

## **CEPF Final Completion and Impact Report**

<b>Organization's Legal Name:</b>	The Vanuatu Environmental Law Association Committee (INC.)
<b>Project Title:</b>	Strengthening Environmental Legal Education and Capacity in Vanuatu
<b>Grant Number:</b>	CEPF-109335
<b>Hotspot:</b>	East Melanesian Islands
<b>Strategic Direction:</b>	2 Integrate biodiversity conservation into local land-use and development planning
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$108,482.00
<b>Project Dates:</b>	August 01, 2019 - April 30, 2021
<b>Date of Report:</b>	October 11, 2021

### **IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS**

1. Nusumetu CCA Tanna Island - The participants of our legal awareness in this CCA was the largest and VELA was highly received and welcomed by our Community.
2. Loru CCA, Santo Island - The participants of this CCA also welcomed VELA but it seemed participants were limited to the actual natural resource owners and not the wider community members.
3. Vatthe CCA Santo Island - Our visit to Vanuatu's first ever registered CCA was unexpected by the Vice-Chairman of its Land Management Committee who came straight out of a hot air coconut dryer to greet us happily.
4. Guidebook Steering Committee - The Steering Committee engaged with the Consultant to discuss the environmental topics that would make up the environmental guidebook.
5. Live & Learn Vanuatu - This Organization provided CCA focal contacts for VELA to arrange its logistical and travel arrangements.
6. CEPF Team - supported VELA throughout the project with technical assistance.
7. IUCN Oceania Regional Office - Gave VELA the opportunity to undertake its ELA exchange activity under its IUCN Oceania Environmental Law Conference program from the 14th - 16th of July 2021.

### **CONSERVATION IMPACTS**

Planned Long-Term Impacts: 3+ years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
The Ni-Vanuatu environmental community is aware of, and has the ability to utilize the country's environmental laws to promote the country's sustainable development and biodiversity conservation. At least 2 public interest environmental law cases brought within 3 years of the end of the project	VELA actually has a public interest environmental law case from logging in Santo with it now but we are not operational due to lack of funds and so until VELAs work will cease until we have funds from any other projects.

Planned Short-Term Impacts: 1 to 3 years (as stated in the approved proposal)

Impact Description	Impact Summary
VELA outreach on environmental law through radio, news media, and Facebook reaches an estimated 40,000 people to raise awareness on environmental law	VELA has now 2024, followers on its Facebook page and growing and we had been on the national radio 3 times during this project. Now that our guidebook is nearly completed we can go back to the national radio broadcast to talk about the topics in our guidebook. VELA has just recently developed its new website - <a href="http://www.vela.org.vu">www.vela.org.vu</a>
By the end of the project, the Vanuatu Environmental Law Guidebook is adopted for use as a training and information resource by at least 40 Rangers in Vanuatu (70% male and 30% female) 10 staff of DEPC, 10 CCA committees, 30 Environmental Law Students from the University of the South Pacific every year, including VELA	A big disappointment to VELA was the work of our Professional Consultant whom just handed in the soft copy guidebook today after many promises. The guidebook is in its last draft before finalization which is a shame but at least we have the guidebook with us and VELA will continue to finalize its form. The Vanuatu Department of Environment, SPREP have all requested a copy of the guidebook. Moving forward the VELA project Coordinator will finalize the guidebook. The Vanuatu Climate Change Network have also requested a copy of the guidebook. A brief presentation of the guidebook was held during the VELA symposium event and its article came out in the local newspaper which can be accessed on this link - <a href="https://www.dailypost.vu/news/vela-launches-first-ever-booklet-on-biodiversity/article_7344e2ea-dd19-11eb-ae03-a7208dbf5de3.html">https://www.dailypost.vu/news/vela-launches-first-ever-booklet-on-biodiversity/article_7344e2ea-dd19-11eb-ae03-a7208dbf5de3.html</a>
Due to VELA training, 40 park rangers have incorporated their knowledge of environmental laws and use of legal tools to improve management of four CCAs of Green Hill on Tanna, Tabuemasana, Vatthe and Loru of Santo	It was a surprise to VELA to learn that there are not that much Conservation rangers in Vanuatu. All in all there was only 6 rangers that attended our legal awareness outreach. Conservation Rangers in Vanuatu need incentives in the form of cash allowances so they can maintain the protection of their CCAs as they also have families to support. VELA will start doing legal awareness using our guidebook throughout Vanuatu. We will secure funding to print hard copies from SPREP and the Vanuatu Department of Environment.
By the end of the project, VELA has secured funding of between US\$30,000 to US\$50,000	VELA as a co-applicant has secured a US\$13,500 from the IUCN Regional Office to undertake legal awareness on the ELA workshop and its outcomes

Impact Description	Impact Summary
from at least 1 other donor to fund VELA’s environmental work in Vanuatu	with regard to environmental law in Vanuatu. VELA is now at the contracting stage. VELA has also send a Concept Note to UNDP/SGP and Kiwa Initiative Local Projects Component 2021.

**Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?**

The most obvious negative impact of the project was the COVID19 global pandemic which resulted in State of Emergency lockdowns and new measures for undertaking community outreach in Vanuatu.

The second negative impact was the slow payment of funds by CEPF to VELA. VELA received its first payment under this project on August 2019 and then we had to wait until July 2020 for the second payment. This delay disrupted our operational and activity costs. Although VELA had submitted reporting late, the delay in the review of these reports just exacerbated the situation. The No-Costs Extension of the Grant Agreement was not favorable to VELA as CEPF was the only sole funder to VELA. The VELA project Coordinator did not receive any salary since January 2021 till the end of the project in April 2021 and the Finance officer in March & April 2021 did not receive her salary. Funders would expect grantees to be responsible to source financial sustainability but it does not turn out the way we want all the time. Paramount importance of any project is the welfare of the project staff or implementers before activities and this had been documented in our Large LoI.

On a positive side, VELA is grateful to CEPF to have granted such a Large Grant to a new Organization like VELA. VELA will not be where it is now without the funding from CEPF. Although VELA did not succeed to secure more funding from CEPF, VELAs base has now been established and we will continue to strive forward with our mandate as an ELA in the EMC. VELA was also grateful to the IUNC regional Office for allowing VELA to host the ELA conference in Vanuatu and at the same time making use of their program for VELAs Exchange Program.

**PROJECT RESULTS/DELIVERABLES**

**Overall results of the project:**

I believe VELA has completed to some extent all its activities under this project. Although, not in the way it initially anticipated but given that the Organization is new, the activities undertaken was its first activities and credit must be rendered to all those involved in one way or another.

**Results for each deliverable:**

<b>Component</b>		<b>Deliverable</b>		
<b>#</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>#</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Results for Deliverable</b>
1.0	Strengthening of Financial & Management Structures	1.1	VELA financial procedures and policy manual	VELA has already completed these 2 documents and they are currently in use.
1.0	Strengthening of Financial & Management Structures	1.2	Create a functional MYOB accounting system for VELA (means of verification: quarterly budget reports) Aug 2019	VELA now has a working MYOB accounting system in place which was used throughout the project for reporting.
1.0	Strengthening of Financial & Management Structures	1.3	Organize and carry out VELA Annual General Meeting for members, (means of verification: Meeting minutes), Sept 2019	An AGM event was held on the November 27, 2019. Refer to our facebook page - <a href="https://www.facebook.com/vanuatuenvironmentallawassociation/">https://www.facebook.com/vanuatuenvironmentallawassociation/</a> to see photos of the event. It was during this AGM that VELA signed a MOU with Live & Learn Vanuatu.
1.0	Strengthening of Financial & Management Structures	1.4	VELA Financial Sustainability (means of verification: 2 Project Proposal and 2 Grant Agreements (July 2020)	This was one of the hardest part of the project. VELA sent out 6 project proposals. 2 small project proposal got accepted (IRI USAid Womens Training & JICA DRR Online Training) and the other 4 declined due to not meeting criteria of funding requirement. VELA needs training on project proposal drafting. Currently, VELA is awaiting the response of 3 project proposals it had submitted.
2.0	CEPF project management and monitoring	2.1	CEPF financial and programmatic reports and audits submitted on time and accurately (Sept 2020)	VELA submitted all its financial reports on time. Although VELA submitted its programmatic reports late we have tried our best to report accurately and will respond to queries on our reporting to CEPF.

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
2.0	CEPF project management and monitoring	2.2	Final impact monitoring report completed at project close (July 2020)	VELA has now completed this report. The delay of this report is due to the fact that VELA was all this time waiting to receive its legal environmental law guidebook.
2.0	CEPF project management and monitoring	2.3	Safeguard policies for Indigenous Peoples implemented, monitored, and reported every six months to CEPF to ensure full compliance (July 2020)	VELA submitted 2 safeguard policies to CEPF under this project.
3.0	Environmental Law Associations (ELA) Exchange Workshop	3.1	Hold exchange workshop for 12 reps of the four ELAs, EDO and IUCN to share lessons learned and to identify opportunities for future collaboration to strengthen environmental law in the East Melanesian Island (means of verification:workshop report) Dec 2019	VELA held the exchange workshop alongside the IUCN Regional Office Environmental Law Conference. It was interesting for VELA to hear the challenges and lessons from ELAs and legal institutions in the region. The 2 key challenges were resources and enforcement of environmental law in the region.
4.0	Community Conservation Areas/Rangers Legal Training	4.1	Conduct four training sessions on environmental law as it relates to CCA management in villages of Green Hill, Tabuemasana, Vatthe and Loru, for 50 rangers and community members (60% men and 40% women). Means of	This outreach program was a real success for VELA which conducted its legal awareness in 3 CCAs and 2 High Schools. We have now signed an MOU with Nusumetu CCA on Tanna Island VELA will sign another 2 CCAs with Loru & Vatthe CCA. VELA was requested by all 3 communities to re-visit them with our legal awareness in the nearby future depending on projects secured.

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
			verification: Training report. June 2020	
5.0	Environmental law information/networking and profile building	5.1	Guidebook to Vanuatu Environmental Law published online and in hard-copy	VELA had the final draft soft copy with it now. VELA will now finalize it and source funding for it to be printed in hard copy. The final soft copy will be uploaded onto the new VELA website.
5.0	Environmental law information/networking and profile building	5.2	Technical support networks strengthened by 6/30/2020 (verified by list of members of technical experts panel and advisory group and report on activities of both panel and advisory group)	Unfortunately, our Professional Consultant did not provide VELA with experts panel review. VELA will now have to do this as it finalizes the guidebook. There was a advisory group meeting which spearheaded the topics contained in the guidebook.
5.0	Environmental law information/networking and profile building	5.3	Website attracting 100 visits per month and online publication of - Guidebook & other training material,contacts and information (Verification through report on website content and number of visitors – report on achievements to be provided by 6/30/2020)	The VELA Website link is - <a href="http://www.vela.org.vu">www.vela.org.vu</a> VELA is very happy that it now has a website and we thank CEPF for making this happen. We will continue to upload it with useful material for the public.
5.0	Environmental law information/networking and profile building	5.4	VELA Facebook page or group that releases at least 1 post per month and that has at least 500 followers or members established	The VELA Facebook page now has 2,024 followers

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
5.0	Environmental law information/networking and profile building	5.5	Outreach on environmental law results in 4 radio segments and four newspaper articles in Vanuatu's leading newspaper and radio station, to raising awareness on the importance of environmental law	<p>VELA did 3 radio segments. The first one was the introduction/publicity of VELA as an Organization and its work and the next was about an introduction to environmental law in Vanuatu. The 3rd radio segment was about women's leadership/financial management. 4 newspaper articles were published about VELA.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <a href="https://www.dailypost.vu/news/vela-chairman-suggests-separate-environmental-court/article_c024bb28-ed8e-11eb-ae74-abd420025b81.html">https://www.dailypost.vu/news/vela-chairman-suggests-separate-environmental-court/article_c024bb28-ed8e-11eb-ae74-abd420025b81.html</a></li> <li>2. <a href="https://www.dailypost.vu/news/chairman-confident-vanuatu-will-benefit-from-conference/article_f6730008-e4f2-11eb-ab90-f7369487ad5c.html">https://www.dailypost.vu/news/chairman-confident-vanuatu-will-benefit-from-conference/article_f6730008-e4f2-11eb-ab90-f7369487ad5c.html</a></li> <li>3. <a href="https://www.dailypost.vu/news/vela-launches-first-ever-booklet-on-biodiversity/article_7344e2ea-dd19-11eb-ae03-a7208dbf5de3.html">https://www.dailypost.vu/news/vela-launches-first-ever-booklet-on-biodiversity/article_7344e2ea-dd19-11eb-ae03-a7208dbf5de3.html</a></li> <li>4. <a href="https://www.dailypost.vu/news/jica-vanuatu-trainee-receives-certificate-after-completing-online-training/article_8ae6080a-723b-11eb-9652-2b68d83ca6cc.html">https://www.dailypost.vu/news/jica-vanuatu-trainee-receives-certificate-after-completing-online-training/article_8ae6080a-723b-11eb-9652-2b68d83ca6cc.html</a></li> </ol>
5.0	Environmental law information/networking and profile building	5.6	Conduct symposium and launching of the Vanuatu Environmental Guidebook for 30 participants, 60% women and 40% men (June 2020) Means of verification:	A symposium for the launching of the Vanuatu Environmental Guidebook was held in June 29, 2021 at the SHEFA Provincial Conference room in Port Vila.

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
			Symposium report. June 2020	

### Tools, products or methodologies that resulted from the project or contributed to the results:

The best methodology used in this project was a simple face to face discussion with the CCA participants which is the main form of informal education in the customary setting. Although, we used charts and printed materials the simple conversation and discussion was much more lively and fun.

## PORTFOLIO INDICATORS

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
2.2	Number of communities affected by incompatible development projects provided with legal training and support.			1	VELA had made outreach to 3 communities although it should have been 4. The 4th CCA VELA should have visited was Mt Tabuemasana CCA but due to logistical hardship we could not reach them. This CCA is currently threatened by logging activities allegedly happening right now. VELA hope to reach this CCA under its up and coming small project with the IUCN Regional Office.
5.3	Number of civil society organizations supported by CEPF that secure follow-up funding from conservation trust			0	

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
	funds and/or the GEF Small Grants Programme.				

## GLOBAL INDICATORS

### Protected Areas

Protected areas that have been created and/or expanded as a result of the project. Protected areas may include private or community reserves, municipal or provincial parks, or other designations where biodiversity conservation is an official management goal.

Name of Protected Area	WDPA ID*	Latitude	Longitude	Country	Original Total Size (Hectares) **	New Protected Hectares ***	Year of Legal Declaration or Expansion
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\*World Database of Protected Areas

\*\*If this is a new protected area, 0 should appear in this column

\*\*\* This column excludes the original total size of the protected area.

## Key Biodiversity Area Management

Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) under improved management—where tangible results have been achieved to support conservation—as a result of the project.

KBA Name	KBA Code	Size of KBA	Number of Hectares with Improved Management

## Production Landscapes

Production landscapes with strengthened management of biodiversity as a result of the project.

A production landscape is defined as a site outside a protected area where commercial agriculture, forestry or natural product exploitation occurs.

Name of Production Landscape	Latitude	Longitude	Hectares Strengthened	Intervention

## Benefits to Individuals

- **Structured Training:**

Number of Men Trained	Number of Women Trained	Topics of Training

- **Cash Benefits:**

Number of Men – Cash Benefits	Number of Women – Cash Benefits	Description of Benefits

## Benefits to Communities

View the <b>characteristics</b> column below with the following corresponding codes:	View the <b>benefits</b> column below with the following corresponding codes:
1- Small Landowners	a. Increased Access to Clean Water
2- Subsistence Economy	b. Increased Food Security
3- Indigenous/ Ethnic Peoples	c. Increased Access to Energy
4- Pastoralists / Nomadic Peoples	d. Increased Access to Public Services
5- Recent Migrants	e. Increased Resilience to Climate Change
6- Urban Communities	f. Improved Land Tenure
7- Other	g. Improved Use of Traditional Knowledge
	h. Improved Decision-Making
	i. Improved Access to Ecosystem Services

Community Name	Community Characteristics							Type of Benefit									Country	Number of Males Benefitting	Number of Females Benefitting
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	a	b	c	d	e	f	g	h	i			

### Characteristics of "Other" Communities:

## Policies, Laws and Regulations

View the <b>topics</b> column below with the following corresponding codes:			
A- Agriculture	E- Energy	I- Planning/Zoning	M- Tourism
B- Climate	F- Fisheries	J- Pollution	N- Transportation
C- Ecosystem Management	G- Forestry	K- Protected Areas	O- Wildlife Trade
D- Education	H- Mining and Quarrying	L- Species Protection	P- Other

No.	Name of Law	Scope	Topics															
			A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P

**“Other” Topics Addressed by the Policy, Law or Regulation:**

No.	Country/ Countries	Date Enacted/ Amended	Expected impact	Action Performed to Achieve the Enactment/ Amendment
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**Companies Adopting Biodiversity-friendly Practices**

A company is defined as a for-profit business entity. A biodiversity-friendly practice is one that conserves or uses natural resources in a sustainable manner.

Name of Company	Description of Biodiversity-Friendly Practice	Country/Countries where Practice was Adopted
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**Networks and Partnerships**

Networks/partnerships should have some lasting benefit beyond immediate project implementation. Informal networks/partnerships are acceptable.

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/ Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
Memorandum of Understanding between VELA and Live & Learn Vanuatu	2019	Vanuatu	Yes	Formalize working relationship to share information and resources with regard to the protection and sustainability of Vanuatu's environment

Name of Network/Partnership	Year Established	Country/Countries	Established by Project?	Purpose
Memorandum of Understanding between VELA and Nusumetu CCA	2020	Vanuatu	Yes	Formalize working relationship to assist the CCA in any area of interest to both parties that will enhance the protection of the environment. VELA is now waiting for a response to a concept note we had submitted to undertake a solar pump water project in Nusumetu so that people do not go into the conservation area and disturb the water resources inside.

## Sustainable Financing

Sustainable financing mechanisms generate funding for the long-term (generally five or more years). These include, but are not limited to, conservation trust funds, debt-for-nature swaps, payment for ecosystem services (PES) schemes, and other revenue, fee or tax schemes that generate long-term funding for conservation.

Name of Mechanism	Purpose	Date Established	Description	Country/Countries	Project Intervention	Delivery of Funds?
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## Globally Threatened Species

Globally threatened species (CR, EN, VU) on the IUCN Red List of Threatened Species, benefitting from the project.

Genus	Species	Common Name (English)	Status	Intervention	Population Trend at Site
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## LESSONS LEARNED

1. CEPF should have been able to allow VELA to rent an Office of its own. The arrangement to share Office space is very difficult in Port Vila and the issue itself was such a hassle for us.
2. There must be a specific funding from CEPF for only the ELAs in the region to engage in policy and law reform initiatives. We cannot depend on the Government to take the lead but we can broaden our network, partner with them and collaborate in our work aligning with national subsistence development goals (SDGs). CEPF could use the IUCN ELA Conference Outcome Report as a baseline for the work ELAs in the region, especially environmental law in the region.
3. CEPF or donors for that matter to CSO/NGOs in Vanuatu need to understand that we can only cause impact when we address the raw needs from CCAs. CEPF needs to be flexible with its funding categories and realize that we cannot push aside the needs of natural resource owners when it comes to biodiversity conservation.
4. Last year in 2020, CEPF just received its second payment to VELA in July 2020. Such delay in payment interrupted VELAs activities and operational costs. The financial report was sent on time but the programmatic report was sent late. On top of this, the review of the reports (especially financial report) just exacerbated the delay even more.
5. VELA needs to submit its programmatic reports on time for CEPF to review.
6. VELAs Executive Committee need to have a governance/financial induction on their roles as Board Members. They need to be robust and support VELA management fully.
7. VELA needs training in project proposal / concept note drafting.

## SUSTAINABILITY/REPLICATION

The CEPF 'No Cost Grants Extension' for VELA really hit VELA very hard as a challenge considering CEPF was our only sole funder. For this year 2021, the Project Coordinator went without salary from January 2021 to April 2021. The Finance Officer March and April 2021 without salary. Funders need to realize that NGO staff welfare in Vanuatu must be paramount as implementers of the activities. This was well documented in the VELA Large Grants LoI.

The COVID19 pandemic I believe affected everyone both CEPF and VELA.

A huge success for VELA is that the 3 CCAs we visited in our outreach welcomed VELA with open hands and are requesting VELA to continue with our legal outreach to their communities.

VELA will continue with its legal outreach to other CCAs using its guidebook in Vanuatu pursuant to new projects and funding.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS/STANDARDS

## **ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS**

CEPF now needs to fully utilize the ELAs it has established in the region for environmental law purposes.

This final completion report should have been sent much earlier but we had to wait for the guidebook to be submitted to us. VELA really appreciates CEPF for bearing with us.

The ride during this project has not been easy but one thing I am proud of is that the people of Vanuatu appreciate the work of VELA and its mandate and they look forward to more work from VELA reaching their communities.

## **ADDITIONAL FUNDING**

<b>Total Amount of Additional Funding Actually Secured (USD)</b>	
<b>Breakdown of Additional Funding</b>	

## **INFORMATION SHARING AND CEPF POLICY**

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned and results. For more information about this project, you may contact the organization and/or individual listed below.

Vanuatu Environmental Law Association (VELA) [vela.vanuatu@gmail.com](mailto:vela.vanuatu@gmail.com)