



**Consultations towards a
National Framework on Traditional Knowledge on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction
15-27 April 2013
Port Vila, Vanuatu**

Background:

At present multiple stakeholders are involved in activities related to traditional knowledge and climate change, and several major projects on the topic will be launched in 2013. There is little coordination and approaches utilized by various individuals, organizations and agencies are not standardized.

At a November 2012 summit¹ jointly convened by the Vanuatu Cultural Center and the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department, stakeholders agreed that a Framework on Traditional Knowledge & Climate Change and Disaster Risk Reduction should be developed to ensure that the concerns, sensitivities and aspirations of all stakeholders (including customary stewards of traditional knowledge) are addressed to guide future work in this area.

Current Initiative:

Moving forward, a multidisciplinary, multi-agency team has been assembled to undertake a series of consultations among stakeholders to determine the key elements that should be included in the Framework. The team includes researchers from the Australian National University², the University of Western Sydney³, the CSIRO⁴, Vanuatu Cultural Center⁵ and the Vanuatu Meteorology and Geohazards Department⁶.

Consultations will take place in Port Vila from 15-27 April 2013, and include interviews, meetings, workshops and surveys.

Objective:

¹ See attached Summit Report

² Miranda Forsyth

³ Fiona Cameron

⁴ Ainka Granderson

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⁶ Phillip Malsake, Mike Waiwai, Christopher Bartlett



Develop draft guidelines/protocols for the collection, access, use and storage of traditional ecological knowledge for climate change adaptation and disaster risk management (including local indicators for forecasting; traditional calendars; short term weather; long term climate; famine foods and food preparation; TK on mitigation and adaptation methods);

Concerns relating to the misuse and misappropriation of TEK will be of utmost importance and the protection of IP of TEK kastom holders will be of primary consideration;

A comprehensive survey of the many and varied perspectives of all ni-Vanuatu residents will not be possible due to limited time and resources. The draft guidelines/protocols formulated from the initial consultations can be a starting point for more extensive consultations and feedback with communities across the archipelago facilitated through the VKS fieldworker program.

While generalisations may be possible on how TEK can be collected, used and accessed, the particular circumstances and cultural perspectives of individuals and communities as well as their histories and experiences are factors that will determine the nature of specific guidelines/protocols that can be used in certain situations.

Research method:

Through a series of interviews, consultations and workshops the project will be directed towards the gathering together of the opinions, aspirations and concerns of kastom knowledge holders including their visions for guidelines/protocols in regards the collection, use and access of their traditional ecological knowledge for climate change adaptation..

The team will, also gather together the opinions and aspirations of stakeholders who wish to access and use TEK along with their own visions in regards the types of guidelines/protocols that might inform their practices. The team will analyse the existing legal framework to establish the current and potential future laws relating to ownership and use of TEK and the forms in which it is embodied (recordings, photographs, databases etc).

The team will use these consultations to develop protocols that detail the roles and responsibilities of each of the stakeholders in the collection, use and access to TEK.

Once the consultations have been completed the analysis will involve identifying common ground, tensions, conflicts, differing opinions between the stakeholder groups and how these might work



together, their points of dissent and what pathways could be developed to navigate through some of these complexities to establish protocols that are both useful and meaningful.

Consultation Outputs:

It is envisaged that the finished protocols will include the following documents:

- General Guidelines for collection, access, use and storage of TEK (statements of principles, objectives of collection, access and use, levels of consent needed to be obtained, guiding customary norms etc)
- Contracts/ consent forms
- A MoU or contract for those wishing to use the collected TEK

Detailed Schedule 15-27 April 2013:

Monday 15th April 2013 - interviews and face to face meetings

Tuesday 16 April 2013 – Visit to Pele Traditional Knowledge Workshop

Wednesday 17 – Tuesday 22 April 2013 - interviews and face to face meetings

Tuesday 23 April 2013- Workshop with internal experts to drafting the protocols in light of the feedback from the consultations

Wednesday 24 April 2013 – Discussion meetings on draft protocols with broader stakeholders

Thursday 25 – Friday 26 April 2013 - interviews and face to face meetings

Proposed Interviews

- Vanuatu Kaljoral Senta – Marcelin, Taman, Evelyn
- National Advisory Board on Climate Change & Disaster Risk Reduction – Brain Phillips, Malcolm Dalesa
- Vanuatu Meteorology & Geohazards Department- Phillip Malsale, Jotham Napat
- Malvatumauri Council of Chiefs
- Vaturisu Council of Chiefs
- Parliament: Ralph Regenvanu
- Prime Minister's Office, Dept of Strategic Policy, Planning & Aid Coordination- Johnson Naviti
- Department of Environment – Donna Kalfatak
- Australian Bureau of Meteorology - Linda Chambers
- UN Office, World Bank, AusAid, NZAID



Proposed Focus Groups:

- VMGD/Meteorology/NAB
- Government departments/officials (Department of Environment and Conservation; Dept of Strategic Policy, Planning & Aid Coordination; Water Resources; Public health; Land; Ministry for Education and Internal Affairs; Dept of Ag, Forestry Fisheries)
- Vanuatu Climate Adaptation Network
- Vanuatu Humanitarian Team
- Academics who work with/research with TEK
- Environmental law group, USP
- Teacher's College/School teachers/Vanuatu Agricultural College

Key Issues to be determined

- What customary norms exist in relation to TEK?
- Should the protocol/guidelines be national in scope or at a community/ island/ province level? How can a multi-level approach to governance be instituted?
- What are the culturally sensitive issues likely to be? And around what types of information and practices? How best can disputes over whom has access or uncertainties of ownership be dealt with?
- What are the cultural sensitivities around each of these types of TK?
 - Local indicators for forecasting
 - Short-term (weather)
 - Long-term (climate)
 - Traditional Calendars
 - TK on Mitigation & Adaptation Methods
 - Disasters – indicators and mitigation
- What prior informed consent mechanisms would work best?
- How tailored to particular categories of knowledge should the protocol be?
- How can the active participation of women in all aspects of collection and use of the TK be ensured?
- What types of benefits will go back to the providers of the information?
- What protocols can be developed to ensure equitable benefit-sharing arrangements and that acknowledge the contribution of Kastom owners?
- Who has the right of access to certain types of TK information and knowledge? How could a protocol detail rights of access?



- What are the roles and responsibilities of each of the stakeholders (Kastom holders; NGOs, communities, individuals) in the project in terms of the collection, access and use TEK?
- How can the rights/IP of kastom owners of TK be protected?
- Kastom plays an important role in the protection of TK. What kastomary law protocols should be included in this framework? How do these differ in different communities?
- What sorts of guidelines/protocols can be developed to protect TK from inappropriate use for harm, for commercial purposes; tourism and commercial exploitation?
- How will the protocols be monitored, enforced and revised as necessary?
- What types of IP are created in the collection of TEK and how should it be managed?
- How will the TEK be stored? Who will maintain the database and administer access to it?
- How can the collection, use, access and storage of specific TEK take account of traditional ecological knowledge that is locally specific and connected to all aspects of day to day life?