



Government of the Republic of Vanuatu

Vanuatu National Roadmap for Coastal Fisheries: 2019–2030



This National Roadmap will guide the sustainable development of our coastal fisheries until 2030. The roadmap supports the objectives of *The People's Plan: National Sustainable Development Plan (NSDP) 2016–2030* and the *Vanuatu National Fisheries Sector Policy 2016–2031*. The roadmap provides a framework for Vanuatu's implementation of the principles and commitments to community-based fisheries management (CBFM) set out in *A new song for coastal fisheries – pathways to change: The Noumea strategy* developed by the Pacific Community (SPC). Other policies outside the immediate domain of fisheries, particularly the *Vanuatu National Ocean Policy* and policies for health and environment, which are important in informing the development of the coastal fisheries sector.

OUR VISION FOR COASTAL FISHERIES IN VANUATU

By 2030, secure sustainable coastal fisheries, underpinned by community-based approaches, to ensure the resilience and well-being of our people.

Threats to coastal resources

Vanuatu faces threats to its coastal resources both within and beyond the sector's influence. Declines have been measured in many important species, such as sea cucumber, trochus, green snail, and giant clam. Close to towns, declines in reef fish and shellfish are particularly evident. These trends are made worse by using unsustainable fishing practices to salvage income from smaller catches, ultimately leading to the collapse of important resources. External threats include population growth, natural disasters, climate change, pollution, and coastal development with its associated coastal runoff and siltation.

Need for a national roadmap for coastal fisheries

In late 2017, Vanuatu Fisheries Department (VFD) began formulating a vision for coastal fisheries and developed a subsequent strategy that could operationalise that vision. The resulting framework provides both strategic guidance that is responsive to the existing policy landscape and operational guidance for implementation. Here we summarise the key elements of the roadmap, the reader is directed to the full roadmap for further details.

Key guiding principles

The following key principles guide implementation of this roadmap.

1. Recognise women's contribution to coastal fisheries and promote more inclusive fisheries management and livelihoods.
2. Recognise diverse users and their roles and responsibilities in fisheries, promote CBFM and capacity building, as well as the motivation and empowerment of communities.
3. Promote and strengthen partnerships and networking among stakeholders in coastal fisheries at the national, sub-national, regional and sub-regional levels, and with international players.
4. Uphold and promote ecosystem-based approaches to fisheries management (EAFM) to ensure a holistic approach to decisions taken with respect to the management and development of coastal fisheries.
5. Promote good governance, best practice and accountability in coastal fisheries management and sustainable development.
6. Recognise the complexity and challenges in coastal fisheries (including with respect to the geographical nature and remoteness of the country), promote innovation and use of information and communications technology in the management and monitoring, control and surveillance of coastal fisheries.

Four overarching outcomes

Resilient communities: Communities are well equipped, connected and have the capacity to monitor, address, withstand and adapt to changing conditions. These changes may vary in time and scale from acute, immediate and intense shocks, to slow shifts in the environment. Community self-sufficiency means dependence on development aid is reduced, in part through local capacity building.

Effective coastal resource governance: Various bodies of VFD, including its provincial sub-offices, in collaboration with other government and non-government agencies (e.g. Department of Environment), ensure the effective governance of coastal zones and the resource stocks in them. Roles of civil society in management, regulation enforcement and behaviour control are integrated into governance frameworks, which provide for fora for inclusive design and decision-making processes.

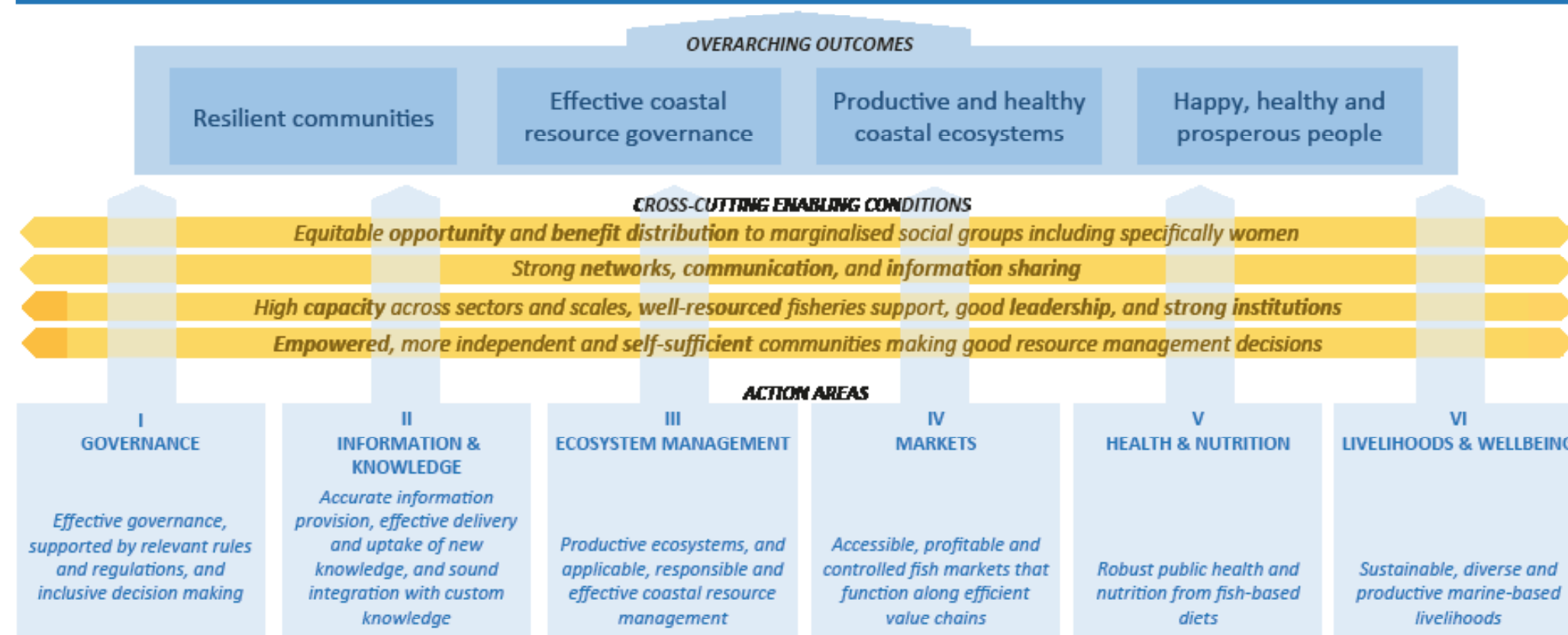
Productive and healthy coastal ecosystem: Coastal ecosystems function optimally and provide important ecosystem services despite climate change. Economically important resource stocks are thriving under responsible harvesting regimes. People understand eco-dynamics and connectivity between ecosystems in relation to their practice. Consequently, anthropogenic damage is minimal.

Happy, healthy and wealthy people: Social, economic, political and physical living environments foster the well-being of local communities. Although the state of well-being is often understood from a personal perspective, the basic conditions of economic prosperity, security, food abundance, stability and good health are attained through effective resource management (given the centrality of coastal resources in people's lives in Vanuatu).

Framework for Vanuatu National Roadmap for Coastal Fisheries

VISION

BY 2030, SECURE SUSTAINABLE COASTAL FISHERIES, UNDERPINNED BY COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACHES, TO ENSURE THE RESILIENCE AND WELLBEING OF OUR PEOPLE



Six focal action areas

In order to achieve the outcomes and, ultimately, the vision for coastal fisheries, activities need to be implemented in six focal areas. Collaboration with other relevant government agencies is implicit in the execution of activities within each focal action area. These agencies include, for example, the Attorney General's Office, Police Maritime, the National Statistics Office and National Disaster Management Office, Department of Environment, and the Ministry of Health among others.

I GOVERNANCE

The existing Vanuatu fisheries legislation does not adequately enable CBFM and EAFM principles. The design of new or amended legislation must be transparent, inclusive and fit-for-context. In part, this will ensure that the implementation of rules and regulations across multiple scales and sectors. Principles of inclusiveness and decentralisation should guide this process to ensure that opportunity is fairly distributed and that local institutions are recognised. With its fisheries management and development mandate, VFD has a vital role to play in integrating bottom-up management, practice and knowledge. VFD will provide support and enforce common, enabling laws and policies at the national level with regard to coastal fisheries.

II INFORMATION & KNOWLEDGE

Accurate and usable information will be as important for stakeholders. Broad uptake of new knowledge hinges on creative, appropriate and ongoing modes of delivery. Integrating technical insights from science with existing (traditional) knowledge, in part, ensures learning and local support for management interventions.

III ECOSYSTEM MANAGEMENT

Ecosystem approaches to fisheries management principles are vital to maintain the multiple roles that coastal fisheries play in people's livelihoods as well as the broader functions of marine and terrestrial systems. CBFM approaches will enable the integration of diverse interests to help meet challenges arise from competing interests.

IV MARKETS

It is critical to develop sustainable market systems through improved social organisation, infrastructure improvement and mechanisms to allow for reliable supply. Access to markets in order to sell and buy fish must be secured by improving the reliability and consistency of connections to domestic urban markets.

V HEALTH & NUTRITION

Fish is an important component of the diet of most Ni-Vanuatu and critical to the improved nutrition of vulnerable groups (e.g. pregnant women and young children). It is important to inform community members of the micronutrient value of fish, particularly in child development stages. Post-harvest handling needs to be hygienic to minimise diet-related disease.

VI LIVELIHOODS & WELL-BEING

The livelihoods of rural people need to be broadened, diversified or improved to ensure reliable streams of income. Household income from marine-based activities can be improved with new technology, higher value-adding and better management. It is important that livelihood improvements focus on raising the standard of living and both individual and community well-being, not only economically but also socially, culturally and politically.

Cross-cutting enabling conditions

For all actions to feed into the overarching outcomes successfully, four key enabling conditions must be met.

1. All interventions must be designed to ensure equitable opportunity for engagement and benefit within and across stakeholder groups. This requires mechanisms for broad inclusion to minimise, for example, gender-based marginalisation. Effective checks and balances are essential to ensure processes are fair and accountabilities are in place.
2. As noted in strategic policy objective 8 in the National Fisheries Sector Policy, strong networks are imperative to communication and information sharing. Opportunities to voice grievances, resolve conflicts, learn across scales and develop support systems will facilitate better implementation.
3. Capacity is needed to implement the roadmap. Local resource users need to be equipped with necessary skills, knowledge and resources manage fisheries and realise their aspirations. Leadership at all levels will be critical for stakeholder groups to work collectively, as will the institutions that can overcome vulnerabilities from overdependence on individual leaders.
4. Activities under the roadmap should contribute to further empowering communities with formal and effective mandates to control access to resources. Decisions should be guided by locally developed, nationally endorsed, management that set out rules for what, how, who, and where management is applicable.

Monitoring, evaluation and learning

The underlying objective of this roadmap is to improve current and future management outputs, outcomes and impacts toward the national development goals, and to assist in Vanuatu's annual reporting obligations under the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the *New Song Noumea Strategy*.

The roadmap has a lifespan of 11 years (2019–2030) with reviews planned after three, six and 11 years. Monitoring and evaluation will run parallel to implementation, with lessons learned documented and measures of success or failure assessed according to qualitative and quantitative indicators as part of the operationalisation framework

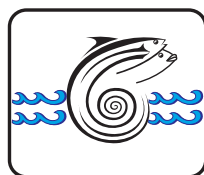




North Efate, ©Ada Sokach

Contact

The information presented here is an excerpt of the published *Vanuatu National Roadmap for Coastal Fisheries: 2019–2030* document. For copies of the full document and for further information please contact the Vanuatu Fisheries Department.



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Pacific Community
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