Policy acknowledges and respects the diversity of our cultural heritage, values and seeks ways to accommodate them as development progresses.

1.3.9 Mainstreaming adaptation

The best approach to manage the impact of climate change on water is guided by an IWRM framework which involves protecting water sources, managing climate variability, controlling demand, promoting a culture of conservation and providing adequate funds for water resource management and sanitation improvements.

1.3.10 Framework for developing this policy and implementation plan

The process used to develop this policy has used the above principles, previous Government initiatives and the policies and objectives of the NDS and draft NIIP as a guiding framework.

1.4 Policy and Plan Development Process

Cabinet appointed the National Intersectoral Advisory Committee (NIWCC) to provide it with integrated agency advice on the WATSAN sector. NIWCC is made up of Government Ministries, State-owned enterprises (SOEs), community-based organisations (CBOs) and non-government organisations (NGOs). The NDS identified wide-spread, high priority rural and urban community concerns over water supply and sanitation. These concerns have driven the integrated process used by NIWCC to develop this policy and its accompanying implementation plan. The process is shown in Figure 2 below.

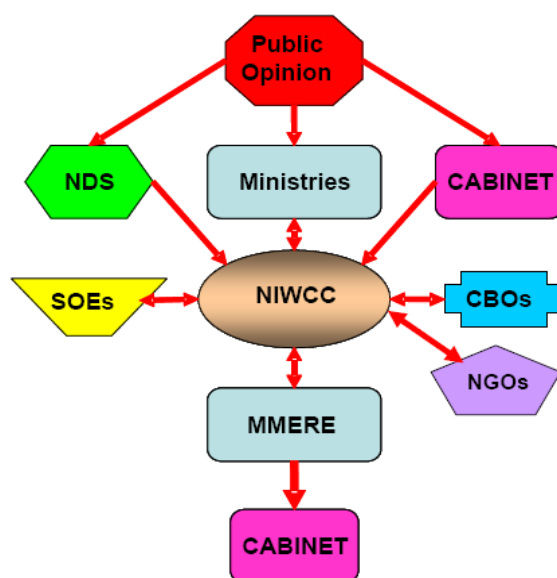


Figure 2 Process used to develop this policy and its accompanying implementation plan showing the central role of Cabinet and Cabinet-appointed NIWCC.

The first step in the development of this Policy and its accompanying Plan involved the review and analysis of previous Government policies, laws, plans, strategies, and the many key reports dealing with WATSAN and WATSAN-related issues. These are listed in Table 1

1.4.1 Relation to the National Development Strategy

The NDS 2016-2035 is the central policy document of SIG. It identifies four key focus areas. Although the NDS, assigns water and sanitation to one focal area, *Improving Livelihoods of All the People of the Solomon Islands* under the objective: *Develop Physical Infrastructure and Utilities to Ensure all Solomon Islanders have Access to Essential Services and Markets*, water and sanitation underpin almost all focus areas in the NDS. Within infrastructure and utilities, NDS aims to: *Improve water supplies and sanitation in urban and rural areas in terms of quality, reliability and coverage* by 2035. This policy builds on that aim. NDS also calls for the development of sector plans and policies as a linkage between the broad goals of NDS and the specific activities of Ministry Corporate and Provincial Plans and Programmes. This Policy and its accompanying Implementation Plan is therefore a direct response by Cabinet through MMERE to the NDS.

1.4.2 Adaptive planning process

Following careful review of the goals of NDS and the documents in Table 1, a series of five NIWCC workshops were carried out as part of a facilitated, five phase adaptive planning process shown in Table 2. This straightforward process identifies sequentially values, vision, key issues, goals and objectives as the basis for policy. The process then identifies mechanisms to achieve objectives, responsibilities, resources and schedules required to implement policy. It also provides mechanisms to review outcomes and revise the policy and plan.

Table 1 Policies, legislation, plans, reports and analyses underpinning this Policy

Category	Title
Policies	Climate Change Policy 2012 Draft Rural Water Supply, Sanitation and Hygiene Policy 2013 Draft National Water Policy 2007 National Energy Policy Framework National Population Policy,
Legislation	Protected Areas Act 2010 Draft Environmental Impact Assessment Guidelines, 2008 Draft Water Resources Bill 2006 Environmental Health Act 1998 Environment Act 1998 (in force 2003) Minerals Act 1996 Solomon Islands Water Authority Act 1992 Town and Country Planning Act (Amendment) 1982 Land Titles Act 1969 Forestry Act 1969 River Waters Act 1968
Plans & Strategies	Draft Green Growth Strategic Plan, 2013 Draft National Infrastructure Investment Plan 2013 Draft Medium Term Development Plan, 2013 Solomon Water (formerly SIWA) Development Plan 2013-2015 National Disaster Risk Management Plan 2011 National Development Strategy 2016-2035 Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan 2009-14 National Adaptation Plan of Action 2009 Waste Management Strategy and Action Plan 2009-14 National Biodiversity Strategy Action Plan, 2008 National Disaster Management Plan 1997 (Revised edition) Solid Waste Management Strategy for the Pacific Islands, 2010-2015 The Revised Solomon Islands Code of Logging Practice, MFEnC, May 2002 Pacific Plan 2005 (Revised 2008), Draft Review of Pacific Plan Pacific Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Water Management, 2003
Reports & Analyses	Solomon Islands Water, Sanitation and Climate Outlook 2011 Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment & New Research 2011 Water and Sanitation Programme Mission Report to the Solomon Islands, SPC-SOPAC, 2011 Mission Report: Joint National Action Plan for Disaster Risk Management and Climate Change, Solomon Islands, SPC-SOPAC Internal Report 64, 2011 Solomon Islands: Staff Report for the 2011 Article IV Consultation, Third Review, IMF, 2011 Report on Water Security and Vulnerability to Climate Change and Other Impacts in Pacific Island Countries and East Timor. For Pacific Adaptation Strategy Assistance Program, Department of Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, GHD Pty Ltd, 2011 Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment and New Research. Volume 1: Regional Overview. Pacific Climate Change Science Program, Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Melbourne, 2011 Climate Change in the Pacific: Scientific Assessment and New Research. Volume 2: Country Reports. Pacific Climate Change Science Program, Australian Bureau of Meteorology and Commonwealth Scientific and Industrial Research Organisation, Melbourne, 2011 Solomon Islands-IWRM Diagnostic Report 2007 Honiara City Water Loss Management, Sectorisation, Metering and Logging Programme – Stage 1, SOPAC Report 401, 2007 JICA, 2006. The Study for Rehabilitation and Improvement of SIWAs Water Supply and Sewerage Systems, Japan International Cooperation Agency Honiara. Solomon Islands Technical Mission Report Water Quality Monitoring & Water Demand Management, Honiara, SOPAC, 2006 UNDP Human Development Report 2006 National Consultations Solomon Islands, PIEPSAP Report, SOPAC, 2004 Solomon Islands - European Community Country Strategy Paper and National Indicative Programme for the period 2002 – 2007, EC, 2001 Master Plan Study of Power Development in Solomon Islands, Final Report, JICA, January 2002

Table 2 Five phase adaptive planning process used by NIWCC to develop this Policy

Phase	Objective	Components	Principal Outputs
I. Formulation of the Issues	Determine issues, problems and opportunities	Previous actions and policies, recognised issues, problems, opportunities, and their interactions; constraints to effective management	Issues to be addressed by policy, plans, legislation
II. Ends Planning	Determine values, where you want to be and the gaps between that and now	Extract values, vision, principles, goals, and objectives to achieve the desired ends.	Fundamental values, Policy principles, Policy goals and objectives
III. Means Planning	Choosing mechanisms to achieve goals and objectives	Develop and select actions for achieving goals and objectives and indicators for completion of actions	Implementation Plan Actions
IV. Resource Planning	Determine resources required for planned actions	Define resource needs and identify if resources are available or how they will be generated or acquired	Implementation Plan resources needs
V. Implementation and Control	Determine responsibilities and schedules for implementation	Identify who is responsible for actions, when they are to be implemented and how implementation is to be monitored	Implementation Plan Schedule and Responsibilities for implementation. Ministerial Operations Plans

Drafts of the Policy and Plan were reviewed and refined by NIWCC throughout the series of workshops and the final drafts were submitted to MMERE for transmission to Cabinet.

1.5. Consistency with other Government Initiatives

This Policy and its accompanying Plan are built on the NDS 2016-2035, the draft National Water Policy 2007, the draft Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Policy, 2013 and other initiatives over several decades listed in Table 1. SIG's broad basic policy document, the NDS, calls for the development of sector plans and policies. Almost all focus areas in the NDS rely on having good supplies of safe water and adequate sanitation. Policy and Plan development has incorporated objectives of NDS and draft National Infrastructure Investment Plan, 2013, NIIP.

1.6. International and Regional Obligations in WATSAN

Solomon Islands is signatory to the Sustainable Development Goals particularly concerning water and sanitation for all by 2030. These SDGs Goal Indicators were developed by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators and agreed upon at the 48th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission held in March 2017. SDG Goal Indicator 6 concerns water “*by 2030, achieve universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water for all* and on sanitation “*by 2030, achieve access to adequate and equitable sanitation and hygiene for all and end open defecation, paying special attention to the needs of women and girls and those in vulnerable situations*”.

The Solomon Islands also has strong regional commitments to sustainability through its endorsement of the 2005 Pacific Plan (amended 2008) and to improved water governance made under the *Pacific Regional Action Plan for Sustainable Water Management, 2003* (RAP) which was endorsed by all Pacific Island Nations Heads of State during the Pacific Island Leaders meeting in Auckland in 2003.

The RAP was developed after wide-ranging, multi-stakeholder, national consultations held throughout the region and in SI. Actions identified in the RAP focussed on using IWRM to:

- improve the knowledge base;

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- identify appropriate water extraction and treatment technologies;
 - increase capacity;
 - introduce risk assessment and management;
 - engage communities in co-management at all levels;
 - disseminate information;
 - improve water governance;
 - promote regional cooperation;
 - reduce water demand, wastage and unaccounted losses;
 - protect water source areas; and
 - ensure water supply and sanitation systems are sustainable.

The Government acknowledges that these actions remain as relevant today in Solomon Islands as they were in 2003 when it endorsed the RAP and is committed to addressing these issues through this policy and its accompanying implementation plan.



Solomon Islands

National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy

Part 2

Challenges, Opportunities and Benefits

2.1 Challenges

There are very diverse, complex and vital WATSAN challenges in rural and urban areas facing our nation. If development is to continue, these challenges require urgent government intervention. The challenges fall within seven high priority policy areas:

1. **Governance and Information**
2. **Capacity Development & Education**
3. **Community Partnerships**
4. **Safe, Secure, and Protected Water Sources**
5. **Sustainable Water Supplies and Conservation**
6. **Sanitation and Waste Management**
7. **Climate extremes, Disasters and Climate Change**

The NIWCC identified a number of challenges under each of these high priority policy areas.

2.1.1 Governance and information

Governance in the WATSAN sector in SI is below regional standards. There are few endorsed instruments available to manage water supplies sustainably and to access and protect water source areas adequately. Laws are outdated, non-existent or not enforced. Government agencies and enterprises need clear directions and our WATSAN priorities need to be specified to communities, international donors and non-government organisations (NGO). Future growth and development of the country and improved WATSAN services require strategic plans. No single Ministry has a clear national focus on all aspects of WATSAN and coordination between agencies needs to be improved. Duplication of responsibilities leads to poor and inefficient outcomes. The very dispersed, diverse nature of settlements in SI mean that water resources and supply systems cannot be managed centrally. They require regional and local cooperation and engagement and adequate resources.

There are emerging business investment opportunities in the water sector. Being blessed with abundant water resources the desire to improve access and self-reliance for the increasing population as well as commercial security is becoming more evident. There is huge potential for local level commercialisation of water resources such as water bottling and will require adequate policy for planning to promote local and business investor partnerships for sustainable development of water resources for Solomon Islands.

Successful management requires good information on what is being managed. Our information on availability, safe yield, variability and quality of the country's water resources, state of water and sanitation services and waste management systems, demand for water, health impacts, impacts on ecosystems and water use by economic sector is very limited, incomplete and is difficult to access. This severely limits planning and good management. There is a need to strengthen local research to provide island-relevant information.

2.1.2 Capacity Development and Education

The number of trained and skilled people and the resources available to plan and manage water resources and sanitation across our widely spread nation, and to design, manage and maintain adequate supplies of good quality water and appropriate sanitation services is very limited. General awareness of the vulnerability of our water resources to land uses and the value of water needs to be improved. Changing perceptions and behaviour is a key to improving WATSAN outcomes. A coordinated, focussed WATSAN education program, at all school levels, which recognises low literacy levels, is necessary for sustained capacity development and increased awareness and engagement.

2.1.3 Community Engagement and Participation

Because of the high number of rural communities spread across Solomon Islands, water supply and sanitation cannot be managed at the national level. Local communities must be engaged in planning, managing and maintaining their water supply and sanitation systems. Their participation in the care and protection of water source areas is critical. Engaging and raising awareness, particularly amongst school children, requires a major effort.

2.1.4 Safe, Secure, and Protected Water Sources

Limited numbers of households in Solomon Islands have access to safe water supplies. There is no licensing system or approval process for development of public water supply or sanitation systems. To provide safe water for human use, water source areas must be protected from contamination, misuse, misappropriation and urbanisation. Ensuring land use does not degrade water resources is highly contentious. Customary land-tenure in supply catchments, high population growth rates, especially in urban and peri-urban areas, and development pressures from mining, forestry and agriculture, mean that securing safe, protected water sources is a major challenge. Hydropower generation is also very limited despite the potential for increased generation and use as additional water supply. Access to sources of water for public water supply or hydropower production is politically sensitive but must be addressed.

2.1.5 Sustainable Water Supplies and Conservation

Public health and the adequacy, reliability, safety, accessibility and sustainability of water supplies are major concerns in throughout SI. In urban areas, rapid and unplanned growth, aged infrastructure, intermittent supply, non-revenue water and accessibility to water source areas because of customary tenure all threaten the financial viability of water suppliers. The supply of adequate, safe water to the highly dispersed, large rural population is also a major challenge relying on active local community participation and ownership but with limited resources and advice. The generally reliable rainfall in SI means there is potential for significant increase in rainwater harvesting and collection provided care, maintenance and maintenance of household and community rainwater systems is improved.

In order to supply growing communities with adequate water in an equitable way, it is essential that water losses from piped or irrigation systems and excessive use of water be controlled to reasonable levels, especially in urban and peri-urban areas. Water losses and non-revenue water are unacceptably high in urban areas and threaten the sustainability of water suppliers.

2.1.6 Sanitation and Waste Management

Over 80% of rural households and rural schools have no sanitation systems. Urban sanitation is a major concern with only about 11% of households in the small, central area of Honiara connected to a reticulated sewerage system. This discharges untreated sewage into the near-shore environment. Poorly constructed septic tanks also contaminate the soil and groundwater. In the wet season, contaminated groundwater rises to the surface. Incidences of diarrhoea and water-borne diseases throughout SI are unacceptably high. Wastes and pollution from untreated sewage discharge and disposal of solid, hazardous and toxic wastes are also a major threat to human health, receiving waters and downstream ecosystems. Public sanitation systems have also been installed without government approval.

2.1.7 Climate Extremes, Disasters and Climate Change

Variable rainfalls in the Solomon Islands are coupled to large-scale swings in sea surface temperature in the surrounding oceans characterised as ENSO events. Frequent flooding as a result of tropical cyclones and accompanying landslides are major issues, especially in urban areas, where drainage is inadequate. SI is also subject to frequent natural disasters such as cyclones, storm surges and island overtopping, earthquakes and subsequent tsunamis, such as those in 2007 and 2013, as well as volcanic eruptions. These disrupt water supplies and sanitation services. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency of extreme events and severity of impacts will also increase with growing populations.

2.2 Opportunities

The above challenges are vital and complex. Solomon Islands, however, has a number of advantages and strengths which provide opportunities for addressing these challenges.

2.2.1 Abundant, reliable rainfall

Large regions in Solomon Islands are blessed with abundant, reliable rainfall, dependable streams and springs and plentiful groundwater. The potential for increased yields of good

quality water, improved water storage, expansion of rainwater harvesting and collection and enhanced hydropower production is very large. Additionally, abundant and reliable water resources are present in the larger islands that produce very good quality water. These abundant water supplies are incentives for commercialisation of water resource especially the water bottling industry which will have economic benefits for the country.

2.2.2. The people

The people of the Solomon Islands have survived for 12,000 years under highly variable climates and difficult, isolated conditions. They have demonstrated considerable resilience and great strength in addressing the many challenges of tropical environments. In addition, despite limited financial, technological and infrastructure resources, the well-developed and strong diverse local institutions of communities, their resilient social systems, extended families, sensitivity to environmental change and high degree of equity, together with their kinship-based, transnational networks provide coping strategies and capacity to meet the above challenges.

2.2.3. The Church

Churches play very strong roles in communal life, especially in rural areas. Virtually every village has a church building and Christian concepts are invoked in political discussions at all levels so that churches are influential in politics. Churches run and staff health clinics and hospitals and play an active role in education. They are vehicles for social mobilization and are increasingly involved in environmental issues. Their widely distributed nature means that Churches are vehicles for social mobilisation and improvement.

2.2.4. Respect for land and the environment

Land is at the very centre of life throughout SI. It is the whole community's most valued heritage and has deep spiritual, historical and political significance. Because of this, people are sensitive to environmental change. The powerful connection to the land and its resources can be harnessed for sustainable management and protection of water source areas.

2.2.5. Committed public service

Solomon Islands is blessed with having a national and provincial public service which is committed to serve the people and has long experience and training in the WATSAN sector.

There are a number of agencies responsible currently for water supply and sanitation in the Solomon Islands or for protecting and monitoring related environments:

- Water Resources Division (WRD), Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification-national water resource assessment for water supply, hydro-power generation, and management and development of groundwater
- Environmental Health Division (EHD) and Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS) of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services, for provision of safe water and sanitation to rural populations in Solomon Islands and monitoring of biological quality
- Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology (MECCDMM) – environmental protection, climate monitoring and analysis, disaster risk management, climate change adaptation
- Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey – land management, planning and compensation payments in water supply catchments
- Ministry of Rural Development – local WATSAN projects
- Ministry of Infrastructure Development – drainage from roads
- Solomon Islands Water Authority (SIWA), now operating as Solomon Water (SW) – provision of safe water and some wastewater services to urban populations in the capital Honiara and, at present, in regional centres of Auki, Noro and Tulagi. The original mandate of SIWA is to supply all provincial urban centres, an extra seven.
- Provincial Governments (PG) - provision of water and sanitation services to provincial

urban centres and villages not serviced by SW in the capital and regional centres

- Honiara City and urban town councils (HCC and UTC) – urban planning, enforcement of building codes for rainwater collection and sanitation systems, drainage, sullage and waste management.
- Village Committees – protection of water sources, operation and maintenance of water supply and sanitation systems

This Policy and its accompanying Plan recognise that the highly dispersed nature of communities in SI requires close cooperation between National, Provincial, Local Governments, Constituencies and villages and adequate resourcing.

2.2.5 Strength of Constituencies

The 50 parliamentary Constituencies are powerful mechanisms for raising awareness and planning and promoting action at the local level. Because most Constituencies are wantok, they provide an efficient mechanism for sharing knowledge and experiences in rural regions.

2.2.6 Ability to attract donor funds

SIG has a proven ability to attract aid donors who have supported very significant WATSAN projects in both rural and urban throughout Solomon Islands. Plans are to continue this aid. This policy provides a mechanism for SIG to announce its priorities in this sector and to ensure that aid is focussed on these Solomon Islands priorities. Promoting commercialisation of water resource especially for water bottling industry and other related purposes would likely attract donors and/or private investors to partner with communities in water resource investments.

2.2.7 Non-government organisations, NGOs

There are a substantial number of NGOs operating in the WATSAN sector throughout Solomon Islands. There is considerable potential to increase their effectiveness through the identification of key sector priorities and plans.

2.2.8 Membership of international and regional organisations

Solomon Islands is a member of many significant international and regional organisations including the United Nations, the Pacific Forum, Secretariat of the Pacific Community, and Secretariat of Pacific Regional Environment Programme. SIG has endorsed many relevant international and regional initiatives and agreements in the WATSAN, Health, Environment and Climate sectors. This has enhanced technical transfers and sharing of expertise.

Despite the many and diverse challenges facing the Solomon Islands in the WATSAN sector, the above advantages and strengths provide the basis for overcoming these challenges and ensuring that development, health and food production will not be limited by the adequacy, reliability or safety of water supplies and sanitation.

2.3 Benefits of this Policy

The benefits to Solomon Islands of adopting and implementing this Policy are that it will:

- Coordinate government and SOE action in the nationally vital WATSAN sector
- Direct resources and assign responsibilities to government-identified priority areas
- Improve public health due to safe water supplies, improved sanitation and hygiene
- Ensure development in Solomon Islands is not limited by inadequate, unreliable and unsafe water or inappropriate sanitation
- Provide resources and training for government agencies, enterprises and communities to protect and manage water supply and sanitation
- Improve school WATSAN education programs
- Transition water supply to a sustainable basis
- Provide climate change adaptation strategies in water supply and sanitation
- Clearly signal to the public the Government's determination to address the issues

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- Emphasise Solomon Island's priorities to international donors, NGOs and aid agencies
 - Increase the potential for improved funding and aid opportunities
 - Support potential local level commercialisation of water resources such as water bottling and other related purposes
 - Fulfil Solomon Islands' international and regional obligations in WATSAN



Solomon Islands

National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy

Part 3

Statement of Policy

**Wata hem laef
Gud wata hem presis fo evriwan
Evriwan mas luk aftarem wata**

Title: National Water Resources and Sanitation Policy:**Short Title: National WATSAN POLICY**

This Policy sets down the values, vision, mission, aims, national policy goals and objectives of Solomon Islands Government (SIG) for water resources, water supply and sanitation.

3.1 Values

This Policy recognises as fundamental values held by the overwhelming majority of Solomon Islanders concerning water.

- ❖ **wata hem laef**
- ❖ **gud wata hem presis fo evriwan**
- ❖ **evriwan mas luk aftarem wata**

3.2 Vision

The vision of Solomon Islands Government for integrated water resources and sanitation management is:

Well-managed, protected water sources; safe, reliable, sustainable, and affordable water supplies; appropriate sanitation and waste management; for continued development, improved health and well-being of all Solomon Islanders and for sustaining our water-related ecosystems which support us.

3.3 Mission

The mission of the Solomon Islands Government and its agencies and enterprises is to enhance economic development, improve public health and sustain food production in rural and urban communities by ensuring that:

all communities have access to adequate, reliable and safe water supplies and appropriate sanitation through protection and sustainable management of our water sources, supply and waste management systems and catchment areas.

This mission commits the Solomon Islands Government to:

- **Improve management of the nation's water resources, water supply and waste management sanitation systems**
- **Identify priorities and responsibilities, increase capacity, improve governance, expand WATSAN education and give clear directions in the water and sanitation sector**
- **Understand, protect and conserve reliable sources of good water**
- **Make sure communities have access to approved, adequate, safe, reliable, sustainable, affordable and well-managed water supplies, hydro-power, appropriate sanitation and waste treatment and disposal**
- **Look after our unique, water-related ecosystems which sustain us,**
- **Form partnerships with communities and organisations and provide incentives to achieve these, and**
- **Review WATSAN policy outcomes regularly, revising policy and plans where necessary**

3.4 Policy Goals

Solomon Islands Government has seven broad goals to address the highest priority national challenges in the WATSAN sector.

1. Governance and Information

Policies, plans, legislation, and organisational structures established for sustainable management of water resources, water supplies and sanitation, based on reliable and accessible information.

2. Capacity Development and Education

Well-trained and skilled staff employed in efficient, adequately-resourced organisations to manage water and sanitation supported by national WATSAN and hygiene education programs operating in schools at all levels.

3. Community Partnerships

Rural and urban communities understand the importance of good quality water and appropriate sanitation and are engaged in the protection of water resources, water conservation, planning and management of community systems

4. Safe, Secure Water Sources

Surface and groundwater sources of freshwater are accessible for public water supplies and these sources and down-stream ecosystems are protected from contamination and misuse

5. Sustainable Water Supplies & Conservation

Adequate, safe, reliable, and financially sustainable water supplies are available at reasonable cost to all rural and urban communities, institutions and industries who in-turn conserve water, use it wisely and minimise losses and waste.

6. Sanitation and Waste Management

Appropriate sanitation and waste management systems available throughout Solomon Islands which minimise health and environmental impacts especially on coastal environments.

7. Climate extremes, Disasters and Climate Change

Risks due to climate variability, natural disasters and projected impacts of climate change incorporated into all aspects of water and sanitation planning and management.

The following Policy Objectives have been developed under these Goals to focus sector activities

3.5 Policy Objectives for each Policy Goal

Policy Area	Policy Goal	Policy Objectives
1. Governance and information	1 Policies, plans, legislation, and organisational structures established for sustainable management of water resources, water supplies and sanitation, based on reliable and accessible information.	1.1 Water resource, water supply, hydro-power, other commercial purposes and sanitation policies, plans and guidelines endorsed and implemented.
		1.2 Legal and regulatory base for developing and managing water resources, supplies, sanitation and hydro-power and other commercial purposes updated and enforced.
		1.3 Sector organisation responsibilities and coordination reformed to increase effectiveness and efficiency of services.
		1.4 Outcomes of this policy and plan monitored, and reported annually and instruments updated where necessary
		1.5 National WATSAN monitoring and reporting program and data base established and operational.
2. Capacity Development and Education	2. Well-trained and skilled staff employed in efficient, adequately-resourced organisations to manage water and sanitation supported by national WATSAN and hygiene education programs operating in schools at all levels.	2.1 Skills training programs for water and sanitation managers, technical staff and community operators established and successful.
		2.2 Water and sanitation agencies adequately resourced and staffed with skilled, trained personnel.
		2.3 Primary, secondary & tertiary educational curricula on water, sanitation, waste management and hygiene improved and taught in all schools and institutions
3. Community Partnerships	3. Rural and urban communities understand the importance of good quality water and appropriate sanitation and are engaged in the protection of water resources, water conservation, planning and management of community systems	3.1 Public education and awareness campaigns operating in rural and urban Constituencies to increase awareness of the importance of good quality water, conservation, water source protection, adequate sanitation and hygiene.
		3.2 Training programs running in rural Constituencies on ownership, management, operation and maintenance of local water supply, sanitation and hydro-power systems and other commercial purposes.
4. Safe, Secure, Water Sources	4. Surface and groundwater sources of freshwater are accessible for public water supplies and these sources and down-stream ecosystems are protected from contamination and misuse	4.1 Laws, regulations, ordinances and practices in place to protect public water sources and water source areas from pollution, misuse or over-use
		4.2 Incentive program operating for engaging landowners in the protection of and providing access to source areas for water supply and hydro-power generation and other commercial purposes.

Policy Area	Policy Goal	Policy Objectives
		4.3 Improved and reliable access to and protection of customary-owned public water sources
5. Sustainable Water Supplies and Conservation	5. Adequate, safe, reliable, and financially sustainable water supplies are available at reasonable cost to all rural and urban communities, institutions and industries who in-turn conserve water, use it wisely and minimise losses and waste.	<p>5.1 All schools, hospitals and clinics have safe, adequate and reliable water supplies as highest priority.</p> <p>5.2 All rural and urban communities have access to approved, safe, adequate, reliable, affordable and sustainable water supplies</p> <p>5.3 Increased use of household and community rainwater harvesting</p> <p>5.4 Water supply systems in non-urban, rural areas planned, owned and operated by local communities</p> <p>5.5 Increased hydropower generation and other commercial purposes</p> <p>5.6 Incentive schemes established to assist rural communities in maintenance of water supply systems</p> <p>5.7 Increased use of renewable energy in water-supply systems</p> <p>5.8 Losses of water from piped systems reduced to less than 20%</p> <p>5.9 Fair, equitable, tiered-water tariffs introduced for all urban piped water systems to control growth in demand and discourage waste of water</p> <p>5.10 Systems to encourage water conservation operating in rural areas.</p>
6. Sanitation and Waste Management	6. Appropriate sanitation and waste management systems available throughout Solomon Islands which minimise health and environmental impacts especially on coastal environments.	<p>6.1 All schools hospitals and clinics have safe, appropriate sanitation as highest priority</p> <p>6.2 Approved, appropriate sanitation available to all communities</p> <p>6.3 All rural communities trained in the use and maintenance of sanitation facilities and on hygiene.</p> <p>6.4 Sewerage outfalls and waste disposal sites in all urban centres constructed to minimise off-site pollution</p>
7. Climate extremes, Disasters and Climate Change	7. Risks due to climate variability, natural disasters and projected impacts of climate change incorporated into all aspects of water and sanitation planning and management	<p>7.1 Effective use of seasonal weather forecasts by Government, public, businesses and institutions to prepare for extreme events.</p> <p>7.2 Coordination improved between Government agencies for disasters affecting water supply.</p> <p>7.3 Water supply and sanitation systems at risk from sea-level rise and storm surge identified</p> <p>7.4 Adaptation strategies in place for increasing the resilience of water supply and sanitation systems and communities to the impacts of climate change</p> <p>7.5 Improved urban and peri-urban drainage</p>

3.6 Responsibilities for Implementing this Policy

The broad issues of water resources, public water supply and sanitation covered by the goals and objectives of this policy are the mandated responsibilities of many SIG agencies and SOEs and involve contributions from NGOs, peak community-based organisations and local communities. In the current ministry structure, no single government agency has sole responsibility for implementing this integrated national WATSAN policy.

The Water Resources Division in the Ministry of Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification is the designated lead national water resources agency, while sanitation and hygiene associated with public health are the responsibility of the Environmental Health Division of the Ministry of Health and Medical Services. The Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology plays key roles in assessing Environmental Impact Statements, in preventing pollution, preparing adaptation strategies for climate change, and is responsible for disaster risk management and monitoring climate. Solomon Water is the designated water supplier in several key regional centres, including the capital, Honiara, while Provincial Governments perform that role in the remaining centres. Solomon Water is currently also responsible for the piped sewage system in the capital although sewage and sillage disposal is the responsibility of the Honiara City Council. There is the potential for some re-organisations to improve sector outcomes.

Implementation of this WATSAN policy requires integrated and coordinated action by many government agencies with responsibilities directly in or related to the WATSAN sector. It also needs leadership by the government. Formation of a high-level committee, the National WATSAN Reform Committee, is required to ensure the required leadership and coordination of policy implementation. The Committee should consist of the Permanent Secretaries and Heads of the key Government Ministries and SOEs with responsibilities in the WATSAN sector. The Committee reports on policy implementation and WATSAN reforms directly to Cabinet through the Prime Minister.

National WATSAN Reform Committee

Chair – Office of Prime Minister and Cabinet

Members

- Ministry of Mines Energy and Rural Electrification (Secretariat)
- Ministry of Health and Medical Services
- Ministry of Environment, Climate Change, Disaster Management and Meteorology
- Ministry of Finance and Treasury
- Ministry of Lands, Housing and Survey
- Ministry of Provincial Governance and Institutional Strengthening
- Ministry of Development, Planning and Aid Coordination
- Ministry of Rural Development and Indigenous Affairs
- Representative Provincial Premier
- Solomon Water

The National WATSAN Reform Committee, NWSRC, is responsible for monitoring and reporting progress on policy goals and objectives, reviewing sector performance, identifying opportunities for improvements and reforms and ensuring that the necessary coordination, embodied in this policy occurs. The National WATSAN Reform Committee will be assisted with technical advice provided by the Cabinet-appointed National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee, NIWCC, through the MMERE. The NIWCC should be strengthened to include peak community-based organisations such as Solomon Islands Christian Association (SICA), and the Solomon Islands Chamber of Commerce, SICC since these organisations have a direct interest in WATSAN outcomes.

While overall implementation of this policy is the responsibility of the lead water ministry, MMERE, other ministries and agencies also have joint responsibilities for carrying out policy goals and objectives as listed in Table 3.

Table 3 Government agency responsibility for carrying out Policy Area Goals

Policy Area	Agency Responsibility
1. Governance & Information	OPMC, MMERE, MHMS, MECDM, MJLA, MDPAC, MRD SW, MFT, MPGIS, PG, HCC
2. Capacity Development	MPS, MFT, MEHRD, OPMC, MMERE, MHMS, MECDM, MDPAC, MRD, SW, MPGIS, PG
3. Community Partnerships	MRD, MFT, MHMS, MMERE, MEHRD, MLHS, MPGIS, PG
4. Safe, Secure, Water Sources	MMERE, MECDM, MHMS, PG, MJLA, MLHS, MFDR, MAL, MRD, MEHRD, MPGIS, PG, HCC
5. Sustainable Water Supplies and Conservation.	SW, MHMS, MMERE, MECDM PG, MLHS, MDPAC, MFT, MRD, MPGIS, MEHRD, SIEA, HCC
6. Sanitation and Waste Management	MHMS, SW, MDPAC. MFT, MRD, MPGIS, PG MEHRD, HCC
7. Climate extremes, Disasters and Climate Change	MECDM, MMERE, MHMS, MEHRD, MFT, MRD, MPGIS, PG

Responsibilities for actions to achieve Policy Objectives using the current Divisional, Ministerial and agency structures are detailed in the accompanying Implementation Plan. These can be incorporated directly into Ministerial and Provincial Corporate Plans

3.7 Legislative Basis for this Policy

Table 4 lists the current national WATSAN legislation, regulations and ordinances.

Table 4 Current legislation, regulations and ordinances relevant to WATSAN

Title	Purpose	Agency
River Waters Ordinance 1969	Measures for watershed control in relation to rivers only and regulates the use of designated river water through permit applications	MMERE
Water Supply Act 1969	Measures to protect sources and supply water to Honiara and other locations when designated	Chief Engineer
Lands and Titles Act 1969	Allocation and control of registered land	MLHS
Forestry Act 1969	Development and management of forestry sector	MFDR
Mines and Minerals Act 1969	Promotion and management of mineral development in Solomon Islands	MMERE
Public Health Ordinance 1970	Authorises inspections for regulation of water pollution.	MHMS
Solomon Islands Water Authority Act 1992:	Establishes the Solomon Islands Water Authority as an SOE to develop and manage urban water and wastewater services in all urban centres	SW
Environmental Health Act and Provincial Ordinance, 1998	Control and management of water and sanitation services in the rural areas of the country.	MHMS
Environment Act 1998:	Protection, preservation and conservation of the environment, including the prevention and control of pollution to water	MECDM

Some of this legislation is outdated and incomplete. The Rivers Ordinance 1969 only applies to selected specified rivers and does not cover groundwater. A draft Water Resources Act has been under consideration since 2006. It is a good base but requires updating in line with this policy and recent developments. **There is an urgent need for the review and revision of all WATSAN legislation, regulations and ordinances** to ensure protection and improved management of water resources, water supply, sanitation and waste management.

3.8 Specific Activities and Timetable for Policy Implementation

The accompanying **Implementation Plan** provides details of activities to be undertaken under each Policy Objective. It also provides a timetable for implementation of Policy Objectives and activities as well as resources required for implementation. All objectives are high to very high priority. Some can be implemented within 6 months of this policy being endorsed by Cabinet. Because of the very dispersed nature of rural populations in Solomon Islands some objectives are long-term continuing tasks which may take up to 15 years to be fully implemented. Implementation will also depend on the availability of resources.

3.9 Resource Implications of Policy

The high priority and magnitude of rural and urban water and sanitation challenges requires adequate human and financial resources be allocated for the implementation of this Policy. The Implementation Plan estimates that an additional 54 trained staff, 36 in the Provinces, may be required in the sector over the next 12 years. Solomon Islands National Infrastructure Investment Plan 2013 lists proposed water supply, sanitation and hydropower infrastructure projects in rural and urban areas valued at over SDB 1,100 m over the next 7 years. It is clear that this amount is beyond the current means of SIG and will require donor assistance.

3.10 Monitoring and Review of Policy Implementation and Outcomes

It is proposed that the high level National WATSAN Reform Committee, NWSRC, will be responsible for monitoring and reporting of progress on policy implementation to Cabinet. They will be assisted in this process by the National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee which will be expanded to include peak community-based organisations. The Policy and its Implementation Plan will be reviewed formally by NWSRC, with the assistance of NIWCC, every 5 years or at the election of a new Government. Following these reviews, NWSRCCC will recommend to Cabinet any required revision of the Policy and Plan.

3.11 Minister Submitting this Policy

This National Policy is submitted to Cabinet by the Minister for Mines, Energy and Rural Electrification, the lead water minister in Solomon Islands. The Policy has been developed through the Cabinet-appointed National Intersectoral Water Coordination Committee.

3.12 Cabinet Endorsement

This Policy and its accompanying Implementation Plan was endorsed by Cabinet of the Solomon Islands Government.