



Government of Vanuatu
Gouvernement du Vanuatu



INTRACAP
Agricultural Policy Programme

**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**

Summary of discussions - 25th May 2016

- The agritourism and food tourism is a major economic driver worldwide and a very dynamic and profitable sector. The Pacific region has a positive growth trend forecast until 2030. This opportunity of growth in the tourism sector should be seized to make it profitable to Pacific countries, businesses and rural communities. As shown in the Caribbean region, there are many opportunities to maximise agritourism linkages in small island economies and many lessons can be learnt (food festivals, food routes, national awareness campaigns, diversification and product development). In this context of special relevance is the efforts for import substitution (i.e. sourcing 40% cassava for fries and bread production instead of potatoes).
- The Pacific region has already successful business cases linking agriculture and tourism and has the potential to upscale and expand them. It has also data on the potential for main agricultural products. It was highlighted that diversification is key (including within the same product) and added value needed to move up in the value chain. In this context, more efforts should be done in promoting sustainable and inclusive PPPs which promote collaboration between producers, agribusiness and the tourism industry.
- However, as highlighted in the Pacific Agribusiness Forum in 2015, a key missing element is the lack of conducive policies and policy commitments to support: (i) cross-sectoral linkages which are key in this area between the various ministries; (ii) government incentives and measures to promote local food in order to decrease the food import bill (i.e. taxes on imports of cheap food; further dialogues with the hospitality sector); (iii) conducive environment for business to operate; (iv) support to farmers organisations to be able to meet the demand in quantity and quality terms.

- The proactive and visionary approach of Vanuatu government was stressed. It is indeed a very timely agenda for Vanuatu to take on board as there is strong commitment and interest at political level to move it forward. This is confirmed by the strong presence of all Ministries which have a role to play (Agriculture and Trade, Tourism and Health). Major development partners are also interested to contribute to the agritourism strategy. The Minister also stressed the importance of the local population consuming a greater proportion of local healthy produce.
- The agritourism agenda should also be supportive of healthy food which meets the food safety standards of a very competitive market. In this context, it is very urgent to train food safety inspectors (as there are only 2 in the country) able to provide the required certification at production, processing and serving levels and reassure the tourist market on the safety and reputation of the local providers. Efforts in supporting local foods will also contribute to fight the NCDs and other nutritional deficiencies, which represent a very serious problem in the country. Further awareness and media campaigns should be developed to promote local food, especially targeting young people.
- Another promising avenue is collaborating with Chefs who are able to promote local food in a very sophisticated way, increase local sourcing and promote the country image as a food destination. The Pacific has already piloted some initiatives in this area which could be further replicated in Vanuatu.