

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

<b>Organization's Legal Name:</b>	BirdLife International - HQ
<b>Project Title:</b>	Management Planning and Assessment for Three Key Biodiversity Areas in Vanuatu
<b>Grant Number:</b>	CEPF-104007
<b>Hotspot:</b>	East Melanesian Islands
<b>Strategic Direction:</b>	1 Empower local communities to protect and manage globally significant biodiversity at priority Key Biodiversity Areas under-served by current conservation efforts
<b>Grant Amount:</b>	\$171,196.90
<b>Project Dates:</b>	July 01, 2018 - December 31, 2021
<b>Date of Report:</b>	March 01, 2022

### **IMPLEMENTATION PARTNERS**

Vanuatu Environment Advocacy Network - VEAN. Main in-country partner for BirdLife. Maintained connection with communities at a) Kurumambe, Tongoa, b) West Ambrym and c) Mt Tukumera Tanna until Sept 2020 when partnership was curtailed. VEAN continued working on Tanna (under a separate grant) - and subsequently kept in touch with community at West Ambrym.

Eco-Livelihood Development Agency - EDA. Provided support for enthusiastic in-country bird surveyor, Toara Andrew Morris, from Jan 2019 and filled project coordinator role in Kurumambe Tongoa, when VEAN stepped back and country borders closed due to Covid. Live&Learn, Vanuatu. Provided contacts and plan for ornithological survey of Mt Tabwemasana in August 2021.

Santo Sunset Environment Network - provided porters and guides to Mt Tabwemasana survey.

Kurumambe Community Conservation - maintained tabu over Vanuatu SCrubfowl colony at Kurumambe, monitored egg harvesting and worked closely with EDA over monitoring number and harvesting rates of Koroliko on Laika.

Tekarkak Team, TEAN - monitored harvesting rates of Collared Petrel chicks on Mt Tukumera and developed alternative livestock project with VEAN.

West Ambrym Mehle Conservation Group - maintained tabu and monitored egg harvesting of Vanuatu Scrubfowl colony at Faliwa, Sawo and Polimapoplo, West Ambrym.

Dominik Ramik - locally-based birdwatcher who led survey on Mt Tabwemasana.

### **CONSERVATION IMPACTS**

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

<b>Impact Description</b>	<b>Impact Summary</b>
Vanuatu Megapode populations will increase between now and 2030 at the priority KBAs for the species at West Ambrym and Kurumambe, Tongoa, and for Vanuatu as a whole.	Communities at West Ambrym and Kurumambe understand and have practiced methods for improving Scrubfowl (Megapode) numbers using a partial tabu system. Concept introduced to other communities - although full 10 year no-harvest tabu has been initiated in West Santo. Scrubfowl numbers have increased on Efate - with birds reported from at least 4 locations - 3 of which are new since the start of this project, one of which is within the Port Vila boundary.
Vanuatu Environment Advocacy Network position as a national conservation leader in Vanuatu will be enhanced.	Partnership with VEAN was discontinued in September 2020. The chairman, who was also chairman of the Vanuatu Association of NGOs for a few years, continues to promote conservation projects in Tanna, Santo and elsewhere.

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

<b>Impact Description</b>	<b>Impact Summary</b>
3 communities, associated with KBAs at West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukasmera directly benefiting from measures identified to deliver sustainable harvesting methods for target species	West Ambrym and Kurumambe communities considered how best to benefit from 'pulsed' harvesting regime of scrubfowl eggs. The former sell eggs in the commercial centre on Ambrym while the latter trialled selling of eggs in the local markets. Kurumambe community established a 5,000 harvest limit for Wedge-tailed Shearwater, and distributed birds within the community, sold some to other villages on Tongoa and exported numbers to the market in Port Vila. The Tanna community invested in poultry farming as a disincentive to harvesting Collared Petrel chicks - and established a short-term tabu area within the Mt Tukasmera breeding colony.
The immediate impact of ecotourism, as a form of payment for conservation actions, will be evaluated, and recommendations proposed, at the Tongoa/Laika KBA.	Community at Tongoa decided not to pursue this approach. West Ambrym community established an ecotourism 'event' for people visiting the island to trek to the volcano. The event combined a number of local practices with the sustainable harvesting of scrubfowl and used images from the trail camera etc to illustrate the discussion. Unfortunately the Covid lockdown has curtailed any tourism over the last couple of years. However, there is a 'homestay' established close to the main Scrubfowl nesting colony in West Ambrym. The owners are keen to incorporate activities that support the continued conservation of the scrubfowl and other species.
Baseline data on the the status, distribution and level of harvesting of the Globally threatened Collared Petrel at Mt Tukasmera KBA will be collected, analysed and used to	Over 200 Collared Petrel chicks were harvested in the 2019 breeding season. The approximate location of the nesting colony 'owned' by two of the communities was mapped.. VEAN took the lead on developing a conservation plan, and established an

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inform the development of a conservation management plan for the site.	alternative livelihood project to reduce the dependency on Petrel Chicks - a programme that benefitted 3 of the 12 communities who harvest Petrel chicks on Mt Tukusmera. Chick harvesting was low in 2020 - the community considered that this was because there were many festivals in 2020 and little time to search for chicks in the surrounding hill areas. No data was collected in 2021.
Strengthening protection and management for 10 hectares of Tongoa/Laika KBA and 20 hectares of West Ambrym KBA, will be achieved by identifying and promoting community conservation status of sites.	Both communities are suspicious of, and wary of, government involvement in their projects. We discussed the issues with a local legal expert - who was surprised at their lack of enthusiasm. VEAN promoted some of the literature from the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, which also raised concerns about governments taking control of areas for little return. Significant areas of tabu were established in both areas - the tabus were community led, community driven and not part of the governments community conservation legislation. EDA are much more positive about the Government Community Conservation Areas but also noticed the suspicion directed toward government employees. There is a need to showcase the benefits of CCAs to the communities in order to encourage greater uptake across the country in general - and in particular within the current sites.
Conservation action plans will be prepared and agreed for each of the three sites in order to provide the basis for future actions, including funding opportunities, for conservation projects at each of the sites.	We have edited an action plan for Scrubfowl harvesting for the Kurumambe site to capture modifications to the process since the original plan was reported in 2017. Community decisions are oral and undertaken and agreed in a Nakamal, or in community meetings. There is no tradition of capturing this on paper. The plans provide a review of actions to date - and are for future conservationists to understand what has been achieved. They do not influence, rather capture, the community decisions.
Baseline data on the status and distribution of the 5 globally threatened and site endemic bird species that occur in the Mt Tabwemasana CCA will be collected, analysed and use to inform an updated conservation plan for the site, and to update the IUCN Red List on current conservation status of the species concerned..	Sightings of Mountain Starling, Santa Cruz Ground-dove, Palm Lorikeet, Santo Thicketbird and Vanuatu Imperial Pigeon were made, both during the Mt Tabwemasana survey and the locally-led survey of Pic Santo. This data can be incorporated into the community conservation plan along with information on the presence of cats at this high altitude site. The extent to which this information can be incorporated into an updated conservation plan for the site was impacted by the covid lockdown. However the SSEN team are very aware of the records and keen to ensure that the species do not disappear from the Mountain Range, or the Community Conservation Area in particular. There

Impact Description	Impact Summary
	<p>is more interest in visiting other peaks within the Santo Upland Range to determine whether these species are there also. The IUCN Red List will be updated with information from this project - already one species, Vanuatu Imperial Pigeon, has been downgraded from Vulnerable to Least Concern based, partly, on the density that birds can achieve, as derived from this survey.</p>
<p>Implement key actions from the conservation plans at each site, to ensure that they are feasible, realistic and delivering conservation goals.</p>	<p>Partial tabus have been established at Kurumambe and West Ambrym, to control the harvesting of Scrubfowl eggs. Communities have been trained in how to collect the information, and staff at EDA have been shown the means by which this data can be interpreted.</p> <p>A 'bag limit' has been established on the number of Wedge-tailed Shearwater harvested on Laika Island, and the community has been trained in how to collect the information.</p> <p>A tabu area has been established on Mt Tukumera in order to control/cease the harvesting of Collared Petrel chicks within the site.</p> <p>Discussions with communities around the Mt Tabwemasana CCA are ongoing between SSEN and LLV. The CCA is protected primarily by remoteness - few people penetrate the mountain range this far and spend much time in the area. However discussions to establish a trekking route to enable 'tourists' to visit the peak need to be continued to minimise the chance of introduced species, in particular invasive vines, becoming established.</p>
<p>Improve the in-country capacity of project staff to deliver effective conservation actions and investigate opportunities to sustain conservation actions beyond the current project.</p>	<p>VEAN continue to operate within the conservation world, which is encouraging. EDA have become more experienced at co-ordinating projects, organising field visits and meeting with and facilitating community discussions regarding conservation actions. Toara Morris has established himself as the main bird survey within the niVanuatu community and is comfortable using a range of technical equipment to collect data. Much of this capacity development with EDA has been undertaken remotely - due to the covid lockdown. This has proved challenging - but has also been encouraging in the way that the team have 'stepped up to the plate' to deliver. Within the communities there have been a number of enthusiastic supporters who we have been keen to develop. Chief Louis in West Ambrym has been a fantastic contact, as have the team in SSEN and Chris Bartlett. We have liaised with Mayumi Green of 'Wrecks to Rainforest' who has provided considerable support for the Tabwemasana survey. Mayumi is very keen to develop further</p>

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	environmental associations and is very supportive of the concept of conservation areas.
Management actions to benefit the 5 globally threatened species will be proposed to the DEPC and communities for incorporation into a revised conservation plan.	Delayed due to the covid lockdown. BUT, DEPC are upto speed on the findings and aware of the implications, while the communities were very interested in the results at the end of the survey - and keen to talk through the next steps, both themselves and also with LLV and Edenhope Foundation/Pacific Island Climate Change (Chris Bartlett). WE are working with the latter to establish further work, both surveys and conservation actions, within the Santo Mountain Chain KBA.

### Unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

The use of technology (in the form of trail cameras to monitor nests) significantly improved the policing impact. Communities were very keen to make sure the cameras were not stolen when set - and so were keen to monitor. When the cameras were moved on the policing interest declined substantially - even though the policing was to monitor the scrubfowl burrows.

Assisting Dominik and Toara on the Mt Tabwemasana survey enthused the SSEN guides so much they visited Pic Santo and recorded similar range of species including the Mountain Starling and Ground-dove. It would be good to ground-truth/validate this if at all possible. The Covid lockdown meant access to the country from outside became impossible. This increased dependency on locally-based staff who embraced the addition of technology, in the form of recorders to capture bird song and cameras to capture images, to confirm their sightings was heartening. Inevitably, however, liaison with the remote communities in West Ambrym and Tanna became less frequent and trailed away in the latter 18 months of the contract. The lockdown, combined with the cessation of partnership with VEAN, combined to make this too difficult to circumvent.

## PROJECT RESULTS/DELIVERABLES

### Overall results of the project:

Successfully developed tabu protocol for Scrubfowl (VU) colonies, and also trialled a method to monitor activity levels. Methods to be incorporated into Rangers Manual.

Highlighted the importance of the colonies in both West Ambrym and Tongoa for the Scrubfowl.

Established minimum levels of Collared Petrel (VU) numbers on Mt Tukumera, identifying the site as the most important globally for the species.

Established the importance of the Wedge-tailed Shearwater (LC) colony on Laika, methods to be incorporated into Rangers Manual. Evidence of a globally significant population nesting on the island (>1% of global population). Established a baseline for measuring chick harvesting levels.

Undertook a survey of Mt Tabwemasana on Espiritu Santo. Located Mountain Starling (EN) - first official sighting for over 10 years. Also confirmed the presence of a significant population of Santa Cruz Ground-dove on the mid/upper slopes of the mountain.

Investigated the opportunities, and risks, of establishing a government-registered community conservation area in Ambrym, Tongoa and Tanna. Clearly some suspicion. There needs to be a justification for involving outside bodies - which may become realistic with the next phase of the programme in each of these sites.



**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	To increase the capacity of communities at West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukasmera to undertake conservation actions	1.1	Creation of, names and titles of participants in, a West Ambrym Conservation Organisation by the end of December 2018.	West Ambrym Mehle Conservation Committee established. Chairperson: Chief Melip Lows Mera, Treasurer Johnny Bong. Other positions varied. Committee maintained regular meetings to ensure continued operation of project until June 2021. It is unclear whether the committee remains active - we have managed to obtain no feedback from West Ambrym since July 2021.
1.0	To increase the capacity of communities at West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukasmera to undertake conservation actions	1.2	Creation of, names and titles of participants in, a Mt Tukasmera/Mt Melon Conservation Committee by June 2019.	Tekarkak Team, TEAN, group established. Chairperson Johnson Nukaulmen (2018-2019), Reuben Iacho (2020-), Treasurer Kuaniamek Kahu (2018-). Six villages contributed to the monitoring of harvested chicks in 2019. Three of those villages are currently involved in livestock farming. Tekarkak team continue to work with VEAN on local projects aimed at reducing the pressures on the Collared Petrel.
1.0	To increase the capacity of communities at West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukasmera to undertake conservation actions	1.3	Identify key areas of capacity weakness for conservation committees established in West Ambrym, Tongoa and Mt Tukasmera by March 2019, prepare a short report with recommendations on training programmes to resolve the weaknesses	All CSOs had issues with receiving funds. We worked with each of them to find the most effective way to resolve this. This raised issues with banks with-holding payments on suspicion of illegal activities. We were advised to establish personal accounts rather than group accounts - as the former incurred less red tape. Basic governance within committees was well-understood by all communities - who are used to consensual decision-making in an

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				oral context. Considerable change within Kurumambe and also Tukumera groups as leaders moved away from area or became more involved in other work areas. These evolutions often required a visit from the project team to ensure continuity - something that became more challenging with the Covid lockdown. There was little/no attempt to record meeting outcomes on paper - something that the project team attempted to capture as a record whenever we visited.
2.0	To raise community awareness of the unique biodiversity of the West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukumera KBAs, to identify the main pressures on the biodiversity at the sites and to recommend responses to those pressures.	2.1	Prepare a report on the State of birds and, if appropriate, Vanuatu Flying Foxes at each of the sites by the end of December 2019.	Information pertaining to trigger species for the relevant KBAs has been input to the WDKBA forms. Raw data information has been made available through Citizen science networks (eBird) and thus into Scientific Literature (via GBIF). WE obtained no data on Vanuatu Flying Fox - we failed to find the species on Tongoa after Cyclone Harold in 2015. Ambrym communities ensure that flying foxes do not persist close to habitation to protect the local fruiting crops. Tukumera site was challenging, community were not keen on me entering the breeding area. Collected information around the villages - and established some trail cameras en route to the breeding areas.
2.0	To raise community awareness of the unique biodiversity of the West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika	2.2	Provide report on the extent of harvesting, and opportunities to control the harvesting, of Megapodes at	Report back to community, via a Powerpoint presentation, was very successful and indicated to the community both that the birds were fairly common, that there were high

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	and Mt Tukumera KBAs, to identify the main pressures on the biodiversity at the sites and to recommend responses to those pressures.		Ambrym by the end of August 2019.	numbers of cats in the hill land, and cats and pigs around the agricultural land. Communities had agreed to establish temporary tabus (initially 2, 3 and 6 months in length - reverted to 2, 3 and 3 month in length) and to monitor the age of eggs harvested at the appropriate times. This proved successful until contact was lost with community in 2021. At Sawo, following a 2 month tabu the community were able to harvest 60 eggs on one visit - and a further 20 eggs, all fresh, 14 days later. 20 eggs laid after first harvest would suggest that between 10 and 20 females laid those 20 eggs. The harvest was of 40 burrows - there are c3200 burrows on the site - suggesting between 50 and 100 females are using this one site. At Faliwa a lot of eggs harvested during the second period were old - suggesting that the c100 eggs harvested on first visit missed a number of available eggs. Again, clearly a significant population of females using this site. Cycling between a 2 month tabu and 15 day harvest appears the most practical way of maintaining a sustainable harvest. Incubation period is likely to be 45 days.
2.0	To raise community awareness of the unique biodiversity of the West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukumera KBAs,	2.3	Prepare report on progress toward measuring the controlled harvesting of Megapode eggs at	Kurumambe had established a full, complete, tabu over the scrubfowl nesting colony for 18 months, while the trail cameras were present. After a period of no control the community reestablished a 2.5 month tabu period

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	to identify the main pressures on the biodiversity at the sites and to recommend responses to those pressures.		Kurumambe, Tongoa by end of October 2019.	followed by a 10 day period of harvesting in early March, June, September and December. This was established after Covid Lockdown was initiated and the project manager has been unable to visit and discuss the findings since then. EDA staff have reported that there were issues with the sale of scrubfowl eggs - site owners expected some kind of recompense if eggs from their site were for sale. In addition there was concerns that the tabu, while followed by the local community, was subject to transgression by neighbouring communities. There was an increasing level of disillusionment with the process. It is unfortunate that the project manager has been unable to visit the community to investigate alternative approaches that might help to maintain the tabu. We hope that the forthcoming government funding may provide further opportunities for the community to reestablish and manage the tabu.
2.0	To raise community awareness of the unique biodiversity of the West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukasmera KBAs, to identify the main pressures on the biodiversity at the sites and to recommend	2.4	Provide report on the state of harvesting, and opportunities to manage sustainably, the population of Collared Petrel at Mt Tukasmera in Tanna by the end of the project	Six communities (from 12 spread along the Southeastern slopes of Mt Tukasmera) took part in the monitoring of harvesting of Petrels in 2019. Just over 200 chicks were harvested. Burrows are 8-12km from the villages at c700m asl. Apparently suitable habitat between the communities and the breeding grounds are not used - too close to communities and/or the associated dogs/cats? VEAN have subsequently worked closely with

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	responses to those pressures.			the communities and agreed a tabu area on the Mountain, within which chicks are not harvested, in return for the establishment of a livestock-rearing facility in the community. Only 20 chicks were harvested in 2020 - mainly due to the activities undertaken around the festivals in that year. Information on harvesting in 2021 was not forthcoming.
3.0	Assess the extent to which supplementary livelihood opportunities (such as provided by Ecotourism to Tongoa) can provide support to site conservation action plans by December 2019	3.1	Prepare a report, by the end of September 2019, on the extent to which a newly established Ecotourism programme to Tongoa has benefitted the Kurumambe community, and improved the conservation activities at the site.	There was a delay in returning to Tongoa at the start of the project - and by the time we arrived the community had chosen not to pursue the concept of an ecotourism project. There is, however, continued interest at the whole island level, and this would be where the best approach would need to be in the future. SHEFA tourism would be interested in partnering the community. A small Ecotourism project was developed on West Ambrym - between the Mehle Conservation Committee, a landowner at Polipetagever (one of the scrubfowl colony areas) and a locally-based tour guide. Ambrym has an established group of tour guides who take visitors on treks to see the volcano. This ecotourism project is aimed at folk who have a day at the beginning or end of schedule and/or are unable to do the volcano trek due to inclement weather or dangerous conditions. The tour visits the scrubfowl burrows, showcases community gardens and community folklore around the site (see attached presentation). More

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				recently still, a homestay has been established in West Ambrym at Lake Fantang, close to the monitored scrubfowl colonies. We have been invited to provide information. Noticeboards are in place both at the ferry terminal and the airport in West Ambrym for visits to understand the programme.
3.0	Assess the extent to which supplementary livelihood opportunities (such as provided by Ecotourism to Tongoa) can provide support to site conservation action plans by December 2019	3.2	Prepare a report on requests for, and opportunities available, to establish supplementary livelihoods at each of the sites. Provide details for future funding applications by the end of December 2019.	Kurumambe community expressed interest in harvesting and selling wedge-tailed shearwater chicks. Funding to establish this has become available and BirdLife and EDA are leading the data collection. The community also expressed interest in a forest restoration project funded through the governments Forest Department. We are hopeful that this will be linked with the scrubfowl conservation. West Ambrym have established a guided walk for tourists, while a homestay in the unpopulated northwest part of the island has also been established. Access to water continues to be the major concern for the community. We have not found a viable funding source for this, to date, although VCAP2 is likely to include West Ambrym as a site when that programme comes on stream later this year. The Tanna community are already well-versed in ecotourism - with plenty of accommodation for visitors to the volcano, coordinated tribal dances for tourists, etc. The livestock programme, initiated by VEAN in association

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				with the Tekartak team has received GEF small grant funding and is up and running.
4.0	Assess the Relevance of National Community Conservation Legislation to local communities.	4.1	Prepare guide to identify Opportunities and Risks of Community Conservation legislation to local communities at West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukumera by end December, 2019	Little or no progress. Discussion with Vanuatu Environmental Law Association indicated tension among the communities. My presence, being an ex pat with a preference for involvement in Community Conservation legislation, stifles discussion. However, from discussions with VEAN (who were against the CCA legislation) and EDA (who were non committal), the communities need to be convinced of any benefits. To that end we have attempted to extend the conservation projects that we have established here with government-driven, or government-funded projects. Ensuring that the CCA provides further carrots and opportunities for the communities remains an essential task, not just on these sites but for community conservation areas throughout the region.
7.0	Subgrant monitoring and tracking.	7.1	Subgrant agreement in place with VEAN, incorporating Terms and Conditions, by August 2018	Subgrant developed and in place until end of 2019 when VEAN parted company with BirdLife. A subgrant was established with EDA in order to fund the fieldwork of Toara Morris. This ensured fieldwork continued in Ambrym, Tanna and Tongoa - with the latter continuing through until June 2021.
2.0	To raise community awareness of the unique biodiversity of the West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika	2.5	Prepare a report on key learnings and outputs from a workshop in Port Vila highlighting progress toward	A representative from each of the communities met with the project team, MOB and VEAN, in Port Vila. We discussed projects and exchanged information about progress.

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	and Mt Tucusmera KBAs, to identify the main pressures on the biodiversity at the sites and to recommend responses to those pressures.		developing Conservation Actions plans at West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tucusmera in November 2019.	We met with the Vanuatu Environmental Law Association to discuss Community Conservation Areas - which created quite a discussion. It is clear that the communities feel that they need more of a carrot to become involved with government-led processes. We were unable to meet with the Governments Environment Department due to timetable clash. Plans for the Scrubfowl harvesting were devised/modified for both West Ambrym and Kurumambe - although the representatives chose not to capture this on paper. The Tucusmera representative, Asterick, was very keen to promote the concept of tabu areas when he returned - with successful outcome. Subsequently the representative from Kurumambe resigned from the committee - so we visited the island to raise the issues with the community there. The Tucusmera team developed the concepts with VEAN and established a separate conservation plan with funding through GEF small grants. It is encouraging that the representatives are working independently on this kind of project.
7.0	Subgrant monitoring and tracking.	7.2	VEAN to continue to develop partnerships with communities in West Ambrym KBA, Tongoa/Laika KBA and Mt Tucusmera KBA in order to deliver	VEAN has developed a strong partnership with community at Mt Tucusmera, and has established further funding to maintain conservation efforts at that site. EDA have established a good working relationship with the community at Kurumambe - with follow up

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			conservation plans by the end of December 2019	funding available for the next 3-5 years. The partnership with West Ambrym has deteriorated somewhat - as funding has become unavailable. We hope, however, to be able to reestablish a partnership when/if the VCAP2 funding for Vanuatu government becomes available - hopefully later in 2022.
5.0	By the end of the project the results of the survey work have been analysed, priorities for future conservation actions have been established and plans agreed by the communities at the sites.	5.1	Prepare a Management plan for the sustainable harvesting of Megapode eggs in West Ambrym incorporated into a site management plan a agreed by conservation committee by September 2019	Community meetings established a plan to establish tabus on 3 major scrubfowl breeding areas. The plan involved a 2 month, 3 month and 6 month tabu at the sites - followed by a 14 day harvesting period, then back to the original tabu. After 2019, the 6 month tabu was reduced to 3 months. The community supported the tabus - and reported individuals who transgressed the harvesting, with a significant fine being enforced on 2 harvesters. The plan was further supported by the sellers at the Craig Cove Business Centre, who reported any persons who attempted to sell eggs outside the harvesting period. The community monitored the number of eggs harvested on cessation of a tabu, the age distribution of the eggs, and repeated the exercise for eggs harvested throughout the 14 day period. It became apparent that there were many more eggs available than could be harvested, and removed, on any one visit. Age structure of harvested eggs declined only relatively slightly over harvesting period - a suggestion that

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				either first harvest is inefficient or that there are a lot more burrows available, but not harvested.
5.0	By the end of the project the results of the survey work have been analysed, priorities for future conservation actions have been established and plans agreed by the communities at the sites.	5.2	Prepare a report identifying and addressing issues around developing a sustainable harvesting plan for nesting collared petrels around Mount Tukumera prepared by end October 2019.	Petrels are nesting c10km from the villages on the upper slopes of Mt Tukumera, and adjacent peaks. There appears to be plenty of suitable habitat closer to the villages - so either harvesting, or predation by village dogs and cats has reduced bird numbers in these areas. Communities, through TEK, highlighted that number of chicks harvested per visit has declined from 40-50 down to less than 10 - although one person harvested over 40 chicks on one visit in 2019. Harvesters tended to visit known active burrows - burrows that had been harvested in previous years. Very few new burrows were located. VEAN now lead on this project, and have developed a tabu area within the breeding range on site in return for the development of livestock farming for the community that own the land with the breeding colony. This appears to be a positive move - although monitoring/policing the tabu remains contentious. In addition, cats and dogs were seen on occasion on trail cameras set in the breeding grounds so the possibility of predation remains real. indeed, chicks were found to have been predated by cats when members went to harvest in August 2020.
5.0	By the end of the project the results of the survey	5.3	The controlled harvesting of megapode eggs at	After much discussion and prevarication, and following a change in personnel on the

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	work have been analysed, priorities for future conservation actions have been established and plans agreed by the communities at the sites.		Kurumambe is documented and incorporated into a site conservation plan that is agreed by the Kurumambe conservation committee.	conservation committee together with the inclusion of the landowners of the scrubfowl colony area, we established a 2.5 month tabu followed a 2 week harvesting period. Harvesting was allowed in the first half of March, June, September and December. The number of eggs harvested, and their age, were recorded and reported back to EDA. This data indicated that the majority of eggs harvested after Day 1 were fresh - suggesting an efficient harvesting regime. The community maintained this for two rounds - collecting data on the second round. However, a concern/fear that the eggs were being poached by incomers reduced the support for the project and, at the latest visit, the tabu while still active was not being adhered to. There needs to be a stronger incentive to stick with the tabu, combined with a greater assurance that other people are also supporting the tabu. Security cameras were suggested as a solution here - but the infrastructure is not currently in place. There is also a suggestion that many burrows are inaccessible - the nesting area is on a steep cliff - which would suggest that the population remains buffered against overharvesting.
6.0	Project is managed effectively and implemented according to the schedule	6.1	An inception meeting between BirdLife, VEAN and Shefa Tourist office has been held by the end of	Cancelled. Community decided not to pursue this opportunity.

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			September 2019, and a report produced.	
6.0	Project is managed effectively and implemented according to the schedule	6.2	Work plans are in place, and agreed, by participating parties by August 2018	Agreed with VEAN until VEAN left the partnership. A timetable was agreed with EDA with the aim of visits to the Kurumambe and Ambrym communities on a twice yearly basis. Travel to Kurumambe was frequently postponed due to Air Vanuatu flights not being able to land on the grassy airstrip. EDA then took over the role of project manager on the ground when BL staff were unable to visit Vanuatu due to Covid Restrictions. It was challenging to incorporate the current project timetable into a viable programme around EDAs other work.
6.0	Project is managed effectively and implemented according to the schedule	6.4	Reporting targets have been met throughout the project up until December 2019	Developing a standard for reporting, both technical and financial, has been challenging but was achievable when regular visits by project manager and BL staff was an option. This has become considerably more of a challenge during Covid - and I have to credit Mere Ledua, the BL finance manager in Suva for staying on top of the process. EDA have a very competent office manager, part-time, which has also helped.
6.0	Project is managed effectively and implemented according to the schedule	6.5	Civil Society Tracking Tools have been completed, and compared between baseline, at start of project, and end of project for VEAN and for	The departure of VEAN before the end of the project, combined with the lack of opportunity to visit Vanuatu for the Project manager due to Covid meant that follow up CSTTs were not possible. It seems unlikely that many of the suggestions/advice resulting from the starting

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
			the 3 conservation committees.	CSTT were taken up - as there was a recommendation to expand the CSO, obtain a permanent office/deskpace and support staff for financial matters were not taken up. In addition, VEAN preferred not to employ additional staff limiting the amount that they were able to achieve. VEAN have gone their own way and are successful in obtaining new grants/projects at the scale and level that they are comfortable with. EDA provides greater opportunities for developing a robust incountry national NGO - although there remains the confusion over the extent to which they are connected with the governments environment department.
8.0	Ensure compliance with CEPF Social Safeguard Policies	8.1	Safeguard policies for indigenous peoples and involuntary resettlement implemented, monitored, and reported every six months to CEPF to ensure full compliance.	Protocol was in place, there were no issues raised regarding restrictions on the harvesting of natural resources, as the decisions were all made within and by the communities themselves. Some of these decisions have abated - partly due to the inability to visit the sites during the covid lockdown. VEAN have been the main point of contact with the communities, even after VEAN left the partnership. I would fully expect them to inform me if any issues occurred. indeed they did let me know that there was an attempt to sell Scrubfowl eggs during the non-harvesting period in last August 2021. This was reported to VEAN by the local business centre. Beyond that no issues were raised.

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
8.0	Ensure compliance with CEPF Social Safeguard Policies	8.2	Complete Gender Tracking Tool to ensure that gender considerations are integrated into project.	To be completed by BirdLife at the end of the Biorap in TAFEA project (110288).
7.0	Subgrant monitoring and tracking.	7.3	VEAN to complete Gender Tracking tool at onset of project, incorporate recommendations into project, and review Tracking tool at culmination of project.	VEAN completed Gender Tracking tool at the onset of the project but declined to review it at the end of their involvement in the project.
2.0	To raise community awareness of the unique biodiversity of the West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukusmera KBAs, to identify the main pressures on the biodiversity at the sites and to recommend responses to those pressures.	2.6	Ensure dissemination of all final reports to Vanuatu Government DEPC conservation unit by end of project.	All reports prepared up until September 2019 were transferred to Department of Environment by flashdrive. I am in close contact with Rolenas at the department - and have engaged with EDA who have close links with government. We will, formally, transfer remaining reports to the Department next time we meet. I know that Rolenas is on fieldwork for much of this month, while Donna has completed her 3 year contract as Director. We wait to see if Donna reapplies for the role and, whoever takes up that role, we will ensure that they receive a copy of all the data. We are also preparing information to be incorporated into the Key Biodiversity Area dataset and transferring that to the National Coordinating Group.
6.0	Project is managed effectively and	6.3	BirdLife - VEAN (104007) and Live&Learn Vanuatu (103964) projects develop	BirdLife, VEAN and LLV met for discussions regularly, and whenever BL came over for meetings. A number of joint proposals were

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
	implemented according to the schedule		mechanisms to collaborate on their CEPF-financed project, as evidenced by development and implementation of joint work plan by end of Project	developed - unfortunately unsuccessful. Liaison declined when VEAN moved on and EDA became partners with BL - although LLV took part in a number of subsequent meetings to discuss KBAs and monitoring, etc. LLV provided support, and contacts, for the proposed survey of Mt Tabwemasana. Fred Kataiwai in particular was very supportive on this project. A plan for LLV to return to the communities to report findings was deemed unnecessary as the fieldstaff undertook this process on completion of the survey and on return to the village. Results from the survey have been prepared and made available to LLV for presentation at the next meeting of the Mt Tabwemasana Community Conservation Committee.
2.0	To raise community awareness of the unique biodiversity of the West Ambrym, Tongoa/Laika and Mt Tukumera KBAs, to identify the main pressures on the biodiversity at the sites and to recommend responses to those pressures.	2.7	To extend the skills and expertise, at the national level, for the conservation of Vanuatu Scrubfowl such that, by the end of 2020, both VEAN and VESS are confident of extending the conservation actions to other Scrubfowl colonies in Vanuatu.	Both Lai Sakita (VEAN) and Toara Morris (EDA) now have plenty of experience of working with communities, explaining the thought processes, and providing a range of options to communities regarding the use of tabu periods to control the number of eggs harvested. Communities at both Kurumambe and West Ambrym have collected the information necessary to assess populations although there is still an issue regarding interpretation of, and storage of, data collected. Discussions with the communities and the project officers has been curtailed due to the Covid lockdown - reports explaining

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				findings have been made available to VEAN and EDA - but its not clear to me whether this has been understood. Discussions with other communities have seen further tabus established to protect scrubfowl eggs - with a 10 year tabu established by the SSEN in West Santo. I would be surprised if this is realistic - and have, quietly suggested so. However, the community have agreed this - so we shall see.
9.0	Improve conservation of priority species, in particular Mountain Starling, Rusty-winged Starling, Santo Thicketbird, Vanuatu Imperial-pigeon, Palm Lorikeet in and around Santo Mountain Chain KBA	9.1	Report on the number and distribution of Globally Threatened and Restricted Range species in Mt Tabwemasana CCA by March 2021.	Survey undertaken in August 2021. Project team was led by Dominik Ramik (a local birdwatcher) and Toara Morris with guides and porters from the local community. LLV organised the meetings between surveyors and community representatives while Mayumi Green of Wrecks to Rainforest provided excellent last minute support. The raw data was made available via eBird immediately after the survey and also a series of facebook links on both the Birds of Vanuatu, and the Santo Sunset Environment Network page, highlighted the success of the survey. BirdLife also ran an article in their global newsletter about the survey. A full report, highlighting the species recorded, their frequency of occurrence and the restrictions on their distribution caused by altitude are all highlighted - and the implications of this discussed regarding the extent to which the Santo Mountain Chain KBA can be validated. Two species found nowhere else in the world,

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
				Mountain starling and Santo Thicketbird, were recorded as was a significant population of the Globally Endangered Santa Cruz Ground-dove. Findings have been incorporated into the WDKBA and will be added to the IUCN Red List data for these species.

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

Monitoring Scrubfowl numbers at burrows. Scrubfowl are challenging to monitor. Burrows provide a central focal point for their activity. Harvesting eggs from burrows in a standard manner provides information on the number of females per burrow, and so estimates population size.

Monitoring Wedge-tailed shearwater burrows, and estimating number of birds breeding on a site.

Alternative bird survey method for non-experienced surveyors. An alternative approach to the transects method advocated in the Rangers Manual.

## PORTFOLIO INDICATORS

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
3.3	Number of priority species with science-based harvest management plans that are introduced for local food security.			3	We have worked with communities to develop sustainable/restricted harvesting practices for Vanuatu Scrubfowl eggs, Wedge-tailed Shearwater chicks and Collared Petrel chicks.
4.2	Number of local civil society organizations that demonstrate improvements in			3	The CSOs we worked with all had a basic level of capacity. They have all had to invest in banking facilities to enable us to

<b>Portfolio Indicator Number</b>	<b>Portfolio Indicator Description</b>	<b>Expected Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Expected Contribution Description</b>	<b>Actual Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Actual Contribution Description</b>
	organizational capacity.				transfer funds. And they have all developed basic governance systems. They remain, however, very locally organised structures generally dependent as a subgroup of a larger CSO.
4.3	Number of civil society organizations that emerge as national conservation leaders in each hotspot country.			1	EcoLivelihood Development Association (EDA) have enhanced their standing is effective conservation partners. BL continue to work with EDA on a number of projects both within and beyond the current CEPF programme.
4.4	Number of conservationists that demonstrate strengthened capacity in conservation management, science and leadership.			2	Both Toara Andrew Morris and Kingsley Baereleo of EDA have developed improved/increased skills in conservation skills through this project. Lai Sakita has also benefitted from the programme and is now working independently of BL, but probably already had the expertise and is continuing to use it.
5.3	Number of civil society organizations supported by CEPF that secure follow-up funding from conservation trust funds and/or the			3	VEAN - GEF funded work on Tanna EDA - PEUMP funded work on Tongoa/Laika BirdLife - - PacBioscapes funded work on KBAs

Portfolio Indicator Number	Portfolio Indicator Description	Expected Numerical Contribution	Expected Contribution Description	Actual Numerical Contribution	Actual Contribution Description
	GEF Small Grants Programme.				I don't include either SSEN or LLV - both of which have funding to continue projects in their respective areas, but that funding has not come about as a direct result of this project (although we have proposals to work with SSEN in the pipeline)..
1	Hectares in a key biodiversity area (KBA) with new or strengthened protection and management.			50	Land at Kurumambe, Tongoa, West Ambrym and Mt Tukumera, Tanna was set aside and managed under tabu for some or all of the period of the programme and beyond.
2	At least 100,000 hectares within production landscapes are managed for biodiversity conservation or sustainable use.			0	
4	48 globally threatened species have improved conservation status and/or available information on status and distribution.			5	We obtained updated information on the numbers and distribution of the following globally threatened species, Vanuatu Scrubfowl (VU), Collared Petrel (VU), Mountain Starling (EN), Palm Lorikeet (VU), Santa Cruz Ground-dove (EN)

<b>Portfolio Indicator Number</b>	<b>Portfolio Indicator Description</b>	<b>Expected Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Expected Contribution Description</b>	<b>Actual Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Actual Contribution Description</b>
5	At least 10 partnerships and networks formed among civil society, government and communities to leverage complementary capacities and maximize impact in support of the ecosystem profile.			4	BL, VEAN and WAMCC formed a partnership to establish the Scrubfowl conservation work on Ambrym. BL, EDA and KCC formed a partnership to establish scrubfowl conservation work on Tongoa and Shearwater conservation work on Laika. BL, VEAN and TEAN formed a partnership to establish the Collared Petrel conservation work on Mt Tukuamera, Tanna. BL, EDA, LLV, SSEN formed a partnership to work on the Mt Tabwemasana survey - and potential followup projects.
6	At least 40 civil society organizations, including at least 30 domestic organizations, actively participate in conservation actions guided by the ecosystem profile.			8	The following organisations have all contributed toward delivering the project, which was based on recommendations in the Ecosystem Profile. BirdLife International, VEAN, EDA, SSEN, LLV, WAMCC, KCC and TEAN
1.1	Baseline surveys completed for at			3	Baseline surveys of target species at Tongoa/Laika KBA, West Ambrym KBA

<b>Portfolio Indicator Number</b>	<b>Portfolio Indicator Description</b>	<b>Expected Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Expected Contribution Description</b>	<b>Actual Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Actual Contribution Description</b>
	least 10 priority sites.				and Santo Mountain Chain KBA. Data from Mt Tukumera not sufficiently robust to qualify as a baseline survey.
1.2	Awareness of the values of biodiversity and the nature of threats and drivers raised among local communities within at least 10 priority sites.			4	We worked with, and liaised with, communities around Mt Tukumera KBA, Tanna, Tongoa Laika KBA, West Ambrym KBA and Santo Mountain Chain KBA
1.3	Threat levels to at least 15 priority sites reduced through locally relevant conservation actions implemented by local communities.			3	Kurumambe, Tongoa, West Ambrym and Mt Tukumera Tanna have all established long-term or short term tabu areas where the harvesting of species is controlled.
1.4	Conservation incentives (ecotourism, payments for ecosystem services, conservation agreements, etc.) demonstrated for at least 5 priority sites.			1	Community at Polipetever on West Ambrym developed an ecotourism programme - to showcase local traditional activities.
1.5	Number of communities targeted by site-based projects that			4	The Kurumambe community are developing a sustainable harvesting programme for the wedge-

<b>Portfolio Indicator Number</b>	<b>Portfolio Indicator Description</b>	<b>Expected Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Expected Contribution Description</b>	<b>Actual Numerical Contribution</b>	<b>Actual Contribution Description</b>
	show tangible well-being benefits.				tailed Shearwater. 3 communities on Tanna are working on a livestock farming project to replace the harvesting of Collared Petrel chicks.
2.4	Number of CEPF priority sites where biodiversity and ecosystem service values are integrated into land-use and/or development plans and policies.			0	
3.1	Number of CEPF priority species with improved knowledge of their status and distribution.			9	Updated information on the numbers and/or density of the following species were obtained as part of this project. Vanuatu scrubfowl, Wedge-tailed Shearwater, Collared Petrel, Mountain Starling, Rusty-winged Starling, Santa Cruz Ground-dove, Santo Thicketbird, Palm Lorikeet, Vanuatu Imperial Pigeon
3.2	Number of priority species with recovery plans developed, implemented and monitored.			1	Vanuatu Scrubfowl plans developed for 2 sites, conservation activities implemented and number of birds recorded.

## 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.

<b>Name of Protected Area</b>	<b>WDPA ID*</b>	<b>Latitude</b>	<b>Longitude</b>	<b>Country</b>	<b>Original Total Size (Hectares) **</b>	<b>New Protected Hectares ***</b>	<b>Year of Legal Declaration or Expansion</b>
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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
Ambrym	VUT2		85
Tongoa-Laika	VUT21		25
Mount Tukuamera	VUT13		15

## 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
Sawo Faliwa	-16.219	167.957	45	Established a no-harvest tabu, and sustainable harvesting, of scrubfowl eggs in this area
Polipetaver	-16.244	167.991	40	Established a no-harvest tabu, and sustainable harvesting, of scrubfowl eggs in this area
Laika Island	-16.828	168.561	27	Established a sustainable harvest, with upper bag limit, of Wedge-tailed Shearwater chicks.
Mt Tukuamera	-19.553	169.395	180	Tabu area - no harvesting of collared petrel chicks from this area

## Benefits to Individuals

- **Structured Training:**

<b>Number of Men Trained</b>	<b>Number of Women Trained</b>	<b>Topics of Training</b>
25	15	Establishing a tabu area and monitoring the harvesting of eggs of Vanuatu Scrubfowl Monitoring the harvesting of chicks of Collared Petrel Training in the use of a GPS to monitor the location of nests and burrows of scrubfowl/petrels Monitoring the harvesting of chicks of Wedge-tailed Shearwaters

- **Cash Benefits:**

<b>Number of Men – Cash Benefits</b>	<b>Number of Women – Cash Benefits</b>	<b>Description of Benefits</b>
26	6	Policing Vanuatu scrubfowl tabu areas, monitoring and keeping a record of the number and age of eggs harvested, monitoring harvesting of Collared Petrel, mapping distribution of Collared Petrel burrows, guiding folk to biodiversity rich sites.

## 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				
Kurumambe, Tongoa	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vanuatu	50	50										
West Ambrym	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vanuatu	50	50										
Tukusmera Network	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vanuatu	100	100					

### 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

**“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
West Ambrym Mehle Community Conservation Partnership	2018	Vanuatu	Yes	Coordinate the sustainable harvesting, and protect the tabu areas, of Vanuatu Scrubfowl.
Kurumambe Conservation Committee	2015	Vanuatu	No	Identify opportunities for the Kurumambe community to establish conservation areas, deliver management that benefits biodiversity and provide opportunities for a financial income for the community.
TEAN Tekarkak Team	2018	Vanuatu	Yes	To work with others to establish better understanding and investigate opportunities for the conservation of Collared Petrels, and funding opportunities as a product of that conservation.

## 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
Alopecoenas	sanctaecrucis	Santa Cruz Ground Dove	EN	Species Monitoring	Unknown

<b>Genus</b>	<b>Species</b>	<b>Common Name (English)</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Intervention</b>	<b>Population Trend at Site</b>
Aplonis	santovestris	Santo Starling	EN	Species Monitoring	Unknown
Megapodius	layardi	New Hebrides Scrubfowl	VU	Implementation of a conservation action plan	Stable
Pterodroma	brevipes	Collared Petrel	VU	Species protection through a tabu	Unknown
Charmosyna	palmarum	Palm Lorikeet	VU	Species Monitoring	Unknown
Ducula	bakeri	Baker's Imperial-Pigeon	VU	Species Monitoring	Unknown

## LESSONS LEARNED

Working with communities is a longterm commitment. It is essential to hold meetings with the communities before applying for a grant to undertake any work with them. The first meeting provides an opportunity for the communities to express concerns and issues, and enables the project officer to discuss opportunities, solutions, or ways that may help to identify solutions. The community need to think about this. It is not until a subsequent meeting has captured how the community would like to progress, and that progression is in line with the priorities of the project officer, that the proposal should go forward. We managed to achieve this by meeting with communities through a previous CEPF grant and working up potential projects with which they would be interested in collaborating. This can take some considerable time. In the current project this worked successfully for both the West Ambrym and Mt Tukumera projects - VEAN had spent some time liaising with the communities prior to the project and we were able to move forward relatively quickly. The Tongoa project was less successful - ironically because we felt that we were further ahead and had already run a project, for 2 years, establishing a permanent tabu for scrubfowl harvesting. Our mistake was to assume that the community would move, naturally, to the next stage of the project. This wasn't to be and it took us c18 months to get the next stage going - after a change in the personnel on the Conservation Committee.

One of the issues in Tongoa was that we moved from a Tabu 'no harvest' system to a partial Tabu 'Occasional harvest'. This latter provided the opportunity for a small amount of cash return on the eggs harvested, as a pulse. The harvest, and the income from sales, caused a separate issue and resulted in the landowners of the nesting grounds become more involved - becoming the Chair and Vice Chair of the conservation committee. This coincided with a change of view regarding the development of an ecotourism opportunity for the community at Kurumambe. A second factor was that, during the no harvest system we had placed trail cameras in the breeding grounds - which provided a powerful disincentive to visit the area. As soon as we removed the cameras to another project the policing issues become much more high profile with accusations that individuals from other communities were ignoring the tabu and harvesting eggs at times when the landowners and local community were trying to enforce the tabu. This 'lawlessness' resulted in the community being less keen on maintaining the tabu.

The suspicion about government involvement was present from all 3 community organisations that worked with us on the sustainable harvesting project. There was a concern that, once signed up to a government Community Conservation Area, the community would lose control/ownership of the Area and not get anything financial, or other, in return from the government. This concern was captured in a pamphlet by the Vanuatu Cultural Centre, the sentiment of which was supported by VEAN. I believe that the government could easily resolve this by targeting incentives at communities who entered into CCAs. Government funding, eg through GEF, could ensure that there was some funding for communities to continue to collect information on harvesting levels in such a way as to provide information to help with conservation decision making. This is why we have been keen to support the development of notes for the Rangers Manual that target data collection for these species. I hope that the last two years has seen these projects develop in a way that enables government staff to recognise the issues and identify ways of working, together with communities, toward the furtherance of biodiversity conservation in Vanuatu.

The Covid lockdown of the borders to Vanuatu has meant that the project manager has spent the last 21 months of the project leading from overseas. This, clearly, has meant that progress has been more challenging than anticipated. Added to that has been the cessation

of the partnership with VEAN, our lead in-country partner in Vanuatu for 5 years. It is encouraging that VEAN continue to play a role in community conservation plans - working with the Tekarkak Team in Tanna and planning other conservation activities. The relationship with EDA has been forged over the internet - we have not yet met in person - and has, at times, been challenging. However, the fact that I cannot travel has forced EDA to take the lead, and coordinate, projects internally. This has likely improved their capacity to continue to lead and may well have been a positive side effect of the isolation. It is all too easy for the overseas project manager to parachute in and organise to their standard leaving the national staff to follow in their wake.

## **SUSTAINABILITY/REPLICATION**

Sustainable harvesting of natural resources can, in a western environment, enable the harvesters to obtain a premium price for the product. The marketing, etc, being based on the results of, and outcomes from, the sustainability of the harvest. The species harvested in these projects in Vanuatu do not lend themselves to this process. The harvested product is usually either consumed within the community or, if sold made available in the local markets where paying a premium for 'sustainably harvested' product would not be a salespitch. Opening up markets would be far too challenging in Vanuatu - where the isolation of many of the communities and the transportation costs are excessive. The Kurumambe community have received funding to purchase a freezer to stock their Shearwater carcasses prior to transport to Suva. It will be interesting to see how the finances work out on this over time.

Many communities have a great affinity for maintaining a sustainable harvest - and are very keen to ensure that their children and their childrens children are also able to harvest Petrel chicks, scrubfowl eggs etc. So, the process doesnt need to be financially lucrative - rather just cover costs. However, following a sustainable harvest process requires data collection, which can be quite challenging for a community to collect and maintain. There needs to be staff, either in government or non-government, who have the capacity to support the communities and go through data analyses to help the communities with decisions on the sustainability of the harvest. Traditional Ecological Knowledge, obtained by observations and trial and error methods, is pretty much the process we are promoting - but with some more numbers to support the observations.

The Mt Tabwemasana survey proved to be an outstanding success. We were lucky that Dominik Ramik was prepared to take 2 weeks leave from his work to lead the survey. Dominik is an ex pat who is working in Tanna. He wrote the software for the Ornito app for bird identification. Dominik and Toar Morris led the surveys, and provided training to Rangers from the SSEN and the Mt Tabwemasana Ecotourism group. The survey located all the bird species expected in the Santa Mountain Range - including species not previously recorded in Vanuatu for decades. This has significantly improved our knowledge/understanding of the occurrence of these species - and will likely modify the IUCN Red list process. The community representatives were so enthused that they, immediately, visited Pic Santo from where they recorded numbers of the same species - sadly with no confirmatory evidence from photographs or sound recordings. The SSEN and Ecotourism group both provide great opportunities to showcase this, and othersites in the Santo Mountain Chain, for Ecotourism purposes.

## ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS/STANDARDS

### ADDITIONAL COMMENTS/RECOMMENDATIONS

### ADDITIONAL FUNDING

<b>Total Amount of Additional Funding Actually Secured (USD)</b>	\$36,260.00
<b>Breakdown of Additional Funding</b>	PEUMP/BIEM grant from SPREP to develop a Wedge-tailed Shearwater sustainable harvesting programme with Kurumambe community. US\$22,260 BirdLife core fund contributions US\$14,000  In addition VEAN received a GEF Small Grant to continue the programme of work on Mt Tukumera with the Tekarkak Team, TEAN.

### 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.

To contact the general office of BirdLife International in the Pacific Region contact us on [suva.office@birdlife.org](mailto:suva.office@birdlife.org)