Report on Vanuatu’s Draft National Ocean Policy Consultations

Our Ocean

Our Culture

Our People
Report on Vanuatu’s Consultations regarding the Draft National Ocean Policy

As at 27 April 2016

By the Ocean Sub Committee of the National Committee on Maritime Boundaries Delimitation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs

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Executive Summary

A draft Ocean Policy was made available to, and discussed with, the people of Vanuatu through an eight month consultation process from June 2015 to February 2016. A team of staff from across different, relevant government departments visited 33 community centres in 20 islands and all the Provinces of the country. Over 1,000 people were consulted directly and, through them, their villages and families. The consultations involved presentations from the government staff followed by feedback sessions where participants provided government officials with their views. Consultations occurred over a one or two day period per location. This Ocean Policy Consultation Report was prepared to reflect the full range of outcomes of the consultations. In addition, the Ocean Policy was substantially revised in response to the consultation findings.

Main finding of the consultation were as follows:

1. The Ocean Policy, as a whole, must better reflect the many dimensions of the strong and important cultural connection between our people and our ocean;
2. The vision, purpose and scope of the Ocean Policy were agreed with although they needed to better reflect the cultural value we place upon our ocean;
3. There are many dimensions of natural capital, human uses and values and threats that pertain to our ocean;
4. It was recognised that our ocean’s resources (e.g. fish stocks) have diminished over time, everywhere;
5. Some guiding principles should be included in the Ocean Policy e.g to do with polluter-pays, application of traditional marine resource management and knowledge, participatory approaches and the recognition of God’s role in the ocean.
6. An ecosystem-based approach to ocean management was supported and seen to align with traditional practices;
7. A more holistic and harmonised approach to ocean management was supported, including spatial aspects of management;
8. There was recognition of the need to secure our maritime boundaries both external and, in some cases, down to the level of traditional maritime boundaries. On this latter, however, there were divergent views – some did NOT want for formal designation of traditional ownership boundaries.
9. There was a strong desire for better enforcement of existing marine resource management laws (e.g. to do with fishing, shipping and pollution) and suggestions for better top-down: bottom-up communications to facilitate this;
10. All agreed that the ocean future should be sustainable and the diversity of life should be protected, for the children of Vanuatu;
11. All agreed that the benefits of the ocean’s resources should primarily accrue to the ni-Vanuatu;
12. More knowledge about both the marine environment, its threats and management should be shared;
13. Building community and marine resource resilience to change and disasters was seen as desirable;
14. Improvements in shipping practices including navigation to prevent accidents and wrecks was wanted;
15. Suggestions were made for an overarching “Oceans” entity, within government, to integrate the activities and management of the multiple sectors using oceans.

All these issues were addressed in the revised, and final, Ocean Policy.
1. Introduction

The government has identified a need for an holistic National Ocean Policy. It will be the Government’s policy statement for the management of its sovereign water and marine ecosystems through to 2020. The draft policy has been developed by the Ocean Sub-Committee of the National Committee for Maritime Boundary Delimitation.

This draft National Ocean Policy sets out the new policy direction for modern marine management which includes traditional marine resource management knowledge and systems. The policy includes ecosystem-based ocean management and planning, and it describes the implementation arrangements and guiding principles for better management of the Vanuatu’s Ocean.

The Oceans Sub-Committee was tasked to undertake discussions and consultations with marine stakeholders nationally and with other related initiatives regionally and globally on this draft Oceans Policy.

National consultations were held to:

• Raise awareness on the important role of the Ocean in the lives of the people of Vanuatu;
• Capture the opinions of the people of the Provinces on the components of the Oceans Policy; and to
• Integrate feedback into the policy document.

This report provides the methods used in the consultations and the findings of those consultations divided into the input provided that pertains to different sections of the draft, and now revised, policy.
2. Methods

The consultation team consisted of a mixture of up to eleven staff from the Departments of: Foreign Affairs (x4), Geology and Mines (x2), Environment, Finance, VANGO, Ports & Harbor, Vanuatu Cultural Centre, Council of Chiefs and/or a representative from the respective Provincial Government in each instance. Overall, less staff made up the first round of consultations compared to the second round (as is explained below).

The figure below illustrate where consultations were held.
In sum, the number of villages in Torba where consultations were held were 3, in Sanma 7, Penama 7, Malampa 4, Shefa 7 and Tafea 5. In addition, numerous one-on-one and group meetings on the Ocean Policy were held in Port Vila with government and non-government stakeholders.

The consultations were held from June 2015 – February 2016, beginning in provinces more in the north. The consultation team were asked, during village consultations, to keep in mind the following, as issues and concepts relevant to the consultation objectives:

- Promotion of greater ownership of ocean and the idea of a policy to help protect it better
- Traditional ownership
- Local understandings of individual, collective, common stewardship and use
- Zoning as a solution to be implemented
- Seeking input into ocean’s policy topic areas - seek information on relevant sections of the oceans policy

The key messages/topics of the consultation were:

- Our Ocean belongs to us all
- Are there more or less fish now than there used to be?
- How important is the informal fishing sector to sustainable development?
- How important are the mangroves, reefs and other habitats for our fisheries?
- We need to take care of our ocean so that our ocean can take care of us

A draft of the Ocean Policy was provided, ahead of time to the provincial governments. More broadly, the key messages, the fact that an Ocean Policy was being prepared and the following questions were provided to the provinces ahead of the consultations occurring (via media, newspapers and via the provincial governments) to help guide the discussions:

- How is the salt water (near to you and far away) important to you and your community?
- Do you see any problems with the sea or the fish? (prompt: Has anything changed over time?)
- What do you think might help fix these problems?
- Do people obey traditional (and other) marine resource management rules?
- What do you think might help encourage people to comply with marine resource management rules?

These questions were used mainly to semi-structure the consultation process. Much discussion went beyond these questions and relevant points were recorded.

Meeting outcomes were recorded daily (each evening) by member/s of the consultation team.

All consultations team members participated in training, ahead of the consultations, to ensure clarity about:

- The Ocean Policy
- The purposes of the consultations
- Things they had to keep in mind
- Key points of process e.g. respect of local custom and tradition, do not make any promises during the consultations, how to respond to questions you don’t know the answer to, etc
- Key messages
- Questions to ask
- How consultations feedback was to be recorded
- Next steps in the Ocean Policy process
The Oceans Policy consultation team partnered in the logistics and finances with the Deep Sea Mineral Policy consultations – to optimize government efficiency and minimize costs.

The presentation styles and discussion styles used in the Ocean Policy consultations differed in the different areas/islands. This was because of learning lessons along the way and/or unforeseen factors that required the consultation team to modify the program to suit accordingly. After each round of consultations, debriefings were held to ensure that lessons learned in conducting consultations were captured and applied in the subsequent consultations.

When beginning in Penama Province, the travel logistics only allowed for a day of consultation. The consultation team used the Okeaneos waka (traditional sailing canoe) to travel around the islands (Penama & Torba). The advantage of this was that one could travel quickly around the islands; the team was usually brought from one location to the next within a day or so. It was not too tiring and the waka and crew provided accommodation and meals which simplified logistics. Some disadvantages were that it took a few days to get used to, some people were seasick, one must travel with the wind and some found it uncomfortable.

When using the waka, the format of the consultation was of Oceans Policy (OP) presentations in the morning followed by Deep Sea Mining (DSM) Policy presentations in the afternoon – discussions were held after both presentations were completed.

In the southern and central consultations on Pentecost Island this format was used. The lead facilitator briefed the community on the draft OP Policy Actions and invited input. One facilitator was used which was later determined to be inadequate. Group sessions and discussions were then held using butcher paper. Groups were given specific questions on OP and DSM to discuss and they presented back at the end of the session.

In North Pentecost this changed because new members of the team joined in and because cultural protocols deemed it improper to separate the participants into groups. So here we had basically a question and answer session to capture all the inputs with three facilitators to encourage input.

On Ambae, the latter format was used again. However, the presentations were modified when used in Saratamata, the Penama provincial headquarters, due to the higher level of technical interest that was likely to be displayed at the headquarters.

On Maewo, due to miscommunication, the waka arriving late at the consultation location (Petarara) so the team had only half a day to do the consultation and compacted the presentations and discussions into that timeframe.

In Torba Province, this same format was used (of having just one big group). There was the OP presentation in the morning and DSM in the afternoon. Then some more detail was provided on the OP policy actions followed by discussions and a question and answer session (again the audience was given specific lead questions as listed above). Two facilitators/presenters were used and they switched roles in each location.

In Sanma Province, for the capital, Luganville, a more technical presentation was provided again. More team members arrived so that five facilitators could be used to accommodate the larger number of participants in the consultations. Break-out groups were used in Luganville who used butcher paper to capture ideas and present back to the plenary group.

When having the rural consultations in Sanma Province, (Nakere, Tassiriki, Peamaeto, Khole, Tutuba, Port Olry), the more basic presentations were used and feedback was sought in plenary groups.

This was a five-week straight block of consultations; it was determined that it might have been better to split this consultation process up due to fatigue and also because there was perhaps not enough time with the participants in each location.

In the next phase of consultations, namely Malampa and Tafea Provinces, lessons learnt from the first phase were incorporated to improve the consultation process. It was decided that one day was not enough to hold an effective consultation; thus consultations were spread over two days. The consultations were also broken down to no more than two week blocks. There was also a bigger consultation team, and a lot more relevant specific government representatives involved in the team.
(e.g. including from Environment, Foreign Affairs, Ports and Shipping, Finance, Deep Sea Mining, Fisheries). It was also decided to transport the team by plane and truck versus waka (mainly due to some discomfort issues for some team members). The presentations were also simplified to focus on the key points.

Thus in Malampa Province, on Malekula (Lamap & Lakatoro), two days were allocated. One day was for presentations with OP in the morning till after lunch (which included presenting on the fisheries, environment pollution, shipping, foreign policy, international boundary and MSP aspects of the OP) and DSM in the afternoon. Students were invited to attend the sessions.

During the lunch times, the students were given specific questions on the presentations and split into groups to discuss their answers and asked to report back after lunch. The school group with the best presentation (as judged by a panel consisting of local leaders and consultation team members) received a prize (a small amount of cash and t-shirts). The idea was that the youth of Vanuatu would be the ones benefiting from the OP and the government wanted their insights/inputs and ownership of the OP. In addition, their attention to the OP could be a topic of ongoing conversation back in the school rooms and in their homes.

At the end of the first day, the adult participants were split into groups and given Ocean Policy topics for discussion (e.g. shipping/pollution, fisheries, culture/boundaries, deep sea mining) and given butcher paper. They had until the next day to have discussions when they would present back on outcomes.

In Ambrym and Tanna (at White Sands), this format had to be compacted into a one day consultations due to the flight schedules.

In Lenakel and Aneityum, the two-day format was used.

Some island consultations were delayed due to weather constraints; these were done in December. Due to timing constraints, the consultations team was split (into three teams of at least three people) and the consultations were only for one day. These “catch-up” consultations covered: Paama, Erromango and Futuna.

In Shefa, a one-day presentation format was used (except for Epi) and the simplified presentations, revised from the original versions, were given to the communities. Presentations were given in the morning and feedback was sought in the afternoon. A team of six from different Ministries went to Epi, a team of two to South Epi and another team of four went to Emae. The team of four that went to Tongoa included representatives from Tongoariki and Punanga.

In North Efate the consultation was held in Tanoliu Village with thirteen government staff and representatives from all villages in North efate from Epau to mangaliliu, and also offshore islands Lelepa, Moso, Nguna, Pele, Emau.

Again this was also just a one day consultation.

For Port Vila, the consultation was held at VNPF conference room. Participants were mainly NGOs, Civil Society Groups, Women’s representatives, Youth Representatives, and Churches. This consultation only needed a half day. The government had a team of seven from various Ministries.

The issues raised during the consultations are summarized in this report. They are presented within the relevant section of the draft Ocean Policy. Appendix A shows a summary of the feedback received from each community.

The raw data from the consultations – the meeting notes taken by the consultation team – are available from the Department of Foreign Affairs (via Mr Toney Tevi) or Department of Environment (via Mr Vatu Molisa).

The Appendix B details the number of people consulted, where and on what dates. This excludes the ongoing consultations that were held with non-government but especially government stakeholders in Port Vila throughout the consultation period.
3. Using the input from consultations

A vast array of issues was raised and many suggestions were made as to how to improve the management of Vanuatu’s ocean. The Ocean Policy is not able to, nor is it intended to, address all the issues raised in the consultations and presented in this report. This report also makes no assessment of the veracity or utility of the observations and suggestions made. It is simply a report of the findings of the consultations.

Sector-based plans, policies and strategies are, and will remain, important tools in the management of Vanuatu’s seas. The Ocean Policy will complement this sector-based planning by facilitating coordination, collaboration across sectors and assisting Vanuatu to decide what marine activities it would like to promote (or control) in which parts of its maritime estate.

The consultation findings have been used to revise the Ocean Policy and the information is also being shared with relevant government sectors for them to use in their planning and management efforts.

4 A Vision for the Ocean

4.1 Vision

From the draft Ocean Policy: “A safe, healthy and rich ocean for Vanuatu’s people, today and tomorrow.”

There was general agreement with the vision although a better reflection of the cultural importance of the ocean was requested.

It was discussed that exactly what “safe, healthy and rich” means for Vanuatu is to made explicit. This remainder of this Ocean Policy does exactly that.

There was a concern that the time horizon referred to: “today and tomorrow” might be misrepresented so it should be clearer that “tomorrow” means “the future”.

The new vision is:

“A safe, healthy and rich ocean for our people and our culture, today and into the future.”

4.2 Purpose of the National Ocean Policy

From the draft Ocean Policy: “The purpose of the National Ocean Policy is to achieve an ocean governance framework that manages all line agencies with responsibility for maritime and ocean affairs, and harmonizes national actions in relation to the marine resources of the Republic of Vanuatu.”

Referring to the overall purpose of an Ocean Policy, it was broadly agreed to, with one person commenting that it would be good to harmonise across different activities and legislation that pertain to the ocean.

4.3 Scope of the National Ocean Policy

From the draft Ocean Policy: “The geographic scope of the National Ocean Policy is from the coastline starting at the high water mark to all marine waters and the seabed of the exclusive economic zone of Vanuatu.”

No comments were made that pertain to the scope of an Oceans Policy. The consultation team understood from their discussions that the scope for the Policy was broadly accepted.
5. Context for the Vanuatu Ocean Policy

5.1 Jurisdiction

Marine resource management in Vanuatu, today, occurs using current definitions of maritime boundaries, including, in places, an absence of, or confusion about, their definition. It was noted that the Constitution, for example, is silent on oceans.

Some communities were keen to see definition of maritime boundaries including customary community and customary island boundaries, provincial boundaries. The Malvatumauri Road Map was suggested as a way to identify customary boundaries. Others were equally keen NOT to see these boundaries defined. There was considerable variation in opinion about the extent of these boundaries. In all cases, it was clear that the known and legally agreed extents of inshore and nearshore boundaries should be information that is shared more broadly. It was also clear that formal legal support for customary marine resource management practices was desirable in some places.

In terms of national boundaries, it was acknowledged by some that the current provisional boundary of the Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ) excludes the Matthew and Hunter Islands (Umaeneag and Umaenupne in Aneityum language) and there was disagreement with this because there is a cultural connection with these islands.

There was a keen desire that the benefits derived from the ocean are retained as locally as possible – within local communities where possible, or provinces or, at least, within the nation.

The section on “Jurisdiction” in the Ocean Policy was revised to ensure these issues were reflected.

5.2 Natural Capital of Vanuatu’s ocean

Communities agreed that the ocean comprised of valuable natural capital, including a great diversity of life, upon which human uses and values rely.

5.3 Human Uses and Values

People identified human uses and values of the ocean as including all marine resources which provide for food security, fisheries, transport, mariculture, cultural identity, medicine, communication, sanitation, genetic resources, education, health, and livelihoods. Many of these values were mentioned to disproportionately benefit the less advantaged in our communities directly, e.g. women, children and even the disabled.

This information has been reflected in the revised Ocean Policy.

5.4 Threats

Marine resource users and stakeholders identified problems and threats in the marine environment and with marine resources such as climate change, overfishing and destructive fishing, ocean and land-based pollution (including waste from ships), deep sea mining, ship wrecks, submerged munitions, habitat destruction, release of ballast water and crown-of-thorns starfish.

These threats have been identified in the Ocean Policy.

5.5 Guiding principles

It was suggested that the development and implementation of an Ocean Policy should adhere to principles such as:

1. the need for the government to work with local communities,
2. promotion of traditional knowledge and traditional marine resource management,
3. support for participation and accountability in implementation of the Ocean Policy,
4. ensuring free and prior informed consent on the part of traditional owners before implementing any changes (for example, as has been done in consultations on the draft Ocean Policy), and
5. the polluter-pays principle to prevent, for example, habitat damage.

These suggested principles were included in the revised Ocean Policy.

6. Ecosystem-based ocean management and planning

People directly and indirectly referred to an ecosystem-based approach to ocean management in that traditional approaches to resource management are integrated and should be applied and that habitat protection is an inherent component of natural resource management, including in oceans. They also recognized that protection of important biological processes, e.g. tuna spawning sites, was part of applying ecosystem-based management.

These insights were reflected in the revised Ocean Policy.

6.1 Strategic Objectives

Discussions that pertain to the seven strategic objectives for the National Ocean Policy are summarized below.

6.1.1 Secure rights to marine resources

There was much discussion about the desire that the rights to, and benefits derived from, ocean resources are realized as locally as possible – whether to the customary owner, local community, island, province or, at the least, to the nation. This included rights and benefits to do with deep sea mining, genetic resources, tourism and other developments, research, fishing and shipping.

It was mentioned that, in some instances, clearer definition of boundaries (especially external maritime boundaries with neighbouring states), was unequivocally desirable. For others, it was mentioned that traditional ownership, use and management systems did not require (and, in fact, some communities did not want) formal legal definition of customary boundaries.

This objective, in the revised Ocean Policy, reflects these matters.

6.1.2 Culture

It was seen by all that it was important to recognize and promote traditional knowledge, traditional marine resource management systems (including customary governance structures such as the Malvatumauri) and tabu areas. This was seen to promote ecosystem-based management. Some described Vanuatu’s ocean as a mat in which the ocean is one with the land with historical and cultural connections throughout.

It was asked that the Ocean Policy should recognize traditional pathways of canoes, custom singing, custom stories, custom names, traditional uses of marine resources (e.g. different uses of shells), homes of reefs, traditional (marine) “roads” and trading passages, customary medicines as they pertain to the sea – all of which have existed for thousands of years and should be protected. Preservation of the ocean’s resources was seen as part of preservation of culture.

Some suggested use of only traditional canoes and fishing gear inshore and offshore to preserve culture and environmental sustainability. Others suggested use of traditional sailing canoes as transport – also for preserving culture and environmental sustainability.

In some places it was said that the indigenous people of Vanuatu own all life in the sea. In other places, the ownership was said to rest with the Chief. Some tribes are seen to have originated from the sea.

There were requests to formally protect cultural tabu areas and other aspects of traditional management systems in law.
Some thought that beneficiaries of Vanuatu waters must be identified in the context of culture, tradition and the traditional knowledge that has existed over decades. It was explained that there are, for example, “forest people” and “ocean people” and so only the latter should benefit from the ocean’s resources. Others thought the benefits should be equally distributed.

Schools should teach students about ni-Vanuatu culture and traditional marine resource management systems.

See also the feedback from the consultations on jurisdiction (Section 5.1) which discusses the various views on formal demarcation of customary boundaries.

The revised Ocean Policy has a new section on culture to address the issues on culture raised in the consultation.

6.1.3 Reform ocean governance

The need for government to work with, and reflect the needs of, local communities, chiefs, traditional owners in ocean management was often pointed out during the consultations. The concept of harmonizing across the range of marine resource uses was roundly supported, subject to working with local communities and provinces. It was recognized that this could help reduce government spending on addressing conflicts and rehabilitating habitats and could help protect the marine ecosystems upon which human uses rely.

It was suggested, also, that a more holistic, integrated ocean governance approach should also harmonise with international conventions and regional policies to which Vanuatu is party.

These observations informed revisions to the Ocean Policy.

6.1.4 Improve surveillance and enforcement

Suggestions made during the consultations included those regarding:

1. better communications about the existing rules and laws,
2. ensure existing rules and laws are adequate to ensure sustainable use of marine resources,
3. better communications between FFA, central government, provinces, chiefs and community members to raise compliance issues,
4. use of the Malvatamauri Council of Chiefs to raise compliance issues,
5. legislative support for traditional management systems, and
6. training on, and adequate resourcing of, surveillance, monitoring and enforcement to implement existing laws (including, but not limited to, those regarding EIAs, shipping, wreck removal, pollution, use of surveillance information provided by FFA).

These were incorporated into the revised Ocean Policy.

6.1.5 Preserve and protect the marine environment

There was a strong desire, expressed by communities, to preserve and protect the marine environment and to safeguard the resources of the sea.

Threats they discussed that needed to be addressed to preserve the marine environment included those from climate change, oceanic and land-based pollution, habitat damage (e.g. mangroves, reefs), take of locally threatened species (e.g. coconut crab, sea cucumber, some fish species), overfishing and use of damaging fishing gear (e.g. fine-mesh nets, poisons), deep sea mining, release of ballast water, shipwrecks, submerged munitions, constructions (e.g. wharf development) and crown-of-thorns starfish.

It was suggested that this could occur through various mechanisms including fostering compliance with traditional knowledge and management systems and with formal legal management rules, community involvement, use of marine protected areas, protection of tuna spawning areas, use of moorings at anchorages, designation of approved anchorages (to minimize damage to reefs),
collaboration between chiefs and the government to share compliance information, enforcing compliance with shipping safety and navigation standards.

The Ocean Policy was revised to ensure these issues were considered.

### 6.1.6 Promote sustainable economic development

Ecologically sustainable economic development was supported by those consulted including because it was seen as important to the future of Vanuatu since so much of the country is ocean. Particular suggestions for ways to achieve this included:

1. Stopping destructive fishing,
2. Stopping overfishing e.g. of shells (trochus), sea cucumber,
3. Stopping illegal fishing,
4. Limiting and controlling foreign fishing vessels,
5. Promoting local offshore fishing industry,
6. Waste and pollution management,
7. Maximising the local value of economic developments e.g. of game fishing,
8. Instigating a polluter-pays system for shipping pollution, waste and shipwrecks, and
9. Protecting important fish areas (e.g. spawning sites including for tuna).

The Ocean Policy was reworded to encompass these suggestions.

### 6.1.7 Promote public awareness, participation and government accountability

The communities and stakeholders consulted agreed that increasing knowledge of and participation in marine resource management issues was important. They particularly suggested building awareness and ensuring participation, in ocean management efforts, of Chiefs and local communities. This included with regard to better communication regarding implementation of this Ocean Policy and also regarding compliance.

It was noted that empowering local communities to participate in the management of their own resources would promote greater stewardship and local compliance.

Better connections between communities and relevant government departments, in implementing marine resource management efforts, was also suggested.

The revisions to the Ocean Policy ensured these suggestions were captured.

### 6.1.8 Increase knowledge and capacity building

There was agreement, during the consultations, that increasing knowledge and capacity regarding marine resource management would be desirable and that it should including traditional knowledge. Broader knowledge, from community level to government, was seen to be needed about climate change, fisheries management, all forms of pollution and maritime safety. A suggestion was that formal training be provided on topics such as these in schools or colleges. It was also requested that mechanisms be established to share the findings of any marine scientific research broadly.

Some commented that parents also had a role: “We need parents to educate the children to protect the ocean...we need to tell them not to pollute the ocean.”

The revised Ocean Policy has taken this input on board.

### 6.1.9 Build resilience and managing for uncertainty

Climate change impacts were seen as real and the fact that much is uncertain was acknowledged during the consultation. Consequently, building resilience in ecological and social systems was seen as a priority. It was suggested that Chiefs and their traditional knowledge be included in building disaster resilience. Another tool for disaster risk management was using the polluter pays principle – where
those responsible for the disaster or damage, pay for those damages. The reliance upon the tourism and cruise ship industry was seen as a potential risk for the country.

The proposed policy actions in this section, and others, of the revised Ocean Policy take on board the suggestions and observations made here.

### 7. Thematic Areas

#### 7.1 Marine Spatial Planning and Marine Protected Areas

Some of those consulted had ideas about better spatial planning for the ocean in general, such as including traditional spatial management practices into formal marine spatial planning efforts, use of zoning to protect certain areas from certain impacts (e.g. from shipping impacts, from different types of fishing), to zone to promote specified developments (e.g. mariculture) and to protect some areas from all fishing impacts (e.g. tuna spawning areas, some tabu areas).

The Ocean Policy approach to marine spatial planning was revised to be able to address these issues. During the consultations, marine protected areas were mentioned as tools to help protect the marine environment and also to enforce traditional tabu and traditional management areas. As one example, anecdotal evidence suggested that overfishing of sea cucumbers, who are detritivores and therefore important to ecosystem maintenance, was seen to contribute to coral reef decline. People wanted more protected areas, including, as one example, networks of marine protected areas around their island, but wanted the rules to be clear and for them to be complied with. A link to ecotourism was seen as a potential benefit.

A suggestion was made that the Matthew and Hunter Group of islands could become a peace park – for biodiversity protection purposes but also to address the dispute with France.

It was thought that any research to be conducted in any marine protected areas should return the information back to the local community.

The revised Ocean Policy reflects these comments and suggestions in the section on Marine Protected Areas and other sections.

#### 7.2 Fisheries Management

Suggestions were made about how to improve fisheries management including some that, not surprisingly, repeated suggestions made for better ecosystem-based management, marine spatial planning and marine protected areas (above).

##### 7.2.1 Address overfishing

Over-harvesting was seen as a problem that needed addressing in many places including of that of some types of reef fish, sea cucumber, trochus, aquarium fish and coconut crab. These were seen as problems both in terms of the sustainability of the stock itself as well as the flow-on effects to the ecosystem more generally. Comments were made that only sustainable levels of catch should be allowed. Some suggested that effort and catch in the inshore fishing be restricted by: requiring use of traditional fishing methods (e.g. use of canoes, etc.) without application of modern technologies; better controls on harvest; use of temporal controls on harvest (e.g. to avoid spawning season); controls on the number and conditions within inshore commercial fishing licences (e.g. re: allowable catch, allowable gear), and aquaculture. Local fisheries management plans, community-based resource management plans and traditional fisheries management systems were also suggested. Better controls upon the minimum size of fish allowed to be taken was discussed.
7.2.2 Promote local fisheries

Some suggested the use of Fish Aggregation Devices (FADs) to reduce pressure on reefs whilst increasing local catches in rural areas or provision of other assistance to rural fishers (e.g. more provincial, local fishing licenses; hydrographic surveys to identify fish habitats; reviving fishermen’s associations; facilitate market access including establishing local fish markets; support local ownership of fishing vessels; ice machines on islands; facilitate sales of local fish to local markets; control access to inshore fishers by defining allowable vessel sizes or defining areas that are allowed to be accesses e.g. out to 500m; subsidies on fuel for fishing; making fishing gear available for local sale; ensure maintenance of access to all local fishing grounds; promoting local fish cafes;).

7.2.3 Retain fisheries benefits

Controls on foreign fishing vessels and game fishing operations were desired with a view to retaining the benefits (food security and income) within Vanuatu as far as possible. One aspect of this that was mentioned was for fish products to be processed locally (e.g. tuna, shells) and for training in value-adding to products. In addition, suggestions were made to share the benefits of fisheries in Vanuatu equitably throughout the islands and provinces.

7.2.4 Stop destructive fishing

It was desired that destructive fishing practices be stopped, including use of poison and banning all nets smaller than two fingers. It was also suggested that fishing licenses contain conditions to do with appropriate disposal of nets and other fishing materials. A request was made that the take of turtle be banned or much better controlled.

It was suggested, in terms of controlling for non-compliance and bycatch on local commercial and tuna vessels, that observers be used.

7.2.5 Protect fish habitats

Protection of important fish habitats was requested (e.g. spawning and nursery sites) within conservation or marine protected areas. It was suggested that seamounts be protected from deep sea mining because they are important fishing grounds.

7.2.6 Stop pollution

Land-based and oceanic pollution was seen as having a negative impact upon fish habitats and fish stocks.

7.2.7 Capacity building

Understanding of fisheries, ecosystem-based fisheries management (including traditional fisheries management systems) and fisheries development were all areas mentioned as requiring education and training, including within schools or dedicated, ni-Vanuatu fisheries colleges. This effort was suggested to also include increasing knowledge of the fisheries (e.g. data on catches, size of caught species) and that this inform catch limits on licenses.

7.2.8 Improve enforcement

Many requested more effective enforcement of the existing rules including by having more provincial fisheries officers, local Chiefs and the community involved in enforcement efforts (including of traditional management systems). It was suggested, in terms of controlling for non-compliance and bycatch on tuna vessels, that observers be used. Some said that local police, Chiefs and other local authorities should be informed and empowered regarding fisheries legislation so they can contribute better to enforcement. Compliance officers should have access to a boat to conduct patrols. Effective penalties were suggested for non-compliant fishers.

These issues and suggestions were all considered in the revision of the Ocean Policy and also provided to the Department of Fisheries for their use in planning and policy-making. Some ideas were better addressed in the Ocean Policy and others within the Fisheries Department.
7.3 Marine Tourism

Some thought that ecotourism was a good idea and, in keeping with this, maintaining the coral reef environment was important (e.g. not removing and selling the aquarium fish). They saw tourism as providing potential for earning income (e.g. game fishing, sharing cultural sites and cultural information). Some, however, wanted good controls over tourists, especially in accessing cultural sites, and others were concerned that the commercialization of culture led to its devaluation.

All agreed that tourists, and the tourism industry more generally, should not add to degradation or pollution of natural habitats but bring benefits locally.

These issues were incorporated into the revised Ocean Policy.

7.4 Maritime Transport

Maritime transport was seen an important use of Vanuatu’s ocean and plays an integral part in people’s livelihoods and lives (in terms of maintaining connection with social services, educational institutions, health facilities, friends and family).

7.4.1 Navigational safety

Some issues were raised regarding navigational safety to avoid shipping accidents and included suggestions regarding ships comply with international safety standards (including regarding passenger numbers on ferries and provision of safety gear), provision of adequate navigational aids, safe (and environmentally friendly) anchorage areas, secure mooring and wharf facilities, defined international and domestic shipping routes for larger vessels and accurate hydrographic charts.

7.4.2 Shipping accidents

In the case of shipping accidents, suggestions were to ensure all ships entering Vanuatu had insurance to redress damages caused by accidents and to remove any ship wreckage in a manner consistent with an Environmental Impact Assessment – to minimize further damages. It was also suggested that impacted communities receive compensation for any damage incurred to their reefs and, consequently, their food and/or livelihoods. Where the impacts of shipping accidents are not addressed, follow-up enforcement actions should be taken.

7.4.3 Shipping waste disposal

It was proposed that shipping waste disposal, including of ballast water, should be controlled and that crew should be trained in dealing with pollution and waste management. This means that Vanuatu’s ports should provide disposal facilities, as appropriate.

7.4.4 Monitoring and compliance

It was also suggested to work more closely with Chiefs, Area Councils, communities and Area Secretaries to identify infractions of Vanuatu’s law, including reporting of shipping accidents and shipping waste disposal. And that heavy penalties be applied to polluters.

7.4.5 Shipping fees

The idea of asking foreign vessels to pay a transit and/or anchorage fee was raised several times with, then, an equitable distribution of any such benefits. It was suggested to separately identify and categorise different types of vessels, for example, cargo vessels (distinguishing livestock from other trading vessels) from fishing vessels versus passenger ships. It was desired that, then, each of the different types of vessels stick to the nominated usages and pay a prescribed fee. This desire to categorise vessels arose, at least partly, out of issues of passenger and vessel safety.

7.4.6 Domestic ferries

Requests were made for more domestic vessels to service the islands and that traditional waka could be used for some of this.
These issues have been reflected in the revised Ocean Policy – including in the section on Maritime Transport and on Surveillance and Enforcement.

7.5 Deep Sea Minerals

Exploration for deep sea minerals (DSM) in Vanuatu’s waters is beginning and may lead to proposals to conduct deep sea mining. Consultations were conducted on the new DSM Policy simultaneous to the consultations on the Ocean Policy. The following views were revealed about this new emerging issue.

7.5.1 State regulation of DSM

7.5.1.1 Vestment of minerals

All the areas consulted agreed for minerals to be vested to the State. The prime purpose being that with the involvement of the Government under the state it will allow for the proper management of the resource. Another reason was that under the state, the involvement of the Provincial and Central Government avoids conflicts between communities. It was also commented that the Government has the capacity to overlook every activity for DSM including implementation, monitoring, management, risks, waste/pollution, labour and employment. Furthermore, Government has the capacity to cooperate with regional countries.

7.5.1.2 Public tender

All the areas consulted were in support of the public tender process. One island requested that people be made aware of all mineral tenement licenses issued. This will be in accordance of the public tender system of the new DSM legislation when it comes into effect. Some communities wanted to be made aware of prospecting license tenements close to their area. Other communities, on the other hand, requested that Chiefs and landowners be informed prior to mining. The DSM policy states that, once the new legislation is in place, there will be public tender of the prospecting and mining license tenements whereby all companies interested will apply and at that same time the public and relevant authorities will be made aware of this. It was suggested that any DSM development plans must have consultation with Chiefs and local Government.

An issue raised, however, is the lack of communication between the central government and the provincial government and communities. Therefore, communities consulted requested that information should be sent out to the provinces, community and chiefs so that they are aware who the proposed DSM licensees are and which vessels are proposed to be allowed to be in their waters (and similarly once licenses have been given). This communication issue was mentioned as has been a weakness in the past and most communities have not been made aware of, for example, research vessels undertaking research in their waters.

7.5.2 Environmental management

In all provinces, there were common issues raised with regard to the DSM. Some voiced their concern on environmental impacts and openly said that they were afraid of this new industry due to so many unknowns. One community suggested that there was not enough scientific information to steer Vanuatu into the DSM industry. However, most were in support of undertaking more research to better understand the DSM resource and the deep sea environment. The communities are in support of the precautionary principle which states that one should not fail to take precautionary environmental measures due to a lack of information. The suggestion is to progress with DSM with caution, backed by scientific knowledge acquired from research.

Under the DSM Act, CAP 190, Part 4, Section 7 it states that no information shall be disclosed unless it has the consent of the licensee. However, given community feedback, it is important that environmental information acquired during research is made available for public information. If this is done it will allow for community input and a second opinion from the third party. This latter will give the Government the benefit of external scientific review of the data and therefore it will be better be able to address this new industry. Therefore, it is recommended that the DSM Policy should have a clause allowing for environmental information collected by industry in potential DSM mining areas to be made public.
Environmental concerns were also raised in terms of how to deal with pollution arising from licensees or marine scientific research. The communities were satisfied with the idea that the polluter pays principle will be applied and all other penalties as stipulated in the DSM policy. Furthermore, any environment damages made will be rehabilitated in the areas affected.

7.5.3 Operationalising financial benefits

7.5.3.1 Transparency
The areas consulted were made aware of the establishment of the National Offshore Minerals Committee (NOMC). And also the members of the committee and the role of the committee in being consulted by the Minister of Lands with regard to applications submitted. The committee’s role will be to look after the sustainability of the resource and benefit sharing. All the areas consulted agreed with having such a body that will show that the process is more transparent.

There was also mention of the Government implementing the Extractive Industry Transparency Initiative (EITI) for the management and monitoring of the seabed mineral revenues. This was supported by most consulted areas. Communities requested that there be no political interference.

7.5.3.2 Equitable fiscal regime
In terms of the benefits obtained from DSM production, the majority of the consultation areas supported of the distribution of benefits throughout the nation. This would allow for sharing of benefits to areas throughout the country including those that are not in proximity to any license tenement.

Financial benefits from DSM were seen as an avenue for boosting the country's economy in the production phase. However, there is always an issue with benefit sharing. Most areas located far from any prospecting tenements agreed to equal sharing of benefits. Other communities, closest to the prospecting tenements, suggested that areas closest to the mining tenements should have a greater portion of the benefits compared to the areas further away. Some thought benefits should be shared equally with a certain percentage given to ages 18 and over and a different scale applied to those over 50 years.

7.5.4 Optimising social benefits from DSM

7.5.4.1 Employment and local procurement
All areas consulted thought that DSM should improve the welfare of citizens in terms of providing employment opportunities.

Some commented that there should be fair sharing of employment opportunities and it must not be given only to areas closest to mining tenement; some closest to the tenement areas thought employment should benefit their communities more.

7.5.4.2 Capacity building towards Vanuatu’s DSM sector
Communities suggested that appropriate technical and research training be provided to be able to take-up the upcoming employment opportunities. The DSM Policy captures training of skilled and unskilled workmen and it further states that about 100% of the unskilled workmen employed will be locals who will be trained to carry out their tasks.

7.5.5 Marine scientific research
Some supported the idea of deep sea research as it will provide knowledge on what exists in the deep sea environment. It was requested that the information collected by the research be disseminated to the Provincial Government and other local authorities, Chiefs, clans and communities. It was suggested that the research not impact negatively on marine life and that local tribes and customary Chiefs be consulted prior to it being undertaken.

7.5.6 Regional cooperation
All the areas consulted agreed with the Government in recognizing the Pacific Islands Regional Ocean
Policy as a key mechanism for promoting regional co-operation. This also included information-sharing with neighbouring states to minimize the potential for transboundary pollution.

The issues and suggestions made were largely addressed in revisions to the Deep Sea Mineral Policy, however, relevant changes were also made in the Ocean Policy to ensure consistency and coordination of DSM activities with other maritime activities.

7.6 Climate Change
Climate change is a significant issue, for coastal communities especially. More and more information about the impacts upon marine life of ocean acidification, increases in temperature, increasing storm intensity, sea level rise combined with existing pressures bodes ill for the health of the sea. Participants in the consultation raised the need to incorporate mitigation of risks associated with climate change impacts. For example, impacts of sea level rise (and associated storm surge events) were seen as threats to coastal infrastructure. Suggested responses included addressing more sustainable marine resource management, generally, to build climate change resilience in marine and coastal ecosystems, including coral reefs and mangroves that can mitigate the impacts of storm surges. Examples provided included the application of traditional knowledge and marine resource management systems, including use of tabu areas, as well as other management systems.

7.7 Conservation
Sustainable use of marine resources usually includes, but is not limited to, setting aside areas for conservation purposes. Most communities wanted recognition of customary or traditional marine resource management systems, especially tabu areas, to help with conservation. Many also wanted more marine protected or conservation areas put into place to protect the marine environment – including for protection of fisheries resources and for ecotourism. All wanted these areas to be effectively enforced.

See also above sections (Preserve and protect the marine environment, marine protected areas) and section below on “Culture” which calls for formalizing traditional tabu areas.

7.8 Other issues
A few issues arose, during consultations, that were relevant to the Ocean Policy, however, did not align with the other topic areas within this report. These were to do with:

• Concern that political instability disables the government from implementing policies and from good governance in general – this was mentioned everywhere;
• The waste of government resources which need to be applied with each change of government;
• The concept of a US-funded trust fund was raised to compensate local communities for the negative impacts of the old military munitions that were dumped in the sea and to fund their removal (for example, near Tutuba on Santo).

It was recommended that the consultations on the implementation of the Ocean Policy continue and that the Policy be translated into Bislama.
8. Implementation Arrangements

The government was seen to have a clear role in implementing the Ocean Policy and a suggestion was made for an overarching entity, within government, to oversight integrated and holistic planning for Vanuatu’s ocean. It was also suggested that a lead Provincial Government staff member be appointed, per Province, dedicated to implementing the Policy.

Non-government organisations were also mentioned with regard to implementing the Ocean Policy including the need to work with the churches and schools.

Local communities saw their own role, and that of their traditional leaders, in managing and using oceans and therefore having a role in implementing the Ocean Policy.
9. Appendix A: Issues raised within each community - here are some examples.
Vanuatu Ocean Policy
Summary of Community Recommendations

CRAIG COVE VILLAGE
SOUTH AMBRYM ISLAND, MALAMPA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:

- Ensure that the boundary between Malakula and Ambrym is culturally determined.
- Recognise and protect cultural sites.
- Ensure regular monitoring of marine resources and placement of signage to prevent illegal fishing.
- Discourage the use of harmful fishing methods such as cyanide fishing.
- Increase community participation in the management of marine resources.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

DILLONS BAY VILLAGE
SOUTHERN MALANGA ISLAND, TAPEA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:

- Ensure that fishing restrictions on species and technology are reviews.
- Ensure that fishing areas and species limits are reviewed.
- Increase community participation in the management of marine resources.
- Recognise and protect traditional fishing practices.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

DUIDUI VILLAGE
WEST AMBAE, PENAMA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:

- Secure customary access rights to marine resources.
- Ensure that fishing areas and species limits are reviewed.
- Increase community participation in the management of marine resources.
- Recognise and protect traditional fishing practices.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

NAPUA VILLAGE
FUTUNA ISLAND, TAPEA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:

- Improve the management of marine resources.
- Increase community participation in the management of marine resources.
- Recognise and protect traditional fishing practices.
- Increase the use of traditional and sustainable transport methods including sailing ships and canoes.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
Vanuatu Ocean Policy
Summary of Community Recommendations

**KHOLE VILLAGE**
SANTO ISLAND, SANMA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Increase number of marine protected areas.
- Support the vision of Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
- Increase awareness and knowledge on marine resources.
- Support and enhance community monitoring and enforcement.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

**LAKATORO TOWN**
CENTRAL MALEKULA ISLAND, MALAMPA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Support the vision of Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
- Establish and enforce fisheries controls including gear type, size and number caught.
- Improve community-based monitoring and enforcement.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

**LAMAP VILLAGE**
SOUTH MALEKULA ISLAND, MALAMPA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Support the vision of Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
- Establish and enforce fisheries controls including gear type, size and number caught.
- Improve community-based monitoring and enforcement.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

**LAMEN BAY VILLAGE**
NORTH EPI ISLAND, SHEFA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Improve visibility of fisheries by designing an offshore training facility.
- Establish and enforce fisheries controls including gear type, size and number caught.
- Improve community-based monitoring and enforcement.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
Vanuatu Ocean Policy
Summary of Community Recommendations

LENAKEL TOWN
WEST TANNA ISLAND, TAVEA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Empire island gardens to secure marine resources and manage marine activities.
- Secure a fish processing plant for Vanuatu.
- Establish and enhance fish markets on island.
- Provide fishing vessels for the community to use.
- Establish parks for conservation inImportant areas e.g. Matthew & Hunter.
- Strengthen waste management laws and establish proper waste management systems.
- Prohibit and enforce ban on destructive fishing methods.
- Enhance number of fish for monitoring purposes and increase number of police offices for compliance.
- Ensure sea worthiness of ships including updating and purchase of safety equipment.
- Ensure proper training of ship captains and port managers.
- Secure and enhance traditional and cultural practices, pathways, routes, sites, and heritage areas in the ocean.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

LOLOPOPOE VILLAGE
NORTH AMBAE, PENAMA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Revise and harmonise legislation (traditional and modern) relating to ocean management and use.
- Recognise and support customary marine resource management systems including tabu areas.
- Ensure outcomes and implementation of Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy is well communicated.
- Ensure benefits of local marine resources flow back to local communities.
- Enhance the protection and protection of the marine environment.
- Ensure employment of local people on fishing vessels.
- Promote awareness and accountability by strengthening existing networks.
- Build local capacity through training and education including an Ocean Learning Institute.
- Build community resilience for future disasters (disaster risk reduction).
- Increase communication between government, practioners, chiefs and landholders to improve monitoring and surveillance.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

LUGANVILLE TOWN
SOUTH SOUTHEAST SANHTO ISLAND, SANNAI PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Ensure ocean governance is at a provincial level.
- Ensure future economic potential of the ocean is maximised.
- Ensure economic development opportunities are merged back to the provinces so they may develop and become economically well-rewarded.
- Ensure same as the provincial boundaries are merged as are the boundaries of the state, especially with regard to aquaculture.
- Ensure national boundaries are well defined and based on tradition and culture.
- Ensure sovereignty is vested with State.
- Vanuatu should support the independence of all Melanesian states.
- Finance, strengthen and empower existing local networks to undertake surveillance measures against illegal fishing.
- Prohibit fishing of skins in hoopewaters.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

MALAKOF VILLAGE
MAKIRA ISLAND, SHEFA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Improve legal boundaries including customary and provincial boundaries to address illegal fishing.
- Recognise and support customary marine resource management systems including tabu areas.
- Strengthen and empower local government to monitor illegal fishing, overharvesting, and harvesting of sensitive marine species.
- Improve waste management practices, on land and at sea, through effective education, enforcement and management (including traditional and modern methodologies).
- Improve ship wreckage, salvage and disposal including provision for owners to salvage and dispose correctly.
- Securitate Mooma Rock as a heritage national site.
- Securitate Mooma Rock as an important cultural heritage site
- Increase and enhance use of traditional and sustainable transport methods including sailing and canoes.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
Vanuatu Ocean Policy
Summary of Community Recommendations

MELSISSI VILLAGE
CENTRAL PENTECOST ISLAND, PENAMA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Revise and harmonize legislation relating to ocean management and use.
- Recognize and support customary marine resource management systems.
- Ensure chiefs and local tribal authority are engaged in the review and management of Vanuatu’s oceans.
- End and deter overharvest of sea cucumbers.
- Support “Father being the heavens, earth being the mother, and sea being the grandmother”.
- Support and approve government’s “green routes” consultation in the islands.
- Improve island boundaries including customary and provincial boundaries.
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

NERENINGMAN VILLAGE
MOTA LAVA ISLAND, TORBA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Improve ocean corridors in the marine environment.
- Secure coastline borders and legal entity.
- Improve island boundaries including customary and provincial boundaries to address illegal fishing.
- Ensure rights to marine resources for customary owners.
- Strengthen local authorities and chiefly governing systems to enhance compliance of traditional and modern marine resource management rules.
- Preserve and protect marine environment and ensure communities are actively involved.
- Increase communication between government, provinces, chiefs and landholders to improve monitoring and surveillance.
- Ensure correct fishing gear is sold and used (e.g., one finger sets).
- Engage local employment opportunities including game fishing.
- Build local capacity through training and education.
- Improve waste management practices (modern and traditional) on land and at sea.
- Ensure damage to mangroves after disaster is paid for by the polluter (e.g., Debt from ships washed ashore during cyclones).
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

NAKERE VILLAGE
SOUTH SANTO ISLAND, SANMA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Improve island boundaries including customary and provincial boundaries.
- Improve zoning of marine areas, with a request for time for customary access.
- Recognize all traditional tabu areas be captured in legislation and enforced.
- Ensure local access to beaches that are leased by investors.
- Recognize customary authority within the Policy.
- Ensure only current fishing gear type is sold and used (e.g., gone finger nets).
- Establish and improve waste management practices.
- Ensure outcomes of marine research are shared and communicated to all.
- Ensure local communities are aware of and understand the marine sector.
- Recognize local traditional knowledge and customary governance of marine resources in the Policy.
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

NAMASARI VILLAGE
EAST GANA ISLAND, TORBA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Support the vision of Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
- Ensure protection of tuna nursery through direct boundary enforcement.
- Ensure enforcement of marine protected areas.
- Ensure chiefs and local tribal authority are engaged in the review and management of Vanuatu’s oceans.
- Strengthen surveillance and enforcement of illegal fishing.
- Engage license fees and fines imposed on fishing vessels benefit local communities.
- Ensure awareness of licenses issued for fishing and mineral exploration.
- Improve island boundaries including customary and provincial state boundaries.
- Review and update marine resource management laws.
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
Vanuatu Ocean Policy
Summary of Community Recommendations

PANGI VILLAGE
SOUTH PENTECOST ISLAND, PENAMA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Include local traditional knowledge in conservation and
  protected area decisions and management.
- Improve waste management practices and education.
- Improve land boundaries including customary and
  provincial boundaries to address illegal fishing.
- Ensure only correct fishing gear type is sold and used
  (e.g. one fish per net).
- Prohibit and enforce ban on destructive fishing
  methods.
- Protect traditional values and culture.
- Recognize and support customary marine resource
  management systems including tenure areas and
  ridge to reef management systems.
- Recognize the ocean transport people to social
  services for education, health and vocational training.
- Ensure harmony between customary and scientific
  boundaries in the ocean.
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

PEAMAETO VILLAGE
NORTH SANTO ISLAND, SANMA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Serve island boundaries against foreign fishing vessels
  under strict agreements, regulation, and licensing that
  brings back benefits to the local people.
- Increase consultation for any development projects with
  local communities.
- Improve communication between local government and
  local communities regarding commercial fishing activities in
  big tap. Local people must be retrained on how to monitor
  each fishing vessel.
- Agree with ocean policy vision. Ensure the policy
  secures against political interference in managing oceans.
- Strengthen and regulate chiefs and traditional governance
  systems to enforce regulations to protect Big Bay oceans.
- Fishing licenses and agreement must be granted in
  consultation with the existing council of chiefs and
  benefits point to the council.
- Increase awareness and enforcement of marine resource
  management and proper waste management practices.
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

PORT OLRY VILLAGE
EAST SANTO ISLAND, SANMA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Support for zoning to extend to customary
  boundaries.
- Strengthen waste management practices on land and
  at sea (e.g. cruise ships).
- Prohibit docking of ships in Easak waters.
- Ensure access rights to beachfront and inshore waters.
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

PORT VILA TOWN
SOUTH EAFE ISLAND, SHEFA PROVINCE
At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Support Ocean Policy vision but net ‘sustainability’ should
  be able to decide the meaning of ‘safe, healthy and rich ocean’.
- Include ‘sustainability’ as part of the vision to ensure outsiders
  don’t exploit the ocean.
- Ensure Policy includes women, children and people
  with disabilities.
- Service Policy is linked to constitutional provisions for land and
  to all other policies (local, national and regional).
- Secure ownership to 200 nautical miles to safeguard
  genetic resources and intellectual property.
- Ensure island boundaries are based on customary and
  provincial boundaries.
- Strengthen partnerships with other countries to manage
  marine resources including shipping traffic.
- Recognize Indigenous people do not distinguish between
  land and sea. Boundaries must be based on customary
  understanding and use.
- Strengthen and recognize historical connections to
  Melanesia ‘watermen’.
- Recognize customary law according to the constitution.
These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
Vanuatu Ocean Policy
Summary of Community Recommendations

SARATAMATA VILLAGE
EAST AMBAE ISLAND, PENAMA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Improve border boundaries including customary and provincial boundaries to address illegal fishing.
- Ensure the church is involved in ocean governance.
- On site assessment of border issues between islands.
- Support the vision of Vanuatu's Ocean Policy.
- Support the capture of marine facts in the Policy.
- Ensure ongoing consultation with communities regarding the Policy.
- Support further research on impacts, costs and potential benefits of deep sea mining exploration.
- Ensure that Melanesian Spearhead Group address boundary issue.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

SOLA VILLAGE
SOUTH VANUA LAVA ISLAND, TORRA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Name and narrative legislation relating to ocean management and use.
- Regulate air pollution as it relates to marine industries.
- Ensure the law includes local references to people’s attitude and behavior towards our ocean.
- Improve border boundaries including customary and provincial boundaries especially for those areas to be used.
- Support a balance between conservation ( taboo areas) and food security.
- Support the vision of Vanuatu's Ocean Policy.
- Establish clear coordinated institutional mechanisms for integrated marine management across all relevant sectors.
- Strengthen government surveillance and enforcement to combat illegal fishing.
- Support for traditional enforcement with additional financial support from government.
- Support the need for an integrated Ocean Policy for Vanuatu.
- Ensure participation and accountability of all stakeholders.
- Ensure marine research is undertaken without prior approval from local authorities and communities.
- Ensure adequate local staffing to implement Policy at provincial areas.
- Ensure Oceans Policy is translated into Fijiana.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

TANOLI VILLAGE
NORTH EFAITE ISLAND, SHEFA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Ensure that Vanuatu’s maritime boundaries are clearly defined.
- Strengthen and enforce proper waste management systems on land and in the seas.
- Strengthen and support implementation of new and existing marine protected areas.
- Enhance traditional governance and rules regarding marine resource management.
- Improve research and removal of Crocodile (COTS) starfish.
- Enhance fishery regulations including harvesting of seahorses and sharks.
- Empower church and area councils to monitor and enforce marine resource management rules including fees for transpiring vessels.
- Undertake hydrographic survey to improve anchorages and ports for Vanuatu Harbour.
- Strengthen traditional cultures and customs in Ocean Policy including customary laws and cultural values and routes.
- Ensure access for longline fishing.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.

TASSIRIKI VILLAGE
SOUTH WEST SANLIO ISLAND, SIAMBA PROVINCE

At this consultation, community members made the following recommendations:
- Ensure customary boundaries are in accordance to traditional island use.
- Ensure benefits from research are shared with local communities.
- Improve effectiveness of government spending.
- Ensure boundaries are used to reef.
- Do not want customary boundaries to be used.
- Recognize and support customary marine resource management systems including taboo areas.
- Support the vision of Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
- Ensure monitoring and enforcement of waste disposal on ships including appropriate fines imposed.
- Prohibit sinking of ships.
- Support for customary rights out to 100km including right to compensation.
- Ensure employment of local in game fishing enterprises.

These recommendations have been considered in revising Vanuatu’s Ocean Policy.
## 10. Appendix B: List of meetings

This Appendix lists what meetings were held, where, when and the number of participants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Location (Village, Island)</th>
<th>Province</th>
<th>Consultation team</th>
<th>Date(s)</th>
<th>Number of participants</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pangi – South Pentecost</td>
<td>PENAMA</td>
<td>VM,BR,CG,CH,SN,JS,TMT</td>
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1These initials refer to people’s names: TT = Toney Tevi; BR = Brooks Rakau; VM = Vatu Molisa; CG = Camilla Garae; CH = Charlie Harrison; SN = Steve Namali; TMT = Trevor Mele Trief; SL = Sheena Luankon; HW = Henry Worek; JH = Jayven Ham; JC = Joby Csiba; PN = Peter Nihapi; GA = George Amos; KM = Kembro Manderson; PA = Palen Arthur; IK = Ian Kalsuak; CT = Chester Takau; HT = Henderson Tagaro; MM = Mike Asauvakalo; WB = Wyclif Bakeo; RT1 = Roel Tari; RT2 = Ridley Tari.