



# Expanding Conservation Areas Reach and Effectiveness(ECARE) in Vanuatu

Review CEO Endorsement and Make a recommendation

## Basic project information

**GEF ID**

9847

**Countries**

Vanuatu

**Project Name**

Expanding Conservation Areas Reach and Effectiveness(ECARE) in Vanuatu

**Agencies**

IUCN

**Date received by PM**

5/29/2019

**Review completed by PM**

9/14/2021

**Program Manager**

Sarah Wyatt

**Focal Area**

Biodiversity  
**Project Type**

FSP

## **PIF**

### **CEO Endorsement**

#### **Project Design and Financing**

**1. If there are any changes from that presented in the PIF, have justifications been provided?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/8/2021

Yes. Thank you for the additions.

3/4/2021

No, please address the following:

1. In the section on global environmental benefits in the ProDoc, please explain what the GEBs are that this project will conserve/protect.
2. Please provide more detail in the project objective (at least as written in the Portal).
3. The reduction in hectare numbers is quite substantial, so a better explanation is needed. It may be good to highlight that known biodiversity is concentrated in nearshore areas (I'm always a bit cautious to say there is more biodiversity given our lack of knowledge of the deep ocean, but at least as we measure it there is) and the greater expense in establishing smaller areas in nearshore than deep water areas. At the same time, hopefully these community managed PAs will be more sustainable in the long run.

Minor:

- Page 22 of the ProDoc the endemic species numbers don't add up.

- Please fix Table A in the Portal to match the changes made.

7/12/2019

No, please address the following:

- Alignment with GEF strategy on PA expansion - The GEF-6 strategy on support for PA expansion requires that new PAs be KBAs or other sites of global biodiversity importance. Particularly because the project moved to a more terrestrial focus, there needs to be stronger justification of the importance of these sites globally and not just at a national level. While we understand that not every site has been selected yet, perhaps some of the known sites of highest importance and their values can be described. We understand that marine KBAs have not been completed for Vanuatu, but there needs to be better justification and explanation of the sites involved.

#### Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN 21 June 2021

1. Page 48 (9.1 Project rationale and global environmental benefits) now includes:

Vanuatu is located in one of the world's biologically richest regions. The Critical Ecosystem Partnership Fund (CEPF) describes the East Melanesia Islands hotspot across parts of PNG, Solomon Islands and Vanuatu. It 'qualifies as a hotspot due to high levels of plant and animal endemism and accelerating levels of habitat loss.' The limited geographical range of most of the island endemic species predisposes them to extinction when habitats are rapidly modified through human activities or ecosystems are altered through the introduction of exotic species.

The EMI also hosts some of the world's highest linguistic and cultural richness with Vanuatu having the more languages per unit area than any other country.

There are about 1,000 vascular plant species in Vanuatu of which around 150 are endemic. There is high diversity of orchids with 158 species and palms with 21 species, including 14 endemic species. There are 121 bird species, 28 species of reptiles and 12 species of Chiropterae (Flying Foxes and Bats). Invertebrate diversity is not fully described but includes the vulnerable coconut crab (*Birgus latro*) the largest land crab, which is an important food resource in Vanuatu. Recent exploration of caves on Santo revealed four species of invertebrate that were new to science and confined exclusively to these caves (Vanuatu NBSAP). Vanuatu lies immediately adjacent to the Coral

Triangle, the pinnacle of the world's marine biodiversity richness. Comprehensive surveys have not been conducted but Vanuatu's extensive coral reef ecosystems can be expected to be among the richest in the world.

Vanuatu has identified 29 KBAs but most need to be reassessed based on changes to the KBA assessment process. Within the focal geography of the project there are 10 KBAs with endemic and threatened species.

<b>KBA name</b>	<b>Biodiversity (endemic, threatened species)</b>
Small Nambas	5 Endemic species. 1 (NT), 1(VU)
North Efate	4 Endemic Species. 2 (VU)
Epi	3 Endemic Species.
Ringi Te Suh	1 Endemic.
Neck of Malakula ? Crab Bay	6 Endemic Species. 1 (NT), 2 (VU).
Wiawi	5 Endemic Species. 1 (NT) 1 (VU).
West Malo	7 Endemic Species 3 (VU), 1 (NT) and 1 (EN).
Loru	13 Endemic Species. 1 (VU), 1 (NT) and 1 (EN).
Vatthe	18 Endemic Species. 3 (VU), 2(NT), 1 (EN).
Santo Mountain Chain	25 Endemic Species. 5 (EN), 3 (NT) and 5 (VU).

Because coastal and marine areas in Vanuatu have not been assessed for KBA status, the Special and Unique Marine Areas (SUMA) identified in the GIZ-led MACBIO project are being used as proxies for marine and coastal KBAs. Of the 100 offshore (11) and inshore (89) SUMAs identified in Vanuatu, 37 fall within ECARE's priority geography. These SUMAs encompass important coral reef, mangrove, and seagrass habitats that serve as habitats to threatened and endangered species including dugong (*Dugong dugon*) and several species of marine turtles.

<b>SUMA name</b>	<b>Biodiversity Importance (endemic, threatened species)</b>
Crab Bay	Important habitats for species.
South east Malekula	Ideal dugong habitat
Port Stanley	Single National wetland site.
Gaspard Bay (dugong garden)	Important sites for Dugong and turtles.

Vulai Island	Turtle nesting and foraging habitat.
Iamango (Limbenwen)	Physically and biologically outstanding wetland attributes
Bamboo Bay and Dickson reef	Importance to hawksbill turtles
Ringi Te Suh giant clams	Clam Sanctuary.
Wiawi	A significant wetland site.
Arab Bridge	Important for mangroves, seagrass, mud crabs and fishes.
Palekula to Turtle Bay	21 species including 12 (VU) status, 9 (NT), and 1 (EN).
Hog Harbour and Port Orly Conservation Area	10 Cetacean species. 1 (VU) status. 4 species (DD) and 5 (LC).
Malo kilikili	Dugong habitat and turtle nesting areas.
Vathe-loathe Urerure	Important nesting site for hawksbill, loggerhead and leatherback turtles.
Malo Pass	Provide breeding and nursery grounds.
Kevin Anderson	Important breeding and nursery areas.
Lolitz - Pelmol conservation	Rich in pelagic fishes.
Kakula	Important habitats for high biodiversity productivity.
Lamen and Rovo Bays	Fringing reefs of inhabited islands that remain healthy are rare and special.
Havannah Harbour	Important foraging sites for hawksbill turtles.
Marou Lagoon on Emau Island	Diverse habitats for marine organisms.
Eretoka Island (Hat Island)	Potential site for Tuna aggregations.
Pele Island (northeast)	Important habitats for species.
Ponkovia	Fringing reefs of inhabited islands that remain healthy are rare and special.
Moriu to Nuvi	Key Biodiversity Area
Siviri	Important nesting site for hawksbill turtles.
Mavilao	Important habitats.
Paul's Rock	Important dive site. High complex habitat structure.
North Moso	Important hawksbill turtle nesting site and sanctuary.

Epau Village	Important hawksbill nesting site.
Taliko	Special value for nesting hawksbill, green and leatherback turtles.
Tukutuk	Important seagrass beds and for turtles.
Southwest Pele Island	Nesting site for hawksbill turtles
Utanlang	Area abundant in fan coral.
Northeast Nguna Island	Area include seagrass beds and is a turtle nesting habitat.
Emau Island (east)	Important nesting ground for turtles.
Scott Reef	High productive area where reef provides the topographic structure of a seamount.

2. This has been updated in the portal with: Project objective: improved systems and capacity at all levels to achieve a representative, effective and expanded protected areas network in Vanuatu.

In 2017, during the UN Ocean Conference, the Prime Minister of Vanuatu launched the Vanuatu Ocean Policy. In June 2018, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation (DEPC) published the Vanuatu National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP).

The NBSAP is based on an in-depth consultation process that documented over 200 informal Community Conservation Areas (CCAs). A second round of prioritization, conducted by DEPC, led to a short list of 113 priority areas (Appendix 3). The prioritization was based on several factors, including the potential to achieve real conservation outcomes for people and nature at these sites. This achievement was completed while the MACBIO regional project was finishing public consultations related to MACBIO regional bioregion survey and biophysically special unique marine areas survey (SUMAs).

Vanuatu has documented more than 200 informal community conservation areas. Many of the areas are based on traditional management regimes or tabu systems. These informal CCAs can be effective. However, in many areas there is an ongoing erosion of traditional management approaches in Vanuatu as people leave their home villages for economic opportunity elsewhere. Formal and registered CCAs provide communities with additional support for establishing, managing, monitoring, and enforcing their CCAs. Registration also assists Vanuatu with monitoring its natural resources and facilitates reporting on international commitments. Nine CCAs have successfully registered with the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation through 2019.

3. We have included the following in the project portal under Part II. Project Justification. A. Describe any changes in alignment with the Project design with the original PIF A.1. Project Description

The revised project has reduced the expected delivery of protected areas from 5,000,000 ha to 35,000 ha. The major revision required a shift from a top-down approach led by the government to a community-based conservation approach. The vast majority of the PIF's expected 5,000,000 ha were to be derived from large, off-shore marine protected areas that would be established through the government as these areas do not have the customary management approaches that dominate land and nearshore areas in Vanuatu. The revised project eliminated the top-down MPAs aspects of the project in favour of customary management that can only be applied to coastal, near-shore and terrestrial areas that are under customary community management.

We note that near-shore MPAs and terrestrial protected areas likely have higher levels of species richness than offshore areas. Near-shore and terrestrial protected areas in Vanuatu will require much more intensive community processes, consultations, and negotiations than the large off-shore areas might need. However, it is likely that the management costs will be lower and the sustainability of local protected areas will be higher. Off-shore MPAs will require significant resources in Monitoring, Control, and Surveillance that currently does not exist in Vanuatu. Local protected areas will require input from the communities but there are already good models for this and the local communities will see more benefits from their local protected areas than from the off-shore MPAs.

Minor:

Section 3.2.3 of the ProDoc (Page 14/22) has been edited to reflect this ? Under the IUCN Red List of Endangered Species, 65 species endemic to Vanuatu have been assessed for their conservation status. Of these, 18 were found to be of conservation concern. This includes 12 bird species, one of which, the Tanna Ground Dove (*Gallicolumba ferruginea*) is considered extinct. Five are considered ?vulnerable?: the Santo Mountain Starling (*Aplonis santovestris*), Green Palm Lorikeet (*Charmosyna palmarum*), Royal Parrotfinch (*Erythrura regia*), Vanuatu Mountain Pigeon (*Ducula*

*bakeri*) and Vanuatu Megapode (*Megapodius layardi*). Of the mammals, the Banks Flying Fox (*Pteropus fundutas*) is ?endangered? and the Vanuatu Flying Fox (*Pteropus anetianus*) is ?vulnerable?. There are nine endemic reptiles of which the Anatom Emo Skink (*Emoia aneityumensis*), found only on Aneityum, is endangered and the common Emo Skink (*E. erronan*), found only on Futuna and Aniwa, is endangered. One endemic land snail (*Partula milleri*) is critically endangered and *P. eurania* is endangered. There are 38 recorded endemic freshwater species, of which only the Lobed River Mullet (*Cestraeus plicatilis*) is listed on the IUCN Redlist. The rest still need to be assessed. (Vanuatu NBSAP)

- Table A has been adjusted.

IUCN 30 Oct 2020

The project focus has shifted from a national system of protected areas to be more community-based protected area management oriented. The project will focus on expanding community-based PAs and associated communities on 4 main islands in 3 provinces (Sanma, Malakula, Shefa). These areas were selected due to the KBAs present and associated coastal Special and Unique Marine Areas (SUMAs) as well as the capacity of these islands to support expanded protected areas.

**2. Is the project structure/design appropriate to achieve the expected outcomes and outputs?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/8/2021

Yes. There could be interesting lessons from the gender approaches in this project.

3/4/2021

No, thank you for the extensive changes but some issues still remain.

1. Please include SMART indicators in Table B.
2. We are surprised to see this project as having a 'no' for "Gender responsive". Can the project do better to include women and women's empowerment throughout?

7/12/2019



No, there are a number of issues that need to be addressed in the project design and description.

- Top down protected area approach - As mentioned in the STAP review, this project appears to have a very top down, traditional approach to protected area system management. The project will spend significant resources on classifications, categories and policies that don't appear to yield tangible biodiversity benefits while communities have been protecting these places successfully already. For example, the management plans are described not as being developed by the community with the support of outsiders but rather outsiders consulting the community. Yet, won't any sort of management plan be implemented by the communities themselves? Given the remoteness and customary land title this project seems like it should be fundamentally about CBNRM and supporting the communities in doing it.

- Threats - Despite an extensive background documentation, there is a limited description of the threats to biodiversity in the document. It is unclear how the threats outlined (e.g. agricultural expansion) will be addressed by the activities of this project.

- Livelihoods - This section has not been given enough attention. Tourism is only 20% of GDP and is likely concentrated in a few areas. While we understand that fairly small amounts of increased income in absolute dollars could be quite significant, this section needs to be expanded and thought through better. How will these livelihoods be tied to environmental sustainability? At the same time, if a more community based natural resource management approach is taken, there may not be a hard line between PA and livelihoods. For example a local marine zoning and management plan (LMMA approach) would provide conservation and livelihoods in a mixed way rather than separating the two which again is a traditional way of approaching PA management.

- Awareness activities - The indicator of number of copies produced is not a good measure of awareness. Awareness needs to be carefully considered to ensure that the works in concert with the activities of the project and is done in ways that are logical and effective. The awareness activities described here do not meet these criteria. It is unclear how general PA awareness will result in global environmental benefits. As other parts of the project are revised, we encourage a review of these area to make sure that the awareness activities are targeted and appropriate. Ideally, they would be tested before being rolled out widely.

- Financial sustainability - We would like to see some implementation of the ideas explored for financial sustainability. Often plans will just stay plans with including some implementation. Financial sustainability can take a variety of forms for community based protected areas, so it would be good to address this in conjunction with the livelihoods. We understand the funds available for this project are quite limited, so what can be done is limited as well.

## Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN 21 June 2021

1. SMART indicators from the project results framework have been added to Table B in the portal.
2. The Gender Responsive 'no?' was a mistake. Apologies for this. It has been corrected and clarified. Gender and GESI actions for relevant outputs have been included in the ProDoc and in the portal section A.4.

Gender and GESI have been included throughout the Outputs of the project and included in the project results framework. Many activities have gender disaggregated indicators.

Output 1.1. An updated legal framework and policy for PAs in Vanuatu covering terrestrial, coastal and offshore areas.

Ensure that gender and equality are included in the consultation process and in the updated PA policy. Ensure the updated PA policy aligns with Vanuatu's National Gender Equality Policy

Output 1.2. Tools and process guidelines for PA designation, management planning and effectiveness, and for integration in Area Council development plans, are enhanced and developed.

ECARE will ensure that gender and equality are included in the consultations processes and resulting guidelines. Area Councils include a gender component in their composition to ensure that women's views are part of Area Council process in Vanuatu.

Output 2.1. Socioeconomic and Ecological Field surveys of priority existing and proposed PAs conducted and new national PA categories validated.

Socio-economic surveys will include gender-related data collection and be sensitive to gender when studies are undertaken, including GESI training for enumerators. An indicator for women's inclusion is part of the monitoring framework

Output 2.2. Community owned and endorsed PA Management plans and designation documentation for priority PAs submitted

Management plans will include sections on GESI. Management plan consultations will be designed to be GESI-sensitive and to ensure meaningful engagement with women.

### Output 2.3. Capacity and support for PA tools built

Trainings will target women in each province for capacity building. Training materials and courses will be designed for GESI sensitivity.

### Output 2.4. Awareness and understanding of PAs increased at community and national level

Awareness materials will be designed for GESI sensitivity and include GESI issues and the benefits of protected areas for women and vulnerable people.

### Output 3.2 PA-related tourism in selected PAs supporting local community and kastomary owners

Women's businesses will be targeted for income generation assessments and trainings/ capacity building.

### Output 3.3. Protected area-oriented sustainable community livelihoods developed.

Livelihood toolkits developed under Output 3.3 will employ a GESI approach and cross-visits will include women in capacity building activities and visits.

IUCN 30 Oct 2020

Top-down approach: The project has been significantly re-oriented to focus on provincial level activities and expansion of protected areas by supporting Vanuatu's decentralisation process through the newly established Area Councils. Communities and Area Councils will select, nominate, and formalise the protected areas that have already been identified through the national consultation process in the NBSAP. The process of establishing national PA categories has been eliminated in the project and biodiversity and resource use surveys will be limited to the selected provinces and islands. The budget has been realigned to sit the majority of funds Components 2 and 3 which focus on provincial and community activities.

**Threats:** the threat analysis and barrier analysis has been expanded. We have included a table that links the barrier analysis to the project components and outputs.

**Livelihoods:** The project has 3 outputs for financial sustainability for PAs. Two of the outputs focus on livelihoods. Before the Covid-19 pandemic, tourism was 20% of Vanuatu's GDP. Noting that that STAP recommended for greater engagement with the tourism industry. This is one of the largest sectors in Vanuatu and Vanuatu has developed a comprehensive and robust post-Covid sustainable tourism recovery plan. This project will feed into that plan by building capacity of communities and tourism operators to capitalize on PAs and identify tourism products within their PAs that can be marketed as tourism returns (Activity 3.2.1). It also builds capacity of tourism operators to market and conduct sustainable tourism operations in PAs and with communities. The tourism operators may be communities themselves. It also will train community nature guides to have the capacity to engage with the tourism industry. The project will also work with the PA communities to develop entrance fee / voluntary PA fee / or other mechanism to support their conservation efforts.

The second output (3.3) focuses on livelihood options that will arise from the PAs. For coastal PAs, these may be fishing opportunities within and outside of multiple use PAs, sustainable use of mangrove or forest products, or other enterprises that fit within the community-defined PA management plans. Communities will share lessons with each other and with counterparts that are part of the GEF6 Solomon Islands EREPA project.

**Awareness activities:** These have been adjusted throughout the results framework and all awareness oriented activities will be assessed, measured, and reported upon.

**Financial sustainability ?** These are addressed through the community livelihood and enterprise training activities in Output 3.3.

**3. Is the financing adequate and does the project demonstrate a cost-effective approach to meet the project objective?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9/23/2021

Yes.

As PM, I clear the purchase of a vehicle as part of this project given the rough terrain of Vanuatu and need to travel to rural locations.

3/4/2021

Yes, thank you for the changes.

7/13/2019

No, we questions spending so much money on component 1 relative to the others.

Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN 30 Oct 2020

The budget has been realigned to have the majority of funds spent in Components 2 and 3.

Component 1: \$235,780

Component 2: \$1,480,906

Component 3: \$618,951

**4. Does the project take into account potential major risks, including the consequences of climate change, and describes sufficient risk response measures? (e.g., measures to enhance climate resilience)**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/8/2021

Yes.

5/11/2021

No, it would be good to include a bit more on predicted climate change shifts and how the project activities are accounting for them in design.

7/13/2019

We would like to see other revisions before assessing this.

Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN 21 June 2021

The following has been added to Section 11. Risk Analysis and Risk Management Measures. Page 76 of the ProDoc:

Vanuatu is one of the most highly exposed countries in the world to climate change to disaster risks. The Vanuatu Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction Policy (2016-2030) outlines the main climate risks and sets a series of strategic priorities for the country. These priorities are clustered around governance, finance, knowledge and information, adaptation and disaster risk reduction, low-carbon development, and response and recovery. ECARE contributes to several of these strategic priorities. By helping to protect critical ecosystems and protect biodiversity, ECARE will be helping Vanuatu and NiVanuatu communities to reduce vulnerability to climate change impacts by having healthy and functioning ecosystems that they can rely upon for livelihoods.

The main climate change risks that Vanuatu faces include (inter alia):

- ? by 2040, daily temperatures will increase from 1995 levels by 1.2°C;
- ? sea level rise will continue and accelerate;
- ? ocean acidification will degrade 80% of coral reefs within 20 years;
- ? extreme temperatures will reach higher levels and become more frequent;
- ? extreme weather events, including cyclones and storms, will increase in intensity but not necessarily in frequency;
- ? dry periods will last longer; and
- ? extreme rainfall will be more frequent and intense.

Projected consequences of climate change include:

- ? reduced availability of fresh water;
- ? shifts in crop seasonality of harvest, planting and fruiting;
- ? more pests and diseases of animals, crops and trees;
- ? saltwater inundation and intrusion of coastal land and groundwater;
- ? compromised food security;
- ? coral reef deterioration;
- ? reduced fisheries productivity;

- ? increased risk of human disease and health problems, including vector-borne disease transmission and heat related illness;
- ? damage to infrastructure;
- ? loss of coastal land; and
- ? reduced economic growth and revenue generation.

<b>Strategic action</b>	<b>ECARE contribution</b>
7.1. Governance	
Strengthening climate change and disaster risk reduction capacity of provincial, municipal and area council personnel;	Several ECARE activities will focus on Area Council capacity to understand ecosystem values and to protect ecosystems.
7.4 Climate Change Adaptation and Disaster Risk Reduction	
7.4.5 Ecosystem-based approaches	
Prioritising adaptation and risk reduction actions that build on, incorporate and protect taboos, conservation areas, heritage sites, locally managed areas and vulnerable habitats and ecosystems and carbon sinks;	Outcomes 1, 2, and 3 focus on protected areas that include taboo areas, conservation areas and locally managed areas to protect ecosystems that will be better enabled to adapt to impacts of climate change.
Utilising sound land-use planning approaches, and implementing and enforcing ecosystem-related development policy documents (e.g. Land Use Planning Policy, Foreshore Development Act, Physical Planning Act).	Outcomes 1 and 2 will build capacity for communities and Area Councils to plan for ecosystem-related development.

IUCN 30 Oct 2020

Noted

**5. Is co-financing confirmed and evidence provided?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
7/13/2019

Yes.

Response to Secretariat comments  
30 Oct 2020

Noted.

**6. Are relevant tracking tools completed?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

5/11/2021

Yes, thank you.

7/13/2019

No, please include an estimated number of beneficiaries.

Response to Secretariat comments

30 Oct 2020

Based on the 2016 Post-TC Pam mini-census for selected provinces and Area Councils:

<b>Total</b>	<b>97,563</b>
<b>Male</b>	<b>49,664</b>
<b>Female</b>	<b>47,899</b>
<b>Percent female</b>	<b>49</b>

**7. Only for Non-Grant Instrument: Has a reflow calendar been presented?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Response to Secretariat comments

**8. Is the project coordinated with other related initiatives and national/regional plans in the country or in the region?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

5/11/2021

Yes, there will also likely be opportunities for coordination with the ICI particularly in the Pacific and building the evidence base on CBNR with MPAs.

7/13/2019

No, we would like to see this project discuss opportunities for collaboration in the region. In particular, the GEF-6 IUCN project in the Solomons would be a logical



collaborator. Also, UNDP GEF-6 projects in PNG and one on LMMAs in Fiji would also have similar issues around community management of PAs. PNG in particular is similar in that the sites are of national importance but managed by traditional landholders.

Also, without the stakeholder information it's hard to know the involvement of the Departments of Fisheries and Tourism who would be logical partners to implement especially when trying to achieve financial sustainability.

#### Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN 30 Oct 2020

We have included a cross visit to a GEF6 Solomon Islands EREPA site in the project. We will also plan to arrange virtual learning calls between the Solomon Islands and Vanuatu GEF projects. PNG, Solomon Islands, and Vanuatu are all introducing IUCN Green List standards to their protected area portfolios under the BIOPAMA project which is co-financing the project.

**9. Does the project include a budgeted M&E Plan that monitors and measures results with indicators and targets?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/8/2021

Yes, thank you.

5/11/2021

No, while there is a budgeted plan, M&E and KM are not included in the components in Table B.

7/13/2019

Yes, however we would like to see that some of the indicators be revised to reflect the outcomes of the work (such as number of copies of a guideline produced).

Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN 21 June 2021

Component 4 for M&E and Knowledge Management has been added to Table B and modified in the revised uploaded Excel budget worksheet.

IUCN 30 Oct 2020

This has been reflected in the revised version

**10. Does the project have descriptions of a knowledge management plan?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

7/8/2021

Yes.

5/11/2021

No, please include in Table B.

7/13/2019

Not sufficient. It would be good to reflect on how this project can help inform a wider discussion on how to support CBNRM and community PAs in the Pacific and elsewhere.

Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN 21 June 2021

Component 4 for M&E and Knowledge Management has been added to Table B.

IUCN 30 Oct 2020

The knowledge management and communications chapter has been expanded and elaborated.

The project will share data with the Pacific Islands Protected Area Portal, hosted by SPREP. Coastal protected areas will engage with LMMA to share lessons. Through IUCN, opportunities to participate in regional workshops will include sessions to include learnings from this project and other national and regional protected area projects. Lastly, the project will host an annual webinar, supported by IUCN, to share lessons and learnings from the project.

#### **Agency Responses**

#### **11. Has the Agency adequately responded to comments at the PIF stage from:**

GEFSEC

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
7/13/2019

Yes.

Response to Secretariat comments

STAP

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
5/11/2021

Yes.

7/13/2019

No, a number of the comments provided by STAP have not be addressed. Most concerning is the apparent lack of support of community-based management. While we understand the goal is to create national level PAs, these areas will still be managed by the same communities.

Response to Secretariat comments  
IUCN 30 Oct 2020

Comments from the STAP have been addressed in depth in a formal response document. ■

GEF Council

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request  
7/13/2019

Yes.

Response to Secretariat comments  
IUCN 30 Oct 2020

Management effectiveness assessments ? These will not be conducted under the ProDoc as the project will focus on new protected area registration.

Government capacity is addressed at several points of the project, including Outputs 1.1, 1.2 and 2.3. This will focus on the Department of Environment, Ministry of Fisheries, Ministry of Forestry and the provincial Area Councils.

The budget allocations have all been adjusted based on GEF Secretariat and STAP comments as a major revision of the project.

The Marine Spatial Planning that was funded by the German Government has been removed from the project during major revisions.

The co-financing has been confirmed in the ProDoc process.

Convention Secretariat

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request NA

Response to Secretariat comments

## **Recommendation**

### **12. Is CEO endorsement recommended?**

Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request

9/13/2021

Yes, thank you for the responses.

7/29/2021

No, while the project is generally sounds there are a few remaining issues:

1. M&E Budget - Please include an M&E budget that matches the component on M&E.

2. Audits - Please charge to PMC.

3. MTR and TE - This should be charged to the M&E component.

4. Please make sure the budget in the Portal includes totals.

5. Please include the ESS in the Portal and in particular the gender screening.

6. Objective - Please shorten the project objective to be specific and concise both in the ProDoc and the Portal.

7. Carbon benefits - While we understand that these are co-benefits, please include these in Table B and the logframe.

8. It would be good to have some more results at the outcome level rather than just outputs or at least a measure of the quality of the output.

5/11/2021

No, please revise and resubmit.

7/13/2019

Not at this time. Please revise and resubmit. It may be helpful to have a discussion about this project.

Response to Secretariat comments

IUCN ? 22 August 2021



1. This has been done in the ProDoc and portal. We have added an interim review workshop that was missing from the budgeted M&E plan and excluded Audits from the budgeted M&E plan.
2. Done. See Output 4.2, Activity 4.2.1 in the revised budget
3. Done. See Component 4, Output 4.1.
4. Totals are included in the budgets for each component in Annex G.
5. ESS. This has been uploaded to the portal with file name: esms\_screening and clearance\_PO2457\_ECARE Vanuatu\_GEF 6.pdf. The gender screening is included in Part C: Other Environmental and Social Impacts.
6. Objective shortened to: ?The project objective is to improve systems and capacity at all levels (community, provincial, national) to achieve a representative, effective and expanded protected areas network in Vanuatu with a focus on 3 provinces (Sanma, Malampa, Shefa) to ensure healthy ecosystems and viable livelihoods for local communities.?
7. We included CO2 emissions mitigated as a Core Indicator, but have also included it as an indicator of Outcome 2 (Expanded protected area network in Vanuatu) in Table B and in the Logframe
8. Outcome results ? We are not sure what the ?results? of outcomes refers to. We have 3 Outcomes with indicators. We have added indicators to the Outcomes as below. These have been included in the ProDoc results framework and the results framework in the portal.

The Outcomes and indicators are:

**Outcome 1. Protected area policies, guidelines and knowledge developed and improved**

- a. PA policy and legal review
- b. Updated PA policy

**Outcome 2. Expanded protected area network in Vanuatu**

Hectares of PAs created (terrestrial and marine)

**Carbon Sequestered or Emissions Avoided in the AFOLU (Agriculture, Forestry and Other Land Use) sector (CO<sub>2</sub>e tons) (n.b. ? this is new, based on review comments)**

**Outcome 3: Improved financial sustainability options for protected areas**

Funding gap for management of protect areas system (Number of PAs with increased income)

Improved capacity for tourism operators to sustainably market protected area products (Tourism operators understanding) (n.b. ? this is new, based on review comments)

Community enterprises prepared to generate income related to PAs (n.b. ? this is new, based on review comments)

**Review Dates**

	<b>Secretariat comment at CEO Endorsement Request</b>	<b>Response to Secretariat comments</b>
<b>First Review</b>	<b>7/13/2019</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>5/11/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>7/8/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>7/29/2021</b>	
<b>Additional Review (as necessary)</b>	<b>9/14/2021</b>	

**CEO Recommendation**

**Brief Reasoning for CEO Recommendations**