

CEPF Final Project Completion Report

Organization Legal Name:	Vanuatu Environmental Science Society
Project Title:	Building Capacity in Conservation Science and Environmental Education in Vanuatu
Grant Number:	65988
CEPF Region:	East Melanesian Islands
Strategic Direction:	4 Increase local, national and regional capacity to conserve biodiversity through catalyzing civil society partnerships
Grant Amount:	\$93,282.00
Project Dates:	May 01, 2016 - June 30, 2018
Date of Report:	October 20, 2018

Implementation Partners

List each partner and explain how they were involved in the project

The Vanuatu Environmental Science society was the only implementing partner in this project.

Conservation Impacts

Summarize the overall impact of your project, describing how your project has contributed to the implementation of the CEPF ecosystem profile

This was a capacity building grant and overall VESS has grown from a very small organisation with no office or employees to a known organisation in Vanuatu with an office, 3 Ni-Vanuatu employees and an Australian volunteer. We are now invited to government meetings as a stakeholder and have contributed to policies such as the banning of single-use plastics and the unique and special marine areas of Vanuatu and the National Biodiversity Strategy and Action Plan (NBSAP). We are working closely with the Department for Environmental Protection and Conservation and with the Vanuatu Fisheries Department. We also have good relationships with the Department of Forests and the Vanuatu Cultural Centre. We have been invited to participate workshops in Vanuatu and overseas and been asked to be consortium partners with other organisations in joint projects.

The project officers have gained experience in the workforce. Martika Tahi in particular has worked well and gained experience in delivering workshops and report writing. She has been mentored by Christina and Alex, VESS's Australian Volunteer. She was accompanied to the

workshops by Alex in Tongoa and Aneityum and then organised and led the workshops entirely in Futuna.

The environmental awareness components of this project have gone well. We have produced factsheets on the CEPF prioritised threatened species and KBAs in Vanuatu. They are published on the VESS website. We were told that they have been used by UK filmmakers researching threatened species in Vanuatu in order to make documentary. An exhibition was held earlier this year showcasing these species factsheets. They have also been printed and distributed to the communities where workshops have taken place. Workbooks were also written to accompany the workshops and these materials have been left in the communities for future reference. The workshop were mostly well attended and despite delays and challenges of working in remote communities, most of the objectives were achieved. The teachers workshops in Tongoa and Futuna were just a couple short of the target but the targets for community attendance was well exceeded in all three islands.

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

Impact Description	Impact Summary
VESS will have the organisation capacity to seek funding for and to implement biodiversity conservation within Vanuatu. Increased awareness of the twenty-five threatened species and their conservation prioritised by CEPF in Vanuatu. Increased awareness of the ecosystem services provided to people by the six Key Biodiversity Areas prioritised by the CEPF in Vanuatu.	VESS has set up processes and established an office and has built capacity and is successfully implementing biodiversity conservation in Vanuatu. The awareness of threatened species has been increased as well as awareness about the ecosystem services provided by KBAs in Vanuatu.

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

Impact Description	Impact Summary
1) VESS has increased capacity to apply for funding for and manage biodiversity conservation projects by establishing an administrative base and employing personnel.	Since the beginning of this project VESS has established an office and created positions for three Ni-Vanautu graduated to work on conservation projects.
2) VESS has secured at least 2 sources of sustainable funding.	Since the beginning of the project VESS has secured funding for three more projects and is selling eco bags.
3) At least 80 members of community conservation groups and teachers attend workshops in each of 2 Vanuatu KBAs	Workshops were held in Aneityum, Tongoa and Futuna. In total 358 people attend the workshops.
4) Awareness of Vanuatu's unique flora and fauna of two CEPF KPAs increased by 50% by attending the workshops.	Quiz results showed that overall a 50% increase in scores on the quiz was achieved during the workshops
5) Information on the 25 CEPF priority species and 6 KBAs is more widely available to the population of Vanuatu by being published on VESS website.	Posters for KBAs and factsheets on the threatened species are published on the VESS website.
6) By August 2016, VESS has assisted CEPF in the hosting of a meeting of Vanuatu	This meeting was successfully hosted

CEPF grantees.	
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Describe the success or challenges of the project toward achieving its short-term and long-term impact objectives

There appears to be a genuine thirst for knowledge about the environment and a willingness to try to conserve amongst most of the outer island communities and those in Port Vila and this has helped us to reach out to more of the community with our awareness activities. The VESS team has been welcomed wherever we have worked in Vanuatu.

It has been challenging to employ capable personnel in Vanuatu to perform the tasks required in this project. Even those with degrees in natural sciences have needed significantly more mentoring than initially thought. However Martika Tahi has proven to be a valuable and capable employee.

There are always logistical challenges and weather related delays in Vanuatu, particularly when working on the outer islands. Spending only a short time on the islands working with local communities, whilst necessary for economic reasons, it is not always easy to achieve all the planned activities and flexibility is required. These factors have led to delays and changes in plans but despite this most of the objectives and planned activities have been achieved.

Were there any unexpected impacts (positive or negative)?

Our data collection of litter surveys has influenced the policy on banning of single use plastic in Vanuatu which has come into force this year. The data from our clean ups was used by government to decide on what items should be banned in the first round of regulations. Media attention from overseas about the ban has led to journalists seeking interviews with VESS and subsequently raised our profile.

Project Components and Products/Deliverables

Describe the results from each product/deliverable:

Component		Deliverable		
#	Description	#	Description	Results for Deliverable
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.1	Administrative base created by establishing a fully equipped office, as evidenced by rental agreement and equipment inventory.	VESS has a fully equipped and furnished office.
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.2	At least two sources of sustainable funding secured as evidenced by e.g. membership database and ledger of fees paid, invoices for merchandise sold, contract for project funding.	Within the time of the project VESS has successfully received grants for 3 other project and has started merchandising dugong eco bags.
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.3	Employment contract, curriculum vitae and job description of a Junior Scientist / Administrator	Project officers were employed for this project
1	Strengthening the organisational	1.4	Employment contract, curriculum	This was outsourced to an accounting firm

	capacity of VESS		vitae and job description of a financial officer on a part time basis	
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.5	A five-year strategic plan developed and approved by the VESS Board of Directors	The 5 year strategic plan was written and agreed by the board of directors.
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.6	A worksheet for system for monitoring and evaluating project impacts that is created	A system has been developed for monitoring and evaluating projects has been developed.
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.7	An active volunteer network is establish as evidenced by attendance records database and reports of events and activities	VESS has hosted an Australian Volunteer for a year and will be putting in an application for a second assignment shortly
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.8	Improved CSTT score over the lifetime of the project	The score increased from 54 to 65
1	Strengthening the organisational capacity of VESS	1.9	Reports of audit of VESS's financial practices for the financial years of 2106 and 2017	The audit report for 2016 is on file. Audit has been commissioned for 2017 and is being finalised
2	Public awareness and participation activities in Port	2.1	Media coverage, reports and	News of events has been posted on social media, has appeared in the national newspapers in Vanuatu. VESS has also been interviewed by journalists from Australia

	Vila		photographs of four conservation-themed events organised per year including a national campaign for one CEPF priority species and another to increase awareness of ecosystem services provided by the KBAs	and UK about the plastic ban and the role VESS played in it coming into effect.
2	Public awareness and participation activities in Port Vila	2.2	Six public lectures per year delivered as evidenced by attendance database and photographs	12 public lectures have occurred from 2015 to 2017. It has been hard however to find speakers willing to give these lectures.
2	Public awareness and participation activities in Port Vila	2.3	Factsheets produced and published for all 25 CEPF priority species in Vanuatu	Factsheets have been written for all the CEPF priority species that are found in Vanuatu and have been published to the VESS website. The factsheets are available in English and Bislama.
2	Public awareness and participation activities in Port Vila	2.4	Teachers notes produced to accompany the CEPF priority species factsheets	Teachers notes have been written
2	Public awareness and participation activities in Port Vila	2.5	Factsheets produced and published for the six CEPF priority KBAs	7 poster/ factsheets have been uploaded to the VESS website.

			in Vanuatu and one on KBAs in general.	
2	Public awareness and participation activities in Port Vila	2.6	Teacher's notes produced for the six CEPF priority KBAs in Vanuatu and one on KBAs in general.	Teachers notes have been incorporated into a workbook which was handed out at the teachers workshops.
2	Public awareness and participation activities in Port Vila	2.7	Six posters featuring CEPF priority species and KBAs produced and one general poster on KBAs in Vanuatu	7 poster/ factsheets have been uploaded to the VESS website.
3	Awareness workshops in 2 CEPF KBA's	3.1	Organise 2 visits to Tongoa and deliver workshops in villages to increase awareness of CEPF priority species and ecosystem services of the Tongoa-Laika KBA as evidenced by attendance database, photographs and reports.	Both workshops have been completed.
3	Awareness workshops in 2 CEPF KBA's	3.2	20 teachers attend the workshops on	Our teachers workshops on Aneityum exceeded our goal however due to many unexpected circumstances, we had attendance of only 9 teachers on Tongoa-Laika. Eight

			CEPF priority species and KBA in Tongoa	teachers including the two principles attended workshops in Futuna.
3	Awareness workshops in 2 CEPF KBA's	3.3	60 community members attend the workshops on CEPF priority species and KBA in Tongoa	We have achieved our total attendance target for communities with 179 community participants on Tongoa-Laika
3	Awareness workshops in 2 CEPF KBA's	3.4	Organise 2 visits to Aneityum of a week each and deliver workshops in the villages to increase awareness of CEPF priority species and ecosystem services of the Aneityum KBA of the teachers and community conservation groups in Aneityum.	Both workshops have been completed.
3	Awareness workshops in 2 CEPF KBA's	3.5	20 teachers attended workshop on CEPF priority species and KBA in Aneityum	Our teachers workshops on Aneityum exceeded our goal, reaching 29 teachers and principals in total.
3	Awareness workshops in 2 CEPF KBA's	3.6	60 community members attended workshop on CEPF priority species and KBA in Aneityum as	We have achieved our total attendance target for communities with 69 community participants on Aneityum.

			evidenced by attendance database, photographs and reports.	
3	Awareness workshops in 2 CEPF KBA's	3.7	Quiz results show a 50% increase in knowledge after the workshops	Overall the quiz results showed a 50% increase in knowledge after the workshops
4	Component 4: Hosting of CEPF Grantee exchange meeting. By August 2016, VESS has assisted CEPF in the hosting of a meeting of Vanuatu CEPF grantees.	4.1	4.1. Arrangement of travel and accommodation for participants as evidenced by travel itineraries and receipts and bookings and receipts from hotels.	All the arrangements for this meeting were made in good time before the meeting and all attendees arrived at the meeting and were accommodated for the length of the meeting.
4	Component 4: Hosting of CEPF Grantee exchange meeting. By August 2016, VESS has assisted CEPF in the hosting of a meeting of Vanuatu CEPF grantees.	4.2	4.2 Securing the venue and catering and related meeting costs as evidenced by quotes for venue hire and catering and receipts for selected venue and catering option and associated costs of meeting.	Venue and catering were arranged for this meeting.

Please describe and submit any tools, products, or methodologies that resulted from this project or contributed to the results.



The awareness materials that were used in the exhibitions and in the workshops were produced in this project.

Lessons Learned

Describe any lessons learned during the design and implementation of the project, as well as any related to organizational development and capacity building.

Consider lessons that would inform:

- Project Design Process (*aspects of the project design that contributed to its success/shortcomings*)
- Project Implementation (*aspects of the project execution that contributed to its success/shortcomings*)
- Describe any other lessons learned relevant to the conservation community

VESS has only been established for just under 4 years. This capacity building grant was a follow on from a small grant from CEPF which was used to start VESS. We have used this grant to create a base and an office and to establish VESS as a local conservation organisation in Vanuatu and a source of information on environmental issues and particularly threatened species. During the project we have learnt valuable lessons on the best methods to impart information on threatened species to communities in remote areas as well as the urban population in Port Vila.

One of VESS's goals is to engage the public in citizen science project. Our goal is to encourage people to gather data and record what they see and find and to demonstrate the power of data to highlight a problem or a need. The international coastal clean up is one of the citizen science project we engaged in during the lifetime of this CEPF grant. The data gathered during the litter cleanups made people who were engaged in the clean ups really think about what they found. The report on the clean up was also used by government as evidence of the scale of the littering problem and the kinds of litter found on the streets. The report directly influenced the types of litter included in the regulation to ban plastic shopping bags, polystyrene take away containers and plastic straws.

This grant has given VESS valuable experience in proposal writing, project implementation and report writing. It has allowed VESS to network and collaborate with government and other organisation involved in conservation in Vanuatu. VESS is now regularly invited to stakeholder meetings and policy consultations of government departments and other organisations.

Sustainability / Replication

Summarize the success or challenges in ensuring the project will be sustained or replicated, including any unplanned activities that are likely to result in increased sustainability or replicability.

VESS is now a well established organisation with employees and volunteers. One aim of the project was to create an environment where VESS is able to apply for and successfully obtain further funding



for conservation projects in Vanuatu. This aim has been achieved and VESS should now be able to continue to seek funding to implement conservation projects into the future. We have established a good reputation and created relationships with communities in the areas where we work as well as with government and other NGOs. Logistic of project implementation and disseminating information in Vanuatu is a challenge due to the geography and limited transport links within the country. However implementing this project has enabled us to establish our methodologies for successfully delivering information to the communities in Vanuatu for this project and in the future projects.

The information on the CEPF priority species contained in the fact sheets created under this project is available for all on the VESS website www.vanuatuconservation.org. The fact sheets are freely available to all and can be used for education or conservation projects in the future. They will be updated by VESS as more information becomes available, such as with photos and information collected on our recent expedition to research the Bank's Flying Fox.

Safeguards

If not listed as a separate Project Component and described above, summarize the implementation of any required action related to social, environmental, or pest management safeguards

No environmental or social safeguarding issued occurred during this project and no complaints were raised.

Additional Comments/Recommendations

Use this space to provide any further comments or recommendations in relation to your project or CEPF

Additional Funding

Provide details of any additional funding that supported this project and any funding secured for the project, organization, or the region, as a result of CEPF investment

Total additional funding (US\$)
\$11,540.00

Type of funding

Please provide a breakdown of additional funding (counterpart funding and in-kind) by source, categorizing each contribution into one of the following categories:

- A *Project Co-Financing (other donors or your organization contribute to the direct costs of this project)*

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- B Grantee and Partner Leveraging (other donors contribute to your organization or a partner organization as a direct result of successes with this CEPF funded project)*
 - C Regional/Portfolio Leveraging (other donors make large investments in a region because of CEPF investment or successes related to this project)*

Type of funding B -

Due to the web presence and successfully implementing this project and the GEF-funding Dugong and Seagrass Conservation Project, VESS was invited to join a consortium for a project entitled: "Capacity building and data mobilization for conservation and decision making in the South Pacific" which received funding from the Global Biodiversity Information Facility EU-funded BID project. The funds for VESS's portion of the project was €9820 (USD \$11,540) out of a regional project of €61,435.

Information Sharing and CEPF Policy

CEPF is committed to transparent operations and to helping civil society groups share experiences, lessons learned, and results. Final project completion reports are made available on our Web site, www.cepf.net, and publicized in our newsletter and other communications.

1. Please include your full contact details (Name, Organization, Mailing address, Telephone number, E-mail address) below

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