

Community Conservation Area (CCA)  
Information Booklet



# Information Booklet

on the registration of

## Community Conservation Areas (CCAs)

as stipulated in the

### The Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283

#### Part 4- Biodiversity and Protected Area Division 2- Community Conservation Areas

prepared by the

**Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation**



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Under Part 4: Biodiversity and Protected Areas, Division 2 Community Conservation Areas Section 37 of the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283 the Director of Environmental Protection and Conservation may register the Community Conservation Areas (CCAs). Under Section 35 the CCAs should have national biodiversity significance as stated under Section 35 of the EPC Act.

In order to register the CCAs the following processes and procedures has to be followed as covered in the forms:

1. CCA Registration & Application Form
2. CCA Annual Reporting Form
3. CCA Site Assessment Form
4. CCA Cancellation/Amendment Form

This is an Information Booklet designed to help communities and other interested parties understand what it means to register a Community Conservation Area under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283.

### Notes:

- 1) This booklet is intended for a very specific community audience. It will be most effectively used by community coordinators who may have a minimum level of education, but are comfortable with written tools. The relevant community coordinator will most likely approach the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation to receive the booklet. S/he will then make the information contained herein available to the wider local population in a more informal or appropriate way.
- 2) In order to make this information more directly accessible to local residents, the Department would eventually like to produce a DVD video for use in communities.
- 3) Please do provide comments on all sections of this Information Booklet. Also if you encounter any questions from communities during the registration process, please inform the Department so that they may be added to the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section at the end.
- 4) Contact the DEPC Biodiversity Officer for all questions or comments on the CCA registration process and associated regulations.

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***Introduction Letter***

Dear potential CCA applicant,

Thank you for your interest in registering a Community Conservation Area under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283.

The Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation wants to make sure that the outstanding work you are doing at the community-level is recognized throughout the country and internationally.

This Information Booklet is designed as a step-by-step guide to ensure that the official requirements of CCA registration are in line with those stipulated in the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283.

Before you begin the application process you should read through this entire CCA Information Booklet, and make sure you understand the elements needed for a complete application. There is a special Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) section which addresses the most common concerns about CCA registration. The registration process described in this Information Booklet takes time and will require the support of your community, province and national government.

We are here to help, so if you have any questions about the application or need more assistance you can contact the Biodiversity Officer at the

Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation  
Private Mail Bag 9063  
Port Vila  
Vanuatu  
Ph: 25302  
Fax: 23565  
Email: [environment@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:environment@vanuatu.gov.vu)

The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation looks forward to working with you and your community throughout the application and registration process, and we wish you Good Luck with all your community conservation initiatives.

Signed



Albert Williams  
Director, DEPC

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***Layout of the Guide***

Sections 1-8 of the guide are designed to help you understand the meaning of Community Conservation Area as intended in the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283 and help you decide if your area meets the criteria for registration.

Section 9 serves as a step-by-step guide for completing the application and obtaining the required supporting documents

Sections 10-12 of the guide outline the submission and approval process.

At the end of this document you will find a series of appendixes which are useful when drafting a management plan for the Community Conservation Area or when filling in the official CCA Application Form.

***Section 1. Key Points/Executive Summary***

- In November of 2002, the national Parliament passed the Bill for the Environmental Management and Conservation Act.
- On March 10, 2003, the Act was published in the government gazette and the Act became law of Vanuatu.
- In 2010 the Environmental Management and Conservation Act was amended and changed its name to Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283. The amendment was passed by parliament in year 2010 and was consolidated in year 2011.
- The purpose of the Act is “the conservation, sustainable development and management of the environment and the regulation of related activities.”
- The Act allows for the identification and registration of Community Conservation Areas, and outlines the general requirements for registration.
- Once a fully completed application is submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, the CCA registration decision-making process may take up to 3 months.
- Upon approval, the Community Conservation Area will be publicly declared and listed in the National Environmental Registry

## ***Section 2. Terms & Interpretation***

The EPC Act clearly defines the following terms

**Applicant** means the entity that applies for CCA registration under the EPC Act, and may include one or more of the following: customary landowner, customary resource steward, recognized community leader, village governing body, chief, family group, tribe, organization or body, private individual, or any other entity.

**Biodiversity significance** means the ranked significance of an area according to specified biological diversity values to account for ecological concepts such as rarity, endemism, diversity, fragmentation, habitat condition, resilience, threats, and ecosystem processes

**biological diversity** means the variability among living organisms from all sources including terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are part, including diversity within species, between species and of ecosystems.

**Biological resources** include genetic resources, organisms or parts thereof, populations, or any other biotic component of ecosystems with actual or potential use or value for humanity.

**By-law** synonymous with management rule

**community** means a social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage; including but not limited to a group of individuals, family group, tribe or village

**Conservation** includes the preservation and protection of natural resources and heritage.

**Conservation area** means an area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection, maintenance and sustainable use of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means

**Destructive harvest** means collecting or otherwise extracting natural resources in a way that destroys or damages the environment

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**Endemic** means native to Vanuatu and not occurring naturally anywhere else.

**Environment** means the components of the earth and includes all or any of the following, land and water, layers of the atmosphere, all organic and inorganic matter and living organisms, the interacting natural, and cultural and human systems

**Governing body** means any entity that is recognized as having the right to make decisions on behalf of the populous. This authority may include but is not limited to the paramount or ranking chief, council of chiefs, village council, conservation area committee and provincial office

**Invasive species** means any species, including its seeds, eggs, spores, or other biological material capable of propagating that species, that is not native to an ecosystem; and whose introduction does or is likely to cause economic or environmental harm or harm to human health

**Management committee/coordinating body** means the entity that is responsible for the implementation, management and maintenance of the Community Conservation Area, including providing annual reports to the DEPC and ensuring that procedures are followed for prosecuting offenses of CCA management rules.

**Management plan** means a comprehensive document that describes how, who, what, where, when, and why a Community Conservation Area is managed.

**Management rules** means the rules implemented for the purpose of managing the Community Conservation Area.

**National Environmental Registry** means the database of all records relating to environmental applications, permits, and approvals that is housed at the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

**Natural disaster** any event or force of nature that has catastrophic consequences, such as avalanche, earthquake, flood, forest fire, cyclone, lightning, tornado, tsunami, or volcanic eruption

**Natural resources** includes all living and non-living, finite and renewable resources found within Vanuatu but does not include resources lawfully maintained for domestic or commercial purposes.

**Pollution** means the contamination of air, water, or soil by substances that are harmful to living organisms.

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**Protected area** – synonymous with conservation area

**Sustainable use** means the human use of biotic and abiotic resources that does not contribute to their long-term degradation, overuse or destruction.

The EPC Act and this Information Booklet utilize the following acronyms:

**BAC**- Biodiversity Advisory Council

**CCA**- Community Conservation Area

**DEPC**- Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

**EPC Act** – Environmental Protection and Conservation CAP 283

**MPA**- Marine Protected Area

**NCS**- National Conservation Strategy

**NBSAP**- National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan

**PA** - Protected Area

**TAC**- Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

**VEU** - former Vanuatu Environment Unit



### ***Section 3. Brief History of Conservation Activity in Vanuatu***

The concepts of sustainable use and biodiversity conservation are often inherent in the culture and customary livelihoods of Ni-Vanuatu people. Local practices which directly or indirectly enhance biodiversity conservation have been used in Vanuatu for millennia. Examples of traditional activities that have conservation benefits include seasonal bans on the harvest of certain flora and fauna, closures over sacred sites, or taboos on harvest of some areas or objects. While not all traditional practices protect or sustain biodiversity or natural resources, a general conservation ethic was and continues to be enshrined within the diversity of Vanuatu's customary laws.

The Constitution of Vanuatu states that "Every person has the fundamental duties to himself and his descendents and to others... to protect Vanuatu and to safeguard the national wealth, resources and environment in the interests of the present and of future generations" (Article 7(d)).

"*Conservation*" is an English word that has been used regularly in Vanuatu since before independence in 1980. It has many different meanings depending on who uses it and where it is used. The term "*Conservation*" first appeared in the National Parks Act (No 7) of 1993 which allows for the protection of areas that have "outstanding value from the point of view of science and conservation." Now, the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act CAP 283 also use the word conservation. This Act is the most comprehensive national environmental legislation to date and it specifically enables the declaration and registration of "Community Conservation Areas".

But conservation isn't new to Vanuatu. Notable examples of long-enduring Community Conservation Areas are the Uri, Narong, Wiawi, and Ringi Te Suh marine reserves on Malekula established in 1991, Mystery Island reserve on Aneityum (1995), Penoru Conservation Area long 1980s and Mere-Sauwia Conservation Area on Nguna (1998). Early government-initiated, top-down Community Conservation Areas in Vanuatu also include the Kauri Forest Reserve (Erromango; 1995) and Vatthe Conservation Area (Santo; 1993).

Community Conservation Areas have garnered strong interest among Ni-Vanuatu villages. It is estimated that the total number of informal CCAs is over 250 across the archipelago. Now there are even networks of CCAs, including the Nguna-Pele MPA Network (2003) and the Crab Bay MPA Network (2004).

## ***Section 4. What is a Community Conservation Area?***

The EPC Act defines a "Conservation Area" as

*"An area of land and/or sea especially dedicated to the protection, maintenance and sustainable use of biological diversity, and of natural and associated cultural resources, and managed through legal or other effective means"*

It further defines "Community" as

*"A social group of any size whose members reside in a specific locality, share government, and often have a common cultural and historical heritage; including but not limited to a group of individuals, family group, tribe or village"*

Accordingly, most of the tabus, protected areas, MPAs, reserves, sanctuaries and conservation areas that currently exist and are managed by communities in Vanuatu may be considered "Community Conservation Areas" under the EPC Act.

Community Conservation Areas may

- be any size; big or small
- Cover land resources, marine resources or both.
- be privately or community owned
- be cooperatively managed with another organization
- allow use/harvest of resources inside the CCA
- be permanent, short-term or periodically used
- support indigenous or non-indigenous activities and practices

The Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation would like to provide support and extension to all community conservation initiatives in Vanuatu, regardless of what they are called or how they are expressed. The DEPC is especially interested in supporting Community Conservation Areas that are of national "biodiversity significance". An area is likely of biodiversity significance if it has one or more of the following features:

- represents the best example of an important ecosystem or habitat type (see appendix 5)
- is needed for sustainability of harvesting activities (i.e. timber or trochus)
- has high species diversity

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- area is a location of intense biological activity (i.e. reef fish spawning aggregation)
- area has great aesthetic beauty, sustainable tourist attraction or is a natural monument
- provides a crucial habitat for a particular species or groups of species (see appendix 5-7)
- has special cultural values, educational, historic, religious or recreational values
- is important for resource maintenance
- is a site of resource rehabilitation, restocking or re-vegetation
- may accommodate ex-situ and in-situ conservation activities (for example, tree seedling nurseries or giant clam gardens)
- covers important land features
- includes a customary or sacred site
- is part of or includes an important water catchment area
- is a tourist site/attraction
- is a research area
- is an area that is threatened by current or future development.
- provides critical ecosystem services such as (but not limited to) watershed management and climate mitigation

Most Community Conservation Areas in Vanuatu **DO NOT** have all of the features listed above, and many areas contain other features which make them of biodiversity significance. However if you are planning to establish a Community Conservation Area, you may want to choose a site with as many of the above features as possible.



Siri falls, Gaua. It is part of the Lake Letas Conservation Area. © Ursula Schiskowsky



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Mangrove Habitat of Amal-Crab Bay Protected Area on Malekula. ©MESCAL Vanuatu



Butmas Forest, upper catchment area of Sarakata River © Donna Kalfatak

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***Section 5. Who may apply to the DEPC to register a CCA***

Applications to register Community Conservation Area(s) may be submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation to by a variety of individuals or groups.

The EPC Act specifies that:

*"If the applicant(s) agree to the formal protection of areas of biodiversity significance, these areas may be registered by the Director as Community Conservation Areas"*

For the purposes of this Act, **an applicant** may be any one or more of the following:

- a customary landowner
- a customary resource steward
- a recognized community leader
- a village governing body
- a chief
- a family group
- a tribe
- an organization or body
- a private individual
- any other entity

There may be an unspecified number of applicants listed on a CCA Application Form submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.

As stated clearly on the CCA Application Form, the applicant(s) must sign the application **together with at least two (2)** members of the CCA management committee/coordinating body **and at least two (2)** members of the community governing body, including but not limited to:

- paramount or ranking chief
- recognized community representative
- chairman of village council
- conservation area representative
- provincial area secretary

## ***Section 6. Eligibility for CCA Registration***

For the purposes of the EPC Act, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation seeks to register those CCAs which meet a pre-defined set of criteria. Namely, to be registered as an official CCA under the EPC Act, the DEPC Director must ensure that:

- (a) the objectives of the proposed Community Conservation Area are identified and are in accordance with sound conservation practices; and
- (b) the boundaries of any proposed Community Conservation Area are accurately identified; and
- (c) consent and approval are obtained from all persons having rights and interests in any land that is to be included in the proposed Community Conservation Area; and
- (d) An appropriate conservation, protection or management plan is developed for the area to insure the achievement of identified conservation objectives.

In addition, the Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation wishes to register areas that have been in place for ***3 years or more***. However, there is no maximum duration required for a Community Conservation Area, and registration can be cancelled at any time (see section 12).

Several Vanuatu Departments and organizations offer registration of community areas, for example:

Forestry Department: Forestry Conservation Areas  
Fisheries Department: Marine Reserves  
Vanuatu Cultural Center: Sacred Sites, World Heritage Sites

Each of these organizations has its own set of requirements and registration processes. A proposed CCA may be registered under any (or all) organizations if that is so desired. Registration as a Community Conservation Area under the EPC Act does not preclude registration elsewhere.

If you have questions about your CCA's eligibility to register under the EPC Act, contact the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation for more information and clarification.

## ***Section 7. Benefits of CCA Registration***

The CCA registration process and application procedure are comprehensive. Obtaining the required letters of support from chiefs, councils and provincial government officials will likely take considerable time and a significant commitment by the applicant.

### ***So why should you bother to register your Community Conservation Area?***

There are many good reasons to register, but the most important is the recognition that your CCA will receive once it is listed in the National Environmental Registry.

You will also receive an official Certificate of Registration signed by the Director of the Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.

Other benefits of CCA registration may (but not always) include:

- Publicity from the media including in local newspapers, on the internet, and on the radio.
- Special consideration by local aid donors for conservation or other development projects
- Access to important conservation information like posters, booklets on environmental monitoring methods, and species guide books
- Nomination by the national government for international awards and recognition
- Site visits from government departments and officials.
- Invitations to participate in national workshops and meetings
- Opportunities to participate in capacity building exercises and training sessions
- Consideration for national CCA awards
- Administrative support for planned management activities
- Participation in site exchanges and regular communication with other communities in Vanuatu and overseas.
- Membership in national networks and programs
- Opportunities to host national and foreign researchers interested in Vanuatu CCAs

After registration the Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will do as much as it can to help you improve and sustainably manage your Community Conservation Area.

## ***Section 8. Enforcement of CCA Management Rules/By-Laws***

According to section 39 (1) of the EPC Act,

*"the applicant and/or the CCA management committee/coordinating body is responsible for the development, implementation, and enforcement of the management plan established for a registered Community Conservation Area"*

In other words, the ultimate responsibility for enforcement of management rules/by-laws lies at the local CCA level. All CCA rules and by-laws set by the management committee/coordinating body should be enforced by existing local or customary governance structures.

In most Ni-Vanuatu community cases, there is a well-established hierarchy for dealing with offenders who disregard local or customary rules and norms. In many cases, local governance structures are very effective, and should be fully utilized, strengthened and supported. However, there is an emerging concern among many Ni-Vanuatu communities that local rules and by-laws are not always respected by all residents.

This disregard for local or customary rules and laws may be due to:

- Eroded customary governance systems
- Inability of communities to control external agents (i.e. neighboring villagers)
- Low, soft, or inappropriate fines and penalties enacted at the community level
- Religious beliefs (for example, that God provides resources for unlimited human use and enjoyment)
- Mental attitudes (for example, that closures should only be temporary)
- Poverty and lack of available resources to meet basic human needs
- Poor cooperation or disputes among individuals or groups
- No recognition of local rules by modern law and legislation

Many communities have specifically requested assistance from the national government to enforce the management rules and by-laws that pertain to Community Conservation Areas.



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In order to meet the requests of local communities, the Section 39(2) of the EPC Act enables and strengthens existing local or customary rules and governance by confirming that:

*"CCA management rules and by-laws are legally binding and enforceable"*

Section 41 (f) of the EPC Act further stipulates that

*"A person who contravenes any term or condition of a registered Community Conservation Area is guilty of an offence punishable on conviction to a) a fine of not less than 50,000,000 vatu for corporate offenders, or b) a fine of not more than 50,000,000 vatu for individual offenders, or c) to imprisonment for a period of not more than 5 years, or to any combination of the above"*

Section 42 states that

*"Where an offence under this Act is committed or continues on more than one day, the person who committed the offence is liable to be convicted for a separate offence for each day on which the offence is committed or continues."*

Once a Community Conservation Area is officially registered by the DEPC, management rules/by-laws become legally binding and enforceable under the EMC Act. That is to say, penalties for rule breaking can be taken beyond local or customary levels and enter into the national justice arena.

**SPECIAL NOTE:**

This regulation does not intend to do away with, ignore, override or otherwise degrade local and customary governance structures and processes.

Contraventions of CCA management rules/by-laws must be primarily dealt with using locally accepted processes and customary practices. **The authority of the EPC Act may only be used for prosecution of offenders once all local dispute resolution mechanisms have been fully exhausted.** Legal assistance to prosecute CCA offenders will only be entertained by the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation in very special circumstances, and only if the CCA management committee/coordinating body can demonstrate, with significant evidence, that it has fully exhausted all existing local dispute resolution mechanisms.

## ***Section 9. CCA Registration Step-By-Step***

Nambawan! You have read the supplementary information above and decided to complete an application for official CCA registration.

Below you will find a step-by-step guide to help you obtain and submit your application.

**Step 1-** Collect an application package from the Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation. It will be helpful to contact the Biodiversity Officer in advance and inform them that you have decided to begin the application process. This way, the Department of Environment and Conservation will be ready to help should questions or concerns arise.

**Step 2-** Read through the Application Form and Information Booklet. If there is anything you do not understand, contact the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation and ask!

**Step 3-** Discuss registration of your CCA with your community and other interested parties. Make sure that everyone understands what a Community Conservation Area is, and what registration means for the community. Misunderstanding can cause problems later, so it is better to ensure that everyone is in agreement right from the beginning. Get a verbal agreement from the community to proceed with the application (you will need more formal community approval documentation later).

**Step 4-** Write or update a Management Plan for the proposed Community Conservation Area. In many cases a village CCA management committee/coordinating body will be responsible for making and implementing a management plan. However, each community is different, and there may be other entities that are more appropriate. You may find it helpful to look at the management plans from other communities in Vanuatu as a guide. (See appendix 2 for notes on the information and map that should be included in a CCA Management Plan).

**Step 5-** Present and obtain approval for the proposed CCA management plan at a community or village meeting. Note: **An official record should be kept when the proposed Community Conservation Area is discussed and approved in a public meeting.** The meetings minutes or a verification letter should be submitted along with the CCA application.

**Step 6-** Obtain a letter of support for the proposed CCA from the appropriate village governing body. In many (but not all) cases this letter will come from the paramount chief or village council. The letter should clearly mention the name of the CCA in question, and state that the majority of community members are in agreement with its registration under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act.

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**Step 7-** Notify adjacent villages and communities of your intent to register your CCA under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act. Obtain a letter of support from two (2) surrounding communities. The letter should clearly mention the name and village of the CCA in question, and state that the adjacent community is aware of and in agreement with its registration. The letter should be signed by a designated person from the surrounding villages' governing bodies. **Note:** this is an important part of the application process to ensure that the proposed CCA is not under dispute.

**Step 8-** Obtain a letter of support from the area or island Council of Chiefs. The letter should clearly state the name of the CCA in question, and state that the proposed CCA is not disputed. The letter should be signed by the Chairman or designated person from the area or island Council of Chiefs.

**Step 9-** Obtain a letter of support for the proposed CCA from the Secretary General of the Provincial Government. It is helpful if you provide the Province with the CCA management plan, map, and supporting letters from the village governing body, council of chiefs and surrounding communities. The letter from the Provincial government should clearly mention the name of the CCA in question, and state agreement with its registration under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act. The letter should be signed by the Secretary General or designated person from the Provincial government.

**Step 10-** Answer and complete all the questions in the Application Form.

**Step 11-** Collect all required signatures on the Application Form.

**Step 12-** Now you are almost ready to submit your completed application to the Vanuatu Department of Environment Protection and Conservation. Check to make sure that you have obtained all of the following documents:

- Completed Application Form
- Management plan for the proposed CCA (including map)
- Reports, minutes or verification letter from a community meeting where the CCA is discussed and approved
- Letter of support from the appropriate village governing body
- Statements of support from two (2) surrounding villages/communities
- Letter of support from the Secretary General of the Provincial Government
- Letter of support from the area or island Council of Chiefs

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**Step 13** - Make sure you keep copies of all documents for your own records.

**Step 14**- Congratulations! You are ready to send or deliver your completed CCA application to:

Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation  
PMB 9063  
Port Vila  
Vanuatu  
Ph: 25302  
Fax: 23565  
Email: [environment@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:environment@vanuatu.gov.vu)



Eratap Village Women discussing resource use for Eratap Mangrove Tabu Area. ©MESCAL Vanuatu

## ***Section 10. The CCA Application Approval Process***

Now that you have submitted your application, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation must ensure that it is complete and meets the requirements set out in the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act.

Several people will review your application:

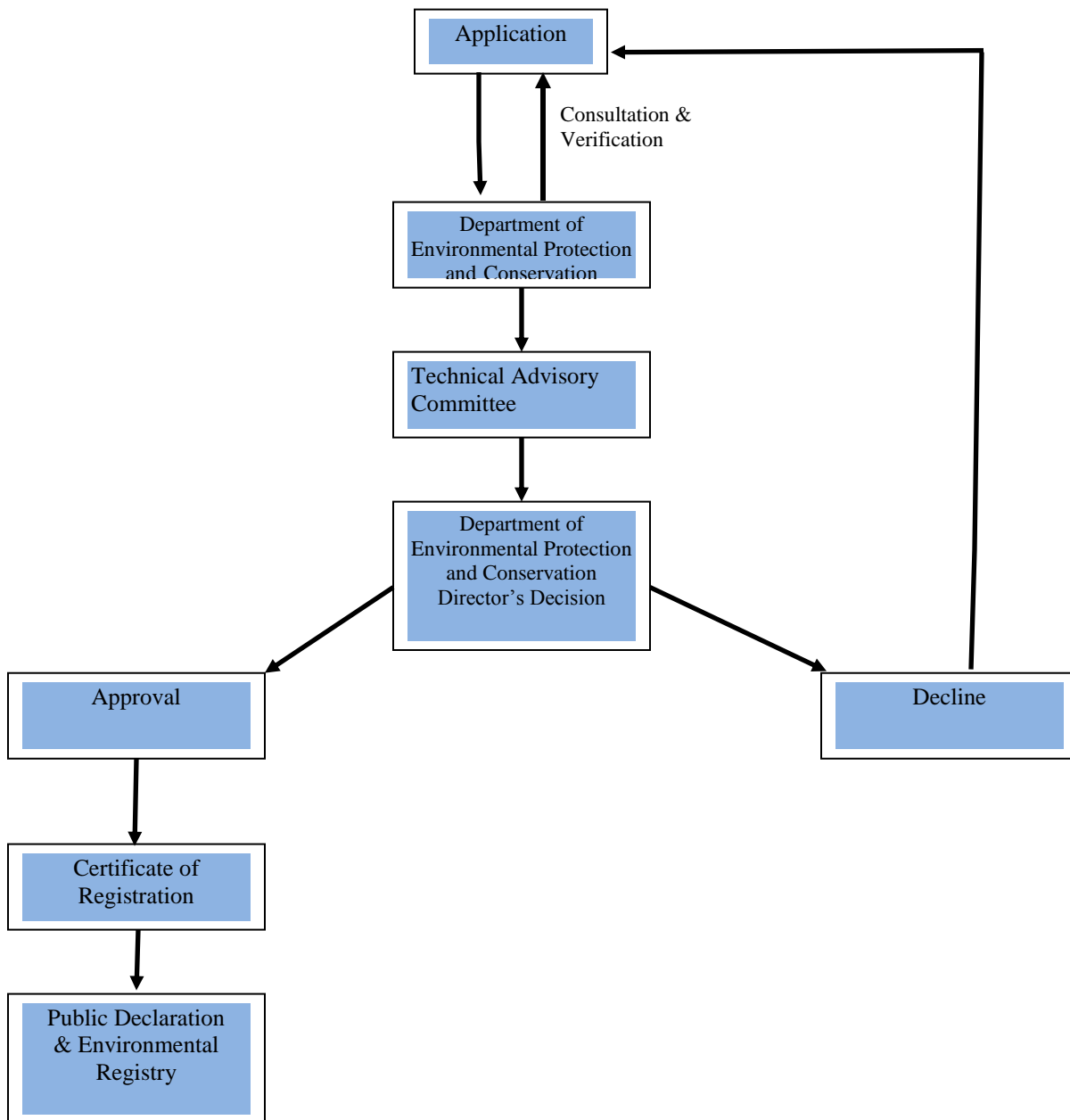
1. The Biodiversity Officer will review the CCA management plan and make sure that it is complete. Then the Biodiversity Officer will contact relevant parties and request additional information and documents. For example if the applicant indicates that trochus reseedling was conducted in the proposed CCA, the Biodiversity Officer may contact the Fisheries Department and request reports and survey results. The Biodiversity Officer may also contact independent references to determine the factuality of the application.
2. If satisfied, s/he will pass the application to a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), who will make specific recommendations on the approval and registration of the CCA. The Technical Advisory Committee must ensure that the primary objectives of the proposed CCA are in-line with sound conservation practices.
3. Once the Technical Advisory Committee makes its recommendations, the Director of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will approve or decline the application for the proposed CCA.
4. If a CCA application is approved, the Director of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will inform the community, provide a Certificate of Registration and record the CCA in the National Environmental Registry
5. If a CCA application is declined, the Director of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation must, in writing, provide the specific reasons as well as make recommendations regarding amendments or changes to future applications.

Notes:

- The process, beginning from the time a fully complete application (with all letters, management plans and supporting documents) reaches the Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation to the time the Director communicates a final decision should not exceed **three (3) months**
- TAC is a special-interest group comprised of relevant expert stakeholders whose composition is dependent on the CCA application under consideration and convened on a case-by-case basis.

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The flow chart below schematically represents the application review process:



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The following steps outline the process that should be followed for official registration of a Community Conservation Area.

**I. Applicant**

1. Collect/complete Application Package from the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation
2. Obtain/provide required endorsement letters
3. Complete CCA Management Plan and Map
4. Submit completed Application Form with attachments to the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

**II. Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation**

1. Review and screen the application for completeness and accuracy
2. Analyze and summarize feasibility of CCA Management Plan, ensure objectives of CCA are in line with sound conservation practices
3. Request survey or research reports from relevant departments/organizations
4. Forward copies of CCA application, feasibility summary, and research reports to the Technical Advisory Committee (TAC)

**III. Technical Advisory Committee**

1. Review pre-screened CCA Application
2. Consider summaries/reports provided by DEPC
3. Make a technical recommendation to the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation

**IV. Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation**

1. Review recommendations by TAC
2. Approve Application
  - a. Issue certificate of registration to applicant
  - b. Public Declaration and update National Environmental Registry
3. Decline Application
  - a. Issue letter of decline with specific reasons and recommendations

**V. New Community Conservation Area**

1. Implement activities outlined in the CCA Management Plan
2. Submit annual reports to the DEPC using the Annual Reporting Form
3. Participate in periodic site visits and assessments as requested by the DEC

## ***Section 11. CCA Maintenance and Reporting***

Congratulations! Hopefully you have now fulfilled all the requirements set out by the EPC Act CAP 283 and your CCA has been officially registered under the Department of Environment Protection and Conservation Act!

But remember, the work doesn't stop here.

As stipulated under the EPC Act, it is now the responsibility of the local management committee or coordinating body to fulfill its obligations as set out in the CCA management plan.

### **Annual Reporting**

CCA Annual Report must be submitted to the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation as part of the registration requirement. Specifically, the DEPC seeks clarification on how the CCA management committee or coordinating body has fulfilled the activities described in the management plan. This report is required every year during its terms of legal registration under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act.

The CCA management committee or coordinating body should use the template provided in Appendix 11 for their annual reporting.

If there are any problems or challenges arise during the reporting process, please inform the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation as soon as possible; they may be able to offer advice or technical assistance.

### **Periodic Site Visit Assessments**

*In addition* to the required annual reports, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation may ask partner organizations to make periodic site visits to the area. Individuals making site visits to the CCA may include staff of other government departments, NGOs or local volunteer organizations. The local CCA management committee or coordinating body will be informed in advance when any site visit is scheduled to take place and who will undertake the assessment. The visitor will ask questions regarding the implementation of the management plan. S/he may ask to speak with various individuals within the community and/or physically visit the CCA. The site assessment will be transparent and open for anyone in the community to see. S/he will ask for several local signatures to verify the accuracy of the report. S/he will then be required to submit a report to the Department of Environmental Protection and



## Community Conservation Area (CCA) Information Booklet

Conservation. The site visitor will use the Site Visit Assessment Form that is provided in Appendix 12.



Pongkil village (South Erromango) living in harmony with nature. Pongkil community joins Happy Land community and other nearby communities established the Erromango Kauri Conservation Area. © Molu Bulu

## ***Section 12. CCA Deregistration, Cancellation or Amendment***

### **Community-initiated CCA deregistration, cancellation or amendment**

There may be situations when the community decides it no longer wishes to have its CCA recognized under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act, or wishes to amend its registration.

According to the EPC Act:

*"An applicant may, at any time, apply in writing to the Director for a determination to do all or any of the following:*

- (a) cancel the registration of a Community Conservation Area, or any part of such area;*
- (b) amend any established Community Conservation Area management plan;*
- (c) modify any area of the registered Community Conservation Area"*

In other words, to cancel or amend the CCA's registration, the CCA management committee/coordinating body must make a **written request** to the Director of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.

The written request must include the CCA Cancellation/Amendment Form with a detailed explanation of the reasons for CCA registration cancellation/amendment and signed by the original CCA applicants/endorsers.

The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation understands that there are unforeseeable circumstances which necessitate CCA cancellation/amendment. However, the DEPC will usually try to negotiate with the management committee/coordinating body in order to avoid CCA cancellation.

### **DEPC-initiated CCA deregistration, cancellation or modification**

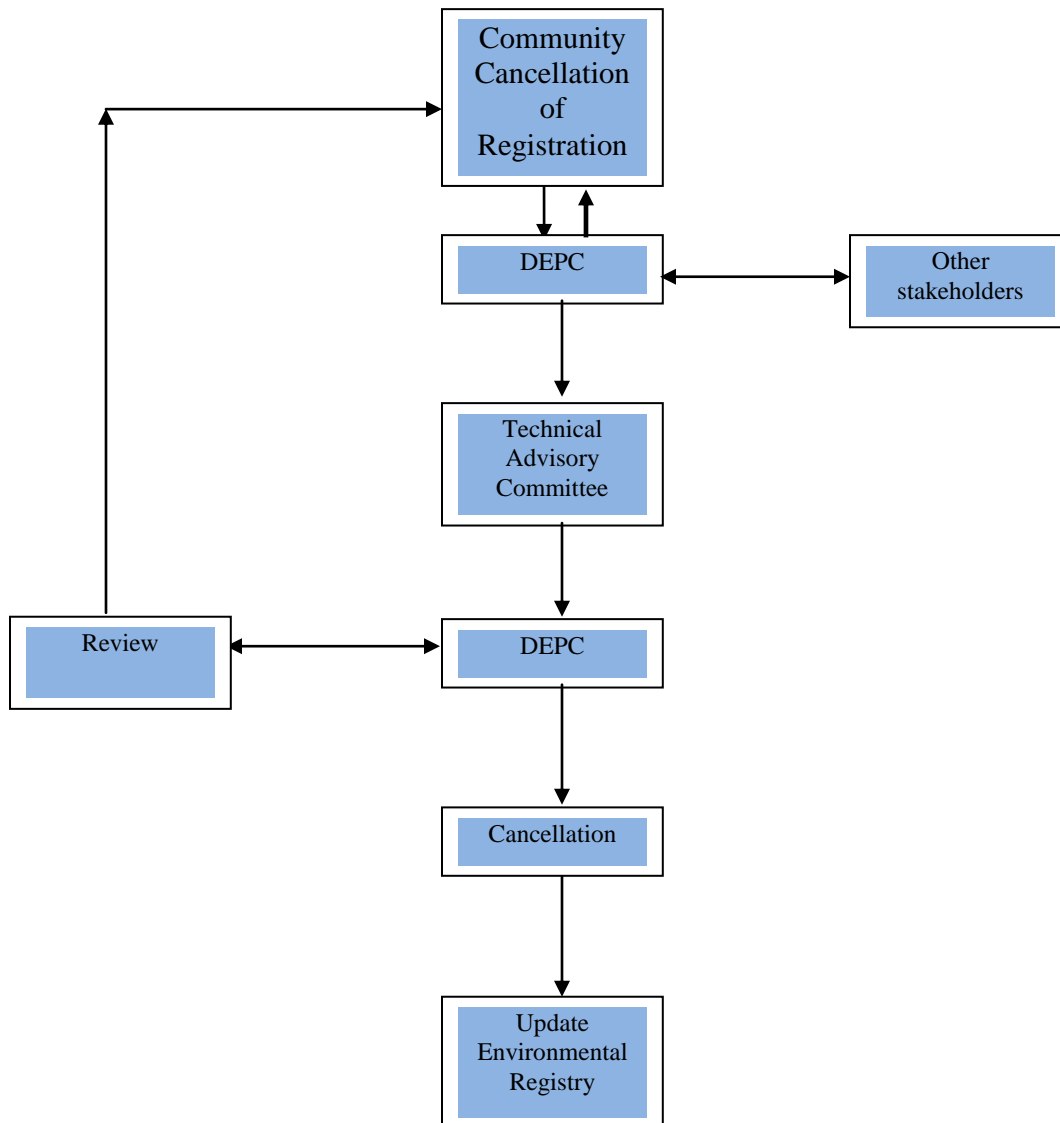
In other circumstances, it may happen that the CCA management committee/coordinating body is not fulfilling its obligations under the CCA management plan, or repeatedly fails to submit annual progress reports to the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation. In these cases, the Director of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation may request that the registration of the CCA be cancelled. This is a rare event, and will be preceded by communication, consultation and negotiation with the CCA management committee/coordinating body.

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**Notes:**

- The cancellation process, beginning from the time a fully completed CCA Cancellation/Amendment form and explanatory letter reaches the Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation to the time the Director communicates a final decision should not exceed **three (3) months**
- Upon deregistration or cancellation, the community is required to return the original Certificate of Registration issued by the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.
- If a cancellation application is declined, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will provide reasons for its decision not to deregister or cancel a CCA and continue negotiations with the CCA management committee/coordinating body.

The flow chart below represents the process for CCA cancellation:



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**The following steps outline the process for canceling, deregistering or amending an existing Community Conservation Area**

**I. Original CCA Applicant(s)**

Complete Cancellation/Amendment Form

1. Obtain original signatures/endorsements as per application
2. Attach the following documents:
  - Letter detailing reasons for CCA cancellation/amendment
  - Minutes of meeting where CCA cancellation/amendment is publicly discussed
  - original Certificate of Registration
3. Submit all documents to the Department of Environment and Conservation

**II. Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation**

1. Review reasons for CCA cancellation/amendment
2. Consult community and other relevant stakeholders
3. Submit CCA cancellation/amendment request to TAC for review
4. Issue notice of cancellation/amendment to village governing body, provincial government and the area or island Council of Chiefs
5. Update National Environmental Registry



CCA reps and government officers discussing invasive species affecting Vanuatu's biodiversity © David Butler



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**Appendix 1. CCA Management Plans**

The Environmental Protection and Conservation Act requires that your proposed CCA is governed by a Management Plan. The EPC Act states that to be registered:

*"An appropriate Management Plan is developed for the area to ensure the achievement of identified conservation objectives."*

A Management Plan is a comprehensive document that describes how, who, what, when, where and why a conservation area is managed. Most existing conservation areas and tabus in Vanuatu do not have guiding Management Plans. However, to ensure that all government-recognized CCAs operate effectively, the DEC requires that management planning take place.

If possible, the CCA coordinator, management committee or coordinating body should use the following formats to guide the development of a locally-appropriate CCA Management Plan. Where there is availability of technical resource person at your place, use sample II. Use sample I if there is no technical person assisting the community to develop the management plan. The more information provided in the Management Plan, the better for the community and future success of the CCA.

<b>CCA Management Plan</b>	
Format Sample I	
<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
<b>a.</b>	<b>Village Background</b>
<b>b.</b>	<b>History of CCA</b>
<b>c.</b>	<b>Site Description</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>CCA MAP</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES (see appendix 3)</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES (see appendix 4)</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>RULES AND FINES</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>SIGNATURES</b>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>

<b>CCA Management Plan</b>	
Format Sample II	
<b>I.</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION</b>
<b>a.</b>	<b>Purpose/Aim</b>
<b>b.</b>	<b>History of CCA</b>
<b>c.</b>	<b>Site Description</b>
<b>i.</b>	<b>habitats and ecosystems (see appendix 5)</b>
<b>ii.</b>	<b>key and significant species (see appendix 6 &amp; 7)</b>
<b>iii.</b>	<b>threats (see appendix 9)</b>
<b>II.</b>	<b>CCA MAP</b>
<b>III.</b>	<b>OBJECTIVES (see appendix 3)</b>
<b>IV.</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT ACTIVITIES (see appendix 4)</b>
<b>V.</b>	<b>MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE</b>
<b>a.</b>	<b>office bearers</b>
<b>b.</b>	<b>responsibilities</b>
<b>VI.</b>	<b>RULES AND BY-LAWS</b>
<b>VII.</b>	<b>OFFENSES AND PENALTIES</b>
<b>VIII.</b>	<b>SIGNATURES</b>
<b>IX.</b>	<b>ATTACHMENTS</b>

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The CCA management committee/coordinating body may wish to refer to the other appendices of this Information Booklet for more detailed explanation of the various components of the Management Plan.

Defining the Management Rules and By-Laws is critically important because if the CCA registration application is approved, these rules will be legally binding for all local and non-local residents and visitors.

Management planning is a participatory activity. Everyone in the community should play a part in the development of the CCA Management Plan, including groups like women and youth. CCA management planning can be difficult, and may require that assistance of NGOs or government departments. Realistically, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation cannot facilitate management planning exercises in every ni-Vanuatu community. Therefore, if you have a specific request or question please contact the Biodiversity Officer for assistance.



Matantas Community during Vathe Conservation Area Management Plan Awareness in 2011. © D. Ka Ifatak

## ***Appendix 2. CCA Mapping***

Section 37(b) of the EPC Act states that a condition of CCA registration is that:

*"the boundaries of any proposed Community Conservation Area are accurately identified"*

It **IS NOT** the intention of the EPC Act to define, interfere with or otherwise usurp ownership of land covered by any proposed or existing CCA. CCA registration **DOES NOT** equate in any way to the transfer of land to the Government of Vanuatu, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation or any other entity. Land ownership is of no consequence to CCA registration, so long as all interested parties agree to the area being formally declared as a Community Conservation Area.

However, in order to formally recognize any proposed CCA at the national level, it is critical that the boundaries of the area be fully, completely and accurately mapped. This is most often achieved by way of a survey from the Lands Department or other recognized body.

The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will attempt to make arrangements to cover the costs associated with formal CCA surveys.

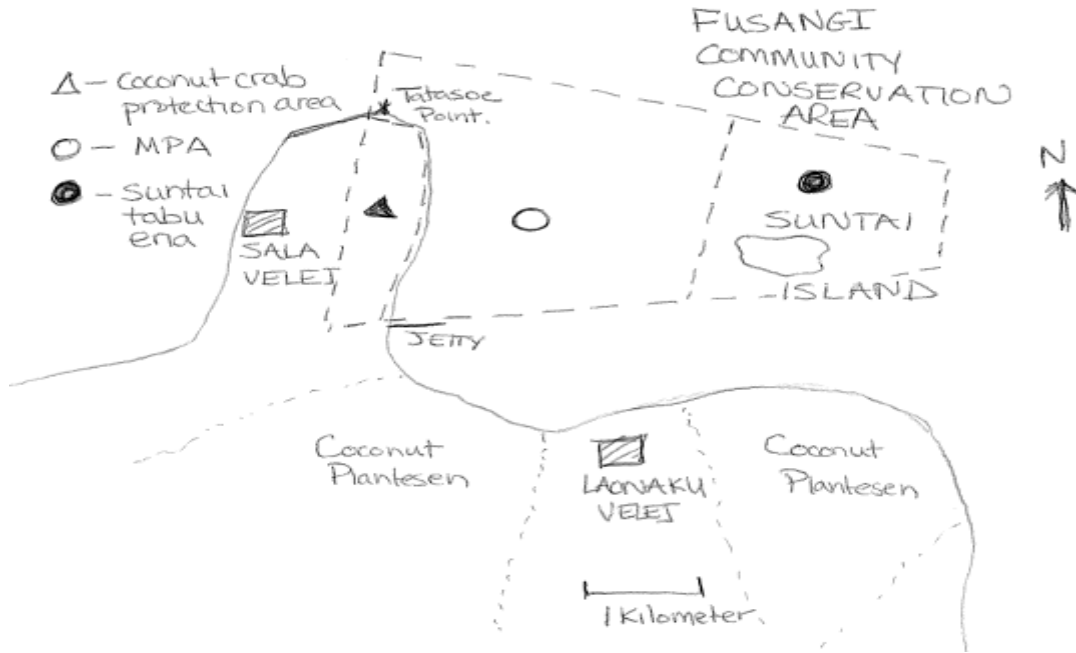
Before a survey is conducted, the DEPC requests that applicants submit a sketch map of the proposed CCA to facilitate preparations for a more detailed survey by the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation.

Below is an example of a suitable sketch map to be provided for the CCA application.

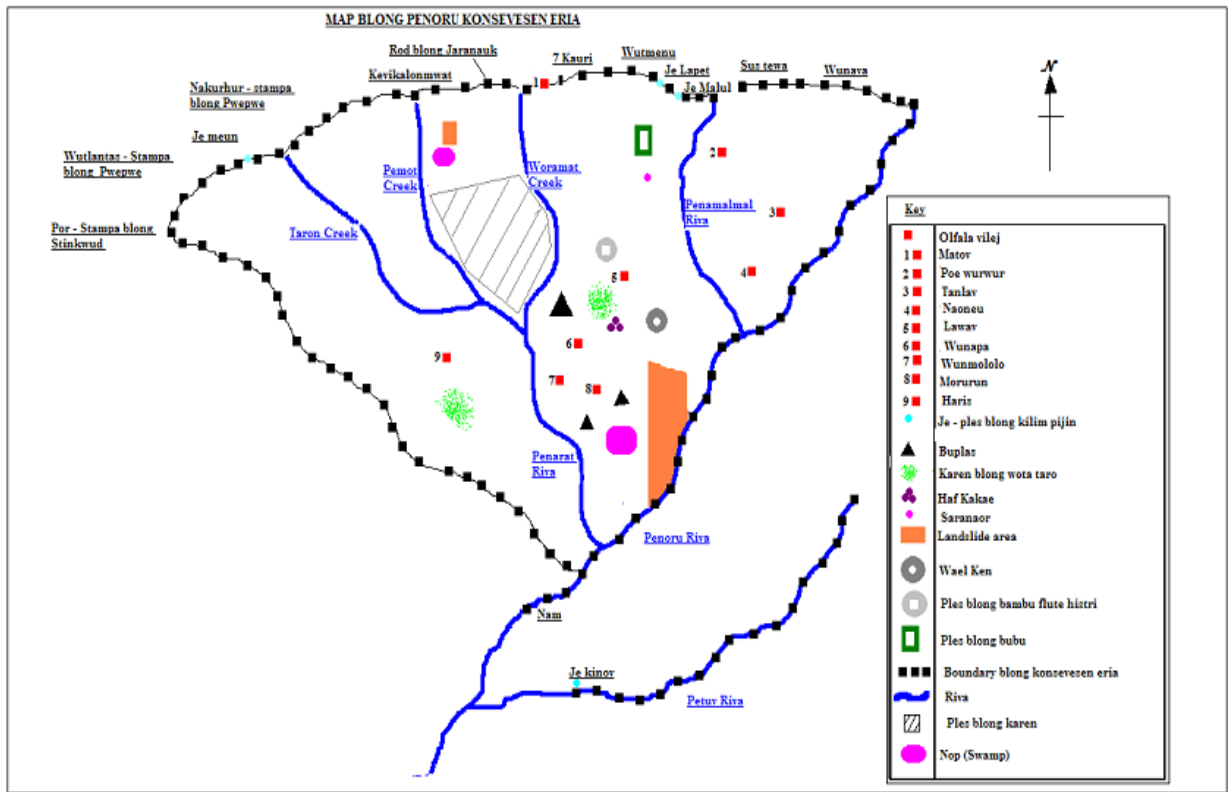
Preliminary sketch maps should have the following elements:

- Clear CCA boundaries
- Proposed zones within the CCA
- Location of any significant species or habitats
- A scale bar with specified distance units (e.g. kilometers)
- North arrow
- Map Legend and Key describing the major components of the map
- Location of the nearest village/town/settlement

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Sample of a preliminary sketch map that may satisfy CCA application requirements. Do not directly copy this sample CCA sketch maps. Each community is different!





### ***Appendix 3. Objectives of a Community Conservation Area***

Section 37(a) of the EPC Act states that a condition of CCA registration is that:

*"the objectives of the proposed Community Conservation Area are identified, and are in accordance with sound conservation practices"*

In Vanuatu there are many reasons why an individual or community might like to establish a Community Conservation Area. At times these reasons may have little to do with the management and conservation of biological or cultural diversity. For example, some communities may wish to establish a CCA to

- encourage eco-tourism activities
- obtain funding, aid or development support
- strengthen ownership or tenure rights over an area
- block or stop a development project or activity

The objectives listed above, while potentially valuable, **should not be the primary reason** for registering a Community Conservation Area. Rather, the Department of Environment and Conservation seeks to recognize CCAs that are **especially dedicated to the protection of natural and cultural resources.**

For this reason, the CCA Application Form asks the applicant to list the objectives of the proposed CCA. Below are examples of potential conservation-related objectives of Community Conservation Areas that may support the protection of biological and cultural resources:

- Protect species diversity
- Protect sensitive/vulnerable areas
- Conserve critical habitats
- Conserve critical ecological processes
- Improve water quality
- Reduce soil erosion
- Maintain a high quality environment
- Increase the catches of reef fish
- Promote alternative income opportunities
- Maintain resources for future generations
- Improve the education and awareness of the community
- Reduce levels of pollution
- Protected a customary site

**(This is not a complete list of all possible conservation objectives, and each Community Conservation Area will have its own unique objectives.)**

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Part of Epau Marine Conservation Area, East Efate



Jordan River is part of Vatthe CCA, Matantas, Northeast Santo © James Teri

#### ***Appendix 4. Activities supporting CCA objectives***

The objectives you list for your CCA should be clear and broad, and be backed up with specific tangible activities. It is not enough to state an objective of the CCA without detailing how the objective will be met. For example, consider the CCA objective of reduced pollution. The management plan should outline the **specific activities** that will be undertaken to achieve the objective of reduced pollution, like holding a clean-up campaign or outlawing plastic bags in all village stores.

Below are examples of activities that will directly contribute to the realization of CCA goals and objectives:

- Plant 250 Sandalwood seedlings in the agro forestry area of the CCA
- Complete 5 Reef Check coral reef surveys in the MPA
- Implement seasonal harvest periods for octopus
- Put custom namele leaves on the path leading to the forest reserve
- Run an village awareness on the lifecycle of the coconut crab
- Limit the collection of sand and coral from the beach for 2 years
- Place 10 wire baskets of stones on the eroding beach front
- Visit the primary school 2 times/year to speak to the class
- Post the CCA rules and regulations on the community notice board
- Set a 9cm size limit on Trochus
- Kill 1 wild pig in the CCA every month
- Send a CCA progress report to the Department of Environment and Conservation every 12 months
- Tag 3 sea turtles every months and send data to Wan Smolbag
- Undertake a sacred site survey with VKS fieldworkers

**(This is not a complete list of specific conservation activities applicable in CCAs, and each Community Conservation Area will have its own unique conservation activities).**

An important part of identifying specific conservation activities is to specify **who** will complete each activity, and **when** the activity will be completed. It is also important to describe how the successful completion of activities will be **evaluated**.

***Appendix 5. Critical habitats and ecosystems found in Vanuatu***

Vanuatu is made up of over 80 islands, each with a unique geography and physical environment. Our country has ecosystems that are not found in many other parts of the world; for example coral reefs and volcanoes.

The CCA Application Form asks you to list or describe the habitats found inside the proposed CCA.

Below are examples of ecosystem types and habitats found in Vanuatu that may be found in your Community Conservation Area:

- Coral Reef
- Mangroves
- Sea Grass
- Lagoon/Bay
- Estuary
- Sandy Beach
- Rocky Coastline
- Swampy Lowlands
- River Delta
- Coconut Plantation
- Cocoa Plantation
- Agro-Forestry Garden Plots
- Seashore Forest
- Lowland Forest
- Montane Forest
- Grassland
- Seasonal Forest and Scrub
- Volcanic Ash Plain
- Urban-Village-Town

**(This is not a complete list of Vanuatu's ecosystem types, and each Community Conservation Area will include its own unique ecosystems.)**

## ***Appendix 6. Key species important to the people of Vanuatu***

Vanuatu's population is heavily dependent on natural resources for the maintenance of local livelihoods. In some cases, establishing Community Conservation Areas may restrict or limit the resources available to local people. The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation wants to ensure that CCAs **do not** place an unfair burden on local people by closing off a critical resource base.

The CCA application form asks you to list or describe the key species that are regularly used by local people inside the proposed CCA.

Here we list some key marine and terrestrial species that are commonly used, harvested or consumed by ni-Vanuatu people:

### Marine:

- Coral Reef Fish
- Trochus
- Giant Clams
- Green Snail
- Crabs, Lobsters or Prawns
- Octopus
- Shells
- Sea Turtles
- Sea Urchins
- Seaweed or Algae

### Terrestrial

- Livestock (wild or domesticated)
- Fowl (wild or domesticated)
- Flying Fox
- Birds
- Land crabs
- Mud crabs
- Nuts (wild or domesticated)
- Root Crops (wild or domesticated)
- Fruit and Vegetables (wild or domesticated)
- Natangura
- Bamboo
- Pandanus

**(This is not a complete list of species used by ni-Vanuatu people, and each Community Conservation Area will have its own unique key species.)**



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*Terebralia palustris* on sale at Lakatoro Market © D. Kalfatak



Mud crab © MESCAL VANUATU

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**Appendix 7. Species of national significance**

The application form requests that you list any nationally significant species that inhabit or utilize the proposed CCA. Species are nationally significant if they are endangered, vulnerable, threatened, rare or endemic. Status of these plants and animals is defined by the IUCN (International Union for the Conservation of Nature: [www.iucnredlist.org](http://www.iucnredlist.org)).

The tables below give the scientific and common names of some of Vanuatu's nationally significant species. On the application form, list only those that are found within your proposed CCA. List as many as you can accurately identify.

<b>Nationally Significant Species: ENDANGERED, VULNERABLE, THREATENED, AND RARE</b>	
Scientific Name	Common Name
<b>PLANT SPECIES</b>	
<i>Agathis macrophyllum</i>	Kauri
<i>Agathis silbae</i>	Kauri
<i>Canarium harveyi</i>	Nangae
<i>Carpoxyton macrospermum</i>	Palm
<i>Caryota ophiopellis</i>	Snakeskin Palm
<i>Clinostigma harlandii</i>	Palm
<i>Cycas seemanii</i>	Cycad
<i>Cyphosperma voutmelensis</i>	Palm
<i>Gulubria cylindrocarpa</i>	Palm
<i>Heterospathe uniformis</i>	Palm
<i>Licuala caballionii</i>	Palm
<i>Metroxylon warburgii</i>	Natangura
<i>Neoveitchia brunnea</i>	Palm
<i>Orchidaceae spp.</i>	Orchids
<i>Pelagodoxa henryana</i>	Palm
<i>Physokentia tete</i>	Palm
<i>Santalum austrocaledonicum</i>	Sandalwood
<i>Veitchia montgomeryana</i>	Palm
<b>ANIMAL SPECIES</b>	
<i>Acropora sp./Porites sp. etc.</i>	Coral Reef
<i>Birgus latro</i>	Coconut Crab
<i>Bolbometopon muricatum</i>	Bumphead Parrotfish
<i>Brachylophus fasciatus</i>	Banded Iguana
<i>Cardisoma sp.</i>	Land crabs

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<i>Charmosyna palmarum</i>	Green Palm Lorikeet
<i>Charonia tritonis</i>	Bubu/Triton Shell
<i>Chelonidae</i>	All turtle species
<i>Cheilinus undulatus</i>	Humphead Wrasse
<i>Crocodylus porosus</i>	Saltwater crocodile
<i>Ducula bakeri</i>	Vanuatu Imperial Pigeon
<i>Ducula pacifica</i>	Pacific Imperial Pigeon
<i>Dugon dugong</i>	Dugong
<i>Erythrura cyaneovirens</i>	Royal Parrotfinch
<i>Epinephelus lanceolatus</i>	Giant Grouper/Los
<i>Falco peregrinus</i>	Peregrine Falcon
<i>Gallinolumba sanctaecrucis</i>	Santa Cruz Ground Dove
<i>Holothuriidae</i>	All Sea Cucumbers- Biche-de-mer
<i>Macrobrachium sp.</i>	Freshwater Prawns
<i>Megapodius freycinet</i>	Vanuatu Incubator Bird/Megapode
<i>Odontoceti/Mysticeti</i>	All Whales and Dolphins
<i>Panulirus sp.</i>	All Lobsters
<i>Pomacanthidae /Acanthuridae/etc.</i>	All Aquarium Fish
<i>Pteropidae</i>	All Flying Fox and Bat Species
<i>Scylla sp.</i>	Mud Crabs
<i>Tridacna/Hippopus spp</i>	All Giant Clams
<i>Trochus niloticus</i>	Trochus
<i>Turbo marmoratus</i>	Green Snail

<b>Nationally Significant Species: ENDEMIC</b>	
Scientific Name	Common Name
<b>PLANT SPECIES</b>	
<i>Agathis silbae</i>	Kauri
<i>Calamus vanuatuensis</i>	Rattan
<i>Callophyllum neo ebudica</i>	Tamanu
<i>Carpoxyton macrospermum</i>	Palm
<i>Caryota ophiopellis</i>	Snakeskin Palm
<i>Clinostigma harlandii</i>	Palm
<i>Cyphosperma voutmelense</i>	Palm
<i>Dioscorea hebridensis</i>	Yam
<i>Ficus granatum</i>	Nabanga
<i>Heterospathe uniformis</i>	Palm
<i>Licuala cabalionii</i>	Palm
<i>Macaranga megacarpa</i>	Navenue
<i>Neoveitchia brunnea</i>	Palm
<i>Orchidaceae spp.</i>	Orchid
<i>Physokentia tete</i>	Palm
<i>Veitchia spp.</i>	Palm



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<b>ANIMAL SPECIES</b>	
<i>Akihito vanuatu</i>	Freshwater Fish
<i>Aplonis santovestris</i>	Santo Mountain Starling
<i>Cryptobhepharus novohebridicus</i>	Beach Skink
<i>Ducula bakeri</i>	Vanuatu Imperial Pigeon
<i>Emoia aneityumensis</i>	Aneityum Skink
<i>Emoia erroran</i>	Futuna Skink
<i>Emoia nigromarginata</i>	Pentecost Green Skink
<i>Emoia sanfordi</i>	Vanuatu Green Tree Skink
<i>Emoia speiseri</i>	Speiser's Skink
<i>Erythrura regia</i>	Royal Parrotfinch
<i>Halcyon farquhari</i>	Vanuatu Kingfisher
<i>Megapodius freycinet layardi</i>	Vanuatu Incubator Bird/Megapode
<i>Myeomeia cardinalensis</i>	Vanuatu Honeyeater
<i>Lentipes kaaea</i>	Red-nose Goby
<i>Neolalage banksiana</i>	Vanuatu Fly Catcher/Buff-bellied Monarch
<i>Perochirus guentheri</i>	Saw-tailed (Southern) Gecko
<i>Petula sp.</i>	Land Snail
<i>Phylidonyris notabilis</i>	Vanuatu Mountain Honeyeater
<i>Polyura sacco</i>	Butterfly
<i>Pteropus anetianus</i>	White Flying Fox
<i>Pteropus fundatus</i>	Banks Flying Fox
<i>Ptilinopus tannensis</i>	Tanna Fruit Dove
<i>Rhyacichthys guilberti</i>	Freshwater Fish
<i>Schismatogobius vanuatuensis</i>	Freshwater Goby
<i>Sicyopterus aiensis</i>	Creek Ai's Goby
<i>Sicyopus pentecost</i>	Pentecost Goby
<i>Sicyopus chloe</i>	Chloe's Sicyopus
<i>Stenogobius yateiensis</i>	Yate's Goby
<i>Stiphodon astilbos</i>	Freshwater Goby
<i>Stiphodon kalfatak</i>	Kalfatak's Stiphodon
<i>Stiphodon mele</i>	Mele's Stiphodon
<i>Stiphodon sapphirinus</i>	Sapphire Stiphodon
<i>Sus scrota</i>	Narave Pig
<i>Zosterops flavifrons</i>	Yellow White-Eye

Note: These tables are not intended to report ALL Species of National Significance. Designations and status of biological species change regularly, and new species are discovered each year. There are likely many more significant species that could be listed on CCA Forms.

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*Akihito Vanuatu*, endemic to Vanuatu- found on Ambae and Pentecost ©E. vigneux

### ***Appendix 8. Human activities inside CCAs***

In Vanuatu, people depend heavily on natural resources for their livelihoods. Many ni-Vanuatu communities do not have enough land to establish a Community Conservation Area that is completely off limits for use by people.

The Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation would like to recognize all Community Conservation Areas in Vanuatu, even if the Management Plan allows the controlled use of resources within proposed CCA boundaries. There are many examples of human activities that are compatible with conservation goals.

The CCA application form asks you to list human activities that are being undertaken inside your CCA.

Below are examples of the types of human activities that could potentially undertaken in Vanuatu CCAs:

- Collecting fruit or nuts from trees
- Harvesting non-timber forest products
- Snorkeling or swimming in the sea or on the reef
- Nature tours or ecotourism
- Walking, hiking or passing through

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- Gardening or agro forestry
- Planting trees
- Doing surveys or monitoring
- Customary celebrations or rituals
- Culling pest or introduced species (i.e. wild pig or big leaf vine)

**(This is not a complete list of human activities undertaken inside CCAs, and each Community Conservation Area will have its own unique set of activities).**



Entomology Assessment in Nabauk CCA, South Santo. © D. Kalfatak

## ***Appendix 9. Threats facing habitats and species in Vanuatu***

Conservation Areas are generally established in order to mitigate or reduce the impact of threats on natural resources.

In order to assess the potential for effective conservation, the CCA application form asks you to identify the Threats that may impact the CCA.

Below are examples of threats that may directly or indirectly impact the effectiveness of the proposed CCA:

### Man-Made Threats:

- major development projects (roads, bridges, land clearing)
- commercial harvest of resources
- overharvest of resources
- destructive harvest of resources (breaking coral etc)
- frequent burning or fire
- dumping of pollution, waste or chemicals
- marine debris or flotsam
- intensive agricultural activities
- poaching inside the CCA
- logging
- livestock grazing
- land, title, or domestic disputes
- weak governance

### Natural Threats:

- cyclone
- flood
- earthquake
- land slide
- soil erosion
- volcanic eruption
- tidal wave or tsunami
- drought
- fire or lightning
- coral bleaching
- coastline erosion
- invasive species or fast growing weeds

**(This is not a complete list of threats that may be impacting CCAs, and each Community Conservation Area will have its own unique set of threats).**



## ***Appendix 10. Disputes and Community Conservation Areas***

The Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation wishes to avoid the registration of CCAs under the EPC Act that are currently under dispute.

Disputes are common in ni-Vanuatu communities and villages. Disputes can occur over chiefly titles, domestic issues, political parties, church denominations, land ownership, village boundaries, development projects and many other things. Disputes are often very disruptive to the quality of life in many communities and present a major obstacle to Vanuatu's overall development. Disputes have at times been caused or exacerbated by Community Conservation Areas in Vanuatu, potentially leading to their collapse or failure.

The CCA Application Form asks if there are any disputes within or regarding the CCA. If so, please describe in detail the causes and extent of the existing dispute(s). Explain what measures are currently being taken to solve the dispute. Please describe any impact the dispute may have on the registration or implementation of the proposed CCA.

**Note:** It may still be possible to register an area under dispute if both parties can demonstrate their agreement on and commitment to the success of the proposed CCA.



Amal-Krab Tabu Eria (AKTE) Management Committee at Malekula. © MESCAL VANUATU

# Appendix 11 - Annual CCA Reporting Form



Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation  
**COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA (CCA)**



## Annual Reporting Form

**Instructions:**

1. Print clearly
2. Answer all questions
3. Refer to the CCA Information Package for clarification or more information

Today's date:			
<b>CCA Information</b>			
1. Full name of CCA:		Traditional name of CCA (if any):	
2. CCA Location	Village/Community:	Island:	Province:
3. Date of official CCA registration:	Day:	Month:	Year:
<b>Changes since registration/last annual report</b>			
4. Has the structure of the CCA Management Committee/Coordinating Body changed? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If Yes, describe:			
5. Has the CCA contact information changed? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <span style="float: right;">If Yes, provide new contact information below:</span>			
New Contact Information:	Land Line:		Mobile:
	Mailing Address:		
	Email Address:		Website:
6. Have the following changed? <small>(tick where appropriate; and attach copies)</small>	<input type="checkbox"/> Management Plan, if Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Finalized <input type="checkbox"/> Updated <input type="checkbox"/> Drafted Date Changed:	<input type="checkbox"/> CCA Usage Rules, if Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Finalized <input type="checkbox"/> Updated <input type="checkbox"/> Drafted Date Changed:	<input type="checkbox"/> Customary Regulations, if Yes <input type="checkbox"/> Finalized <input type="checkbox"/> Updated <input type="checkbox"/> Drafted Date changed:
7. Has the CCA changed size? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO <span style="float: right;">If Yes, describe, specify measurement units and attach new map:</span>			

For office use only: Date Received by DEPC

Certificate Date

Certificate Number

<p>8. Have the CCA objectives changed?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  (If Yes, list NEW objectives)</p>	
<p>9. Have the CCA management activities changed?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  (If Yes, list NEW activities)</p>	
<p>10. Have the CCA habitats and ecosystems changed?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  (If Yes, list NEW habitats/ecosystems)</p>	
<p>11. Have any NEW nationally significant species (endangered, threatened, vulnerable, rare or endemic) been observed/recorded in the CCA?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  (If Yes, list NEW species)</p>	
<p><b>Changes</b> <i>(continued)</i></p>	
<p>12. Have the human activities that occur regularly within the CCA changed?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  (If Yes, list NEW activities)</p>	
<p>13. Have the threats affecting the CCA changed?  <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  (If Yes, list NEW threats)</p>	
<p>14. Are there any NEW disputes or other conflicts within/regarding the CCA? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO                  If Yes, describe in detail:</p>	
<p>15. Has any NEW research or surveys been carried out in the CCA? <input type="checkbox"/> YES <input type="checkbox"/> NO If Yes, describe and/or attach documentation and reports:</p>	

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16. Have there been any NEW expressions of commercial interests within the CCA?  YES  NO

If Yes, describe and provide names of organization or company and their details:

17. Has CCA management committee/coordinating body worked with any other outside groups apart from those already listed in the application form?

Government Departments:

NGOs:

Others:

18. Describe any technical support and/or funding received by the CCA since registration or the last annual report:

## Assessment

19. Describe the current state of CCA management:

20. Does the community perceive that resources within the CCA are increasing or decreasing?

Describe and give specific examples:

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**Assessment** *(continued)*

21. Describe any CCA Management Plan goals and objectives that are not being carried out, and explain why:

22. Describe any unplanned activities (not in Management Plan) that are occurring within and/or affecting the CCA, and explain why:

23. Additional comments regarding progress and/or challenges to the management of the CCA:

\*\*Please attach any other relevant information that will assist the DEC to evaluate the progress of this Community Conservation Area.

**Reporter Information**

Name of person completing CCA Annual Report:

Position/Organization:

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[Type text] [Type text]

[Type text]

## **Endorsements**

\*\* At least Four (4) signatures are required on this form: Two (2) from the CCA Management Committee/Coordinating Body

Two (2) from the Community Governing Body

**We, the undersigned, certify that the information provided in this CCA Annual Report is complete and accurate**

Name	Position/Organization	Signature	Date

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Certificate Date

Certificate Number

# Appendix 12: Site Assessment Form



## Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation COMMUNITY CONSERVATION AREA (CCA)



### Site Assessment Form

**Instructions:**

- 1. Print clearly
- 2. Answer all questions
- 3. Refer to the CCA Information Package for clarification or more information

Today's date:

#### CCA Information

1. Full name of CCA:		Traditional name of CCA (if any):	
2. CCA Location	Village/Community:	Island:	Province:

#### Assessment

3. Assess how well the CCA is being managed: Give specific examples of management activities.

4. Does the community perceive that resources within the CCA are increasing or decreasing? Describe and give specific examples:

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5. Describe any CCA Management Plan goals and objectives that are not being carried out, and explain why:

6. Describe any unplanned activities (not in Management Plan) that are occurring within and/or affecting the CCA, and explain why:

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7. Describe and assess the level of human dependence on the resources within the CCA:

8. Describe and assess the level of threats affecting the CCA:

9. Describe any recent research or surveys carried out in the CCA:

10. Describe any recent projects, technical support, or funding given to the CCA:

**\*\*Please attach any other relevant information that will assist the DEC to evaluate the progress of this Community Conservation Area.**

**Reporter Information**

Name of person completing CCA Site Assessment Report:	Position/Organization:	Contact Telephone:
Signature:		Date:
Person(s) consulted to complete CCA Site Assessment: <small>Give name and position in community.</small>		

**Endorsements**

\*\* At least Four (4) signatures are required on this form: Two (2) from the CCA Management Committee/Coordinating Body  
 Two (2) from the Community Governing Body

**We, the undersigned, certify that the information provided in this CCA Site Assessment is complete and accurate**

Name	Position/Organization	Signature	Date



## ***Frequently Asked Questions***

Q: Does my village lose ownership or stewardship rights of the land/resources if it registers an area as a Community Conservation Area under the Environmental Protection and Conservation Act?

A: No, registration simply means that the Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will list your CCA the National Environment Registry and will attempt assist you to manage your community's natural resources.

Q: If someone breaks the rules of our Community Conservation Area, will the Department of Environment and Conservation help us punish the offender?

A: The national government does not have the human or financial resources to directly manage or enforce each community's natural resources. Even after CCA registration, it will be the community's responsibility to manage and enforce the CCA. According to the EMC Act, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will only assist with enforcement in rare cases and only when all local governance processes have been fully exhausted.

Q: If someone breaks the rules of our Community Conservation Area will they be arrested, put through court or charged a fine by the government?

A: See above, The Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation encourages the enforcement of CCA regulations at the community level, and will only become involved in extraordinary circumstances. If the CCA management committee or coordinating body exhausts all local governance options to deal with CCA transgressions, offenders may be prosecuted in the national legal system under the EPC Act. The maximum penalty for an offense under the EMC Act is 50,000,000 vatu.

Q: Will the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation monitor or survey the resources inside a registered CCA?

A: The Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation cannot physically monitor the resources in each community throughout Vanuatu. However, the DEPC will provide technical advice and monitoring guidelines and training to your CCA management committee or coordinating body.

Q: Will the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation provide funds to help implement the activities in the management plan of a registered CCA?

A: No, the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation cannot provide funds directly. However, the DEPC may assist you in accessing external funding by including your CCA in government biodiversity and conservation project proposals to donors or by providing endorsement letters to donors and funding agencies for any project proposal you may be developing with any partner organizations.

Q: If the applicant is unable to obtain all of the required endorsement letters required for a complete application, will the DEPC still consider the CCA for registration?

A: All endorsement letters are required for CCA registration. However if an extraordinary issue arises you should contact the Biodiversity Officer at the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation for assistance. Exceptions to the application requirements will be made on a case by case basis.

Q: Can we register our tabu area, even though the community opens it for fishing every 6 months?

A: Yes, as long as the taboo has been in place for more than three years. If harvesting every 6 months is a clearly described in the CCA management plan, then it is fine to register the tabu area.

Q: Can we register our conservation area if we plan to permanently reopen it in 10 years?

A: Yes, any area established for more than three years may be registered. If your community decides to reopen the CCA at any time, and remove the registration, the DEPC requires a CCA Cancellation Form to be submitted.

Q: If we submit an application for CCA registration and it is **not** approved by the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation, may we submit another application?

A: Yes, a declined application will be followed by a letter from the DEPC explaining why it was not successful. If you improve in these areas, and

follow the Director's recommendations, a CCA application resubmission is welcome.

Q: What happens if we want to cancel our Community Conservation Area, but the Director of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation declines our cancellation application?

A: The Director of the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation will only decline to cancel a CCA if that area is of national or international significance. The Director will always consult with the community to discuss CCA cancellation requests.

Q: Can we register our Conservation Area with the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation even if it is already registered with the Forestry or Fisheries Departments?

A: Yes, you can register the CCA under any Act of Parliament. There is no limit to the number of Acts under which you register your CCA. It will depend entirely on you and your community to decide under which Act(s) you would like to register your CCA. However, in the future this might change where there will only be one national CCA management system for Vanuatu which means that only one Act will be used for legal registration of all CCAs.

Q: Can we register our Community Conservation Area with the Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation even if it is already registered with the Vanuatu Cultural Center?

A: Yes. You may still register your CCA under the EPC Act even if it has already been registered with the Vanuatu Cultural Center Heritage Sites or any other government department.

For any other questions or to get more information about Community Conservation Areas, please contact

The Biodiversity Officer  
Vanuatu Department of Environmental Protection and Conservation  
Private Mail Bag 9063  
Port Vila  
Vanuatu  
Ph: 25302  
Fax: 23565  
Email: [environment@vanuatu.gov.vu](mailto:environment@vanuatu.gov.vu)



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