

Social Assessment

Scoping the potential for Payment for Ecosystem Services in Vanuatu; Live & Learn Vanuatu

Dolav Community, Gaua Island, Torba Province, Vanuatu

Dolav is the largest community (200 people) on the isolated West Coast of the island of Gaua. Gaua is a Key Biodiversity Area with Lake Letas in the middle of the island.

In 2014 Live & Learn Vanuatu (LLV) undertook biodiversity protection education with the community and surrounding schools. In 2015, Dolav community stated their interest in working with organisations to develop their skills and knowledge to better manage their resources. After the first awareness in July 2014, the community decided to engaged in eco-tourism and turned the one day celebrations on the 24th of August when the missionaries first arrived in their community to Lakona Bay Custom festival an annual event that will not only gather local communities together but to also bring yachties and other interested visitors to also come and watch the festival. The festival has run for two successful years and looks to demonstrate local culture but also focus on how ecosystem protection provides a pristine local environment for ecotourism.

The community developed an Action Plan in 2015 and have started implementation of this plan by protecting a large area of their marine resources within the bay. The community also plans to restore the degraded watershed and create more integrated resource management planning. Suitable financing or business opportunities in tourism are seen as an opportunity for the community to develop their economy around the key ecosystems they manage.

In 2016, the community gain an increase knowledge of opportunities that could be gain through their Protected Area. In addition to this their chief was flown in to Port Vila to sit in a Payment for Ecosystem Services roundtable meeting to seek and build interest in the Tourism Sector bringing in alternative opportunities to conserve their pristine forest a home to Vanuatu's endemic species known as scrub duck.

(ii) Expected project impacts (both positive and negative)

Positive:

This Project has continue on to strengthen and support the initiatives planned by the community of Dolav. Activities that highlights the positive impacts of this project were community commitments to conservation, gender participation and building the relationships between the community, government, NGO's and private donors.

Overall this Project has led to initial discussions and scoping of activities that can happen in the Dolav Protected Area that then could be recognized as PES activities to create conservation actions. This activity happen on a week's visit by Live & Learn to Dolav community in June 2016

Through Live & Learn Vanuatu's existing relationship with the community of Dolav several phone calls are continuously received from the Dolav community updating on the status of their conservation actions and their interest to increasing their conservation areas.

Negative:

It is not intended that the project should have any negative impacts. The project seeks to assist the community to work further to develop plans that they have created themselves through previous workshops with Live & Learn. In this sense, for further field work to support implementation to **not** occur could be seen as a negative impact.

This project does not intend to facilitate the signing of contracts or agreements with third parties and the Dolav community but to provide an opportunity for the Dolav community to see what support and partnerships are available to them. The project in no way endorses the sale or transfer of any form of resource ownership away from the custom landowners in and around Dolav.

(iii) Free, prior and informed consultations prior to submission of the LoI

This scoping study looks at the interest mainly from the demand side (PES buyers) and therefore at this stage does not require the Dolav community to agree to any further activities to take place on their land. Currently the community have improved their communication relationship with Live & Learn Vanuatu and often receives quarterly phone call for updates from both parties. Live & Learn Vanuatu has developed, through the Nakau Programme, a process of Free Prior and Informed consent for any actual PES projects to take place. This process exceeds the minimum requirements of the UN process for FPIC and will only take place outside this current scoping project if deemed desirable by the community.

(iv) Measures to avoid adverse impacts and provide culturally appropriate benefits

The project ensure that the people of Dolav in no way feel pressured to establish any relationships with tourism businesses. Though their cultural identities were presented as potential opportunities for Tourism Live & Learn Vanuatu and Department of Tourism ensure that the people of Dolav felt in no way pressured to link their full detailed cultural belief into Tourism.

The field work will involve Live & Learn staff and contractors only. Staff and contractors involved have no bias or interest in partnerships being developed. All consultations were performed in Bislama and design consultations in a way which documents the views, including the concerns, of the community members.

(v) Monitoring

Live & Learn Vanuatu Field officers have provided a report of the consultations clearly outlining the discussion and what the community felt. Follow up emails was made to the Secretary General for Torba Province and World vision in Gaua to assist in monitoring any negative feedback and update Live & Learn Vanuatu and authorities concern.

While the chief Dolav community was in Port Vila he gave an update to Live & Learn Vanuatu staffs on the Dolav community and brought with him to a letter from the community acknowledging Live & Learn Vanuatu's support, as a relationship of trust already exists.

(vi) Grievance Mechanism

The Dolav community has been advised at the start of the project that should they have any grievances they can talk to the Jimmy Tes(5446624), Glarinda Andre(5742222), however there was no grievances during the duration of this project.

The Dolav community was also encouraged that any grievances raised with the project leads or third party contact will be taken very seriously and communicated to the CEPF Regional Implementation Team and relevant stakeholders (if necessary) within 15 days, together with a plan for remedial action (if any is required).

Regional team contact details was also provided;

phone on +679-331-9084 or email on cepfeastmelanesia@iucn.org and vatumaraga.molisa@iucn.org or via post on c/- CEPF Regional Implementation Team, PMB 5 Ma'afu St, Suva, Fiji.

(vii) Map of Gaua care of: <http://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/Torba.pdf.pdf>

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