



VANUATU

LAND SECTOR FRAMEWORK:

2009-2018

**“A Prosperous, Equitable and Sustainable
Land Sector for Vanuatu”**



DRAFT REPORT

(for Distribution and Comments)

**Authorised by the Ministry of Lands, Minerals, Energy,
Environment and Rural Water Supply**

November 2008

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Acronyms

AusAID	Australian Agency for International Development
CoM	Council of Ministers
CRP	Comprehensive Reform Program
DCO	Development Committee of Officials
DoL	Department of Lands
DSPPAC	Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination
GoV	Government of Vanuatu
LSF	Land Sector Framework
LSCU	Land Sector Coordination Unit
Malvatumauri	National Council of Chiefs
MBC	Ministerial Budget Committee
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MoL	Ministry of Lands, Minerals, Energy, Environment and Rural Water Supply
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTSF	Medium-Term Strategic Framework
NLS	National Land Summit
NLSC	National Land Steering Committee
NZAID	New Zealand Agency for International Development
PAA	Policy Action Agenda
TWG	Thematic Working Group
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
VCC	Vanuatu Cultural Centre
VLGC	Vanuatu Land Governance Committee
VSTLRI	Vanuatu Short Term Land Reform Initiative

Executive Summary

This Land Sector Framework (LSF) provides the foundation for a strategic plan to implement land sector reforms in Vanuatu. It is intended to guide government, the private sector and civil society in the use and management of Vanuatu's land resources. The LSF is based on a *Vision* and a set of strategic objectives or themes. It outlines implementation priorities for a policy and activity agenda over a ten year period and builds upon the 2006 National Land Summit (NLS) resolutions and recent donor initiatives in the sector.

Policy Context

The overall policy context for LSF development is driven by a Government of Vanuatu (GoV) commitment to improve the welfare and quality of life of its people through the development challenges defined in the Policy and Action Agenda (PAA) for 2006 – 2015 as follows:

- Achieve higher and sustainable economic growth to create jobs and raise incomes while conserving resources for future generations;
- Ensure macro-economic stability to create a stable investment climate; and
- Raise standards of service delivery, particularly to the rural and outer regions, to improve access to basic services while lowering the costs of internal trade.

The National Vision for Vanuatu is to achieve by 2015 “*a significant increase in real per capita incomes, along with steady growth in levels of employment.*” The PAA priorities are:

- Promotion of private sector led economic growth, particularly in primary industries and tourism, within an environment of public sector reform, good governance and appropriate regulation; and
- Provision of resources for education and training to ensure a skilled, motivated, gender-balanced labour force.

They will be achieved through a process which aims to harmonise the development activities and the support of the donor partners.

Strategic Approach to LSF Development

The LSF facilitates an integrated approach to the land sector which encompasses all stakeholders and services and enables actions and resource use to be prioritised. It is intended to mobilise the stakeholders to achieve a common purpose or mission.

The *Vision* is to create:

“A Prosperous, Equitable and Sustainable Land Sector for Vanuatu”

To achieve this *Vision*, five themes (or strategic objectives) have been identified which, collectively, constitute the land sector *Mission*:

“To provide an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder participation in the effective use, management and stewardship of Vanuatu's land resources”

Four principles will guide stakeholders and policy makers to ensure that the land sector activities are aligned with the GoV development policy agenda. These principles are:

- Management of land resources must comply with social and economic objectives,
- Stewardship of land resources must guarantee environmental sustainability,
- Land agencies must be relevant, cost-effective, efficient, and sustainable, and
- Planning, implementation, decision making and monitoring of activities must be participatory, transparent and accountable to protect the interests and rights of all stakeholders.

Some of the key aspects of the land sector which have informed LSF development to date include the:

- Prevalence of customary land tenure over leasehold tenure,
- Centrality of Kastom principles and practices as a core of national identity and their application to land tenure and Kastom law in Ni-Vanuatu society,
- Uncertainty over customary authority and leadership and its impact on land dealings and transactions,
- Impact of economic development pressures on customary land,
- Weakness of women's land rights compared to men and the marginalisation of women in decision-making processes on land matters and the social consequences,
- Inequities in the current application of the land lease administration system and the long-term social and economic impacts of such practices,
- Importance and significance of multi-stakeholder processes in the governance of land,
- Lack of operational efficiencies in the land lease administration and records information systems,
- Under-utilisation of Vanuatu's cultivable land for productive use,
- Looming effects of urbanisation and informal settlements in the major urban centres of Vanuatu,
- Land tenure security for customary landholders to provide a secure basis on which to plan and invest for the future,
- Land tenure security for vulnerable groups,
- Role of the land sector as an important part of the framework for environmental and natural resource management,
- Planning and development of the land asset; including the management of government and public lands, the management of common property resources, individual and community-based land use planning, and urban planning and development.

These key aspects have informed the development of the five themes for the LSF which are:

- Enhancing the governance of land,
- Engaging customary groups,
- Improving the delivery of land services,
- Creating a productive and sustainable sector, and
- Ensuring access and tenure security for all groups.

The following strategies and activities form the basis for LSF implementation:

LSF Strategies and Activities

Vision	A Prosperous, Equitable and Sustainable Land Sector for Vanuatu				
Mission	To provide an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder participation in the effective use, management and stewardship of Vanuatu's land resources				
Themes	Enhancing the governance of land	Engaging customary groups	Improving the delivery of land services	Creating a productive and sustainable sector	Ensuring access and tenure security for all groups
Strategies	•Ensure accountable, transparent and fair dealings in land •Encourage sector-wide oversight of land governance system	•Build civil society capacity to contribute to sector development •Increase support for community awareness and engagement	•Strengthen agencies to use resources properly •Improve coordination within land sector and delivery capacity	•Strengthen land management •Foster land market development •Support sustainable development practices	•Facilitate better access to land •Strengthen local-based dispute resolution •Strengthen land tenure security
Policy and Activity Agenda	•Land law reform •Land and environmental policy development •Land governance system	•Community awareness and engagement •Community boundary mapping •Community relations and structures	•Efficient and effective enabling services •Service culture and performance •Information technology and management •Infrastructure and civil works	•Land market development •Physical planning and development •Sustainable land and environmental management	•Clarify and strengthen land rights •Land and resource dispute resolution •Protect vulnerable groups •Social, gender and youth assessments

The LSF emphasizes: the empowerment of customary groups to understand their land rights and undertake their own land planning and development; a participatory multi-stakeholder approach to land governance; increasing productive land use, improving the efficiency and effectiveness of land service delivery mechanisms within urban and rural areas; addressing the inequalities, tenure insecurity and inequitable systems and processes associated with land dealings and transactions, strengthening the land rights of women and vulnerable groups, and creating a supportive framework for sound environmental and natural resource management.

LSF Implementation

The LSF provides a roadmap for land sector development over a ten year period. It is based on a fundamental premise that land is not the sole responsibility of the GoV but that all stakeholders should share in the responsibility for its management. LSF implementation is divided into two (2) five year periods and will require alignment with the GoV budget cycle and planning horizons. This will facilitate its integration with the corporate and annual planning of the government agencies and stakeholders involved in its implementation.

It is envisaged that new initiatives and approaches for the land sector will be designed, piloted and evaluated during implementation. Outcomes from these applications will guide the direction and scope of subsequent activities and also inform the development of future land policy. For the first

five years (2009-2013), activities have been identified which are considered to be priority areas and core to land sector development. For the second period (2014-2018), activities are designed to consolidate previous achievements and broaden the scope of implementation so that longer-term challenges; such as urban drift, informal settlements and hazard management are addressed.

Governance Arrangements

The multi-dimensional and multi-stakeholder elements of the LSF highlight the need to clarify the responsibilities and linkages between the stakeholders involved in the governance arrangements. The Ministry of Lands (MoL) has shown vision, leadership and commitment and will take carriage of procurement, administration and implementation of the LSF - including the oversight for land policy development, planning and resource allocation.

This oversight will be facilitated by a multi-stakeholder *Vanuatu Land Governance Committee* (VLGC) established to develop and maintain a strong strategic focus on the LSF. The Director-General of Lands will be the *Focal Point* and will be supported at the national level by a *Land Sector Coordination Unit* (LSCU) within the MoL structure. The LSCU will be responsible for day-to-day administration of LSF implementation, including monitoring and evaluation. LSF implementation will also need coordination at sub-national levels although the structures at these levels will need careful consideration.

There will be occasions when specific land sector studies must be undertaken. It is envisaged that these tasks will be coordinated by the LSCU and supported by a number of *Thematic Working Groups* (TWGs). The roles and responsibilities of the TWGs may align with the LSF themes and / or be formulated to address specific studies using resources drawn from stakeholder expertise.

Monitoring and Evaluation

Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) is an integral part of LSF implementation and will provide vital information on land sector performance. Responsibility for M&E oversight will lie with the MoL and they will be supported by the LSCU in an administration and coordination role. M&E will need to be multi-level and multi-disciplinary and all stakeholders will have roles to play. Principles which will be applied to M&E are:

- Processes must not impose huge demands on key stakeholders while, at the same time, they must reflect adequate engagement,
- Analysis and reporting must blend both qualitative and quantitative data,
- M&E must support broader GoV data collection and management requirements and ensure that the information is used systematically and consistently; and
- Data must be disaggregated by gender as well as by province / island.

The M&E Framework must be consistent with the PAA and incorporate processes to review LSF outcome statements to ensure they are clear, measurable and achievable. The approach must be participatory and aim to achieve stakeholder consensus on actual progress. It is envisaged that a combination of annual reviews and results-based M&E will be used to obtain information on performance that will guide future LSF decision making. Annual reviews will be carried out by the VLGC and more extensive evaluations will be conducted every five years or less, if deemed necessary.

Collection tools for M&E will vary across activities and key stakeholder groups and it won't be appropriate to standardise the processes. Likewise, the sources and types of information and data

will also vary according to the indicators for success. It will generally fall into three categories; (1) routine data for reporting, (2) national data, and (3) sector - specific data. Indicative performance measures have been prepared for the LSF policy and activity agenda. An opportunity also exists to design an M&E Framework that can measure performance at the LSF outcome levels and can be linked to broader GoV development goals.

Funding and Resources

Funding for land sector initiatives should be underpinned by an expenditure program which is under GoV leadership. Moreover, the overall approach presents both challenges and opportunities - including new funding mechanisms that will increase the impact of land sector initiatives on GoV development goals. A sector-wide approach intrinsically relies upon the formulation of investment scenarios that are based on a clear policy framework and implementation strategy, will uphold the principles of good governance and are developed through extensive multi-stakeholder consultation and participation.

Funding support for the LSF can be secured from a range of sources; including; national, provincial and municipal governments; donor agencies, the private sector and - potentially - self-generating revenue. Several donor initiatives have already commenced with UNDP, AusAID, NZAID and World Bank undertaking, or soon to initiate, activities in line with the LSF themes. This current engagement provides an opportunity to build confidence in, and prove the strength of, a sector-wide approach to land. However, the suitability of alternate funding mechanisms and sources can only be explored and developed once the LSF implementation schedule has been refined and specific priorities and areas of activity confirmed.

In the short-term, there is a need to integrate the financial and resource allocations for the current donor programs into a consolidated resource envelope for LSF implementation which is aligned to the GoV planning and budget cycle – taking into account the manpower resources available. On the other hand, the longer term financial and resource envelope is more difficult to predict and estimate. This will require the development of an investment strategy which outlines different assumption-based scenarios for the rate at which activities in the land sector over the ten year period will either expand or contract.

Summary

This report presents the rationale, justification and the design of a Land Sector Framework for Vanuatu. It summarises the current status of progress on its development and provides a foundation for the next stage of planning prior to full implementation. A preliminary implementation schedule has been prepared, initial stakeholder mapping has been undertaken, governance arrangements have been proposed and key activity areas for each theme have been identified.

The development of the LSF is now at a stage where a consultative process with key stakeholders is required to obtain initial feedback on its strategic direction and thematic content. Once this feedback has been received and incorporated, steps can be taken to undertake the next series of actions which have been proposed – including its endorsement and approval by the GoV.

1. Introduction

This Land Sector Framework (LSF) for Vanuatu has been developed by the Ministry of Lands (MoL) to provide a comprehensive framework for the implementation of sector wide initiatives based on the recommendations from the 2006 National Land Summit (NLS).¹ It acts as a road map for Government, the private sector and civil society for the use and management of Vanuatu's land resources.

The formulation of the LSF is the first step in developing an integrated approach to land sector planning which encompasses a diverse group of stakeholders and a broad spectrum of services. It is intended to capture the interests of multi-stakeholders in the sector to achieve a common vision. This challenge will require ongoing land policy development, greater institutional harmonisation, better coordination and new approaches for land service delivery and performance monitoring.

The LSF implies a shift towards a sector-wide planning approach. It is not intended as a blueprint; instead, it provides a framework in which Government, stakeholders and donors can work together to improve land sector planning. The LSF acknowledges there is limited capacity in the Vanuatu land sector, so it will be important to prioritise actions and resources. A coordinated effort will be needed across the land sector to support policy formulation, funding, monitoring and evaluation of performance.

Land sector stakeholders in Vanuatu include: a rural majority who reside on customary land; urban dwellers, some of whom engage in small business and commercial enterprises; those working in land-related sectors such as agriculture, forestry, tourism and property development; national and provincial government staff; civil society; and the private sector.

The LSF is based on a vision and a set of strategic objectives or themes. It outlines a ten year policy and activity agenda which accepts that priorities will change. The next stage in the development of the LSF will comprise a process of consultation with, and research and analysis by a wide range of stakeholders. It draws and builds upon the NLS resolutions and other recent donor-supported initiatives in the sector.

1.1 Land Sector Agenda

The overall policy context for the development of the LSF is driven by a commitment of the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) to improve the welfare and quality of life of its people. This is articulated through several broad development challenges as defined in the Policy and Action Agenda (PAA) for 2006–2015, as follows:

1. Achieve higher and sustainable economic growth to create jobs and raise incomes while conserving resources for future generations;
2. Ensure macro-economic stability to create a stable investment climate; and
3. Raise standards of service delivery, particularly to the rural and outer regions to improve access to basic health and primary education services while lowering costs of internal trade.

¹ The Ministry of Lands wishes to record its appreciation to Dr. Douglas Larden and Ms Anna Naupa who contributed to and assisted with the compilation of this report.

The National Vision is to achieve by 2015 “a significant increase in real per capita incomes, along with steady growth in levels of employment.” Within the region, Vanuatu is one of the leading countries in achieving the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) in education, health, environmental management and other key social indicators. Public sector reforms are directed towards raising governance standards and productivity levels in the civil service and will result in higher service standards and managerial accountability.

The main implementation priorities for the PAA are:

1. The promotion of private sector led economic growth, particularly in primary industries and tourism, within an environment of public sector reform, good governance and appropriate regulation; and
2. The provision of resources for education and training to ensure a skilled, motivated, gender-balanced labour force.

These priorities are being achieved through a Medium-Term Strategic Framework (MTSF) which sets the basis for development goals which are country-specific and aligned with the broader MDGs. The MTSF also aims to harmonise development activities and donor partner support and advocates the development of sector-specific strategic frameworks. The ongoing development of the LSF will, therefore, need to make sure it remains consistent with other land-related policy statements and is aligned with and well-informed by these documents.²

The central role of land in the social and economic development of Vanuatu has ensured its inclusion in the Government’s Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) which was initiated in 1997. The most recent CRP matrix for the period 2004–2006 highlighted the need for:

1. Reform of the land law system in order to minimise uncertainty about land tenure and facilitate better land use;
2. Gazettal of the Customary Land Act; and
3. An attractive, safe, healthy and sustainable environment.

The role of land in Vanuatu was re-emphasised at the *National Summit for Self Reliance and Sustainability* held in July 2005, during which the recommendation was made to stage the *National Land Summit*. The NLS identified twenty resolutions which could form the basis of a new land policy. The resolutions highlighted the importance of ‘land’ as a driver for change. They also highlighted the need for an equitable and sustainable policy framework and regulatory regime.

A transitional strategy was prepared and a National Land Steering Committee (NLSC) was soon established to provide oversight for the implementation of the resolutions. This LSF is informed by these developments and is designed to contribute to the goals of the PAA as outlined above.

From a global perspective, the LSF incorporates the spirit of the 1992 Rio Declaration and recognises that environmental responsibility and care, social issues and sustainable development, including the stewardship of land, are not only the concern of Government but must be shared by a range of different stakeholders – implying that a participatory multi-stakeholder approach is essential to dealing with such issues.

² See e.g. Taufatofua, P (2007), *Agriculture Sector Policy 2007-2012*, Food and Agriculture Organisation of the United Nations, FAO/SAPA.

1.2 Guiding Principles

The LSF implicitly provides multi-stakeholders and policy makers with broad guiding principles that, when collectively applied, will ensure land sector activities are aligned with the Government of Vanuatu's overall development policy agenda. These guiding principles are envisaged to be:

- 1) *Management of land resources will need to comply with broader social and economic objectives*

This principle implies that the management of the land asset and its resources should:

1. Be guided by efficiency and equity concerns;
2. Fulfill stakeholder expectations and desires;
3. Protect disadvantaged and vulnerable groups; and
4. Be gender responsive.

Clear decision-making and governance rules will need to be specified in consultation and by agreement with all key stakeholders.

- 2) *Stewardship of land resources must guarantee environmental sustainability*

Land is a natural resource which provides a range of goods and services. Therefore, it is paramount that land resources are managed within a broader ecological context to ensure that negative environmental impacts are minimised and the economic and social benefits derived from land are maximised for current and future generations.

- 3) *Land sector organisations must be relevant, cost-effective, efficient, and sustainable*

Land sector organisations must have a clearly defined role in land resource management, provide services that are efficient and effective in terms of cost, and be sustainable in terms of ongoing funding of their activities.

- 4) *Planning and implementation, decision making and monitoring of land sector activities must be participatory, transparent and accountable in order to protect the interests and rights of all stakeholders*

The land sector must be responsive to the interests and rights of all landholders. This means there must be clear, transparent and equitable processes in place for land resource allocation and the monitoring of their use and impact. All stakeholders must be accountable for decisions on land allocation and service provision, and community groups and individuals must also be encouraged to participate actively in the governance processes which control these activities.

In the following sections, the key land sector issues in Vanuatu are summarised in *Section 2*. The strategic themes of the framework are explained, together with the challenges, risks and opportunities for their achievement in *Section 3*. Some aspects of LSF implementation are presented in *Section 4*, and a proposed LSF governance structure is outlined in *Section 5*. The approach for monitoring and evaluation, and for funding and resourcing of the LSF are discussed in *Sections 6 and 7*, respectively.

2. Key Land Sector Issues

Vanuatu is a small Pacific island country with a population of about 218,000 dispersed over 65 of the archipelago's 83 islands. The capital, Port Vila, has a population of only 33,700. With such a small and dispersed population, Government and civic organisations can only have a very limited influence outside the towns. Furthermore, communication and inter-island trade is limited. Activities in the land sector must therefore be planned carefully to ensure that their scope and scale match the modest capacity of the agencies and stakeholders involved, while ensuring they integrate well with current Government programs.

2.1 Customary Land Tenure

At Independence in 1980, the land in Vanuatu was formally restored to the customary owners and users. The new Constitution proclaimed: *All land in the Republic of Vanuatu belongs to the indigenous custom owners and their descendants*. It further proclaimed that the rules of *kastom* form the basis of land ownership and use in Vanuatu³. As such, land is closely linked with heritage, power, and spirituality. Custodianship and the exchange of rights are central to *kastom* practice, ensuring that harmony, authority, relationship networks and social responsibility are maintained.

Rights to land, however, are often not easily identifiable, but tend to depend upon oral histories, 'memory culture', complex local categories, and varying inheritance practices. The clustering of the population into villages, plantation communities and towns has also meant that many customary land owners and users no longer live within their traditional boundaries or even with their own communities. Because of this, boundaries and rights have inevitably become less certain over time.

Within a single community it is not uncommon for there to be conflicting forms of interest in the same area of land. While the Constitution recognises that *kastom* rules apply to customary land dealings, the lack of formal rules has led to ongoing disputes and a lack of certainty and security over ownership, boundaries and use of the land. Dispute resolution vitally depends on *kastom* chiefs and *kastom* law to clarify any conflicting local practices. Yet despite its diversity, *kastom* retains wide respect and authority in Vanuatu society and is almost universally regarded as the core of national identity.

2.2 Authority in Custom

The Malvatumauri (National Council of Chiefs) is the peak organisation providing advice to Government on *kastom* values and practices in Vanuatu, and according to the Constitution it must be consulted on all matters related to land. However, chiefly authority is frequently bypassed and while the chiefs make many decisions on customary land tenure, a fundamental issue confronting all of these decisions has been a lack of clarity on customary authority and leadership.

Today authority is exercised by a range of chiefs who hold varying sway. These include *kastom* chiefs, led through the Malvatumauri, who are the traditional basis of authority and represent the families, clans and tribes of the ni-Vanuatu. However, authority is also exercised by village or community chiefs whose leadership over a cluster of dwellings was established by the former colonial authorities in order to facilitate service delivery.

As well, chiefly status is attributed to many religious or political leaders and this diffusion and lack of clarity has led to many uncertainties over leadership and authority. Of particular concern is that

³ Article 73 and 74 of the Constitution

the legal system accepts the legal status of a chief to sign official documents on behalf of their community, despite underlying uncertainty regarding the scope or status of their authority.

2.3 Development Issues

Most ni-Vanuatu have access to land through customary systems. At the same time however, the potential of land to drive economic development in Vanuatu has rarely been realised under customary practices alone. Constraints such as poor inter-island transport, lack of access to credit, poor access to basic services, and limited income-earning opportunities have restricted people's ability to explore the potential of their land and have resulted, directly or indirectly, in emerging social problems. This situation is regarded as a serious concern and had led to initiatives such as the Kastom Ekonomi Program led by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre (VCC).

Population growth rates in Vanuatu are quite high (2.6 percent) and in 2004, 41 percent of people were under 15 years of age. This demographic profile places a huge strain on education and youth employment. One consequence is that growth in urban areas and peri-urban villages is occurring at more than twice the national average. This places further pressures on land and leads to dissent and conflict when incursions on customary land occur. As a result, informal settlements have been established which lack basic services, including water and sanitation, thereby posing a serious public health risk. These informal settlements are also a potential source of social instability.

Customary practices are struggling with the pressures of economic development. There is increasing evidence to show that traditional systems are being severely challenged, undermined or exploited to support conflicting claims over land, the pursuit of inconsistent interests, and the private ambitions of individuals.

2.4 Gender Perspectives

The strength of customary systems is that they have evolved to ensure social security, safety and sustainability in traditional subsistence communities. As such, *kastom* integrates many practices that go some way toward protecting women's rights and often provide traditional avenues for women to gain rank within their communities and participate in decision-making processes, but generally not in relation to land. This usually still rests with men.

However, evidence suggests that even the traditional protection of women's interests afforded by *kastom* are being eroded, and the management of customary land is becoming even more male-centric. This is driven in part through the manipulation of *kastom* in response to issues such as pressures on limited land resources and the increasing commoditisation of land. Women are being more marginalised from the decision-making processes involving land and many of the decisions are even less socially equitable and transparent than before.

Although land legislation is gender-neutral, the implementation of the process has adopted a male bias. As such, the issue of women's access to land has been placed on the national agenda in Vanuatu to ensure that gender-specific policies are addressed. Improved gender equality has been shown to improve social cohesion, security and economic opportunity. This is reinforced if women are included in decision-making and their rights to utilise, own and develop land are protected and their awareness of these rights is increased.

2.5 Formal Land Dealings

Under the current law, Government or private investors can negotiate long-term (e.g. 75 year renewable) leases with customary owners. While all land is deemed customary, leases are deemed to be incontestable by law and there is no legal recourse for a customary owner to rescind the deal or regain any right to their land. The incontestable status provides protection for the public or private sector to develop the land, yet the arrangements are often “private” dealings that create disputes which the disenfranchised customary landholder or user must resolve with the person who signed the lease on his or her behalf.

In the past, leases for the development of large agricultural holdings, or for the provision of land for public needs, have been the touchstone of many ongoing disputes. However, these are insignificant compared to recent land development issues. These days Vanuatu is being heavily promoted as a tourist destination. Hence, many pristine coastal and hilltop sites have been leased, with local community access being blocked to beach frontages, foreshores and associated infrastructure. In other cases, the leased land has remained idle for speculative purposes or has tied up prime agricultural land for alternative land uses.

The inherent subtleties of custom law, the uncertainty of custom authority and the lack of recognition of the customary group as a legal entity, has led to many reports of inequitable land dealings. This has resulted in benefits only being captured by a few, with some ni-Vanuatu being estranged from their land because the lease terms and conditions have unfavourable clauses for renewal and fail to provide access rights and/or long-term financial return.

For their part, land agents and investors take a very pragmatic approach to land transactions. They are not prepared to spend time and money unravelling the complexities of customary tenure, preferring instead to deal only with the identified “chief” as required by the legislation. This avoids the time-consuming consultations to ensure that all rightful customary owners are identified but could potentially generate numerous conflicting claims and disputes over the land.

Mechanisms have been established in the Constitution to protect customary owners from potentially unscrupulous actions when establishing long-term formal leases. Yet these powers are vested in Government and acted on through the Minister of Lands who has the duty to protect customary owners from formal dealings that may be prejudicial to the owner, user or national interest⁴.

While investments in land require security of tenure, many people believe that the current application of the land lease administration system has gone well beyond the original intent. The consequences of this are central to many of the disputes over land in Vanuatu. Generally it is the less powerful and less vocal segments of the community who suffer most. Without effective policy and enforcement, the long-term social and economic impacts of current practice are likely to harm both investors and local communities alike.

2.6 Land Lease Services

The issues described in *Section 2.5* are compounded by the current disarray of the lease records in the Department of Land’s (DoL) Registry Office. Urban and broader development on the two main islands of Efate and Espiritu Santo account for 93 percent of all leases in the country. The remaining 7 percent are mainly large agricultural leases, spread across all islands, many of which

⁴ Land Reform Act: Part V, Section 8 (2) (c).

are significantly under-developed. Approximately 2,800 leases (or 27 percent) are taken out directly on customary land, while the rest are sub-leases of public land (mainly residential and commercial).

Severe problems exist with a significant backlog of leases awaiting registration in the DoL. Lease approvals are very slow, particularly residential leases for ni-Vanuatu, and can often take from two to four years to establish. In contrast, international investors generally find that their leases take less time. As such, ni-Vanuatu are disadvantaged as banks will not lend until leases are officially registered. More expensive interim measures are required if residential or commercial development is to commence immediately.

Furthermore, the poor record-keeping and uncertainty of the lease registration process leads at best to huge operational inefficiencies and at worst to the exploitation of loopholes in the process to facilitate speedier registration. Hence clearing the backlog and establishing transparent and efficient processes for land lease administration are seen as an urgent priority for the land sector.

3. Strategic Themes

3.1 Vision Statement

Vanuatu is rich in natural resources and social capital which protect its communities from extreme economic hardship. Moreover, land is a productive asset, and as a prime source of sustenance for the majority of the population it needs to be carefully managed. The prudent allocation of land resources facilitates economic growth but its irresponsible utilisation will ultimately stifle development. In light of these realities, the *Vision* for the land sector is to create:

“A Prosperous, Equitable and Sustainable Land Sector for Vanuatu”

This vision highlights the strong link between land and economic and social development. The GoV vision of *“An Educated, Healthy and Wealthy Vanuatu”* implies a productive land sector that will contribute to prosperity, increased welfare standards and quality of life. The management of land resources in an equitable and sustainable way will be crucial to ensure economic (e.g. productive sector growth), social (e.g. better access to basic services), and environmental (e.g. ecosystem preservation) objectives are achieved.

The LSF has been designed to capture the key land sector issues facing Vanuatu today. The framework draws upon the initiatives from the current land sector agenda (*see Section 1.1*) and other global trends in land sector development which are relevant to the Vanuatu context. The vision encapsulates a long-term goal for which strategies and activities can be formulated. The framework serves to guide decision makers and stakeholders in determining the best course of action to achieve the vision.

To achieve this vision, five strategic objectives (or themes) have been identified which, collectively, constitute a *Mission* for the land sector which is:

“To provide an enabling environment for multi-stakeholder participation in the effective use, management and stewardship of Vanuatu’s land resources.”

The LSF themes directly align with several of the GoV development priorities which focus on equitable growth, primary sector development, good governance, public sector reform, provision of

better basic services, private sector development and human resources development. The themes capture the thrust of these priorities and provide sufficient flexibility for their application to the land sector.

3.2 Themes and Strategies

The five themes proposed are based upon an assessment of the key land sector issues outlined in *Section 2* and the outcomes from consultations which formed part of a recent design process for a five year Land Program in Vanuatu. The framework also incorporates some features of land sector development in a global context which are relevant to Vanuatu.

The themes are instrumental in realising the vision for the land sector. Each one defines a key *outcome* for which a series of strategies and activities are formulated. It is intended that the LSF will form the basis for a more widespread consultative process with key land sector stakeholders in Vanuatu before it is finalised and submitted to GoV for approval.

THEME 1

“Enhancing the governance of land”

Previous efforts to provide land sector support in developing countries have generally focused on strengthening the national land agency to improve the institutional, legal, technical, management and tenure frameworks. However, such an approach has not always delivered the expected outcomes. In Melanesian contexts this is partly because the ultimate beneficiaries are the customary land owners and users who themselves are an integral part of a land governance process.

This first theme acknowledges that communities, civil society and the private sector play an important role in enhancing land governance and must be empowered to assume their traditional responsibilities and actively participate in the process. The rigour and transparency demanded by the governance processes will require that multi-stakeholder responsibilities be defined, overseen and audited. Mechanisms that govern the administration and management of land must also be developed and enforced in order to remove legal anomalies, improve transparency, remove conflicts of interest, reduce disputes and ensure equitable outcomes for all parties.

Two key strategies have been identified for this theme. The first strategy is to ***ensure accountable, transparent and fair dealings in land***. This will involve:

- carrying out reviews to improve land legislation, regulations and enforcement criteria;
- incorporating good governance principles in land tenure and administration processes;
- promoting a blend of formal and traditional (customary) systems for land governance; and
- increasing awareness and education on professional conduct and ethics.

The second strategy is to ***encourage sector-wide oversight of the land governance system***. This will be achieved by:

- promoting a participatory approach to land governance involving all relevant stakeholders;
- establishing the necessary structures and advisory bodies for the governance system;
- ensuring consistency between legislation and constitutional decrees on land status and tenure systems; and
- aligning land sector activities to the Government reform and priority action agenda.

Indicative activities to support the implementation of the two strategies under this theme are outlined in *Section 4*. They will require significant cooperation and harmonisation between stakeholders, especially given the limited capacity of the Government, private sector and civil society in Vanuatu.

THEME 2

“Engaging customary groups”

In Vanuatu, land provides a fundamental basis for economic growth, social development and stability. Members of customary groups are therefore an integral part of the land sector, but they have been marginalised from decision-making and negotiation processes concerning their land. The 2006 NLS emphasised the need for customary groups to be aware of the traditional (*kastom*) economy, customary and formal land laws, fair dealings in land and their rights and interests to land, including tenure security and land usage for both individuals and groups.

This second theme recognises the importance of actively engaging and working together with customary groups as a part of the land sector initiatives. It acknowledges that developments in the land tenure system must take place in close consultation with customary groups and in harmony with customary tenure systems. The LSF has identified initiatives that will link customary groups to national interests, and align with land policy development areas that have been included in the post 2006 NLS agenda. They include:

- the recording and potential registration of customary land;
- establishing governance mechanisms for land dealings and fostering land markets;
- formal recognition of customary groups;
- providing customary landholders with access to advisory support services; and
- strengthening the mechanisms for dispute resolution.

Two key strategies have been identified for this theme. The first strategy is to ***build civil society capacity to contribute to land sector development***. This strategy will involve:

- strengthening civil society advocacy for the protection of customary land rights and
- encouraging civil society participation in land sector planning and development.

The second strategy is to ***increase support for community awareness and engagement***. This strategy will be achieved by:

- supporting customary principles and practices;
- enhancing community awareness of land rights;
- improving community decision-making on land matters;
- increasing customary landholders’ understanding of formal land matters; and
- providing them with greater access to land information.

Indicative activities to support the implementation of the two strategies under this theme are outlined in *Section 4*. This will involve a concerted and sustained effort to

- strengthen community relationships with Government and civil society;
- establish land sector management and advisory structures at sub-national levels;
- create an extensive knowledge base on *kastom* policies and practices;
- build the capacity within traditional communities to negotiate and make decisions on land matters;
- conduct comprehensive community awareness programs on land laws and rights; and
- map community boundaries and cultural sites.

THEME 3

“Improving the delivery of land services”

The effective and sustainable use and management of land depend on efficient, coordinated and streamlined land service delivery; proper utilisation of land sector resources; a strong customer service culture and performance ethic within delivery agencies; and reliable information on land that is accessible to a wide range of land users in forms that are appropriate and relevant.

In Vanuatu, there is a pressing need to improve the land lease registration system, land and mapping information services, the processes for land use planning and development and the management of Government and public land. The systems and procedures which support these basic services must be both stable and clear to all concerned. The responsibility for some of these functions also needs to be clarified and mandated. This also needs to be supported by legislative, regulatory and administrative frameworks that are transparent, diligent and enforceable.

This third theme recognises that improved land service delivery is fundamental to stability and social harmony within communities. However, it also acknowledges that Government systems are severely stretched. One of the ways to increase effectiveness is for the Government to develop collaborative partnerships with civil society and the private sector to provide these services. The LSF has identified that a key initiative for service provision will be the creation of a coherent and comprehensive Land Information System. This Land Information System should be relevant and readily accessible to the majority of the population.

Two key strategies have been identified to address the issues. The first strategy is to ***strengthen relevant agencies to use resources properly***. This will require:

- strengthening core procedures and operational practices with the land administration system;
- introducing appropriate technologies and information systems to streamline service delivery;
- assessing the effectiveness of institutional linkages and roles to meet land service priorities; and
- introducing a results-based system for measuring performance at sector and agency/stakeholder levels.

The second strategy is to ***improve coordination within the land sector and its delivery capacity***. This will be achieved by:

- fostering better cooperation between key land sector stakeholders;
- adopting a sector-wide approach to resource utilisation and mobilisation;
- supporting the involvement of the private sector and civil society to provide specific land services; and
- strengthening land service capacity at both national and sub-national levels.

Indicative activities to support the implementation of the two strategies under this theme are outlined in *Section 4*. They will require:

- a commitment to continuous improvement;
- the introduction of accountability measures, codes of conduct and standards for land service delivery;
- capacity building for professionals and practitioners in land-related disciplines;
- improved staff performance;
- a customer-focus ethos and, in the longer-term;

- infrastructure and civil works to improve facilities for land service delivery.

THEME 4

“Creating a productive and sustainable sector”

In the early 2000s Vanuatu experienced negative growth rates and was not reaching its full economic potential. However, since then the economy has recovered and is now experiencing sustained GDP growth, averaging 5.6 per cent since 2003 and expecting to remain above 5 per cent in 2009. This growth has been attributed to increasing output in the services and industrial sectors, largely driven by tourism and investment in land development and construction, with services contributing 72 per cent of GDP.

Tourism contributes to the service sector through flow-on effects in transport, communications, wholesale and retail trade, banking and insurance, real estate development and hotel, resort and accommodation services. In particular, the boom in real estate development since mid-2004 and the subsequent land speculation has become a political issue driven by pressure and the concerns expressed by customary landholders who have been disenfranchised from their land.

Agriculture also plays a role, with forestry and fisheries accounting for 18 per cent of GDP. While a large proportion of the total land area is considered unsuitable for large-scale agriculture, only one-third of the total cultivable land is presently farmed. Vanuatu is rich in land resources and so the potential exists to expand the productive base and increase the productivity of land already under cultivation to meet the increasing demands for agricultural produce from the urban population and the tourism sector.

This fourth theme recognises that a productive and sustainable land sector is vital to economic and social development within Vanuatu. Moreover, it acknowledges that sustainability concerns should not be disregarded in favour of short-term productivity gains and that an appropriate balance must be reached if a long-lasting improvement in the quality of life and wealth of ni-Vanuatu people is to be achieved.

Three key strategies have been identified to address the issues. The first strategy will ***strengthen the management of land***. This will require:

- strengthening the systems for and approaches to land use planning;
- adopting an integrated approach to physical planning;
- strengthening the management of government/public lands; and, if possible,
- introducing redistribution schemes designed to minimise urban pressures.

The second strategy will ***foster land market development***. This will include:

- the introduction of mechanisms to improve the generation of revenue from land;
- ensure more equitable sharing of the benefits from land transactions;
- facilitate better access to land markets and credit finance; and
- stimulate land development through wealth creation.

The third strategy is to ***support sustainable development practices***. This will be achieved through:

- the promotion of sustainable land management practices to facilitate growth in allied productive sectors (e.g. agriculture); and
- by supporting the stewardship and protection of natural resources and the environment.

Indicative activities to support the implementation of the three strategies under this theme are outlined in *Section 4*. They will include initiatives to:

- strengthen physical planning laws and development controls;
- build capacity to improve the management of government/ public land;
- improve land lease arrangements;
- establish entities that facilitate greater access to credit finance for land investment;
- strengthen the system to monitor and assess land and marine quality; and
- undertake environmental and social impact assessments prior to making decisions on land.

THEME 5

“Ensuring access and tenure security for all groups”

Land tenure security is a safeguard which protects and conveys to landholders and users a sense of certainty and stewardship towards their land. This in turn enhances productivity and ensures sustainability. Policies concerned with raising productivity and economic efficiency through greater security of tenure and access to land resources are important, but they must also address the inequalities and injustices which exist in the land sector. As such, access to dispute resolution systems, the protection of vulnerable groups, and studies on the impacts of land reform are important outcomes under this theme.

This theme recognises that to increase people’s security and access to productive assets, legislative review is required, laws and regulations must be strengthened and enforced and the institutional framework for implementation may need to be reassessed. The recording and registration of customary land alone will not suffice. Awareness programs must highlight the need to protect rights and be clear on the associated obligations. The LSF also acknowledges that special attention must be given to poor, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Improving the accessibility and efficiency of dispute resolution mechanisms for these groups is important. Mechanisms that can improve security through tenure conversion and service provision rather than outright land purchases by Government will also be explored.

Three key strategies have been identified to address the issues. The first strategy is to ***facilitate better access to land***. This strategy will require an appropriate balance to be found between respect for the rights of communities to their land and the economic imperative to access land for commercial ventures. Of equal importance is the need to protect community and broader public access to common property resources such as coastlines, beaches, national parks and waterways.

The second strategy is to ***strengthen local-based dispute resolution***. Here the focus is:

- to support customary practices that preserve peace and social harmony in communities;
- to improve access to justice for people engaged in land disputes and are seeking compensation; and
- to strengthen, increase capacity and introduce mechanisms that will resolve land disputes quickly and fairly.

The third strategy is to ***strengthen land tenure security***. This strategy will include all landholders and users, including women, children and vulnerable communities. This will involve a review of land tenure laws to assess their complexity and simplify where appropriate, while ensuring that adequate tenure security safeguards are either maintained or added.

Indicative activities to support the implementation of the three strategies under this theme are outlined in *Section 4*. The activities focus on solutions which protect rights and access to customary land, common property resources, cultural and heritage sites and leased areas. Mechanisms for improving dispute resolution processes will look at the effectiveness of sub-national networks and structures, the adoption of community-based approaches, and support to the justice system to expedite court decisions on land compensation claims.

Both caution and sensitivity will be applied to solutions which address the rights of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups. Studies will be undertaken to understand and identify the issues and their implications before proposals are formulated to stabilise, regulate and secure the tenure rights for these groups. Benchmark and periodic studies on the social, gender and youth impacts of land reform will also be undertaken to inform land policy dialogue and development.

3.3 Challenges, Risks and Opportunities

The LSF advocates a sector-wide approach to address the key issues facing the land sector in Vanuatu. During LSF implementation, there are likely to be significant challenges to overcome but, conversely, there are also areas where there is scope for improvement. Some of the key challenges, obstacles and risks for LSF implementation will be:

- **Capacity of Government agencies and shared roles:** National Government plays a central role in coordinating and guiding land sector activities, but capacity to provide effective services across the country is limited. Certain service roles may be:
 - devolved to sub-national levels;
 - provided by the private sector (e.g. valuation, surveying, etc); or
 - delivered by civil society (e.g. community facilitation and negotiation support).
 This will only be possible if the GoV acknowledges the need, establishes effective processes and provides resources to legitimise and oversee diverse service delivery models.
- **Effective capacity building:** Building capacity will be essential to successful LSF implementation. Moreover, the wide variety of stakeholders involved creates other challenges - each with varying needs, view points and interests. It will be vital for LSF implementers to consider all possible approaches to capacity building at each level, developing and trialling new approaches if appropriate.
- **Land sector harmonisation:** Many donors will be interested in providing support to the land sector in Vanuatu. However, donors may not align their activities with the LSF, instead pursuing their own interests outside of its guidelines. This raises the risk that LSF activities may not be coordinated and that the limited resources available will be captured by sideline issues that may not contribute towards long-term improvement in the sector. The LSF recognises the need to harmonise donor inputs, as well as effectively managing stakeholder absorptive capacity. It also provides guidance on the entry points (see *Appendix 2*) and ensures that mechanisms are in place to liaise with Government, other stakeholders and other donors (see *Appendix 4*).
- **Private sector engagement:** The LSF advocates that the private sector should play a role in land service delivery. It will therefore be important to build the capacity of the private sector to ensure the availability and quality of services are not jeopardised. A regulatory framework and code of conduct for the private sector must also be established to ensure that acceptable technical and professional standards in land service delivery are achieved. It will also be essential to ensure that vulnerable groups are able to access and afford the services provided by the private sector.

- **Working with customary land:** Customary land issues are complex and can only be successfully addressed by ni-Vanuatu stakeholders themselves. The LSF recognises the sensitivity of customary land issues and acknowledges that without this mandate from customary landholders and the GoV, some of the activities would simply not be undertaken.
- **Delays in legislative approvals:** The track record for legislative change in Vanuatu shows that long timeframes for approval and gazettal of new legislation and amendments are common. Amendments to legislation that are fundamental to land reform may take considerable time, with the result that some LSF activities may not be as effective. Where possible, changes to facilitate reform should therefore be made through existing regulations. The land sector must be proactive and continue to lobby Parliament for their approval.
- **Inertia for change and political will:** There are some land sector issues in Vanuatu that are currently the topic of hot debate. It is often difficult to bring about substantive change in established norms and behaviours - particularly if they involve elements of power, authority, conflict of interest and exploitation. The situation is very challenging and political commitment will be required to effect change.

Notwithstanding the above challenges and risks, the land sector can capitalise on and explore a number of opportunities. These include:

- The CRP and PAA documents and the NLS resolutions have provided valuable guidance for LSF formulation and have ensured that it is aligned with GoV development goals.
- The LSF adopts a sector-wide approach and provides scope for developing multi-stakeholder partnerships. This will enable comprehensive data collection and close monitoring of performance to gauge if progress is being made towards achieving the LSF's objectives for the land sector.
- The proposed devolution of a land advisory and facilitation service to sub-national levels creates real opportunities to target the actual needs of local communities.
- Opportunities exist for increasing land sector revenue during the LSF timeframe, and studies will be undertaken to look at the potential for revenue generation. Improved revenue collection and benefit sharing mechanisms are also planned under the LSF.
- The LSF will foster both private sector and civil society participation in land sector activities. If capacity in the private sector can be developed and an adequate regulatory framework established, then the private sector can provide some of the LSF services and relieve the Government of some of its responsibilities. Civil society can also play a major role in awareness programs and greatly increase accountability and transparency in the land sector.

4. LSF Implementation

4.1 Brief Overview

It is emphasised that the LSF is not a blueprint for the land sector for the next ten years. Rather, it should be used as a roadmap for enhancing land sector development in a participatory manner using the collective strengths and capacities of all the stakeholders involved. Guiding the process is the vision, mission and five themes outlined in *Section 3*. These themes form the framework in which the policy and activity agenda has been set (see *Appendix 1*).

The LSF is based upon a fundamental premise that land is not the sole responsibility of Government. It accepts that a change in thinking is required to shift the emphasis away from a Government responsibility to a sector-wide participatory approach involving multi-stakeholders. This will help to mitigate the burden of limited capacity in the land sector, facilitate an improved land service delivery to all communities and ensure that broad stakeholder engagement in the land sector is maintained. Preliminary stakeholder mapping has been undertaken for the LSF and is summarised in *Appendix 3*.

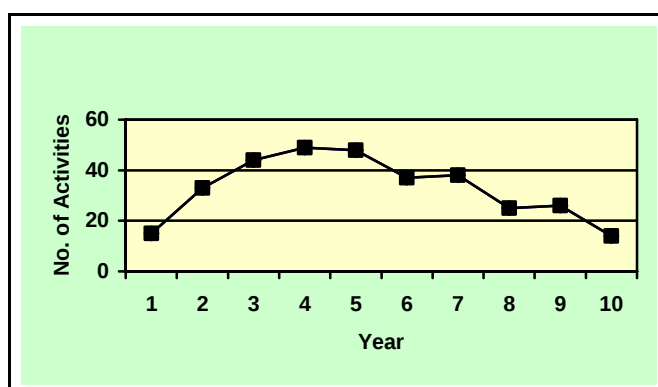
4.2 Implementation Approach

The LSF does not specify implementation phases at this stage, nor is it aligned with GoV budgetary cycles and planning horizons. Instead, it outlines a number of strategies which underpin the five themes. These strategies are supported by the policy and activity agenda which will inform the corporate and annual plans for Government agencies and other stakeholder organisations over the ten year timeframe.

New land sector initiatives and approaches will be designed, piloted and evaluated. Outcomes from these applications will guide the direction and scope of subsequent activities and also inform the development of future land policy and its implementation. A schedule for LSF implementation has been prepared to provide a snapshot of the phasing of the activities (see *Appendix 2*).

The graph below is derived from the preliminary schedule outlined in *Appendix 2* and shows the total number of LSF activities that would be conducted in any given year as currently proposed. However, the rate of implementation will need to be assessed on a year-by-year basis and take into account the absorptive capacity in the land sector at the time.

Figure 1: Land Sector Activity Distribution



During the first five years (2009-2013), the activities will focus on areas which are considered by the majority of stakeholders to be a priority and essential to the future development of the land sector. For the second period (2014-2018), the activities are designed to build on the achievements from the first five years and broaden the scope of implementation so that longer-term challenges for the land sector (e.g. urban drift, informal settlements and hazard management) are addressed.

The Table below summarises the key activities for each theme for each of the five-year periods. As a next step in LSF development, it will be necessary to set out in more detail the policy and activity agenda and explain their contribution to the achievement of LSF objectives, and the mechanisms and processes proposed for implementing them.

Table 1: LSF Implementation – Key Activities

Key Activities for LSF Implementation		
Theme	2009-2013	2014-2018
1. Enhancing the governance of land	- Review and strengthen legislation and legal support systems - Review and formulate land and environmental policy - Commence institutional harmonisation process for land sector coordination - Establish land governance system, advisory structures, rules of engagement and performance frameworks	- Examine feasibility of drafting a national land law - Review and mainstream development of land use policy and plans - Formulate national urban planning policy and guidelines
2. Engaging customary groups	- Construct knowledge base and document custom rules and practices - Build capacity for decision-making and negotiation - Implement community awareness programs on land issues and rights - Map community boundaries and cultural sites - Strengthen community structures and relationships with key stakeholders	- Continue community awareness programs in regional and local settings - Develop systems for recording and registering customary land - Develop mechanisms for collective (or group) ownership of customary land - Establish regional and local land management and advisory structures - Facilitate community participation in land sector development in regional and local settings
3. Improving the delivery of land services	- Undertake continuous process and systems improvement - Embed operational governance principles into processes and procedures - Build private sector and civil society capacity to deliver land services - Introduce a customer-focused service culture - Establish service performance standards and formulate codes of conduct - Establish land information and records management system	- Expand land service delivery to regional and local settings - Strengthen private sector and civil society organisations to perform land services - Conduct regular customer satisfaction surveys - Develop geographic information system for development applications - Design and construct MoL facilities
4. Creating a productive and sustainable sector	- Improve legislation, enforcement, compliance and regulation measures for land dealings - Increase credit access to and revenue generation from land - Strengthen physical planning laws and development controls - Improve land planning, development and management of public and government lands - Introduce land and environment impact, stewardship, policy and quality assurance initiatives	- Continue to improve land development and management of public and government lands - Prepare statutory urban, rural and coastal zone management plans - Continue land and environment impact, stewardship, policy and quality assurance initiatives - Strengthen systems for monitoring land degradation, pollution and hazard management - Introduce measures to minimise marine and land degradation and pollution
5. Ensuring access and tenure security for all groups	- Introduce mechanisms to protect ownership of customary land and access to 'common' property resources - Strengthen mechanisms to resolve land disputes and reduce compensation claims	- Introduce mechanisms to protect heritage and sacred cultural sites - Continue initiatives to protect the rights of vulnerable groups - Secure land rights of informal settlers

	• Strengthen justice system to facilitate speedy resolution of land compensation claims • Commence initiatives to protect the rights of vulnerable groups • Undertake studies on informal settlements and urbanisation	through stabilisation and regulatory measures.
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5. Governance Arrangements

5.1 Institutional Framework

A thorough analysis will be required before the framework for LSF implementation is finalised. In Vanuatu, there are effectively two administrative structures in place: that is, the *formal government structure* that operates at national, provincial and municipal levels and the *traditional customary structure* which operates at national, island, area and village level.

Given the advocacy of a sector-wide approach and the capacity limitations within all organisations and at all levels of operation, this strongly suggests that a ‘hybrid’ structure should be considered for LSF implementation. The LSF does not propose a solution at this stage but it does acknowledge that the issue of institutional harmonisation will need to be addressed during the early years of implementation.

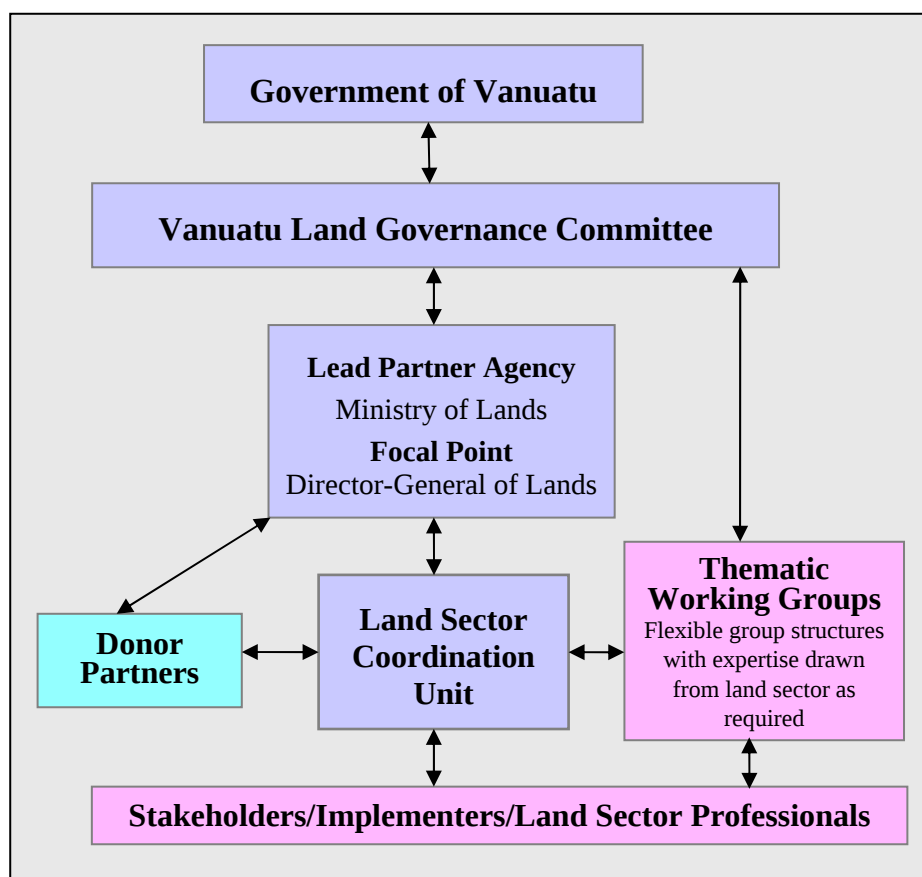
Given the governance and management structure proposed for the LSF, it will be important to clarify and define the key roles and responsibilities for undertaking the activities and the key linkages between the various organisations and stakeholder groups that will be involved at each level of operation.

5.2 Land Sector Oversight

The impetus for undertaking the challenging task of implementing the LSF requires vision, leadership and sustained commitment. The Ministry of Lands, Minerals, Energy, Environment and Rural Water Supply (MoL), through its Director General, has responded to the need for a land sector plan and has initiated the development of the LSF as the first stage in the process. As such, it is logical that MoL take carriage of LSF procurement, administration and implementation; including oversight for overall policy development, planning and resource allocation.

A multi-stakeholder **Vanuatu Land Governance Committee** (VLGC) will be established at national level to develop and maintain a strong strategic focus on, and oversight of, the LSF themes.⁵ The VLGC will supercede the present National Land Steering Committee (NLSC) and will have overall responsibility for planning and reviewing the LSF as land sector policy and implementation evolves. The governance arrangement for the LSF is presented in Figure 2 below.

⁵ The VLGC will also be the vehicle through which the land sector can liaise with other policy and information forums and periodically report to these forums on land sector policy and LSF implementation.

Figure 2: Governance Arrangement for Land Sector Framework

The VLGC will include representatives from key Government agencies, civil society groups, private sector and development partners. A proposed membership list is outlined as part of the governance arrangements (see *Appendix 4*). As the lead agency, MoL will chair quarterly management meetings of the VLGC. These meetings will monitor progress on activities (including reviews of implementing agencies and partner reports) and assess new activities to ensure they reflect evolving land sector policy.

The Director-General (DG) of Lands will be the **Focal Point** for the LSF and will be supported by a **Land Sector Coordination Unit** (LSCU). The initial entry point for activity proposals within the LSF will be through the Focal Point and LSCU. This will involve the preparation of proposals and their endorsement by the LSCU and Focal Point before submission to the VLGC. Following VLGC approval, the proposal will then be submitted through the Development Committee of Officials (DCO) and referred to the Department of Sector Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) for final GoV approval. Proposals which impact on the recurrent budget will require approval by the Ministerial Budget Committee (MBC).

Where external assistance is required, DSPPAC will submit the proposal to donors. Donors will therefore need to identify and organise a representative to liaise with the VLGC, the GoV and the LSCU on matters relating to the land sector as a whole. Bilateral activities relevant to land will continue to be directly negotiated; however, they must be endorsed by the VLGC.

In the future, LSF implementation at the sub-national levels will also need to be harmonised. The governance structure for these arrangements will be more challenging and must take into account the institutional representation and resource capacity limitations at these levels.

5.3 Coordination Mechanisms

In order to achieve the strategic objectives of the LSF it will be essential to develop and strengthen the capacity for coordination and communication within the land sector in Vanuatu. Mechanisms will be required to ensure that horizontal coordination occurs between land sector institutions and that communication flows freely between the vertical administrative levels of the formal government and traditional customary systems.

At the national level, the coordination point will be the LSCU (see *Appendix 4*) which will supersede the existing NLSC Secretariat. The LSCU will be responsible for the day-to-day administration and implementation of the LSF, including monitoring of activities for reporting to the VLGC.⁶ It is proposed that the LSCU be a formal unit within the MoL structure and report to the DG for Lands.

The LSCU, while located within the MoL, should also include a representative from the key stakeholder partners. As some land sector activities may operate outside of Government, a participatory approach will be required to ensure that good coordination, communication and knowledge of relevant land sector activities occurs. A multi-partner coordination unit will help to minimise the risk of a single entity influencing decisions.⁷ This type of arrangement will require an MoU or similar formal arrangement between the key partners based upon the agreed roles and responsibilities of the stakeholders.

LSF implementation at sub-national levels will also need coordination. The coordination focal points at these levels must be carefully considered and are likely to be a scaled down version of the national structure. Nevertheless, a phased approach in the regions will be necessary – taking into account institutional representation, resource capacity limitations and the extent of land sector activity. It will be important to ensure that collaboration and horizontal coordination of land sector planning and implementation is a top priority.

5.4 Thematic Working Groups

Overall responsibility for LSF implementation will rest with the VLGC. As implementation progresses, there will be many occasions where specific land sector studies will be undertaken and new techniques and processes developed and tested. It is envisaged that these pilot studies and applications will be coordinated by the LSCU and supported by a number of **Thematic Working Groups** (TWGs).

The roles and responsibilities of the TWGs outlined in *Appendix 4* may align with the five themes for the LSF as described in *Section 3.2* (e.g. governance, customary groups, service delivery) or be formulated to address specific land sector studies (e.g. land policy development, legislative review, informal settlements, urbanisation). As such, the TWGs will be ad hoc and formed by the VLGC when specific needs arise, using relevant specialist expertise. It is a flexible arrangement designed to allow for immediate response to land sector issues and will enable access to a diverse pool of stakeholder expertise.

⁶ The LSCU may comprise, or have access to professionals with land sector experience and perform a range of advisory, administrative, communication/information, research and monitoring and evaluation functions to facilitate and promote LSF implementation.

⁷ Multi-stakeholder partners may nominate a representative to the LSCU for a set period and then have a renewal or replacement mechanism in place when the period expires. This representation may be aligned with the priorities of LSF implementation at the time.

6. Monitoring and Evaluation

6.1 Principles

An underlying principle of LSF implementation is that it should be flexible and responsive to current needs in Vanuatu. It will be structured around a multi-stakeholder management process facilitated by the VLGC. This approach is likely to challenge conventional Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for land sector programs and it is envisaged that new and emerging methodologies will need to be integrated with more traditional approaches.

M&E will be an integral part of LSF implementation as it provides vital information on land sector performance and contributes to impact evaluations of LSF outcomes. Because the LSF will involve a range of stakeholders and is expected to have broad impact in relation to policy goals, monitoring will need to be multi-level and multi-disciplinary and all stakeholders will have roles to play.

Some of the principles that should be applied during the formulation and refinement of the M&E system are:

- Processes must not impose huge demands in terms of time and methodology on key stakeholders while, at the same time, they must reflect adequate engagement;
- Analysis and reporting must blend both qualitative and quantitative data collection methodologies within a structured framework;
- M&E for the LSF must support broader GoV data collection and management requirements and ensure the information is used systematically and consistently; and
- Data must be disaggregated by gender as well as by province / island.

Responsibility for overseeing the development and implementation of the M&E system will lie with the MoL and the administration and coordination of M&E activities will be undertaken by the LSCU. The LSCU will work closely with the MoL and other key stakeholders to ensure the timeliness, relevance and quality of the M&E information.

6.2 Performance Measures

A preliminary set of indicative performance measures, including both quantitative and qualitative data and information, have been identified for the LSF and are listed in *Appendix 1*. A systematic approach for integrating these data will be required, together with an M&E system that provides the tools and a structured process for analysing and interpreting the evidence and reaching conclusions about performance.

At this stage, indicative performance measures have only been developed for the LSF policy and activity agenda. Measures for the LSF vision, mission and themes which link performance to broader national outcomes, together with benchmarks and agreed targets will need to be developed. The M&E system must also be consistent with the GoV's PAA and incorporate processes to regularly review LSF outcome statements to ensure they are clear, measurable and achievable within the established timelines.

The approach to M&E must be participatory and should aim to achieve consensus amongst all stakeholders on progress towards achieving the LSF outcomes, with an emphasis on identifying the

most significant changes which have occurred. The participatory methodology will incorporate an interview process that is tailored to different stakeholder audiences (e.g. customary leaders, land owners and users, and community members), captures the storytelling culture in Vanuatu (e.g. involves the concept of *storian*) and constitutes an integral part of the process for capacity building.

6.3 Reporting and Evaluation Process

It is envisaged that a combination of annual reviews and results-based monitoring will be used to obtain information on performance that will guide LSF decision-making. Reporting on LSF progress and achievements will be aligned with the GoV's planning timelines and budget cycles. Annual reviews will be carried out under the auspices of the VLGC and will involve a range of key stakeholders to assess the progress of LSF implementation against agreed, rather than pre-determined, benchmarks and targets.⁸

Extensive LSF evaluations will be conducted every five years with the possibility of additional evaluations during these periods, if deemed necessary. These evaluations will be more comprehensive than annual reviews and will provide more scope for revisions to the strategies and objectives of the LSF. The evaluation exercises will involve a range of key stakeholders, and the GoV may also engage external evaluators from a range of disciplines to assist in the assessment of LSF impact and the identification of future proposals.

The first evaluation should be undertaken in Year 4 or 5 of LSF implementation and will be critical to the assessment of new techniques and approaches that have been introduced to the Vanuatu land sector.⁹ The outcomes will inform the recommendations on appropriate strategic and financial revisions to the LSF so that the framework reflects the planned scale and shape of implementation for the second five year period.

6.4 Data and Information Collection

The collection tools for LSF monitoring and evaluation are likely to vary across activities and key stakeholder groups. Consequently it may not be appropriate to standardise the processes. Likewise, the types of data and information to be collected and the relevant sources will also vary according to the indicators for success, which still require further definition.

The performance measures listed in *Appendix 1* and the preliminary stakeholder mapping undertaken in *Appendix 3* provide the starting point for defining the data collection requirements and the key stakeholders involved. This mapping will also help to define the methods and processes (e.g. individual interviews, group discussions, surveys, census, questionnaires, audience research, manual collation, electronic collection, documentary evidence) to be adopted for data and information collection.

The methods for collecting the M&E information will essentially fall into three main categories: (1) routine data collection and reporting, (2) national data collection, and (3) gathering sector-specific data. Routine data collection and reporting will focus on providing M&E information which is activity-specific. It will require the development of work plans and agreed targets against which

⁸ Annual reviews may include: (1) assessing progress against benchmarks and targets and performance against activities, themes and vision for the land sector, (2) identifying constraints to progress, (3) reviewing expenditure and budget outlines for the following year, identifying funding gaps if any, and propose measures to meet any anticipated shortfall, (4) sharing successful experiences, and (5) reaching agreement on work plans and outputs for the following year.

⁹ Evaluations may include: (1) assessing the technical, economic, social and environmental impacts of the LSF, (2) reviewing progress and identifying areas of success and non-success, (3) reviewing the efficiency, efficacy, effectiveness, relevancy and sustainability of LSF implementation, (4) prioritising strategies and activities for future implementation, (5) reviews of expenditures and costs, and (6) identifying constraints to the achievement of outcomes.

stakeholder reporting is undertaken in a format consistent with GoV reporting requirements. Any data and information that has to be gathered at sub-national level will also be aggregated into the national database.

National data collection exercises like census, household, crop and integrity surveys provide an avenue for assessing the contribution of land sector initiatives to national development goals. However, land sector programs in general have tended to develop M&E frameworks and systems which measure performance at activity level rather than the 'higher level' outcomes which are linked to these goals. For the LSF, it would be possible to design collection tools that will measure LSF performance at the vision, mission and theme levels.

Some elements of the LSF will require analysis on a regular basis using data which will not be available through either routine reporting or national data collection. These may include: benchmark and periodic studies on pilot approaches, service delivery surveys, customer satisfaction surveys, stakeholder surveys, peace and conflict studies, systems and operational performance surveys, and impact studies on gender, youth and vulnerable groups. Provision has been made in the LSF to conduct such studies, and dedicated resources will be required.

7. Funding and Resources

7.1 Overview

Funding for a land sector-wide initiative should be underpinned by an expenditure program which is under GoV leadership. Moreover, the approach to LSF planning, budgeting and implementation presents both challenges and opportunities. These include the potential to introduce new approaches that will increase the impact of land sector initiatives on GoV development policy goals, such as economic growth and good governance.

The sector-wide approach intrinsically relies upon the development of land sector investment scenarios which are based on clear strategies and policy framework, uphold the principles of good governance, and are developed through extensive consultation and participation with the multi-stakeholder partners.

7.2 Potential Funding Sources

LSF funding support can be secured from a range of sources including donor agencies, national, provincial and municipal governments, the private sector, and - potentially - self-generating revenue. One scenario would be for individual donors to support discrete activities in the LSF. Another possible scenario in the longer term would be a 'pooled' donor funding mechanism that could allow more flexibility and responsiveness to local challenges and needs as they arise.

Several donor initiatives have already commenced in the Vanuatu land sector. For example, UNDP, AusAID, NZAID and World Bank are undertaking, or are soon to initiate, major activities in line with the LSF themes. The formulation of the LSF at this time has benefited greatly from the timely harmonisation of the design processes involved in these initiatives. The current donor engagement also provides an opportunity to build confidence in, and prove the strength of, a sector-wide approach to land before new approaches for funding and resource allocation are considered for the longer term. Donors will need to address ways in which their support to the land sector is organised and coordinated. This may necessitate the formulation of rules of engagement and memoranda of agreement for cooperation similar to that developed for other sectors in Vanuatu.

The suitability of alternative funding mechanisms and sources can only be explored and developed once the schedule for LSF implementation has been refined and specific priorities confirmed. As the LSF evolves, it is possible that more activities will be undertaken in other related Government agencies and organisations. Appropriate mechanisms for allocating funds to these different stakeholder organisations must also be developed. It is envisaged that donors will continue to provide significant support during the lifetime of the LSF, and funding levels may even reduce as activities become mainstreamed into GoV recurrent budgets.

7.3 Estimating Finances and Resources

In the short term, it will be relatively easy to integrate the financial and resource allocations for the donor programs into a consolidated resource envelope for LSF implementation. This will take into account the manpower resources available and should be aligned to and integrated with the GoV planning and budget cycle.

The longer term options for donor investment in land sector development are more difficult to predict and estimate. In this case, attention should not simply focus on the estimates but also on the future pattern of resource allocation across the strategic objectives (themes) and key activities of the LSF, as reflected by sector priorities. This will require the development of an investment strategy which outlines different scenarios for the rate at which activities in the land sector will either expand or contract.

8. Points for Consideration

This report has presented the rationale, justification and the proposed design of a Land Sector Framework for Vanuatu. It summarises the current status of progress on its development and provides a foundation for the next stage of planning prior to implementation. In its current form, the LSF outlines a vision and mission for the land sector and five enabling themes or strategic objectives to achieve the vision and mission. Each theme is underpinned by a set of strategies, a policy and action agenda and indicative performance measures for monitoring and evaluation.

A preliminary implementation schedule has been prepared, initial stakeholder mapping has been undertaken, governance arrangements have been proposed and key activity areas for each theme have been identified. LSF development is now at a stage where a consultative process with key stakeholders is required to obtain initial feedback on its strategic direction and thematic content. Once feedback on the LSF has been received and incorporated, steps should be taken to formulate the next series of actions which would include seeking the endorsement and approval of the LSF by the GoV.

This report has identified a number of activities for LSF development in the immediate term that would facilitate ongoing progress and ensure that momentum is maintained. These activities include:

- Undertake sector-wide consultations with stakeholders on the current status of the LSF and obtain feedback on the strategic direction and thematic content (*Section 1*)
- Outline a process to facilitate LSF land policy dialogue and formulation (*Sections 1 and 4.2*)
- Outline a process for institutional harmonisation in the land sector that is relevant to the Vanuatu context (*Sections 1 and 5.1*)

- Review GoV sector-based policy statements to ensure ongoing development of the LSF is consistent and well informed by these documents (*Section 1.1*)
- Refine stakeholder mapping and analysis for the LSF to ensure that stakeholders are correctly aligned with the LSF agenda and that lead stakeholders are identified for specific activities (*Appendix 3*)
- Refine LSF activity implementation schedule and align with GoV budgetary cycle and planning horizons (*Section 4.2*)
- Progress the development of a land sector implementation plan and resource allocations and link the policy and activity agenda with LSF objectives and outcomes and the GoV reporting requirements (*Sections 4.2 and 5.2*)
- Review the rate of implementation for LSF activities in light of donor activities and the absorptive capacity issues in the land sector (*Section 4.2*)
- Prepare an M&E system for the LSF (*Section 6.1*) and develop additional measures for the LSF vision, mission and themes which link performance to national development outcomes (*Section 6.2*) and the LSF indicators for success (*Section 6.4*)
- Formulate rules of engagement and memoranda of agreement for donor cooperation in the land sector, similar to those developed for other sectors (*Section 7.2*)
- Integrate the financial and resource allocations for current land sector donor programs and recurrent activities into a consolidated resource envelope for LSF implementation, taking into account the manpower resources available and alignment with the GoV planning and budget cycle (*Section 7.3*)
- Develop investment strategies which outline different scenarios for the rate at which activities in the land sector will either expand or contract over the ten year timeframe (*Section 7.3*).

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Appendix 1

Draft Land Sector Framework



VISION

THEMES

“A Prosperous, Equitable and Sustainable Land Sector for Vanuatu”

Enhancing the governance of land

Engaging customary groups

Improving the delivery of land services

Creating a productive and sustainable sector

Ensuring access and tenure security for all groups



REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

Priority Action Agenda 2006-2015

“An Educated, Healthy and Wealthy Vanuatu”

Strategic Priorities

- Private sector development and employment creation
- Macroeconomic stability and equitable growth
- Good governance and public sector reform
- Primary sector development
- Provision of better basic services, especially in rural areas
- Education and human resources development
- Economic infrastructure and support services

Current Action Items

- Growing the productive sector, especially agriculture and tourism
- Maintaining macroeconomic balance
- Raising public service performance
- Cutting costs associated with transport and utilities
- Improving access to basic services such as health and education



STRATEGIES

1. Ensure accountable, transparent and fair dealings in land

- Regularly review and improve land laws, regulations and enforcement criteria
- Incorporate principles of good governance in land tenure and administration
- Promote a mixture of formal and traditional systems for governance
- Increase awareness and education about ethics, leadership values and codes of conduct

2. Encourage sector-wide oversight of land governance system

- Promote a stakeholder - inclusive participatory approach to land governance
- Ensure consistency between legislation and constitutional decrees on land status and the land tenure system
- Align land sector initiatives with the government reform and priority action agenda

1. Build civil society capacity to contribute to sector development

- Strengthen civil society advocacy for the protection of customary land rights
- Encourage civil society participation in planning and land policy development

2. Increase support for community awareness and engagement

- Support customary principles and practices
- Enhance community awareness of land rights
- Improve community decision-making on land matters
- Improve understanding and access to land information for custom landholders

1. Strengthen agencies to use resources properly

- Strengthen land administration system and procedures and improve core operational practices
- Introduce appropriate application technologies to streamline service delivery
- Assess institutional roles and linkages and reorganise agencies to meet service priorities
- Monitor and report on performance at sector and agency levels

2. Improve coordination within land sector and delivery capacity

- Foster cooperation within government, civil society and with communities
- Adopt sector-wide approach to resource utilisation and mobilisation
- Engage the private sector to deliver selected land services
- Strengthen capacity at national, provincial and local municipal government levels

1. Strengthen land management

- Strengthen land use planning systems and approaches
- Adopt an integrated approach to physical planning
- Strengthen management of public/ government lands
- Introduce land acquisition schemes to minimise the pressures of urbanisation

2. Foster land market development

- Strengthen mechanisms for revenue generation and equitable sharing from land transactions
- Promote land market access, credit access and wealth creation measures to stimulate land development

3. Support sustainable development practices

- Promote sustainable land management practices to facilitate growth in allied productive sectors
- Support stewardship and protection of environment and natural resources

1. Facilitate better access to land

- Enhance community and public awareness of access rights to land
- Protect community access to common property resources
- Support access to land for commercial ventures

2. Strengthen local-based dispute resolution

- Support customary practices that preserve peace and social harmony in communities
- Improve access to justice for people with land compensation claims
- Increase capacity to resolve land disputes quickly and fairly

3. Strengthen land tenure security

- Simplify tenure laws
- Strengthen land tenure security for all owners, occupiers and users
- Protect land rights for women and children
- Protect land rights for vulnerable communities



Agency Corporate and Annual Plans
Performance Measures

“A Prosperous, Equitable and Sustainable Land Sector for Vanuatu”

Enhancing the governance of land

Engaging customary groups

Improving the delivery of land services

Creating a productive and sustainable sector

Ensuring access and tenure security for all groups

STRATEGIES

1. Land law reform

- Resolve ambiguities in legislation and constitution and assess scope for change
- Strengthen legislative support system to speed up reform processes
- Revise laws to remove uncertainties in land rights, access and use
- Implement proposed changes to improve foreshore, strata title, and subdivision legislation
- Investigate scope and feasibility of drafting a national land law

2. Land and environment policy development

- Evaluate and improve national, provincial and area land use policies
- Formulate new environmental policies and initiatives
- Formulate national urbanisation policy and planning guidelines
- Undertake broad sector-wide land policy studies to identify and fill policy gaps in critical areas
- Investigate the scope and feasibility of drafting a national land policy

1. Community awareness and engagement

- Build knowledge base on the dynamics of decision making in customary communities
- Build capacity within communities to negotiate and make decisions on customary land matters
- Document custom land policies, rules and practices, including measures for sustaining land and the environment
- Implement community awareness programs on land laws and rights

2. Community boundary mapping

- Evaluate past and existing pilot studies on mapping customary land
- Provide support to facilitate decisions on community boundaries and mapping
- Identify and map heritage, sacred cultural sites and “tabu” areas
- Investigate feasibility and scope of establishing a system to record and, potentially, register customary land
- Examine models and introduce legislation to recognise the collective ownership of customary land

1. Efficient and effective enabling services

- Undertake continuous process improvement to achieve efficient and effective land services
- Instil transparency and accountability into all administration and management processes
- Assess feasibility of expanding province-based land office network to provide decentralised land services to communities
- Build capacity in surveying, mapping, planning and valuation
- Strengthen private sector and civil society to perform some services

2. Service culture and performance

- Continue public service reform initiatives to improve performance and responsiveness of staff
- Formulate codes of conduct for all land professionals and practitioners
- Establish service standards
- Introduce a customer- focus ethos for the delivery of land services
- Undertake regular customer and community satisfaction surveys

1. Land market development

- Design a framework to enhance land sector productivity and increase economic returns
- Conduct benchmark studies on the impact of land reform on economic growth and development
- Improve legislation, enforcement, compliance and regulation measures for leasing arrangements
- Strengthen entities and consider legislation that can facilitate greater access to credit loans for investments in land
- Consider legislation to define land class as the basis for land valuation, rental and tax regimes

2. Physical planning and development

- Review and strengthen physical planning laws and development controls
- Prepare statutory urban, rural and coastal zone management plans
- Build capacity and improve planning and management of public and government lands

1. Clarify and strengthen land rights

- Establish framework to support and protect land rights
- Revise tenure law to ensure access to and ownership of customary land is protected
- Protect heritage and sacred cultural sites
- Strengthen and enforce laws and regulations to protect public access to ‘common’ property resources (oceans, rivers and lakes)
- Provide utilities and road access to leased areas

2. Land and resource dispute resolution

- Review customary land tribunals and assess feasibility of a provincial tribunal network
- Explore traditional community - based mechanisms for dispute resolution
- Strengthen the justice system to enable speedy resolution of land compensation claims

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STRATEGIES



3. Land governance system

- Adopt an institutional harmonisation process to implement the land sector framework
- Develop governance structures and rules of engagement for land sector
- Develop and implement framework of measures to improve the governance of land administration and tenure
- Strengthen composition and authority and powers of relevant land management and planning committees
- Design and implement a suite of pilot studies to test, evaluate and mainstream key land reform and governance initiatives

3. Strengthen community relations and structures

- Build and strengthen relationships between communities, civil society organisations and the Government
- Explore feasibility of establishing provincial and area council land sector management and advisory structures
- Adopt a participatory approach to facilitate and engage communities in land sector planning and development

3. Information technology and management

- Formulate policies and protocols for the distribution and management of land and spatial information
- Establish an accessible and reliable land information and records management system
- Build user-friendly spatial information system to support mapping and development applications

4. Infrastructure and civil works

- Audit existing Ministry of Lands space utilisation
- Upgrade/ expand Ministry of Lands building space to improve service delivery and performance
- Evaluate feasibility of constructing new facility for Ministry of Lands

3. Sustainable land and environmental management

- Embed land and environmental management policies, principles and quality assurance practices into national, provincial and area council development plans
- Develop a framework outlining responsibilities for land stewardship
- Strengthen system to monitor and assess land quality, changing land use, high risk hazard zones and future trends
- Introduce measures to minimise land and marine degradation and pollution
- Regulate and undertake environmental and social impact assessments prior to decisions on land

3. Protecting vulnerable groups

- Identify and protect the rights of poor and disadvantaged communities
- Undertake studies on informal settlements and the impact of urban drift
- Introduce measures to stabilise, regulate and secure land rights for informal settlers

4. Social, gender and youth assessments

- Conduct foundation and periodic studies on the impact of land reform in Vanuatu on:
 - Social harmony and development
 - Gender equity, equality and women's rights
 - Youth welfare and employment to inform future land law and land policy development

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STRATEGIES

POLICY AND ACTIVITY AGENDA

INDICATIVE PERFORMANCE MEASURES

1. Land law reform

- No. of new land laws enacted
- Legislation enacted to recognise the collective ownership of customary land
- No. of outdated land laws repealed
- No. of amendments made to existing land tenure legislation
- No. of amendments made to 'land' clauses in the constitution
- Preparation of draft national land law
- Level of positive public and stakeholder perception of land laws

2. Land and environment policy development

- Formulation and mainstreaming of national land, physical planning and environmental policies within government
- Level of positive public and stakeholder perception of policies
- Demonstrated evidence that policy development has been undertaken in a participatory manner

1. Community awareness and engagement

- No. of communities actively engaged in land law and rights awareness forums
- % of public able to name land tenure types and categories and key land sector institutions
- No. of communities with thorough documentation on rules for decision-making and negotiation on land matters and sustainable practices

2. Community boundary mapping

- Analysis of lessons learnt from pilot studies on mapping customary land
- No. of communities with boundaries agreed and mapping completed
- No. of communities that have thorough documentation of custom land histories, practices and records
- % of customary landholders interested in registering their land in a formal system
- No. of heritage, sacred cultural sites and "taboo" areas identified, mapped and preserved

1. Efficient and effective enabling services

- Quality of processes in terms of 'best-practice' organisational maturity models
- No. of professionally trained surveyors, valuers and planners and % of land sector positions filled by qualified personnel
- No. of contracts awarded to civil society and private sector companies
- VT spent on provincial land services in line with development plans
- VT spent on land services, per employee and total sector revenue

2. Service culture and performance

- Agreed service delivery targets and standards met
- Staff performance review outcomes
- VT revenue generated from sale of land and spatial information
- % people satisfied with land services
- No. of requests for land and spatial information
- Reasons for and types of usage for land and spatial information

1. Land market development

- Number, type and size of land holdings held under specified categories
- No. of new leases issued and land transfers/ transactions per year
- Productive output/ hectare under leasehold and customary tenure
- Population/ hectare of rural and urban land
- No. of defaults (loss of land) on credit loans for land investment
- No. of lease registrations used as collateral

2. Physical planning and development

- % of urban and rural areas covered by detailed physical plans
- No. of statutory urban, rural and coastal zone management plans produced and approved
- No. of government land acquisition and distribution proposals acceptable to affected communities
- Level of enforcement for development controls

1. Clarify and strengthen land rights

- % of land holdings under secure title
- % gender breakdown of names and signatories on lease registrations
- Average size of land used per household for all groups
- No. of trained providers of information on land rights

2. Land and resource dispute resolution

- No. of total land disputes per annum and % involving women and vulnerable groups
- % of public who have experienced unfair land service dealings
- Clearance rates for land claims in the courts and elapsed time for compensation payments
- % disputes resolved in land tribunals and those appealed to higher courts
- Cost of resolving land disputes in courts, tribunals and custom

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STRATEGIES

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POLICY AND ACTIVITY AGENDA

3. Land governance system

- Sector coordination and management structure viewed by communities and stakeholders as functional
- No. of land sector institutions operating effectively
- No. of complaints or disputes involving land sector institutions
- No. of pilot studies producing high impact and quality land and governance reforms
- Land and governance reforms are embedded in legislation and mainstreamed into government operations
- Quality of land sector program management in terms of best-practice program management maturity models
- Fully functional National Land Taskforce with frequent and regular meetings and delivering quality outcomes to the National Government

3. Strengthen community structures

- Demonstrated evidence of proactive participation by communities, civil society organisations and the Government in working together to implement the land sector framework in a cooperative, respectful and trustful manner
- No. of provincial and area council land sector management and advisory structures established and functional
- Extent of community representation and contributions to thematic tasks groups established to implement land sector planning and development initiatives

3. Information technology and management

- Types of organisations, national surveys and statistics making use of land and spatial information
- % of clients satisfied with the land information and records system
- % of clients satisfied with spatial information system
- % of land records accurate and updated

4. Infrastructure and civil works

- Space audit of Ministry of Lands undertaken
- Analysis of space requirements completed
- Building plans for new facility designed and implemented
- Construction of new facility for Ministry of Lands completed

3. Sustainable land and environmental management

- % area of land and marine habitats degraded or polluted
- % of suitable/ unsuitable land used for agricultural and commercial purposes
- No. of communities that have developed land policies and land use plans
- % of households using sustainable land conservation methods and techniques
- % and coverage of land under various land types (forest, wetlands, urban cultivated, national park)
- Compliance with best-practice environmental standards (e.g. air pollution, water quality, soil salinity)
- % of households aware of good and harmful environmental practices
- No. of provinces and area councils with approved land sector development plans

3. Protecting vulnerable groups

- % of poor and disadvantaged groups without access to land
- Extent to which policy and laws protect vulnerable group
- No. of informal settlements for which integrated physical plans have been produced and land tenure security provided

4. Social, gender and youth assessments

- % of land recorded or registered in women's name (either jointly or independently)
- Extent to which policy and laws address gender and social discrimination
- No. of incidences where land disputes create serious social disorder and abuse
- No. of incidences where land market development has created job opportunities for youth

Appendix 2

Implementation Schedule and Sequencing Plan

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[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

[illegible]

Appendix 3

Preliminary Stakeholder Mapping



VISION

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REPUBLIC OF VANUATU Priority Action Agenda 2006-2015

“An Educated, Healthy and Wealthy Vanuatu”

Strategic Priorities

- Private sector development and employment creation
- Macroeconomic stability and equitable growth
- Good governance and public sector reform
- Primary sector development
- Provision of better basic services, especially in rural areas
- Education and human resources development
- Economic infrastructure and support services

Current Action Items

- Growing the productive sector, especially agriculture and tourism
- Maintaining macroeconomic balance
- Raising public service performance
- Cutting costs associated with transport and utilities
- Improving access to basic services such as health and education



INDICATIVE STAKEHOLDER GROUPINGS

1. Ensure accountable, transparent and fair dealings in land

- Ministry of Lands (MoL)
- Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs (MNCC)
- Ombudsman's Office
- Public Service Commission

2. Encourage sector-wide oversight of land governance system

- MoL
- MNCC
- State Law Office (lesser role)
- Dept of Economic and Sector Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC)
- Membership of National Land Governance Committee (to be formed)
- National Council of Women (NCW)

1. Build civil society capacity to contribute to sector development

- Vanuatu Association of Non-Government Organisations (VANGO)
- Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta (VKS)
- MNCC
- MoL

2. Increase support for community awareness and engagement

- MNCC
- VKS (particularly awareness)

1. Strengthen agencies to use resources properly

- MoL
- Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)
- Ministry of Internal Affairs (MIA)
- DSPPAC

2. Improve coordination within land sector and delivery capacity

- MoL
- MIA
- MoA
- Main civil society actors (MNCC and VKS)
- DSPPAC
- Private Sector
- Local authorities (Provincial and Municipal Governments)
- Office of the Valuer General (VG)
- Professional Associations (e.g. Chamber of Commerce)

1. Strengthen land management

- Department of Lands (DoL)
- Physical Planning Unit, MIA
- MoL
- MoA
- Provincial and Municipal Governments, MIA

2. Foster land market development

- MoL
- Private Sector (Banks)

3. Support sustainable development practices

- MoA
- MoL
- MoL, Environment Unit
- VKS

1. Facilitate better access to land

- VKS
- MNCC
- MoL
- Ministry of Trade and Ni-Vanuatu Business
- Private Sector (Banks)

2. Strengthen local-based dispute resolution

- MNCC
- Customary Land Tribunal Unit
- Judiciary

3. Strengthen land tenure security

- MoL
- MNCC
- VKS
- Ministry of Justice and Social Welfare (MJSW)
- State Law Office
- NCW
- National Youth Council
- Youth Inter-Agency Group
- Academic/research institutions e.g. USP



Agency Corporate and Annual Plans
Performance Measures

Appendix 4

Governance Arrangements

Proposed Governance Guidelines

National Land Governance Committee

The Vanuatu Land Governance Committee (VLGC) will have general oversight of the Land Sector Framework (LSF). It will have overall responsibility for planning and reviewing the LSF as land sector policy and implementation evolves. As a national committee it must include government, non-state actors and the private sector. Possible membership may include (the key stakeholders for the land sector):

- Ministry of Lands
- Department of Strategic Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC)
- Ministry of Trade
- Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries
- Ministry of Internal Affairs
- Ministry of Finance
- Ministry of Justice and Social Welfare
- National Disaster Management Office
- Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs
- Vanuatu National Cultural Council/Vanuatu Cultural Centre
- Vanuatu National Council of Women
- National Youth Council/Youth Inter-Agency representative
- Vanuatu Association of Non-Government Organisations
- Private Sector representative
- Donor representative

Terms of Reference

- Direct, facilitate and oversee the LSF
- Initiate activities/studies in areas of critical interest to the government and the community
- Provide advice on and endorse proposed activities within LSF
- Appoint thematic groups as necessary to address specific issues
- Guide on publicity and sensitisation of the citizens on the LSF (public awareness)
- Ensure the LSF is linked to national and other sectoral policies
- Participate in all National Fora on the LSF

Focal Point

The Vanuatu Ministry of Lands, Minerals, Energy, Environment and Rural Water Supply (MoL) will be the main implementing agency and will have overall responsibility for procurement, administration and implementation of the LSF. The Director-General of Lands will be the Focal Point for the LSF and will need to be supported by a Land Sector Coordination Unit (LSCU).

Terms of Reference

- Act as Focal Point for donors seeking to provide assistance to the land sector

- Advise the LSCU on land policy priorities set by the LSF

Land Sector Coordination Unit

The LSCU will be responsible for the day-to-day administration and implementation of the LSF, including monitoring of activities for reporting to the VLGC. It will report to the DG for Lands, and should be a formal unit within the MoL structure.

The LSCU, while based within the Ministry of Lands, should include a representative of the key implementing partners as a partnership approach to land sector reform is fundamental to the successful implementation of the Land Sector Framework. As many land sector activities operate outside of government, a mechanism is required to ensure good coordination and knowledge of the relevant land sector activities. A multi-partner coordination unit will also minimise the risk of a single entity influencing decisions.¹⁰ This type of arrangement will require an MoU or similar formal arrangement between the key partners. The agreed roles and responsibilities of partners will guide this arrangement.

Terms of Reference

- Provide the linkages between and amongst the VLGC and stakeholders/implementing partners
- Ensure that there is a balanced multi-partner perspective in all decision-making
- Provide technical and administrative leadership for the LSF, drawing also on relevant technical expertise from within the multi-partner LSCU
- Liaise with donors, as directed by the Focal Point, and guide development assistance within the LSF
- Responsible to the VLGC for effective coordination and monitoring and timely reporting of activities within the LSF
- Source and acquire relevant data and material to facilitate the operations of the
- Thematic Working Groups (TWGs)
- Provide secretariat to the entire LSF
- Ensure all records relating to the LSF are accurate and easily retrievable

Thematic Working Groups

Thematic Working Groups (TWGs) roles and responsibilities may align with the major themes within the LSF, but are not specifically established throughout. The VLGC can form TWGs as the need arises, using relevant specialist expertise. It is a flexible arrangement designed to allow for immediate response to issues relevant to the sector and will enable flexible access to a diverse pool of expertise within the land sector.

Terms of Reference

- Form to follow up specific topics. Membership may be from the VLGC, where necessary;

¹⁰ Multi-stakeholder partners may nominate a representative to the LSCU for a set period and then have a renewal or replacement mechanism in place when the period expires. This representation may be aligned with the priorities of LSF implementation at the time.

- Recommend to the LSCU the priority, scope and content of studies to be undertaken and propose terms of reference;
- Recommend to the LSCU consultants to carry out such studies, where necessary;
- Review and endorse consultants' reports to be accepted or resubmitted;
- Delegate members of the TWGs to attend meetings and workshops;
- Receive submissions from members of the public;
- Task the LSCU to distribute working papers and reports; and
- Execute what is necessary to attain their mandate, within the limits of the allocated resources.

The Chair of each Thematic Working Group shall specifically be expected to:

- Provide an administrative link between the LSCU and the respective thematic working group;
- Inform members of the time and location of general meetings and make the necessary administrative and logistic arrangements for their timely and smooth operation;
- Keep a record of attendance and decisions made at general meetings of the thematic working group and follow up on the agreed actions points; and
- Execute any task to assist the thematic working group to attain its mandate, within the limits of the allocated resources.

Donors

Donors will need to organise to identify a representative to liaise with the VLGC, the GoV and the LSCU on matters relating to the sector as a whole. Bilateral activities relevant to land will continue to be directly negotiated, however, must be endorsed by the VLGC.

Possible donors:

- AusAID
- NZAID
- UNDP
- World Bank
- Oxfam International
- The Christensen Fund, and
- People's Republic of China

LSF Oversight Meetings/Monitoring

The MoL, as the lead partner agency for the LSF, will chair quarterly LSF management meetings with the Vanuatu Land Governance Committee. These meetings will allow for monitoring of activities against the LSF (including review of implementing agencies and partners reports, as well as assessment of proposed activities in the sector) and will inform sectoral progress reporting. These meetings and progress reports will allow for review of the LSF to reflect evolving land sector policy.

Process for Obtaining LSF Activity Approval

The initial entry point for activity proposals within the LSF is through the Focal Point and LSCU. An activity proposal will be prepared and must be endorsed by the LSCU and Focal Point before submission to the VLGC. Upon the VLGC approval, a proposal is then submitted through the Development Committee of Officials (DCO) and referred to the Department of Sector Policy, Planning and Aid Coordination (DSPPAC) for final GoV approval. Where external assistance is required, DSPPAC will submit the proposal to donors. Where a proposal will impact upon the recurrent budget, it will require approval by the Ministerial Budget Committee (MBC).

Review of the Vanuatu Land Use
Planning Project (VLUPP)

Final Report

October 2008

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Acronyms

CARMA	Community Area Resource Management Approach
CARMAP	Community Area Resource Management Action Plans
CRP	Comprehensive Reform Program
DoL	Department of Lands
GoA	Government of Australia
GoV	Government of Vanuatu
LUPO	Land Use Planning Office
PAA	Policy Action Agenda
REDI	Rural Economic Development Initiative
TAG	Technical Advisory Group
VANLATS	Land Lease Administration Tracking System
VANRIS	Vanuatu Resource Information System
VLUPP	Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project

Executive Summary

The Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project (VLUPP) commenced in August 1995 and was completed in August 2000. The Government of Australia (GoA) funded the project at a cost of A\$5.025 million and the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) provided counterpart funding of A\$446,345. The recipient government agency was the Department of Lands (DoL). VLUPP sought to build the capacity of the GoV to plan the sustainable use of its land resources.

This review focuses on the achievements of VLUPP and an analysis of the lessons learned. This has involved a preliminary baseline assessment of the project outcomes using the monitoring and review information and key project documentation available at the time of project completion. This assessment has been supplemented by additional information gathered during a field visit in May 2008 which sheds further light on whether further inherited project outcomes have eventuated since project completion.

Considerable time had elapsed since the completion of VLUPP in 2000 and no post-project evaluation had been undertaken since that time. A 'formal' impact evaluation was not required and so this review has looked for evidence of sustainability and assesses any inherited project outcomes on that basis. More particularly, it identifies lessons that would inform plans for future activities in the land sector and the design of a land reform program.

Only cursory attention was given to impact evaluation as this 'higher order' assessment can be very difficult to measure without using a comprehensive information gathering process. A qualitative approach involving participatory techniques with key project staff, stakeholders and target beneficiaries was, therefore, used because of the inherent difficulties and constraints in obtaining reliable quantitative performance and results-based information and impact assessment data for the project.

VLUPP was originally designed to maximise environmental sustainability and promote economic governance through institutional capacity building in land use planning/ natural resource management at national and provincial levels. The main areas addressed by VLUPP and the key issues examined by this review are summarised under the following five categories:

Land Use Planning

In a pragmatic way, it can be concluded that the overall goal and purpose of VLUPP was achieved at the time of project completion. The focus was to achieve an improved land use planning system in Vanuatu that was supported by relevant land use policies and to establish a national office with technical assistance provided by the provincial governments to support land use planning throughout the country down to the community level.

Once VLUPP was completed, or soon thereafter, the land use planning process began to falter. There were several factors which may have contributed to this:

- The inability to institutionalise and mainstream land use planning within routine DoL operations and the known challenges and difficulties faced in formalising and approving new policies;

- The need for broader recognition within DoL and Government that land use planning is indeed a formal and legitimate service provided by national and provincial governments and the need to be proactive in mandating and legislating responsibility for it;
- A reluctance at the time to integrate land use planning as a fundamental component of a land lease administration and management system; and
- The need for even more effective awareness, training and education programs to ensure that all stakeholders and communities fully understand the concepts and principles which underpin land use planning and the longer term benefits that accrue to economic development.

Provincial Planning

Successful land use planning is dependent upon the cooperation of provincial governments, their willingness to comply with land use policy and the financial sustainability of the government system at all levels. In hindsight, provincial governments were not in a position to either respond to or cope with the demands of VLUPP. Changes in provincial governments meant that new incumbents had to be informed and trained on the rationale and benefits of integrated national/ provincial land use planning and resource management. There was a continual turnover of staff and repeated training of provincial planners was required.

On a countrywide basis, the land use planning capabilities that were introduced during VLUPP at provincial level have remained tenuous. This would partially appear to be a consequence of provincial governments not having a mandate or supporting legislation to undertake land use planning functions and responsibilities - in spite of VLUPP efforts to formalise the responsibilities and include TAG functions and CARMA as part of routine service delivery.

The introduction of the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) was seen as a mechanism through which land use planning could be sustained in the provinces but REDI also highlighted the difficulties operating at provincial and area council levels. These included a lack of financial and human resources and a lack of institutional strengthening at the provincial level which led to technical advisory groups and bureaucratic structures being effective at these levels.

Community Area Resource Management Approach (CARMA)

VLUPP introduced a consultative community development planning process (CARMA) based upon a participatory rural appraisal technique used extensively in the agriculture sector. The technique was slightly modified for the Vanuatu context and recognised that local communities were in the best position to articulate the problems faced in the use and management of their rural land. It provided a mechanism to directly engage with local communities and assist them in developing land use action plans (CARMAPs).

CARMA was an effective vehicle for raising awareness and developing the action plans; however, the process was dependent upon a functional and well-resourced Technical Advisory Group (TAG) with balanced multi-sector experience and expertise that could assist local communities to:

- improve land use planning techniques,
- bridge the gap between communities and the provincial and national government, and
- act as a structural mechanism that would sustain land use activities in the longer term.

The effectiveness of CARMA also depended upon the ability of communities to respond to the new approaches to land use planning and embrace the changes in thinking. Moreover, the resource allocated for capacity building, education and training and ongoing government support were not sufficient given the geographical diversity of the pilot sites and the intensity of the training and capacity building that was needed at provincial, TAG and local community levels. In principle, the concept of an options-based approach to land use planning is straightforward but it does require more participation by communities as a whole in land use decision making. However, given the important role of land in Vanuatu society there can be inherent difficulties in using a community-based approach.

In hindsight, assistance to rural communities benefits from a greater understanding of the pressures on customary land and the significance of ‘tribal’ (clan and/or family unit) custodianship, governance, social structures and land use rights under custom practice. The roles played by provincial planners do not guarantee a better understanding of these issues and any future land sector initiatives which interact at community level must acknowledge the distinction between clan and community and the impact this differentiation has on development.

Vanuatu Resource Information System (VANRIS) Development and Application

VANRIS was chosen as the primary technology tool to provide a thematic mapping and analysis function for land use planning. The system was introduced to Vanuatu during the early 1990s in an earlier Forestry project but, by necessity, required redevelopment and upgrades to serve a broader user base as a thematic land use planning tool. VANRIS was not an “off-the-shelf” system and did not have a commercial technical support base which could be readily accessed by users and system developers.

The majority of users contended that VANRIS was too advanced and sophisticated for planning staff without a background in spatial systems. It was, therefore, recognised that training would be vital to sustainability and considerable effort was channelled towards training VANRIS operators, as distinct from technical specialists. The lack of post-project resources and funding for ongoing maintenance and support to keep VANRIS operational and current in the longer term also significantly reduced its effectiveness and restricted its broader application within other user organisations.

Land Lease Administration

This component of the project originated from a VLUPP design requirement to use lease boundary data in VANRIS to assist planning. The priority was medium-scale land use mapping of rural areas, and so urban areas were not considered. However, it was impossible

to complete this task in the proposed timeframe given the status and poor quality of the survey data. The scope of the activity was reduced and the emphasis changed to clearing the backlog of land lease applications in the land registry as the delays were viewed as a serious impediment to land development.

In a logical sense, clearing the backlog of land lease applications does not necessarily improve land use planning per se as this primarily requires improvements in the enforcement, compliance and management of leases and the existence of, and adherence to, an approved land use zoning map. Removing the backlog will, however, facilitate the consolidation of the records and the creation of a spatial representation of the lease boundaries. These boundaries can be subsequently used in land use planning and when new applications for land leases are considered.

Lessons Learnt and Conclusions

VLUPP sought to build the planning capacity of the GoV with regard to the sustainable use of its land resources, but in spite of some short-term successes and impact, the project was unable to live up to longer-term expectations, could not sustain the expected outcomes and did not produce any substantial inherited outcomes.

The inability to institutionalise and mainstream the land use planning process within the government bureaucracy and, ultimately, the lack of resources and funding by national and provincial governments to ensure continuity after project completion were the major factors which reduced the likelihood of achieving positive impact and/or sustainability.

It was reported in project documentation that the Department of Lands (DoL) felt the project design had been imposed upon the agency and more emphasis should have been given in the design to strengthening the operational functions of land lease administration, registration and management. As a consequence, underlying issues of project ownership could have been present during the project but did not surface until it was completed.

The lessons from this review are highly relevant to future activities planned for the land sector in Vanuatu. They are broadly summarised as follows:

- The primary agency identified for implementation must be fully engaged in the design to ensure ownership and the proposed activities aligned with the Government's agenda and policies;
- Absorptive capacity limitations of participating government agencies and stakeholder interest groups must be acknowledged;
- The need to institutionalise and mainstream land use planning within a well-defined agency charter and clear institutional framework supported and underpinned by appropriate legislation and a sound governance system;
- New approaches to land programs must include comprehensive awareness programs to ensure that all stakeholders accept, engage and commit during implementation;
- Organisational and advisory structures established for community-based initiatives must be aligned with traditional development models and also be adequately resourced;

- The scale of implementation must be confined so that objectives do not become too ambitious, with resources dissipated across too many activities and/or diverse geographical areas;
- Support services to provincial governments and local communities cannot be achieved using a national-centric approach. It is essential that these services are clearly specified, properly sustained and included in recurrent budgets;
- Capacity building needs to be innovative and strategic, easily accessible to provincial governments and local communities and carefully targeted at appropriate participants; and
- Advanced technologies with limited support infrastructures require ongoing post-project support mechanisms after project completion to ensure a modest level of sustainability.

Relevancy of Lessons to Future Land Sector Initiatives

These findings and lessons highlight the need for a critical assessment of the potential challenges, constraints and externalities that will directly influence the success of a future land program in Vanuatu. In summary, these are:

- The level of political will and commitment to a land program that may challenge traditional approaches;
- Absorptive capacity limitations of participating government agencies and stakeholder interest groups;
- Provision of infrastructure and support systems to underpin a decentralised approach to land service delivery;
- Existence of an institutional framework and sound governance system which clearly articulate the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities within the land sector;
- Greater emphasis on awareness, education and communication campaigns that maximise the learning outcomes for all stakeholders; and
- Revisiting the conventional approach to capacity development through innovation and creativity to ensure longer-term impact and sustainability.

All of these factors will require careful scrutiny and prudent judgement within the design of a relevant, efficient and effective land program that will support and deliver long-term impact and sustainability for the Government of Vanuatu, the Ministry of Lands and all stakeholders involved.

1. Background

The Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project (VLUPP) commenced in August 1995 and was completed in August 2000. The Government of Australia (GoA) funded the project at a cost of A\$5.025 million and the Government of Vanuatu (GoV) provided counterpart funding of A\$446,345. The recipient government agency was the Department of Lands (DoL).

The project sought to build the capacity of the GoV to plan sustainable use of its physical resources. The project goal was “An improved land use planning system to achieve sustainable development and conservation of natural resources” and its purpose was to “Establish a National Land Use Planning Office (LUPO) with capabilities in database management, including the use of VANRIS, and land use planning at national, provincial and local or district levels.” VLUPP supported the operation of LUPO within the DoL and it soon became the prime mapping resource centre in Vanuatu at the time. The technology used to improve the thematic mapping capability was the Vanuatu Resource Information System (VANRIS).

The Terms of Reference (ToR) for this review, as outlined in the Request for Tender (RFT) and included in Appendix 1, stated that its purpose was to evaluate the impact of VLUPP on land use planning/ resource management capabilities at national and provincial levels since its completion in 2000. A key objective was to determine whether there had been an improvement in land use planning/ resource management by the relevant authorities and whether this improvement could be attributed to VLUPP.

It was confirmed by AusAID that this review was not a formal impact evaluation in the traditional sense as this would have implied a more significant resource allocation and time commitment. The review was essentially initiated by the GoV so that the findings could inform longer term plans for future activities in the land sector and the design of a land reform program. It was, therefore, agreed that the review would focus on the achievements of VLUPP and, more particularly, an analysis of the lessons learned across the five project components.

This initially involved a preliminary baseline assessment of the project outcomes (see Appendix 2) using the monitoring and review information and key project documentation available at project completion. This assessment was supplemented by additional information gathered during a field visit in May 2008 to shed further light on any possible inherited project outcomes that may have eventuated since project completion.

The field mission for this review was conducted during the period May 3-15, 2008. The team comprised Dr Doug Larden (Team Leader) and Mr Steve Likaveke (Land Use Planner). A detailed itinerary was prepared prior to the field mission and the review schedule (see Appendix 3) included meetings with GoV national and provincial departments, DoL senior staff, ex-VLUPP project staff,¹ user agencies, private sector representatives, civil society organisations and three of six communities who participated in the project as target beneficiaries for community-based land use planning. The field visit culminated with a key

¹ Discussions were also held with the following Australian team members: - Mr Ric Caven, AACM / VLUPP Project Director and Dr Ken Lyons, Component 5, Team Leader – Land Lease Administration.

informant workshop on May 13, 2008 attended by ni-Vanuatu VLUPP project staff to formulate responses to key issues that had been identified during the consultations. A record of the responses at the workshop is summarised in Appendix 3.

The Review Team records its appreciation to Ms Anna Naupa, AusAID (Senior Program Officer – Land, Gender and Media) and Mr William Ganileo (DoL) who provided logistical and organisational support to the review team, made significant technical contributions to the review process and assisted and participated in stakeholder forums and meetings.

2. Approach and Methodology

The standard framework for project reviews and evaluations generally applies the following five key assessment criteria:

- *Relevance* - were the objectives right?
- *Efficiency* - did the activities undertaken represent value for money?
- *Effectiveness* - how well were the objectives achieved?
- *Impact* - what were the impacts, both intended and unintended?, and
- *Sustainability* - will the benefits, particularly in institutions or systems, be sustained?

Acknowledging that considerable time had elapsed since the completion of VLUPP in 2000 and that no post-evaluation of the project had been undertaken, it is clear that many of the above assessment criteria are not appropriate for this review. For example, efficiency and effectiveness are best measured close to project completion. The evaluation of these criteria many years after the project was completed begins to lose relevance as technologies, systems, processes, procedures, expertise and implementation approaches and methodologies - all of which contribute to efficiency and effectiveness - change over time. Moreover, assessments of impact and sustainability all benefit from hindsight. The longer the period between project completion and evaluation, the greater the chance that external influences and factors which predominantly affect impact and sustainability will have emerged and become entrenched.

As such, only cursory attention has been given to impact evaluation as this ‘higher order’ assessment can be very difficult to measure without using a comprehensive information gathering process, undertaking extensive consultations with all representative groups and allocating substantial investments in time and resources.² A qualitative approach involving participatory techniques with key project staff, stakeholders and target beneficiaries was, therefore, used because of the inherent difficulties and constraints in obtaining reliable quantitative performance and results-based information and impact assessment data for the project. This review, therefore, primarily looks for evidence of sustainability, assesses any inherited outcomes from the project on that basis and, more importantly, identifies the lessons that can be drawn from the findings.

The methodology takes the ‘theory of change’ for VLUPP; that is, the logical framework outlined in the Project Implementation Document (PID), and looks at its evolution (i.e. the

² Impact Evaluation, Office of Development Effectiveness (ODE), AusAID, November 2006.

‘story of change’) as described in the project change frame.³ This analysis tests the validity of the logic upon which the original design of VLUPP was based in terms of actual project outcomes that were achieved in 2000 and any further inherited outcomes that may be evident in 2008. Appendix 2 outlines an abbreviated version of the logical framework and the change frame for the VLUPP project and summarises where inputs have changed and new outputs added.

The analysis was accomplished through a process which:

- Assessed whether VLUPP produced the intended outputs and did these outputs contribute to achieving the project objectives (or outcomes);
- Examined what external factors influenced the success and failure of the project and when they appeared to have an influence. Understanding these externalities is important for the design of future activities in the land sector; and
- Analysed where changes were made to inputs and activities to produce outputs and achieve outcomes, whether the outcomes were ultimately sustainable and what were the lessons that could be drawn from the findings.

The above analysis also provides useful insight on where to look for potential issues/problems that potentially would affect the longer-term sustainability of VLUPP. The existence of specific products and graphical outputs from VLUPP (e.g. land use plans, land use profiles, thematic maps, atlases, special maps) also helps to verify whether project sustainability has occurred.

The review assessment framework comprised a series of generic questions adapted from the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) Evaluation Guide which systematised the review methodology and identified broad issues that should be addressed, the intended sources of information and the method of information collection. The generic questions were supplemented by project-specific questions that were derived from the underlying assumptions and verifiable indicators listed in the logical and change frameworks.⁴

3. Functional Elements of VLUPP

VLUPP was designed to maximise environmental sustainability and promote economic governance through institutional capacity building in land use planning/ natural resource management at national and provincial levels. The following functional elements (project themes) have been compiled from the Terms of Reference for the review and various project documents. They are used to categorise the key issues examined by this review and to frame the report structure for presentation of the review findings (see Section 4).

³ A comprehensive change frame for VLUPP was never completed nor was there a summary of any major changes during the project documented in the Project Completion Report. Change frame information for this review was extracted and compiled from the Project Implementation Document, Annual Plans and the Mid-Term Review.

⁴ Typical questions which formed the basis of the review discussions and interviews held during the field mission are listed in the Baseline Summary and Assessment Framework Report that was prepared as part of the Desk Review in May 2008.

3.1 Land Use Planning

- Assess the extent of project impact on building capacity in land use planning in the Department of Lands at national and provincial levels;
- Examine the status of activities in LUPO since project completion, including the employment of a national land use planning policy;
- Assess developments in national, provincial and community-based land use planning and management since project completion;
- Establish the relationship (if any) between these developments and the project activities and outputs undertaken and the outcomes achieved; and
- Examine changes/ improvements to land use planning/ natural resource management by relevant authorities in areas of specific application (i.e. in sector and pilot/ target areas).

3.2 Vanuatu Resource Information System (VANRIS)

- Evaluate the effectiveness of VANRIS since project completion;
- Identify barriers (if any) to its use (e.g. restrictions due to problems associated with resource levels, technology sophistication, systems maintenance, data availability, staffing).
- Examine the status of the VANRIS system and database and relevant national, provincial and sector applications. For what applications has VANRIS been successfully utilised?

3.3 Community Area Resource Management Approach (CARMA)

- Assess the effectiveness of the consultation methodology adopted and the key lessons learnt;
- Examine the use of CARMA as an effective vehicle for raising awareness;
- Assess whether the project succeeded in ‘bridging the gap’ between villagers in the process of developing land use plans at the local, provincial and national levels and in various sectors;
- Investigate the extent to which CARMA has been applied to community-based natural resource management planning and subsequent Action Plan (CARMAP) formulation; and
- Consider the effect of the project on planning capabilities at the provincial and community-based levels and whether this has been sustained (e.g. through provincial plans and Community Area Resource Management Action Plans – CARMAP).

3.4 Land Lease Administration

- Assess the effectiveness of organisational ‘strengthening’ for land lease administration provided to the DoL;
- Identify any improvements in land lease administration as a result of the project;

- Establish the linkage between improvements in land lease administration and land use planning; and
- Evaluate results from the audit for land leases and determine if there is a correlation between these results and the land use planning and policy compliance requirements.

3.5 AusAID Perspective of Key Issues

As a leading donor in Vanuatu, AusAID also had a number of issues which the review needed to address as follows:⁵

- Cessation of land use planning activities in Vanuatu;
- Currency of data in, and ongoing development of, the VANRIS system;
- Lack of planning professionals in Vanuatu;
- Activities in the environment and land sectors, or more broadly in the country, which may impact on this situation; and
- Priorities and focus of DoL in terms of other donor activities in the land sector.

The first three concerns are addressed in this report. A summary of recent activities in the land sector and the focus of DoL in terms of their involvement in other donor activities is contained in the Concept Design Paper for the Vanuatu Land Program which was prepared in July 2008.

4. Review Findings

The findings presented here are based on an examination of key project documents and a preliminary assessment of project outcomes at project completion as documented in Appendix 2 and summarised in Section 4.1 below. The findings are further informed by an assessment of extensive feedback from discussions, interviews and consultations with key stakeholder groups and additional documentation collected during the field mission. An extensive record of these discussions as reported is provided in Appendix 3. The findings from this review are also evaluated within the context of the lessons learnt from the recent case studies prepared under the AusAID Pacific Land Program initiative.

4.1 Summary of Outcome Assessment at Project Completion

In a pragmatic way, it can be concluded that the overall goal and purpose of VLUPP was achieved at the time of project completion. The focus was to achieve an improved land use planning system and the establishment of a land use planning office at national level to support the land use planning function throughout the country down to the community level. To this extent the project design, together with several necessary modifications, including the addition of a land lease administration component, was adequate to achieve the goal and purpose.

National land use guides were prepared and used to assist with decision-making on land lease

⁵ Correspondence from Anna Naupa, AusAID, Port Villa, Vanuatu

applications. One focus here was to identify prime agricultural lands that should be preserved in Vanuatu to ensure food production and security. Provincial land use guides were also incorporated into regional development plans as part of the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI). Local community and area council resource management and development action plans (CARMAP) were prepared using a participatory rural appraisal technique that was modified by VLUPP and utilised to suit local conditions in Vanuatu (CARMA).

After Independence in 1980, successive governments in Vanuatu have placed considerable emphasis on economic development as a key driver for the national economy. The introduction of REDI as an economic initiative towards the end of VLUPP was completely aligned with this policy strategy. REDI was seen as an important and timely development because it would contribute to the sustainability of the Technical Advisory Groups (TAGs) established during VLUPP. It was also envisaged that REDI would strengthen the role of LUPO as a key provider of resource information for provincial planning and technical advice to local communities wishing to embark upon specific land use initiatives.

In principle, the national and provincial TAGs were effective mechanisms to coordinate the activities of the various sectors and link communities into the planning process. The proviso, however, was that they were adequately resourced, their functional responsibilities were clearly articulated and recognised, and the membership comprised of appropriate multi-sector expertise. In close consultation with NGO organisations, it was envisaged that the TAGs would assist in the coordination, preparation and implementation of the provincial economic development plans which, in theory, would also include land use guidelines and maps.

However, caution was expressed during VLUPP on the risk and consequences of inadequate funding for the TAGs and the focus of REDI remaining on economic development without due consideration of the social elements of development. Of particular concern was the need to maintain social harmony in the presence of land conflicts and the associated consequences on land use planning of land availability and productivity.

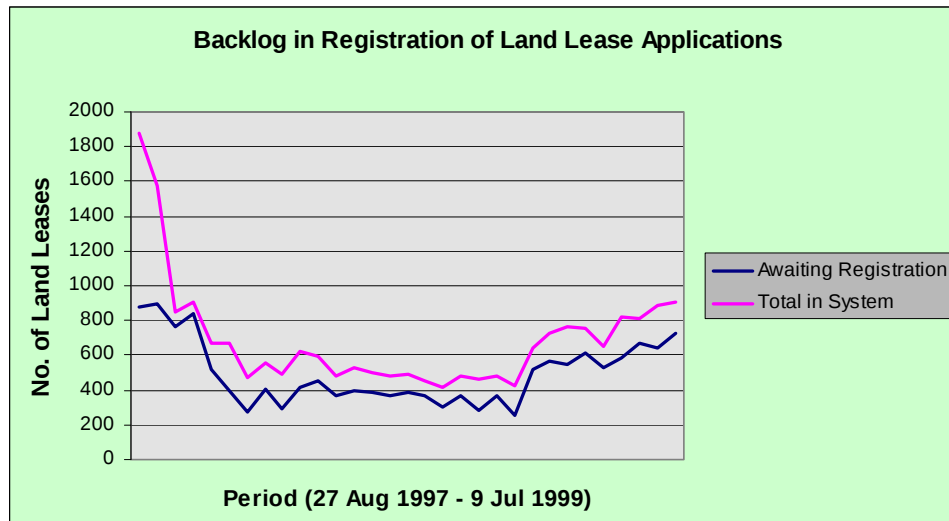
To support the medium-scale mapping and analysis requirements for land use planning, the VANRIS system was chosen as the primary technology tool. VANRIS was introduced as part of a previous AusAID-funded project in the Forestry Sector during the early 1990s, but the system, by necessity, required redevelopment and upgrades to serve a broader user base as a thematic land use planning tool. By the end of VLUPP, however, it was reported that most agencies were registered VANRIS users and produced maps and data from the database.

The goodwill and cooperation of the key natural resource line agencies (i.e. Forestry, Agriculture and Environment) ensured that the project worked well – even though DoL was not regarded as the main implementing line agency for natural resource management. This was demonstrated in part by the very active and vibrant VANRIS users group that had been established during VLUPP and was functioning effectively at the end of the project.

The VLUPP activities which focused on land lease administration in DoL in a sense were essentially a “bolt-on” component that was not completely integrated with the rest of the project. However, their inclusion recognised the need for efficient processes in land administration and, more broadly, for land lease management. Problems with lease administration were soon identified and manual processes were immediately introduced to

improve processing speed and efficiency to remove backlogs in the system.

The following graph outlines the impact of the assistance on backlog levels for the registration of land leases within the DoL at the time. A significant reduction in the number of backlogs was observed at the beginning of the activity, and these numbers were kept at a manageable level for some time – more a reflection of the staff resource capacity at the time rather than real impediments in the system. The increase in backlogs towards the end of the period was a result of the Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) across the public service and the significant cuts in DoL staffing as a result of downsizing the public service.



VLUPP was effective in establishing a central office and facility (LUPO) which potentially would have contributed to an improved land use planning system in Vanuatu. The facility was underpinned by fundamental and thematic resource information, database and mapping software packages to support the functional requirements for producing land use plans at national and provincial scales and other specialist and/ or thematic products.

Once VLUPP was completed, or soon thereafter, the land use planning process began to falter. It is not entirely clear what were the real reasons for this but the evidence gathered has suggested that several factors have contributed as follows:

- The inability to institutionalise and mainstream land use planning within routine DoL operations and the known challenges and difficulties faced in formalising and approving new policies;
- The need for broader recognition within DoL and Government that land use planning is indeed a formal and legitimate service provided by national and provincial governments and the need to be proactive in mandating and legislating responsibility for it;
- A reluctance at the time to integrate land use planning as a fundamental component of a land lease administration and management system; and
- The need for even more effective awareness, training and education programs to ensure that all stakeholders and communities fully understand the concepts and principles which underpin land use planning and the longer term benefits that accrue to economic development.

As a consequence, the formal acceptance of the National Land Use Policy and Plan and the adoption of land use planning by provincial governments did not eventuate – in spite of considerable emphasis given at the national level on training programs to support land use planning and policy development. Moreover, while there were pockets of land use planning activities reported in some provinces and communities during the field mission, but they were mainly at the instigation of progressive community chiefs and only tenuously linked to VLUPP.

Land use planning capacity levels within most government agencies, either at national or provincial level, have not been sustained. Nevertheless, it is fortuitous that one of the key members of the VLUPP project team is currently the provincial planner of Shefa Province – one of only a few planners in Vanuatu with a background in land management. Current opportunities for ni-Vanuatu students to study land use planning and practice the discipline appear to be extremely limited.⁶

The resolutions from the 2006 Land Summit highlight the problems which can occur if land use planning is neglected in a land development process. Greater political awareness is required to ensure that land use planning is placed firmly on the national policy agenda. Governance systems and the authority of the land planning and management committee must also be strengthened so that accountability and transparency is inculcated within land

⁶ Data was sought from the Education Department on the number of scholarships awarded to students wishing to study land-related disciplines but the information was not forthcoming.

development decision-making and approval processes.

4.3 VANRIS Development and Application

VANRIS was not an “off-the-shelf” system and, as such, did not have a commercial technical support base which could be readily accessed by users and system developers. When VANRIS was embraced by VLUPP, the system was effectively in an ‘experimental’ development stage and a majority of the users contended that it was too advanced and sophisticated for planning staff and users – particularly users without any exposure to the application of geographical information systems (GIS).

Even the most experienced ni-Vanuatu GIS specialist on the VLUPP project team at project commencement reported the difficulties in understanding the capabilities and functionality of VANRIS and was hesitant to conduct provincial training. It therefore remained even more challenging to train non-GIS users, particularly in the provinces but also in Port Vila, on how to use and apply the system.

Several versions of VANRIS were developed during the project. The development process was an iterative one and basically driven by user requests to make the system more user-friendly and to incorporate subsequent improvements in spatial analysis and database management software as they became available. Even so, the VLUPP project team was clearly concerned about the ongoing sustainability of the system, as considerable effort and resources were channelled towards training VANRIS operators, as distinct from technical specialists, in what was a very dynamic system development and maintenance environment. Moreover, in spite of some technical assistance put in place at project completion, there was no ongoing provision for post-project resources, maintenance and support to keep VANRIS operational in the longer term.

A simple test of sustainability would be the number of upgrades and improvements to the system that have occurred since project completion in 2000 and the number of current users of the system. It was reported during the field mission that VANRIS Version 3 still existed in some agencies in Port Vila, but that there had not been any system upgrades after project completion.

The lack of post-project resources and funding for ongoing maintenance, support and training to keep VANRIS operational and current in the longer term also significantly reduced its effectiveness and restricted its broader application within other user organisations after the project was completed. For example, the system crashed in Penama, Sanma and Shefa Provinces and was completely damaged by fire in Tafea Province and not replaced. It was not clear whether VANRIS suffered similar fates in other organisations as it was reported during the field mission that DoL could not conduct follow-up training and system maintenance because of budgetary constraints.

Clearly, this lack of technical support would severely impact land use planning applications within the thirty-seven organisations in which VANRIS was installed. The review team was constrained by time and was not able to visit all of these installations and examine outputs from the system. Nevertheless, the VANRIS installation in the Department of Forestry was inspected where, as expected, it was still being used to map logging permit areas – albeit with

database information that had not been updated for quite some time.⁷

It was reported that VANRIS had been used as an analysis tool to support a population GIS compiled using 1999 national population and housing census data. However, its widespread use basically ceased in 2000, with most user agencies switching to the MapInfo GIS software package which was operated independently of the VANRIS system but still utilised the multi-layer information themes held in the database. The MapInfo package was introduced throughout the South West Pacific Island nations under a scheme sponsored and supported by the South Pacific Commission (SOPAC). This development coincided with the demise of the VANRIS users' group in 2000. This group was replaced by a GIS user group which subsequently became dysfunctional because of internal conflicts between members.

More recently, the DoL has acquired, through joint cooperation with the Australian Defence Imagery and Geospatial Organisation (DIGO), digital mapping information with nationwide coverage. DIGO chose to utilise the ArcInfo/Arcview product suite as the preferred analysis tools for this dataset, and as a consequence DoL now have access to two spatial analysis products for its GIS applications.

4.4 Provincial Planning

In hindsight, provincial governments were not in a position to respond to or cope with the demands of VLUPP. Changes in provincial governments towards the end of the project meant that the training of new political incumbents (i.e. the provincial planners) on the rationale and benefits of land use planning had to start again. Arranging the training for some of the TAGs also proved extremely challenging.

On a countrywide basis, the land use planning capabilities that were introduced at provincial level have remained tenuous. Shefa Province is an exception with the establishment of declared physical planning zones which have involved area councils in the decision making process.⁸ However, little progress has been made by other provinces to incorporate land use plans within their overall provincial plans. This would partially appear to be a consequence of provincial governments not having a mandate or supporting legislation to undertake land use planning functions and responsibilities - in spite of VLUPP efforts to formalise the responsibilities and include TAG functions and CARMA as part of routine service delivery.

Successful land use planning is dependent upon the cooperation of provincial governments, their willingness to comply with land use policy and the financial sustainability of the government system at all levels. The introduction of REDI during VLUPP was very timely and provided the impetus for national and provincial governments to work together on economic development plans. The provinces became the focus of the activities and the increased level of cooperation meant that land use planning and the TAG structure could potentially have been incorporated into the broader REDI initiative. Unfortunately, this did not occur and REDI did not include land use planning as part of its mandate. Instead, it

⁷ It is however acknowledged that data collection is an expensive exercise and budget constraints would have prohibited updates to maintain currency.

⁸ The Provincial Planner from Shefa Province (ex-VLUPP Project staff) also provided assistance to Sanma Province to formulate similar integrated plans.

promoted individual or small family units as the prime drivers for economic growth rather than communities.

The experience gained from the initial implementation of REDI highlights the difficulties operating at provincial and area council levels. These included a lack of financial and human resources at the provincial level and a disinclination at national level to take responsibility for the guidance of the program. There were initial successes in terms of planning and coordination, but capacity constraints at provincial and local levels remained unresolved and continued to stall progress. At the area council level there were also problems in administration, representation and efficiency.⁹

The economic focus of REDI did facilitate links between provincial government and communities and provided provincial governments with an opportunity to better serve the social needs of the communities. REDI also facilitated the coordination and sharing of information between key provincial government departments and local stakeholders and demonstrated that *sequencing of reforms* was very important. However, the incomplete work on decentralisation and the lack of institutional strengthening of provincial governments has meant that several legal, human and resource constraints still needed to be overcome.

A comprehensive list of the lessons learnt from the 2007 stock-take of REDI is provided in Appendix 3 and highlights many of the issues which have led to technical advisory groups and bureaucratic structures being ineffective at provincial and local levels.

4.5 Community Area Resource Management Approach (CARMA)

VLUPP introduced a consultative community development planning process based upon an established Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique which had been used extensively in the agricultural sector. The PRA technique was slightly modified for the Vanuatu context (CARMA) and recognises that local communities were in the best position to articulate the problems faced in the use and management of their rural land. It provided a mechanism to directly engage with local communities and assist them in developing land use action plans.

CARMA was an effective vehicle for raising awareness and developing the action plans because it allowed direct participation and interaction with local communities and ensured that the plans were aligned with their needs and priorities. However, the CARMA process was dependent upon a functional and well-resourced Technical Advisory Group (TAG) with balanced multi-sector experience and expertise that could assist local communities to:

- improve land use planning techniques,
- bridge the gap between communities and the provincial and national government, and
- act as a structural mechanism that would sustain land use activities in the longer term.

⁹ Soni, N., Alatoa, H. and Harries, B. 2007, *Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) Stock-take*, Draft Final Report, Watergall Consulting Ltd, Port Vila, April.

The effectiveness of CARMA also depended upon the ability of communities to respond to the new approaches to land use planning and embrace the changes in thinking. While in principle CARMA was a useful vehicle for raising awareness and effecting these changes, it could be argued that the resources allocated for capacity building, education and training and ongoing government support were not sufficient given the geographical diversity of the pilot sites and the intensity of the training and capacity building that was needed at provincial, TAG and local community levels.

In principle, the concept of an options-based approach to land use planning is straightforward but it does require more participation by communities as a whole in land use decision making. However, given the important role of land in Vanuatu society there can be inherent difficulties in using a community-based approach. For example, pressures on crop optimisation can cause problems when sufficient land is not available in the first place. The variability in land fertility and quality can also create tensions over land use that can lead to social disharmony and disputes within communities.

When operating at the community level, REDI highlighted the need to sequence reforms over considerable periods of time. It is questionable whether VLUPP was too ambitious in trying to change traditional thinking to land use planning in customary communities. The land use model in customary communities for food production is generally based upon individual and/or family plots allocated by the village chief.

Training was the key mechanism for capacity building at national, provincial and community level. While this was an appropriate strategy, there were concerns expressed during the project and the review mission that most of the training was Port Vila-centric and the level conducted at the pilot sites/communities could have been much greater. The training programs for community pilots focused on practical measures for land use planning and action plan development, changing mindsets, moving from traditional approaches to more integrated planning concepts and future planning. The Sarete, Limap, Mangaliliu communities visited during the review mission repeatedly made the point that more training and follow up would have been helpful to prepare the community land use action plans (CARMAPs). Appendix 4 contains a summary of the discussions from each of the community visits.

For long-term impact to occur, new approaches to land use planning need to have been fully understood by the pilot communities. Even though the national agencies involved in VLUPP understood the concepts and principles very well, there did not appear to be any serious impetus to seek a formal mandate for the introduction of the land use planning function. The decentralisation of services also had both positive and negative impacts - without decentralisation it would have been virtually impossible working in the provinces and with local communities using the CARMA model. On the negative side, changes in provincial governments led to frequent changes in the provincial planners who are political appointees. Policies need to be developed to introduce some stability at the provincial level.

The impact of VLUPP on provincial land use planning was, therefore, minimal because the human, financial and technical resources were not consistently available and the TAGs did not function to expectations. Incentives were needed to generate the interest of the provincial planners and to mainstream the land use planning function within the provincial government

system. There are only two planners in Vanuatu with experience in land management and town and country planning.¹⁰

The key link used by VLUPP to “bridge the gap” between villagers and other agencies in the land use planning process was the TAG. Representation offered by TAGs varied from province to province and was multi-sectoral (Lands, Agriculture, Water, Health etc) but the level of expertise was very much constrained by the qualifications and experience of the individual TAG members. During VLUPP, the link between communities and government was effectively facilitated by the Project. Given the lessons learnt from REDI alternative mechanisms are now needed to facilitate the community interaction and engagement. During project implementation, TAG visits were timed to coincide with the completion of community and/or area council action plans. However, after project completion it was reported that the TAGs did not visit communities because of resource constraints and difficulties assembling the group membership.

The project also initiated a National TAG to play a coordination role when it became obvious that the provincial TAGs were struggling to fulfil their advisory obligations. In effect, there was a heavy reliance by all stakeholders on a top-down approach to the provision of technical advice. While considerable effort was made during VLUPP to build capacity at national and provincial levels it was felt that CARMA would have had greater impact if more capacity building had been undertaken at village level.

It was reported that very few communities in Vanuatu have good development structures in place. Nguna Island in Shefa Province was cited as a good example - built upon the foundations of missionary work - but the review team was unable to visit this community because of weather constraints. The quality of leadership in communities and area councils is reported to be highly variable throughout Vanuatu. Communities with good leadership and not driven by a political agenda tend to focus on development issues and the structures in place work effectively. These communities are beginning to take more responsibility for land use planning and the leaders appreciate the benefits of a community – based approach.

In hindsight, assistance to rural communities benefits from a greater understanding of the pressures on customary land and the significance of ‘tribal’ (clan and/or family unit) custodianship, governance, social structures and land use rights under custom practice. The roles played by provincial planners do not guarantee a better understanding of these issues and any future land sector initiatives which interact at community level must acknowledge the distinction between clan and community and the impact this differentiation has on development.

Within the resource bounds of VLUPP, considerable effort was committed to the introduction of the CARMA process and the corresponding formulation of Action Plans (CARMAPs). Community engagement and the follow-up interaction were good but the geographical location of the pilot sites, although easily accessible, may have been too diverse. A total of six (6) communities (one in each province) and two (2) area councils were chosen as pilot sites for CARMA – the area councils were incorporated so that greater coverage could be achieved and effectiveness increased.

¹⁰ Many of the current Provincial Planners in Vanuatu do not have any formal training or education in land use planning.

It was reported during the field mission that some communities did not get the opportunity to view their CARMAPs and that the area councils had only just commenced their development plans towards the end of the project. Greater impact may have been also achieved if the number of pilot sites had been reduced and there was more sequencing of the reforms.

4.6 Land Lease Administration

The land lease administration component was introduced in the third year of VLUPP and was completed over an 18 month period. The priority was medium-scale land use mapping of rural areas, and so urban areas were not considered because they required data and analysis at much larger scales. As such, the emphasis of VLUPP was on rural land and it is within this context that the correlation between improvements in land lease administration and land use planning should be examined.

The new component originated from a design requirement to use lease boundary data in to assist planning. Unfortunately, the resources and capacity were completely underestimated in the design and it was impossible to complete this task in the proposed timeframe given the state and poor quality of the survey data and the efforts required. Instead, the scope of the activity was reduced and the new component focused on clearing the backlog of lease applications in the registry as these delays (in some cases several years) were also viewed as a serious impediment to land development.

The training focused on improving manual systems and processes and the application of the VANLATS system for tracking lease documentation using an ‘on-the-job’ approach. It was reported during the review that the counterparts were critical of the short-term technical assistance inputs for training, technology transfer and advisory services. It was felt that working continuously alongside staff for longer periods was far more efficient and effective.

VANLATS was not designed to be an essential element of the lease administration and management process and so its lack of use for monitoring and tracking after project completion did not impact upon the lease approval process.¹¹ Nevertheless, registry staff continued to use the new manual systems and processes that were put in place and have applied the processing checklists for lease administration to the present day.¹²

The impact of this component as an organisational strengthening activity was ephemeral because the personnel trained in land lease administration were retrenched as part of the national government’s Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) which downsized the public sector. Although the backlog was kept at a constant moderate level during VLUPP (see Section 4.1), it was felt that the resources that were allocated to this activity would not be sufficient to make a lasting impact. As a consequence, the current backlog of applications in the registry awaiting registration has increased to a level which is about a factor of five (i.e.

¹¹ The lack of VANLATS use after project completion was most likely a consequence of computer failures and no long-term post-project maintenance support in place to remedy the problem and/or the need for a greater awareness and appreciation of the VANLATS attributes for monitoring the land registry process. This highlights the need to ensure that DoL senior management support the technology, can interpret the statistics provided by VANLATS and are willing to commit to its maintenance and ongoing use.

¹² Some of the leases examined as part of the Second Lagoon pilot audit study for VSTLRI have used the checklists that were introduced as a result of the process improvement undertaken in the Land Registry during VLUPP.

3,500) greater than at the time of VLUPP completion. The corresponding total number of applications within the full system is more like 5,500; that is, about a factor of six greater than at the time of VLUPP completion.

In a logical sense, clearing backlogs does not necessarily improve land use planning per se as this primarily requires improvements in the enforcement, compliance and management of leases and the existence of and adherence to an approved land use zoning map. Removing the backlog will, however, facilitate the consolidation of the records and the creation of a spatial representation of the lease boundaries. These boundaries can be subsequently used in land use planning and when new applications for land leases are considered.

The outcomes from the VSTLRI pilot studies for the land lease audits (Activity #2) both in urban and rural areas have indicated that compliance with the land use conditions on leases is not considered to be the major problem – at least throughout the areas examined. Of the leases audited in the Second Lagoon pilot study area, only 7% did not comply with the approved lease category for land use, and all of these were essentially small businesses operating on residential properties. These breaches were considered to be relatively minor compared to some of the breaches with other acts governing foreshore development, physical planning, environment and health which involved possibly unauthorized land reclamation, sea wall construction and some polluting activities on the lagoon foreshore.

VLUPP suggested that the administration of land leases deserved more support than just short-term inputs but within a broader land sector context. At the end of the project, several issues were identified which reflected a need to re-examine the land use planning process in Vanuatu, although their relevance should now be tested in the context of the proposed land reform initiatives which have since emerged from the 2006 Land Summit. These were:

- The risk of allowing economic development without prior social analysis which aims to reduce or avoid conflict and the potential constraints to land availability and productivity;
- Land use decisions ultimately lie in the hands of custom landholders and land use policy should be defined in those terms. Support programs need to be designed to include an awareness and education focus that encourage landholders to cooperate rather than be suspicious of and resist the use/development of their land by outsiders;
- Land laws and regulations derived from ‘western’ countries were a threat to custom landholders because they were being used to undermine tribal authority and security; and
- Land tenure matters were often considered to be too sensitive and/or difficult for development assistance but not if developed by Melanesians using the ‘Melanesian way’.

VLUPP recommended that there should be an immediate follow-on activity that would assist custom landholders to address the above issues so as to mitigate the political risk of conflicting land claims and community tensions. Ironically, these predicaments from eight years ago are only now being addressed as part of a new land program.

5. Lessons Learnt and Conclusions

VLUPP sought to build the planning capacity of the Government of Vanuatu with regard to the sustainable use of its land resources. While it achieved some short-term successes and

impact, VLUPP ultimately was unable to live up to longer-term expectations, could not sustain the expected outcomes and did not produce any substantial inherited outcomes.

The inability to institutionalise and mainstream the land use planning process within the government bureaucracy and, ultimately, the lack of resources and funding by national and provincial governments to ensure continuity after project completion were the major factors which reduced the likelihood of achieving positive impact and/or sustainability.

It was reported in project documentation that the Department of Lands (DoL) felt the project design had been imposed upon the agency and more emphasis should have been given to strengthening the operational functions of land lease administration, registration and management. This was confirmed during the field mission but the criticisms were more in the context of the relevance of land use planning. As a consequence, underlying issues of project ownership could have been present during the project but did not surface until it was completed.

The review findings in Section 4 highlight many lessons that can be drawn from the VLUPP project. These are listed in the table below and are broadly summarised as follows:

- The primary agency identified for implementation must be fully engaged in the design to ensure ownership and the proposed activities aligned with the Government's agenda and policies;
- Absorptive capacity limitations of participating government agencies and stakeholder interest groups must be acknowledged;
- The need to institutionalise and mainstream land use planning within a well-defined agency charter and clear institutional framework supported and underpinned by appropriate legislation and a sound governance system;
- New approaches to land programs must include comprehensive awareness programs to ensure that all stakeholders accept, engage and commit during implementation;
- Organisational and advisory structures established for community-based initiatives must be aligned with traditional development models and also be adequately resourced;
- The scale of implementation must be confined so that objectives do not become too ambitious, with resources dissipated across too many activities and/or diverse geographical areas;
- Support services to provincial governments and local communities cannot be achieved using a national-centric approach. It is essential that these services are clearly specified, properly sustained and included in recurrent budgets;
- Capacity building needs to be innovative and strategic, easily accessible to provincial governments and local communities and carefully targeted at appropriate participants; and
- Advanced technologies with limited support infrastructures require ongoing post-project support mechanisms after project completion to ensure a modest level of sustainability.

Table: Lessons Learnt from VLUPP

Major Category	Lessons Learnt
Activity design and ownership	The primary agency identified for implementation must be fully engaged in the design to ensure project ownership.
	The absorptive capacity limitations of participating agencies must be acknowledged.
	Project activities must be clearly aligned with government policies and priorities.
Embedding land use planning	A clear institutional framework is required to identify the agency responsible for land use planning and policy development.
	A sound governance system is needed to guarantee accountability and sustainability of land use planning at all levels of government.
	The agency responsible for implementing land use policies must be given a clear charter which is reinforced by legislation.
	The introduction of new functional responsibilities within an agency should be mainstreamed right from the start.
Maximising learning outcomes	Greater emphasis is needed on awareness, education and communication campaigns that maximise the learning outcomes for all stakeholders.
Implementation environment	Organisational and advisory structures established for implementation must have adequate financial and technical support.
	Community-based initiatives must be aligned with traditional development models and acknowledge the distinction between clan and community.
	The scale of implementation must be confined so that objectives do not become too ambitious, with resources dissipated across too many activities and/or diverse geographical areas.
Effective capacity building	The introduction of advanced technologies demands a more strategic approach to capacity building which incorporates transition and phasing out mechanisms once competency standards are met.
	Sustained on-the-job technical training is needed to ensure that advanced competencies are achieved to ensure technology maintenance and development is routinely performed.
	Support services to provincial governments and local communities cannot be achieved using a national-centric approach. It is essential these services are clearly specified, properly sustained and included in recurrent budgets.
	Where possible, technical expertise and support should be permanently located in the provinces where it can be easily accessed by local communities.
Measuring project	Monitoring and evaluation frameworks require performance

Major Category	Lessons Learnt
outcomes	indicators (both qualitative and quantitative) that can measure real impact and changes in social and economic development.
Post project support	Advanced technologies with limited support infrastructures require ongoing post-project support mechanisms to ensure a modest level of sustainability.

The key findings and lessons that have been outlined in this report are indeed relevant to future activities planned for the land sector in Vanuatu. They highlight the need for a critical assessment of the potential challenges, constraints and externalities that will directly influence the success of a land program. These are:

- The level of political will and commitment to a land program that may challenge traditional approaches;
- Absorptive capacity limitations of participating government agencies and stakeholder interest groups;
- Provision of infrastructure and support systems to underpin a decentralised approach to land service delivery;
- Existence of an institutional framework and sound governance system which clearly articulate the roles, responsibilities and accountabilities within the land sector;
- Greater emphasis on awareness, education and communication campaigns that maximise the learning outcomes for all stakeholders; and
- Revisiting the conventional approach for capacity development through innovation and creativity to ensure longer term impact and sustainability.

All of these factors will require careful scrutiny and prudent judgement within the design of a relevant, efficient and effective land program that will support and deliver long-term impact and sustainability for the Government of Vanuatu, the Ministry of Lands and all stakeholders involved.

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Appendix 1
VLUPP Review
Terms of Reference

EXCERPT FROM REQUEST FOR TENDER (RFT) SHORT-TERM LAND REFORM INITIATIVE: ACTIVITY #4

Review of the Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project (VLUPP) 1995-2000

Background

The Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project (VLUPP) commenced in August 1995 and was completed in August 2000. The Government of Australia funded the project at a cost of A\$5.025 million and the Government of Vanuatu provided counterpart funding of A\$446,345. The project sought to build the capacity of the Vanuatu Government, through the Department of Lands, to plan sustainable use of its physical resources. The project helped the establishment and operation of the Vanuatu Land Use Planning Office (VLUPO) with the Department of Lands. The Office became the prime mapping resource centre in Vanuatu as well as a supporting agency for natural resource line departments. The tool for improved mapping was an upgraded Vanuatu Resource Information System (VANRIS).

The project comprised five components with the following objectives:

1. *National land use planning*: to establish the VLUPO, build land use planning capabilities at a national level and promote a land use planning service to other agencies and users of natural resource information. The VLUPO was also to ensure consistency between different levels of planning.
2. *Provincial strategic planning*: to build land use planning capabilities in the provinces.
3. *Community-based planning*: to develop and employ a Community Area Resource Management Approach (CARMA) based on participatory rural appraisal method to develop and promote a sustainable system for resource management planning at the community level.
4. *Project Management*: to ensure efficient implementation, monitor and evaluate project progress and provide regular reports on progress against objectives to both governments. The component was to set up a Project Coordinating Committee (PCC) to oversee and implement coordination.
5. *Improving land lease administration*: to strengthen the administration of land lease registrations.

The sustainability of VLUPP in 2000 looked to be promising due to the implementation of a locally based program called the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI). VLUPO was to be the main source of information for development of provincial economic plans plus techniques developed by VLUPP.

The Managing Contractor was AACM International.

Purpose and Objective of the review

The purpose of the review is to evaluate the impact of the Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project (VLUPP), since its completion in 2000, on the planning systems and capabilities of relevant resource management authorities at the national and provincial levels. Was there an improvement in land use planning/management by the relevant authorities and *can this be attributed to VLUPP?*

Broadly, the review will:

1. Summarise activity achievements and lessons learned across the five project component areas as of August 2000 (VLUPP's completion date), utilising the existing performance monitoring and review information and any additional evidence available during the review process. This will provide a baseline from which to assess further inherited outcomes from the project.
2. Assess developments in national, provincial and community-based land use planning and management since 2000, and whether these can be attributed to VLUPP activities. Specifically, the review should examine:
 - The status of Land Use Planning Office activities since VLUPP's completion in 2000, including the employment of a national land use planning policy;
 - The status of the VANRIS system and database and relevant national, provincial and sector applications;
 - VLUPP's effect on planning capabilities at the provincial and community-based levels and whether this been sustained (e.g. through provincial plans and Community Area Resource Management Action Plans);
 - Use of CARMA as an effective vehicle of awareness raising;
 - Land Lease Administration improvements as a result of VLUPP; was the organisational strengthening provided by the project to the Department of Lands effective?
3. Provide recommendations for incorporating lessons learned into the design of a land management component for a 5-year Vanuatu Government land reform program.

Methodology

It is suggested that the review comprises of three phases as follows:

Phase 1 consisting of assembling a review team; a study of relevant documents; an examination of available data; detailed development of methodology including work planning. An in-country visit will be necessary.

Phase 2 consisting of carefully planned fieldwork, qualitative and quantitative, as stated in the methodology.

Phase 3 should focus on analysis of data and qualitative findings, as well as writing of a draft report, which will conclude on the impacts of the AusAID-funded land reform intervention, draw lessons learned and make recommendations for a longer term land reform program and, if appropriate, for development interventions in general.

The draft report will be reviewed by the Land Steering Committee and relevant stakeholders. Based on this feedback, the final Review Report will be prepared.

Institutional arrangements:

(a) General direction from AusAID and the Steering Committee, and particular day-to-day direction from the Director General.

Geographical scope:

VLUPP was implemented broadly, from a Port Vila office. Provincial planning training was provided to all provinces. Site visits to key provincial headquarters will be necessary to assess provincial planning capacities.

Timeframe and Duration:

Land use planning is an immediate concern for Vanuatu, and a core factor in the development of a range of land reform initiatives such as subdivision controls, foreshore reserves and land lease management. This review should be undertaken concurrently with the compliance audit of land leases, with a draft report prepared in time for scoping and design of a longer term land reform program.

It is anticipated that the duration of this activity will be for no more than 6 weeks.

Technical assistance requirements

- One international TA
- One national TA with background in land use planning.

Persons to be consulted

Department of Lands; Provincial/physical planners and Physical Planning Unit and relevant community-based land use management committees.

Appendix 2
Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes

Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
	Goal: “An improved land use planning system to achieve sustainable development and conservation of natural resources”	No change	Verifiable Indicators (VI) – Land use plan(s) guiding the management of resources within their physical capability Means of Verification (MoV) – Appraisal of land use plans and inspection of target localities		The goal and purpose of VLUPP were achieved. National land use guides were being used to assist the decision-making on land leases. Provincial land use guides were being incorporated into regional economic development plans. Community level resource management plans and associated action plans (CARMAP) were being utilised. REDI came at the right time for VLUPP as it strengthened the role of LUPO as the main provider and source of information for the preparation of provincial economic plans and the role it has played in the community consultation processes involved. Most Departments were registered VANRIS users and could produce maps and provide data for the database. The goodwill and cooperation of the key natural resource departments (Forestry, Agriculture and Environment) ensured that the Project worked well – even though DOL was not seen as an implementing agency for natural resource management. The national and provincial TAGs were seen as an effective mechanism to coordinate the various sectors and NGOs prepared and coordinated the implementation of the strategic economic development plans which included land use guidelines and maps. Problems with land leasehold administration were identified and manual processes introduced to improve processing speed and efficiency. A computer-based document tracking system (VANLATS) was introduced but no reference was made to the system in the PCR.
	Purpose: “Establish a National Land Use Planning Office with capabilities in database management,	No change	VI – An institutional structure with skilled personnel, managing databases and producing land use		The capacity of Pacific Island nations like Vanuatu to absorb development assistance (DA) over relatively short timeframes (< 5 years) remains a significant constraint to effective aid implementation. The strategy used during VLUPP was to restrict the structure of the DA team to one long-term advisor and provide strategic inputs using short term specialists. The effectiveness of such an approach needs to be re-evaluated, particularly when specialist computer-based systems like VANRIS and VANLATS are involved or

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
	including the use of VANRIS, and land use planning at national, provincial and local or district levels”		plans which serve national, provincial and local interests MoV – Review the institutional arrangements and the quality of database management and planning		significant system process re-engineering is required. The Project noted that insufficient resources were made available (or assigned) to fully address the inherent problems with land leases and that a longer program of assistance was warranted.
	Outputs & Activities				
	Component 1: National Land Use Planning Objective: not specifically stated in the PID but encapsulated throughout the component description	Objective: “To establish the VLUP, build land use planning at a national level, promote a land use planning service to other agencies and users of natural resource information and ensure consistency between different levels of planning”			
1.1	Output: Land Use Planning Office in the DOL, Ministry of Natural Resources	No change	VI – A fully functioning office providing efficient resource information and planning services MoV – An	KRA1 PEG/ MES	A Land Use Planning Office (LUPO) was established in the DOL and was functioning well with a trained complement of 3 professional and 2 support staff. Processes were developed to meet public and private sector needs for land use information and planning services. A decision to create LUPO was made by the GoV mid-way through the Project and it was funded through DOL budget allocations, although budget delays and shortfalls were encountered from time to time (e.g. change of governments, budget approvals) and these affected the pace of implementation. At project completion, a recurrent budget for LUPO

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
			inspection of the office. Interviews with clients		was assured for the medium term. The <u>sustainability</u> of LUPO was dependent upon: - Continued recognition and acceptance by the Government, DOL, other national government agencies, provincial governments and - Ability to contribute, in a credible way, to socio-economic development through the provision of spatial data on natural resources, maps, land use guidelines and policy. The likelihood of <u>sustainability</u> would have been improved if the functions of LUPO were mandated and supported by legislation. There was no legislation in place for the enforcement of the planning requirement by the end of the Project. This was viewed by some in the GoV as a weakness because legislation was seen as a key to enshrining the planning functions into practice.
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 5 specific activities (1.1.1-1.1.5) to achieve Output 1.1.	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarised simply as “Land Use Planning Office activities”. For specific details on achievements and changes to activities, refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. <u>Summary of Changes</u> - No change to activities in AP 1996-97. - Budget adjustment to account for higher than budgeted office costs in Vanuatu (AP 1997-98). - Activities either adjusted or added to ensure (AP 1998-99): ➤ LUPO functions are mandated and supported by legislation, ➤ Training program for LUPO staff and VANRIS users extended to the end of the Project (also in AP 1999-00), and ➤ Training needs are reviewed, assessed and revised.			

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1.2	Output: VANRIS system development and maintenance	No change	VI- All systems working MoV – Inspection of systems	KRA MES	Considerable resources were devoted to VANRIS development and maintenance – far more time than was originally planned. The system was driven by specialist software and knowledge of database software (e.g. FoxPro and Access) and MapInfo was necessary to operate the system. Three versions of VANRIS were developed during the first 3 years, it was subsequently redeveloped in 1999 and both hardware and software upgrades were carried out in 2000. VLUPP ‘transformed’ VANRIS from an unused expensive product to an accessible and useful one which produced tangible outputs. Three specialists (i.e. Physical Land Use Planner, Resource Management Officer and Database Manager) were trained by VLUPP and skills were provided to a diverse group of Ni-Vanuatu application users - 45 in total. Continuing development of VANRIS was needed by the end of the Project – underpinned by IT training for ni-Vanuatu and the availability of a sound IT support service. The <u>sustainability</u> of VANRIS would therefore depend upon external support and the availability of a small number of highly skilled staff who could provide ongoing training to existing and new users. The vulnerability of LUPO to staff turnover also extended to the mapping unit in DOL.
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 6 specific activities (1.2.1-1.2.6) to achieve Output 1.2.	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarised simply as “VANRIS System Maintenance”. For details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. <u>Summary of Changes</u> ▪ No change to activities in AP 1996-97. ▪ Activities and inputs either adjusted or added to (AP 1998-99): ➤ Train staff in system redevelopment and dataset upgrades in order to maximise use and impact of VANRIS system as a resource management tool for managers, ➤ Train LUPO database manager and selected VANRIS users in system maintenance troubleshooting and build			

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		in-house capacity for system modifications, and ➤ Determine accurate central and provincial maintenance costs for the system. ▪ Activities included to (AP 1999-00): ➤ Upgrade software front-end to VANRIS to make the system more user-friendly and upgrade system hardware as equipment was reaching the end of its life.			
1.3	Output: Database and land use planning systems appropriate for national, provincial and sector applications	No change	VI – Systems installed and working. Land use planning capability. MoV – Inspection of systems	KRA MES	The PCR reported that ‘material’ was held in LUPO and was readily available. However, the PCR did not specify what type of material (presumably operational manuals, training guides etc.) or the types of thematic layers included in the database. An active user group existed at the time of Project completion and a user hot line service was established and functioning within LUPO. Some of the datasets were of poor quality or very patchy and improvements were necessary. Deficiencies in stream data were given as an example. Suggestions were made to improve database functionality and user-friendliness for layer creation and importing data and also for enhancing the economic analysis capabilities to support the REDI development planning activities (see commentary on Component 2). The scale of the VANRIS data was 1:50000 which indicate the limitations of VANRIS for more detailed planning. The usefulness, or otherwise, of the satellite imagery for land use classification and land degradation studies and the effectiveness of the training provided for hazard and land use risk mapping was not mentioned in the PCR. It was anticipated that the database would be <u>sustainable</u> and kept up-to-date based on an assumption that an ongoing maintenance support budget would be allocated and a small number of highly trained staff was available.
	Activities: The Logical Framework	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarized simply as “Database and land use planning systems”. For			

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	identifies 8 specific activities (1.3.1-1.3.8) to achieve Output 1.3.	details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. Summary of Changes - No change to activities in AP 1996-97. - New activity to produce an additional layer in the VANRIS database to assess land uses and associated land degradation derived from satellite imagery (AP 1997-98). - New activity to provide training in hazard and land use risk mapping for LUPO and DAH (Agriculture and Horticulture) land use planners to increase analytical and research skills for problem identification and resolution using tools supplied by the Project (AP 1998-99).			
1.4	Output: National Land Use Plan	No change	VI – Maps and reports MoV – Inspection	KRA MES	The Project emphasis was on planning for sustainable land use and a key output was the formulation of a National Land Use Plan (NLUP). In effect, NLUP was defined by the GoV and VLUPP as a series of land use guidelines supported by zoning maps and a National Land Use Planning Policy (NLUPP) which was acceptable to the GoV. They were developed using a collaborative sectoral approach and key decision makers were kept informed and involved in the process. Top priority was given to the preservation of prime agricultural land and a four tier-grading system was used to differentiate each category of agricultural land (from best to marginal). The intention was to use NLUPP as a reference document for line agencies involved in the assessment of uses for alienated land, most of which was being used for agriculture. It was not known by the end of VLUPP whether NLUPP was used as input to the formulation of resource and environmental legislation. As there was no overall planning authority mandated by legislation to be responsible for national land use, it was not considered appropriate to define land use without consideration of land tenure issues. Land tenure issues were outside the scope of the Project. The view of VLUPP was that NLUPP would only be further developed if outside

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
					assistance was provided. This raises an issue concerning the <u>sustainability</u> of a national/ provincial land use planning process and the real level of government commitment. Sustained efforts were required to brief new provincial governments on the importance of national/ provincial plans and policies and to ensure provincial planners were provided with materials (training guides and resource manuals) to support their work. No economic analysis was undertaken for VLUPP since the prevailing view at the time was that ‘planning projects do not lend themselves to this form of analysis.’ Even so, VLUPP was asked to undertake a commodity survey (presumably a national survey) by the National Planning Office for economic modelling purposes. The land use profiles prepared by VLUPP should have provided more comprehensive technical and economic information on development opportunities in Vanuatu. Resource management planning is a central part of economic development and LUPO was fulfilling a significant support function to the GoV in this regard by the end of the Project.
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 10 specific activities (1.4.1-1.4.10) to achieve Output 1.4.	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarized simply as “National Land Use Plan (Policy)”. For details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. <u>Summary of Changes</u> ▪ No change to activities in AP 1996-97 ▪ Activities either adjusted or added to (AP 1998-99) ➤ Brief new provincial governments/ officials (change of provincial governments) on the concept of VLUPP/ LUPO and the importance of national/ provincial plans and policies, ➤ Emphasize and reinforce rationale and implications of planning and policy, land use responsibilities and compliance, ➤ Provide simple training materials and			

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary			Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
		resource manuals for provincial planners, and ➤ Satisfy a request from National Planning Office for a commodity survey for economic modelling.		
	Component 2: Provincial Strategic Planning Objective: not specifically stated in the PID but encapsulated throughout the Component Description	Objective: “to build land use planning capabilities in the provinces”		
2.1	Output: A planning capability in each province	No change	VI – Provincial plans prepared and updated by the provinces MoV – Inspection	KRA MES/ PEG
	Activities: The Logical Framework	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarized simply as “Planning Capability in each Province”. For		

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
	identifies 5 specific activities (2.1.1-2.1.5) to achieve Output 2.1.	details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. Summary of Changes - No change to activities in AP 1996-97 - New activities added to (AP 1998-99) - Intensify training of planners and new TAG members and - Formalize responsibilities in duty statements in order to emphasize provincial role in resource management planning and reinforce that CARMA and CARMAP implementation should be part of a normal service delivery activity. - Activities adjusted to encourage Directors to include TAG duties in ToRs so that officers recognize these roles should be part of the extension service (AP 1999-00)			
2.2	Output: Provincial or strategic plans	No change	VI – Maps and reports MoV – Inspection	KRA MES	Provincial planning was supposed to be a key feature of VLUPP and yet the effectiveness of Component 2 was not evident, even towards the end of the Project. Poorly staffed and funded provincial administrations meant that staff were not inclined or motivated to work with VLUPP - presumably because the benefits were not appreciated and the ‘rewards’ for a heavier workload never eventuated. The provincial planners were central to the preparation of the provincial/ strategic plans but there were problems in some provinces when the positions were not filled by competent planners - although this changed under the Comprehensive Reform Program and with the advent of the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI). Notwithstanding these constraints Provincial Atlases were produced by VLUPP. When REDI was introduced it created a mechanism for the National Government to engage with and work for the provinces. As a result, the provinces became the focus for natural resource planning/ management, the level of cooperation improved and the efficiency and effectiveness of the activities under Component 2 increased. REDI called for the formulation of Provincial Economic Development Plans. The

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
					National TAG formed under VLUPP chose Tafea Province as the pilot site and worked closely with the provincial TAG to produce the first plan. The plan included land use guidelines prepared by VLUPP and the provincial government worked closely with communities using a participatory planning process. This provided a dual opportunity for VLUPP to demonstrate a linkage between resource planning/management and economic development and to raise the awareness and understanding of the Project objectives at all levels of government. The model for Tafea Province was subsequently accepted for community and provincial economic planning throughout the country. The view of the Project was that the preparation of provincial and strategic plans was <u>sustainable</u> so long as REDI remained active and budget and investment allocations were made for implementation. At the time, provincial governments were allocating large amounts (1-2 million Vatu) of their budgets to REDI activities. REDI utilised the outcomes from VLUPP to define provincial economic development plans and identify strategies for implementation with provincial government support. The coordination of REDI activities in the provinces is currently the role of the provincial planner. The PCR noted that there were many <u>lessons learnt</u> from the REDI initiative – an initiative that was driven by ni-Vanuatu, nurtured through a National TAG structure, ‘home grown’ by using Tafea Province as the pilot site and one that could be easily replicated with National Government support. Full development throughout the country would depend upon the expansion of REDI nationally. NZAID provided significant support to REDI during the period 2000-05.
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 9 specific activities (2.2.1-2.2.9) to achieve Output 2.2	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarised simply as “Provincial or strategic plans”. For specific details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. Summary of Changes ▪ No change to activities in AP 1996-97. ▪ Activity expanded to include incentives for			

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		provincial governments to adopt planning such as: altering the position of provincial planners to that of central government employee, provincial funding through strategic plans, access to donor funds and NPO funding (AP 1998-99).		
	Component 3 Community Area Resource Management Plans Objective: not specifically stated in the PID but encapsulated throughout the Component Description	Objective: “to develop and employ a CARMA approach, based on participatory rural appraisal methods to develop and promote a sustainable system for resource management planning at community level”		
3.1	Output: Landowner awareness of land use planning and resource management issues	No change	VI – Land owners conversant with land use planning and resource management issues MoV – Interviews with land owners Content of community-based plans	KRA MES The project trialled a fully consultative community planning process based upon a modified Participatory Rural Appraisal (PRA) technique developed specifically for the Vanuatu context. The Community Area Resource Management Approach (CARMA) worked through traditional communities and was accepted by the GoV as a standard approach to community consultation for resource planning/ management. In most cases, CARMA had its own momentum and was considered an excellent way of raising the awareness of land and resource issues at community level. Community engagement and interaction was good, although communities were often frustrated by slow follow-up. The role of the TAG was central to the success of the CARMA process. The TAG also provided a feedback mechanism to improve the quality of provincial and national planning but their participation was often restricted by a lack of financial and provincial support.

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					However, considerable resources were committed to the process and the corresponding formulation of Action Plans (CARMAP) – Output 3.2. The Project envisaged that these types of activities would continue and be <u>sustainable</u> only if they were brought under the umbrella of REDI.
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 6 specific activities (3.1.1-3.1.6) to achieve Output 3.1	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarized simply as “Land owner awareness of land use planning and resource management”. For specific details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. Summary of Changes No change to activities in AP 1996-97. Activity expanded to acknowledge that non-government TAG members should be paid field allowances from provincial funds (recorded in MTR 1998 but not in AP 1998-99).			
3.2	Output: Community Area Resource Management Action Plans	No change	VI – Resource management plans being implemented within target areas MoV – Field inspection of target localities	KRA MES	Project inputs were re-allocated in an attempt to institutionalise the CARMA and CARMAP processes within the targeted areas. This was supported by more specifically targeted education programs to improve and reinforce CARMA and provincial planning, to promote greater involvement of provincial people in the process, encourage community ownership and community engagement in implementation, monitoring and evaluation. Activities were also adjusted to involve Area Council secretaries, chiefs and communities in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of CARMAPs to reduce the workload demands on LUPO. The provincial TAGs were central to resolving planning and implementation issues. The view of the Project was that the linkage between the community and provincial plans was still <u>inadequate</u> by the end of the Project. This reflected a weakness in central support for the provincial governments and was an issue that could only be addressed by the National Government. It was envisaged by the end of the Project that CARMAPs would probably not continue in their present form unless support was provided under REDI. REDI and the TAGs would remain strong politically and would deliver quality results so long as they remained ‘out of

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					centralised supervision and control.’ Provincial TAGs still exist and now report directly to the Prime Minister.
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 14 specific activities (3.2.1-3.2.14) to achieve Output 3.2	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarised simply as “Local Resource Management Plans and CARMA and strategic plans”. For specific details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. Summary of Changes ▪ No change to activities in AP 1996-97. ▪ Increase and reallocate TA resources (from Resource Economist) for the institutionalisation of the CARMA process (AP 1997-98). ▪ More specific targeted education programs to improve and reinforce CARMA and provincial planning, to promote greater involvement of provincial people in the process, encourage community ownership and community engagement in implementation, monitoring and evaluation (AP 1998-99) ▪ Activities adjusted to involve Area Council secretaries, chiefs and communities in implementation, monitoring and evaluation of CARMAPs to reduce demand on LUPO (AP 1999-00)			
3.3	Output: CARMA and strategic planning at Area Council level for two pilot	Added in AP 1998-99 to broaden coverage of	VI – Not included MoV – not included	KRA MES	The CARMA process was extended in the later stages of the project and this new Output was added to extend the coverage from a single community to area level. The first pilot area was situated on Nguna Island. New activities were designed to test a model that would expedite multiple community consultation processes. Area Councils and communities arranged and conducted the

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
	areas	CARMA from single community to area level			process under TAG supervision so that greater coverage could be achieved and effectiveness increased. The TAG was seen as the key to the resolution of planning issues. The PCR did not report any specific results and/ or outcomes from the AC CARMAs – except passing reference to the successful trialling of Area Council planning ‘in each province’ with good geographic coverage. Additional inputs were assigned to the Community Development Trainer in order to complete and document the lessons learnt from the AC CARMAs and to assist the Ministry devise a strategy to link National TAGs to Provincial and community TAGs. The whereabouts of this report was not known at the time of project completion.
	Activities: The change frame did not list any activities to support the achievement of Output 3.3	The PCR did not report this additional output either at output or activity level. This output was added very late in the project and it is doubtful any progress was achieved. May need to track other project documents to ascertain progress. Summary of Changes ▪ No changes reported ▪ Activities included to (AP 1999-00): ➢ Introduce CARMA and strategic planning at Area Council level for two pilot areas to expedite effective multiple community consultation processes. ➢ Include additional twelve months of input for Community Development Trainer to complete and document lessons from AC CARMAs and to assist the Ministry devise a strategy to link National TAGs to Provincial and community TAGs. This position was filled by a Ni-Vanuatu and was essential			

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		to the community activities and the inputs were significantly increased during the Project		
	Component 4: Project Management Objective: not specifically stated in the PID but encapsulated throughout the Component Description	Objective: “to establish a Project Coordinating Committee to oversee and coordinate implementation, ensure efficient implementation, monitoring and evaluation of project progress, and provide regular reports on progress against objectives to both governments”		
4.1	Output: Management systems which provide efficient project implementation	No change	VI – Efficient implementation of the project design MoV – Project monitoring and review	KRA DAA WE The project completion report (PCR) stated that the project was successfully completed but the quality of the PCR was very poor. Management and financial systems were computerised and of good standard and information was easily accessible. Payment milestones were predominantly linked to reports and training workshops. The structure of the Project team created its own implementation problems given what was a complex and ambitious project design. The key issues were the overloading of the team leader with administrative and management duties at the expense of the technical advisory role that was required and little understanding or ownership of a large number of multiple short-term advisor inputs with only a small number of counterparts. These issues raise a question about how teams and the team balance of advisors should be structured for Pacific Island countries. The quality of Project monitoring and evaluation was poor. Key results areas were not defined in the PDD but were later rectified in the PID. No activity schedules were devised in the PID and this made it difficult to objectively quantify project activities by independent reviewers. This was not rectified during project implementation. The Annual Plans provide more detail but the measures of performance do not reflect the quality or effectiveness of outputs merely the number that were produced. Success should be measured by the standard of the capability introduced, the quality of the systems and

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					not the number of reports. There were also deficiencies with the performance indicators and there were inconsistencies in advisor reporting (e.g. a draft completion report was prepared for Component 5 but was never finalised and lodged in the archives). On a technical note, however, VLUPP received international recognition from UNESCAP for 'best practice' in integrating environmental considerations with economic decision making.
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 5 specific activities (4.1.1-4.1.5) to achieve Output 4.1	The PCR did not report at the individual activity level. Key activities were summarised simply as "Management systems which provide efficient management, Project Implementation Document, Quarterly reports, Training reports, Project Completion report". For specific details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. Summary of Changes ▪ No change to activities in AP 1996-97 and AP 1997-98. ▪ Activity changes to: reduce administrative workload of Team Leader, procure replacement vehicle and increase operational funding for LUPO to keep pace with increased rates (AP 1998-99). ▪ Funding allocated to procure vehicle for Luganville operations and ensure adequate budget levels are maintained for LUPO to meet costs in excess of DOL allocation (AP 1999-00).			
	Component 5: Improving Land Lease	Objective: "To improve existing processes, train staff in the improved processes, ensure that all records needed for lease-hold land			The PCR reports that VLUPP experienced a degree of angst at project inception as it was perceived to have been foisted upon the GoV without its clear support. There was also some misunderstanding that the Project sought to 'interfere' with land tenure issues. In a

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary			Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
	Administration This Component was added at start of 1997-98 Financial Year	administration are reliable, easily accessible, up-to-date and available to those who require them; and ensure that lease-hold land transactions are processed quickly and reliably and meet pre-defined performance standards”		way, these can be viewed as <u>design lessons</u> . They remain relevant for a land reform program.
5.1	Output: Improved Manual Processes	Added in AP 1997-98.	VI – - Processes clearly documented and understood by all participants - Clear guidelines and application forms available to processors and users 95% of time performance targets met - Backlog reduced - All relevant lease records locatable in 15 minutes - Review of legislation and recommendations presented MoV – Note: This list was not complete due to missing pages in logical framework: - User survey of regular users	KRA PEG The PCR reports that this output was only partially successful but does not state the reasons. It appears that it was under-resourced because the commentary says it was probably worthy of its own project support given the size and importance of the activity to land administration. It was envisaged that there would be new level of awareness to incorporate environmental and land use principles before the issuance of land leases as part of the provincial economic planning process. The draft completion report for this component was not availability at the time of this baseline assessment.

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary				Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
			indicating significant improvement and an effective system ▪ Departmental documentation ▪ Departmental performance records		
	Activities: The logical framework identifies 4 specific activities (5.1.1-5.1.4) to achieve Output 5.1	The PCR did not report at the activity level. Key activities were identified as follows: ▪ Design and build an application tracking process ▪ Reduce existing backlogs ▪ Plan and implement improved manual processes, and ▪ Evaluation of improved manual processes For specific details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. <u>Summary of Changes</u> No changes to activities in AP 1998-99.			
5.2	Output: Strengthened Organisation	Added in AP 1997-98	VI – Corporate and annual plans, training needs assessment and plans, training courses, office refurbishment MoV – Acceptance of plans, training evaluation reports	KRA PEG	This output was completed but the group that was trained was retrenched by the Public Service some months after the training as part of the Comprehensive Reform program which aimed to downsize the Public Service.

Code	Logical Framework Narrative Summary		Preliminary Baseline Assessment of Project Outcomes (as reported at Project Completion and analysed during Desk Review)
	Activities: The Logical Framework identifies 4 specific activities (5.2.1-5.2.4) to achieve Output 5.2	The PCR did not report at the activity level. Key activities were identified as follows: ▪ Increase management effectiveness ▪ Increase staff effectiveness ▪ Conduct training, and ▪ Do minor refurbishment For specific details on achievements and changes to activities refer to Annual Plans and Mid-Term Review. <u>Summary of Changes</u> ▪ No change to activities in AP 1998-99	

Note 1: MES – Maximize Environmental Sustainability, PEG – Promoting Economic Governance, DAAWE – Delivering Australia’s Aid Program with Excellence

Appendix 3
Review Schedule and Discussion Notes

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
Sun 4 May PM	VSTLRI Team - Nick Howlett, Sarah Mecartney, Reginald Garoleo, William Ganileo Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke	• Need municipal physical planning not zoning maps. • Need for more assistance in land use planning and development of VANRIS. • Government is non-committal to planning and informal settlements. • Awareness and education is essential for land in Vanuatu. • Planning is not recognised by GoV. • Elections in September 2008 at both national and some provincial levels. • VLUPP was too sophisticated for an effective community-based approach. • Provincial Governments need funding to sustain CARMA and CARMAP.
Mon 5 May AM	AusAID – Anna Naupa, Sara Webb Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke	• Where are all the planning professionals? • REDI appeared to be the default structural mechanism for introducing land use planning in the provinces once the TAG approach started to falter. • There was no effective link with the provincial government. • Status of the LMPC is/was still unclear. • Current program must be country-driven. • Key issue is that DoL staff must own the land reform program. • DG is the driver of the land reform program. • Still a perception that the Land Summit initiative is donor driven.
	NLSC – Russell Nari, William Ganileo, Ralph Regenvanu, Manina Packete, Michael Taurakoto AusAID – Anna Naupa VSTLRI – Nick Howlett Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke	• Need for continuation of land use planning in order to build up capacity again. • Purpose of VLUPP review discussed. • Discussion on role of Internal Affairs in the land use planning process. • Cultural Centre has been involved when issues of traditional sites need to be resolved. • GoV didn't know what to do with the project. No evidence the GoV really took the project on board and there was no evidence of land use planning being adopted. • VLUPP was not flexible enough. • Capacity at provincial level was poor – high turnover of personnel who were not qualified. • At the national level, project did not link well with policy decision-making, national policy was not related to project and there was no linkage with the National Plan. • The situation is even worse at provincial level. • Concept of consultants flying in and out for short visits was not satisfactory for technology transfer to counterparts, didn't see total value of the project, did not recognise the need for a budget allocation to maintain equipment in DoL and provinces. • GoV is weak in making decisions, needs to get its act together, but it is not an election issue. • Need for information and comprehensive land use plan. Proper planning is required and the provinces have the authority under the Physical Planning Act. • Customary owners generally have the final say.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		- Physical Planning is with Internal Affairs. Physical Planning areas are often declared but never gazetted. Important for plans to be gazetted. - No-one sees any value in planning. Bottom up approach is needed. Discussion focused on the need for adequate resources to do provincial and municipal planning. - Land use planning process needs to be revisited as part of the land reform program. - Consultation process is important and people need to agree on what is being done. Need to have one plan for communities, one for province and one for national. - Subsequent community-based plan was developed for Mangaliliu community after the project was completed, but this community did not build upon REDI initiative or utilise the TAGs. This work was undertaken as an initiative under the Heritage Development Act. - REDI has slowed down because priorities changed and it lacked support. - Extensive workload is being placed on physical planners in the provinces.
Mon 5 May PM	LUPO/VLUPP Project Staff – Alicita Vuti, Emil Mael, Edward Kaltimat, William Ganileo, Jerry Sampson, Lino Samiel, Katua Rezel Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke	- Project was perceived by project staff to have value and benefit. It was implemented throughout the country but the take-up by government was not as expected. Not integrated within DoL, budget was sliced and pilot projects were not continued. - Land use planning was not seen as a priority, focus was on management and not planning, project personnel were re-assigned to other positions after the project was completed. - Continuity after project completion would have impacted upon urban policy, physical planning priorities and further land use planning. - Currently the DoL Planning Section does not work with the provinces. No assistance given for CARMA. Most of the current focus in the provinces is on resolution of boundary disputes – estimated 13 disputes every day. - Change in the Project TL decreased momentum and replacement adopted a “holding position” attitude and showed no desire to institutionalise project positions or roles in DoL. - Provincial Affairs/Internal Affairs should have been involved in project design right at the start. - Training was mainly done in-house and attachment would have been beneficial. - GIS capability in VANRIS was not very good and there were too many upgrades to VANRIS during the project. VANRIS training was discontinued after project was completed because of lack of funds. Problem was teaching people who were not map readers in the first place. Electricity supply in provinces poor, compatibility of operating systems was an issue, data was outdated, designing changes was a major problem. - Land Use Planning Policy document was never endorsed by the CoM. Planning at a national level is more strategic in nature. Community-based planning was not picked-up. - Some provincial governments are not strong and find it very difficult to play a coordination role. Provinces did not pick up TAGs for land use planning and even the national TAG does not function now. Having a qualified land use planner in the provinces would have benefits. - Perception played a big part in bringing land use planning to a halt. DoL was more concerned about issuing leases and the pivotal role they were playing in developing the land market.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		• Project was perceived to be expensive and to keep it sustained was virtually impossible. • The technology being used was very advanced at the time and general familiarisation with computers was poor. This was a constraint to the project. It was hard to convince people to use computers. • People query the government's role concerning what they should do on their land. Thus the education process through the TAGs was seen as important. • Communities were suspicious about mapping their land. Concern that it would be sold off to others.
	ESCAP UNDP – Alistair Wilkinson, Karibaiti Taoaba Internal Affairs - Jerry Sampson Shefa Province - Emil Mael DoL - William Ganileo Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke	• UNDP were undertaking a scoping study to investigate provision of assistance to GoV to develop a national urban development policy. No further details have been forthcoming but a report was to be prepared.
Tues 6 May AM	Sanma Province (Luganville) DoL – Gordon Willie, William Ganileo Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke World Bank - Justin Haccius	• J4P World Bank program, long-term 5 year, community based program starting with the land tribunals and also focusing on gender and governance. • Possibly using the Sarete community as a pilot. • A briefing note on the planned activities of the J4P program was provided to the Review Team.
	Sanma Provincial Government – Secretary General Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve	• Felt there were too many layers of government, TAGs dysfunctional • Politics tends to dominate Area Councils and this has led to tensions between Chiefs and political appointments to the position of Chairman for Area Councils (e.g. South Santo Area 2 Council). • Agricultural Bank is a source of funding for communities.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	Likaveke DoL – Gordon Willie, William Ganileo World Bank – Justin Haccius	
	Luganville Municipality - Harry Tete (Physical Planner) Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke DoL – Gordon Willie, William Ganileo World Bank – Justin Haccius	• Lakatoro physical plan declared and gazetted. • Santo enforcing moratorium on leases. • LMPC advisory only. Wants more power. All decision-making power is currently vested in the Minister of Lands. • LMPC meetings placed ‘on hold’ during moratorium period. • There is a major need to strengthen the LMPC. Currently there is no planning expertise on this committee.
Tues 6 May PM	Sanma Technical Advisory Group (TAG) – World Vision rep., Gloria Tarileo (Sanma Dept of Women’s Affairs), Juliette Antas (Sanma Council of Women). DoL – Gordon Willie, William Ganileo World Bank (J4P) – Justin Haccius Review Team - Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke	• Note: Member ‘representatives’ attended in place of the actual TAG members. No representation from provincial government line agencies (e.g. Agriculture, Health etc). Sanma Provincial Planner did not attend any of the meetings as he was involved in Provincial Council meetings during the time of our visit. • Reported that communities have utilised TAGs but have not adopted a sector-wide approach. • Most requests for advice and assistance are for agricultural purposes. • Term used in communities is development committees. • Intention is to formulate 5 year community development plans. However, funding for projects is a concern as funding has not been released through REDI. • REDI is under Ministry of Provincial Affairs and the view was there was no need for a national REDI. • 80-90% of the funding is from donors. Exploring all avenues for funding (e.g. NGOs, Banks, Private Sector). • There was discussion about a 5 year integrated development plan for Sanma Province that has been submitted for consideration. Unclear about the status of this plan. • Need for legislation to support these new initiatives. • There are no computers to help with mapping. • Over 50% of NGOs are part of the Integrated Development Committee. • TAGs failed because of no money, poor attitude, no commitment (no requirement to report, no deadlines were set, different

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		priorities), to many committees (same people on all committees). • Poor delegation and reporting. • Population increase is placing pressures on land availability. • Migration/ informal settlements/government land/compensation are issues.
		Preliminary Assessment of Issues based upon Initial Impressions • Lack of appreciation amongst DoL staff (land lease section) of land use planning concepts. • Advisory and technical structures for land use planning too wieldy and cumbersome. • False expectations created by funding and resource levels during project implementation. • Land use planning processes not institutionalised as part of routine activities. • Technology support systems were experimental and evolved with no maintenance and support mechanisms in place. • Too many government and advisory layers. • Communities sought to circumvent constraints by seeking multi-funding sources, still used PRA techniques, sought individual rather than integrated advice. • Need to look at alternative models for community-based planning (e.g. World Vision model for community development). • Funding mechanism through REDI was too cumbersome and uncertain. Not sure where the allocated funds went and if there were vested interests in the process! • Professional education and training priorities in Vanuatu are in other discipline fields. Land management and planning are not high on the list. Scholarships are very limited and need to know what areas are being funded. • Integrated approach to land use planning may have confused communities about the aims and complicated their understanding of the benefits of land use planning. Introduction of sophisticated systems and concepts may have exceeded the absorptive capacity of communities. • Communities need to understand the need to consult with a number of advisors (technical experts) before they finalise community plans. In other words create a de-facto TAG to get a multi-disciplinary perspective on land use (i.e. consult with Agriculture, Health, Water on a 1:1 basis).
Wed 7 May AM	Sarete Community - ~ 15 community members attended. Sanma Technical Advisory Group (TAG) –World Vision rep., Gloria Tarileo (Sanma Dept of Women’s Affairs), Juliette Antas (Sanma Council of Women).	• It was a Vila-run approach with no follow-up from Lands. • TAG members rarely engaged with the community afterwards (and TAG members present verified this, saying that in their view once the project was completed they didn't think they had a role there any more and that their work stopped also). • There was not enough training, particularly around preparation of a community action plan. • The community members present also noted that they didn't know how to be pro-active to demand the services and support they required (partly due to the chiefly dispute and lack of cooperation among leaders but also because there is an increasing number of land disputes that are quite time-consuming). • There was some lasting impact of VLUPP in the community because there was a change and people did organise themselves a bit better. The health committee in particular has been quite active (partly because other programs like the Village Healthworker Program have helped to sustain the impact here). • See also <i>Appendix 4</i>.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke AusAID – Anna Naupa World Bank(J4P) – Justin Haccius, Matt <u>Zurstrassen</u> DoL – Gordon Willie, William Ganileo	
Wed 7 May PM	Vanuatu Agriculture College – Peter Napwett DoL – Gordon Willie, William Ganileo Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve Likaveke AusAID - Anna Naupa World Bank – Justin Haccius	• VAC responsible for the training of farmers. To gain entry into the College, students must prepare agricultural proposals and plans. Very few students in the College are from Santo. • There was confusion during the VLUPP project over the role of the TAG in Sanma. Not enough attention was given to public awareness and communication networks were very limited. • The connection between communities and the provincial government was very weak. • Agriculture is essentially an informal market. Decisions on which crops to farm are price-driven. • Discussed the 1996-2000 Forestry Project used VANRIS for logging concessions (not verified) and that there was a copy of VANRIS in Forestry, Agriculture. We were not able to inspect the VANRIS installation in Santo but were advised that it was not operational in Santo DoL office. We did visit VANRIS installation in Forestry in PV and it was operational but information was not being updated by DoL due to a lack of funding from GoV. Peter N. also reported that Malapoa College also had VANRIS but it is not operating. • Discussed pilot project in Tanna Province on aqua-forestry and that a user pays approach to data and information provision creates problems. • Discussed VANRIS/FORIS and noted that Forestry and Agriculture were the heaviest users of the system.
Thurs 8 May AM	GoV Central and Line Agencies – Yvannah Taga (Health), Simil Johnson (Statistics) Review Team – Doug Larden AusAID – Anna Naupa	• Discussion centred on the population census for 1999 and the detailed information it provides at village level together with location of schools (Education), clinics (Health), airports (Air Vanuatu) and roads (Infrastructure). • Agricultural census conducted in 2006 and crop survey conducted in 2007. • Population GIS built upon VANRIS with MapInfo providing the GIS functionality. • Difficult to get accurate information from NGOs at village level. This information is considered important. • Population GIS is difficult to maintain and funding should be allocated in budget for its maintenance. • SPC has supported the development of the Population GIS with the addition of new layers, provision of hand-held GPS capability, and strengthening of GOS capacity in Agriculture (Forestry). • DoL is not mandated to collect information for VANRIS and so the Planning Unit does not give it a high priority. VANRIS is

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	DoL – William Ganileo	dependent upon the willingness of other Departments/Ministries to provide information. DoL has a strong relationship with the Department of Statistics and can get access to sector-wide information. Statistics Act mandates Department of Statistics to collect the data. • There is no coordination of VANRIS activities. VANRIS Users Group has not been active for 4 years although there has been discussion to resurrect it with core members (Lands, Health, Education, Statistics, Forestry, Agriculture, Electricity, Telecon) and to undertake a user needs analysis. Core members did meet once in November 2007. • Approach in DoL involves two groups, one involved with VANRIS applications and the other specifically with MapInfo applications. Success depends upon willingness of other agencies to share data. No specific data sharing arrangements are in place at the moment. • VANRIS is a good system but its user friendliness is debatable (no tools). VANRIS was too sophisticated at the time for elementary users. No back-up/maintenance/budget to support its ongoing operation. Current scale of data in VANRIS is 1:50000 and not detailed enough for larger scale physical planning. • Individual line agencies need to update the data in VANRIS and this is where the system is breaking down.
Thurs 8 May PM	Donor Agencies – NZAID (Angela Hassan-Sharp, James Toa) JICA (Atsuko Orimoto, Ayami Suzuki, Albert Karlosaruru) Review Team – Doug Larden AusAID – Anna Naupa	• Initial discussion was on the details of the NZAID tender for the CLT and ICT projects and the likely timing of the process. • James Toa (NZAID) mentioned he was formerly a member of the VANRIS Users Group and knew about VLUPP. • NZAID funded Vanuatu Education Management Information System (VEMIS). Sustainability of project depended upon government ownership and resources but project came to a halt. • NZAID funded REDI for a number of years. The maps in the REDI report were provided by LUPO. • NZAID also funded Phase 1 of the CLT Project. Land Officers were good at the National level but not in the provinces. Provinces did not have sufficient support. • Discussion with JICA focused on the priorities of the aid program in the areas of marine protection, waste management, rural development, infrastructure and training programs in information technology, waste management, marine protection, fisheries, public works, and pollution control. • JICA funding TA in Internal Affairs (Urban Planning-traffic control) and senior volunteer as an IT specialist in land registration in DoL.
	Mangaliliu Community, Shefa Province – senior community leaders attended and provided a representative cross-section of views. Review Team – Steve Likaveke	• Community responses were quite similar to the views expressed about VLUPP by the Sarete community in Sanma. • Although the project was run from Port Vila there were greater levels of follow-up because of the community's proximity to Port Vila. However, while action plans were produced they could not be implemented in full because of funding issues. • Engagement of TAG members during project implementation was good because the access to technical expertise in Shefa Province was not as significant a constraint as in other provinces. However, the sustainability of the TAG structure and its functionality waned considerably because of the resource, administrative and changing development priorities as outlined in the 2007 REDI Stocktake report. • Training for preparation of a community action plan was sufficient but more would have been appreciated if resources and time had been made available by the project. Community members were aware of the services and support they needed. • There was evidence that the community in Mangaliliu were aware of the importance of land planning but it was not clear where this

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	DoL – William Ganileo	particular impact could be attributed to VLUPP. Extensive efforts, in conjunction with the National Cultural Centre, have been made over a lengthy period of time to prepare community zoning maps to support a submission to the World Heritage Commission on the recognition and protection of cultural sites in the area. • See also <i>Appendix 4</i>.
Fri 9 May AM	DoL – Russell Nari, David Moses, Alicka Vuti, William Ganileo, Michael Mangawai, Martin Sokomanu Review Team – Doug Larden	• This meeting was arranged to brief DoL personnel on the purpose of the VLUPP review and to obtain their views on the project. • The challenges of culture and ownership were highlighted in terms of what VLUPP was trying to achieve. These included: (1) the need for awareness programs to shift thinking about land use from an individual plot basis to a community wide basis (i.e. in other words, think at community level when implementing land use plans), (2) the need for a governance system that in the long-term should be linked with the provincial government and the chiefly system (i.e. governance should be driven by civil society and government together and not just government), and (3) financial and human resources must be available to underpin technical management and administration. • Governance system should focus on accountability. There is currently a high turnover rate given that there are a number of political appointees. Provincial governance system must be linked to chiefly system and will involve structural change and further staffing. • People on the ground did not know what the project was trying to achieve as they were not involved in the project design. Given that it was an integrated land use planning project, it was not clear how different lands personnel could get involved. Director of Lands at the time was the only representative from Lands on the PCC. • The project was seen as an activity that DoL did not have much control over. • Formal training is seen as a waste of time if the operational environment is not sound enough to accommodate it. • Training program was not suitable (i.e. context not relevant). Work experience attachments would have been more productive. • The replacement TL should have worked more closely with the DoL to institutionalise the new land use planning concept and ensure that a permanent position was created in DoL to carry the concept forward. • VLUPP did not have a proper exit and/or transition strategy. • Need to consolidate new land reform program, what it will entail, how do we get there, and what is required to get there.
Fri 9 May PM	Civil Society – Manina Packete (VNCW) DoL – Russell Nari, William Ganileo World Bank (J4P) – Justin Haccius, Matt Zurstrassen AusAID – Anna Naupa, Charles Vatu Review Team – Doug Larden, Steve	• Lack of understanding at the community level of the role of the TAG and the link with REDI. • Creation of Area TAGs and their membership caused disputes as the Area TAGs were not seen as representative of communities. • National Council of Women reported that the flow of information breaks down due to bad coordination and organisation. The challenge is how can dialogue be initiated with the provincial government? • Village structure already exists; designers need to get a better understanding of it. • Communities did not really understand the benefits of VLUPP. Rate of literacy is low. • Pressures are being placed on communities by those with vested interests. • Need to better understand the structures at provincial level, including the District system. • Need to better understand traditional system when introducing a project like VLUPP. • Successful projects – Governance program with FSP which targeted 8 communities directly. Must align with GoV policy agenda. • Programs put pressure on communities and generally it is because of poor or inappropriate designs, lack of ongoing funding to ensure sustainability. 80% of communities do not see the benefits and there is a tendency to revert back to subsistence farming after

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	Likaveke	the programs are completed. • TAGs still exist under REDI program but the emphasis is more on economic development rather than land use planning. There is no real linkage of local programs to government programs. Different levels of capacity in TAG representation. Church representation has caused problems in the past. • Successful communities identified as Nguna Island, Bunlab (sustainable), Ifira (successful Trust – delegation with high chief of the island supported by advisory group), Penama province (perceived as the best Province). • Need to focus on the priorities of communities. • Work of Melanesian Institute (Pentecost) on governance was noted and also the UQ Centre for Peace and Conflict Studies. • In communities, leadership plays an important role and those villages with tertiary educated graduates tend to show progress. • Churches are organised through the Vanuatu Council of Churches which lobby government for better policies based upon kastom, Christian principles and ready to accept change.
Sat 10 May AM	Port Vila Review Team - Doug Larden	• Preparation of workshop presentation Some Emerging Issues and Lessons Learnt upon Reflection – Project design could have been more responsive to needs – Agency ownership could have been much stronger – Agency/s mandates and responsibilities for land use planning were lacking – Appropriateness of technology may have been too sophisticated for most users – Effectiveness and adequacy of training programs questionable – Governance systems not really addressed – Community development models should have been investigated in more depth – Awareness, education and communication is fundamental – Government commitment and priority not evident – Monitoring and evaluation of implementation should be linked to relevant performance measures – Technical advisory structures too cumbersome – Understanding integrated land use planning concepts was too challenging. – Diverse project implementation environment
Sat 10 May PM	Port Vila Review Team - Doug Larden	• Preparation of workshop presentation
Sun 11 May AM/PM	Port Vila Review Team - Doug Larden	• Preparation of workshop presentation. This was in the form of a PPT which listed a number of key issues which needed to be discussed and confirmed.
Sun	Visit to Limap	• This visit was severely restricted by logistical and weather constraints at the time and although the team was able to “touch base”

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
11 May AM/PM	Community, Malampa Province Review Team - Steve Likaveke DoL - William Ganileo	with the community and some provincial officials there was not enough time to discuss the VLUPP project in detail. • Issues were raised about Project effectiveness not too dissimilar from those in other communities visited. • Limap community was working together in a cooperative manner and, unlike Sarete community in Sanma, was not divided over land disputes. • See also <i>Appendix 4</i>
Mon 12 May AM	Shefa Provincial Government – Emil Mael, Physical Planner (was a key project staff member on VLUPP) Review Team - Doug Larden	• There is an issue around whether the land use planning function in Vanuatu should be given to or shared with another agency? • The government planning function should have its own power and mandate. There are no powers under the Land Lease Act for land use planning. Physical Planning is under the Physical Planning Act. Municipalities have powers for urban planning. • The DoL has no legislative authority to collect land use planning information but played an advisory role to other line agencies • At the end of the VLUPP project, the LUPO was essentially disbanded and the office space, project equipment and personnel were all reassigned. • Project provided computers and map information to 6 provinces and many government departments and other organizations (not enough time was available during the review mission to inspect these installations – estimated that majority of installations were not functioning because of lack of support. • Users of VANRIS were only beginning to learn how to use the system by the end of the Project. There should have been follow-up and refresher training. System maintenance was also lacking after the Project was completed. • A data sharing arrangement between Agriculture and Forestry was put in place during the Project but after the Project finished the data sharing arrangement was stopped. • TAG function was transferred to REDI. Initially, the primary function of the TAG was land use planning but when the responsibility shifted to REDI the emphasis shifted to project planning to support REDI. REDI was more project-driven to facilitate economic development. In the provinces the focus was only on REDI and there was little strategic or provincial planning happening. • At the Area Council level most of the discussion was about how to respond to REDI. • At the time of the VLUPP the government priority appeared to be with land use planning so that the Minister of Lands could receive good advice on planning matters. The land lease function was also a priority as it was seen as fundamental to economic development through a vibrant land market. • A National Land Use Plan and Policy was produced but never mandated. The Council of Minister's at the time did not give land use a priority because it was not on the government's policy agenda. • When VLUPP was completed, the land use planning process stopped at the community level. 80% of rural areas still have not been introduced to the concepts of land use planning. • The support for VANRIS was non-existent after VLUPP was completed. When computers malfunctioned VANRIS became inoperable. VANRIS worked reasonably well during the Project when support was provided, user meetings were held and there were regular system updates. After project completion the user group did not meet regularly and user agencies may have started to pursue their own agendas. • A trend started to occur around 2000. There was a shift from VANRIS to MapInfo to support basic mapping functions in Land.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		VANRIS also had social data but it was superseded by PoPGIS and VEMIS which underpinned census and education applications. - At the provincial level the main focus was on education, health and agriculture (small projects but not land use planning). Only one province (Sanma) has a Land Office. - At the time, the TAG committee structures worked well. However, when the CRP was introduced it had a direct impact on funding and staffing of the TAGs and their ability to operate. - Interaction between project staff and DoL staff was poor. DoL personnel were antagonistic towards the Project right at the start because there was not a sufficient emphasis on 'traditional' land administration and registration. The issuance of land leases was considered more important than land use planning and there was no incentive to change the status quo. - VLUPP project team cooperated and worked well together at the outset and were highly motivated by an energetic TL. The key long-term counterparts (Emil Mael, Alicka Vuti, Alick Daniels) were the land use planning pioneers but any momentum that was built up during the Project was soon thwart by senior DoL staff. - It was noted that Agriculture has officers throughout the country and this may provide a better opportunity for introducing land use planning at the community level. Land use planning is often viewed by communities in the context of agriculture and forestry. - Administrative structures and responsibilities for land use planning/town and country planning/physical planning/urban planning need to be re-examined at all levels of government (national, provincial, municipal).
Mon 12 May PM	European Union – Nicholas Berlangier-Martinez, Adrien Mourges Review Team – Doug Larden AusAID – Anna Naupa	- Concern was raised by the EU representatives about demarcation of customary boundaries and the administrative issues associated with unfair land dealings. - EU programs have two main foci – (1) budget support for public finance management reform with a component related to land, and (2) productive sector development – initiative currently on donor table. Need to identify what should be done to increase job creation and economic growth. - There is an environmental component to the productive sector development initiative, which includes strengthening the Environmental Unit in MoL and looks at governance aspects of unfair land dealings from a national perspective. - Suggested that lessons learnt from VLUPP must emphasize the <u>practical</u> issues about land management. - Vanuatu has a good legal framework but no-one is bothering to apply it. - Climate change is being discussed under the National Adaptation Program (NAPA). DG for Lands is involved in these discussions - There are issues around the use of the term 'ownership' in relation to customary land. Communities have the right to use land but not to sell it. When donors get involved in 'land reform', multiple 'owners' of customary land begin to surface.
	VSTLRI – Sarah Mecartney DoL - Land Registry staff previously working on VLUPP – Katua Rezel, Lino Samiel Review Team – Doug	- Difficult to predict the future in terms of urban population trends. - Currently in Land Records, there are 3 computers for 10 staff (6 who are permanent and 4 on contract). Zero budget for stationery/files so the area is completely under-resourced. - Standard operating procedures and manuals need a complete revamp. - For the land lease administration component of VLUPP, the focus was on clearing the backlog. - VANLATS was a multi-user database application based on Microsoft Access and installed on computers from the floppy-disk and run from the computer with a central database on the DoL file server. If the system crashed it needed to be re-installed from the floppy-disk.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	Larden	• VANLATS was easy to use for monitoring and tracking files in the system. • When VLUPP commenced, computers had only just been introduced. Users were more concerned about learning the basic functions (e.g. Word). LUPO project personnel were familiar with computers but DoL staff personnel were not. • LUPO was located in a separate building to DoL.
Tues 13 May AM	Private Sector – Steve Tahi, Ernest Bani Review Team – Doug Larden	• VLUPP demonstrated the need for land use planning and the mechanisms required to implement the land use planning process. • There was a clear idea of what could be achieved from the project at the national level but not at the community level. • The land use options approach adopted by VLUPP was only suitable and worked for those who had available land and could apply the options. • There was too much emphasis at the national level, particularly with education and training, and not enough emphasis devoted to community level. It was a top down approach rather than a bottom up approach. • There was good cooperation between agencies during the Project but it has been suggested that the Project should have been independent of Lands. A constraint was that the Project suffered from the DoL view of land use planning which did not necessarily align with the broader picture. • VANRIS was not used to its full capacity. • VLUPP produced good outcomes but there was a lack of cooperation between DoL and other agencies. DoL was protective of its ownership of VLUPP. • There were no technical personnel available to continue VLUPP. • VLUPP needed more government commitment. • A greater awareness program was required (aimed at members of Parliament and Council of Ministers) • Steve T. spoke about his visit to Fiji to look at their Land Information System designed for Land Management, Forestry, Electricity and Telecom. System was very good and was designed to inform Council of Ministers. • Does Vanuatu require a large comprehensive land information system or just a series of small ones? The importance of such a system/s still needs to be justified because not everyone is convinced that it is necessary. New rules need to be put in place – priorities have not been set because the benefits have not been justified. • For VLUPP, (1) the Land Use Plan was an issue (2) DoL needed authority to obtain information from other agencies in order to produce it, and (3) agreement within government as to where the VLUPP should have been located. • VANRIS Users Group consisted of members of government agencies and NGO's. It coordinated information flows within VLUPP and was seen to be comprised of members that were the only users of the system. Needed to be a member of VANRIS Users Group to get access to information. • There was no leadership demonstrated in terms of VLUPP sustainability. There wasn't a particularly good relationship between LUPO staff and DoL staff to ensure the project was institutionalized within DoL. There was also no transitional strategy and there was some "finger pointing" towards the end of the project. • Once the Project was completed there was no consistency in terms of the application of VANRIS. Individuals had their own view and approach in terms of how VANRIS should be operated and managed. • Short-term visits for training on advanced systems were not satisfactory. This approach was OK for simple training but a full-time

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		permanent TA was required to assist with VANRIS. • Link between national, provincial and communities was weak. VANRIS was installed in selected provinces but the new planners have not been trained. The information is still there but the new planners are ignorant of what is going on. • The TAGs primarily consisted of government officers but the members of the TAG did not fully understand the role of the TAG. TAGS were subsequently overtaken by REDI. • GoV was very protective of certain information and there were problems of getting access to information. GoV should categorise which information can and can't be accessed. • Private sector wondered whether the user pays system for information still existed. • VLUPP was not successful in defining the land use planning function. Project design did not look at land use planning in a holistic fashion. Ownership was not presented as everyone's responsibility and so the Project may have appeared to have a narrow focus. • There has been a lack of awareness about the activities of VSTLRI which flowed from the Land Summit. National Land Steering Committee needs to be more proactive in getting the message out. Government wanted the private sector involved. Private sector view is that they should carry out the day-to-day functions and the government should focus on legislation, regulations and enforcement. • Need to assess strength of private sector (surveying, valuers). Valuer General is a statutory position under the Constitution. Government surveyors and valuers are not registered. Surveyors and valuers meet regularly but the professional bodies are still very much in their infancy stage. • In DoL, the functions of surveying and land lease administration are separate entities in the minds of the staff. • Need to get information from Ministry of Education to find out what field scholarships are awarded and where are the priorities.
Tues 13 May PM	Key VLUPP Informants Workshop VLUPP staff – Alick Daniels, William Ganileo, Emil Mael, Liz Pechan (by phone/email) VSTLRI – Reginald Garileo Review Team – Doug Larden	• This workshop forum was held to discuss the key issues that were emerging from the review mission. A PowerPoint presentation was prepared to guide the discussions. It outlined key issues based upon the outcomes of the field mission that were discussed under the following headings: Government policy agenda <i>Was land use planning on the national policy agenda in 1995?</i> • Land use planning has never really been a high priority on the government's policy agenda. The idea for the project came from the Rio de Janeiro Earth Summit Conference in 1992. The timing of the Project was relevant but the broader focus from government was different. • In Vanuatu, the government used the 5 year Development Plan and subsequently the CRP (1998-2003) for strategic development of the country. Health, education and agriculture were priorities. Government was more concerned about land development and the issuance of leases as a means of revenue generation and a stimulus for economic growth rather than the need for land use planning. This has virtually been the view since Independence. <i>Is land use planning still on the national policy agenda and what is its priority?</i> • After VLUPP was completed, the emphasis on land use planning stopped and the understanding of the concept was poor. However, resolutions from the Land Summit point to the fact that this has caused problems and land planning needs to be reinvigorated.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		- Land use planning needs to be put back on the agenda and more awareness and education needs to be carried out at both a provincial level (Councillors) and the national level (Parliamentarians). - Land use planning is seen as a delaying factor for quick investment returns and that is why it is not taken seriously. Governance systems <i>Has land use planning been institutionalized at all levels of government in Vanuatu?</i> - The land use planning function in DoL during the time of the Project was focused on training and the provision of advisory services and not on policy and policy development. The Land Use Plan and Policy Framework was not adopted and the Project team did not look at mandating the function. Provincial planners are in the Council payroll. Efforts have been made to institutionalize land use planning but nothing has happened. In DoL today, the planning function is incorporated with the valuation and enforcement functions. - The ni-Vanuatu team in LUPO worked very well together and capability was built in the team members. They saw the experience as an opportunity to further careers but the chance never came. LUPO was not included in the formal structure of the DoL. VLUPP personnel who were transferred into the DoL were not assigned to the planning function but filled the position of Principal Lands Officer. <i>Are national and provincial planners accountable for undertaking land use planning and is it formally part of their job descriptions? Who at the national level is responsible for land use planning?</i> - Provincial planners do not have a land use planning function incorporated in their job descriptions. At the national level, there is neither an official land use planner nor a position for one. There was once a national position but it was never filled. - To be effective, it was felt that there should be a separate land use planning function in the national government. Agency responsibilities and mandates <i>Is the DOL responsible for national land use planning and what is its planning capacity?</i> - The DoL is not responsible for national land use planning. The Department only plays an advisory role but advice is never called upon. There are no professionally trained planners in DoL. All staff have a land management background (USP, PNG) and focus on lease execution. <i>Does the DOL have a mandate to carry out land use planning on behalf of the Government of Vanuatu?</i> - There is no Town and Country Planning Department. If there had been, VLUPP could have linked into it. The Physical Planning Act covers the urban centres and provinces for urban development. <i>What is the status of the National Land Use Plan and supporting policy framework?</i> - A National Land Use Plan was produced and published in the form of an Atlas. Land use policy was also formulated but it never received approval from the Council of Ministers and there has been no push to have it approved by the DoL. Note: There is a need to revisit the formulation of the National Land Use Plan and develop a proper process by which investment proposals comply with the plan. This can only be achieved if the LMPC is strengthened and the National Plan is utilized by all decision makers in the

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		process in accordance with a National Land Development Policy. Agency commitment and priorities <i>Is the DOL committed to ongoing responsibility for land use planning?</i> • Commitment to land use planning by DoL is an issue at the operational level and to resolve this issue will require future leadership by the Director General of the Ministry. <i>Does DOL receive requests for advice on land use planning and who in the DOL provides this advice?</i> • Requests are received for advice on land use planning but there is no-one in the Department available to give this advice. Planning in DoL is a function currently undertaken on an ad hoc basis. <i>Is land use planning a priority in DOL and is it linked to land lease administration?</i> • Land use planning is not a priority in DoL but should be so. There is no requirement to undertake land use planning as part of the land lease administration process. Comprehension of land use planning concepts <i>Is the concept of land use planning well understood in Vanuatu?</i> • There was a serious issue concerning the level of training that was conducted at the pilot sites/communities, essentially lasting for one week. If there had been any impact, then elementary concepts of land use planning would have been understood by the pilot communities. Country-wide, the concept of land use planning at a community level is still not well understood because all the supporting and advisory structures for land use planning collapsed. • Impact at the provincial level was minimal because the resources (human, financial, technical, organisation) were not available. • VLUPP was essentially national-centric and, as such, the lead agencies (DoL, DoA) would have understood the concepts and principles of land use planning but did not support, or have the mandate, to take the planning function seriously. <i>What needs to be done to improve the rural community understanding of land use planning?</i> • Incentives are needed to generate the interest of key people (e.g. Provincial planners) in land use planning and to institutionalise the function in the provincial system. • All provinces have a provincial planner who should be responsible for the land use planning function in their portfolio. This position needs to be made permanent on the payroll of the Provincial Government. • Provincial planners need to obtain town and country planning experience. Specific training of key community players is also required. • A focus should be on provincial management of the land use planning process working with key community leaders. <i>Is the general concept of land use planning difficult for communities to understand?</i> • In principle, the concept of land use planning (i.e. the options-based approach) is relatively easy to teach to communities but in practice it is very difficult. In particular, the pressure on crop optimization can cause problems and conflicts when the land is not available in the first place. If information is provided on land quality it creates tensions in the community that can lead to conflicts.

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		• A major oversight of VLUPP was that it tried to change the traditional way of land use in communities. The basic community development model recognizes individual plots assigned to families for food production and common areas for religious, education and recreational areas etc. The VLUPP approach required a more integrated community-based approach to land use decision making. Provincial government responsiveness <i>Did the provincial government cope with the demands of the Project and what capacity was built?</i> • The provincial governments were not in a position to cope with the demands of the Project. There was always a high turnover of staff, the new provincial governments at the time were elected mid-way through the Project and repeated training of the provincial planners was required because they were political appointees and completely unfamiliar with the Project. <i>What extent was a land use planning capability introduced at the provincial level and what developments have occurred?</i> • Country-wide, there has not been much capability introduced at the provincial level. Shefa Province has been the lead province in declaring physical planning zones with Area Councils having considerable power in the decision making process. The early integrated plans formulated for Sanma province were based on the subsequent work of Emil Mael, Land Use planner on VLUPP. <i>How many provincial plans are being produced?</i> • It was reported that not many provincial land use plans have been produced since VLUPP (if any). The project did produce land use plans on regional basis and these were cited in Port Vila and Sanma but it was clear that these plans had not been updated. It was also reported that land use plans had been incorporated in the economic development plans produced by REDI but these were not cited. Technical advisory group functions and composition <i>Did TAG composition represent the requirements for land use planning and was there an imbalance of expertise?</i> • This varied from province to province. The representation was multi-sectoral (Lands, Agriculture, Water, Health etc) but the level of expertise was very much constrained by the qualifications and experience of the individual TAG members. It has been reported that there are only two professionally trained planners in Vanuatu with a land management background. <i>How often do TAGs currently visit rural communities?</i> • Subsequent to VLUPP completion, the TAGs did not visit re-visit communities because of resource constraints. It was also not clear whether TAGs made repeated visits to the pilot sites/communities during VLUPP or whether the initial visits were a “one-off”. • The Project also initiated a National TAG but it soon became evident that the TAG structures were an inefficient method of delivering development outcomes, due to inadequate capacity building and a failure to integrate existing community authority structures. It was envisaged that the REDI initiative and the associated structures/ mechanisms might incorporate the land use planning function and replace the role of the TAGs as formulated by VLUPP (see comments below). • It was reported that it was difficult to assemble the TAGs. Visits often depended upon completion of the community and/or Area Council action plans. Communities currently do not expect to interact with TAGs, instead will liaise with relevant Departments

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		depending upon needs and requirements (e.g. Agriculture, Water) <i>What impact did REDI have on the functions of the TAGs and does REDI include land use planning as part of its mandate?</i> • The Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI) did not include land use planning as part of its mandate. Initially the emphasis was on individual or small family units but today it is more focused on communities and their access to small grants funds. The prevailing view in Vanuatu is that individuals and/or small family units are the drivers of economic growth and communities are there to provide social protection and welfare. • During initial implementation of REDI there were many impediments. These included: lack of financial and human resources at the Provincial Council level and reluctance at national level to take ownership and responsibility for the guidance of the program. • There were initial successes at provincial level in terms of planning and coordination but capacity constraints remained unresolved and continued to stall progress. At local area council level and wards there were problems in administration, representation and efficiency. • REDI developed links between the Provincial Councils and the communities as this is seen as a positive outcome as it allowed Provincial Councils to better serve the social development needs of communities at the expense of supporting economic development directly. REDI also facilitated the coordination and sharing of information between key Government departments and local stakeholders at a provincial level. <i>What were the lessons learnt from the REDI initiative?</i> • REDI clearly demonstrated that sequencing of reforms was important. The incomplete work on decentralisation and the lack of institutional strengthening of the Provincial Councils has meant that several legal, human and resource constraints still need to be overcome. A comprehensive stocktake of REDI compiled by Soni, Alatoa and Harries (April 2007) highlights many of the weaknesses and challenges which caused the TAG structure to collapse and the REDI initiative to falter. These are: – Objectives and priorities are broad and not prioritised and rely on sophisticated integrated planning techniques which have not yet been realized in Vanuatu. – Central Government Ministries and Departments lack the commitment and resources to adequately implement REDI in its current form. – Alignment of REDI initiative with central government policy, including the CRP, PAA, MTSF and Millennium Goals is weak – reflecting the focus of provincial authorities on grass-roots service delivery. – REDI administrative structures, including the TAGs, not working as intended due to inadequate awareness of their tasks and responsibilities, inadequate capacity building, insufficient resources and poor monitoring and evaluation. – REDI program not subjected to any meaningful internal evaluation nor are there any inbuilt indicators of success. – REDI faces considerable implementation challenges and lacks adequate financial and human resources to administer program in current form at both national and provincial level. – Communications, financial resources and responsibility for REDI initiatives poorly coordinated between Department of Provincial Affairs, central line departments and provincial governments. – Inadequate provincial infrastructure including transport and communications is hampering integrated planning efforts and

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		grassroots participation in REDI activities. – External stakeholders, including the private sector, are poorly integrated in REDI initiatives and administrative structures. • There is a need for a more critical examination of the role and functions of the Provincial Council, the line Departments, the donors and the private sector in a way that addresses the strengths and weaknesses found via REDI. • REDI activities should be separated from decentralisation and provincial council reform with an increased emphasis on developing private business enterprises to empower rural communities and generate sustainable economic growth. • Consideration should be given to splitting REDI into three separate projects to strengthen (1) provincial councils; (2) line agencies providing enabling infrastructure and supporting community development; and (3) small private entrepreneurs and businesses. Community development models <i>Do community and area council development models/ committee structures cater for land use planning?</i> • Very few communities have good development structures in place. Nguna Island in Efate, however, was quoted as a good example which has built upon the foundations established by the early missionaries (1870s). The review team met with World Vision representative (Mackenzie) who is working with Sarete community on formulating a community development models but this particularly community is divided. • Quality of leadership in area councils and communities varies throughout Vanuatu. Communities which have good leadership by the chief and are not driven by political agendas tend to focus more on development issues and the structures in place work effectively. <i>Are collective/integrated plans being produced or are community initiatives driven by individuals?</i> • In the past, community initiatives were driven by individuals but some communities are beginning to take broader responsibility for integrated planning. Chief and senior leaders are beginning to understand the benefits of collective/ integrated planning. <i>Did the project “bridge the gap” between villagers and other agencies in the land use planning process?</i> • The key link used by the Project to “bridge the gap” between villagers and other agencies in the land use planning process was the TAG. During the Project, the link was tenuous at best and now the TAGs are not effective. The administrative structures to facilitate community interaction need reactivation but clearly in a different form. Awareness, education and communication <i>What could have been done to improve awareness, education and communication of land use planning?</i> • Training was the main focus during the Project. There were no major awareness campaigns, education programs and/ or communication strategies formulated. The media was used on occasions, live theatre groups were not used although primary schools were used as an avenue for education because land use planning had never been previously included in subject curriculum. <i>Was the consultation methodology adopted effective?</i> • The modified participatory rural appraisal methodology used by VLUPP was considered a suitable approach to effectively engage the communities in the development of land use action plans.

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		<i>Was CARMA an effective vehicle for raising awareness and developing action plans?</i> • CARMA was an effective vehicle but it was not given the necessary resources to ensure its sustainability. Project design and ownership <i>Did the DOL feel that the project design was forced upon it?</i> • The DoL felt that the Project was designed from “outside” and that it was forced upon them. • Initial frustrations towards the Project were mentioned in the Project Completion report mainly because the land administration (registration) function had been overlooked. • Similar negative feedback was obtained during the review mission although it was more in the context of a lack of relevance or need for land use planning. <i>Was there ownership of the project on the part of the DOL? How was this demonstrated?</i> • In short, the answer to this question from the group was no and the Project ownership (or lack thereof) issue surfaced in many forms. • Little incentive to institutionalize VLUPP either during implementation or after its completion. • No mandate given by government to conduct land use planning in Vanuatu and DoL did not seek that secure that mandate. • No-one in DoL was prepared to champion or promote the land use planning concept within government. • Little cooperation between the Project and mainstream DoL staff during implementation. <i>Was the project design adequate to achieve the goal and purpose of the project?</i> • Design focus was to achieve an improved land use planning system and the establishment of a land use planning office at national level to support the land use planning function throughout the country down to the community level. • To this extent, the Project design, together with several necessary modifications (changes) including the addition of a land lease administration component, was adequate to achieve the goal and purpose. • Design did not recognize the multi-elements which comprise a land system; including administration, management and development which ultimately led to the resistance from DoL. Project implementation environment <i>Did decentralization and changes in provincial governments impact upon project performance?</i> • Decentralisation had both a positive and negative impact on the Project. Without decentralization, the Project would have had extreme difficulty working in the provinces and with communities. The negative side was there were too many changes in provincial governments that led to changes in personnel. Policies and guidelines need to be established to address these instabilities. <i>Was the project scope and diversity too ambitious?</i> • The project design was overly ambitious (in terms of the country-wide scale of implementation and the number of pilot sites). The design also made some fundamental assumptions about the ability to grasp and the depth of local understanding of integrated land use planning concepts. This ultimately resulted in the Project’s lack of impact and sustainability in the longer-term.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		Appropriateness of technology <i>Why did VANRIS undergo so much development and change during the project?</i> • VANRIS was not a commercial system and in this regard it was still experimental. Several versions of VANRIS were developed during the Project and the development process was basically driven by user requests to make the system more user-friendly. <i>Was VANRIS too sophisticated for most users?</i> • Particularly for non-GIS users. The first GIS specialist on the Project team (Liz Pechan) did not conduct any provincial training because of difficulties understanding the capabilities and functionality of the VANRIS system. It was, therefore, extremely difficult for provincial personnel to learn how to use and apply VANRIS when the national local GIS counterpart was struggling with the more advanced aspects of the system. <i>Was VANRIS effective after project completion and what, if any, were the barriers to its use?</i> • The lack of funding to support ongoing maintenance and upgrading of VANRIS and to conduct related training to expand its application among potential users significantly reduced the effectiveness of VANRIS after project completion. Mapinfo (one element of VANRIS) was not introduced into the provinces and the VANRIS system crashed in Penama, Sanma and Shefa and was completely damaged by fire in Tafea. <i>What is the current status of the VANRIS system and database?</i> • The group reported that VANRIS Version 3 still existed in some agencies and organizations throughout Port Vila but the review team did not have time to visit the installations or view outputs from the system. However, the team did visit the Forestry Department where VANRIS was still being used for mapping logging permits but the database had not been updated for some time. It was not clear whether VANRIS suffered similar fates in other organizations as it was reported that DoL could not follow-up training and system maintenance because of a lack of funds. <i>For what applications has VANRIS been successfully used and by which organizations?</i> • VANRIS has been used as an analysis tool for POPGIS. Most agencies are now using MapInfo in conjunction with the VANRIS database which contains multi-layers themes, primarily for agriculture. Adequacy of training programs <i>National land use planning and policy development</i> • Considerable emphasis was given at the national level on training programs to support land use planning and policy development in the initial phases of the Project. • As the administrative and management workload of the Team Leader increased, this significantly impacted upon the role of the Team Leader in the principal role of Land Use Planning advisor. <i>Provincial strategic planning</i>

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		• Was not effective because of repeated changes in provincial personnel and difficulties getting TAG personnel together. <i>Community development planning</i> • The training programs for community development focused on practical measures for land use planning and action plan development, changing mindsets, moving from traditional approaches to integrated planning concepts and future planning. • Communities visited during the review mission did, however, complain that the training was effectively “one-off” exercises with little follow-up particularly on the preparation of community action plans. <i>VANRIS system development and user application</i> • See previous section on appropriateness of technology. <i>Land Lease administration</i> • The training for land lease administration focused on systems and processes and the VANLATS application for tracking documentation and was effectively conducted as on-the-job training. • After project completion, VANLATS was no longer used (floppy disk-based software) and the staff soon reverted back to manual processes. • Counterparts were critical of the short-term advisory inputs used for technology transfer, training and advisory services and felt that longer term inputs were required to work alongside counterparts in an on-the-job mode. Monitoring and evaluation <i>To what extent were the provincial planning and community development activities regularly followed up in the field?</i> • There was no formal monitoring and evaluation system put in place to ensure that community action plans were being developed and implemented to set standards (see also comments under Adequacy of training programs). • The general approach was to re-visit communities as the need arose or to liaise with different members of the TAGs to check on progress of the action plans. A number of Area Councils did not complete their development proposals. • The Project was ambitious in the sense that 8 geographical dispersed communities and 2 area councils were chosen as pilot areas. <i>How were the key performance indicators for the project measured?</i> • Very much a reporting based approach to monitoring and evaluation (i.e. no of reports, no of communities visited) with no key indicators chosen to measure outcomes, impact and sustainability. Post project resources, maintenance and support <i>What level of financial and human resources was committed to land use planning once the Project was completed and for how long?</i> • Government was mainly concerned with the transfer of the Project assets and was not committed to funding activities after the Project was completed. <i>Was a support contract prepared for ongoing maintenance and development of VANRIS and VANLATS after Project</i>

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
		<i>completion?</i> No support contract was in place for VANRIS and VANLATS at Project completion. SOPAC, however, provided project funds to implement MapInfo throughout the SW Pacific and Vanuatu was a beneficiary.
Wed 14 May AM	Director of Forestry – Liuo Mele DoL – William Ganileo VSTLRI – Reg Gareleo Review Team – Doug Larden	- Was involved in VLUPP using data from the natural resource inventory. VANRIS was part of the daily operation and he was happy with the design of the project and its applications. - Problem implementing maps in rural communities – land use was not sorted out (mainly tenure) and enforcing a particular land use plan in an area caused problems. - Discussed FAO project in agriculture. Project was very useful. Forestry office provided the data but it was 10 years old. Data not upgraded because DoL do not budget for VANRIS updates and upgrades. - VANRIS and MapInfo are still being by Department of Forestry. There is an obligation to maintain sustainable forestry. Areas are identified for agricultural production. It is not clear if the government has a mandate to select specific lands for particular production. Government needs to persuade the communities (holders of the land) to use it for alternative land use purposes. - Most of the information on communities is held by Government. There are long-term implications in working with communities. In many villages it will take time, the landholder makes the decision on land use not the Government. - Government enforcement can have rippling effects on communities and can create problems. What is needed is an agreement between government and the landholder on how to optimize land use. This agreement would require (1) identification of the customary owner (2) create the plan on how to deal with it, and (3) a cost-benefit analysis of the plan. - VLUPP looked at specific communities, the National Land Use Plan was captured in the REDI document and the land use plans were published in an atlas. - There is current activity in the communities because of development initiated by the Chiefs – this is the new approach. - The Resource Management Unit determines the forestry type but there is no development plan to provide guidance. Forestry is providing communities with advice on land use (e.g. Sandalwood plantation). - Agriculture doesn't have maps or a mapping tool to assist communities with food production. Peter Napweth was not impressed about the VLUPP report he received on the land use profiles. - Devolving responsibilities back to the provinces. National Government should provide policy and the provincial departments should implement. Reported that Finance is trying to establish itself in all the provinces. - Mentioned a project funded by the Venezuelan Government to establish nurseries in communities.
	Ministry of Lands, Environment Unit – Trinison Tari DoL – William Ganileo VSTLRI – Reg Gareleo	- Received copy of VANRIS software/database/MapInfo but not the hardware. Program was installed from one disk only on all the various user machines. VANRIS was used for some time but then the computer crashed. The computer crash was not reported back to Lands because the project was nearing completion and there was a lack of interest. - Group training was provided by LUPO team (William Ganileo, Matthew Tamar). Frustration expressed that there was not enough training. - VLUPP was perceived as a good project. Opportunities were there to cooperate on river management. Problem with project, however, were user perceptions that VLUPP was a map-making exercise and a lack of appreciation on the part of users on the

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	Review Team – Doug Larden	potential to use the information in the database for integrated land use planning. Awareness programs were needed to advocate the benefits of land use planning. • Project did not continue because of lack of funds. GoV was not prepared to provide on-going support and did not provide funds. DoL also did not allocate budget. • There were perceptions that the project was donor driven with the consultants doing much of the work. Focus was on meeting milestones. • There was no real attempt to integrate project team within the government hierarchy and a proposed transition structure was not implemented. • There were serious problems with VANRIS data cleaning and when data was lost DoL were not able to replace it. • ArcGIS was used to support the Australian Mapping. Defence provided ArcGIS but it was not successful. It was supported with about one week of training. USP teach GIS in Suva. • The question was asked why Defence did not use MapInfo. Any initiative with ArcGIS/Arcview was destined to stall because of no support. • The logic of introducing two GIS software packages in Vanuatu was questioned. VANRIS was based on MapInfo and there is commonality with this package throughout the Pacific countries (e.g. SOPAC initiative). A health project in Malampa used ArcGIS and a French GIS (APIC) is being used by UNELCO (Electricity Co.). • DoL is currently planning to develop expertise in two packages (MapInfo and ArcGIS/Arcview).
	Department of Forestry, GIS Officer – Phyllis Kamasteia DoL – William Ganileo VSTLRI – Reg Gareleo Review Team – Doug Larden	• Phyllis is a GIS operator in Forestry with qualifications in Forestry from PNG but no qualifications in GIS. Received training through VLUPP, from DoL and a variety of short courses. She reported that there had been no training for about 3 years (since 2005) • VANRIS users group existed until early 2000 and then was transformed into a GIS users group. Conflict within the GIS user group has caused it to become dysfunctional. • VANRIS was initially established during an earlier Forestry project in Vanuatu (Bellamy was the author of the VANRIS Handbook) and then continued to be developed during VLUPP. • Use of VANRIS essentially stopped in 2000 (not completely) and most people started to use MapInfo together with information from the VANRIS database. • VANRIS is still being used by Forestry for the mapping logging areas. Map data is stored in different places. • Getting funds to support computer and printer purchases is difficult. • A participatory land use planning project on Sustainable Forestry Management was run by GTZ. • VANRIS was installed in the provinces but they are not using it. • Long-term training is required for GIS and remote sensing.
Wed 14 May PM	AusAID – Nick Cumpston, Anna Naupa, Sara Webb, Charles Vatu	• Debriefing session on field mission and presentation of preliminary findings.

Date	Participants	Discussion Notes
	<i>Review Team</i> - Doug Larden	
Thurs AM 15 May		• Field mission completed

Appendix 4

Community Visits

VLUPP Review – Community Visits

1. Introduction

The Government of Vanuatu recognised the value and need for land use planning from the national level right down to the rural communities. The VLUPP project under Component 3 proposed a total of six (6) communities – one for each province - to be chosen as pilot sites for the application of the Community Area Resource Management Approach (CARMA) and the production of land use planning action plans (CARMAP).

Training in the application of the CARMA was conducted by VLUPP over a one week period and the subsequent production of the CARMAPs was to undertaken by the communities, in conjunction with and assisted by, the Technical Advisory Groups that were established by VLUPP to support the communities in this work.

The review team conducted one (1) day consultations with each of the three (3) communities involved in the CARMA/CARMAP pilots. These communities were Sarete community on Espiritu Santo Island, Mangaliliu community of Efate Island and Limap on Malakula Island. An open forum was conducted in each of the communities during which feedback was sought on the success of the pilot applications. Senior members and elders of these communities attended the meetings and all could recall the VLUPP pilots.

2. Land Use and the Village Community

Land use in Melanesia is often a very difficult concept to understand from a “western” perspective. Yet to a member of a clan or tribe it is simple because of their affinity with the land. This gap in understanding is often exacerbated by terminology used to describe land use and tenure which for each cultural perspective can also be quite diverse.

The notion that village communities such as Sarete, Mangaliliu or Limap are based upon communally-owned land may not be correct especially if the community is a group of sub-tribes or clans. This is because once a portion of the land has been allocated the authority over the use of the land rests with the allottee. The allocation by the tribe constitutes right of use which can be perpetually inherited by the descendants of the allottee.

A tribe or clan is a fragmented grouping of families in the sense that the chief, in some cases, is more of a ceremonial figure with no ultimate power over land use activities. This is why community targeted projects like VLUPP are generally not effective. Although the CARMA had noble and achievable objectives the target group for implementation should have been the families.¹³

3. Sarete Community, Espiritu Santo Is., Sanma Province – 7th May 2008

About twenty (20) villagers attended the review meeting and among them was the Number 2 Chief of the village, the village pastor and two women. The meeting was held in the village market house.

3.1 Landowner awareness of land use planning issues

¹³ This is the approach that was followed by the Rural Economic Development Initiative (REDI).

The Sarete villagers recalled only one CARMA workshop conducted in the village as part of VLUPP. The community was very appreciative of the workshop as it aided them in better understanding issues related to land use. They recognised that increased population growth in Sarete was placing greater demand on the land for their livelihood. They admitted however, that in a few years time many of the single youth will have their own families who will have to be allocated land for their livelihood.

The CARMA workshop was well attended by the villagers and it assisted them to recognise that large tracts of land had been heavily used for major cash crops such as coconut plantations. As a result less land area was left for other crucial needs such as the collection of firewood and gardening. Coconut plantations have been the predominant land use since the colonial era and are favoured because it provides cash income for schooling expenses for their children.

Highlighted during the CARMA workshop were land use issues such as the protection of water catchment areas, protection of drinking water, pollution from cattle, and the protection of the river bank from erosion by flooding. They claim to have participated well in the workshop and appreciated it and they recalled writing on large sheets of paper which were taken away by the workshop conductors with the promise that Sarete's Community Resources Management Action Plan (CARMAP) would be produced and a copy sent back to the village.

The villagers were uncertain as to receiving or citing the Community Resources Management Action Plan (CARMAP) for their village. Some thought that the village Number 1 Chief may have had a copy but this could not be verified because he did not attend the meeting.

3.2 Continued involvement in land use planning using CARMA

Sarete as a community neither implemented their CARMAP nor continued the CARMA taught to them from the workshop primarily because of land disputes and secondarily due to a serious lack of leadership. The apparent hesitation by villagers to speak freely to the review team reflected the seriousness of land disputes and weak leadership. The review team did not explore the causes of the land disputes in detail except to learn that it was between Sarete people and another adjacent tribe and that resolution is being sought through other appropriate bodies. However, it was noted that land disputes between tribes, clans (or sub-tribes) and families impedes directly on the implementation of the CARMAP and the continuation of the CARMA. Land use planning principles and skills learnt during the workshop lie dormant within the members of the community except for one villager who practices it on a plot of land over which he has primary right of use.

The two village chiefs, who are blood brothers, were in dispute. During the visit of the review team, the Number 1 Chief did not attend the meeting. It was reported he had received the message of the visit but opted to go to his garden. The Number 2 Chief who officiated the meeting no longer lived in Sarete after the CARMA workshop. He had established his own settlement less than a kilometre outside Sarete village. His reluctance to speak out was obviously a reflection of the dispute with his brother but it was not the review team's place to delve into the dispute. Village chiefs are a reflection of those who own primary rights over the land on which a village is established. It is therefore assumed that this brotherly dispute could make land non-available for further community use except for existing social services such as the church, health clinic and school.

Only one villager continued to practice land use planning on his plot of land in the village. He participated in the CARMA workshop and spoke of the values and benefits of land use planning at the family level. He fenced an area of the stream running along the boundary for the breeding of prawns. The same area was also converted as a green buffer for flood mitigation. However, his efforts suffered from disrespectful encroachments by other villagers, perhaps youth and he now applies the land use planning principles on his other plot of land about thirty minutes walk outside of Sarete village where he established several fish ponds. The story of this individual raises issues about family and community and it was obvious from the visit that the residents of Sarete village did not have equal rights over the use of land within and immediately surrounding the village.

It is often said by others that customary land ownership is an impediment to development and many do not recognise that customary land owned by a tribe is subject to subdivision and allocation to members of the tribe as individuals and families. The tribe still has overall ownership of the land but the '*right of use*' for the allotted portion is now vested upon the allottee who has authority to use it for gardening and cash cropping such as coconut, cocoa plantations and even forest farming. In exercising this '*right of use*', individuals and families were able to apply land use planning to the allotted land.

3.3 Support of the Technical Advisory Group

Capacity at the provincial and community area council level did not permit continued consultation with Sarete community since the workshop. There was no follow up meeting from the VLUPP neither from the provincial or community area council Technical Advisory Group (TAG). The Sanma Provincial TAG membership included representatives from Cooperatives, Forestry, Livestock, Agriculture and Fisheries. During a courtesy meeting with the Secretary General for Sanma Province and some members of Sanma TAG it was revealed that the Provincial Government fully supports the CARMA, however, the provincial TAG does not operate because of:

1. *Lack of finance* - The annual budget for each sector was already insufficient to sustain on-going commitments and the obligations of the TAG to Sarete community were then marginalised.
2. *Personal attitude* - It is difficult when certain individuals set and pursue priorities which differ from the team.
3. *Lack of commitment* – both provincial and sectoral.
4. *Poor delegation* - Regular meetings of the TAG disappeared because appointed members failed to send their replacements to attend.
5. *Abundance of committees* - Capacity of the provinces are over-stretched and the schedule of meetings clash with each other.

Needless to say these weaknesses cascade through the government hierarchy so that travel to and meetings with the community are almost non-existent. Sector representatives such as Agriculture or Women's Development would visit for their respective sectors but not as representing the TAG.

4. Mangaliliu Community, Efate Is., Shefa Province – 8th May 2008

The Number 1 Chief led 11 villagers who attended the meeting. Among the participants were 5 women and 2 youth.

4.1 Landowner awareness of land use planning issues

Mangaliliu village is located on the same island as the capital, Port Vila and is accessible by road. It was difficult for the villagers to recall the workshop conducted for them in 1996 in their village. They did not have a copy of the village CARMAP and they did not know if a CARMAP existed for Mangaliliu claiming they had never received any reports.

Assisted by explanations from the review team, the villagers were able to demonstrate an understanding of land use issues and their impact on their daily livelihoods. Serious concerns were expressed about the growing population and the constraints it caused on land availability for gardening and the difficulties in getting firewood. Within the village some land use changes were implemented to allow for the construction of their water-supply.

They were of the opinion that the current attractive price of copra was putting pressure on their already scarce land. Good prices for copra may cause people to establish new or expand existing coconut plantations which result in a chronic land shortage for other essential land uses such as gardening.

4.2 Continued involvement in land use planning using CARMA

The villagers admitted that as a community they do not practice the CARMA taught during the workshop and that families continue using their allotted parcels of land according to their needs or their own best judgment. It was also unanimously expressed to the review team that another reason for them not to continue with CARMA was insufficient training. Villagers admitted that one training workshop was not sufficient for them to learn even the basic principles of integrated land use planning.

Perhaps the greatest reason for the failure of CARMA in Mangaliliu was land disputes. The land surrounding the village is traditionally subdivided and right of use given to families. No village authority or any other external authority can impose or subject such allotted lands to CARMA and the disputes generally tend to arise over decisions made on the types of land use practiced (e.g. land speculation).

It was unclear whether a community body in the village was ever appointed and mandated to be responsible for the continuation of CARMA. The village has its Church Committee, Women's Group, Youth Committee and Clinic Committee to ensure that these core social services continue to function.

4.3 Support of the Technical Advisory Group

Since the 1996 CARMA workshop there had not been further follow up visit by the Provincial TAG. Fisheries officers had visited them a number of times for the Fishermen's Club but since then there has been no further funding available through the REDI to support the TAG.

4.4 Other community projects

Mangaliliu community received assistance from the Vanuatu National Cultural Centre to establish a World Heritage site on a small island just offshore from the village which was the burial ground of a famous traditional chief. The site was recently placed on the World Heritage list. Another project was the Fishermen's Club for Mangaliliu combined with Gnuna village. This project was to assist the fishermen with some infrastructure to enable them sell their catch. Both projects were formulated by the respective members of the TAG and some visitation to the village was made by REDI officers.

5. Limap Community, Malekula Is., Malampa Province - 11th May 2008.

It was Sunday so almost all villagers were available. The venue in which the review team conducted the meeting only allowed for about 18 people while the majority of villagers remained outside.

5.1 Landowner awareness of land use planning issues

Landowners' awareness of land use planning issues was enhanced through the CARMA workshop conducted in Limap village in 1996. The workshop was well remembered by the Village Chief and his villagers. Memorabilia of the workshop conducted from 19th to 23rd August 1996 included a group photograph preserved in a picture frame kept by the Chief and a fine tree planted next to the village health aid post. Six villagers who had attended the CARMA workshop were present in the meeting one of whom was the village chief.

The village chief clearly stated that land use planning is a tradition handed down from previous generations. The CARMA workshop was most appreciated because it awakened them to practise with vigour. Information shared and teachings delivered added knowledge to the traditional methods of subsistence farming.

Limap villagers have been concerned about some major land use issues including the need to upgrade the vehicular access road between the village and the main road. They have classified this road upgrade as the number one priority for the community. The predominant land use along this road was coconut and cocoa plantations. Because of the very poor road conditions the review team had to walk for about 2 hours from the main road and back along this access road. It was noticeable that nuts remained on the ground un-harvested for copra. Likewise cocoa pods were rotting on the trees and posing health risks for further yields. This has diminished the earnings of the families from coconut and cocoa.

The second serious concern for them was the over-harvesting of mud-crabs. This is an income-generating resource as well as a delicacy and it is the desire of Limap community to conserve and preserve the mud-crab habitat. However, Limap villagers do not have exclusive land use rights over the habitat. Tribal members from the next village would harvest the crabs and Limap residents have no power to stop them. It is often possible for members of the same landowning tribe to settle in more than one village scattered over the tribal land. This is a Melanesian phenomenon which adds another dimension to the definition of community not only in the context of CARMA but for other community-based projects as well.

5.2 Continued involvement in land use planning using CARMA

While the villagers were highly appreciative of the CARMA teaching, as a community, they were not able to continue. However, stemming from the CARMA workshop but not directly

influenced by it was a more visual plan for marine conservation produced in 2002 including the mud-crab habitat. This was a joint venture by the Environment Unit and the Fisheries Department of the Government of Vanuatu, the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the South Pacific Regional Environmental Program (SPREP) and the United Nations Development Program (UNDP). The village has a copy of this plan but not a copy of the Limap Community Area Resource Management Action Plan produced from the 1996 CARMA workshop.

Some families in Limap have set aside areas for firewood. Others are doing gardening on the river basin and have reserved a green buffer along the river banks. Some have even planted trees on the river banks for flood mitigation. In support of their chief, the villagers confirmed that they inherit traditional methods of land use planning where families decide for themselves how best they would use their allotted land. The teachings of the CARMA workshop are helpful but cannot be applied to Limap as a community because there is no such thing as community allotted land. Community facilities are the Church, health aid post and school. Families are left to utilise their land allotment with no authority or guidance from the community. However, land use activities which endanger community livelihood such as pollution to the water source will attract some form of intervention from the community.

5.3 Support of the Technical Advisory Group

There was no follow up CARMA meeting after the 1996 workshop. The CARMAP for Limap had been produced after the 1996 CARMA workshop but no copy was ever delivered to the village.

Individual members of the TAG, especially the Agriculture staff continue to visit because of the cocoa association. Malekula has a number of cocoa associations. A few cocoa farmers of Limap are regularly visited for technical advice. The forestry representative of the Lakatoro TAG accompanied the review team to Limap as it was convenient and at no cost to the Forestry Unit. She would otherwise not be able to make such a visit because of financial constraints. Each sector such as agriculture, forestry and fisheries still continue to provide technical advice to individual farmers.