



# **“SETTING THE SCENE”**

## **MITIGATION AND THE UNFCCC**

**Presentation by Murray Ward at the**

**Summer School 2013**

**of the**

**International Partnership on Mitigation and MRV**

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# What is mitigation?

- **An activity occurring that has the effect of reducing the emissions of greenhouse gases to the atmosphere or increasing the removal of greenhouse gases from the atmosphere (e.g. sequestration of carbon dioxide by growing biomass)**
  - **Focus under the UNFCCC is activities undertaken or directly influenced by humans ... “anthropogenic”**

## Quick history on mitigation in the UNFCCC

- **1992 Agreement of the UNFCCC at the “Earth Summit” in Rio; objective to avoid dangerous anthropogenic climate change ....**
  - All countries expected to play a role in mitigation, but not equal expectations
  - **Three main categories: Annex I, Annex II, non-Annex I**
    - Annex I (developed countries) have “aim to” (non-binding) targets to stabilize emissions at 1990 levels by 2000
    - Annex II (then OECD countries) have obligations to support mitigation by developing countries with capacity building, technology transfer and finance (“agreed incremental cost”)
    - Non-Annex I (developing countries) will undertake mitigation, with support as needed and provided
- **The mitigation ‘ball’ starts rolling**

## Quick history on mitigation in the UNFCCC ...2

- **1995: Agreement to negotiate Annex I countries' targets for the period after 2000**
- **1996: Declaration these targets should be binding**
- **1997: Kyoto Protocol (KP) agreed**
  - **established binding targets cf 1990 levels for “Annex B Parties” in first period 2008-12 based on a ‘basket’ of greenhouse gases using GWPs to set CO<sub>2</sub> equivalency**
  - **established ‘flexible mechanisms’ (EU ‘bubble’, and emissions trading and joint implementation between Annex B Parties) along with reporting, accounting and compliance provisions ... and “mechanisms eligibility”**
  - **established the Clean Development Mechanism**
- **2000: Incoming Bush Administration in the US rejects (won't ratify) KP**
- **2001: Marrakech Rules for KP agreed**

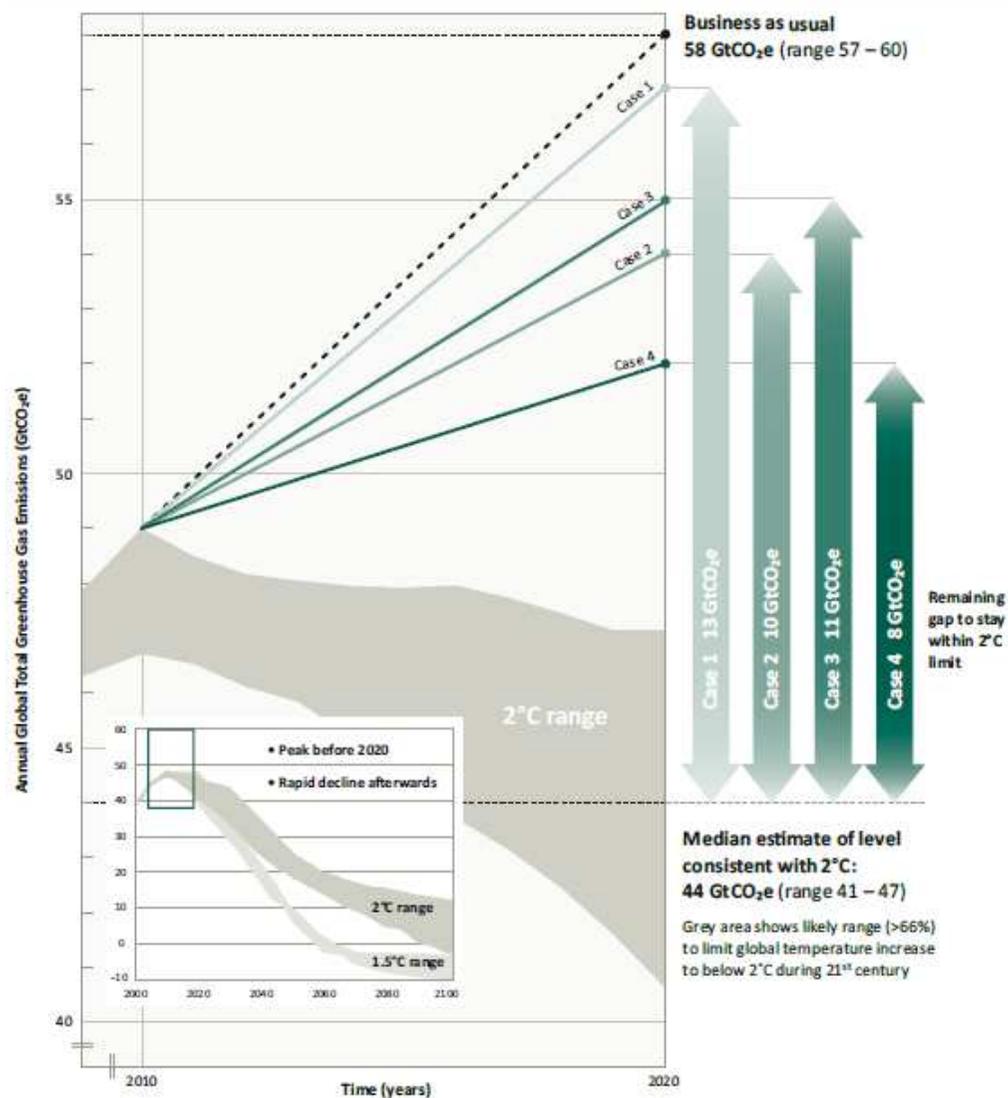
## **Quick history on mitigation in the UNFCCC ...3**

- **2007: In the “Bali Action Plan” agreement to begin negotiations for a comprehensive climate change agreement for the post-2012 period addressing issues of concern to developed and developing countries**
  - **Shared vision (long term mitigation objective)**
  - **Developed countries’ mitigation targets for post-2012**
  - **Nationally appropriate mitigation actions by developing countries supported by developed countries (finance, technology, capacity building)**
  - **Launch of REDD (eventually REDD+) discussion track**
- **2008-2010: Countries ‘pledge’ actions/targets**
- **2010: In the “Copenhagen Agreement” world leaders agree to keep global warming within 2°C (from pre-industrial); review in 2015 (e.g. 1.5°C objective of some Parties kept alive)**

## Quick history on mitigation in the UNFCCC ...4

- **2011: “Cancun Agreements”:**
  - Endorsed Copenhagen Agreement under UNFCCC
  - Closed much, but not all, of the business of the Bali Action Plan; deferred rest to the next COP in Durban
  - Concern about the apparent “emissions gap” for the sum of all targets and pledges of mitigation action in 2020 to be consistent with a 2°C path
- **2012: Durban outcomes:**
  - Agreement to have a KP CP2 (with some developed countries dropping out including some major emitters); but time period and QELRCs yet to be determined
  - Continued concern about the emissions gap
  - Agreement to a Durban Platform for Enhanced Action that by 2015 will agree to a mitigation framework involving all developed countries and developing countries from 2020

# Current status of pledges – the „Ambition Gap“



- > UNEP Gap report gathers results from research teams around the world related to global emission scenarios
- „Ambition gap“ of 8-14 Gt in 2020, depending on stringency of accounting and conditionality of targets

UNEP Gap report 2012: <http://www.unep.org/publications/ebooks/emissionsgap2012/>

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# Mitigation themes and keywords

- **Commitments / Ambition**
- **Transparency**
- **Accounting / Accountability**
- **Support**

## Mitigation themes and keywords ...2

### ■ **Commitments / Ambition**

- **Targets**: an outcome at some future time described in quantitative terms; can be binding or non-binding, conditional or unconditional, expressed in many different metrics (e.g. emissions, percent renewable energy, 'carbon neutrality', annual reduction in area deforested), economy wide or sectoral
- **Pledges**: similar to targets but usually non-binding
- **Quantified emissions limitation and reduction commitments (QELRCs)**: the specific form of binding target established for Annex B Party commitments in the Kyoto Protocol; when linked with flexibility mechanisms can be seen as the initial allocation of 'allowed emissions' over the given period
- **Emissions trading and joint implementation**: 'flexible mechanisms' for countries with QELRCs which allow them to trade (buy/sell) emission units and meet their obligations

**Green**: all countries   **Blue**: Developed countries   **Orange**: Developing countries

## Mitigation themes and keywords ...3

- **Commitments / Ambition ...cont'd**
  - **Clean Development Mechanism (CDM)**: a flexibility mechanism under the Kyoto Protocol where emissions reduction (or forest sink enhancement) projects done in **developing countries** generate additional emission units that can be used by **developed countries** to meet their obligations. The CDM has been a major means for the financing of project activities undertaken in many (but not all) developing countries, primarily undertaken by private actors. It also required the establishment of a very large institutional framework for mitigation in these developing countries.
  - **Emission scenarios, Low Emissions (or Carbon) Development Strategies (LEDS/LCDS)**: analytical methods or tools to help develop targets, pledges, QELRCs

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## Mitigation themes and keywords ...4

- **Transparency (and tracking progress)**
  - **National Communications (Nat. Coms)**: a comprehensive reporting modality where all countries periodically describe the situation of climate change in their country – how it is affecting the country and what actions they are undertaking to address it; the guidelines for these and periodicity are different for **developed countries** and **developing countries**.
  - **Inventories**: a report detailing the estimated quantities of greenhouse gas emissions and removals (sequestration) occurring in a given year; for **developed countries** these are done and submitted annually; for **developing countries** these are done as part of the periodic Nat. Com.
  - **Biennial Reports (BR)**: a report following specific guidelines prepared by developed countries every two years between the years for which they do Nat. Coms; includes inventory information for that year.

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## Mitigation themes and keywords ...5

- **Transparency ...cont'd**
  - **Biennial Update Reports (BUR)**: a report following specific guidelines prepared by developing countries every two years between the years for which they do Nat. Coms; includes an inventory.
  - **International Assessment and Review (IAR)**: a review process applicable to information in Nat. Coms and BRs submitted by developed countries
  - **International Consultation and Analysis (ICA)**: a 'review-like' process applicable to information in Nat Coms and BURs submitted by developing countries
  - **Measure(ment), Report(ing) and Verify(ication) (MRV)**: in its general use a term that covers the processes of inventories, Nat. Coms, BRs, BURs, IAR and ICA; in its more specific uses describes the particular MRV requirements related to, and required for, specific activities, e.g. of projects under the CDM or REDD+ activities, or (now under consideration) of NAMAs, or of domestic measures

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## Mitigation themes and keywords ...6

### ■ **Accounting / Accountability**

- **Emission Units Register:** Connected to the QELRCs under the KP an electronic national accounting system that holds all emissions units (by individual serial number) under the control of the country and its entities in various types of accounts; one of these accounts is a “retirement account” and the test of a country’s compliance at the end of the period is that they hold sufficient units in this account to equal their ghg emissions during the period

This registry system is also a key component of the international system to track the trading between countries of emission units, including units (CERs) originating from CDM projects in developing countries.

# Mitigation themes and keywords ...7

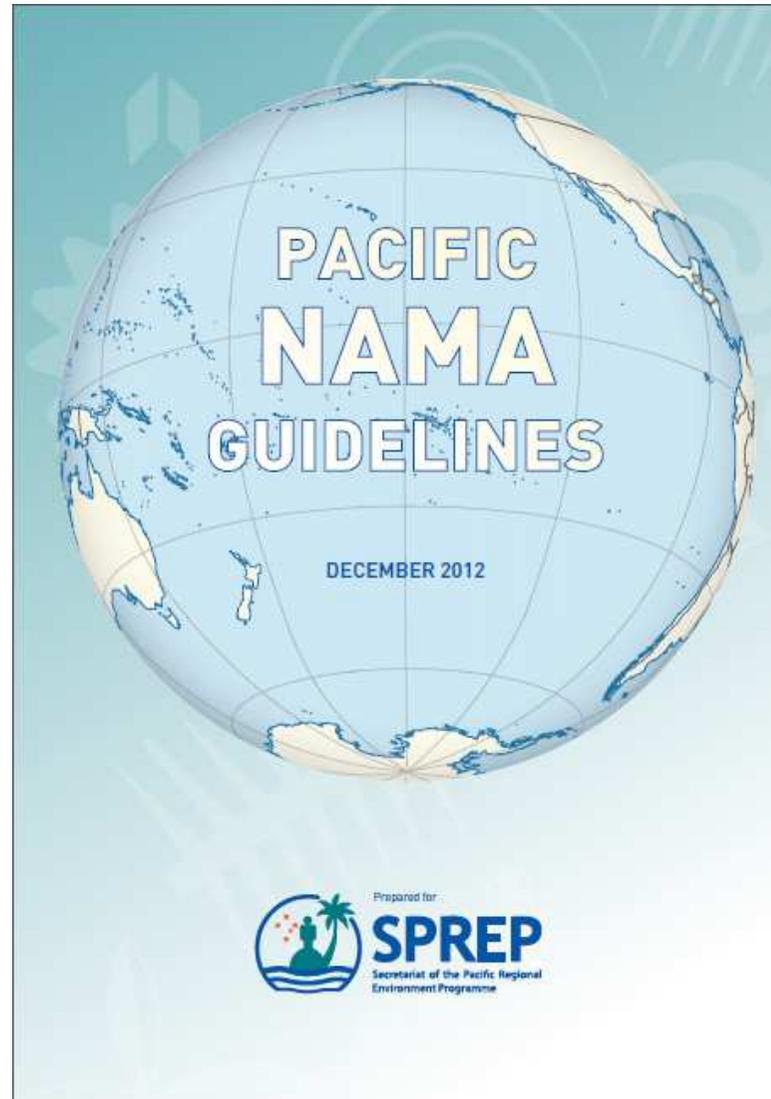
## ■ Support

- **NAMAs**: derives from text in the Cancun Agreements...  
“Developing country Parties will take **nationally appropriate mitigation actions** in the context of sustainable development, supported and enabled by technology, financing and capacity building”

In its generic use the term **NAMA** can be, and has been, used to describe a wide array of types of actions being undertaken and being proposed, with and without the support of international partners. With the advent in 2013 of a new UNFCCC **NAMA Registry** the term **NAMA** is becoming to mean a specifically detailed and formatted proposal by the designated authority in a developing country for action that the country plans to undertake on the basis of receiving specific technology, financing and capacity building support; such proposals are seeking bilateral discussions with prospective support partners

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# PACIFIC NAMA GUIDELINES



# Mitigation and (Sustainable) Development

- Outcomes of many activities long supported by international development agencies under rules for ODA include (and cannot be distinguished from) outcomes now sought under mitigation programmes and projects
  - affordable renewable energy, e.g. in electrification programmes intended to eliminate energy poverty
  - sustainable management of lands and forests
  - water and sanitation management
  - waste management
- For many developing countries, especially LDCs, managing international development assistance flows is a major activity of Ministries of Finance and imbedded in national budget plans and processes
- Understanding and enhancing the linkages between development and mitigation is a key means to increase interest and ownership of mitigation programmes

# Demonstrating mitigation

## Sanitation biogas project in Vaitele, Samoa



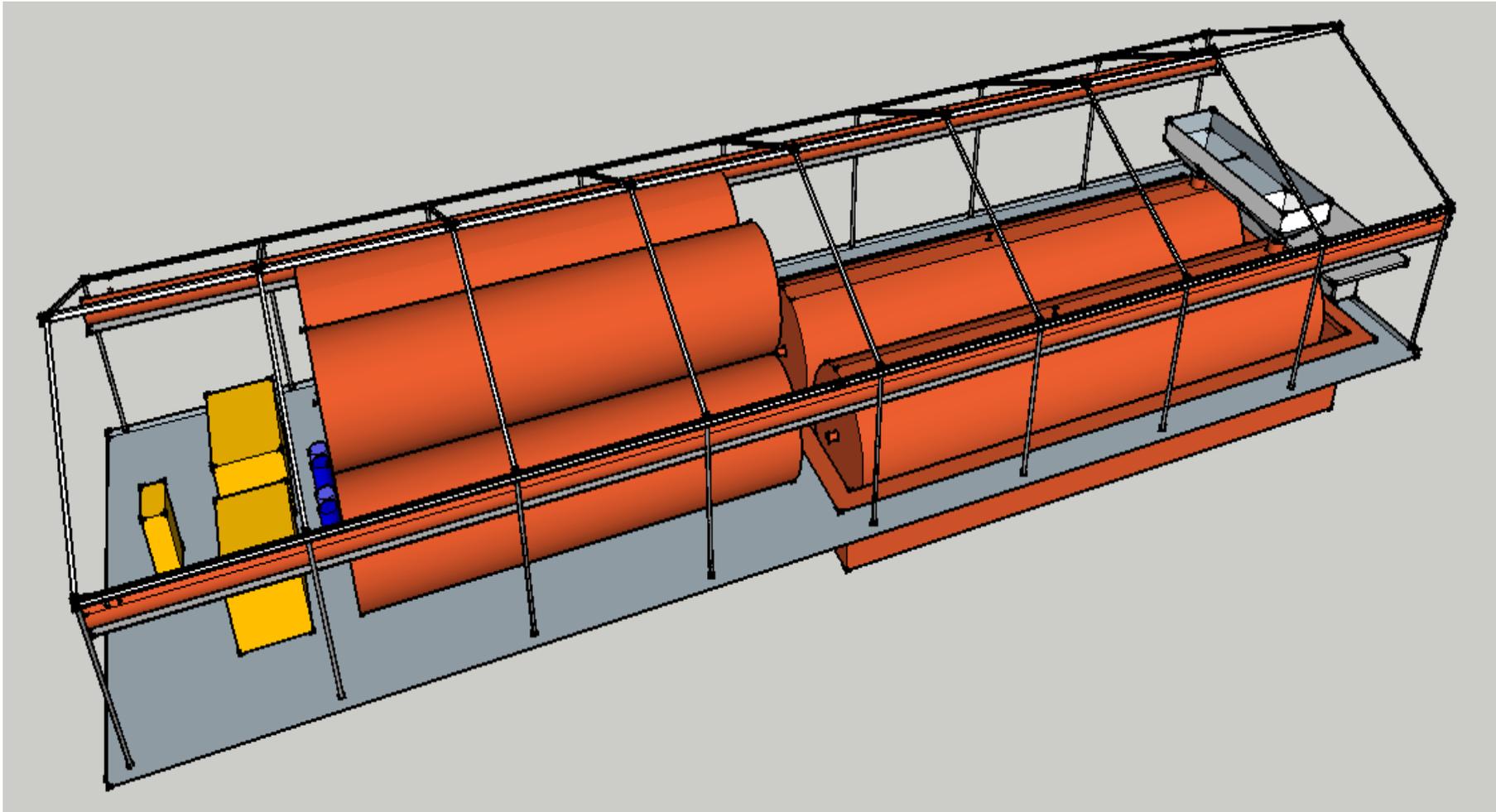
# Demonstrating mitigation Piu Village merremia project



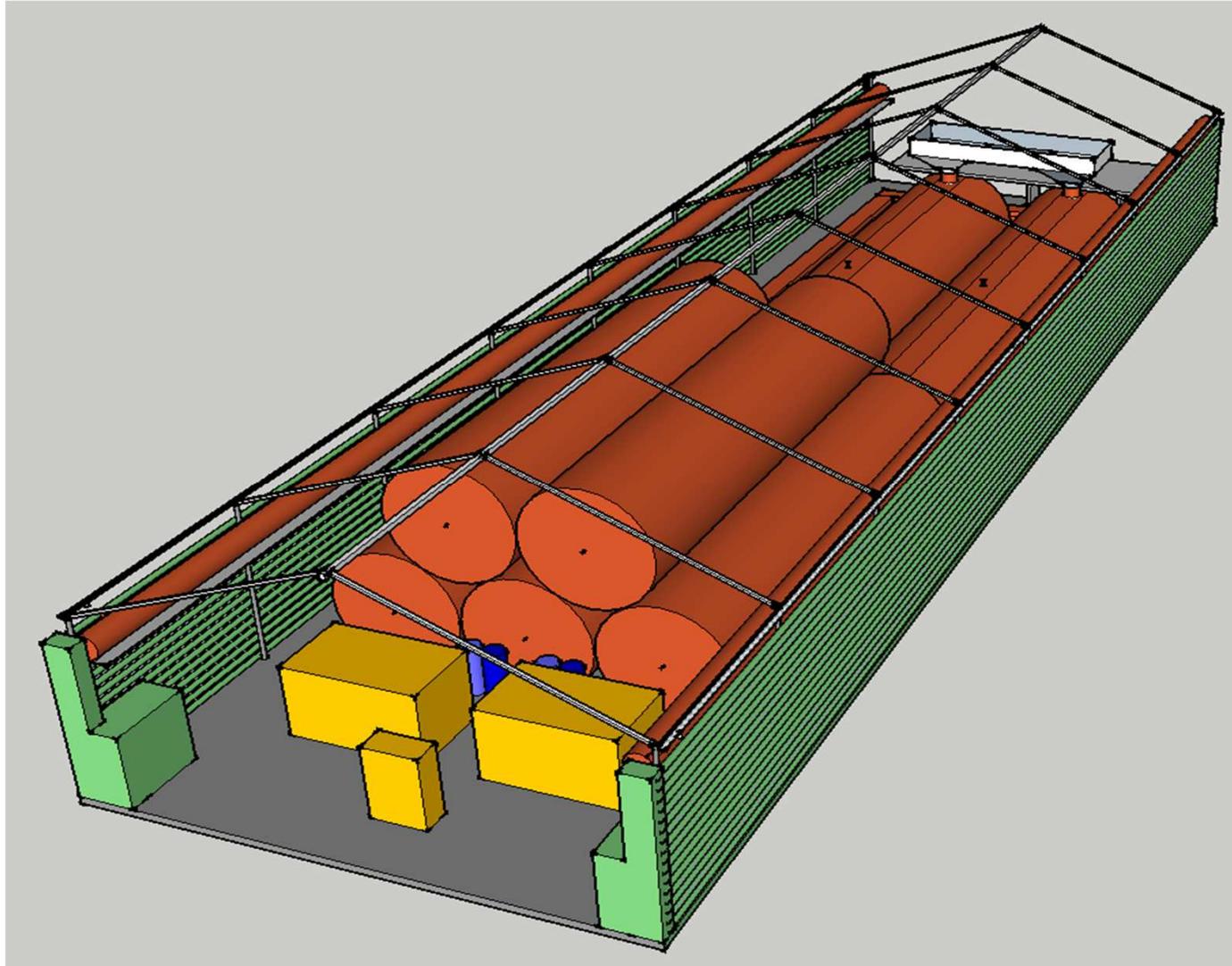
# Demonstrating mitigation Piu Village merremia project



# Proposed future community power project



# Proposed negative emissions power project



**THANK YOU**

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