



**Policy setting for improved linkages between agriculture, trade and tourism:
Strengthening the local agrifood sector and promoting healthy food in agritourism**

**Workshop organised by the Government of Vanuatu and CTA
in collaboration with IICA and PIPSO**

**Port-Vila, Vanuatu, 25-27 May
Warwick Le Lagon Resort & Spa, Erakor Lagoon, Port Vila**

1. Background

Promoting linkages between agriculture and tourism-related markets for improved food and nutrition security

Tourism is the lifeblood of many Pacific economies and agritourism provides a promising avenue for diversification and trade growth. High quality, nutritious and healthy food, available every day of the year, is critical to hotels, lodges and resorts. Often the food purchasing bill of a tourism site is large in comparison to the size of the local economy, yet surprisingly little of this is spent locally, even when supplies are available from farmers, fishermen and small-scale agribusinesses. The challenges of shifting food-sourcing to local suppliers are considerable – achieving this in a way that meets commercial needs and customer preferences and meets food and safety requirements would be one way in which tourism operations can significantly increase their contribution to local economic development.

Tourism has the potential to stimulate demand in the agriculture sector, promote healthy and nutritious food and strengthen the use of local products, so it is important to create linkages between the two, and to develop a policy on agritourism. In addition to the strong economic value of developing a sustainable tourism sector, enhancing the linkages between tourism and agriculture represents an important potential mechanism to stimulate and strengthen traditional local producers and processors and to improve the distribution of benefits along the chain as well as generate investment incentives for local production. The trade policy environment should be more favourable to the private sector and investment, while supporting local entrepreneurs and SMEs through appropriate measures that address import substitution, notably in the form of tariff and non tariff barriers.

Linkages between agriculture, health and tourism not only potentially increase opportunities for domestic agriculture earnings, new markets and product development and therefore sustainable economic growth, but also offer opportunities to help develop visitor attractions and distinctive tourism destination brands through the creative use and marketing of local produce and production techniques, and use of local landscapes. In order to acquire these benefits, the tourism industry needs to be proactive in utilizing local, high quality, healthy and niche agricultural products in touristic sites and events.

Vanuatu has the natural and cultural potential to develop a point of difference in its tourism policy and diversifying its economic sectors can increase resilience of food systems and incomes for rural communities. A policy on agritourism will also develop linkages with the health

sector ensuring that it supports national campaigns towards nutritious and healthy food (embedded in the concept of quality food referred above).

2. Context

The Agribusiness Forum held on 1-3 July 2015 in Denarau, Fiji, as part of the *Pacific Agritourism Week*, was organised by Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO), the Secretariat of the Pacific Community's (SPC) and the ACP-EU Technical Centre for Agricultural and Rural Cooperation (CTA).

It highlighted successes in strengthening links between agriculture and tourism industries in the Pacific region. A major challenge identified was the lack of favourable policies in place to encourage linkages between agriculture, tourism and trade policies and the need to design and develop Agritourism policies which would facilitate those linkages at national and regional levels. An added element is to link with Health Ministry to promote quality products and healthy food as niche markets.

The Forum recommended that the first pilot be launched in Vanuatu with two immediate actions: (i) a selected group of stakeholders involved in the development of the policy will visit the Caribbean where policies are in place and meet their Caribbean counterparts and learn from the process. This was done at the 2nd Caribbean Agribusiness in October 2015; (ii) a policy workshop will be held in Vanuatu in 2016 for the launch of the policy design process.

3. Opportunities for the Vanuatu agrifood sector in tourism related markets: some key issues

The multi-dimensional nature of Agritourism requires a multi-sectoral and multi-layered approach for addressing cross-cutting issues among Ministries of Agriculture, Tourism, Transportation, Health, Environment, Education, Trade and Economic Development.

Some of the key issues which need to be considered in developing agritourism linkage policy in Vanuatu are as follows:

At the level of the Public Sector, agritourism linkages need to be prioritized through:

- Multisectoral approaches: Agriculture (including fisheries), trade, health, environment and tourism policies are developed separately from each other and very few linkages are identified or pursued.
- Promoting quality food: the nature of island economies having limited land availability justifies focusing on quality and healthy food which contributes to food and nutrition security of local and foreign tourists.
- Branding: there is a need for public campaigns to brand Vanuatu as a unique tourist destination with a strong food and culinary offer. Awareness campaigns should target consumers (locals and tourists) on the various uses and benefits of local products (providing information on nutrition and health characteristics).
- Support to farmer's organisations production and marketing capacity: There is a need to create new opportunities for women and youth farmers, families and communities in promoting the use of local food.
- Investment incentives for local production and agroprocessing: value chain infrastructure in agritourism needs to be supported to support business growth.
- Increased setting up/compliance of food safety regulations is needed to strengthen the reputation of the health and nutrition quality of local foods. Rating system for food health will reassure tourists.
- Education programmes which feature the various dimensions in the use of local food need to be strengthened which include the nutritional value.
- Promoting access to affordable ICTs and platforms, particularly with respect to the types of crops planted and available, fisheries products available, processing companies and available products, disaggregated demand from local fresh market and distribution sectors, and from hospitality, tourism, and airlines, artisanal actors and their products, level of exports, *inter alia*.

Private sector has a significant role to play in agritourism development

- There is a need for a collaborative effort by the private sector actors (including farmers' networks, processors, artisans, service providers and investors) to work with the various ministries to put in place policies and strategies that bring together the tourism and agriculture industries.
- Farmers' and fisherfolk organisations need to be strengthened and linked with the agribusiness and craft industries to add value to products.
- SMEs need to focus on product development, product differentiation, marketing and branding to add value to their fresh and processed products. They also need to invest in technology and research to develop their products successfully.
- Developing/strengthening niche markets: Organics, fair trade and origin-linked products can provide a comparative advantage for Vanuatu.
- Multi-stakeholder national platforms need to be established to influence policy bringing the various perspectives from agriculture, trade, health, tourism.

- The Chefs: the link between sustainable tourism, agriculture, nutrition and cuisine

The role of chefs in agritourism is still in its infancy and needs to be developed further, particularly in getting hotels and tourist hot spots to utilise local produce in their cuisine. Promote culinary tourism based on the 'from farm to table' concept and further develop key relationships between the farming and culinary communities so that more locally-sourced foods are in restaurants, hotels etc. There is also an opportunity to link with the need for nutritious choices and build markets for local nutritious crops to support local value chains.

The **cuisine of Vanuatu** incorporates fish, root vegetables such as taro and yams, fruits, and vegetables. Papayas, pineapples, mangoes, plantains, and sweet potatoes are abundant through much of the year. Coconut milk and cream are used to flavor many dishes. Most food is cooked using hot stones or through boiling and steaming; little food is fried. The national dish of Vanuatu is lap lap. Lap lap contains yam, banana and manioc smothered in coconut cream and cooked in a traditional oven. Flying foxes are also captured, kept in cages, and eaten as a stew. Coconut crab is one of the unique foods of Vanuatu. However, many restaurants in Vanuatu have stopped serving this dish as the crab is at risk of becoming an extinct species.

- Addressing the data gaps for Agritourism

There are gaps in the data for crop production, yields and service providers. This data relates to the types of crops that are planted, the volume exported, prices and main chain actors. Equally, further information is needed on the nutrition and health characteristics to promote local fresh and processed food.

Having updated and correct data is essential for informed decision making and business related decisions. Furthermore, access to affordable ICTs and platforms is essential to support business development growth and communications forms a core component in the business infrastructure.

4. Goal and Objectives

Goal: To promote sustainable use of local food by the tourism industry through strengthened intersectoral policies.

Objectives:

- To promote linkages between the agrifood sector and the tourism industry to increase sustainable local sourcing through an agritourism policy in Vanuatu
- To increase the understanding and awareness of the current deficiencies in the supply of produce along the value chain and the actions needed
- To design inter-sectoral and inclusive policies which promote PPPs for improved local food use and consumption.

5. Participants

Government officials from Agriculture, Trade, Health and Tourism ministries, private sector, chefs and actors from the hospitality sector, civil society and academia. International and regional partners will share their experience.

6. Partners

The policy process is led by the Ministry of Agriculture, Trade and Tourism of Vanuatu in close collaboration with the other ministries. Regional and international partners include PIPSO, SPTO, SPC, CTA and IICA. The [Intra ACP Agricultural Policy Programme](#) is financing one expert from the Caribbean.

7. Expected results

- A better common understanding of the opportunities in agritourism in Vanuatu
- The main elements of the Strategy/policy on agritourism developed and validated by the multi-sectoral focus group
- A platform promoting linkages between eath, Agriculture and Tourism is established
- An input to the design of the 1st Vanuatu Agritourism Week
- Main elements to share with other countries and the Pacific region for an agritourism framework

8. Process

An Agritourism Task Force has been established to assist the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries and Biosecurity and Ministry of Tourism, Trade, Industry and Ni-Vanuatu Business to increase the supply of local primary products to the domestic market in particular the tourism industry as well as develop export market capability.

The Task Force will undertake the following:

- (a) Conduct a survey of all restaurants and hotels and other relevant stakeholders in the hospitality sector, to determine local content of all foods consumed, estimate the status of linkages, and map the supply and distribution system.
- (b) Identify fresh and processed goods and craft products with high demand potential
- (c) Determine the standards and specifications and price ranges for goods identified
- (d) Compile an inventory of all fishermen, forestry, farmers and livestock producers on Efate, Santo, Malekula, Tanna and Epi who can supply the tourism industry market
- (e) Carryout an assessment of all farmers on Efate, Santo, Malekula, Epi and Tanna to determine their capacity to supply tourism industry
- (f) Carry out an assessment of the infrastructure and services in support of the distribution system (including access roads, transportation, postharvest handling – cleaning, storage packhouse and cooling facilities, inspectors)
- (g) Compile an inventory of all ni-Vanuatu currently producing value added products to determine their capacity to supply the tourism industry and domestic market
- (h) Coordinate the training of all livestock and food crops farmers, forestry, fishermen and processing businesses who will be supplying the tourism industry and domestic market in the following:
 - Quality of products
 - Pricing of products
 - How to produce and supply on a regular basis as a business
- (i) Facilitate and conduct “partnership events” between potential suppliers and buyers and negotiate increased access to farmers, forestry, fisherman, livestock producers and value added businesses to credit to facilitate increased production and trade
- (g) Establish a mechanism to coordinate and connect the supply of products from ni-Vanuatu businesses with the market.



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PROGRAMME

Wednesday 25 May 2016

8h30-9h00 Registration
9h00-9h15 Opening remarks

- *Howard Aru, Director General of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Vanuatu*
- *Georges Borugu, Director, Department of Tourism and Acting Director-General of Ministry of Trade, Industry and Tourism*
- *Isolina Boto, Manager, Project Coordinator for Regional Trade, CTA*
- *Mereia Volavola, CEO, Pacific Islands Private Sector Organisation (PIPSO)*
- *Honourable Matai Seremaiah Nawalu Minister for Agriculture, Livestock, Forestry, Fisheries, & Biosecurity*

9h15-11h00 Session 1: Setting the scene: what do we know about opportunities to support linkages between agriculture, health and tourism

This session will set the scene on the opportunities that the tourism sector can bring and the needed linkages with other sectors such as agriculture and trade. It will look at successful models in other parts of the world and what could be of interest to Vanuatu agritourism policy.

Moderator: Vanuatu

- Setting the scene: A agritourism policy for Vanuatu
Howard Aru, Director General of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Vanuatu
- Global trends and evolution of agritourism and food tourism
Isolina Boto, Manager and project coordinator for regional trade, CTA
- Overview of the Caribbean and Latin American best practices
Ena Harvey, Expert in Agritourism, IICA, Caribbean
- Best practices in agribusiness development in the Pacific
Mereia Volavola, CEO, PIPSO
- Overview of the agritourism initiatives in the Pacific
Cheryl Thomas, Policy research Officer, SPC

Moderated discussion on key messages for Vanuatu context

11h00-11h15 Coffee Break

11h15-13h00: The Vanuatu context: opportunities for agritourism development

This session will look at the Vanuatu context. It aims at reaching a better common understanding of the opportunities in agritourism in Vanuatu

It will assess the situation in the key areas important to set up an agritourism policy.

Moderator: Vanuatu

- Overview of main agricultural and fisheries fresh and processed products with potential for the tourism-related markets
Jimmy Andeng, Operations Officer, International Finance Corporation (IFC)
- Overview of tourism development
Avio Roberts, Second Political Advisor, Ministry of Tourism, Vanuatu
- Opportunities and requirements for tourist markets
Ruth Amos, Manager of Food Centre, Ministry of Trade, Vanuatu
- Supplying certified fresh and added value food to the hospitality sector
Cornelia Wyllie, Vanuatu Direct
- Experiences in engaging farmers with the tourism sector
Oliver Lato, Farm Support Association

13h00-14h00 Lunch

14h00-16h00: The Vanuatu context: linking nutrition and health for quality food

- Health and nutrition: the case of NCDs in Vanuatu
Myriam Abel, WHO technical advisor to Health Promotion and NCD unit, Department of Public Health
John Tasserei, Officer In Charge (OIC), Health Promotion Unit, Department of Public Health
- Nutrition and health: promoting healthy food and policies to improve diet quality
Tim Martyn, FAO Sub-Regional Office for the Pacific Islands, Samoa
- Experiences from organic production and Pacific Tourism & Hospitality Standard
Nambo Moses, Chairman, POETCom
- Experiences from the Caribbean on nutrition and health focus on agritourism markets
Ena Harvey, Expert in Agritourism, IICA, Caribbean

General moderated discussion on agriculture, tourism and health

16h00-17h30 Working groups in each of the 3 areas to identify key elements of the strategy/policy on agritourism and proposed actions.

Thursday 26 May 2016

9h30-13h30 **Session 2: Promoting agritourism through value addition, quality branded products**

9h30-10h30 **Feedback from the working groups**

10h30-11h45 **Promoting quality and safe products**

This session will discuss key areas to promote quality and safe products needed for the tourism-markets and will present specific examples of success.

- Meeting food safety standards to upgrade

- Henry Sanday, Private sector Development Advisor, MSG*
- Certification processes for creating a sustainable supply chain
 - *Nambo Moses, Chairman, POETCom*

11h00-11h15 Coffee Break

11h45-13h30 Session continues

- Linking farmers to agribusiness for quality products: the case of Tanna coffee
Terry Adlington, Managing Director, Tanna Coffee, Vanuatu
- Value chain training to build sustainable continuity of supply to meet demand: Lessons learned from the Caribbean
Ena Harvey, Expert in Agritourism, IICA, Caribbean

13h30-14h30 Lunch

14h30-16h30 Working groups to discuss the three areas and the needed elements to establish a platform promoting linkages between Health, Agriculture and Tourism

16h-30-17h30 Presentation in plenary and discussion

Friday 27 May 2016

9h00-13h00 Session 3: Celebrating Vanuatu Food and Cuisine

9h00-11h00 Chefs for Development: the link between agriculture & cuisine

This session will look at the role of chefs and the hospitality sector in stimulating demand of local products and its use by chefs. It will share experiences from other regions.

- Best practices and new opportunities in sourcing local food by the Chefs
Chef Christopher Bulememe, Vanuatu Culinary Chefs Association
- Chefs for Development: linking Chefs and other agribusiness actors
Mereia Volavola, PIPSO; Isolina Boto, CTA; Ena Harvey, IICA

Discussions with other Chefs, farmers, Experts from the various Ministries.

11h00-11h15 Coffee break

11h15-13h00 Promoting Food festivals and Food celebrations

Concrete examples from the regional and the Caribbean will be shared which could inspire the 1st Vanuatu Agritourism Week to be held in June 2016.

Discussions and ideas from previous sessions will be summarise and will contribute to design the format of the Vanuatu Week of Agritourism which is meant to be an annual national event.

13h00-14h00 Lunch

14h00-16h45 Developing the Agritourism Policy Framework

Based on previous input and discussions in working groups, this session will look at the main elements to establish an Agritourism policy. It will provide actionable recommendations for short, long and medium term.

Conclusion—Moderator provides concluding remarks focusing on agreed future actions

17h15-17h30 Closure

- *Howard Aru, Director General of Agriculture, Ministry of Agriculture, Vanuatu*
- *Ena Harvey, Expert in Agritourism, IICA, Caribbean*
- *Isolina Boto, Manager, Project Coordinator for Regional Trade, CTA*
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