



Navigating Regulatory Landscapes: Insights from an ISA Legal Analyst in Fiji

Sunayana Bhatnagar, Legal Analyst at the International Solar Alliance (ISA), recently had the opportunity to interact with Fijians and explore the nuances of the regulatory landscape of their country with them.

Reflecting on the genesis of this journey, Sunayana shares, “In 2023, the ISA team embarked on a preliminary fact-finding mission to Fiji. The goal was to comprehensively understand Fiji’s existing regulatory framework and identify avenues for potential collaboration in the energy sector. During this mission, we engaged with key stakeholders, including the Fiji Competition and Consumer Commission (FCCC), Energy Fiji Limited (EFL), and the Department of Energy.”

The essential role of regulatory work for countries to transition towards solar energy

ISA’s regulatory support to Member Countries under its analytics and advocacy priority, Sunayana expounds, helps in creating a pipeline of sustainable and scalable solar energy projects in Member Countries, streamlining a Member Country’s legal and regulatory framework for sustainable and affordable solar energy; it also aims to attract and stabilize private sector investments in solar energy generation and distribution. Underlining the crucial role of this ISA initiative, she adds – our intervention helps strengthen and promote clean energy generation in each Member Country’s energy mix—facilitating the establishment of effective energy regulations that can propel our Member Countries in meeting their Nationally Determined Contribution (NDC) targets through increased investments, transition to clean energy, and improving energy access and security for millions of unelectrified population.

Highlighting the reach of ISA’s efforts, Sunayana added that ISA’s regulatory support project has taken off in four African countries – Ethiopia, Uganda, Sudan, and Somalia. While consultations are in place to support Bhutan and Nepal, SIDs Member Countries are key areas of focus.

Insights from her collaborative sessions in Fiji

Spotlighting a collaborative session she had an opportunity to conduct during her recent Fiji visit, Sunayana highlighted the insightful discussions focused on topics such as the unbundling of the energy sector and the need for tailored regulations to support solar solutions like mini-grids. Discussions with the stakeholders were engaging as they shed light on the challenges and opportunities inherent in navigating the regulatory landscape.

A observation that struck her was that despite Fiji’s abundance of sunshine and islands, the adoption of solar energy remains limited—a potential for growth, innovation, and collaboration between ISA and Fiji. In order to meet the target figure set by the Fiji government of having 50% of energy come from renewable energy, ISA’s solar energy solutions could be highly beneficial. Concretely, the prospect of leveraging solar mini-grids and standalone systems is particularly promising. Private sector involvement combined with innovative regulatory frameworks will position Fiji to accelerate its journey towards achieving sustainable energy access for all.