

Regional Seminar on Developing a Programme for the Implementation of the 2008 SNA and Supporting Statistics in the Pacific region

**Policy demands and priorities to monitor the effect
of economic and other human activity on the
environment**

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Presentation format

- Policy areas in relation to environmental statistics
- Previous environment statistics project/lessons learned
- Existing work/projects of Environment Department with data on environment statistics
- Possible way forward

Policy areas in relation to environmental statistics

- 1997 – Vanuatu went through a Comprehensive Reform Program (e.g public service structure, policy areas and service delivery). PAA was initiated
- A national development policy ‘Prioritised Action Agenda’ or PAA was developed (2003).
- PAA was revised in 2006..... Environmental aspects included....to apply the sustainable development principles.

Policy areas in relation to environment statistics [cont'd]

- 7 strategic priority areas identified in PAA (2006-2015):
 - 1) Private sector development and employment creation
 - 2) Macro economic stability and equitable growth
 - 3) Good governance and public sector reform
 - 4) Primary sector development (natural resources and the environment)**
 - 5) Provision of better basic services especially in rural areas
 - 6) Education and human resource development
 - 7) Economic infrastructure and support services

Policy areas in relation to environment statistics [cont'd]

- The National Statistics Office (NSO) is mandated through an Act (Statistics Act, Cap 83) which enables the Office to collect, compile and publish or disseminate statistics relating to a wider variety of topics which cover the environment statistics.

Policy areas in relation to environment statistics [cont'd]

National Environment Policy..... An overarching environment policy. Still in progress and first draft produced and circulated for comments. Environmental statistics will be included as one policy directive to be implemented by Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.

Previous Environment Statistics project/Lessons learned

- Project called 'RETA 5555 – Institutional Strengthening and Collection of Environment Statistics in Selected countries.
- Duration: 1996-1998 – 2001. Funded by ADB.
- SPREP helped in the coordination role.
- Vanuatu – Project coordinated by Vanuatu Statistics Office, and assisted by Department of Environment. Two statistics Office staff worked on part-time basis on this project.
- Network was created..... Other agencies assisted in providing data (such as Agriculture, Forestry, Fisheries, Energy, Geology & Mines, Meteorology, etc..).
- All data submitted to National Statistics office for compilation.
- Initially planned that after funding ended, Vanuatu Statistics Office and Environment Department would continue with the project.... But this did not happen.
- The project was required to produce three documents: Vanuatu Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (VFDES) ; Compendium of Environment Statistics and; State of Environment Reporting. Only the VFDES was able to be produced during the project period.
- Computer crashed.... The Environment Statistics database was lost????

Lessons learned (both + and -)

+

- Computer provided to National Statistics office to store data and as communication tool (email)
- Vanuatu Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (VFDES) was developed. The PFDES framework (format) has been modified in order to meet specific concerns of the Vanuatu Government and the requirements of the users.

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- No full-time staff working on the project (Statistics & Environment)
- An United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) questionnaire was sent out. Vanuatu (including other Pacific countries) could not fill up as most information asked for are not available in Pacific
- No in-house training conducted except from 3 workshops held in Fiji, Jakarta and Philippines, in which Vanuatu participated

Lessons learned (both + and -)

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- The co-ordination role between the National Statistics Office (NSO) and the Environment Unit (EU) is weak, thus has a great impact on the development of this project.
- Some responsible government departments and organisations did not supply on time requested statistics, thus slows down process and progress of the project development.
- The institutional reform through the initiation of the Comprehensive Reform Programme (CRP) greatly affected the project as it created new job descriptions for officers involved, thus redirection of work areas.

Existing work/projects of Environment Department with data on environment statistics

- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (and its implementation)
- SoE (State of Environment) report.... The last report produced in 1999.... Currently,... in the process of producing a new SoE report for Vanuatu. Done every 10 years as mandated in current Environmental Protection and Conservation Act. SPREP will assist.
- Reports to UN conventions (UNCBD, UNFCCC & UNCCD) + other MEAs.
- MDG goals/information
- Information/data from other government sectors (Fisheries, Agriculture, Lands, Energy, Geology and Mines, Water, tourism, municipalities (waste and pollution) etc...)

Need to integrate or harmonise reporting???

Possible Way Forward

- Previous statistics data may be lost forever. Start fresh.
- Better/improve coordination role Vanuatu Statistics Office and Environment Department
- Create a full-time position for Environment Statistics with the Vanuatu Statistics Office
- Resources needed (funding to implement activities, equipments, etc...)
- In-country workshop/training needed for all stakeholders
- Create an effective network of agencies to help supply data
- Win political support for this project

Thank You!