

MISSION REPORT

BY

PETER WOOD (DESIGN CONSULTANT)

FOR THE

SOUTH PACIFIC BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION PROJECT

JULY 1994

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ABBREVIATIONS

CA Conservation area
CAC Conservation Area Coordinating Committee
CAP Conservation area project
CASO Conservation area project support officer
CP Concept paper
CPO Central Planning Office
DOE Department of Environment
GEF Global Environmental Fund
LOU Letter of Understanding
NGO Non Government Organisation
PC Project Coordinator
PD Project Document
PPD Project Preparation Document
PRAP Participatory Rural Appraisal
RRAR Rapid Rural Appraisal
SPBCP South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Project
SPREP South Pacific Regional Environmental Programme
TA Technical Assistance
TMAG Technical and Management Advisory Group
TOR Terms of Reference
UNDP United Nations Development Programme

1. Introduction

This mission was undertaken by Peter Wood and Fanaura Kingstone, project design and community development specialists respectively, for the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Project. The mission commenced on the 21st February and was completed on 16th June.

The Terms of Reference for the Design Specialist were more applicable to a previous phase of the project, between the Appraisal and the Preparation of the final SPBCP Project Document (PD). The issues raised in the TOR had already been addressed and accounted for in the final version of the PD. This was realised at the time of the first TMAG meeting in early February and some further guidelines for the mission were outlined at that meeting.

The meeting agreed that the work programme of the consultants should enable them to:

- .specify staging/phasing of the workplan;
- .propose documentation and project formatting;
- .address reporting, accountability and monitoring requirements;
- .address linkages with other programmes.

In further discussion with the Programme Manager (PM) it was decided that work would concentrate on 'bridging the gap' between the SPBCP PD and facilitating the mobilisation of the CAPs on the ground. The guidelines address the above issues.

It was agreed that this could be best approached by preparing a set of guidelines for SPBCP applicants to follow. The aim would be to inform eligible countries about SPBCP, how to access the programme and to highlight various issues relating to design and management of CAPs.

Three CAPs were used as models to assist the consultants in identifying major issues that were likely to arise in the design and management of CAPs. The projects were:

- (a) Western Samoa - The Saanapu Sataoa Mangrove Conservation Area, this was chosen because of its proximity to SPBCP HQ, the acceleration of development as a model CAP would create benefits for the overall programme.
- (b) Fiji - The Mt Koroyanitu National Park, this CAP area was believed to be under some immediate threat from logging and provided a good opportunity to develop a serious ecotourism venture. Ecotourism is likely to be the major income generating enterprise in the SPBC Programme.

(c) Vanuatu - The Big Bay National Park, this area is a significant rainforest with current logging proposals to the landowners, it also is a good example of where a land dispute between owners is a major constraint.

The consultants visited all three project areas and worked with Government staff to partially complete the Project Preparation Documents (PPDs). Visit activities included working through the project design process, preparing work plans and project costing and promoting contact between the lead and other agencies that needed to be involved. Although draft reports were produced as a result of discussion between the consultants and the CAP proponents the final reports should be completed by the latter (with community input if possible) and be a true representation of their requirements.

This is the overall Mission Report of the Project Design Specialist, it makes a number of observations and recommendations about CAP design and management as well as the SPBCP head office operations. The report also gives a summary of progress and issues related to the three CAPs visited.

2. Outputs from the Mission

Outputs of the mission in terms of reports are:

- .Guidelines to the South Pacific Biodiversity Conservation Programme.
- .Project Preparation Documents (partially completed) for the three CAPs visited.
- .The Mission Report

Time was spent with those responsible for the existing preparation of the three CAPs. During this period an improved understanding of SPBCP was achieved with particular reference to the requirements for project design and management. The need for a multidisciplinary approach was understood and involvement of other agencies representing women and technical disciplines occurred particularly in Vanuatu and Fiji, the structure already being in place in Western Samoa.

3. Observations and Recommendations

3.1 The Overall Dilemma/General

1. SPBCP faces a dilemma in reconciling the need for developing CAP participatory community based management structures with the need to disburse funds over the remaining four years, to April 1998.

To achieve the former in an effective manner so that a true sense of ownership is developed and maintained by the community, is going to take a long time. This is because:

- .The communities in most instances are starting from a basis of little or no understanding of the CAP. To raise community awareness and develop individual management skills to enable effective participation, often involving cooperation between different communities, is an inherently slow process.
- .There may be an under estimation of skills required to prepare, mobilise and manage the CAPs by the lead agencies. Available resources are too narrow and limited in relation to the overall workload to devote adequate time to CAPs.
- .There is a lack of field based operational NGOs that could take a major role in institutional development at the community level.

SPBCP HQ poses no constraint at present but SPREP yet has little experience in administering and funding such projects. When nine or more CAPs are operating there may be difficulties in coping with demands.

The community based management aspect of the dilemma is not negotiable. It is recommended that consideration be given to making the funding period more flexible. The implications of this would be:

Positive:

- .Enable CAP planning and management to take place in the knowledge of secure funding for a period in excess of four years (or less for CAPs still to be identified).
- .Reduce anticipated preoccupation of CAP management with finding alternative funding sources in the early stages of project implementation.
- .Increase possibility of significant achievements within an extended SPBCP funding timeframe, this will enhance the possibility of attracting alternative funding when necessary.
- .Ongoing operation of a project management/administration unit in SPREP, which may be used for other similar projects.

Negative:

- .Possibility of increased proportion of SPBCP funds being devoted to overheads, (compare overhead/disbursal ratios of other funding institutions).
- .Possibility of developing complacency within CAP management

Options to consider include:

- .Extend the disbursal period beyond April 1998.

.Define a deadline for CAP requests to be made before April 1998 and extend the disbursement period (with or without technical support?).

It is recommended that this issue be examined as soon as possible in a SPBCP review so CAPs can modify their workplans accordingly.

Continuing to work within the constrained funding time frame puts considerable pressure on what are mostly delicate institutional structures.

4.2 CAP Planning and Design Issues

2. Ideally the concept for a CAP should initially arise from the community/landowners themselves. The CAP is 'born' with a sense of community ownership which is then not something that has to be created through awareness campaigns/training.

In reality this will be difficult to achieve because of the lack of knowledge about SPBCP at the community level. There are regional environmental extension activities and there are campaigns promoting awareness of the environment in some countries. These could be used to disseminate knowledge of SPBCP in local languages to communities (such as through the 'One World' Project managed by Radio Australia in close cooperation with SPREP), informing about the project and who to contact.

Directly targeting suitable NGO's by such an extension programme is a further option aiming to increase knowledge about the programme within landowning communities.

This may lead to a number of unsuitable concepts but others may arise with what could be considered as an ideal pedigree.

3. The aim of the PPD is to rationalise, design and develop a workplan for the project. Ideally this should involve participatory planning by the community. In reality this is difficult to achieve because there is a need to prepare the PPD quickly to formalise the relationship with SPBCP as a source of funds and technical assistance and to maximise the drawdown period for the CAP.

In most cases the workplan will define the **approach** to be adopted to develop the community based management structure/activity. The input to the PPD by the community (other than giving their commitment) may be minimal unless the community is already at a stage where it can make an effective input.

4. In preparing PPDs, and given the likely lack of substantial community participation, the preference is for design and preparation to be done/coordinated by relevant agencies in each country. Existing agency resources are either minimal in absolute terms or in relation to their work load. A drawn out PPD preparation period may occur.

Outside assistance (direct from SPBCP or consultants) may reduce this period and introduce experience in the coordination of a multidisciplinary approach for what are essentially integrated rural/community development projects.

5. Technical people have had a large role to play in bringing the CAPs to the current stage of development. As from the stage of preparing PPDs there is a need for involvement of people with project design and management experience over a broad range of disciplines to address the holistic nature of the CAPs.

A multidisciplinary team approach is required. Apart from the relevant technical environmental disciplines, inputs from anthropologists, sociologists, agriculturists, economists may be required. Skills in participatory rural appraisal techniques, project design, community development, project management are required. Only in rare instances will those technical specialists involved with the projects from the beginning have such skills.

In some countries there is a lack of communication between ministries and departments and NGOs. This is a constraint to a multidisciplinary approach.

Multidisciplinary and single discipline multi agency task forces (comprising a mixture of 'thinkers' and 'doers') operating to set workplans may assist in promoting a multidisciplinary approach.

SPBCP may need to actively promote this approach, manifested in undertaking participatory rural appraisals (PRAs), particularly to ensure that the aspects of community development are adequately addressed.

6. There may be a tendency amongst some proponents of CAPs who have shared a long history with the project to resent intervention by others. They may think they are the only people who can progress the project and deny it the additional and multidisciplinary time that it requires.

Such attitudes would lead to a narrow vision for project design and delays. A lookout for such attitudes is required along with a need to mitigate against them.

Note that this was not the case in the CAPs looked at, the need for a multidisciplinary approach was recognised already, the effective coordination of such an approach was the main problem.

7. CAP planners may feel that projects are only starting now (with the development of a workplan and the prospect of external funding). However communication with primary stakeholders may have been occurring over some years. In their minds the project commenced some time ago and expectations of immediate benefits may be high.

In project design there is a need ensure the community has a good understanding of past, present and future project development in the overall context and it is important to give income earning/community development components high priority in the overall development schedule.

8. There is a possibility that landowners no longer living in the village, but residing in urban areas or overseas, may have a different set of priorities to those of the locally resident owners and users. This may complicate design and implementation.

It is necessary to identify all landowners and users, their aspirations and what motivates them in relation to long term land use.

9. There is a perception that PPDs are too long and repetitive of concept papers and other existing CAP survey reports.

There is a need to have a comprehensive stand alone PPD presenting the logical approach to the significance and selection of the CA and the consequent factors that have been considered in project design. Reference to well prepared surveys and concept papers can be made by summarising key points of the existing situation related to resources, community aspects, institutions and policies. If such reports do not exist then this section should be fleshed out from existing information and included in the PPD.

Each PPD should have a 10 to 15 page Executive Summary but behind this probably lies a 60 to 120 page report to enable coverage of these broad based community development projects.

10. There is a need for the National Central Planning Offices to be involved from an early time so they may advise or assist in the preparation of project documents as well as be made aware of incremental funding needs of cooperating agencies.

11. In estimating CAP funding requirements there was a tendency not to know what reasonable funding levels should be.

Some estimates were low due to exclusion of project components whilst with others there was an overreaction by single agencies not having an appreciation of the total project. In such cases agencies were pushing their own ends, enlarging their role beyond what is necessary from the CAP point of view.

Some NGO's whose existence depends on outside funding may be thinking of their existence rather than the needs of the project per se.

Unlike projects more driven by economic and financial criteria where it is relatively simple to identify cost boundaries, CAPs may lend themselves to continuous data collection exercises that have little to do with the conservation of biodiversity.

Any costed input should only be included if it is seen as being

essential to achieving the objective which itself is consistent with the project goal.

12. The CASO is seen as an important input to the project. To be effective he/she must be mobile, have management and administrative support from the lead agency, have on or near site accommodation and office facilities and additional training if required.

The ability of the lead agencies to arrange such support from existing resources will be limited in many cases, particularly related to transport. Consideration should be given to SPBCP funding to relieve this constraint as a last resort.

13. Both the SPBCP PD and the outcome of the first meeting of TMAG imply that some survey inputs for the concept paper and the project preparation document could be funded by SPBCP. Consequences of this may be:

- .The preparation phase will take a long time to complete (with additional survey inputs) delaying the formal adoption of project funding according to its first phase workplan.

- .It might not be the best time to prepare a terms of reference for a comprehensive study that addresses the real issues.

It is recommended:

- .The CP and PPD are prepared on the basis of existing data as far as possible. The PD mentions the large amount of data known on the Pacific (by country) biodiversity.

- .If confirmation is required to better satisfy CAP selection criteria or address TMAG comments on the CP, rapid rural appraisal should be used to fill the gaps.

- .After the selection criteria are satisfied further data requirements become a part of project implementation.

14. Although the intention was for the PPD to be prepared by the countries concerned there is a rationale that they be assisted by SPBCP or outside consultants.

- .The in country capacity to devote the necessary contiguous time in many cases is not available.

- .At present there is no appraisal phase of the CAPs (other than review of the PPD by the TMAG). There needs to be someone making an input (based on a field visit) on behalf of SPBCP to realistically assess the project in light of its attached risks (they may be difficult to identify or played down by CAP management), such as whether key people will stay, whether all land owners are fully involved etc.

- .The need to provide a multidisciplinary approach may be achieved through involvement of SPBCP or consultants.

15. There is a perception amongst some, including major proponents, that environment conservation projects are simple and low cost. This perception has grown from traditional development of national parks on government land, where in fact the requirement for government ownership was a major criteria for selection rather than the importance of the biodiversity that it contained.

However by increasing the priority of biodiversity as a criteria and introducing customary land ownership the project becomes complex warranting a high degree of planning and preparation to cover such issues as:

- .community awareness and management
- .sense of ownership
- .income generating enterprises

Due care must be taken in designing CAPs to ensure all relationships and implications for costing are identified.

16. It is emphasised that income generating projects must fullfill four critical criteria at an early stage:

- .They must be a clear consequence or be particularly enhanced by the community commitment to the conservation of biodiversity.
- .They must provide a financial incentive to the community (return to labour) and the incentive needs to be made known to the community at the outset.
- .The community needs to have a real sense of ownership and progress the enterprise on the basis of self help.
- .They must be designed so that there is an actual and perceived equitable distribution of benefits costs.

In the case of providing improved social services and infrastructure to communities it is again important to demonstrate the linkages to conservation, eg improved water supplies and medical facilities may be a prerequisite for a successful ecotourism enterprise.

17. The development of a CAP implementation model relevant to customary owned land in 14 countries which have different biodiveristy, cultures, responses to incentives, institutions, legislation and policy environments will be difficult to achieve.

With experience what may be achieved is a **model approach** to the identification, preparation and management of CAPs.

18. The PPD may comprise a number of technical annexes to support the main report including the resource base, the community, ecotourism etc.

3.3 CAP Implementation and Management Issues

19. Once project implementation has started there is a need for activities to be progressed according to the workplan, avoiding long delays. There must be evidence of this at the community level to sustain community motivation. Such delays lead to declining credibility of government and non government agencies, the other members of the partnership.

The employment and effective (equipped and mobile) mobilisation of the CASO should be an high priority activity. He/she will be a visible sign of ongoing project activity, a day to day linkage between the members of the partnership and the key player in creating a sense of CAP community ownership and management.

20. The PPD is the recognised and approved report that includes the initial project plan and costing. It is the benchmark set of objectives, outputs and activities in response to the project goal.

Day to day CAP management activities fall within the framework of the PPD but will need to be more detailed by the CASO and others involved in project management and administration in terms of shorter planning and financial control periods and activities.

21. There are instances where consultants have offered free or subsidised services to CAPs. Whilst such practices are common in the framework of NGO activities and environmental concerns, problems may arise in the lack of accountability by the providers of such services.

Such services are sometimes provided according to the agenda of the consultant/researcher rather than addressing the real needs of the CAP. The delivery time of the material also often doesnt match the needs (workplan) of the project and there may be doubts as to the ownership of the material produced.

Contracted services arising out of a direct response to a CAP management prepared terms of reference specifying reporting deadlines and ownership of the output produced is often preferable.

22. There is a dilemma relating to the management needs of CAPs and the resources available to provide them. On the one hand:

- .The process approach to the design and implementation of the CAP's is consistant with the development of community based management projects.
- .This approach requires high level management skills to coordinate inputs and make ongoing decisions in light of new information and circumstances.
- .The process approach and SPBCP reporting requirements are quite

rigid, in order to make the CAP implementation more flexible.

- .Participatory planning involving the community is an inherently slow and long process.
- .The SPBCP disbursement period has only four years remaining, there is a need to disburse funds quickly.

On the other hand:

- .Environmental units in most countries have limited numbers of trained staff and less with practical experience in design and management of implementation.
- .Existing skills at the community level are likely to be more limited.
- .There is likely to be a lack of operational NGOs.

Therefore there is a need to consider:

At SPBCP level:

- .An extension of the time frame for SPBCP funds disbursement past April 1998
- .Promotion of NGOs from existing lean bases, provision of training to NGOs,
- .Relax UNDP and SPBCP reporting requirements, extend the period for which funds can be acquired from UNDP to every six rather than three months.

At CAP level:

- .Provide financial support for lead agency project management
- .Multi agency commitment at a high level

23. There may be an underestimation of management requirements for CAPs in terms of:

- .the need for a:
 - .sense of real ownership by the landowners/users
 - .participatory planning and,
 - .eventual community based management,
- .a true understanding of what participatory planning and community based management implies in practical terms,
- .the length of time required to achieve effective community based management,
- .the initial need for a tight management unit with effective

coordination powers that promotes participatory planning,

.the fact that CAPs achieve conservation of biodiversity through community development requiring a holistic multidisciplinary approach.

At an early stage SPBCP should run a regional workshop for existing and potential CAP planners and CASOs addressing the above issues.

24. To assist in persuading landowners, if required, there should be trips organised to logged/dead reef areas to see how the people have suffered. Economic case studies of such areas should be prepared as useful extension material.

25. The possibility to set up task forces as means of disseminating management responsibility.

3.4 SPBCP Management Issues

26. SPBCP has adopted a relatively passive approach to promotion of the programme in the expectation that inquiries should come from the eligible countries once they know of the existence of the programme.

In light of the remaining four year fund disbursement period and the long time required to mobilise CAPs it is recommended a more proactive approach be now adopted especially to those countries still to prepare a concept paper. As mentioned in Section 4.2/2 a broad based promotion through existing extension networks (eg 'One World') could be adopted in parallel to a more targeted approach to country environmental agencies.

This will assist countries maximise the remaining fund disbursement period and help SPBCP plan use of the available funds to April 1998.

27. With CAP activity now starting and the recent mobilisation of additional staff it is recommended that SPBCP become more clearly identified as a project management unit within SPREP. This would comprise management, technical, information, financial and administration services. SPBCP is unlike other SPREP projects, it covers a broad range of issues and is (should be) driven from the bottom up. It should be responsive to the needs of individual CAPs and therefore may need to have more flexibility than what is required by other projects. This could be facilitated by:

.Fortnightly or monthly SPBCP team meetings of fulltime staff together with the Species Protection Officer, the Information Officer and the Financial Manager. Other SPREP staff would attend if interested.

The object would be to cover such topics as:

(a) discuss physical and financial progress aspects of existing

- CAPs, identifying constraints and resolving issues, discuss applications for new CAPs,
- (b) report on individual workplans and achievements and plans for the next period,
- (c) travel plans and objectives,
- (d) planning SPBCP organised regional activities,
- (e) utilisation of Information Services,
- (f) monthly budget report,
- (g) distribution of activities between staff,
- (h) project reviews etc.

.The Project Manager and the Financial Manager to break down the SPBCP overhead items into workable operating budget headings for the year and the period to April 1998, this will assist distribution of funds over the period and ensure financial control is maintained.

Set budgets for SPBCP overhead costs of each CAP (travel, accomadation, time, surveys etc) according to expected physical requirements.

.Individual staff workplans drawn up as the basis for monthly activities.

.Organisation of SPBCP regional services to CAPs such as:

- .identifying CAP training needs and responding with identifying sources and/or organising regional workshops of relevance to all CAPs,
- .regional meetings of CAP staff to share learning experiences,
- .making contact with international funding agencies (NGO's etc) on behalf of CAPs,
- .identifying relevant NGOs where possible,
- .develop an inventory of case studies on income generating projects, highlighting benefits and pitfalls,
- .SPBCP information sheet prepared on a regular basis to be circulated to the SPBCP CAP network and SPREP contact point network, encourage contributions from the CAPs. Ensure CAPs know key dates such as TMAG meetings, fund application deadlines etc.

.It is acknowledged that SPBCP is both physically and financially a part of SPREP. It is inevitable that as SPBCP activity increases, (communications, travel arrangements, use of vehicle, budgets, expense claims and reporting) SPREP procedures (which were originally established without the needs of SPBCP in mind) may become a constraint to quick and effective responses to the needs of CAPs. It is recommended that procedures be developed, as the needs require, so as to maintain effective technical and financial support to CAPs.

28. It is recommended that the two SPBCP advisers participate in a Pacific orientated cross cultural training course to enable a more effective and sustainable approach to planning and management assistance to individual CAPs. The availability of

such courses is not known, USP would provide some guidance.

29. The SPBCP Project Document (p23) states 'Some SPBCP funds may be used for small seed monies and advice will be provided to local groups which wish to obtain loans for sustainable development activities such as community agroforestry development or conservation linked tourism development'.

The Report on the First Meeting of TMAG (p7) states 'SPBCP will not provide grants to start up small business activities'.

Clarification is required of these two apparently opposing views.

30. It needs to be made clear at what stage is the CAP officially approved for SPBCP funding and by who (by TMAG or the Programme Manager) after the CP or the PPD or on signing of the MOU.

31. To enable quick responses to CPs it is recommended that TMAG members make decisions without necessarily meeting geographically together. Rather they can have a teleconference or simply put their thoughts on fax to each other in order to make a decision on the basis of reports they have received.

32. Recommend that some TMAG meetings take place in eligible countries and include an inspection of CAPs.

33. There is a need to check up on the status of the outstanding report on NGOs.

34. There is no formal appraisal phase for the CAPs especially for those designed without direct input/advice from SPBCP. It is recommended that SPBCP carries out a short appraisal concentrating on the areas of risk, outstanding issues, costs and community commitment.

35. It is important that information sent from SPBCP to the CAP is sent directly to the CAP management personnel, information sent to SPREP focal points, invariably does not get passed to the people who need it.

36. As part of an in house project review it is recommended that eligible countries be asked to respond to a questionnaire covering a comprehensive range of aspects of the programme, at regular intervals.

37. Training will be a critical input for most CAPs, often CAPs will require similar training inputs at similar times. As there is no data base on regional training services it is recommended that SPBCP should:

- .compile a list of CAP training needs including numbers of people and approximate time required,

- .undertake a survey of training services for the region, the

scope of courses provided, the cost, the timing, the ability to provide courses geared to specific requirements,

.put CAPs in contact with sources and organise regional inputs if required, for instance they could be organised through IRETA, (project design, project management and financial control, participatory rural appraisal etc) at an early date.

38. That SPBCP make an inventory of prospective CAP's in all 14 countries in the form of a selection matrix. This would enable an early assessment of eligibility. It would be done in cooperation with countries concerned and help SPBCP know the potential for the rest of the current SPBCP funding period and justify an extension. The output would be a regional long list prioritised according to basic technical and community criteria.

39. To reduce the onus of management and cost on participating countries SPBCP could consider establishing a centralised M&E activity, it would produce M&E data from a regional perspective as well as service individual CAP needs.

Benefits would be a consistent approach to M&E at a comprehensive level. It would increase SPBCP overhead costs.

40. There needs to be some rigid guidelines as to what costs SPBCP will fund and what they wont at a greater level of detail than at present. It is likely that CAPs will apply for funding of a range of costs in the first instance, if some items are rejected by SPBCP this may delay funding of critical project activities, upset the workplan and implementation of the project as a whole.

CAP management will have little time to seek alternative funding sources for small to medium items at short notice.

In particular some guidelines as to what a reasonable salary level for the CASO should be given, considering the salary levels in the country concerned and the SPBCP budget allocation for his item accross all CAPs. It seems as if the original budget was based on about US\$1000 per month.

Once the annual plan is approved funding commitments are made on both sides.

41. In some instances (Vanuatu and possibly Fiji and Western Samoa) it is obvious that a computer for the CAP management will relieve some constraints on the CAP lead agency management resources, provision should be made on the basis that it can be effectively used.

42. CAPs should be encouraged to categorise project costs according to meaningful headings for management purposes (as outlined in the guidelines), this will provide benefits in enabling comparisons within projects over time, between projects leading to identification of problems in implementation and

eventually providing data for establishing what are adequate levels of costs for the implementation of CAPs.

Costing in CAPs is not so much governed by the quantifiable benefits as in more physically productive projects, there is therefore risk that costs could get out of hand following a line of research with little benefit. Cost control is therefore a very important activity.

43. USP could be seen as an institution that may be able to make low cost or zero cost inputs into CAPs as part of research programmes for undergraduate and graduate students. No discussion was held with them relating to this but this could be warranted. The general areas of resource economics, biodiversity, community development, village based enterprises are all topics of current academic interest and of relevance to the CAPs.

44. Experience during this mission indicates the need for visits by SPBCP advisers, to countries to discuss and assist the planning of CAPs, to be based on a strict itinerary which ensures the availability of relevant government and NGO staff for effective working sessions. The staff should be well prepared for the sessions relating to an agreed prearranged programme which outlines the issues to be covered during the period of the visit. Such visits should preferably be condoned by high level staff

One UNDP funded programme operating in a network of countries from a Suva base uses the principle of the 'work week', where the emphasis is on complete dedication by the country staff to the job in hand for one week with little or no outside interruption.

4 Brief Appraisal of Three CAP's

4.1 Western Samoa

Formal meetings have been held in both villages introducing representatives from the DEC, DAFF (Farming Systems), Department of Fisheries, Department of Forestry, Ministry of Women Affairs and Western Samoa Visitors Bureau.

Both Village Councils have provided a commitment to conservation of the mangroves and a limited survey indicates broader support for conservation of mangroves, although the breadth and level of understanding is questionable. It needs to be ensured that untitled people, women, non residents as owners and/or users of the resource need to be fully in the picture and committed.

Ecotourism activities have been progressing since late 1993 with apparent success in terms of money to the villages, the sustainability of the exercise in terms of its organisation and structure for distributing benefits needs to be assessed.

A positive step has been that Sataoa and Saanapu have agreed to

form a joint committee comprising representatives of the womens committee, the church and the pulinuu from each village. The women of Sataoa have been to MWA requesting a meeting to be held for women in the villages. This is a good start in relation to village cooperation, the involvement of women and the means for communication to the broad base of the community through the church. It is likely that there needs to be continuous thinking to ensure that women play a key role in the ongoing activities. It is possible that the women at the village level will put demands on the MWA that the latter cant effectively respond to.

There is no real understanding of the socio economic status and relationships of the village. At present only one part/resource related to some farm households is being addressed without examining the impact of possible consequences on other components of the household, ie an holistic approach has not been adopted to date. In designing a sustainable management plan for the area it is likely that impacts will be related to non mangrove areas such as the need to improve productivity from arable areas or the reef fishery.

The project design focusses on the mangrove area at present and it is preferable to eventually expand this to larger physical land use units such as the Safata Bay Catchment (if this is the appropriate area). This would probably introduce other land owners, however it is likely that a focus on the mangroves will lead to consideration of other areas once a holistic approach to the farm household is adopted.

The Biodiversity Unit of the DEC is overstretched in terms of its present workload including USAID funded CAP's in Savaii and other work at Aliepata. Inability to submit a quarterly budget, read a draft of the PPD and progress it further, lack of progress in employing a CASO and inability to coordinate meetings for women (at the womens request) in the villages in the last two months may be indicative of problems to come.

DEC's staff is due to increase by four (including a head of the Biodiversity Unit) in 1994/95 but with limited office space and facilities and vehicles, and with the recent departure of the Principle Environmental Officer it may continue to be stretched in the short term before benefits of the additional staff arise.

It is recommended that there be a further depth of understanding in the DEC about the CAP, David Butler is the main player at present but Pati and Cedric need to more involved on a detailed planning and implementation basis for the whole project.

There is a need for a critical mass of activity to get going on a sustained basis in the field, this cant be done from the Apia office and there is a need to employ a CASO and set up his/her operating framework as soon as possible.

The CAP in WS, like in other countries, is essentially a community based rural development project and involves activities similar to what is being attempted in the DAFF

Farming Systems Project, the FAO funded Watershed project, work that the DOF are undertaking, the Fisheries Department are undertaking and the MWA are undertaking. In the long term it would seem to make sense that biodiversity conservation be pursued through the promotion of projects not with one lead agency but rather a multiagency implementation committee with spread responsibility (jointly and severally responsible) chaired by the Department of Finance or National Planning Office.

There is no visible field based NGO with the existing resources and experience at present but the OLSS in conjunction with the DEC should be given the opportunity to provide a meaningful role to be funded by SPBCP.

The DEC needs to resolve their office shortage problem as soon as possible especially in relation to having a decent large room for meetings and multi disciplinary agency planning purposes.

Whether DEC can contribute the required time as a lead agency (coordinator, manager and administrator) to effectively coordinate the inputs and support the CASO in the field is of some concern.

Other agencies have attended two village meetings, expressed their willingness to provide inputs to the CAP and participate as members of the CACC. It is not clear how DEC will be able to coordinate the inputs (in terms of timely action) of these agencies knowing the resource constraints of the agencies themselves.

The different agencies provide different technical disciplines, there is no one with a community development socio/economic background and SPBCP may need to advise in relation to this aspect.

That there is no project orientated person involved with the CAP at present.

It seems as if the drive for this project may come from the village, particularly from the women. This is a particularly healthy sign but DEC and other agencies need to be able to respond accordingly otherwise credibility will disappear quickly.

Some of the more immediate action required includes:

- .Prepare a quarterly estimate of expenditure for Q1 1994/95,
- .Work out how a CASO may be employed, advertise and recruit,
- Assess how DEC are going to effectively coordinate activities by others and support the CASO, in terms of transport, accomadation and office facilities
- .Complete the work plan and project costing for the PPD and submit the PPD
- .Prepare a more detailed operational plan showing inputs by DEC, CASO and other agencies, the village committee and relevant

agencies should be part of this exercise. SPBCP can provide advice particularly relating to community development aspects.

- .The village committee need to be activated very quickly first on the agenda being to work out a role and modus operandi for themselves.
- .The MWA need to be made more aware of the CAP and to work with DEC and the CACC to determine a role for them.
- .A clear understanding of the distribution of benefits from ecotourism is required, not as the basis for outside interference, but to assess the sustainability of the business enterprise.
- .A financial analysis of the ecotourism enterprise is required and explained to the villages so they have a clear understanding of revenues, costs and net revenue in relation to numbers of annual visitors. Contributors to the activity in terms of time involved in organisation, transport, guides/paddling etc should be identified and used to demonstrate a possible basis for distributing benefits, including the covering of costs of the WSVB.
- .Need to contact Francois Martel in relation to the resource information he has collected in relation in Lotoafega.
- .PRA
- .DEC need to plan their workload and show how they will be able to cope with the continuous needs of the CAP now that activity at the village has started. They should think laterally and consider the possibility of involving OLSS or others as being the main support point for the CASO.

4.2 Fiji

There is a need for some concern about the management of this project, the default agency is the NLTB for the time being, however it has no experience and dedicated resources to tackle the full gambit of the initial stages of project management and administration. Management can only be effectively carried out by coordinating activities of other agencies who are willing to help but in reality their ability to make timely inputs in turn are restricted by lack of local budget.

The NLTB Land Use Planning section is specialised in land use planning not project management. If there is any chance of accelerating a government decision to nominate an appropriate agency with the sufficient resource base for CAP management then this needs to be done, possibly following up through the Central Planning Office.

Some survey inputs to this project are being done on a goodwill basis, eg the biodiversity survey, this needs to be tightened. The CAP should be specific in what it wants and prepare a terms of reference in direct response to the needs of the project and ask for responses to such TOR and award the contract to the best bid. Only in this way can the provider of services be held accountable and obligated to supplying timely services. There has been progress on this issue with terms of reference for all inputs to the land use plan being prepared.

A key player in project development to date and the existing coordination of the land use plan is Stefan Cabaniuk, an Englishman married to a Fijian working as a regional planner in NLTB in a local position. His personal situation is somewhat tenuous and although dedicated to the cause he might see his priorities change before too long. A top up in salary may help in keeping him in the position longer but not indefinitely. If he leaves there would be a large gap in the technical knowledge and planning for the area which would take some time to fill. Efforts should be made to include other people at a more involved level, even from other agencies such as the DEC, short staffed as it is, and somewhat preempting the ultimate decision of the government in selecting a suitable agency responsible for national parks.

Even the secretarial resources at NLTB may not be sufficient to produce large scale timely reports etc.

Although there is a national steering committee involving a number of agencies these are mainly of a technical nature and development to date has taken place in isolation of the involvement of women development agencies and on the ground NGO's. There is a need to ensure that these be brought into the fold.

The major development from NLTB's point of view is the realisation by Tabua that he needs a dedicated person in the field as soon as possible however he thinks that this will be difficult to achieve in the short term (Jale Baba is expected to go back to work with Fiji Pine). Tabua's strategy is to second an existing NLTB employee to work from the NLTB Lautoka office for say 12 months, as from August. At the same time (now) he would apply to try and get a volunteer with some technical expertise in park management to be in place by early next year. He would also now start looking to recruit a full time dedicated CASO and hope to have him in place by about this time next year, when he came on board and after some overlap with the NLTB secondee the latter would pull out. Tabua thinks such the secondee could get access to a NLTB vehicle three days a week and spend the rest of the week in the office. He would be applying for funding of the secondee by SPBC.

There is an underlying concern about Abaca village, firstly a cooperative has been set up to manage the ecotourism activity, this will need great support to keep it going and the villagers need to be brought into the picture relating the the level of expectations that they should have from it, they shouldnt build their hopes too high. The whole concept of ecotourism success depends on this and if the coop fails then ecotourism may fail for the wrong reasons, this may set it back not just in the village but for the whole of the CAP and surrounding region.

If there is no improvement in the mangement resources of this CAP then it will take a very long time to implement and the funds drawdown will be too slow to make as much advanatage of

the programme as possible.

On returning to Fiji noone in NLTB had required the report in any depth despite having had it for two weeks. The first step was to read the report and then go through it page by page.

A major concern is that the MOU is still unsigned, Tabua maintains that this is more due to petty obstruction in the Ministry of Housing rather than any meaningful knockback of the project. Tabua was going to take it to a higher level in NLTB to try and resolve it at a higher level in MOH. Because NLTB is really only the lead agency by default it would seem that signing the MOU and thereby implying GOF's tacit approval of NLTB taking on this role for the time being.

Despite having asked for a second visit to NLTB they had not read the draft PDD (which they had had for about 10 days) when I arrived so we started from scratch again. On the whole they were fairly satisfied with the report and I don't think that they will change it very much although I expect that this will be more due to the fact that they won't have time to do it rather than they thinking it is as it should be. We mainly worked on the workplan and got some agreement from them. The costing needs to be undertaken and although they maintain they can do this they may need help to get it all completed before mid to late July. They are aware of the need to have it completed by this time.

A list of the risks and outstanding issues to this project are included in Sections 22 and 23.

4.3 Vanuatu

The project preparation document is nearly complete including a whole of project workplan and first phase costing and longer term cost estimates. It should arrive at SPBCP by early to mid July.

Funds have been requested from SPBCP for a number of items, however this was done without any reference to the overall workplan which was not completed at the time and consequently it was difficult for SPBCP to put the requests in their proper context. There is now an understanding of the required sequencing of events.

Institutionally, a national CAP committee has been established (for this CAP only) and have met once in Pt Vila with 12 to 14 medium to high level people attending. The object is keep them informed about progress and requirements from their own departments so they can approve of inputs when required. A similar, Santo based committee, is being established which will include landowner representatives. The project has been presented at a recent Local Government Council meeting.

The sociologist (Tom Ludowski) has completed his survey but still to present his report. Some major findings were that although there are no other landowners involved in the area,

there are other land users and additional CAP periphery meetings will be held with these people. The Matantas people say they do not want to share the CAP with the Sara people and would rather pay them a use lease for the disputed area and thereby have total property rights. I sense it is not as simple as this as paying a use lease would be tantamount to accepting the court decision that the land belongs to Sara and I understand that Matantas have implied that they would never accept this. The issue has not been discussed with Sara as yet.

A further finding of TL's visit is that the SDA component of Matantas said that they would like to run the Manhill people out of the village. This could have serious implications as it would isolate Chief Moses, the major decision maker relating to resource use in the village.

Russell has just started a one month visit to the area to try address the land and within village disputes and raise the general level of awareness of the CAP in the area.

The workplan is quite detailed and there is a concentration of activities prior to the present departure date of Sue Maturin (end of October), although many of the activities will be distributed to outside agencies (tourism, alley cropping, water supplies) it is hard to see the momentum being maintained after she leaves. Especially if the public sector strike continues. Overall I feel the workplan to be optimistic, but it is a good start.

The workplan places emphasis on the development of income generating projects (nut harvesting and ecotourism and alley cropping) in the early stages. The resource use plan is planned for year 2 onwards. The rationale for this is the strong desire for the Matantas people to earn some income from the forest having passed up the logging option. What is of apparent concern is the intention to proceed with the income generating projects, all of which physically use the disputed land area, before there is any indication as to how the disputed land area issue and the within Matantas village disputes may be resolved.

The GONZ has agreed to fund the introduction of alley cropping technology into Matantas by the Farm Support Association (NGO), with one of their staff living in the village. This relates to conservation through intensification of agricultural land use reducing the incursions into the forest area required by the long rotation shifting agriculture system that currently exists. It has been stressed that the introduction of the technology should include a good understanding of the present agricultural systems and how the technology would impact on them. The community must be able to see the financial benefits for itself and want to adopt the technology.

Project management is a key issue. Sue Maturin has been the key motivator up until now, she works closely with Russel who is appears to be quietly confident and competent and has good connections. Russell is only recently back from university and

lacks experience, he is also disenchanted with the public service as after six months they have not been able to formalise his position as Protected Areas Officer and his salary. If Sue Maturin pulls out as presently planned there may be a big lull in progress, which in fact although reflects the true availability of resources, is inconsistent with the desires of the community.

Sue Maturin has done a lot to establish a technical support network for the CAP and slotted this into the framework of the committees.

Feasibility studies for the income generating projects are planned to be done using local consultants. It was emphasised that the financial aspects of the operations needed to be covered comprehensively and conservatively

There is a clear need for good communications between the CAP and SPBCP to be maintained. Misunderstandings have led to some upset relating to the production of a video and the wrong impression as to the date of the TMAG meeting caused the production of the PPD to receive lower priority than necessary.

Advertising for the CASO is going to take place shortly. Sue Maturin feels that they will be able to get a suitable person as a number of people previously with the forestry department are now looking for jobs.