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REPUBLIC OF VANUATU

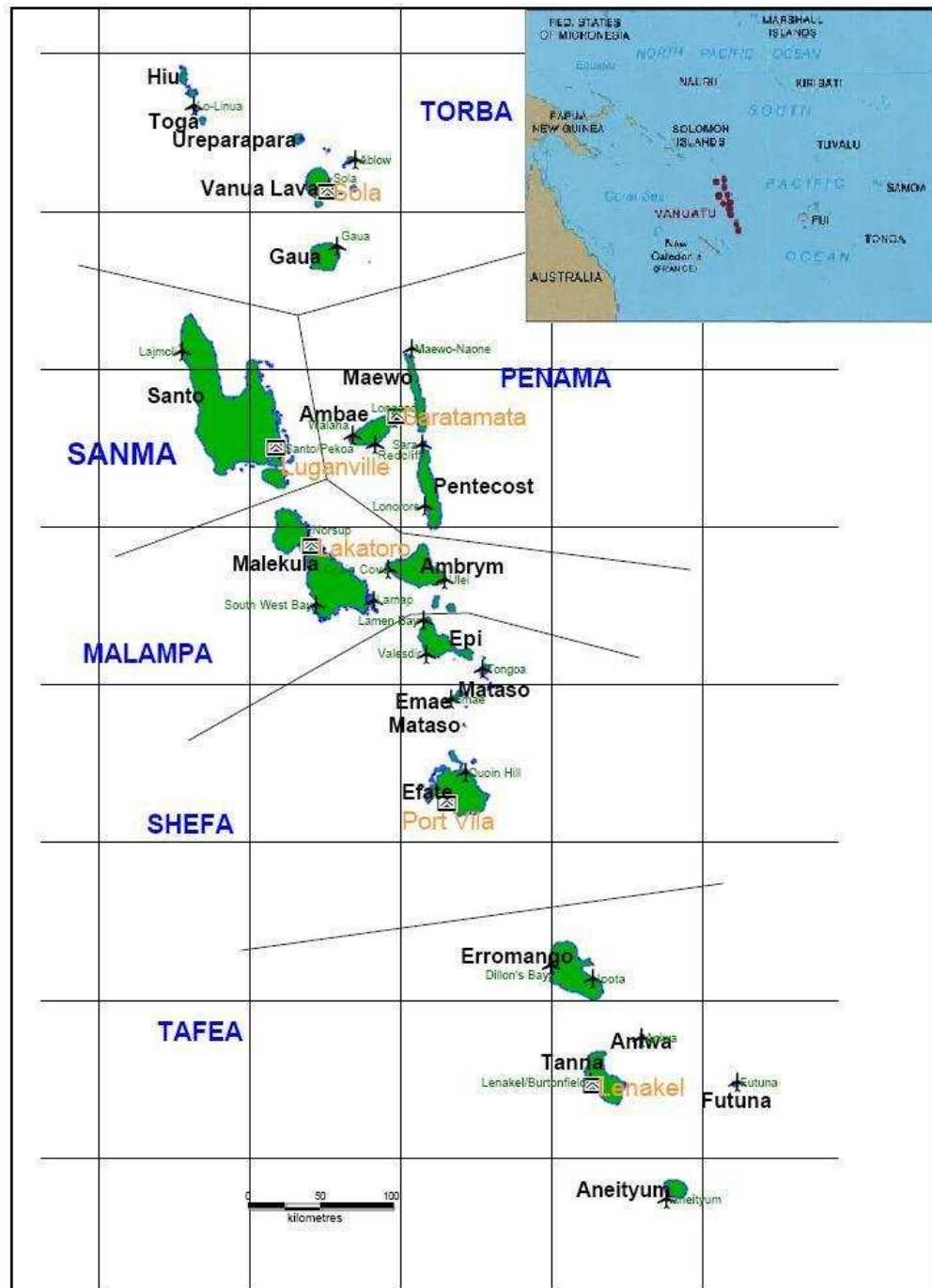


Fig 1. Map of Vanuatu

METHODOLOGY

The data contained in this report was developed through literature review of reports from the government institutions on key documents related to the government's development priority agendas and policy initiatives. A one-on-one interview with sample key stakeholders from government agencies was conducted and a participatory workshop held with some key stakeholders to seek feedback and validate review finding, and to identify priority forward actions to support ongoing implementation of government's development agendas to meet its obligations under the BPoA and the MSI.

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ABBREVIATIONS

ACCPR	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Region
ADR	Annual Development Report
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AfT	Aid for Trade
ASAs	Air Service Agreement
AUSAID	Australian Agency for International Development
BPoP	Barbados Program of Action
BRIDGE	Building Resource in Democracy, Governance & Elections
CBO	Community Based Organistaions
CC	Climate Change
COM	Council of Ministers
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women
CITES	Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora
CFC	Chlorofluro Carbon
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRP	Comprehensive Reform Program
CTBTO	Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation
DEPC	Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation
DGMWR	Department of Geology, Mines and Water Resources
DMGH	Department of Meteorology and Geo-hazard
DNA	Designated National Authority
DRM	Disaster Risk Management
DRR	Disaster Risk Reduction

DSPPAC	Department of Strategic Policy, Planning & Aid Coordination
DWA	Department of Women's Affairs
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ENSO	El Nino and La Nina of the Southern Oscillation
EU	European Union
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FPA	Family Protection Act
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GIS	Global Information System
GTZ	German Technical Corporation
ICPD	International Conference on Population and Development
ICT	Information, Communication and Telecommunication
IMCI	Integrated management of Childhood illnesses
INC	Initial National Communication
IMCI	Integrated management of childhood illnesses
IRS	Insecticides Residual Spraying
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
JPOI	Johannesburg Programme of Implementation
LDCF	Least Developed Country Fund
LDC	Least Developed Country
LLINs	Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Nets
LSF	Land Sector Framework

MBC	Ministerial Budget Committee
MDGs	Millennium Development Goals
MEAs	Multilateral Environmental Agreements
MESCAL	Mangrove Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation & Livelihood
MIPU	Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities
MNCC	Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs
MOH	Ministry of Health
MSI	Mauritius Strategy for Implementation
NAB	National Advisory Board
NACCC	National Advisory Committee on Climate Change
NAP	National Action Plan
NAPA	National Adaptation Plan of Action
NDMO	National Disaster Management Office
NERM	National Energy Roadmap
NFP	National Focal Point
NGOs	Non-Government Organisations
NPPs	New Policy Proposals
NSO	National Statistics Office
NZAid	New Zealand Aid
ODS	Ozone Depleting Substances
OFP	Operation Focal Point
OLP	Ozone layer and Protection
PAA	Priority Action Agenda
PACC	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change

PFEM	Public Finance and Management Act
PFP	Political Focal Point
PLAS	Planning Long Acting Short
PMI	Partners Improving Markets
PMU	Project Management Unit
RFA	Regional Framework for Action
PRR	Pacific Risk Resilience
SIDS	Small Island Developing States
SLM	Sustainable Land Management
SNC	Second National Communication
SOPAC	Pacific Islands Applied Geoscience Commission
TPF	Trade Policy Framework
TVL	Telecom Vanuatu Limited
UAP	Universal Access Policy
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNCBD	United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity
UNCCD	United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNCLOS	United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECOSOC	United Nations Committee for the Economic and Social Commission
UNFCCC	United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change

UNICEF	United Nations United Nations International Children Emergency Fund
URA	Utility Regulatory Authority
VAI	Vanuatu Assessment Index
VCCP	Vanuatu Carbon Credits Project
VCCAP	Vanuatu Climate Change Adaptation Project
VERD	Vanuatu Energy for Rural Development
VERM	Vanuatu Education Road Map
VLUPP	Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project
VMGD	Vanuatu Meterology and Geo-hazard Department
VTSSP	Vanuatu Transport Sector Support Program
WHO	World Health Organisation

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Priority Sustainable Development Areas

In this review, it is necessary to consider the scope of the sustainable development priority issues for Vanuatu to include particular emphasis on the new additional thematic areas that have been endorsed in the MSI which include graduation from least developed country status, trade, sustainable production and consumption (as called for by the JPOI), health, knowledge management, and culture – all of which are intended to support Vanuatu in achieving internationally agreed targets and goals, such as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). As a Small Island Developing States (SIDS), it is imperative that the existing limitations as a country with an economy in transition be included in any development assessment or policy of Vanuatu.

Climate Change

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was ratified on March 9, 1993 and Vanuatu submitted its Initial National Communications (INC) on October 1999. The Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC was ratified in July 17, 2001. In May 2007 the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) was completed and published as part of an institutional set-up that seeks to mainstream climate change issues into the national legal framework. This NAPA focused primarily on agriculture and food security, water management, sustainable tourism, marine resource management and sustainable forestry management. National actions were hindered by the limitations of institutional capacity, finance and human resources. The recent establishment of a new Ministry for Climate Change and Adaptation by the government was effected as means to strengthened Vanuatu's policy on climate change (CC) and disaster risks reduction (DRR).

Natural and Environmental Disasters

Natural disasters have proven to be one of the primary obstacles to national development. Hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis and droughts are the common causal factors which effectively result in significant social, economic and environmental damage to Vanuatu. The 2011 UN Risk Report had listed Vanuatu as the most prone country in the world to natural hazards, meaning that it is exposed to all natural and man-made hazards.

The Commonwealth Secretariate ranked Vanuatu as the most vulnerable state of 110 small developing countries (United Nations 2002a). The International Disaster Database shows that Vanuatu is regularly affected by natural disasters. These episodes have caused millions of dollars in damage to all social and economic sectors.

During the last ten years from 2000 to 2010, Vanuatu experienced more cyclones and more geohazard. On average 2.6 destructive tropical cyclones occur annually. The location of Vanuatu along the eastern edge of the Indo-Australian tectonic plates on the Pacific 'Ring of Fire' is subject to frequent earthquakes on average five events of at least 6 occurring every year. The ash-fallout from the volcanic eruptions has affected the local population through social discomfort, loss of water and food sources and economic loss.

As a natural disaster, droughts and flooding also occur in Vanuatu. This does not preclude the occurrence of slight to moderate droughts, which have a more erratic periodicity. The National Disaster Management Office as the mandated agency responsible for natural and man-made disasters was effected as a means of coordinating the national response actions related to this priority area.

Management of Wastes

Coordination of national actions is implemented by the DEPC through the National Waste Management Policy. Considerable progresses were made by establishing a sanitary landfill at the Bouffa for Port Vila funded by JICA. A draft master plan has also been documented in developing waste management policies and program at the national level and drafting of new Pollution Control and Waste management Bills.

There is a need for a national waste management strategy to develop and implement fiscal and policy incentives to encourage environmentally sustainable imports and local products.

Coastal and Marine Resources

With the tourism and fisheries industries in conjunction with marine based recreation activities contributing over 70% of the national GDP, the importance of the coastal and marine resources is well recognised. National policies and collaborative institutional activities serve to coordinate management of the coastal zone.

The national limitations in meeting the agreed actions are a direct result of the problems encountered with enforcement of national strategies. Currently measures are being undertaken to provide the necessary framework for effective implementation of the fisheries management strategies.

Freshwater Resources

Vanuatu has diligently pursued the national action policies and measures agreed to in the BPOA. Various mechanisms and modalities have been identified and implemented to effectively manage the local fresh water resources.

Sustainability of the municipal fresh water supplies was recognised as a priority when the urban areas of Port Vila and Luganville are experiencing an influx of rural to urban migration and people move in to settle within the water catchment areas providing health risks to urban population.

A Vanuatu National Water Strategy (2008-2018) with a Water Strategic Plan funded by NZ Aid provide a long term holistic management policy over water resources management at the national level to assist protect water catchment area in Vanuatu. A Water Resource Management Act was enacted in 2002 to give effect for the control and use of fresh water resources. Further effort is still required for the national actions pertaining to the establishment of an integrated watershed management system

Land Resources

National land management issues have traditionally focussed on unsustainable horticultural practices, poor watershed management, uncontrolled livestock grazing and soil and sand mining. A Land Summit was held in 2006 and recommended 20 follow up actions including sustainable development. Many of the resolutions are being tackled with assistance from AusAID and NZAID.

Vanuatu ratified the UNCCD in 1998 and has submitted its third national report on actions to implement the convention. The national priorities revealed by existing national development reports are inclusive of destruction of natural coastal systems to facilitate construction, poor positioning of structures along the coast, degradation of land/vegetation and erosion, depletion of fish stocks due to over fishing and destruction of terrestrial fish habitats, pollution due to improper disposal of garbage sewage, industrial effluent, residential encroachment onto agricultural land and uncontrolled development. The inability or limited ability to transcend from the design phase to the implementation phase has undermined the success of relevant agencies to execute the specific national action and policies agreed to in BPOA relating to land resources. Noteworthy efforts are the development of sectoral plans, compilation of land use information in databases and development of physical development legislation.

Energy Resources

Vanuatu has taken some positive steps in the area of implementation of the national actions on Energy. The Government has created a Utilities Regulatory Authority (URA) in 2009 to introduce more competition and control monopoly pricing. A National Energy Corporation was approved by the Council of Ministers (COM) and enabling legislation was drafted. In June 2012, a Vanuatu National Energy Roadmap was also prepared to identify specific opportunities for support.

The country still remains heavily dependent on imported petroleum products mainly for transport and electricity generation. Some work has been done to increase the efficiency in fuel use through promotion of appropriate technology and national energy policies.

Except for the high cost of fuel and electricity locally, which provides an incentive for efficient use, not much else has been accomplished.

Tourism Resources

As tourism is a major contributor to Vanuatu's economy, the Government has put measures in place to ensure that its development and environmental management are mutually supportive. A significant degree of progress has been made on actions agreed to under the BPOA. The high level of success is a direct result of Government adoption of integrated planning and policies to ensure sustainable tourism development. Yet, much needs to be done to bring about infrastructure changes that should see more tourists visiting other islands outside of the metropolitan areas of Port Vila and Luganville

Biodiversity Resources

With the signing of the United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity (UNCBD) and the Convention of International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES) the Government has implemented strategies for the conservation and sustainable use of local biodiversity. An Environmental Management and Conservation Act, the EIA Regulation and the establishment of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation (DEPC) are recent developments towards achieving sustainable development agenda

National Institutions and Administrative Capacity

Vanuatu has strengthened institutional arrangements and administrative capacity in order to integrate environment and economic policy into national planning. Implementation strategies and schedules inclusive of financing mechanisms have been developed.

In the overarching policy document Priorities and Action Agenda 2006-2015, the Government recognizes that in order to achieve its aim to raise living standards, there is a need to put in place and maintain stable macroeconomic conditions. At the same time, the Government is required to establish policies which promote equitable economic growth. These aims were reinforced in the Government's four year work programme set out in Planning Long, Acting Short (PLAS): Action Agenda for 2009-2012;

Further, a new Public Finance and Economic Management (PFEM) Act was put in place to reinforce the budget process and strengthen the accountability of senior government officials. More recently liberalisation in the telecommunications and aviation sectors (2008) have ensured

greater competition – which by generating lower prices is a key ingredient to achieve the goal of increased equity. The introduction meanwhile of new institutions such as the Utility Regulatory Authority (URA) has also signaled a stronger focus on the interests of consumers.

Regional Institutions and Technical Cooperation

Vanuatu is an active member of the regional organizations and as a member it is a signatory to regional environmental agreements and treaties. The Government has encouraged improved co-ordination and collaboration among regional bodies and between the international community and regional programmes.

Further national actions have resulted in the development of a management strategies specifically geared towards environment and sustainable development and to integrate all development policies, plans and strategies in operation within Vanuatu.

Transport and Communication

Vanuatu is not well developed, in terms of infrastructure including transportation and communication. Road networks, telephone, radio, television, internet coverage is very limited to certain areas only. Much of the transportation challenges are national and regional challenges especially air and sea transport. This has posed challenges to the establishment of accessible national and regional market.

Science and Technology

Although this is one of the weaker areas, the Government has attempted to ensure that science and technology policy is closely linked to national environmental strategies and sustainable development plans, emphasising elements such as self-sufficiency and research and development training for science and technology. The development and use of information and communication technology to overcome size and isolation problems have also been emphasised.

Some level of research and development in agricultural processing has also been promoted. The Government has developed or ensured access to databases on environmentally-sound technologies of local relevance.

Human Resource Development

The human resource capacity of Government is limited, and although training and scholarship programmes target specific skills and qualifications, there are gaps in the local pool of human resources. The Government works with development partners to meet capacity constraints as best it can.

Implementation, Monitoring and Review

Implementation, monitoring and review of the national sustainable development programmes and actions have been established through institutional strengthening inter-agency and restructuring to facilitate partnerships with all stakeholders.

Emerging Concerns and Special Needs

Through the review process it was identified that the implementation of the BPOA was generally hindered by inadequate financial and skilled human resources, lack of scientific support from the educational and research institutes, poor facilities, equipment and limitations of technology transfer.

Trade and investment related concerns are focused on improving the level of participation in the international trade by the identification of mechanisms to exploit foreign direct investment, increasing the relative role of the services sector in the national economy, and the development and strengthening of national initiatives and economic reform policies. Further concerns include the existences of unilateral foreign policies which effectively undermine the emerging financial sector.

A summarisation of the other areas warranting special attention:

1. Small size, rapidly growing population and great dependence on limited natural resources underlies the need for more frequent and pertinent environmental assessments with Vanuatu
2. At the policy level, the assessment needs to be better incorporated in the relevant social, economic and environmental plans and policies.
3. Capacity building of the present institutional arrangements will have to be undertaken to efficiently maximize the benefits entrenched in sustainable development initiatives.
4. The current level of information exchange and dialogue between the public and private sectors will have to be strengthened to ensure the views and suggestions of all stakeholders are ingrained into national policies.
5. The national capacity to address issues related to emerging technologies and their applications will have to be addressed. Given the emerging concerns of biotechnology and genetically modified organisms, for example, Vanuatu needs to revise and update the National Biosafety Framework to ensure it meets current development needs and provide adequate mechanisms to manage introduced organisms and products derived from biotechnology or gene manipulation
6. National sensitivity to trade liberalisation and the impacts of globalization would suggest that more detailed analysis of the influence these changes would have on Vanuatu

7. The degree of progress with the Millennium Development Goals within Vanuatu suggests that improvements will have to be identified at the policy level and the data collection level

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The United Nations General Assembly (UNGA) Resolution A/C.2/67/L.40 decided that the Third International Conference on sustainable development of small island developing states (SIDS) should convene to assess the progress and gaps in the implementation of the Barbados Programme of Action (BPOA) and the Mauritius Strategy of Implementation (MSI), building on, inter alia, existing reports and relevant processes (i.e., Rio+20 and post-2015 UN development agenda). Resolution 63/213 stressed “that the review should provide the international community with an opportunity to conduct an assessment of the progress made, lessons learned and constraints encountered in the implementation of the Mauritius Strategy for Implementation (MSI) and agree on what needs to be done to further address the vulnerabilities of SIDS”.

Vanuatu shares common features of vulnerability with other SIDS. The common features namely; narrow resource base, distance from markets, lack of economies of scale, low factor productivity, small domestic markets and vulnerability to adverse environmental disasters leads to difficulties in integrating to the regional and global economy. Vanuatu has a thin economic base which depends primarily on proceeds of tourism and agriculture, both very volatile sectors. As such the country is very vulnerable to exogenous shocks which can also affect its integration into the regional and the global economy.

This report is a review of the way MSI has been implemented in Vanuatu integrated into national policies, achievements made to date, constraints encountered and lessons learnt by both Government and Civil society in the implementation of the MSI.

1.1 Statement of Commitment

In September 2010, the Parliamentarians of Vanuatu reaffirm their commitments to sustainable development including equitable economic growth, social progress, and the protection of the people of Vanuatu and their environment.

The Parliamentarians believes that population, as a cross-cutting issue, affects all other development issues and is, therefore crucial to achieving the MDGs; in particular MDG targets aimed at eradicating poverty and hunger; improving maternal and child health, promote safe sexual practices and reproductive health and rights; combating HIV/AIDS, TB, Malaria and non-communicable diseases; providing universal primary education; and promoting gender equality and women's empowerment.

They recognise that as Parliamentarians they have a crucial role, both individually and collectively as the link between people and the government - as advocates for the rights and needs of people; as legislators to make laws to protect these rights; and as policy-makers to mobilize resources; involve civil society and create the enabling environment necessary to address these needs.

1. 2 Background

Vanuatu is an archipelago of state volcanic islands and submarine volcanoes located between latitude 12° and 23° south and longitude 166° to 173° east, some 1,300km from north to south in the Western Pacific Ocean and a maritime exclusive economic zone of 680,000km². From low coral atolls to majestic volcanoes, Vanuatu is one of the most geographically diverse nations in the Pacific region.

With a total population of about 234,023 (2009 Census) and the increasing movement of people from rural areas to the main cities, providing adequate services and infrastructure to the rural population throughout this scattered archipelago is a major drain on public finances. Vanuatu's diverse landscapes and cultures are a major tourism attraction. Nearly all domestic exports are primary products reliant on Vanuatu's fertile soils and abundant rainfall, with copra and cocoa accounting for about a quarter of exports.

Vanuatu ranks 118th on the Human Development Index and 52nd on the Human Poverty Index. Poverty levels stubbornly remain at about 40% of the population, with about 26% on less than \$1 per day. Subsistence is still the main way of life for the majority of the population living in rural areas. Vanuatu is ranked as a Least Developed Country by the United Nations but this status is currently under review and could change in 2015.

After enjoying an average growth of 6 per cent between 2005 and 2008, Vanuatu economic growth slowed in 2009 by 3.5 per cent and declined to 1.6 per cent in 2010 before deteriorated further to 1.4 per cent in 2011. The sluggish growth was in line with lack of investment projects after MCA came to an end in 2008. Moreover the uncertainties surrounding major economies such as US and Euro zone had weakened confidence in major trading partners such as India, China and Australia which in turn the spillover effects pass through to Pacific Island Countries including Vanuatu. A current estimate is for the economy to rebound in 2012 and growth by 2.5 per cent, forecast for 2013 is at 3.6 per cent and over the medium term the economy is expected to growth at 4 per cent. The expected turn around for growth is in line with the assumptions that public projects will kick start as planned, confidence to restore and activities will pick up in most contributing sectors of the economy

Gross domestic product (GDP) per capita has increased slowly, reaching \$1,862 by 2006 (NSO 2007). Annual inflation appears as measured by the consumer price index (CPI) declined from 2.8 percent in 2010 to 2.7 per cent in 2011 reflecting weak external inflation as changing prices in consumer goods are mostly affected by real price of imported goods. (2011 ADR)

The climate varies from wet tropical in the northern islands to dryer subtropical in the south of the archipelago. Average temperatures range between 21° C and 27°C and average humidity ranges between 75% and 80%. Average annual rainfall declines from over 4,000mm in the north to less than 1500mm in the south.

Table 1: Gross Domestic Product (annual growth rates)

Real GDP Growth by Sector	<u>Actual</u>		<u>Projections</u>	
	2010	2011	2012	2013
Agriculture, Fishing and Forestry	4.8	5.9	4.6	4.2
Industry	12.6	-20.9	-6.2	3.9
Services	3.1	3.6	3.3	3.8
Real GDP	1.6	1.4	2.5	3.6

Source: VNSO & Macroeconomic Committee (in 2013)

The country is prone to cyclones during the warmer months from November to April, although cyclones have recently shown signs of development outside this season. Vanuatu is also vulnerable respectively to anomalously long dry spells and prolong wet conditions associated with the El Nino and La Nina of the Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon. Vanuatu is highly classified to all natural hazards including tropical cyclone, storm surges, coastal flooding, drought, earthquake, land-slide, tsunami and volcanic eruption.

Vanuatu was admitted to the group of Least Developed Countries (LDC) in 1995. Today it is still part of this group although its per-capita GDP exceeds the LDC threshold. This situation has occurred due to the adjustment based on the 'vulnerability index' which takes into account the vulnerability of Vanuatu's economy and natural disasters (Mourgues, 2004). Thus, geography is critical to understanding the development challenges and constraints facing Vanuatu. Basic social service delivery has high per unit costs, and there are capacity restraints to replicate infrastructure.

Vanuatu's population has grown by more than 70,000 since 1990, reaching 234,023 in 2009. The annual population growth rate is estimated at 2.6% to 2.7% per annum and the population projection for 2010 is about 267,000. Although the total fertility rate (births per woman) has declined from 4.9 in 1990 to 4.1 in 2003, infant mortality has dropped from 52 per 100,000 live births to 31, and life expectancy at birth has increased from 62.8 years in 1989 to 68 in 2003. These demographic changes have resulted in a very young population, with 41% less than 15 years of age, along with corresponding social issues like urban drift, unemployment, crime and drug use.

Tourism contributes significantly to the economy of Vanuatu. In 2011 there was a 5% increase in total number of visitors to Vanuatu. Tourism arrival statistics for the past five years since 2007 shows that there has been a 49% increase in the total number of visitors to Vanuatu. In 2011 there was a 5% increase in the total number of visitors to Vanuatu, mostly from the buoyant

cruise ship industry. In 2011 tourism arrivals has increased from 237,648 in 2010 to 248,898, an increase of just over 11,000 more tourist arrivals in 2011 compared to 2010. In 2011 there was a 3% drop in visitors arriving by air which was offset by a 10% increase in cruise ship arrivals.

Vanuatu has a young population with 45% under the age 15 while the proportion of older persons while still low, is increasing. This places health challenges for the Ministry of Health to deal with. The overall goal and long term objective of a National Population Policy, launched in 2012 is to facilitate a better harmonization between population and development and an improved quality of life for Ni-Vanuatu. The policy is an integrated policy and includes strategies from the PAA as well as from various sectors that are linked to their respective sector policies.

Parliamentarians have become better informed of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) and the Millennium Development and Goals (MDGs). They acknowledge that Vanuatu has made some progress in achieving the MDG targets; these achievements are being partly realised through the implementation of the country's Priority Action Agenda (PAA). However, they also realise the prevailing gaps yet to be achieved.

Parliamentarians are concerned about the rapid population growth in Vanuatu and its impact on the national economy and sustainability, on social structures, and more importantly on the welfare of individuals and families. They recognize the diverse needs of remote rural areas and outer islands and to strive to improve coverage for services especially health, education, agriculture, and support rural development.

2.0 NATIONAL PROGRESS MADE ON IMPLEMENTATION OF THE BPOA AND MSI

To facilitate quick and easy comparisons and consolidation of the information with other SIDS, each national action by Priority Area will be reported categorically.

2.1 CLIMATE CHANGE AND SEA LEVEL RISE

The United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) was ratified on March 9, 1993 and Vanuatu submitted its Initial National Communications (INC) on October 1999. The Kyoto Protocol to the UNFCCC was ratified in July 17, 2001.

International Treaties	Status
United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity	Ratified 1993
United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change	Ratified 1992

Kyoto Protocol – greenhouse gas reductions	Acceded 2001
Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer	Acceded 1994
Vienna Convention for Protection of the Ozone Layer	Acceded 1994

Table 2. Climate-change specific instruments enforced by Vanuatu, Source, Mourgues 2005

In May 2007 the National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA) was completed and published as part of an institutional set-up that seeks to mainstream climate change issues into the national legal framework. This NAPA focused primarily on agriculture and food security, water management, sustainable tourism, marine resource management and sustainable forestry management. Unfortunately, the NAPA assumed that only the LDC fund could be tapped for adaptation projects so all projects were scaled as medium sized projects. National actions were hindered by the limitations of institutional capacity, finance and human resources. The recent establishment of a new Ministry for Climate Change and Adaptation by the government was effected as means to strengthened Vanuatu's policy on disaster risks reduction.

The staff of the Department of Meteorology and Geo-hazard and the DEPC continues to organise and attend local and regional trainings on climate change. In 2011 the DEPC has achieved the official gazette of the amendment of the Ozone layer and Protection (OLP) Act and the Beijing and Montreal Amendments. The Project Management Unit for climate change in the Department of Meteorology and Geo-hazard is executing several externally funded projects to address climate change impacts by sectors as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of All Existing Projects since 2005 & Projects in the Pipe Line

Donor	Project	Currency	Total Funding
Global Environment Facility & UNDP	Second National Communications (SNC)	USD	400'000
Victoria University of NZ, UK Gov. Global Opportunities Fund, German Gov. ISAT Fund, NZ Ministry of Environment.	Vanuatu Carbon Credits Project (VCCP) Phase 1	NZD	382360
AusAID	Vanuatu Climate Change Adaptation Project (VCCAP)	VT	30'000'000
Macarthur Foundation	Fisheries & Climate Change	USD	165'000

EU Global Climate Change Alliance	National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)	Euro	5'350'000
World Bank	National Adaptation Programme of Action (NAPA)	USD	150'000
GTZ (German Technical Corporation)	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Pacific Region (ACCPR)	Euro	1'400'000
Global Environment Facility & UNDP	Pacific Adaptation to Climate Change (PACC)	USD	750'000
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Designated National Authority (DNA) Manual	USD	40'000
World Bank	Vanuatu Carbon Credits Project (VCCP) Phase2	USD	20'000
World Bank (GFDRR)	Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction	USD	3'000'000
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Coral Triangle Initiative	USD	181'820
Asian Development Bank (ADB)	Strengthening capacity of Pacific Island States to Climate Change	USD	1'000'000
Government of Germany	Mangrove Ecosystems for Climate Change Adaptation & Livelihood (MESCAL) Project	USD	506'250
UN Habitat & Commonwealth Local Government Fund	Cities & Climate Change	USD	10'000
World Health Organization	Climate Change & Health	USD	10'000
World Bank MDRR	Managing Disaster Risk Reduction	USD	7'200'000
UNDP	Adaptation to Climate Change in the Coastal Zone in Vanuatu - LDCF	USD	8,030,000

	funding		
UNDP	Pacific Risk Resilience Programme (PRR)	USD	4-5 Million approximately
UNDP, UNICEF & FAO	Vanuatu Community Resilience to Climate Change & Natural Disasters (UNTFHS)	USD	2,921,122

Source: Brain Philips, PMU, DMGH and Unicef

In 2012 the National Advisory Committee on Climate Change (NACCC) was renamed to National Advisory Board (NAB) on Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction with the following key roles:

- Strategic Governance and Policy
- Technical Advice, Project Monitoring and Coordination
- Project Management – Governance, Financing, Procurement & Administration
- New Meteorological, Geological Hazards and Climate Change Act to:
- Amend the National Disaster Act
- Amend other relevant legislation to ensure that DRM and climate change are appropriately integrated for example, sectoral legislation for agriculture, tourism, infrastructure etc.

In March 2013 the government created a new Ministry for Climate Change and Adaptation as means to strengthened Vanuatu's policy on climate change and disaster risks reduction in keeping with its commitments to key regional and global agreements. These include the *Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action (2005 – 2015)* or *Regional Framework for Action (RFA)* – a Pacific regional agreement which was endorsed by Pacific Leaders, and the *Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015)* – a global agreement which the Vanuatu Government endorsed at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005.

The National Mitigation Assessment was completed and published as part of the first national report This document focused primarily on climate change and energy production (energy production was responsible for 90% of the national GHG emissions). The Green House Gas Emission Inventory was undertaken and identified sector wise distribution of emissions. Vanuatu has never approached its global restriction in terms of the production of Ozone Depleting Substances (ODS) or green house gases.

From as early as 1994, Vanuatu could account for its total national consumption of ODS. In 1999, a national freeze on the importation of CFCs was instituted. The present phase out programme plans for present consumption levels to be reduced and total phase out of CFCs.

In the furtherance of national activities, in 2012 and again in May 2013, Vanuatu held its National Train-the Trainers Workshop for Customs Officers and other stakeholders. Customs officers are now trained in the detection and handling of ozone depleting substance.

Vanuatu's Vulnerability Assessment Project (VAI) pointed out that the potential threat of extreme weather events such as sea level rise and storm surges would be exacerbated by the effects climate change.

Little progress was made on national actions related to the formation of adjustment and mitigation policies in the context of integrated coastal area management through limited institutional capacity, finance, inadequate human resources and the sheer difficulty of commanding national attention and high priority in government programming in the context of the myriad of pressing socio economic issues.

2.2 NATURAL AND ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTERS

One of the primary obstacles to development in Vanuatu is that of natural disasters; hurricanes, earthquakes, floods, landslide, volcanic eruptions, tsunamis and droughts are the common natural phenomena, which cause significant social, economic and environmental damage on the nation.

Vanuatu is particularly vulnerable to all hazards, which regularly undermine national development efforts. The Vanuatu National Action Plan on Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management developed in 2006 has identified key strategies for mainstreaming DRR&DM across sectors and through all levels of national, provincial and community decisions and actions in order to reduce vulnerability to hazards and provide for effective management of disasters when they occur.

Overall, the review finds that Vanuatu has made moderate progress against its NAP. Key achievements include a raised awareness of DRR-DM issues across all levels of government, progressive improvements in information systems, and moves to bring key government agencies responsible for DRR-DM under one roof. Recent improvement is under way with mainstreaming DRR and CCA at the national, provincial and community levels through the formation of disaster and climate change networks by line government and partner agencies.

Government policy aims to upgrade monitoring systems for better responses to volcanic, seismic and tsunami events in Vanuatu. There were three seismic monitoring stations for the national tsunami warning system installed in Efate. The Geo-hazard installed six seismic monitoring stations for research since 2008. In 2011 there were seven volcano monitoring alert systems operating.

The recent formation of the National Advisory Board (NAB) aims to develop DRR and CCA policies at the national level to direct programs and activities that will assist to address the emerging challenges related to climate change and disasters. Policies developed at this level will assist to strengthen institutions and mainstream DRR and CCA at national, provincial and community levels.

2.2.1 Hurricanes

Vanuatu generally experiences these tropical storms from November to April the month of June to November. Over the last decade, Vanuatu has endured a number of violent storms (Table 4). These episodes have caused millions of dollars in damage and it is a set back to all social and economic sectors.

Table 4: Most Severe Natural Disasters in Vanuatu (1950-2006)

Date	Disaster Type	Number Killed	Number Affected	Economic damage (\$)
24/12/51	Wind storm	100	n.a.	250,000
7/02/87	Wind storm	48	48,000	25,000,000
8/05/99	Wind storm	32	n.a.	n.a.
27/11/99	Earthquake	12	14,100	n.a.
16/01/85	Wind storm	9	117,500	173,000,000
2/02/72	Wind storm	4	n.a.	n.a.
30/03/93	Wind storm	4	12,005	6,000,000
9/01/92	Wind storm	2	n.a.	n.a.
25/02/04	Wind storm	2	54,008	n.a.
27/11/05	Volcano	0	5,000	n.a.
11/01/88	Wind storm	0	4,700	n.a.
8/06/01	Volcano	0	4,500	n.a.
21/12/02	Flood	0	3,001	n.a.

Source: ADB CEA Report, 2007

2.2.2 Earthquakes/Tectonic Activity

Although Vanuatu has not experienced a major tremor since 2010, the location of the islands along the Indo-Australian tectonic plates has resulted in significant seismic activity being recorded. The following commitments have been made by the government

- the Vanuatu National Data Centre was launched. It means that Vanuatu can now access the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty Organisation (CTBTO) database cantered in Vienna, Austria to retrieve data on seismic, hydro-acoustic, infra-sound and radionuclide from the international CTBTO monitoring network;
- SEISCOMP3 earthquake determination systems have been installed and operating to locate the position of earthquakes.
- There was a major upgrade with the Efate system to improve data transmission to main office in Port Vila.
- There was also a major upgrade on the SANVU station for earthquake detection and integrated into Vanuatu tsunami warning system.
- Ambrym station now transmitting data on level of volcanic activity through the e-government ICT network to the main office in Port Vila.
- A World Bank funded project is underway in 2013 to install tsunami early warning systems (Sirens) in Port Vila and Luganville.

2.2.3 Droughts

Severe droughts occur periodically in Vanuatu. However, this does not preclude the occurrence of slight to moderate droughts. Most recent drought occurred in Aniwa in February 2013 for 3 months. NDMO have facilitated the creation of cluster groupings to respond and monitor disasters/possible disasters. The WASH Cluster met in May 2013 to monitor the Aniwa drought.

Vanuatu has made moderate progress against its National Action Plan (NAP) prepared in 2006. The NAP underscore the importance of DRR-DM as a multi-stakeholder and cross-cutting development issue, establishing appropriate institutional and legal frameworks, and mainstreaming consideration of DRR-DM into all development programs, sector plans and budgets.

2.2.4 Other Phenomenon

The majority of the remaining natural disasters floods ,tsunami, wildfires and volcanic eruption which affect Vanuatu are linked to one or a combination of the primary disasters.

Vanuatu has a dedicated institution responsible for natural disasters. It has made moderate progress against its National Action Plan (NAP) prepared in 2006. Key achievements include a raised awareness of DRR-DM issues across all levels of government, progressive improvements in information systems, and moves to bring key government agencies responsible for DRR-DM under one roof.

Vanuatu has also made considerable progress in the national actions relating to strengthening national and regional institutional mechanisms, improvement of access to technology and information sharing for pre-disaster planning.

The Vanuatu NAP articulates how the government plans to strengthen DRR-DM at national level, in keeping with its commitments to key regional and global agreements. These include the *Pacific Disaster Risk Reduction and Disaster Management Framework for Action (2005 – 2015) or Regional Framework for Action (RFA)* – a Pacific regional agreement which was endorsed by Pacific Leaders, and the *Hyogo Framework for Action (2005-2015)* – a global agreement which the Vanuatu Government endorsed at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in 2005. In short, these frameworks underscore the importance of DRR-DM as a multi-stakeholder and cross-cutting development issue, establishing appropriate institutional and legal frameworks, and mainstreaming consideration of DRR-DM into all development programs, sector plans and budgets.

Apart from natural hazards, Vanuatu is also exposed to man-made hazards that can occur from time to time such as accidents, plane crash, ship wrecks, and biological hazards in terms of pest or disease outbreaks. National efforts are currently being considered to take an all hazards approach when developing the national disaster plans. The Ministry of Health has created a Surveillance and Response Unit to provide timely monitoring and response to medical outbreaks

2.3 MANAGEMENT OF WASTES

Waste management is still a big issue in Vanuatu. The problem of solid waste disposal is particularly pronounced in the urban areas of Vanuatu. There are currently no regulations for waste water management or monitoring of receiving environments. Vanuatu has ratified the POPs, there is currently no systematic process in place to implement it.

The Government has strengthened its waste management capacity by implementing the National Waste Management Policy executed in 2006, a Japanese International Cooperation (JICA) funded sanitary land fill at Bouffa for the Port Vila Municipal Council and drafting of new Pollution Control and Waste Management Act. A draft master plan has been prepared which serves as the umbrella document in developing waste management policies and action programs both at the national and regional levels. Vanuatu has already produced its own Solid Waste Characterization and Management Plan. Draft laws relating to pollution control and waste

management have been prepared and are ready to be tabled in parliament in 2013. A 5 year National Strategies on proper waste management was developed in 2011.

2.4 COASTAL AND MARINE RESOURCES

Vanuatu has about 620 sq. km of reefs, which are tremendously important for protection of the coastline and provision of protein for coastal communities, and are normally included inside the boundaries of customary land. Vanuatu is a signatory to some multilateral environmental agreements which provides mandates to the national government to implement for sustainable fisheries resources. The two important agreements are the United Nations Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) ratified in 1982 and the Convention on International Trade on Endangered Species of Wile Fauna and Flora (CITES) ratified in 1989.

In 2002, with financial assistance from the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and UNDP Vanuatu prepared a Strategic ction Plan for International Waters which identified pilot projects to improve community based fisheries resources and integrated coastal zone management. In 2011, the Fisheries Act and the Fisheries Regulation were reviewed. Management of coastal fisheries and coral reefs is increasingly being undertaken by communities, through community conservation areas and declaration of taboo areas as “no-take” zones.

Vanuatu developed a revised Tuna Management Plan in 2009 that lays out the operational parameters for implementing sections of the Fisheries Act of 2005.

The Fisheries Department is conducting trochus re-seeding experiments, assessing stocks of beche-de-mer, coconut crabs, lobsters and giant clams and undertaking seaweed farming trials. All of the above will result in better knowledge and experience to address the pressures on coastal marine resources.

The Coastal and Marine Resources are of critical importance to the survival of Vanuatu. Tourism which is based on the coast, fishing and marine based recreational activities together contribute over 70% of the GDP. Vanuatu has moved from an environment policy stance where tourism projects could not be approved without any an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). This is to ensure that there is no degradation of the coastal ecosystem, land destruction of the beaches and near shore assets – sand mining is one of the most critical problems in the coastal zone.

The upgrading of the Environment Unit to a fully fledged department in 2008 provided new institutional capacity to coordinate management of the coastal zone through a process of EIA. Both the Foreshore Development Act and the Physical Planning Act are being revised to give effect to the EIA Regulation.

The Global Environment Facility (GEF) Small Grants programme also has a programme that engages the civil society in coastal ecosystem management including, climate change mitigation and adaptation.

Since 2009-2013, a total of 950,000 USD grant had been committed under the GEF Small Grants implemented by UNDP in Vanuatu for support to local NGOs and CBOs for local empowerment in environmental management.

The local NGO (Wan smol Bag) created a network of Turtle monitors throughout the archipelago for turtle protection. The Environmental Management and Conservation Act of 2002 had provided for registration of community conservation areas of significance to biodiversity. Since 2009, the GEF and UNDP through the Small Grants programme supports the participation of local Non governmental Organisations and local communities, in strengthening the local efforts for sustainable biodiversity protection and conservation through locally managed marine areas that are under traditional management systems. The managed areas includes beaches hosting turtles nesting sites, sea grass beds, coral reefs and mangrove habitats that are conserved and protected. The experiences bring knowledge and experiences to address threat to management of coastal biodiversity significance sites and also protection of islands coasts to sea level rise and storm surges.

2.5 FRESHWATER RESOURCES

As Vanuatu's population grows so demand on existing water sources will increase. These demands when combined with the increasing risk of pollution and climate related changes could be expected to limit the future availability of potable water, constrain its productive use and impact negatively on Vanuatu's most precious resource, it's pristine environment.

In 2008, the government through the DGMWR and with funding from the New Zealand International Aid (NZAid) assisted the government in preparing Vanuatu National Water Strategy (2008-2018). The strategy proposes a major change in the role of the DGMWR from that of a service provider to main proponent and facilitator of a new integrated water resources management approach. The overall objective of the National Water Strategy 2008-2018 is to improve policy and working practices within various agencies responsible for water supply. To date the strategy has been slowly implemented because of lack of implementation framework that will align with the national water strategy and the inefficiency of coordination mechanisms between the different agencies involved.

With the support of NZAid, the work on the implementation framework is due to be completed by end of 2013.

The GEF/ UNDP small grants programme supports NGOs and local communities revegetation of watershed that are subject to landslides and soil erosion affecting local water supply quality and

quantity. This initiative draws knowledge and experiences in addressing the threats to watershed management and the local community water supplies systems.

2.6 LAND RESOURCES

About 70 per cent of the land area has significantly been used for agricultural activities and human settlement. The highest levels of land use are within the lowland fertile areas including the major flood plains on larger islands such as Efate.

The major threats towards land degradation in Vanuatu are; the lack of land use planning due to the lack of knowledge on the capacity and complex function of the islands land ecosystem. The increasing human population put increasing pressure on the islands limited arable land areas and that unsustainable agriculture, logging and urban development practices are employed, that the latter is the loss of Vanuatu land integrity through soil erosion and loss of soil fertility threatening food production and people's livelihood.

The Vanuatu Land Use Planning Project (VLUPP) which commenced in 1995 under the Department of Lands with the AusAID funding support, was intended to develop mechanisms to improve the existing land use practices in Vanuatu. The expected outputs and outcomes of the project was not up to expectation of many stakeholders. The information focused on forest resource mapping unit from aerial photographs taken in 1986. This information has not been updated since the project was completed in 2000.

In 1998, Vanuatu acceded to the United Nations Convention to Combat Desertification (UNCCD). In April 2008, a GEF/UNDP project "Building Capacity and Mainstreaming Sustainable Land Management (SLM) in Vanuatu Project" commenced. The objective of the project was *"to strengthen the enabling environment for sustainable land management while ensuring broad-based political and participatory support for the process."*

Vanuatu had little success in implementing the specific national action and policies agreed to in BPOA relating to land resources, while several plans have been developed and information compiled in a couple of related databases, very little implementation of these plans have taken place. The Land Sector Framework (LSF) which covers 2009-2018 provides the government through the Ministry of Lands strategic direction or the development and management of land resources in Vanuatu. LSF builds upon the 2006 National Land Summit resolutions and recent initiatives in the sector. The strategic priorities highlighted in the LSF have been implemented by Mama Graon Program funded by the governments of Australia and New Zealand.

The Mama Graon Program funded by AusAID which started in 2011 failed to deliver expected outcomes because of the lack of coordination and leadership at the national level and the program is also subject to many negative criticisms from the public on how the program is

managed. The program is an outcome of the 2006 Land Summit which calls for review of land dealings in Vanuatu.

In mid 2012, a joint review committee was appointed by the government to review the Mama Graon Program and have come out with very practical approaches on how to effectively implement the program to meet its key objectives.

Further work must be done in the area of formulating and enforcing laws, regulations, and economic pricing and incentives in order to encourage the sustainable and integrated use, management and conservation of the land and its natural resources.

2.7 ENERGY RESOURCES

Vanuatu has done very little work in the area of implementation of the national actions on Energy. The country still remains heavily dependent on imported petroleum products mainly for transport and electricity generation.

Very little work has been done to increase the efficiency in fuel use through promotion of appropriate technology and national energy policies. Except for the high cost of fuel and electricity locally, which provides an incentive for efficient use, not much else has been accomplished.

Negligible attempts have been made to establish and/or strengthen the national research capability in the development and promotion of new and renewable sources of energy, including wind, solar, geothermal, hydroelectric, wave and biomass energy.

In 2011, the Energy Unit underwent a major restructuring. The name has now changed to the Department of Energy Mines and Mineral Resources. In October 2011 launched the development of the Energy Roadmap (NERM). This is a very important milestone for the Energy Sector in Vanuatu developing its policy since there has never been a more comprehensive energy policy in Vanuatu's history. The NERM covers all energy subsectors including Renewable Energy, Petroleum, Electricity access, reliability and affordability, Energy Efficiency and Energy Conservation. The Vanuatu Energy for Rural Development (VERD) has also been implemented in 2011 (2011 ADR)

2.8 TOURISM RESOURCES

Tourism contributes 40% of Vanuatu's GDP. The growth in Vanuatu's economy over the last five years has been largely due to real estate and tourism activities. The diversity of cultures, geologic forms, biological life forms and the world's most accessible wreck dive and proximity makes Vanuatu a preferred destination for Australian and New Zealand visitors.

Vanuatu developed the National Tourism Development Mater Plan in 1994 which has resulted in Vanuatu's tourism growth over the last decade.

The most promising export in years to come will continue to be Tourism. Vanuatu's goal is to improve tourism yield while ensuring environmental and cultural sustainability. With better linkages to agriculture and fisheries, tourism can be the engine of growth for Vanuatu's economy.

Whilst the tourism institutions do an exceptional job given difficult circumstances, further efforts can be made by the Vanuatu government and the tourism industry. Such efforts can include climate proofing tourism assets; enabling greater participation of the Vanuatu communities, ensuring equitable and sustainable development from tourism and catalyzing small and Medium Enterprises using tourism as the leverage.

Tourism is possibly the most important sector in Vanuatu, with visitor numbers growing Vanuatu's economic survival depends on Tourism. Over the past decade, the dependence of tourism on sustainable environmental practices has been increasingly recognised.

Tourism arrivals increased from 237,648 in 2010 to 248,898 in 2011. In 2011 there was a 3% drop in visitors arriving by air; offset by a 10% increase in cruise ship arrivals. Total tourism expenditure was estimated to be approximately USD 222 million of which approximately USD 189 million was by international visitors in 2010.

Vanuatu has been successful in implementing the national actions agreed to in BPOA for Tourism Actions relating to supportive tourism-environment policies, sustainable tourism development and the protection of cultural integrity. Work has been initiated on the action stipulating the identification and development of facilities to meet specific niche markets, particularly in eco-tourism, nature and cultural tourism and involving local populations in the identification and management of natural protected areas set aside for eco-tourism.

2.9 BIODIVERSITY RESOURCES

Vanuatu does not have high levels of diversity or endemism of terrestrial species. Overall richness and endemism range from low to moderate in comparison with other eco-region. Managing and maintaining the environment resources is crucial for the economic development of Vanuatu.

Sustainable management and conservation of the environment resources is very important to ensure that the ecosystems are protected and maintained for equitable future human generations. Vanuatu made considerable achievements including:

- Being a signatory to the Nagoya Protocol on Access to Genetic Resources and Benefit Sharing in November 2011,

- The signing of the Bio-Safety Cartagena Protocol,
- The review of the Vanuatu National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan. This is an environmental policy developed in year 2000.
- The amendment of the Environmental Management and Conservation Act and the enactment of the EIA Regulation to regulate developments,
- The strengthening of the Department fo Environmental Protection and Conservation

The development of conservation areas is a priority in the PAA. The DEPC has assisted several communities and private sectors in facilitating their conservation area initiatives. In 2011, a total of 4,120 hectares of land were legally registered as conservation areas.

Vanuatu is off to a slow start in implementing national actions in Biodiversity. The current National Biosafety Framework Project (as mandated by ratification of the Cartegena Protocol on Biosafety to the Convention on Biological Diversity) seeks to establish the necessary enabling regime to minimise the potential effects of biotechnology on the nation's biodiversity. It should be noted national progress has been hindered as there are still some significant gaps in inventory compilation and safeguarding of intellectual property rights.

2.10 NATIONAL INSTITUTION S AND ADMINISTRATIVE CAPACITY

Vanuatu's National Development Strategy is the Priorities and Action Agenda (PAA) formulated in 2006 (covering 2006-2015). It is based on the longer term objectives of the Comprehensive Reform Program (CRP) on which Vanuatu embarked in 1997 and further revised in 2006. The main agenda for action includes increasing productivity in key sectors - especially agriculture and tourism - maintaining macroeconomic stability, cutting costs associated with transport and utilities, improving service effectiveness and enhancing access to basic services such as health and education. PAA priorities link to the Millennium Development Goals and cross cutting issues. The challenge remains for the government to put in place an effective monitoring and evaluation system inregarding progress on government strategic policy priorities.

Vanuatu is moving slowly but on the right track to put in place the necessary institutional mechanisms required to manage the environment and initiate the process of integrating the environment into general economic planning. But it has yet to establish a Sustainable Development Board to oversee sustainable development issues. For the purpose of this report it is recommended that the government endorse the Development Committee of Officials to be the body responsible for sustainable development issues.

Much work needs to be done on the actions which essentially require enactment of modern legislation regulations and provision of adequate resources.

The following is a highlight of the major activities carried out over the period.

- Improvement in legal and institutional frameworks for the management of the environment and natural resources;
- Meaningful participation by civil society in decision making;
- Prevention and management of the causes and impacts of natural disaster and disaster response;
- Pollution and waste management; and
- Recognition of the relationships between the environment and trade, energy use, science and technology.

2.10.1 Institutional Arrangements

The implementation of the MEAs in Vanuatu is dependent on the collaborative organization of the duties and responsibilities among the various government agencies. Firstly, there is a three-pronged focal point system for all sustainable development conventions. Secondly, participation has not been fully institutionalised, with recommendations being submitted directly to the policy makers. Finally, legislation is being developed with the specific purpose of ensuring synergies in sustainable development initiatives.

2.10.2 Focal Point System

Vanuatu does not have a specific sustainable development body to make decisions on sustainable development issues. The Political Focal Point (PFP), the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and External Trade, facilitate global affairs to the ratification process of all conventions. The National Focal Point (NFP) in most cases are the government agency set up with the specific task of coordinating the implementation of all MEAs. The importance of this function lies in the ability of the NFP to not only set priorities for the implementation of each convention but also to identify opportunities for synergies with implementation objectives. Although some MEAs have been ratified, concrete synergies for the implementation and management strategy specifically geared towards environment and sustainable development to integrate all development policies, plans and strategies needs to be developed.

The Operational Focal Point (OFP) occasionally referred to as the competent or scientific authority is that agency with the specific duties of day to day implementation of an individual convention. The DEPC coordinates biodiversity management issues while the NAB on Climate Change coordinates climate change issues.

2.11 REGIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND TECHNICAL COOPERATION

Vanuatu understands that regional institutions and organisations are able to overcome some shortcomings by pooling human resources, linking national efforts and attracting international resources. Vanuatu's affiliations to regional and international organisations and conventions (e.g. UNCCD, UNFCCC, UNCBD) provides several benefits to Vanuatu. Bilaterally, the historical donors also provide technical assistance to Vanuatu in the economic and social sectors and on environment related issues of importance to Vanuatu. Technical cooperation in Vanuatu has been mainly project based without any further follow up program as can be seen in Table 3.

2.12 TRANSPORT AND COMMUNICATION

There have been some major successes in providing more affordable telecommunications and aviation services. Deregulation in these sectors has led to greater competition and lower prices and has underpinned the growth of the tourism sector.

There has been a dramatic increase in tele-density as a result of these reforms. With the increased competition between Digicel and TVL, current mobile coverage is now about 90 per cent. A Universal Access Policy (UAP) Fund has been set up to subsidise the delivery of mobile telecommunications services to selected remote areas.

A new air service agreement was signed between the Government of Vanuatu and the United Arab Emirates bringing the total number of current ASAs to ten, four of which are effective and currently utilised.

The main mode of transport in Vanuatu is by sea, via small craft in coastal areas and combined passenger and freight vessels for interisland movements. Outside of Port Vila and Luganville, shipping services call at about 36 small jetties or wharves and many more informal anchorages or beach landing sites. For most communities, services are relatively frequent and reliable. The government has created a new office of Maritime Affairs within the Ministry of Infrastructure and Public Utilities (MIPU), which will eventually take over regulation of both vessels and infrastructure. With donor assistance the international wharf in Port Vila has been upgraded and improvements are on-going for the domestic shipping service.

2.13 SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

Vanuatu is not well endowed with the infrastructure necessary to achieve either technology development or effective transfer of appropriate technologies to combat environmental degradation. Even when dealing with established technologies, Vanuatu lack the capability needed to provide ongoing maintenance and repair. We also find that management and technical expertise relevant to the ecologically sustainable development of natural resources is scarce.

Vanuatu welcomes the increased technical cooperation with the industrial countries and also with other developing countries in order to adapt Vanuatu's practices to technologies which are even more productive and are also environmentally sound.

There is a need to facilitate the technology development in Vanuatu which is affordable and appropriate, along with the associated development of human resources, skills and training, research and information sharing. Vanuatu should also develop guidelines and implement procedures for Environmental Impact Assessment and take into account the probable impacts on other resource users and environments when evaluating particular development proposals.

Over the past decade, Vanuatu has been a beneficiary from many scientific and technical information provided by various regional and international organisations. At the community level, the use of the scientific and technical information is difficult. There have been various awareness and training programmes conducted at community level, but much work remains to be done, including simplifying scientific and technical information to be understood by the community who contribute significantly to sustainable development

2.14 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Increasing access to primary education is a priority goal for the Vanuatu Government under the Primary Education Policy that aims to enrol 100% of all children 6-11 years in classes 1-6 by 2015. In 2010 the Ministry of Education with its development partners implemented a school grants scheme subsidizing 365 primary schools parental contributions to ultimately make primary education free.

2.14.1 Poverty Eradication

The Government of Vanuatu's 2009 strategy document Planning Long, Acting Short outlines the most recent policy priorities and strategies, which include macroeconomic and governance priorities as well as strategies focusing on employment, education and health. In terms of macroeconomic policy, the Government's priority is to achieve responsible macroeconomic and fiscal management, including implementing the New Development Budget to better align resources with priorities, strengthening the legal regime governing the appropriation and use of public funds, and maintaining payroll costs at a manageable level.

Together with Planning Long, Acting Short, the priorities and action agenda (PAA) An Educated, Healthy and Wealthy Vanuatu 2006-2015 (Government of Vanuatu 2006a) sets the government's 10-year policy priorities. The initial PAA was formulated in 2003 with five priority areas, and was later expanded to cover seven priorities: (1) private sector development and employment creation; (2) macroeconomic stability and equitable growth; (3) good governance and public sector reform; (4) primary sector development (natural resources and the environment); (5) improved provision of basic services, especially in rural areas; (6) education

and human resources development; and (7) economic infrastructure and support. This policy also emphasizes expanding economic opportunities and economic infrastructure. Overall, the main policy strategy in Vanuatu is focused on increasing private investment

2.14.2 Education and Reduction of Child Mortality

Considerable improvements have been made in the last two decades in reducing under—five mortality. Improved perinatal and neonatal survival has been attributed to improved antenatal care, the increased proportion of deliveries attended by skilled birth attendants, the increased proportion of deliveries taking place in health facilities, and better referral systems to access emergency obstetric care.

Decreasing mortality beyond the neonatal period has been attributed to a number of effective public health interventions targeting infant and child health which include child immunisation; integrated management of childhood illnesses (IMCI) focusing on early treatment of respiratory infections and diarrhoeal diseases; strong promotion of exclusive breastfeeding, healthy weaning practices and child nutrition; child growth monitoring to detect early under—nutrition; improved malaria prevention and treatment; better access to improved water and sanitation; a longer time between births (child spacing); and better access to primary health care. In addition, the general socio—economic status and well—being of people has improved, particularly regarding education and access to information which has resulted in positive impacts on health—seeking behaviours.

2.14.3 Gender Equality and Empowerment of Women

Vanuatu ratified the Convention on the Elimination of all forms of Discrimination Against Women (CEDAW) in 1995 and the Optional Protocol in 2007 and submitted the initial, second and third combined State reports in 2007. Currently pending Council of Ministers' endorsement are the fourth and fifth combined State Reports that were produced by the multi-sectoral National CEDAW Committee with support from UN Women. The civil society supported the shadow report writing process and a draft is currently in place.

The revised PAA gives gender equality and women's empowerment more prominence and identify gender mainstreaming as a strategy of the whole of government that needs more concerted efforts.

2.14.3.1 Gender Based Violence

The passing of the Family Protection Act (FPA) in 2008 was a milestone after almost 11 years of awareness raising and lobbying by women human rights organisations. The FPA No. 28 of 2008 criminalized domestic violence and prohibits the use of bride price as a defense for domestic violence. It also has provision for the establishment of the Authorised Persons and Registered Counselors. In 2010 and 2011 saw the establishment of the National Family Protection Taskforce and the setting up of a number of Provincial Family Protection Taskforces to guide

implementation of the Act. In 2011, DWA supported by AusAID carried out awareness programmes in targeted communities in Port Vila to support them to develop community action plans on gender based violence. In 2012 the DWA piloted the implementation of the FPA in the Big Bay area in Santo and South Santo with assistance from UN Women.

The first comprehensive research on gender based violence was conducted by the Vanuatu Women's Centre and the Vanuatu National Statistics Office and the report was released in 2011. The finding of the research shows that Vanuatu has alarmingly high rates of violence against women by husbands/partners. Among women who have ever been married, lived with a man, or had an intimate sexual relationship with a partner, 60% experienced physical and/or sexual violence in their lifetime; more than 68% experienced emotional violence; more than 28% were subjected to several forms of control by their husband or partner, more than 2 in 3 (69%) experienced at least one form of coercive control, and most of these were living with physical and sexual violence. Most women who are subjected to violence by husbands/partners experience multiple forms of violence.

2.14.3.2 Women's Political Participation

A series of Building Resource in Democracy, Governance & Elections (BRIDGE) Gender and Elections module were conducted throughout Vanuatu from 2009 to 2012 with support from UN Women which resulted in various outcomes. Inclusive is a council resolution by Shefa Provincial Government Council for 25% reserved seats for women. An outcome statement by the Parliament stated 30% reserved seats for women. A pool of 19 BRIDGE, comprising partial facilitators, workshop facilitators and accrediting facilitators were trained as part of this project to continue with this work.

Gender profiling of political parties, a national study was undertaken by the Vanuatu Department of Women Affairs to identify what political parties in Vanuatu have done to promote women's political participation since Independence in 1980. The objective of this study is to identify women's participation in political parties, compile data including concerns about gender equality, and identify means for advancing equality in political governance. Lack of financial and human resources to support systematic planning and policy development as well as lack of commitment by political parties are cited as challenges to women's equal participation in politics. There is a need for voter education and leadership training for women. The study also provides recommendations for what should be done to strengthen women's engagement in political life in Vanuatu.

The DWA with support from UN Women is currently carrying out a diagnostic study of the 2012 elections and past elections with a focus on women's political participation.

2.14.3.3 Women's Economic Empowerment

In partnership with UN Women, government of Vanuatu is implementing the Partners Improving Markets (PIM), a 5 year project (2013 – 2017) with a focus on women market vendors, building

capacity of provincial and municipal councils to be gender responsive, and thirdly on gender responsive services and infrastructure within the market place.

In 2010 a review of the National Women's Machinery, the Department of Women's Affairs, was commissioned by the Ministry of Justice & Community Services with technical support from AusAID and UN Women. Building on this, DWA with support from the World Bank / Asian Development Bank is carrying out a gender stock take. Since 2012 consultations have been held across the provinces of Vanuatu for the development of the National Women's Development and Gender Policy.

An outcome of the Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs workshop on Gender and Land in May 2013 is the adoption of a Declaration on Gender and Land that has since been endorsed by the Council. The MNCC will now need to be supported by key partners to implement this commitment.

Since the implementation of CRP, Vanuatu has made progress in achieving gender equality in the economic and social development of the country. The Department of Women's Affairs (DWA) was created to develop, coordinate and review policies for gender equality in close partnership with NGOs. A major achievement for DWA in 2011 was providing the National CEDAW (Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women) Committee with the material required to endorse the Vanuatu State's Party Report on the CEDAW submitted to the United Nations in 2012.

In 2011 the DWA and partners conducted a number of awareness raising workshops and reestablished gender focal points in all ministries. The DWA provides other ministries assistance in mainstreaming gender into sectoral policies, projects and activities. Recent examples include the National Gender and Education Policy and National Gender and Lands Program. The department is currently working on incorporating gender issues into Lands Policy.

A review of the broader mechanisms for achieving gender equality including DWA and NGOs and other stakeholders was conducted in 2011. The objective was to identify ways to strengthen the role of DWA in coordination, planning, evaluation and monitoring the policy and program activities of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Vanuatu.

In 2011, the DWA joined with the Vanuatu National Statistics Office in the publication of the Gender Monograph, a detailed gender analysis of the 2009 Census results which highlight a number of areas for evidence based policy development.

2.14.4 HIV/AIDS, Malaria and Other Diseases

Vanuatu continues to record high prevalence of STIs and risk behavior, in particular unsafe sex, among vulnerable population groups, which already creates a context where HIV could spread

rapidly. But there are services in place to provide the public with knowledge, skills and access to services to prevent transmission of HIV and STIs. So far Vanuatu has established a national Voluntary Confidential Counseling and Testing program through 17 clinics which are operated by government and NGOs. The challenges of budget constraints continue to dictate the success in the reduction and prevention mechanisms of HIV/AIDS in Vanuatu.

Vanuatu adopted the regional initiative of WHO to eliminate measles in 2012. A review of the immunization program in 2010 by UNICEF and MOH indicated coverage at 80% and an increase to 92% in 2011. Possible factors contributing to non completion of vaccination schedules include logistics difficulties for children in remote rural areas, population mobility, and parents' and caregiver's misconceptions in vaccines.

The national malaria control strategy continued in Vanuatu with indoor insecticides Residual Spraying (IRS). A high coverage of Long Lasting Insecticide Treated Nets (LLINs) was maintained with Vanuatu's six provinces being targeted. The Pacific Malaria Initiative Support Centre has assisted Vanuatu in addressing IRS, LLINs coverage, improving case detection and strengthening community engagement through establishment of Malaria Elimination Committees. With budgetary support from development partners, MOH has achieved significant progress in the fight against malaria and in particular the progress achieved in malaria elimination on Tanna islands. The program is rolled out into other islands and provinces in Vanuatu.

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3.0 IMPLEMENTATION, MONITORING AND REVIEW

Implementation, monitoring and review of the national environmental component programmes and actions have been established through institutional strengthening and inter-agency restructuring to facilitate partnerships with all stakeholders.

A code of practice exists wherein the implementation of all national environmental programmes must be inclusive of specific administrative and financial management systems. The identification of National Executing Agencies and focal points is a prerequisite for the implementation of any project. Additional activities are inclusive of the identification and recruitment of relevantly trained personnel to oversee the projects.

One particular mechanism being explored is the implementation of small scale grants to community groups for sustainable development activities. Complementary actions ensured that

communities were closely involved in developments and projects, while private sector local consultants were given employment opportunities in close collaboration with the respective agency responsible for each development component.

Evaluation of programmes and projects are conducted using phased evaluation procedures. Difficulty has been encountered in the evaluation process as traditional monitoring processes have overlooked the inclusion of parameters for quantitative indicators.

3.1 Monitoring and Evaluation Unit

The establishment of a Monitoring and Evaluation Unit within the Office of the Prime Minister functions as the monitoring arm of the government toward the implementation of its development program, including how the Government is meeting its targets toward global goals such as the MDGs as well as global commitments such as the Johannesburg Declaration on Sustainable Development. It publishes annually an Annual Development Report of the Government's achievements and challenges in meeting the government national strategic plan. The M&E Unit have been working closely with government sectors, supporting them in their planning and monitoring of corporate and business plans that are inherently linked to national development plans.

4.0 CROSS SECTORAL AREA: TRADE AND INVESTMENT

4.1 Trade

Vanuatu has acceded to the WTO in 2011. Vanuatu is open to trade with very little restrictions. The Melanesian Spear Head Group Trade Agreement is the current benchmark and has led to voluntary tariff reduction below the WTO requirements.

The Trade Policy Framework (TPF) was finalized in late in 2011. The objective of the TPF are to: Mainstream trade into Vanuatu's national development strategy; enhanced development through increased exports of goods and services; guides and informs the working of Vanuatu National Trade and Development Committee; inform Trade negotiations; and facilitates increased inflows of Aid for Trade (AfT)

In light of the international thrust towards globalization and free trade, efforts to bolster the economic development of Vanuatu have focused on improving the level of participation in the international trade by the identification of mechanisms to exploit foreign direct investment, increasing the relative role of the services sector in the national economy, and the development and strengthening of national initiatives and economic reform policies.

Nonetheless, sustainable development as facilitated by the strengthening of national economic policy has been inadequately addressed due to the existence of specific vulnerabilities such as

small size, insufficient capacity (institutional, financial, regulatory, and technical), and proneness to natural disasters.

The constraints to national economic growth are further intensified by unilateral foreign policies which effectively undermine the emerging financial sector. The existence of investment distorting trade barriers in the form of foreign policies which violate national rights to ensure market access to cross-border services is a great concern to Vanuatu.

Numerous local initiatives have been structured to diversify the national economy through improving competitiveness and expanding the range of products and services traded. The Ministry of Trade is attempting to enhance small manufacturers by adopting measures to increase their capacity in identifying and implementing trade efficient policies. There is also an ongoing initiative to develop a responsive trade policy to diversify the range of products locally and to ensure that the country is able to exploit any niche market opportunities.

4.2 Sustainable Production and Consumption

Vanuatu did not suffer social upheavals as other countries did as a consequence of the Food Crisis of 2007. Some urban based families had difficulty coping with the increase in the cost of imported goods and the increased cost of fuel. But on the whole there was minimal if any impact from the Food Crisis that hit the rest of the world.

4.3 Graduation from LDC Status

In January 2009, the Vanuatu government argued to the UN Committee for the Economic and Social Commission (ECOSOC) that Vanuatu should continue in its status as a Least Developed Country (LDC). The argument was that per Capita GDP increase does not in itself reflect a substantive change in the lives of all the people. Facts including vulnerability to natural events such as cyclones, volcanic eruptions need to be considered in the question of whether to graduate Vanuatu out of its LDC status. Vanuatu has until 2015 to prepare itself for graduation from its status as an LDC.

4.4 Overseas Development Assistance

The Government continued to receive substantial financial support from its development partners to assist the nation's national development. The bulk of this assistance is from donor-funded projects and programs implemented by line ministries. The budget process allows for ministries to put forward new programs as new policy proposals (NPPs). The NPPs are submitted together with the recurrent budget to the Ministerial Budget Committee (MBC), which then reviews those submissions and confirms which of these NPPs will be funded through government or donor's resources.

Donors often focus on social sectors like health and education as well as infrastructure. Given the scarcity in government resources, donors often fund operational expenses that could not be funded from the recurrent budget.

5.0 EMERGING CONCERNS

National progress with the implementation of the necessary actions mandated by the BPOA /MSI reveals that the necessary framework exists to implement all of the national actions given the right supplemental assistance. The specific needs identified translate into the thematic categories of institutional capacity building, technology exchange, financial resources, political support, enforcement of existing regulations and the need to develop and review existing legislation.

As illustrated in this report, there is progress in some areas but a few others have been identified as those warranting special attention:

- Small size, rapidly growing population and great dependence on limited natural resources underlies the need for more frequent and pertinent environmental assessments with Vanuatu.
- At the policy level, the assessment needs have to be better incorporated in the relevant social, economic and environmental plans and policies.
- Capacity building of the present institutional arrangements will have to be undertaken to efficiently maximize the benefits entrenched in sustainable development initiatives.
- The current level of information exchange and dialogue between the public and private sectors will have to be strengthened to ensure the views and suggestions of all stakeholders are ingrained into national policies.
- The national capacity to address issues related to emerging technologies and their applications will have to be addressed. Given the emerging concerns of biotechnology and genetically modified organisms, for example, adequate mechanism will have to be identified and implemented to circumvent possible negative implications.
- National sensitivity to trade liberalisation and the impacts of globalization would suggest that more detailed analysis of the influence these changes would have on the nation of Vanuatu.
- The degree of progress with the Millennium Development Goals within Vanuatu suggests that improvements will have to be identified at the policy level and the data collection level.

- Monitoring & Evaluation – a robust information system for measuring Sustainable Development indicators and targets

6.0 A WAY FORWARD FOR VANUATU

The Mauritius Plan of Action National Action Report shows that Vanuatu has made progress in all sectors under the MSI and that it has strengths that can be better harnessed towards implementation of Strategies.

It is important for Vanuatu's Development Partners to keep on track with funding, capacity building and institutional strengthening to continue work that have been initiated for all sectors. And the government with assistance from donor partners must continue to support the work initiated in some of these areas:

1. Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction

Vanuatu is prone to natural disasters, and with climate change, the frequency and impact of these disasters is increasing. Social and economic development in Vanuatu will continue to be affected, underlining the need to mainstream disaster risk reduction and disaster management (DRR&DM) and climate change adaptation into national planning and budgetary processes.

2. Gender mainstreaming

Ensuring women's equitable participation in social, economic and political decision-making is a key determinant and driver of development. While Vanuatu has achieved gender parity in education, the empowerment of women at all levels of society has seen little progress.

The government must ensure that gender is effectively mainstreamed into all policy objectives.

The commitment to promote political stability, to strengthen social welfare through implementation of the relevant and appropriate legislations, the preparation of a national population and human resources development plan, the strengthening of provincial and municipal governance, and gender equality and the empowerment of women

3. Youth

The 2009 population census reveals that over 40 per cent of the population are young people. This represents a challenge and opportunity to the government to ensure that young people have adequate access to employment, livelihood opportunities and basic services. Increased attention to, and investment in, young people across sectors is critical for the government to renew financial and technical commitments with assistance from donor partners where required.

4. Trade

The government must ensure that there is conducive environment for commodity exports, including improvements to quarantine and other trade facilitation services.

5 . Health

Promote a primary health care with community health workers to be supported by a national network of health facilities with appropriately qualified staff with the necessary supplies and equipments.

7.0 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, Vanuatu has implemented some development strategies as laid out in the Mauritius Strategy in its national development plans. It has advanced itself in terms of sustaining stable economic growth and has built resilience against adverse impacts of the global economic crisis. Vanuatu can position itself to achieve a sustainable level of development and making growth more inclusive by effectively identifying its inherent comparative advantage and tailoring precise and implementable policy.

Vanuatu should take advantage of the sustainable development framework of the Mauritius Strategy to address its respective environmental vulnerabilities and improve infrastructure to bridge the remoteness of its islands. It should make the best use of the development assistance both from bilateral and multilateral partners under this strategy.

ADMINISTRATIVE APPENDICES

I. List of Persons interviewed/consulted (prior to contract agreement)

Date Consulted	Name/Position/Activity conducted	Organization
08/04/2013	Sanlan Williams UN Desk Officer	Department of Foreign Affairs
09/04/2013	Jessie Benjamin.Climate Change Officer	Project Management Unit, Department of Meteorology and Geohazard
12/04/2013	Hannington Tate, Acting Director	Department of Forestry
17/04/2013	William Ganileo, Project Coordinator	Sustainable Land Management, Department of Lands
17/04/2013	Shedrack Welegtabit, Director	National Disaster Management Office (NDMO)
18/04/2013	Albert Williams, Director	DEPC
22/04/2013	Chris Simelum, A/PEO	Department of Energy
03/05/2013	Brian Philips, Manager CC PMU	Department of Meteorology and Geohazard

II. List of people who attended the stakeholders consultation

Date	Name	Organisation
16/05/2013	Bethuel Solomon	DSPPAC
16/05/2013	Gideon Mael	DSPPAC
16/05/2013	Armstrong Masanga	DSPPAC

16/05/2013	Pioni Willie	DSPPAC
16/05/2013	Rebecca Olul	UN Women
16/05/2013	Joe Pakoa Lui	Department of External Trade
16/05/2013	Roslyn David	Unicef
16/05/2013	Pakoa Rarua	Department of Public Health
16/05/2013	Dickinson Tevi	Vanuatu Red Cross Society
16/05/2013	Sanlan William	Department of Foreign Affairs
16/05/2013	Ernest Bani	Consultant

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