



RESCCUE



ACTIVITIES UNDERTAKEN IN NORTH EFATE, VANUATU

The RESCCUE project was implemented in Vanuatu under the supervision of both SPC and the Government of Vanuatu by WSP Opus in association with Development Services, OceansWatch, Landcare Research, Live and Learn Vanuatu, and C2O consulting.

Activities ended early November 2018 with a participatory lessons-learned workshop held in Emua, North Efate, and the last Vanuatu steering committee meeting. Participants expressed their satisfaction with most of the project's outcomes, especially the Tasi-Vanua network Resource centre built in Emua and the newly established North Efate Conservation Fund.

[The final RESCCUE project report for Vanuatu](#) is summarizing all activities and outcomes at the North Efate pilot site. In addition, all [RESCCUE project reports](#) are available.

RESCCUE developed its activities in North Efate in an integrated coastal management (ICM) and climate change resilience perspective. In line with its overall rationale, the project endeavored to reduce non-climate stressors on the ecosystems so as to increase their resilience as well as the resilience of communities depending on them. Activities were divided in five broad areas synergetic with one another.



MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF MARINE ECOSYSTEMS

RESCCUE has focused on empowering communities to assess and manage their marine resources effectively through the development and use of two different tools: a [community marine monitoring toolkit](#) and a [tabu area management guide](#). The project also supported the North Efate communities to map their existing tabu areas and strengthen them as necessary. Finally, a two-week Australia-Pacific exchange on marine resources management was organized, involving two Vanuatu Fisheries Department staff members.



Champions leading the mangrove survey refresher training

A focus on the community marine monitoring toolkit

The Vanuatu Community Marine Monitoring Toolkit has been developed through a partnership between the Government of Vanuatu, the two environmental networks in North Efate, Wan Smolbag, C2O Consulting, OceansWatch and Live and Learn Vanuatu. It was formally endorsed by the Vanuatu Fisheries Department.

The aim of this toolkit is to provide a series of monitoring modules that directly inform village-based decisions to improve local marine resources management. Marine Champions have been trained to use the toolkit and have then trained other interested community members. Marine Champions and Monitors are compiling monitoring data in the Tasi Vanua Environmental Education and Resource Centre (see below) and sharing it with the Vanuatu Fisheries Department, which then incorporates such data in its own database.

MANAGEMENT AND PROTECTION OF TERRESTRIAL ECOSYSTEMS

RESCCUE supported the Shefa Province and local chiefs in their efforts to establish a protected area named the Efate Land Management Area (ELMA). RESCCUE specifically supported a rapid biodiversity survey ([Bioblitz](#)) of the north-western Efate forests, in collaboration with the Vanuatu Department of Forestry, the Shefa Provincial Government Council, the Vaturisu Council of Chiefs and the Tasi Vanua and Nguna Pele Environment networks. A great case of collaboration between scientists and traditional knowledge holders!



*A giant gecko (*Gehyra vorax*)*

In addition to the Bioblitz, the project conducted two pilot activities aiming at controlling invasive species and fostering ecological restoration:



Epau restoration area

- a. A trial was undertaken to test locally-made pest-proof fences around a garden used to grow food, with the aim of excluding key pest species (rats, mice and Giant African Snails).
- b. An ecological restoration site was identified by the Epau community, on the eastern part of ELMA for on-site control of the vine *Merremia peltata*, agroforestry and reforestation activities, in collaboration with the Department of Forests. The site has been fenced and planting operations have recently begun.

WASTE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES

RESCCUE supported the establishment of community Waste Committees in several villages to plan and implement waste management activities, with the help of a Community Waste Toolkit. Waste collectors and recycling bins were established in several villages, as well as road side waste collection stations. Waste collection trials were organized with the Port Vila Municipality using its yellow plastic rubbish bags. As a result, the Municipality now circles the island ring-road once a week to collect the bags.



Pele children learning about rubbish in the ocean

A plastic waste campaign was organised to support the Vanuatu Government's initiative to ban certain single-use plastics, effective on 1 July 2018. A Plastic Waste Play was specifically developed and performed by local NGO Wan Smolbag Theater, a Plastic Free 'Taleva' Parade went across all North Efate, and posters and a comic book were distributed in villages and schools. Finally, workshops and waste separation and composting trainings were delivered including in several schools where composts have been established.



Speaker during the Plastic Free Parade

THE TASI-VANUA RESOURCE CENTRE AND INNOVATIVE FUNDING MECHANISMS



The Tasi Vanua Environmental Education and Resource centre

The Tasi Vanua Environmental Education and Resource Centre was established by RESCCUE in Emua village in North Efate. It is intended to be the central hub for the North Efate Tasi Vanua Environment Network, to support its members in organising and coordinating conservation activities and to serve as an environmental education and tourism information venue for North Efate.

Another achievement of the project was the establishment of the North Efate Conservation Trust, following a [feasibility study of innovative funding mechanisms](#) to provide sustainable income stream for ICM activities in North Efate.



This trust is a partnership between the Tasi Vanua and Nguna Pele Environment Networks, the Shefa Tourism Council and Live and Learn Vanuatu, who signed a Deed to work together to deliver ICM activities identified in a conservation priorities action plan and a business plan. The source of on-going funding is a voluntary 10% conservation levy on accommodation and tourism activities that the North Efate and Nguna Pele and Emao Tourism Associations will collect from their members. The planned revenues from the 10% levy is estimated at about EUR 8,000 per year.

RESCCUE provided EUR 90,000 of seed funding to the Trust, which will be used over the next four years. This allows to start collecting the levy and managing the fund, while conducting tangible activities to demonstrate tourists what their contributions is used for. Planned activities include the installation of tabu area signboards, yacht moorings to protect the reef from anchor damage, coral replanting and marine monitoring activities. A series of conservation stories were published in a tourist booklet to showcase the conservation impact the Trust is having.

The viability and success of the North Efate Conservation Trust lies in the hands of the Trust parties, who now have a major responsibility to ensure the continuous implementation of conservation activities and collection of the tourism levy.

INTEGRATED COASTAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

RESCCUE supported the participatory development of an [ICM plan for North Efate](#), in line with the National Integrated Coastal Management Framework and Implementation Strategy for Vanuatu. The activities undertaken in RESCCUE are all components of the ICM Plan. They were led primarily by the community-based Tasi Vanua and Nguna Pele environmental networks, in partnership with Government Departments and the Shefa Province.